

envision Easton

DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Town of Easton, Washington County, New York
May 29, 2025



Department
of State

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

The Town of Easton developed this Comprehensive Plan (Plan) with financial assistance from the Department of State (DOS) and the Hudson Valley Greenway. The Smart Growth Community Planning & Zoning Grant from NYS DOS was administered with assistance from the NYSDOS Office of Planning Development & Community Infrastructure. It followed from and built on collaboration with the Hudson River Valley Greenway grant which provided early stages of community mapping and engagement, including a survey of residents which explored public opinions and preferences around future land use, development, and conservation options for the Town of Easton.

Overall, this Plan was created by identifying local assets, reviewing past initiatives, engaging with partners and stakeholders, and defining community strengths, opportunities and needs. Based on profiling, a Vision was created and planning Goals were established. Along with these a series of alternative strategy options are presented that can be used to move the Plan forward. Community input was integral to this whole process.

This Plan represents a commitment to ensuring the Town remains an attractive, vibrant community that provides an excellent quality of life. Easton has been a rural farming core since 1789 when it was formed from Stillwater and Saratoga. The Town is notable as the birthplace of Corliss Steam Engine inventor George H. Corliss (1817-1888) and primitive artist Grandma Moses (1860-1961) whose works evoked her life as a frugal farm woman. Easton is a community that was on the front lines of the Woman's Suffrage movement, starting in 1891 when Mary S. Anthony, Secretary of the Woman's Suffrage Association and sister of Susan B. Anthony, started the Easton Political Equality Club, with a vestige that lives on today in the Easton Book Club.

*envision*Easton



Physically, Easton is also defined by its adjacency to the Hudson and Battenkill Rivers, contains the southern half of the Village of Greenwich, and is home to Willard Mountain Ski Area. In addition to the remarkable scenic character of the landscape viewed from the Town's country roads and other vantage points, Easton is known as the host the County's premier event—the Washington County Fair—at the fairgrounds on Route 29. The agricultural base in Easton is remarkable. Local products include milk from Easton's dairy farmers, Hand Melons and other abundant produce.



The Town of Easton developed and adopted its current Master Plan in 1970. While updates were made in 1977, 1984 and 1990, the current plan is 55 years old and does not reflect changes in the Town and State in over half a century. Town officials have determined the community is in need of a new plan, designed from the ground up to recognize current conditions, incorporate modern understanding of community planning, and to provide a road map for smart, sustainable and quality growth over the next 10 years. Community leaders see many challenges as well as opportunities ahead. This Plan update provides renewed and strengthened strategies for conservation and development in Easton. Moving forward with implementation, the Town will seek to continue to bolster engagement and the involvement of the greater Easton community to make planning a reality.

It is important to remember comprehensive plans help guide policy and are not law. Rather, the Plan provides a framework within which to make decisions relating to future land use and development. Plans are intended to reflect the long-term vision of the community to guide investments, policies, and projects.

A BLUEPRINT FOR ACTION

The Easton Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan is organized as follows:

Historic Context – This part, or Plan element, provides background, supplying guidance that is more secondary and more of a preamble and sets the stage for the profiling and action

planning that follows. Historic Context delves into ways that physical and cultural history, including the building fabric and landscape, influence Easton's sense of place. It highlights factors to contemplate during planning that shape community identity.

Community Context - There are six elements that provide a profile of Easton's the region's environment using numerous subject dimensions. Each element starts with a principle and is followed by a subset of goals and strategies that are presented based on the assessment and trends analysis that follow. These six elements include the following:

- Housing Choices;
- Living Environment;
- Placemaking;
- Economic Vitality;
- Community Infrastructure & Transportation/ Mobility; and
- Leading for the Future.

Public Engagement - This is a summary of the engagement process and the input provided by community members. There are also consultations with regional partners including those at the Washington County Planning Department.

The Plan - The heart of this document, The Plan presents an over-arching Vision developed from public outreach along with goals for Easton. In addition to these, there is a detailed Plan Implementation Matrix, identifying strategy actions assigned under each goal, as well as potential partners, suggested timeframes, and potential funding sources. This is accompanied by five Key Actions and a Future Land Use Map that together describe the potential to undertake land use policy upgrades, form plans, and advance other objectives as possible

focuses for action once the Plan is adopted. Given the small and limited nature of Easton's local public sector, it is suggested that the Town form a Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee (CIPC) to help keep attention on activating the Plan in the years ahead.

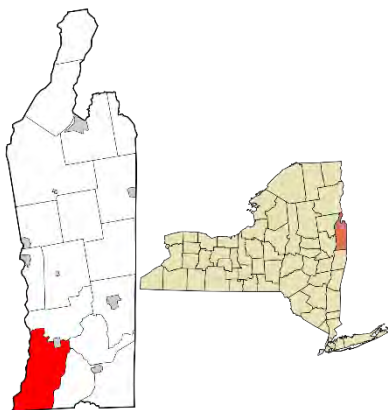


Figure 1: Location of the Town of Easton within Washington County

Update Needed!

The Easton community requires an evaluation of its social, economic, and environmental conditions to reflect the current needs and realities of its population and landscape.

The Town of Easton has been well-guided by its original 1970 Comprehensive Plan along with the subsequent amendments. Yet, considering changes that have affected the community, Town officials recognized the Town is in need of a new plan to better understand conditions and help frame future development. Accordingly, the Town Board formed a Comprehensive Plan Committee (CPC) made up of the members of the Planning Board and the Town Board who oversaw the planning process and guided the formulation of this new “Envision Easton” Comprehensive Plan.

The “Envision Easton” process consisted of two phases. Phase 1 developed the “Envision Easton” Comprehensive Plan Vision Report. It was based on efforts to engage the community through an in-person and virtual visioning process. The Report presented a desired vision for Easton, reflective of its community and economic development needs for the next ten years.

Phase 2 covered the compilation of a robust profile, as well as Goals and detailed strategies on how to realize the Town’s Vision for the future. The full Plan encourages local investment that is compatible with the protection and enhancement of natural and cultural resources, while providing suggestions on how to add to the supply of housing and structure other community development actions to reinforce the high-quality of life within the Town. The Plan is balanced and identifies a broad range of recommendations to move the community’s vision forward.

While there were a variety of techniques used to stimulate public participation, gather many voices, and develop a broad-base of understanding about needs and techniques to address them, it is the opinion of Town leaders that continued community engagement is needed. As planning and implementation proceeds past adoption, there is a need for many voices at the table to help usher in a process that identifies how best to build, strengthen, and develop Easton using this blueprint.



Figure 2: Grandma Moses Home Site on Co. Rt. 74A

Why is This Plan Necessary?

The Envision Easton Plan is a collection of information and analysis designed to guide future development. It provides Easton with a foundation for forming policies and projects to foster a more certain future.

A Comprehensive Plan provides a framework and context within which to make decisions relating to future land use and development.



Figure 3: Looking West from Willard Mountain

With a population of roughly 2,279 according to the 2020 US Census, Easton continues to be a predominantly rural, agricultural area and a Right-to-Farm community. One shift underway involves demand for siting large-scale solar energy facilities; while recognizing and balancing the importance of farming. Two other notable factors encompass the fact the overall the community is aging and that new housing growth has been low.

The Town Board determined the new Plan was the appropriate vehicle to address the needs of its residents and to protect its current landscape. The Town will use the Plan to encourage development in a way that is compatible with the protection and enhancement of its natural resources, the landscape, and economy, while reinforcing the Town's unique quality of life.



Provide a balance between the preservation of Easton's quality of life and natural resources while accommodating for future development.

Allow the town to better protect the public health, safety, and welfare of its citizens by protecting its lands from adverse development.

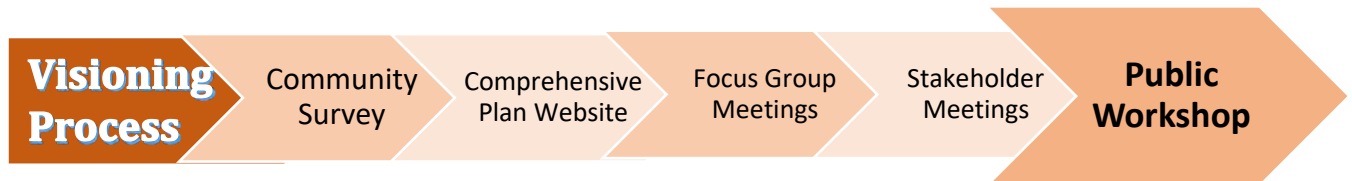


Reevaluate the Town's: Natural Resource, Cultural Resources, Economic Development, Public Access, Regional Planning, Historic Heritage, Environmental Management.

Town of Easton Planning Process

In January of 2022 the Town formed a Comprehensive Plan Committee (CPC). The Committee was tasked with reviewing the 1970 Comprehensive Plan and the existing Subdivision Law, as well as participating in the CPC, stakeholder and public meetings. During this review, the CPC reviewed the recommendations in the 1970 Plan to determine those which were successfully implemented, recommendations that are no longer relevant, and others that are still applicable. The CPC was essential in articulating the concerns and needs of Easton residents that have guided development of this Plan.

A Comprehensive Plan is a working document that outlines a vision of the Town of Easton's future and should be consulted just as the town might consult the public, legal counsel, or others when making policy decisions and allocating resources.



Laberge Group, a local engineering and planning firm specializing in comprehensive planning and public participation, was hired by the Town in mid-2022. The Town and Laberge Group designed a two (2) phase planning process to leverage local and State resources to assist with funding the Plan. Phase 1 was completed in the first half of 2023. Additional funds for Phase 2 were provided through a New York State Department of State Smart Growth Grant.

A Vision Report provided an overview of community goals and objectives based on preliminary findings from the first phase of the process. The Report was intended to build community involvement, and support. Additionally, it assisted with establishing relationships with key local and regional stakeholders. A product of this was an initial community vision accompanied by an identification of factors related to community strengths and weaknesses — prime considerations when there are actions that seek to improve the overall quality of life. The Vision Report set the foundation for the rest of the process, which involved the creation of policy and project recommendations.

Smart Growth Framework

This Plan is organized to advance Smart Growth Principles. The following Smart Growth Principles of New York State embody planning and development concepts that influence the creation of livable, sustainable and equitable communities.

The 15 Smart Growth Principles are as follows:

1. **Mixed Land Uses (*Promote mixed land uses in focus areas*)**: A mix of land uses can convey substantial fiscal and economic benefits by placing commercial uses near residential areas as a critical component of achieving viable places to live for those who use and depend upon the area's commerce.

Easton's rural character has two primary patterns. Over most of the landscape there are open spaces in farmlands, fields and forests. These contrast with settled areas around the Village of Greenwich, in hamlets, and in its cross-roads, where this Plan promotes housing options. These locations, especially in the north around Routes 29 and 40, contain commercial uses, as well as homes and services. Easton's Vision is for low density growth within these places that are focuses for a balanced mix of land uses. The Plan advances this strategy by assigning primacy to agriculture within a significant portion of the community's land area and by encouraging growth and municipal investments outside the areas that are within the County Agricultural District.

2. **Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices (*Create an adequate range of housing opportunities and choices*)**: Provide quality housing with efficient access to jobs, resources, and amenities for people of all income levels, ages, and races.

The Plan recommends encouraging a diversified housing supply that will support all members of the community, including middle income households. It guides housing growth around Greenwich and broadly around Route 29, where residents of new housing can benefit from walkable scale and proximity to services. There is a strategy to create regulations for developing accessory housing and the Plan urges forming a partnership that can be used to explore ways to stimulate housing growth and investment. It also calls for collaborating with Washington County to pinpoint ways to secure grants and structure incentives that will prompt housing rehabilitation. As practicable, the Plan promotes developing housing for older persons adjacent to the Village and in hamlets, while preserving the ability to develop family and worker housing on farms. It also suggests enabling conservation subdivisions as a tool to structure some additional housing growth in agricultural areas which are currently at buildout, according to the subdivision regulations.

3. **Development and Redevelopment in Existing Communities (Promote development and redevelopment where infrastructure is adequate and sustainable):** Smart Growth directs development towards existing communities already served by infrastructure, seeking to utilize the resources that existing neighborhoods offer, and to conserve open space and irreplaceable natural resources on the urban and metropolitan fringe.

The Plan guides growth near Greenwich, in hamlets and crossroads, and along existing roads. Following this approach can enable strategic infill in northern and northeastern parts of Town where there is a larger population and a higher density of streets and public facilities. It would promote reinvestment in existing systems, while guiding growth away from high value farmlands and preferably, conserved places. Although no properties are connected to public water or sewers within the portion of the Town outside of the Village, over the long term, depending on findings from future studies, this area may be a practical location for consideration of an expanded public water service that taps into the Village system and the existing water line that extends south of the Battenkill. In conjunction with planned, compatible, and sustainable community growth, providing for this type and scale of infrastructural investment could offer a way to leverage the cost of extending and providing this utility while protecting public health and the water quality environment.

4. **Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place (Build on Traits that make a Distinctive, Attractive Community with a Strong Sense of Place):** Smart Growth encourages communities to set standards for development and construction that respond to community values of architectural aesthetics, neighborhood-friendly design and human-scale planning, as well as expanded choices in housing and transportation.

The Plan encourages the protection of the sense of place by sustaining agriculture and promoting growth in hamlets and crossroads and in the northern and northeast parts of Town and outside the County's Agricultural District. As shown on the Future Land Use Map, it celebrates Easton's rural and natural character. It emphasizes opportunities to provide strategic small-scale housing growth and organizes site planning that achieves the compatible integration of new land uses, including solar energy installations. It also provides for a focus on assets such as the Washington County Fairground, the scenic road network, and the farming landscape, while it promotes aligned business growth, agritourism, and enhanced access to the rivers and open spaces of the community.

5. **Density (Promote Sustainable Compact Neighborhoods):** Compact communities are more land- and energy-efficient; provide the critical mass for neighborhood retail, commercial development and mass transit; protect natural resources; and promote walkability. Concentrating and directing growth in designated centers reduces the demand for sprawling development of greenfields on the metropolitan fringe, thus saving open

space and farmland and protecting natural resources. Growth in centers maximizes the use of existing infrastructure, avoiding costly municipal expenditures on the extension and maintenance of new infrastructure.

The Plan focuses on the preservation of agriculture, pointing most housing growth outside of the locations where farming is assigned primacy. Easton's Plan promotes establishing rural design guidelines that depict practices for compatible low-density commercial and residential growth in the crossroads, hamlets, and adjacent to the Village. Most new development would follow a traditional, compact form typical of locations without public water or sewer. Another strategy suggests exploring the potential to share services and to connect to an existing Town water line that serves a small area in the Village on the south side of the Battenkill — thereby enabling future compact and compatible growth, with an opportunity for limited additional neighborhood and residential housing growth adjacent to the Village.

- 6. Clean Energy (Promote and Integrate Clean Energy Resources and related incentives):** The inclusion of clean energy siting and development into planning, zoning, building, and infrastructure, including, but not limited to, solar, wind, geothermal, and microgrids.

The Plan recommends establishing local laws covering the siting of solar arrays and battery electric storage renewable energy development. The standards would be used to integrate these type facilities with the landscape while supporting innovative clean energy development. Specific regulations and guidance will provide for appropriately placed and scaled installations along with the management and mitigation of the physical effects of facility sitings. It is anticipated the law will limit this type of growth to 1.5% of total acreage in the Town. Depending on future development demand, this Plan also provides a basis for adding regulations covering wind energy facilities or other undefined energy sources.

- 7. Climate Change (Promote Sustainable Mass Transit that reduces the Local Levels of Greenhouse Gas Emissions).** Concentrating residential, commercial, office and recreational land uses provides the density and critical mass necessary to sustain mass transit, reducing automobile dependency, vehicle miles travelled and transport-based greenhouse gas emissions. Denser communities are also more energy- efficient. Walkable/bikeable communities make pedestrian activity possible by mixing land uses, building at reasonable densities, connecting streets, expanding transportation options, and creating complete streets that serve pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists.

Mass transit is generally not applicable for this community, but providing for growth in crossroads, hamlets and near Greenwich will enable walkable scale and a shift to fewer

auto trips when people substitute-in walking or bicycling trips. This Plan encourages planning for regional rural public transport and workforce mobility innovations to aid factors such as workplace participation. Such efforts could result in lower vehicle miles traveled per capita, while the potential for regional transportation connections would be somewhat enhanced by focusing growth in the north and by Route 29. The Plan also provides for an energy mix transition by enabling clean energy facility sitings and the benefits that can flow to the community from access to a nearby discounted supply.

- 8. Resiliency (Increase Resiliency to Weather Events):** Land use, development, and infrastructure that is adaptive to climate change impacts and is resilient and resistant to extreme storm events.

The Plan promotes participation in Washington County hazard planning and encourages capital planning that assesses potential measures to enhance identified critical public facilities durability, such as through vulnerability assessments and an evaluation of the need and feasibility of adding back-up power supplies, so they are more likely to operate as needed in the event of severe weather. It advises ensuring that future development is directed outside of stream corridors and is setback from locations within '500 year' floodplain (0.2% annual chance of flooding). The Plan also discusses the critical need to foster resiliency in agriculture. To do so, it urges local stakeholders to periodically caucus on which agricultural and economic development strategies to focus on – consistent with the County's Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan. Moreover, as a means of sustaining agriculture and allied enterprises, the Plan encourages parties in-Town to work with actors from across the three-county area to design and implement programs and projects that can benefit and reinforce farming in Easton. The types of actions suggested include protecting high value agricultural soils, supporting initiatives that help farmers adapt to changing climate conditions, structuring compatible energy facility sitings, structuring emergency providers vulnerability assessments, and bolstering agricultural markets by encouraging farm stores, farm stands and cooperatives.

- 9. Green Infrastructure (Improve Green Infrastructure and Resident's Participation in this Effort):** Smart Growth incorporates green buildings – energy conservation measures, renewable energy, sustainable site location and maintenance, locally produced materials and food, well-maintained and well-placed parks, trails, linked open spaces, child accessible, environmental and ecological education areas, sustainable stormwater management and urban forestry.

The Plan supports sustaining Agriculture, encourages policies for managing renewable energy facility installations, and promotes conservation design and mechanisms such as instituting site plan review as a means of aiding resource management and conservation. It identifies an opportunity to sequester carbon in soils at farm operations

and in forests adjoining farmlands. It highlights the potential to deploy low impact development techniques in order to bolster resiliency to extreme weather ranging from droughts to intense or prolonged rain events. The Plan promotes the extension of best practices for nonpoint stormwater management on farms. It also encourages the use of natural design solutions and green infrastructure applications when preparing highway drainage retrofits and in conjunction with structuring compatible growth in hamlets and crossroads, when the right conditions are present, in order to enhance community character and versatility.

10. Social Diversity and Integration (Encourage social diversity and integration):

Communities designed on Smart Growth principles allow people of diverse ages, incomes, races and physical abilities to interact more regularly, easily and safely by encouraging walkable communities, accessible public spaces and a variety of age-, income- and race/ethnic-integrated housing opportunities.

The Plan recommends exploring ways to increase housing choices so that existing and future residents feel welcome and can find housing that suits their needs. This includes examining how to support suitable housing options for senior residents so they can continue residing in Easton. Meanwhile, there is a Key Action recommendation to develop a Town recreation plan. This can provide for strategically assisting community health and wellness and enabling recreational and cultural opportunities for residents of all ages, including children and older persons. It can help with aligning resources and establishing durable community partnerships and initiatives. One recommendation in conjunction with a recreation plan is to examine ways to optimize the use of Burton Hall as a community space, which can aid social cohesion and help inspire as well as support and sustain residents' involvement in various civic activities.

11. Regional Planning and Coordination (Expand planning and implementation efforts across jurisdictional lines, to increase effectiveness, sustainability, and resiliency):

We conduct our daily lives on a regional, multi-jurisdictional basis—in many cases living in one local government, working in another and recreating in yet another. And economic, ecological and transportation systems also operate regionally. It is therefore imperative that municipal planning also align and coordinate with regional objectives, systems and plans, as represented, for example, in NYSEDA Regional Sustainability Plans, REDC Strategic Plans, countywide plans and plans developed by Regional Planning Councils. Regional planning and coordination allow stakeholders to more effectively collaborate across jurisdictional lines to leverage resources and achieve mutual goals and objectives—environmental, social and economic.

The Town has a small local government administration and limited capacity to independently address pressing needs; however, the Comprehensive Plan encourages consistently aligning with actions laid out in the County Farmland

Protection Plan and coordinating with regional agencies and partners in advancing agricultural, as well as economic and community development, transportation, and public health programming that will benefit Easton. For one, it promotes collaboration with Washington County on housing planning, which will strengthen the local economy. It calls for Washington County's development of rural public transport and workforce mobility project(s), along with involvement of stakeholders such as the transit authority, human service agencies, large employers, and service providers. It also recommends engaging local emergency officials in assessing needs and planning resilient systems for public safety. It also promotes establishing ways for the Town Board and citizens to engage with school officials in efforts to adjust to declining enrollment and define ways to provide school services, downsize, or consolidate, and enable compatible community use of school facilities for public programming. It also prompts local and County coordination in leveraging actions and investments that will improve broadband and cellular communications.

- 12. Walkable/Bikeable Neighborhood Designs (Promote Walkable/Bikeable Neighborhood Designs):** Walkable/bikeable communities make pedestrian activity possible by mixing land uses, building densely and connecting streets in a gridded pattern. This expands transportation options and creates streetscapes that better serve a range of users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and automobiles.

The Plan promotes pedestrian safety and it encourages forming a recreation and trails master plan which can aid community walkability and quality designs for trailheads and public access points. It also promotes growth in crossroads, hamlets and near Greenwich, which may enable higher levels of non-motorized trips. Rural design guidelines could help to provide ways to enhance walkable neighborhood design and safe driveway access configurations.

- 13. Variety of Mobility Choices (Increase Mobility and Circulation within Jurisdictional Lines and Improve Connectivity with areas outside Jurisdictional Lines):** Providing people with efficient and varied mobility choices - walking, biking, public transit - fosters greater community opportunities for housing, shopping, and jobs compliant with Smart Growth principles.

The Plan encourages growth in crossroads, hamlets and near the Village of Greenwich. This can result in higher percentages of residents residing in places where they can pursue active travel—walking, or even bicycling manageable distances—to services, work and entertainment. This aids sustainability of transport with fewer motorized vehicle trips, which could lessen strain on roads. It also recommends establishing trails which support recreation mobility and walking trips.

- 14. Well-Planned and Well-Placed Public Spaces (Promote Well-Planned and Well-Placed Public Spaces):** The public realm plays a prominent role in the Smart Growth paradigm. Smart public spaces increase walkability, social interaction, livability, a sense of place and neighborhood aesthetics.

The Plan sets out a vision for growth and preserving the working rural landscape and small town character. Accordingly, it encourages the protection of agricultural lands and sensitive environments. It also guides growth into northern Easton, where there is a larger surrounding population and a higher concentration of existing public assets (including nonprofit land uses and quasi-public lands) and services that can be enhanced and leveraged as opportunities arise. This type of focus can enable, as practicable, the promotion of walkable, bikeable design and take advantage of features and strengths of the intersecting State roads in the northern part of Town. The Plan also recommends developing a recreation and trails master plan, which will help with structuring well-planned and high-quality enhancements of existing public spaces, or the establishment of new public assets throughout Town, including in and near the hamlets and cross-roads that are other places recommended for focusing future growth and investments. Development occurring after adoption of this Plan will be well-planned and energy efficient, despite being structured as low density. This Plan prescribes rural design principles and provides for site plan review. It also enables infill development that is compatible with existing community form, resulting in fewer or shorter car trips based on the relative proximity to other uses and services.

- 15. Community and Stakeholder Collaboration in Planning (Promote community and stakeholder collaboration in planning):** Collaborative efforts can lead to creative resolutions of development issues and greater community understanding of the importance of good planning and investment which results in great places to live, work, shop, and play.

There was a substantial effort to publicize the process for developing Easton's Comprehensive Plan. Residents were requested to complete a survey that gathered perspectives about community character and the potential for growth. Other engagement activities included: a staffed booth at the County Fair, focus groups, two public workshops, and two public hearings. The input from these outreach activities assisted with identifying issues and testing and refining the strategies presented.

The community must remain engaged in planning and be provided with adequate opportunities to participate in the development of and comment on capital plans, local law updates, designs for public projects, community programming, and any other related efforts. Going forward, residents and stakeholder can provide input that will assist with enhancing farming and agricultural markets, natural resource management, tourism and overall economic development, and achieving recreational, housing, and

transportation improvements. It is essential to foster effective coordination and define ways the community and business, local and regional non-profits, and government actors can assist in optimizing outcomes. Importantly, the Plan recommends forming a Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee (CPIC). The CPIC can assist with using this Plan, conducting periodic reviews of its substance, progress with it, as well as making recommendations which will support comprehensive planning and the involvement of the people and groups that make up this community and help to affect change.



COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

Easton is known for its agrarian lifestyle, unique quality of life, and small-town character. There is a rich scenic landscape in this predominantly rural location that draws from the iconic beauty of the Hudson and Battenkill Rivers, as well as the remarkable open landscape.

Finding ways to conserve and enhance Easton's quality of life and environmental character, while providing necessary community and economic development, requires leveraging opportunities and acting strategically. In addition to the current 1970s-era Town comprehensive plan, and conditions and trends profiling presented herein, there are eight local and regional plans providing content that informs planning and development in Easton and the broader Washington County surroundings; of which Easton is an integral part. **Appendix B: 'Local & Regional Plan Summaries'** provides an overview for each local and regional plan. These other plans were used as guides in contemplating future action recommendations for Easton.

The Town in 2020 had a population of 2,279 persons, 1,037 housing units, and an average household size of 2.43 persons. The median age is now at 46.0 years, and a large percentage (33.8%) of residents are over age 60. The number of children declined by 13%, while overall population has remained stable.

While the Town is largely agrarian, with a population density of just 40 persons per square mile, there is some evidence of a gradual shift in its economy and workforce towards non-agricultural, home-based businesses and large-scale solar energy facilities—creating competition for quality land and putting pressure on the agricultural base of the Town.



ENVISION EASTON'S VISION STATEMENT

Based on public engagement, a Vision Statement was created that captures the intent of the Town:

Town of Easton Vision

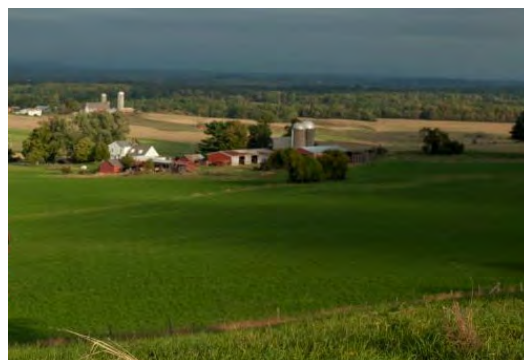
Easton is unique because it offers a remote lifestyle yet is surrounded by modern conveniences. The Town's quality of life aligns with the small-town character that is embraced by those who live, work, and visit Easton.

Envision Easton promotes rural planning and preservation. Protecting the agricultural landscape and industry, enhancing tourism amenities, and capitalizing on regional relationships will sustain and support a high quality of life and move the Town forward.

The Town of Easton's high quality of life has been maintained through the preservation of its strong tradition as a working rural landscape providing for multi-generational housing options and economic growth that strengthens the tax base while enhancing community character. The community's rural character enables recreational activities throughout the Town, which connect residents with one another as well as with nature.

Easton protects and bolsters its scenic, quiet, friendly, affordable, and sustainable small-town character through the continued preservation of farmland and open space, the promotion of compatible infill development, and the enactment of stronger land use regulations.

In furtherance of this community vision, the Town of Easton created goals and strategy objectives designed to work toward realizing the defined new future. These are assigned to each of the six profile elements that are found at the beginning of each of these sections. There is also an Implementation Plan that is thoroughly outlined at the end of the Plan. This provides a full list all of the goals and strategies in one single place.



ENVISION EASTON'S COMMUNITY PROFILE

There are six main subject elements, or categories used to understand past trends and present Goals for Easton's future. Each element starts with the presentation of a key theme to advance the Vision and guide this Plan. Separately, but also part of forming the content in this Plan, there is a discussion of New York State Smart Growth principles and how these relate to contextualizing and structuring action.

These examinations of the community environment, its conditions and trends are comprehensive. The discussion this profiling presents information for decision-making. This profiling can be consulted when deliberating on potential future actions and key priorities, or other strategies that are identified as important to Easton's future development.

The following are the subject-based principles for Easton:

- **Housing Choices:** *Protect and enhance opportunities for existing and future residents to access diverse and affordable housing options.*
- **Living Environment:** *Safeguard the long-term viability of the Town's natural resources and open spaces for future generations, including its sensitive environmental areas, agricultural lands, and scenic resources.*
- **Placemaking:** *Provide for distinctive, attractive community character that builds upon and fits with the Town's historic pattern of rural, agricultural development.*
- **Community Infrastructure & Transportation/ Mobility:** *Provide for capital investments that enable quality and resilient growth, assist transport safety, and spur mobility options for residents.*
- **Economic Vitality:** *Achieve a diversified economic base that centers on the agricultural and natural resource-based enterprises that underpin Easton's rural character.*
- **Leading for the Future:** *Steward strategic and resilient growth that compliments regional development frameworks and aids governmental efficiency.*



Envision Easton's Key Actions

There are five Key Actions identified by the Town as priorities to advance during implementation of this Plan. These Key Actions align with the Vision. Key Actions address the needs and interests of current and future generations and provide a means to move this Plan ahead.

The Key Actions identified for Easton are described in The Plan and are referenced in the Implementation Matrix to show how these relate to various recommended goals and strategies:

1. Recreation & Trails Master Plan
2. Town Capital Improvement Plan
3. Progress Land Use Laws & Regulations Updates
4. Agricultural Planning & Development
5. Fostering Rural Housing Options

Consulting the Vision, Key Actions, and the Implementation Plan should bring familiarity with the intent of this Plan and suggested strategies.



HOW WILL THE PLAN BE IMPLEMENTED?

New York State Town Law

New York State Town Law gives towns the power to create a comprehensive plan, should they so desire. Town Law describes the legal requirements for approval and what elements may be included, but does not firmly require each element. This means each comprehensive plan in New York State is unique and tailored to the individual community. Easton's unique Comprehensive Plan will prove instrumental in moving the Town forward. The adoption of this Plan by the Town Board is the first step towards fulfilling the Town's Vision.



Figure 4: Burton Hall (easton.sals.edu)

The recommendations in this Plan will not produce the intended results unless Town officials and collaborators address its guidance through local policies, regulations, and public investments. With an updated Plan in place, stakeholders will better understand how land use regulations, budgeting, capital improvement programming, and other actions help achieve goals, enable desired growth and foster positive change. This Plan urges formation of a Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee (CPIC) to assist the Town Board with the process of aiding the courses of action once the Plan is adopted. The formation of partnerships between the Town and other stakeholders is essential.

Many communities use various land use tools to manage and advance growth. State Town Law provides that zoning and subdivision regulations “shall be in accordance with a Comprehensive Plan.” Easton does not presently have Zoning, but the Plan does provide strategies for enhancing subdivisions and land development. Once the Plan is adopted, there should efforts to upgrade policies; covering tools, including but not limited to: subdivision, site plan review standards, regulations addressing specific uses such as renewable energy facilities, architectural design guidelines, sign controls, or environmental quality review criteria.

Like the Plan itself, the Implementation Plan should be a living document that can be amended by the Town Board, as new actions are introduced, and strategies are implemented. With this Plan the Town of Easton will encourage development and conservation in order to reinforce a high quality of life.

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee

This Plan should not only continue to build on the foundation achieved in former plans, but guide progress in addressing the needs of Easton’s residents today. As noted, it is recommended that the Town Board designate a *Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee* (CPIC) to assist with the use and implementation of the Plan.

An Implementation Plan and Future Land Use Map highlight the Town’s “next steps” towards Plan implementation. There are general implementation recommendations, as well as specific strategies presented in the detailed Implementation Matrix. The latter lists the Plan’s goals along with the alternative strategies suggested for advancing such goals. In the Matrix there are suggestions for potential stakeholders to involve in addressing actions, plus there is identification of external grant resources that may be targeted to assist with activating particular strategies.

Based upon dialogue during the comprehensive planning process, the following general actions have been identified which should be undertaken by the Town:

- Adopt and then use the Plan on a day-to-day basis;
- Establish a Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee (CPIC);
- Continue to develop and fully utilize a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP);
- Continually promote cooperation and participation;
- Prepare annual reviews as a suggestion for the courses of action over the next year;
- Continually explore potential funding sources and implementation techniques; and
- Update the Comprehensive Plan on a regular basis.

Strategies in the Implementation Plan are assigned recommended timelines for action. These range from Ongoing, to Short, Mid-term, or Long-Term, in order to help inform interested persons about how they may coordinate, structure and sequence future action.



MONITORING THE PLAN

The 2025 Envision Easton Comprehensive Plan implementation process should be thought of as ongoing. The Plan provides a framework to inform detailed decision-making as implementation moves forward. Measures of success should be developed for gauging the effectiveness of Plan implementation, including progress in achieving goals and selected strategies. Amidst such an effort, dialogue should be maintained with residents, civic groups, and implementation partners, such as at Washington County, among business and development interests, and including but not limited to stakeholders at key non-profits, and adjacent municipalities.

The following thresholds are proposed for use in evaluating progress and making periodic Plan updates:

- **Annual Review** – The Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee (CPIC) should be lean, but help keep a focus among Town officials on using and activating this Plan. This group should assist the Town Board, by forming a brief annual review on the status of efforts. It should be submitted to the Town Board in February of each year, outlining implementation progress during the previous year and define suggested priorities for implementing the Plan over the next year.
- **Five-Year Assessment** – At this point, the CPIC should provide a more detailed report on Plan progress. It could include a description of significant milestones since Plan adoption. The progress report could also suggest course corrections, highlight renewed or emerging priorities, provide rationale, identify alternative options, and lay out for other minor amendments. These can be influenced by changing local dynamics, such as completion of outlined projects, impediments experienced, or based on major or new regional, state and national trends. The Five-Year Assessment could also be used as a point to update key profiling data that has become available, as it would likely help inform and steer decision-making.
- **10-Year Update** – Starting during the year nine Annual Review, there should be dialogue about the need for a major Plan update. If it is determined that the timing is appropriate, during year ten review, consider reengaging the process to revise and adopt an updated Plan.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

In developing the updated Town of Easton Comprehensive Plan, it is essential to preserve the rich history of the Town. That heritage is characterized, by but not limited to, traditional farming practices and the area's place in Colonial era history. This history serves as the foundation for community identity. By promoting the preservation of the agricultural base, it honors the legacy of those who have cultivated this land for generations.

Patterns related to agriculture have influenced the landscape character, settlement, and the features of buildings. There often are buildings of varied types that are evident in and around the Town's hamlets and crossroads. Adaptive reuse of buildings and sites with historic character can breathe new life into the community and maintain a link to the past while meeting modern needs.

Providing contextual design within development can further allow growth to enhance the historic character of the Town. Community involvement through resident engagement also supports a conversation about the future and fosters a sense of pride. Ensuring that the Town's cultural narratives reflect on the community and agricultural roots will help preserve the sense of place and community for future generations. Together, a plan can be synthesized that promotes education and awareness of what it means to live in the Town of Easton, and supports sustainable growth while maintaining the character of this rural community.

NATIVE AND EARLY COLONIAL HISTORY

The lands that are now Easton were once the home of the Horicon Algonquin Tribe and later became the hunting grounds for Iroquois tribes. In 1683 Cornelius Van Dyke, Jan Jansen Bleecker, Peter Phillipsen Schyler, and Johannes Wendell purchased their Saratoga hunting grounds from the Mohawks. These lands were granted as "The Old Saraghtogha Patent" on November 4, 1684, and later confirmed and issued on October 23, 1708. The first undisputed historical record of European settlement was that of Killian de Ridder, who around 1730, purchased from the original patentees a grant of land that included much of what is now Easton.

The land wasn't likely to have been permanently settled until the 1790s, due to ongoing territorial disputes associated with Queen Anne's War (1702-1713), King George's War (1744-1748), and the French and Indian War (1754-1763). Once the fighting ceased, Dutch and Quaker families settled within the southeast portion of the Town. Soon after these settlements were established fighting for the American Revolution commenced and the Dutch families were forced to leave their lands. However, as a



Figure 5: Quaker Meeting House

passivist community, the Quakers were allowed to remain in their settlement and this group influenced Town history. Remnants of the war include the locations of the Hessian encampment, where the British Army crossed the Hudson River in 1777, and a gun emplacement located in northwestern Easton.

AFTER THE REVOLUTION

The cessation of the American Revolution offered greater security and land title legitimacy which, in turn, stimulated community growth. On March 3, 1789, the “East Town” of the Saratoga District was established by the legislature as the Town of Easton, and in 1791 the Town became part of Washington County. Around this time Quaker and Dutch settlement increased in the southern part of Town, Rhode Island Baptists started farms in the northern section of Town, and Easton became home to a substantial number of displaced sea captains and whalers from Massachusetts.

Originally, the dominant economic activity was subsistence and flax farming. This later transitioned into dairy farming along with the expansion of specialized potato and apple markets. Dairying persisted throughout much of the 19th and 20th centuries and continues to have a presence today. In the late 20th century, many farms had to transition away from dairy to beef to serve the rising costs of production. In 1860 all arable land was under cultivation with the average size of a Washington County farm being 116 acres.



Figure 6: Easton History Quilt

The growing number of farmers created a need for services and several industries, and several village centers sprang up in Easton. There was a grist mill on Ensign Brook at the Crandall farm and the John Gale’s Mill at Middle Falls on the Easton side of the Battenkill. Ferries across the Hudson were operated by local farmers, including the Sarles Ferry, the Powers-Briggs Ferry, and the Wright-Hogan Ferry. Several town centers – Crandall’s Corners, Barker’s Grove, Bang All, Starbucks Corners, Beadle Hill, South Easton, Archdale – grew to serve farmers. In these centers were general stores, blacksmith shops, inns, post offices, and schools. Marshall’s Seminary was built in 1863 to teach secondary subjects. Two particularly active associations of that time were the Temperance League and the Anti-Slavery Association.

CIVIL WAR ERA

The Civil War had a cataclysmic effect on the development of many farm communities. Most of the young men went away to war and left the farm to the care of their aging parents, and in many



Figure 7: Quaker Friends' Seminary

cases, these men never came back. A number of farms in the eastern United States had a dubious future; with the life of a farm generally lasted only as long as the life of the current farmer. Although Easton lost almost 50 percent of its population between 1860 and 1960, it managed to remain a viable agricultural community. Remaining a predominantly agricultural community has forced farmers to adopt new methods to survive. Easton's development pattern has remained mostly unchanged and contributes to the Town maintaining a

high quality of life. As was true in the past, Easton's challenge continues to be balancing its historic land-use pattern with modern development pressures in order to move the Town into the future while not sacrificing those assets that make it a desirable, safe, and attractive community.

HISTORY & ARCHITECTURE

In Easton, architecturally important structures range from pre-Revolutionary to Victorian. Maps displayed on the walls of Burton Hall, backed by documentation available in Town archives, including the 1970 Comprehensive Plan, documents of the community's historic properties, revealing 93 sites, structures, or areas of significant historic and/or architectural value. Some of these structures, with pictures, were recorded on historic inventory forms and given to the Town Historian as a sample for recording historic information.

Over 50 structures that were recorded as being built before 1850 are located on a listing of the Historic Sites, Structures, and Areas, and are identified on maps in reports available at Town Hall. These resource documents also identify several scenic areas, historic sites, cemeteries, and some other noteworthy houses. When providing area and site level planning, stakeholders are encouraged to identify potential historic structures, as well as the quality and defining features of Easton's scenic landscape, with consideration regarding how to promote new development that preserves, enhances, and complements these attributes. This way growth can build on traits that make a distinctive and attractive community with a strong sense of place.

The potential historic structures are situated all around Town. Not surprisingly, transportation routes are durable attributes of this community. Many noteworthy structures are situated along Route 40, as well as along River Road (County Route 113), as well as a grouping of older,

potentially significant structures in North Easton. Locations with notable buildings also include Meeting House Road and Vly Summit Road.

Easton's history also relates to its position on the Hudson and Battenkill Rivers, with the Enlarged Erie Barge Canal (on the Hudson River) providing a role in regional transportation history. This goes back to the point of construction, between 1836 and 1862, and the point when the Enlarged Erie Canal was replaced in 1918 by the 3rd version of the canal, known as the "Barge Canal", which was engineered for powered craft instead of mule-drawn boats¹.

The following are some additional limited points that highlight notable structures and features of the community, while others may be identified through future historic structures reconnaissance surveys, or during the review of plans for development in particular locations:

De Ridder Homestead, River Road north of Route 29. Built c. 1790 – Brick (some original). Southern wing oldest part. Eyebrow windows. One story. Alteration of roof is visible near the roof line. The northern part was built later - two-story brick in Federal style with Greek Revival features - probably c. 1840.

Major Barker Farm House and Barns, Off Route 40, c. 1790. Two-story clapboard. Near mill dam. Barn with vertical boards. Once had a grist mill. May have had a role in hiding slaves or protecting European settlers against Native Americans.

North Friends Meeting House, Route 40 north of Burton Road, c. 1838. One-story brick. Shuttered windows. Porch along the facade. Built to provide a meeting place for Quakers in North Easton when the congregation was large. Now is only used occasionally.

Cemeteries & Graveyards

There are approximately 50 cemeteries and farm graveyards throughout the Town, most of which are located on private property. The approximate locations of many of these are indicated on documentation and maps available at Town Hall. Construction activities undertaken near resources such as these should be carried out in such a manner that these sites will be preserved intact and in no way disturbed or destroyed.

¹ www.eriecanal.org

Scenic Features & Views

Battenkill River/ Dionondahowa Falls (Big Falls) – The following excerpt describes features of three waterfalls on the Battenkill River, including Big Falls. While portions are now contained by dams, the Battenkill River, on Easton’s northern boundary, influenced historic settlement (early mills) and the river corridor contributes to Easton’s physical character. This was inclusive of the confluence of the Battenkill with the Hudson River on the Town’s northwest edge, north of the historic Village of Schuylerville which is situated on the Hudson’s opposite, west shore.

“On the Battenkill are three falls – the first at Greenwich; the second at Galesville, forty feet high; the third, half a mile below and west of Galesville, known as ‘Dionondahowa Falls’. The last is worthy of note, the stream falling seventy-five feet within a distance of three hundred. For forty or fifty rods above the falls the stream runs in a gently-descending rapid, curving to the right, and descending more rapidly as it nears the falls. It then suddenly narrows its channel, inclines to the left between rough walls of slate rock, and falls over four successive terraces, each narrower and higher than the preceding. The waters, now of creamy foam, here gather together, and entering a rocky gorge hurl themselves madly over the brink into the ‘Devil’s Caldron’. Now lashed to fury, beaten to spray, dashed hither and thither with resistless force, they sullenly pour forth over another fall of twelve or fifteen feet, and turning to the right flow through a dark ravine between high rocky banks on their way to the Hudson. The scenery at this point is beautiful and picturesque, and may well repay the tourist for a trip to view this wonderful manifestation of the power and masterly skill of Nature’s great Architect.”²



Viewsheds - Part of Easton’s historic, natural and agrarian charm must be measured in consideration of the many important viewsheds available across this community. There are a vast variety of locations affording quality scenic views that should be considered and practicably protected as planning and development arises.

² ‘History and Biography of Washington County and the Town of Queensbury, New York, 1894, available at: <https://archive.org/>

HOUSING CHOICES

Protect and enhance opportunities for existing and future residents of Easton to access diverse and affordable housing options.

Population and population changes can influence the economy and the life of the community. Moreover, examining the housing base, features of the supply and demand, and affordability of housing will assist in generating a profile of the community and planning for future development.

The guiding principle for Housing Choices, stated above, is to protect and enhance opportunities for existing and future residents of Easton to access diverse and affordable housing options.

GOALS & STRATEGIES FOR HOUSING CHOICES

The profiling that follows, provides a set of goals and strategies for advancing Housing Choices. These specific goals and strategies will advance housing choices and the smart and sustainable achievement of these community planning vision. The Implementation Plan, integrates all goals and strategies, across all six plan elements and the schedule to provide further guidance on these goals and strategies.

Housing Choice Goal 1: Foster strategic growth and investment in the supply of housing to provide options for residents, protect and enhance the economic base, and grow sustainably and minimize impacts to agriculture.

- A. Collaborate with Washington County to identify rural housing choices and stimulate construction of a range of new housing opportunities that will strengthen community and economic development in Easton.
- B. Create standards that define how and when to enable or require Conservation/Cluster Subdivisions that provide for compatible compact housing.
- C. Promote walkable/bikeable design when new housing is proposed in northern parts of Town, taking advantage of nearby existing services.
- D. Create regulations for development of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) when there is adequate well and septic system capacity. Standards should require owner occupancy and establish primacy of the principal dwelling to minimize visual/ environmental impacts.
- E. Advance strategies that provide a range of housing options for seniors.
- F. Support the development of middle income housing in the Town.
- G. Collaborate with Washington County to secure grants and financial incentives that promote/facilitate home repairs.

- H. Consider short-term rental (STR) regulations and fees to guard against the loss of significant numbers of rental homes and ensure STRs are routinely inspected.
- I. Continue to support the availability of housing on large properties with agricultural operations, as a means to assist farmers and farm workers.

DEMOGRAPHIC & GROWTH TRENDS

The total population of Easton was 2,279 in 2020 (US Census). This represents a flat or slightly declining trend from 2010, with a slight decrease of approximately 60 persons from 2,340 at that time. The population density in 2020 based on this source was 40 people per square mile.

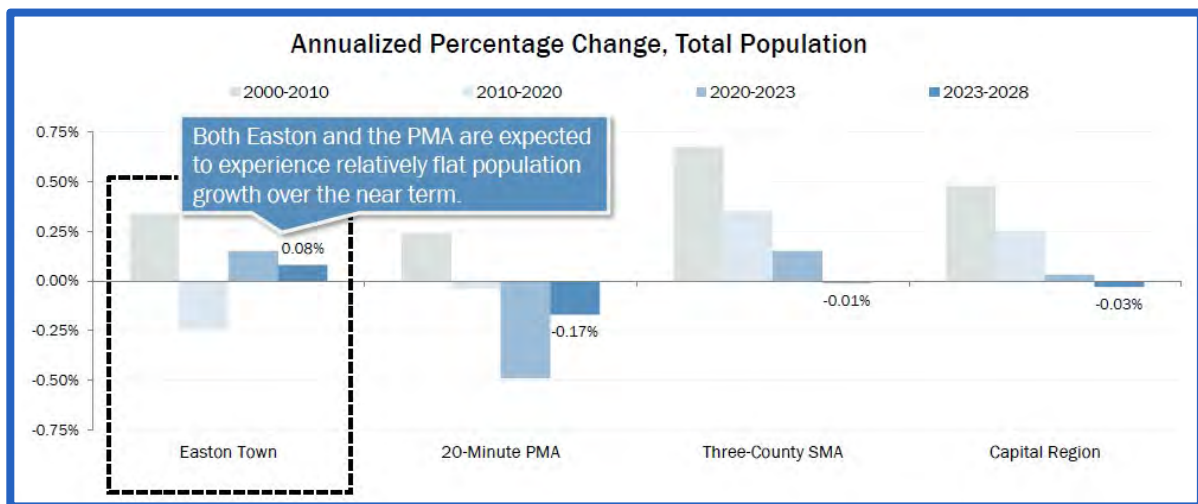


Figure 8: Annualized Percentage Change, Total Population³

The Town of Easton, between years 2000 – 2023, has seen slight variation in its total population. The Annualized Percentage Change graphic presents Easton’s Total Population, as well as that for overlapping broader geographies. Over this period, the Town, as depicted on the left side of the graphic, demonstrated low but dynamic population change. The Town saw a slight increase in population of just over 0.25% between 2000 and 2010, a decrease of 0.25% the following decade (between 2010 to 2020), and between 2020 and 2023, there was a slight estimated increase of 0.16%. Based on an estimate for 2023-2028, Easton’s population should rise slightly, by 0.08% (which would result in estimated growth of roughly 10 persons).

Slightly more males (51.6%) than females (48.4%) resided in Easton as of the last Census. This is a break from what is considered the norm for more rural American communities, with typically higher percentages of females within the total population.

³ 4Ward Planning. (2024). Easton Comprehensive Plan, Demographic & Economic Profile, p-10.

At the point of the last ten-year (decennial) census, in 2020, a majority of the population, 92.6%, identified as White, while 3.8% identified as Hispanic. The race distribution of householders in both family and nonfamily households indicates that the majority of householders were white alone, with other racial groups making up small, statistically insignificant percentages.

The median age of people residing in the community is estimated as 47.6 years in 2020, per the five-year average presented in the American Community Survey. The Town's population is relatively older compared with the population surrounding Easton within a three-county area encapsulating Rensselaer, Saratoga and Washington Counties.

Based on population age distributions in 2023, using 10 year aggregations, the largest age group in Easton covered persons aged 55-64 (15.3%). The group aged 65-75 was 14.0% of population.⁴

Examining the age pyramid showing female (white bar categories) versus male (blue bars) shows a skew, with larger percentages of population in five year age categories that represent people that are older, between the ages 50 and 79. This means there are smaller percentages of adults, such as who head late-stage families, in the 45 to 54 years range, and early stage families in the 35 to 44 years range.

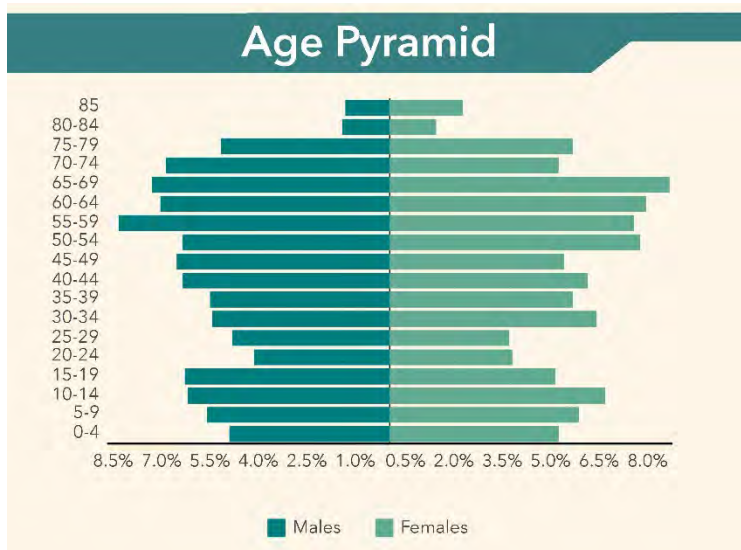


Figure 9: Age Pyramid

The age brackets with low percentage of population were individuals aged 0-4 and 85 and older, both at combined female and male rates 4.4% and 2.2% respectively.

The lines in the pyramid with triangles show the comparable rates in Washington County. Easton has a slightly older population, which is 65 years or older. It is notable that there are more children in Easton, within the Infant through age 19 age categories when compared with the rates in Washington County.

⁴ 4ward Planning (2024), Easton Comprehensive Plan, Demographic & Economic Profile, p-12.

The average household size was 2.39 people. The data on household type reveals that married couple households accounted for the highest percentage at 54.8%, followed by male householders with spouse/partner, female householders with spouse/partner, and cohabitating couple households. There were also a significant number of single-person households, which accounted for 24.9% of the total households.

Population relationship data showed that the majority of households were composed of a householder and a biological child, while nonrelatives accounted for 3.3% of the population. Household age distribution data reveals that the age group with the highest percentage of householders was those aged 65-74, accounting for 19% of the total households.

According to the 2017-2021 American Community Survey 23.2% of the population aged 3+ years were enrolled in school. The standard households in Easton were families, making up 71.2% of households. The majority of these were 2-person families.

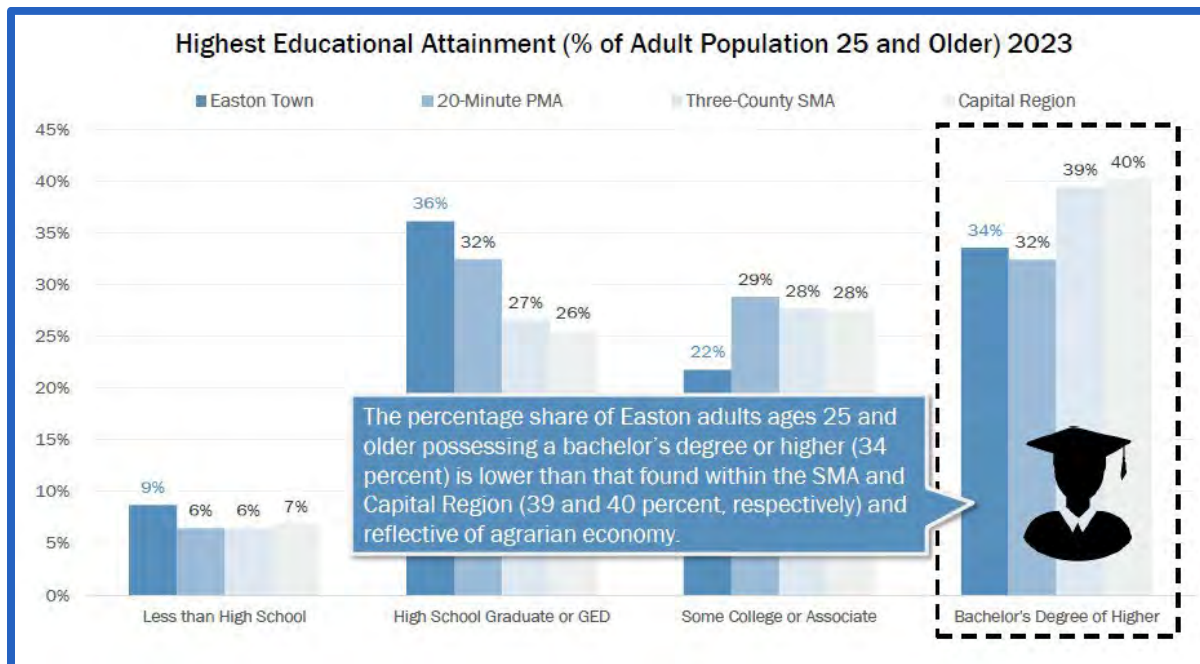


Figure 10: Highest Educational Attainment⁵

The Educational Attainment Figure displays the highest educational achievement of Easton's population. Only 9% of the population had less than a High School education. The majority of the population, 36%, has graduated High School or completed a GED. 22% have attained some college or Associates Degree and 34%, the second largest population percentage of Easton, have attained a Bachelor's Degree or Higher. The higher percentage of those with Bachelor's Degree

⁵ 4Ward Planning. (2024). Easton Comprehensive Plan, Demographic & Economic Profile, p-14.

or Higher in surrounding areas could be in part due to their relative proximity to Colleges and Universities.

HOUSING

Easton's housing pattern is embodied by the historic farmhouses and the settlements which arise in locations such as crossroads, small hamlet areas, along road corridors, and in the northern part of Town around the Village of Greenwich. By virtue of many houses in this community being over 50 years old, there is significant architectural character in these structures with facades that echo the Town's rich heritage. These structures and residential land-use patterns influence Easton's identity.

As of the 2023 American Community Survey 5-year estimate, the Town of Easton's population was 2,352 people.⁶ Those people were spread across 719 occupied structures, 544 of which were owner-occupied, while 175 were rented. As of 2021, the Town's housing market had seen an upswing with 22.2% more house closing in the first quarter than the previous year (Easton Courier). The Town's 854 non-vacant residential parcels make up 54.3% of the total 1,322 parcels in Town. They are primarily composed of dwellings with 3 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms.

Housing Cost Burden

As of 2023, 11% of renters in the Town of Easton spend at least 30% of their income on rental costs, including rent and utilities, which is generally considered rent-or housing cost burdened. For homeowners, 29% have at least 30% of their income tied up in home ownership costs. The share of renter-occupied households in Easton has been declining in recent years, while the share of owner-occupied households with mortgages has been increasing since 2019.

⁶ Census Reporter. (2023). Easton Town, Washington County, NY. <https://labergegroup.com/Easton/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/ACS-2021-Census-Reporter.pdf>

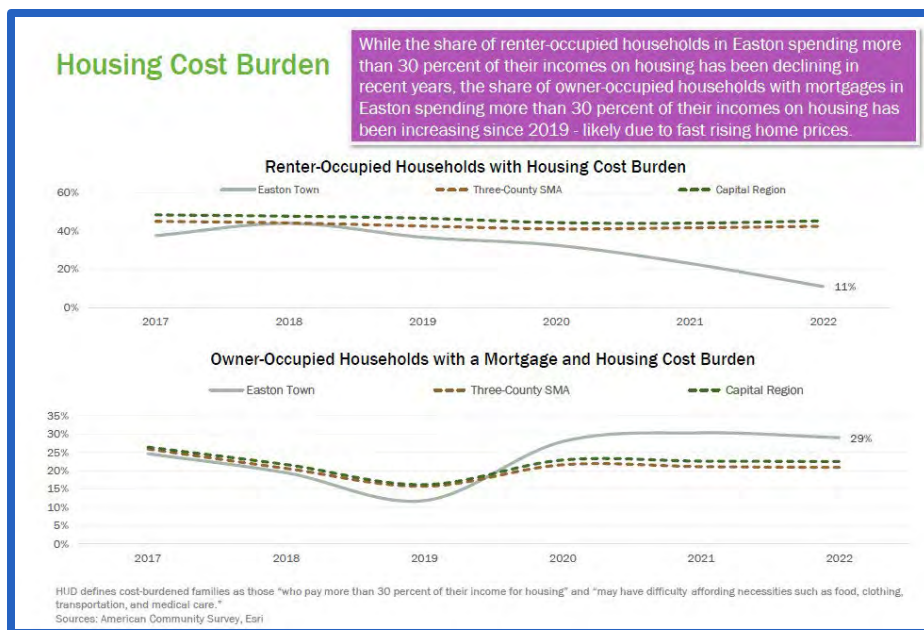


Figure 11: Housing Cost Burden

Housing Unit Size

Easton has relatively high shares of three- and four-bedroom units compared with other surrounding geographies analyzed (which is consistent with the pattern that is often evident in rural communities). However, given the increase in one- and two-person households in Easton, there is likely a growing mismatch in the housing demand versus existing stock.



Figure 12: Housing by Bedrooms, 2022⁷

⁷ 4Ward Planning. (2024). Easton Comprehensive Plan, Demographic & Economic Profile, p-24.

Housing by Year Built

The diverse housing stock ranges in property class types such as ranches, cottages, contemporary houses, and colonial-style homes. The common features of these properties include 2-story structures and a variety of construction materials such as wood, aluminum, and vinyl. The properties vary in age with the median year of construction being 1900.

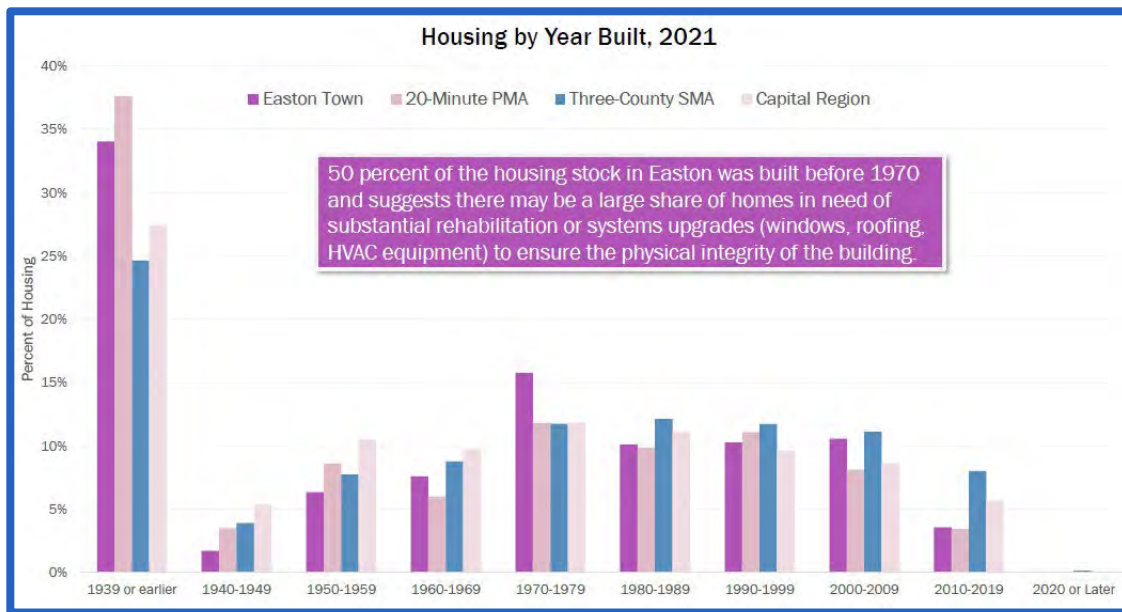


Figure 13: Housing by Year Built, 2021⁸

Housing Tenure

Housing Tenure relates to whether occupants own or rent their housing. The Town of Easton data shows 15-percent of Easton's housing stock is classified as renter-occupied, far below the renter-occupied shares of housing in the other broader overlapping geographic areas examined. Given that younger persons/ younger households may be challenged by the relatively high interest rates and home prices in the current economic environment, increasing the share of rental units in Easton could help attract a younger demographic and retain those who are an older demographic and may be aging out of large homes but desiring to stay in the community. Adding and retaining more households could contribute to the Town's (and Village's) economic vibrancy.

⁸ 4Ward Planning. (2024). Easton Comprehensive Plan, Demographic & Economic Profile, p-23.

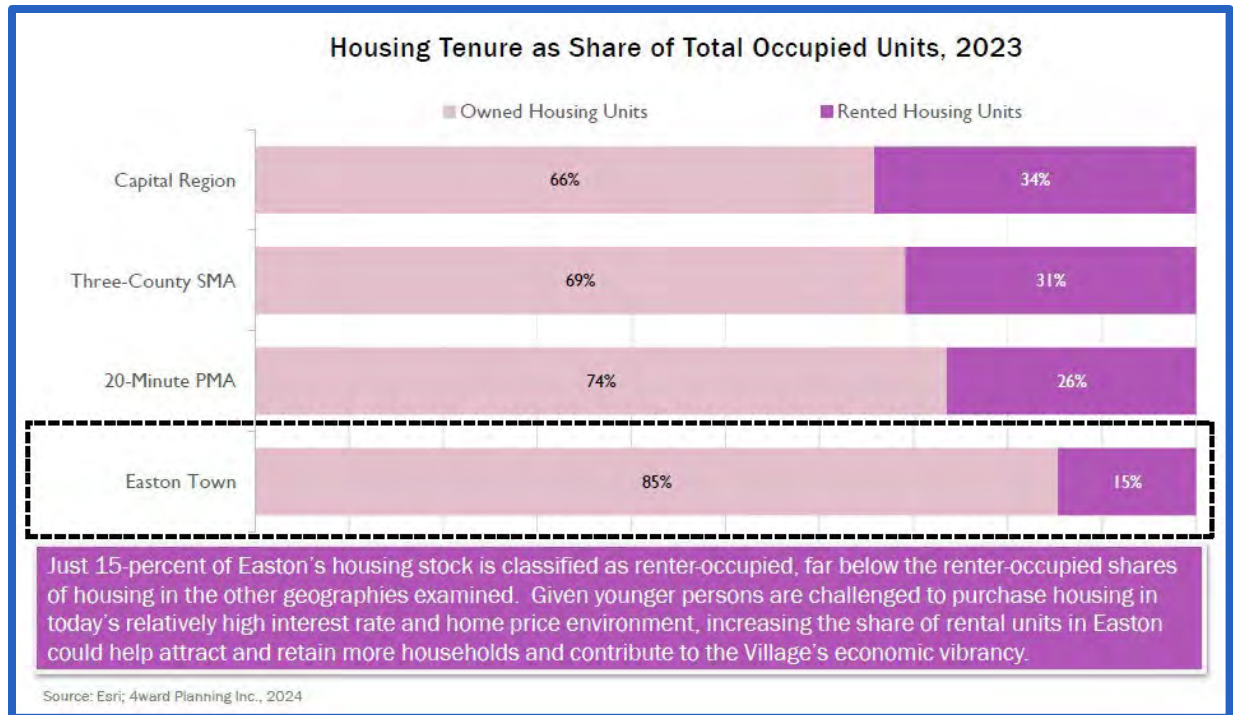


Figure 14: Housing Tenure

The majority of the housing stock consists of single-family residences. A full 86.8% of the housing is single-family. Another 11.9% of the housing inventory is within duplexes (4.8%), 3 to 4 unit buildings (5.4%) and 5 to 9 unit structures (1.3%). Mobile homes cover 1.7% of the inventory⁹.



⁹ 4Ward Planning. (2024). Easton Comprehensive Plan, Demographic & Economic Profile, p-21.

LAND USE

At its core, Easton is defined by its traditional agrarian land use pattern. The working, historic landscape is widely considered the Town's most valuable asset. Easton's general development pattern is demarcated by small historic hamlets and crossroads, that are set among orderly



and diversified agricultural fields, with State, County and Town roads connecting these locations over a low density street grid. Within this pattern, the physical setting is characterized by low rolling hills, small mountains, the Hudson River floodplain, and many east to west flowing tributaries, with wooded lands in between.

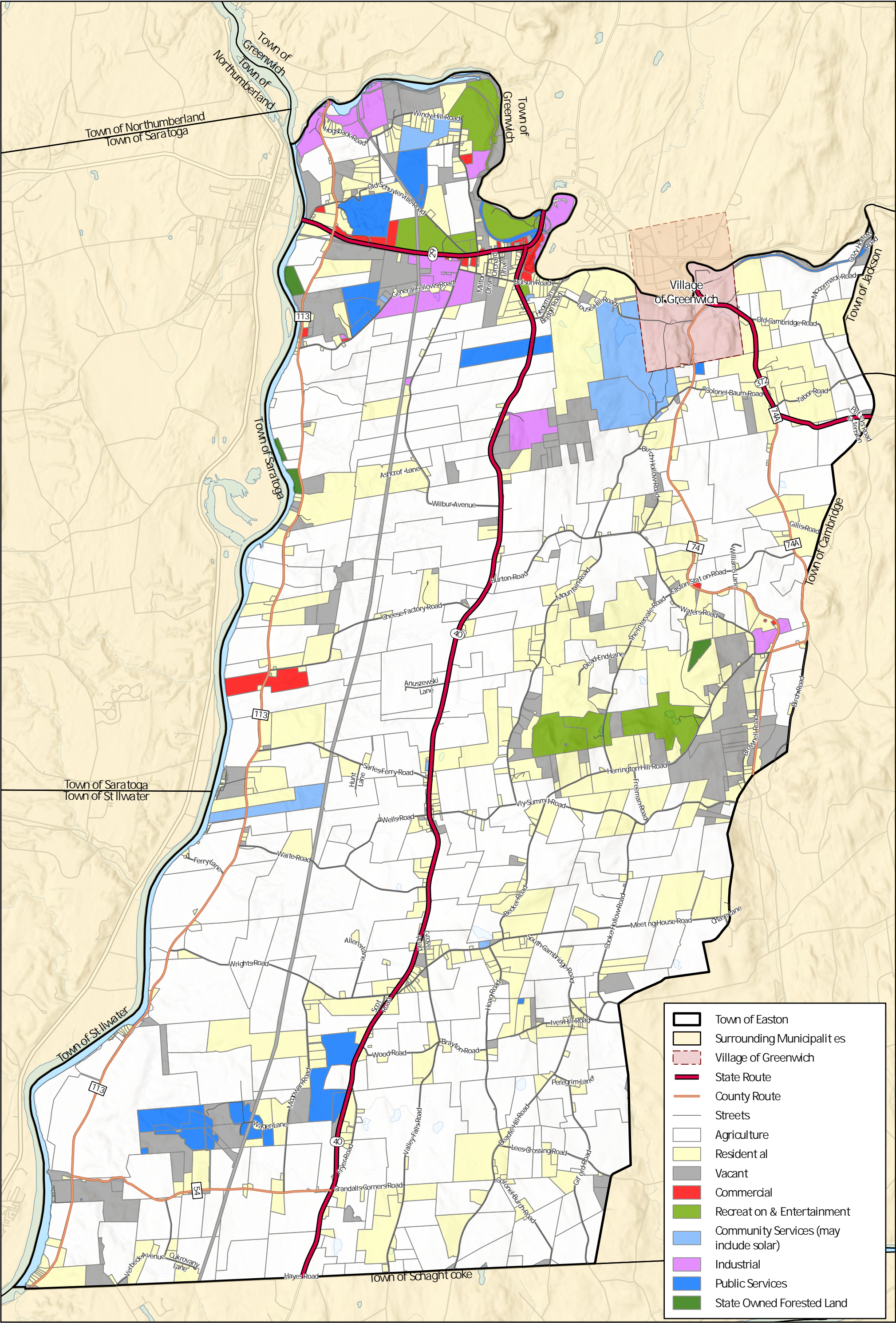
Existing Land Use

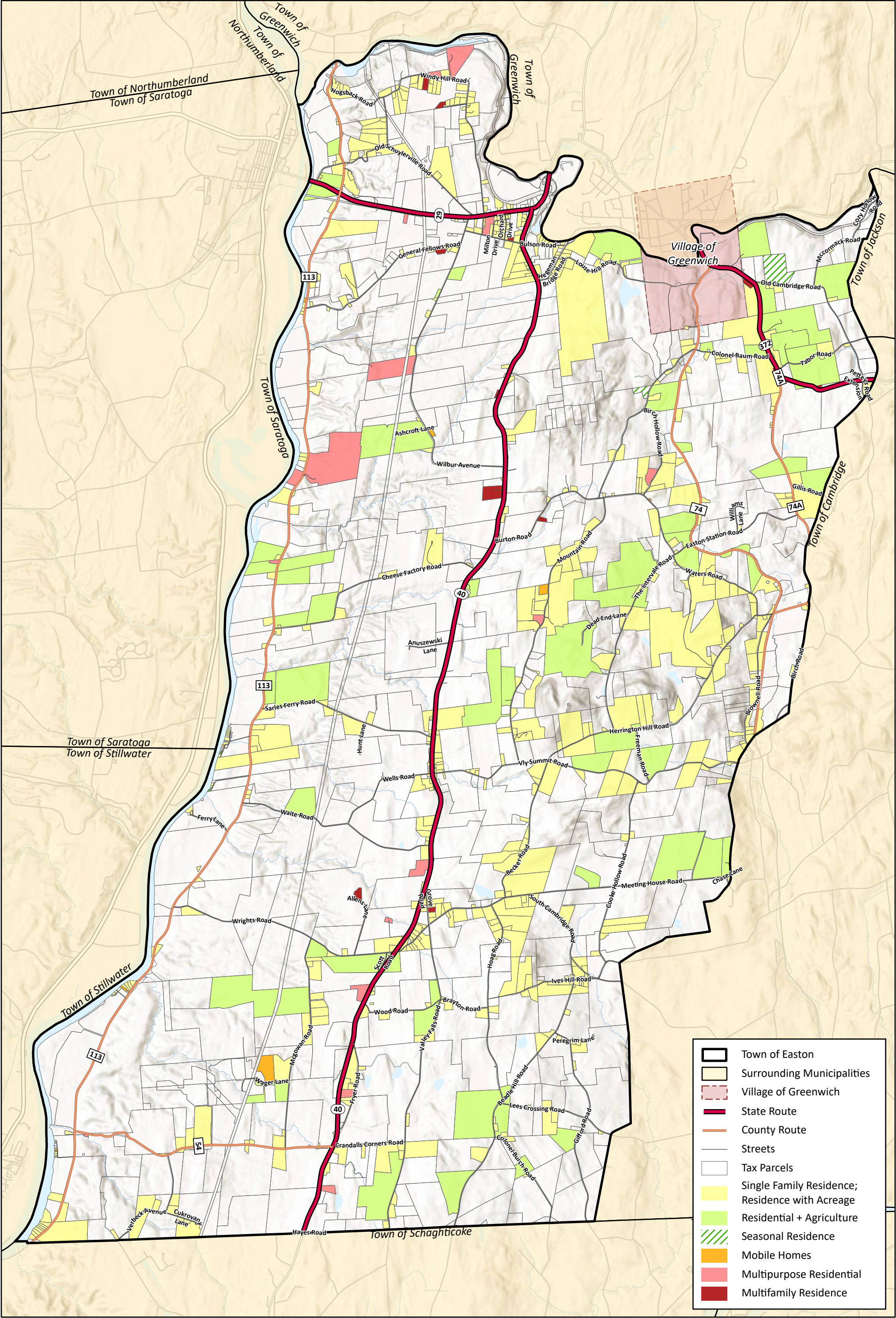
Considering land use, while most of Easton consists of agricultural development, open space and forests and lower-intensity residential development, there also exist some limited more intensive land uses. These include manufacturing facilities and utility-scale solar energy arrays. There are also some recreational land uses, including two golf courses and an alpine skiing center.

Table 1. Existing Land Uses in Easton.

Land Cover Categories	Acres
Agriculture	24,011.8
Residential	7,929.7
Vacant	3,121.4
Commercial/Industrial	3,737.9
Community/Public Services	1,496.2
Wild Forest	70.8
Total	40,367.8

Table 1 details current generalized land uses and their acreage based on an analysis of parcel configurations and assessment data. (See **Existing Land Use Map**). This table and the map illustrate how agriculture is the principal land use, with its 24,012 acres representing 59.5% of the total of 40,368 acres townwide. There are 7,930 acres used for residential purposes (about 20% of the total land base), and another roughly 3,700 acres (9%) involve commercial / industrial activities or uses.

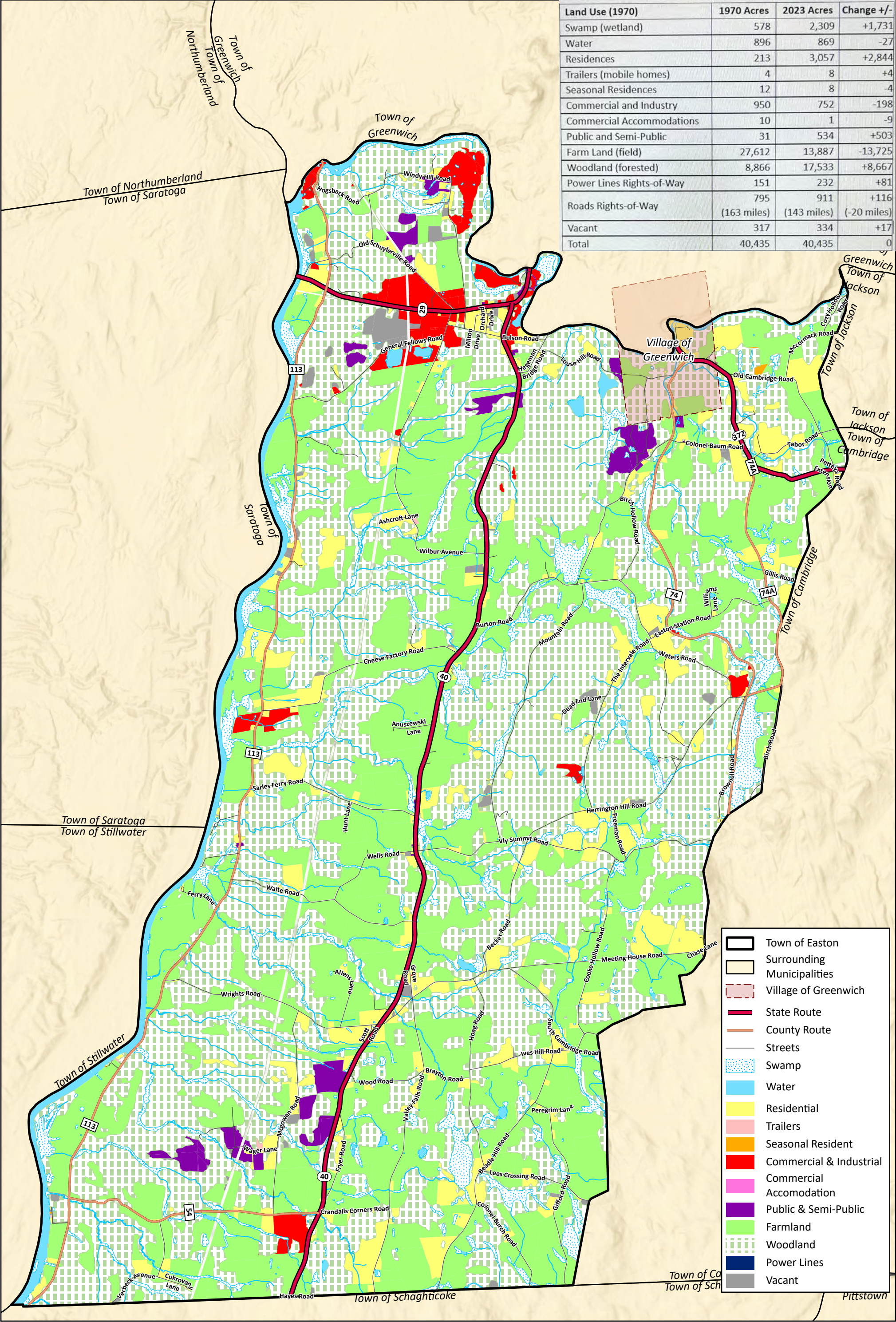




Generally, the **Existing Land Use Map** depicts parcels coded as Agriculture occurring in all areas of the community, with this being the dominant land use. One exception is around and especially north of Route 29 where there are a variety of uses, including: Vacant, Industrial, Recreation and Entertainment, Public Services, Agriculture, Residential, as well as some Community Services and Commercial. Residential uses occur in all areas of the community, but there is a noticeably higher concentration of parcels coded as a residential land use east of Route 40.

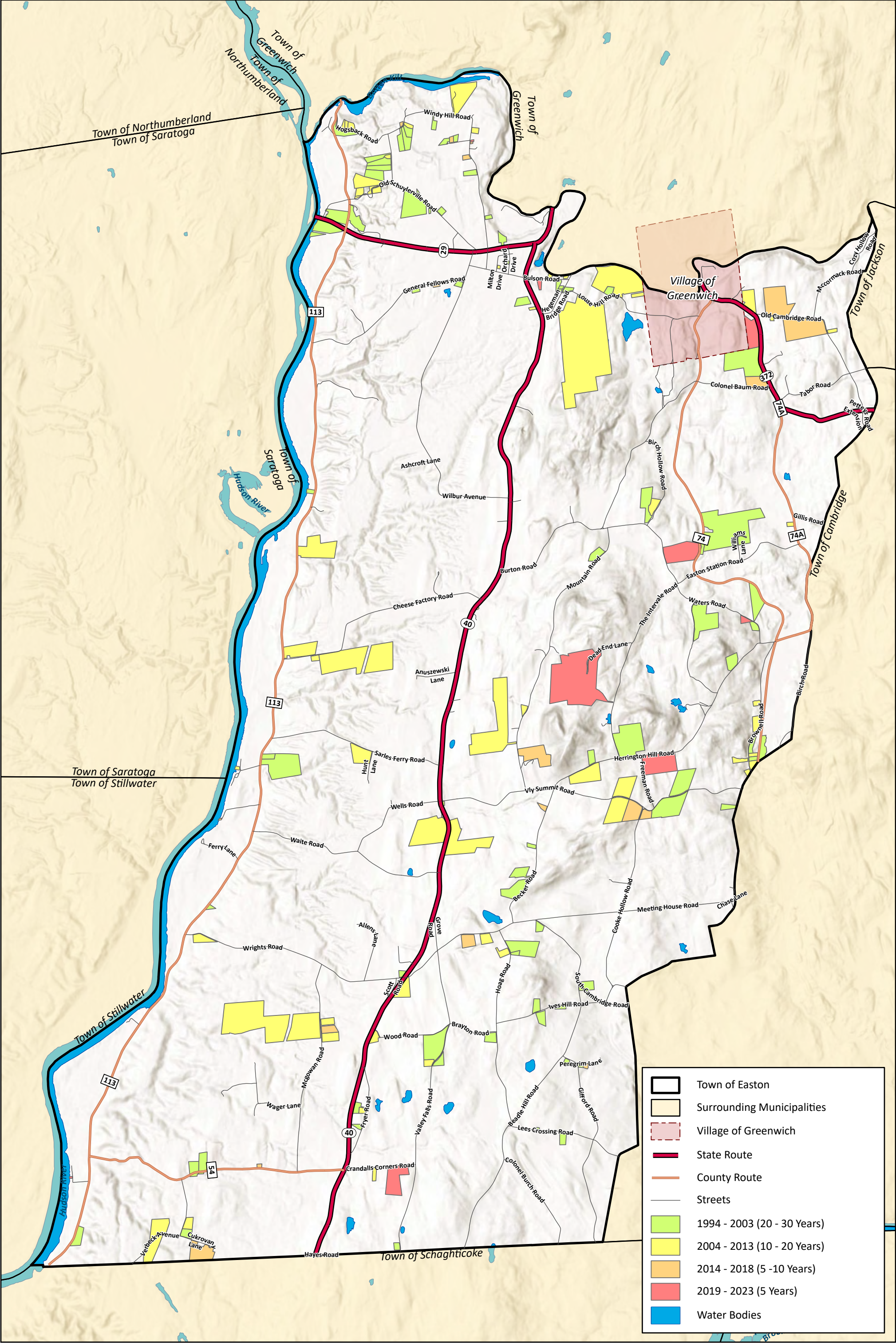
The **Residential Land Use Map** shows where the subset of residential parcels are located and what general type of land use occurs when there is some type of housing on a parcel. These same land use codes can sometimes be used to identify what general housing types there are on a property. By far the most prevalent housing type is single family homes. Many of these parcels with single family homes involve rural residences with acreage, which per New York State assessment data is code 240, comprising a year-round residence with at least 10 acres of land. There are also many agricultural properties that contain residences. Within Easton there are some multi-purpose residential structures, and a few mobile homes and multifamily residence properties.

The residential pattern of land use appears to show a sizable number of residential properties where it may be possible to add a second housing structure based on the relatively large general lot sizes. Factors like lot size and lot use may be considerations when assessing the potential to create housing options that involve accessory dwelling units or two housing structures on a lot.



Land Use (1970)	1970 Acres	2023 Acres	Change +/-
Swamp (wetland)	578	2,309	+1,731
Water	896	869	-27
Residences	213	3,057	+2,844
Trailers (mobile homes)	4	8	+4
Seasonal Residences	12	8	-4
Commercial and Industry	950	752	-198
Commercial Accommodations	10	1	-9
Public and Semi-Public	31	534	+503
Farm Land (field)	27,612	13,887	-13,725
Woodland (forested)	8,866	17,533	+8,667
Power Lines Rights-of-Way	151	232	+81
Roads Rights-of-Way	795 (163 miles)	911 (143 miles)	+116 (-20 miles)
Vacant	317	334	+17
Total	40,435	40,435	0





Land Use Change In Easton

As development occurs in Easton, it is important to consider whether there is potential for physical changes that can influence negative environmental or economic impacts. Examples of undesirable effects could be associated with increased building on highly fertile lands, fragmentation and isolation of fertile lands, or increases in levels or categories of land uses, particularly single family housing, which can influence disproportionate or hard to manage increases in the costs of supplying public services. Since agriculture is a dominant and unique land use in Easton, there is examination of changes in land use as part of considering whether and how growth may influence the sustainability of farming and as part of considering how development patterns relate to efforts to facilitate smart growth.

Table 2. Land Use Change in Easton

Land Use Categories (1970)	1970 Acres	2023 Acres	Change +/-
Swamp (wetland)	578	2,309	+1,731
Water	896	869	-27
Residences	213	3,057	+2,844
Trailers (mobile homes)	4	8	+4
Seasonal Residences	12	8	-4
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Vacant	317	334	+17
Total	40,435	40,435	0

The **Land Use in 2023 Using 1970 Classifications Map** depicts current generalized land use by utilizing the same coding techniques that were applied in 1970, when the prior comprehensive plan was produced, and applying them to the current period. By developing data on current land use based on classifications that were utilized in 1970, it is possible to compare land use at these two different points in time.

Although agriculture remains the dominant land use in Easton, a closer look at the information for since 1970 shows an important change that has taken place over the past few decades (See Table

2). The number of acres in residential use in 1970 was 213 acres; however, by 2023, it was 3,057 acres. This represents a 2,844% increase in acreage devoted to residential use. While not all of the data depicted in the Table 2 compares ‘apples to apples’, as land classifications applied in 1970 did not follow lot lines, it does show an significant increase in residential uses acreages¹⁰.

Table 2 shows that compared with 1970 there has been a loss of 198 acres of land devoted to commercial and industrial uses. This may in-part be based on methodology, but while Washington County has a significant industrial economic base compared with surrounding counties, it may be partly emblematic of consistent trends for decreases in industry all around the region and the U.S.

Housing Growth

There is a strong case for creating an adequate range of housing opportunities and choices in Easton, so it is advantageous to consider the characteristic of housing change that has occurred.

The **Homes Built in Last 30 Years Map** shows the spatial layout of housing constructed since roughly 1991. When growth has occurred, it has more often been in northern, and to an extent northeastern parts of Town. It appears that substantial portions of all new housing units in Easton were built in the vicinity of the Village of Greenwich and straddling and especially north of NYS Route 29.

Table 3. Homes Built in Last 20 Years in Easton.

Number of Homes	Year Built
9 Homes	Within Last 5 Years
18 Homes	5-10 Years Ago
53 Homes	10-20 Years Ago

Considering the pace of new housing construction for a shorter period, over the last 20 years, it appears that housing growth in recent years has slowed somewhat compared with the earlier comparison period (see Table 3). Tax data analysis indicates that in last 20 years, between 2001 and 2021, 80 new homes were built. The majority of those houses were built 10 to 20 years ago. In the five years between 2017 and 2021, nine new homes were built.

Based on US Census data, which provides another source of comparison on housing stock growth, it appears that the increase in new housing units was slightly greater than in Table 3, with 84 new units. In year 2000, there were 953 homes in Easton and in 2010 there were 1,022 homes. This means there were 69 new housing units between 2000 and 2010, or a 7.2% increase over that decade. If an ideal target rate for new housing construction is defined as 0.5% per year (or

¹⁰ There was not a change in the amounts of wetlands; rather, methodology has changed.

five tenths of one percent per year), then from 2000 to 2010 this rate was exceeded at 0.72% per annum.

Also according to the US Census data, in 2020, there were 1,037 homes, equating to growth since 2010 by 15 units. This means that between 2010 and 2020 there was a 1.5% increase over 2010 levels, and an 8.8% increase since 2000. From 2010 to 2020 this ten year rate of 1.5% translates into an annual housing growth rate of 0.15% per annum, which would be less than a potential one year target rate of 0.5%. According to the Town Building Inspector, 12 new homes were built in the 5-years between 2020 and 2024. This means a similar rate of new housing construction has continued¹¹.

The location of new residential homes has implications for agriculture. It is well documented within the research base that fragmentation of farmland and increased, low density residential land uses can impact farm viability and the overall sustainability of the agricultural sector. There is substantial discussion about how residential land use change influences agriculture under 'Working Lands' in the 'Living Environment' portion of this document.

Besides the risks to agriculture from unfocused patterns of housing growth, it is important to consider whether or how residential development is influencing other aspects of the community's economic base. Based on the rates of new housing construction over the last 15 years, it appears there has been a relatively slow rate of adding new housing to the existing supply. This can mean there is a low rate of replacing older homes, such as which could be near the end of their useful life depending on factors such as but not limited to their age and the state of physical upkeep over time. If multiple housing units cease to be occupied due to factors such as wear, this would influence a lower rate of replacement of housing stock, which could influence housing demand.

¹¹ Per analysis supplied on March 30, 2025.

LIVING ENVIRONMENT

Safeguard the long-term viability of the Town’s natural resources and open spaces for future generations, including its sensitive environmental areas, agricultural lands, and scenic resources.

The Living Environment of the Town of Easton covers the community’s natural systems. This is structured to include an examination of farming’s major influence on the community’s environment and its development patterns. The large number of farms in Easton is a major element of the community’s land base and its open and rural character. Most of the Easton Community Survey respondents felt that agriculture was very important— expressing a positive perception of farming and showing support for local agricultural products.

GOALS & STRATEGIES FOR EASTON’S LIVING ENVIRONMENT

Living Environment Goal 1: Protect the Town’s natural and environmental resources.

- A. Protect stream corridors and wetlands to provide community resiliency against intense rains storms and floods. Consider a horizontal setback from the mean high water, top of bank, or edge of any wetland or stream, while detailing the allowable exceptions for development within such setbacks.
- B. Foster public access to the Hudson and the Battenkill River corridors for fishing, boating, and general recreation, including nature viewing.

Living Environment Goal 2: Improve local development policies and processes to protect and preserve agriculture while achieving compatible growth.

- A. Adjust subdivision requirements to enable additional housing lots on parent parcels, providing for the ability to increase limited housing while protecting farmland.
- B. Promote and participate in a Washington County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan update.
- C. Formulate standards for quantifying, assessing, and analyzing potential development impacts in the Agriculture Critical Environmental Area (CEA). These could include criteria for defining how and where small-scale incompatible growth may be allowed, while also identifying mitigation that would protect the primacy of agriculture.
- D. Create a Town web page that provides information on programs and financing for agricultural land owners.
- E. Periodically assess which local agricultural and economic development strategies to focus on—consistent with the County’s Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan.
- F. Consider drafting zoning to achieve desired land use patterns.

Living Environment Goal 3: Foster and invest in parks and recreational offerings to support a healthy community, improve quality of life for residents, and encourage tourism.

- A. Develop a Town recreation master plan.
- B. Define community desires for a Town Park, establish alternative site requirements (sports field(s), court(s), playground, a pavilion, etc.) and form a community partnership to advance programming.
- C. Work with farmers and landowners to create easements that enable trails and interconnections (as an aid for hunting, fishing, hiking, snowmobiling access).

NATURAL SYSTEMS

The process of land use planning requires a thorough understanding of natural features of the community. By reviewing the Town and its physical setting and ecological resource base it will help to ensure development actions fit with these features and are practically arranged so they do not result in potential undesired impacts. The Natural Systems section of this Plan describes the Town's natural resources, including, but not limited to: water resources, topography, slope, soils, and geology. Refer to the **Natural Resources Map** for additional information.

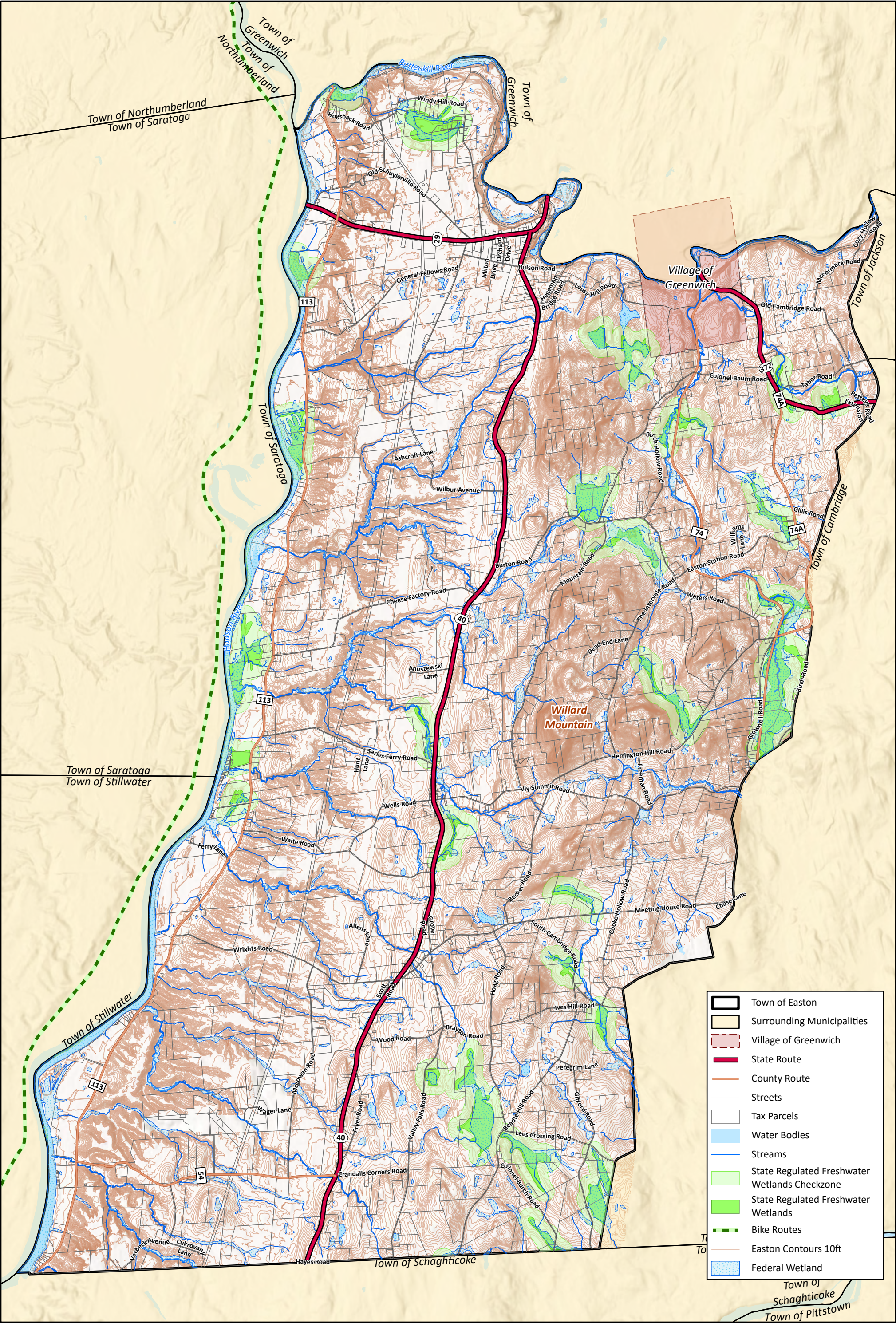
Topography

The Town of Easton's landscape is comprised of four major topographic sections. The first consists of high elevation mountains in the central east side of the Town. This area includes major mountain peaks, including: Whelden Mountain (368 m), Herrington Hill (369 m), Willard Mountain (423 m), Becker Hill (333 m), and Beadie Hill (300 m).

The second topographic section runs along NY 40 in the northeastern and the southeastern part of Easton. This section can be grouped as a slope with some plateau sections. In addition, major agricultural land can be found along NY 40 as the mild slopes provide suitable land for farming. This section comprises a high elevation of around 610m and a low elevation of around 350m spread over a large area of land.

The third section contains the northwest part of Town between Battenkill River and the Hudson River, a flat plateau. This is the most densely developed area in the Town and includes the site of the Washington Fairgrounds.

The Fourth section is the southwest and mid-west part of Easton between the Hudson River and NY 40. This area includes steep slopes going westward towards the Hudson River as well as many streams draining into the Hudson.



Slopes

The terrain is rugged along and within the ridgelines and areas with the highest elevations. These ridgelines with steep slopes extend from an area adjacent to Louse Hill Road in the north and southerly encompassing Whelden and Willard Mountains, Herr and Becker Hills, and generally terminating on the north side of Ives Hill Road on Beadle Hill. Additional steep slopes are found to the west of State Route 40. In these locations, there are steep grades rising beside streams where the channels have eroded and cut deeper into the ground.



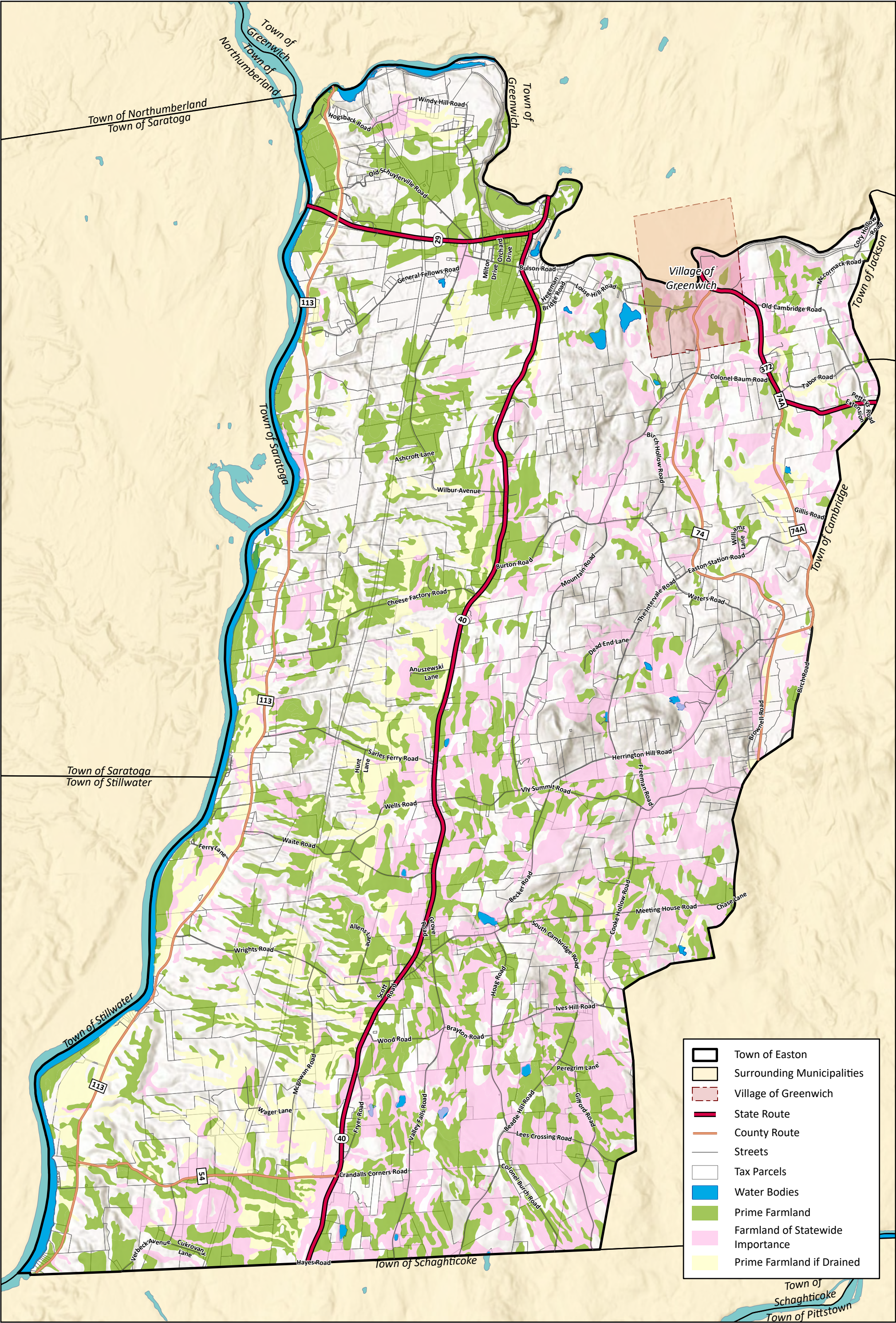
Soils

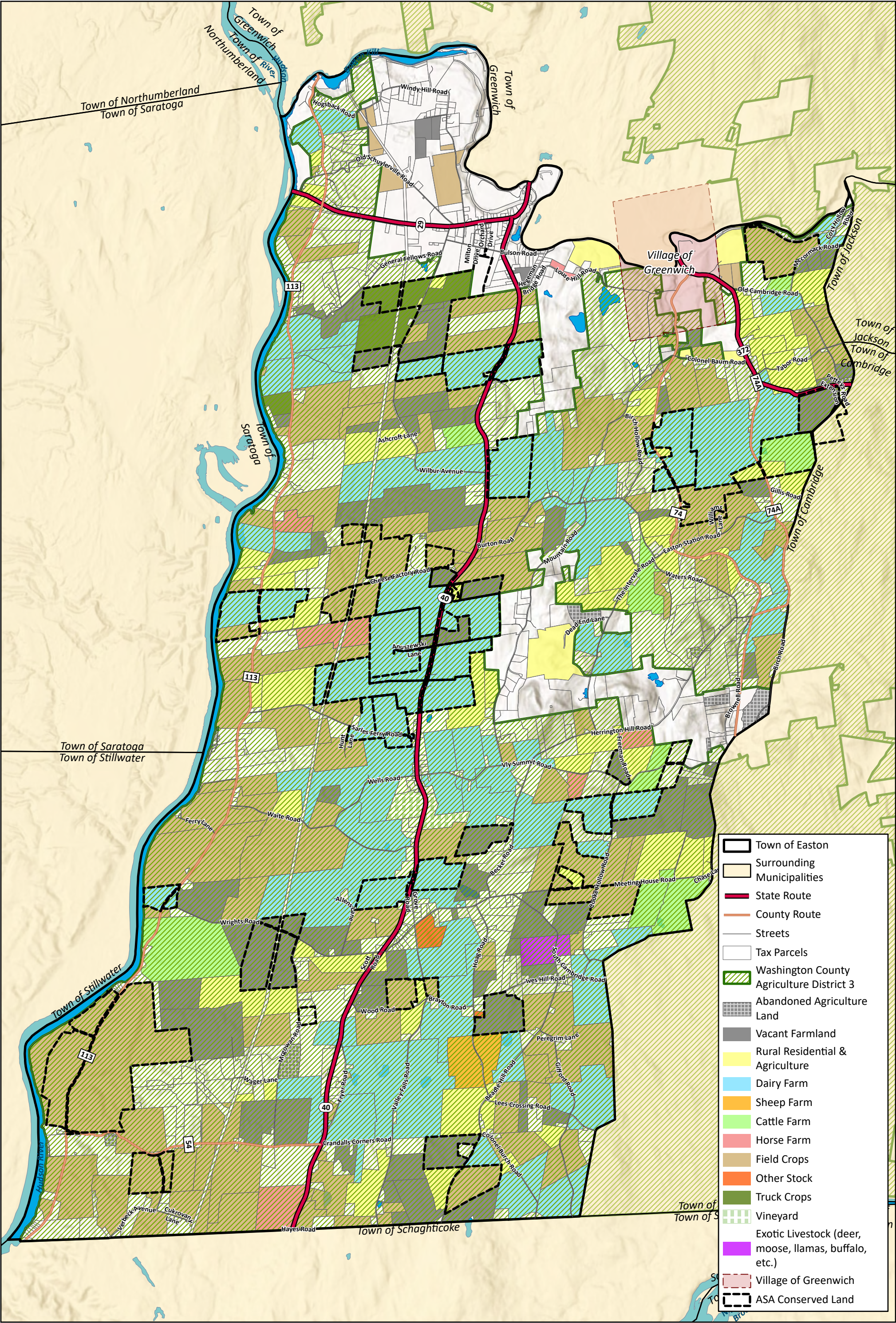
In the Town of Easton, there are five types of surficial deposits, meaning relatively young geological deposits on the lands surface which are composed of poorly consolidated clay, silt, sand and gravel-sized particles, are produced chiefly through erosion, from flowing water, wind, and ice. The five primary soil types, and their percentages are:

- HWE: Hudson and Vergennes soils, steep and very steep, 10.46 % of total soils in Easton;
- Bnb: Bernardston gravelly silt loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes, 8.36 % of total soils in Easton;
- HvB: Hudson silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes, 6.28% of total soils in Easton;
- BnC: Bernardston gravelly silt loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes, 6.21%;
- NBF: Nassau-Rock outcrop association, steep and very steep, 5.10% of total soils; and
- RhA: Rhinebeck silt loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, 4.77% of total soils in Easton.

The Vergennes series consist of very deep, moderately well-drained soils on glacial lake plains. They are formed in calcareous estuarine and glaciolacustrine clays. The Hudson series consists of very deep, moderately well-drained soils formed in clayey and silty lacustrine sediments. They are nearly level through very steep soils on convex lake plains, on rolling hilly moraines, and on dissected lower valley side slopes ranging from 0 to 60 percent. Hudson and Vergennes soils are present in the western part of the Town around the streams that drain to the Hudson River.

The Bernardston series consists of very deep, well-drained soils formed in till derived mainly from dark gray phyllite, slate, or schist. The soils are moderately deep to dense till. They are nearly level to very steep soils on uplands. Slope ranges from 0 to 50 percent. Bernardston gravelly silt loam soils are concentrated in the southwest part of the Town.





The Rhinebeck series consists of very deep, somewhat poorly drained soils formed in clayey lacustrine sediments. They are on glacial lake plains and uplands mantled with lake sediments. Slope ranges from 0 to 15 percent.

Easton's soils are well adapted to agriculture with the eastern half of Town being predominately slate loams, its western half composed of silty-clay loam soils, river bottom soils along the Hudson, and well drain sands and gravels at the confluence of the Battenkill and Hudson.

[Agricultural/ Farmland Soils Resources](#)

A highly important agricultural resource is the soils base. Given the dominance of farming in Easton, this section delves into how the living environment is influenced by soils features, since soils support plant life with nutrients, water, and other characteristics. Within New York State, farmland soils are defined and organized into three main categories: Prime Farmland Soils; Prime Farmland Soils if Drained; and Soils of Statewide Importance. Following are definitions of these three categories of farmland soils, accompanied by descriptions of soil coverages in Easton.

Prime Farmland - 'Prime Farmland Soils', as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber and oilseed crops, and is available for these uses. It can be cultivated land, pastureland, forestland, or other land, but it is not urban or developed land, or waterbodies. Prime farmland soils have the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to economically produce sustained high yields of crops when proper management, including water management, and acceptable farming methods are applied.

There are 9,434 acres of "prime farmland soil" in the Town (See Table 4 and **Agriculture Soils Map**). In Easton, prime farmland soils can be found throughout Town, with many small and medium sized concentrations, primarily west of Route 40 and in the southern half of the Town south of Vly Summit Road. In general, prime farmland has an adequate and dependable supply of moisture from precipitation or irrigation, a favorable temperature and growing season, acceptable acidity or alkalinity, an acceptable salt and sodium content, and few or no rocks. For prime farmland soil, the water supply is dependable and of adequate quality. Prime farmland is permeable to water and air. It is not excessively erodible or saturated with water for long periods, and it is not frequently flooded during the growing season or is protected from flooding. Prime farmland soil is of major importance in meeting short- and long-range needs for food and fiber.

A subclass of prime farmland is "prime if drained." These are fields that have been improved with tiles or other drainage. Within Easton, there are an additional 2,932 acres of land considered prime farmland soils if drained. Typically this type of soils category is evident west of Route 40, especially east of the north-south running utility line corridor. There are also concentrations of prime farmland soils if drained on the west side of Route 113.

Farmland Soils of Statewide Importance - Land that does not meet the criteria for prime farmland is considered to be "farmland of statewide importance" for the production of food, feed, fiber, forage, and oilseed crops. There are approximately 8,440 acres of soils of statewide importance in Easton. The criteria for defining and delineating farmland of statewide importance are determined by New York State. Generally, this land includes areas of soils that nearly meet the requirements for prime farmland and that economically produce high yields of crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods. Some areas may produce as high a yield as prime farmland if conditions are favorable. The most extensive Farmland of State Importance coverages are in the southeast quadrant of the Town.

Actively farmed land, shown on the **Farm Type and Agricultural District Map**, can be found throughout the Town on Prime, Prime if Drained, and Statewide Important Soils. These three categories of soils comprise over half (51.5%) of the Town land area. Like the soil resources, farms are not concentrated in only one area but are found throughout the Town. In the larger context of the County and region, Easton itself contains a concentrated and critical mass of farmland. However, farmlands are fragmented by residential land uses.

Table 4. Soil Type and Acreage in Easton

Soil Type	Area (Acres)
Prime farmland	9,433.69
Farmland of statewide importance	8,439.93
Prime farmland if drained	2,931.87
Not prime farmland	19,600.91
TOTAL	40,406.40
Note: Based on analytical methods, soils and land use coverages do not correlate.	

Water Resources

The Town's primary surface water resources include the Hudson River and the Battenkill River. They provide several amenities to the Town. These include but are not limited to recreation; aesthetics; wildlife; and aquifer recharge.

Natural water resources including rivers, streams, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), and National Wetland Inventory (NWI) wetlands are shown on the **Natural & Environmental Resources Map**.

Many tributary streams and brooks drain the Town watersheds. These streams and brooks contribute to the groundwater aquifers found in the unconsolidated deposits in the valley.

Ultimately, the Town's watershed feeds the Hudson River thereby affecting the quality and quantity of water in that river and associated ecosystems.

Besides the Hudson and Battenkill Rivers, there are numerous water bodies within the Town. Generally, these are comprised of small ponds and streams that mostly flow in an westerly direction towards the Hudson River, although streams in the northeast flow towards the Battenkill, and on the eastern side of Town they often start out by flowing south.

Some higher order streams include, in alphabetical order:

- Ensign Brook;
- Flatley Brook;
- Fly Creek;
- Fryer Brook;
- Kidney Creek;
- Macauley Brook;
- Skylar Brook; and
- Whiteside Creek.

The Town's water supply is generally derived from groundwater resources developed in outlying sub-aquifers. These resources are obtained from dug, driven, and drilled wells as well as springs occurring at or near the surface. The principal aquifer system for the Town, having potential as a municipal water source, is the river-bottom land of the Hudson River.

Floodplain

Under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the following Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) panels cover the Town of Easton:

- 3608870001C, map effective date 5/3/2000;
- 3612240005C, effective 11/20/1991;
- 3612240010B, effective 7/2/1986; and
- 3612240015B, effective 7/3/1986¹².

¹² FEMA National Flood Hazard Layer Viewer, July 5, 2024:
www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8b0adb51996444d4879338b5529aa9cd

Based on a consultation with these printed floodplain map panels for this community, the pattern of floodplains is generally as follows:

- There are extensive areas of Zone A adjacent to the Hudson River. Zone A represents areas with a one percent chance of flooding. These are usually west of County Route 113 (River Road).
- There are occasionally small slivers of Zone B immediately adjacent to the Hudson River Zone A floodplains. Zone B represents areas of moderate flood hazard, usually the area between the limits of the 100-year and 500-year flood. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, these areas are used to designate floodplains of lesser hazards, such as where there may be shallow flooding with average depths of less than 1 foot, or drainage areas less than one square mile.
- There is a linear Zone A floodplain corridor along Fly Creek and surrounding the large wetland complex in Archdale in the vicinity of Brownell Road and Birch Road.
- There are Zone A's along the stream corridors that flow within the northeast quadrant of Town. These streams flow northerly towards Greenwich and eventually into the Battenkill River.

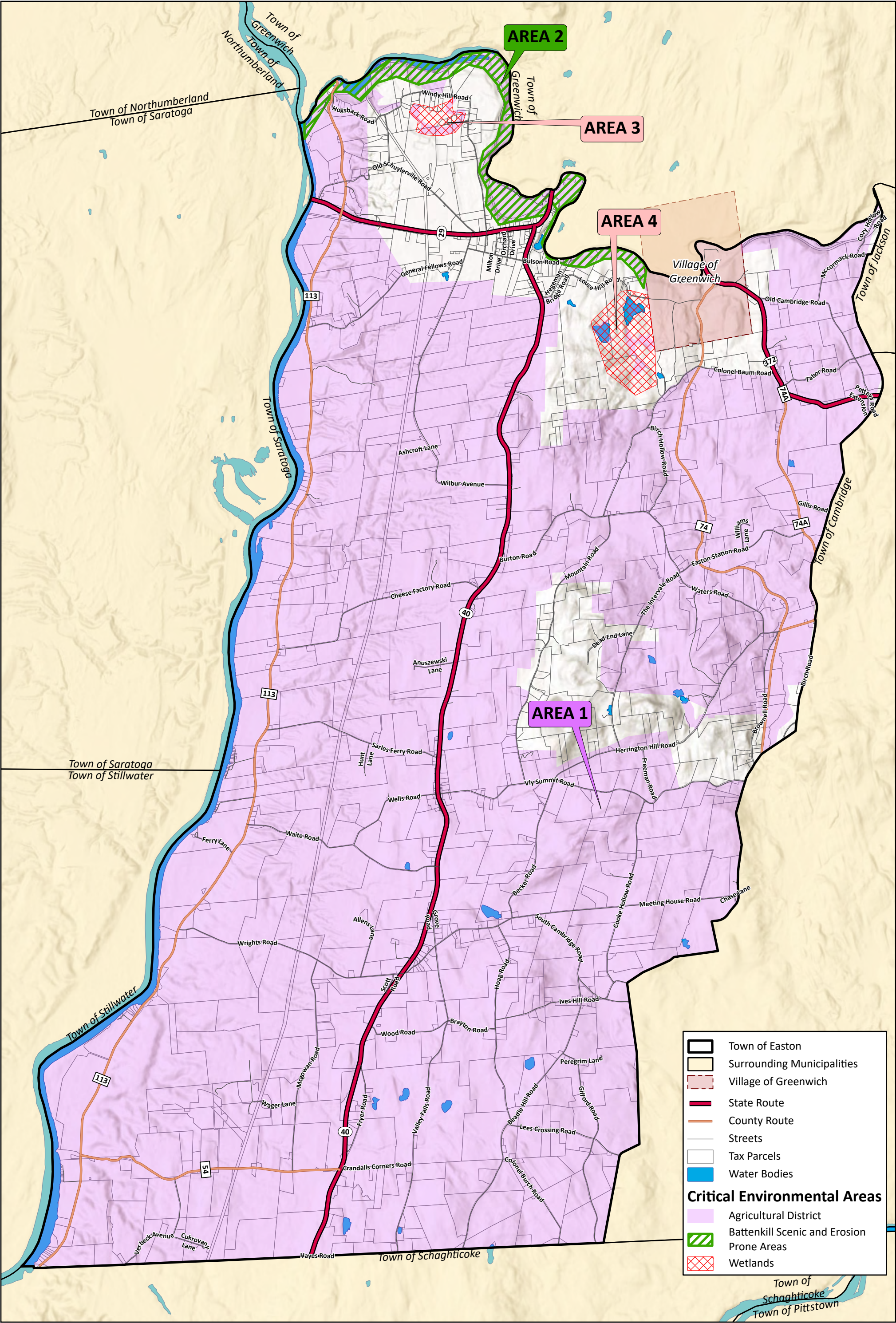
Flooding has a significant influence on the living environment and is the most common and costly disaster in the United State. FEMA is performing a flood study for Washington County. The process of updating the FIRMs involved the publication of Preliminary FIRMs in December 2023 and the initiation of an Appeal Period on October 22, 2024. The new FIRMs are scheduled to become effective in Spring 2026¹³.

Forests

Forested lands are scattered throughout Town with the largest concentration just east of Route 40 in the north on Schuyler, Whelden, and Willard Mountains. Forested lands are also concentrated along the tributaries to the Hudson River and along the escarpment following the river. There is one 22.4-acre NY State Forest preserve parcel between Waters Road and Herrington Hill Road and three NY State Forest parcels along the Hudson River with a combined 48.4 acres.



¹³ <https://www.fema.gov/press-release/20241015/public-invited-review-flood-maps-washington-county-new-york>



Critical Environmental Area

A Critical Environmental Areas (CEAs) is a part of this State that is designated by a local or state agency to recognize a specific geographical area with one or more of the following characteristics:

- A feature that is a benefit or threat to human health;
- An exceptional or unique natural setting;
- Unique social, historic, archaeological, recreational, or educational value; or
- An inherent ecological, geological, or hydrological sensitivity to change that may be adversely affected by any physical disturbance.

A CEA is designated by a local or state agency through the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR, 6NYCRR Part 617). As shown on the **Critical Environmental Area Map**, there are three (3) distinct established CEAs in Easton. Coverage by a CEA serves to alert project sponsors to the Agency's concern for the resources contained within it. All three of these CEAs were effective as of May 4, 1984, and all of them are classified as "Unique character of resources"¹⁴:

1. Agriculture District;
2. Wetlands; and
3. Battenkill Scenic & Erosion Prone Areas.

A CEA is not a zoning law, nor is it associated with any specific land use regulations for new uses. It is a designation that serves to alert developers or applicants for new land uses requiring Planning Board approval that there is a critical resource contained within the CEA. Once a CEA has been designated, potential impacts on the characteristics of that CEA become relevant areas of concern that warrant specific, articulated consideration in determining whether a new action could adversely impact the resources within the CEA and in determining the significance of any State Environment Quality Review Act (SEQRA) classified Type I or Unlisted actions that may affect the CEA. Since the Town does not have zoning, the CEAs are available as a tool to aid in environmental resources assessment and the process of mitigating the potential effects of growth and development on the designated high value resources.

There is substantial discussion on the attributes of agriculture in Easton as the Agricultural District CEA covers most of the Town. The exceptions include select areas in the north centered around Route 29 and Louse Hill Road, as well as locations grouped around Whelden, Willard, and Easton Mountains. The significance of having an Agricultural District CEA is that whenever a project

¹⁴ NYSDEC. Critical Environmental Area (CEA) inventory maintained by NYSDEC (<https://dec.ny.gov/regulatory/permits-licenses/seqr/critical-environmental-areas>). Accessed July 5, 2024.

comes before the Planning Board or Town Board for an approval that requires SEQR (such as a subdivision) a more detailed evaluation of potential adverse impacts on agriculture is required.

WORKING LANDS

In Easton, working lands constitute both fields and managed forestlands. The large number of farms is a dominant feature of the landscape. Accordingly, there is extensive examination of agriculture since it is a major component of Easton's living environment. Defining the features of working lands and identifying changes and trends on and around them can assist users of this Plan in understanding baseline conditions in Easton. It can also assist the consideration of possible changes and measures that can be used to protect and enhance aspects of the community that members value.

In Easton there has been conversion of some open fields for use as solar energy generating facilities. In some of these cases there is an effort to have a joint use, whereby there is continuation of agricultural activities amidst the solar arrays and appurtenant features. This dual practice is referred to as agrivoltaics.

Forestry

Tree cover coded as forests encapsulated 17,533 acres, or 43.4% of the community land area in 2023. There is not data identified that characterizes significant levels of timber harvesting, or that identifies high numbers of parcels used for logging, however, forestry activities and forests management is presumed to comprise part of Easton's natural resource-based economy. For example, there are active orchards, plant (and tree) nurseries, as well Christmas tree farms in the Town. Furthermore, harvesting of timber is contained within the definition of 'farmer' in the Town's 1992 Right to Farm Law.

Agriculture

While the local economy is more diversified than in the past, agriculture continues to dominate land use (and the form and character of the living environment) in Easton. Some 88.3% of all land within the Town has been included as part of Washington County Agricultural District 3, while only 62.6% of the land has been classified as agricultural use. Additionally, 11.6% of the land has been further protected through agricultural conservation easements.

Inventory of Current Agricultural Conditions

In order to sustain and enhance the agricultural economy in Easton and to protect valued farmland, it is important to characterize what the current conditions in Easton are. From that it is

possible to evaluate trends, challenges, and barriers to continued agriculture and build on traits that make a distinctive community. This section describes current conditions of the agricultural economy, farmland, and agricultural land uses. While there is discussion regarding farming type land uses in this part, a more in-depth, cross-sectional review of all major land use categories is contained in the Housing Choices element of this Plan.

Farmed Parcels in Easton

Agriculture activities in Easton are widespread. There is diversity within this sector, such in terms of the types and sizes of agricultural operations evident in the Town.

- There are 312 parcels of land and 27,251 acres in the Town of Easton that are classified as agricultural in some capacity.¹⁵ Of those, 24,085 acres are “primary” agricultural parcels where farming is the principal use, and 3,000 acres on parcels which are classified as residential with agricultural uses on them.
- 54 parcels are residential parcels that also have agricultural uses on them. These parcels are considered “secondary” agricultural uses.
- There are 14 parcels considered abandoned agricultural lands (165 acres). See **Farm Type and Agriculture Districts Map**.
- The largest agricultural uses are on parcels identified as used for field crops (108 parcels on 9,656 acres) and dairy farms (47 parcels on 3,581 acres).
- There are 64 additional parcels considered Vacant Farmland (3,716).



¹⁵ These are parcels of land identified and coded as agriculture by the Town Assessor.

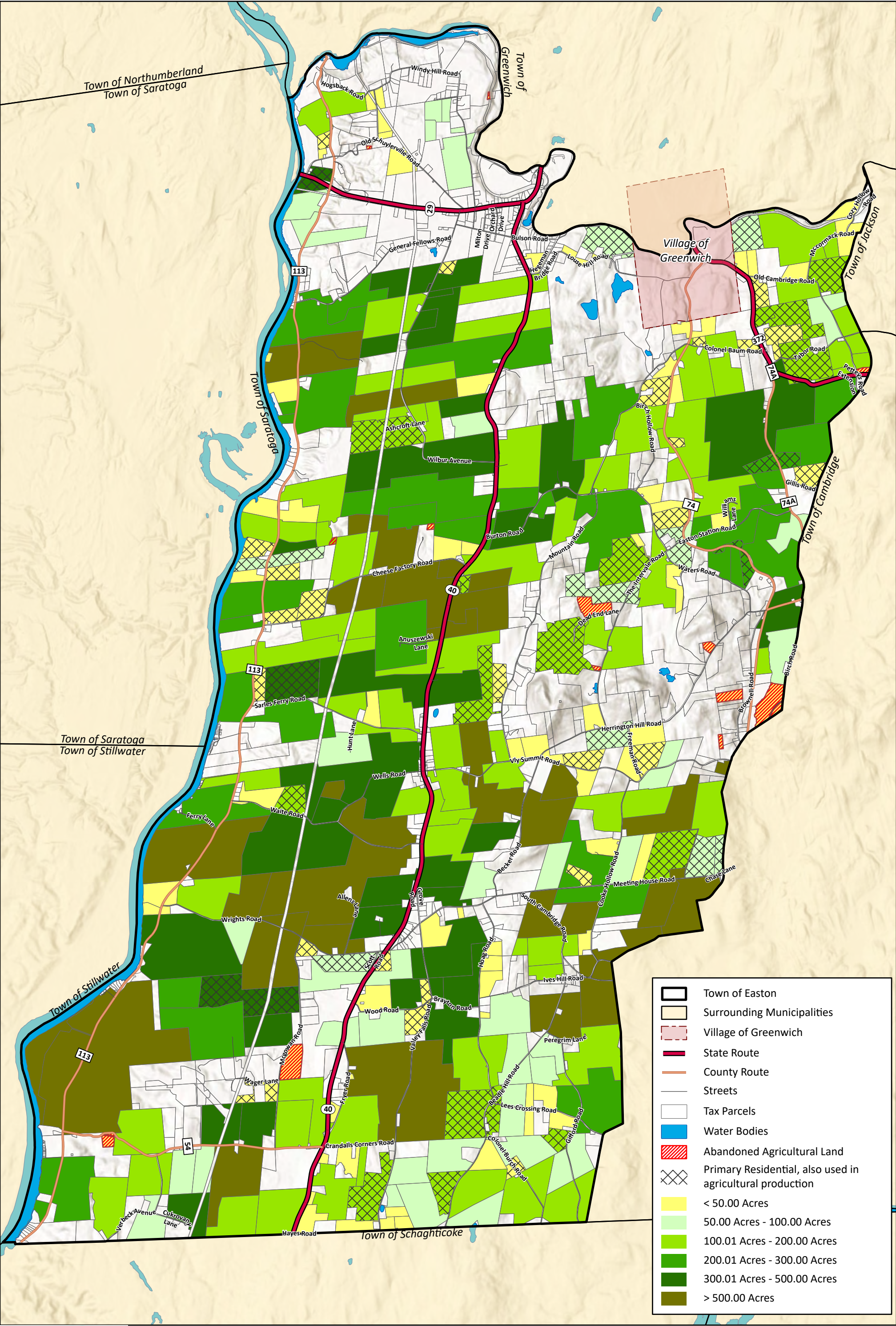
Table 5. Farm Type and Farmed Parcels the 2023 Town of Easton Tax Parcel Data

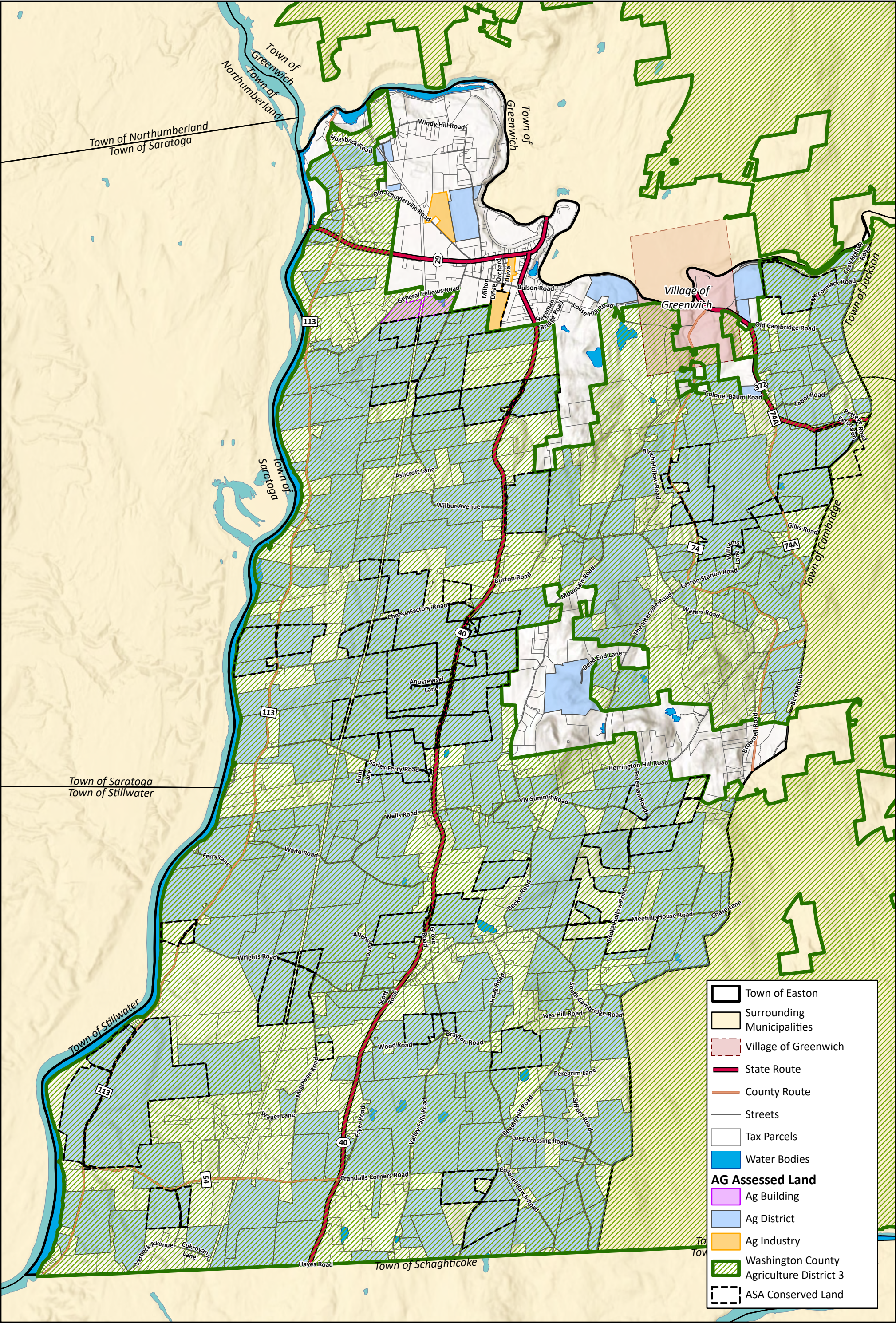
Type of Farmland (including forestlands)	Agriculture (Primary or Secondary Use)	Assessment Code	# of Parcels	Total Acreage by Farm Type	Definition of Classification Description
Vacant Farmland	Primary	105	64	3,715.69	Land used as part of an operating farm. It does not have living accommodations and cannot be specifically related to any of the other divisions in the agricultural category. Usually found when an operating farm is made up of several contiguous parcels.
Dairy Farm	Primary	112	47	3,580.86	
Cattle Farm	Primary	113	7	953.28	
Sheep Farm	Primary	114	1	167.00	
Other Livestock Farm	Primary	116	2	53.04	
Exotic Livestock	Primary	184	1	154.67	
Horse Farm	Primary	117	5	366.29	
Field Crops	Primary	120	108	9,655.90	Potatoes, wheat, hay, dry beans, corn, oats, and other field crops.
Truck Crops	Primary	140	4	323.87	Muckland used to grow potatoes, sugar beets, onions, snap beans, tomatoes, cabbage, lettuce, cauliflower, sweet corn, celery, etc.
Vineyard	Primary	152	1	114.00	
Rural Residential & Agriculture	Secondary	241	54	3,000.26	Primary residential but also used in agricultural production
Abandoned Agriculture	-	321	14	165.40	Nonproductive; not part of an operating farm.
Total # of Farmed Parcels & Acreage			312	27,250.60	
Note: Primary refers to a parcel that is wholly used for farming purposes, while Secondary refers to a parcel that has a residential land use and farmland.)					

Most of the land base in the Town of Easton is situated within the NYS Certified Agricultural District #3 boundary. See the **Farm Type and Agricultural Districts Map**. Total acreage within Agricultural District #3 is 35,015 acres, which is 86.6% of the Town's total land base of 40,420 acres.

The remaining 5,506 acres located outside of this Washington County Agricultural District #3 is all in northern parts of Town. One part of this acreage is in the vicinity of Mountain Road, Intervale Road, Herrington Hill Road and Brownell Road. The other larger part straddles State Route #29 by the Fairgrounds, Winding Hill Road, and the intersection with Route 40, and also covers a portion of the Village of Greenwich, as well as south of its border, north of Colonel Baum Road

Not all of the land within the Agricultural District is farmed, however. There are 762 non-farm parcels (mostly residential) situated within the District, having a total acreage of 7,552.28 acres. This translates to only 7.9% of the land within the Agricultural District that is in non-farm use.





Farm Sizes in Easton (by Parcel)

The Town of Easton has many relatively large parcels. This is related to the history of farming in this community and the continuing prevalence of agriculture.

Overall, the average size of a farmed parcel in Easton is 88 acres, but it varies widely from 1 acres to over 500 acres. Dairy farms have the largest acreage: the average size of a dairy farm in Easton is 179 acres. The average size of a parcel used for field crops is 88 acres. See **Farmland by Owners and Acres Map**.

- The average size of a rural residential parcel that also has agricultural uses on it is 55 acres, but they vary widely in size from 1.7 acres to over 177 acres. These parcels may be the primary residence of a farm owner or their family, or they may be residential properties that rent land to farmers.
- The largest farmed parcels (>300 acres) are associated with dairy and field crops. There is more of a diversity of farm types on parcels < 100 acres in size.
- Table 6 and the Acreage by Parcel Size Figure below, describe the number and acreage of farmed parcels by size. Parcels sized 100 to 200 acres are the most common size.
- By acreage, 69% of farmed acreage in Easton takes place on parcels greater than 100 acres, with about 20% of farmed acreage is on parcels sized between 300 and 500 acres.
- About 13% of the farmed acreage is on parcels less than 50 acres in size.
- However, 46% of farmed parcels are less than 50 acres in size.
- Twenty-seven parcels, or 9% of all parcels are sized > 200 acres but those parcels manage over 32% of the farmland in Easton.

Table 6. Total Acreage by Parcel Size.

Parcel Size	# of Parcels	Acres
less than 50.00 Acres	145	3,420.13
50.00 Acres - 100.00 Acres	66	4,955.92
100.01 Acres - 200.00 Acres	74	10,013.46
200.01 Acres - 300.00 Acres	15	3,428.92
300.01 Acres - 500.00 Acres	9	3,376.61
Greater than 500.00 Acres	3	1,985.90

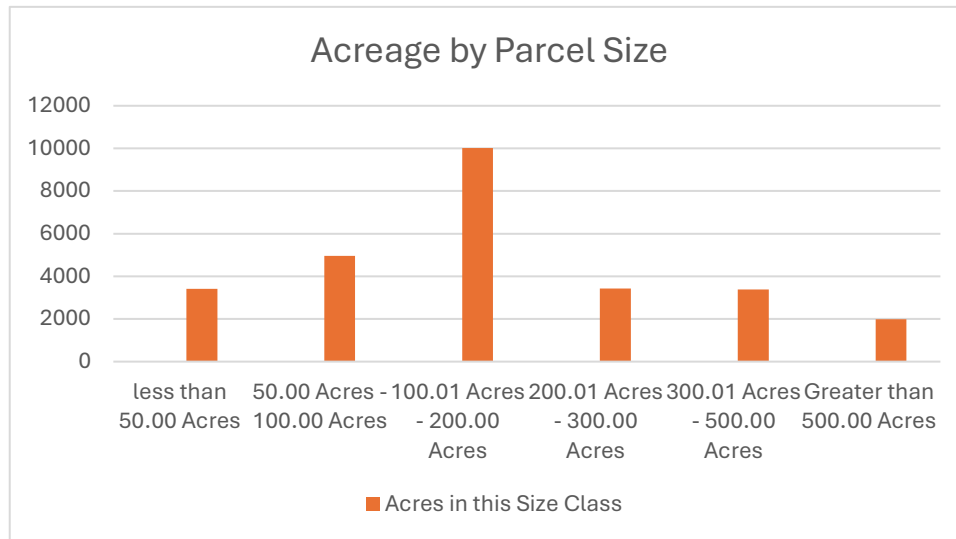


Figure 15: Acres by Parcel Size

Table 7 below describes the average parcel size, and minimum/maximum parcel size for each of the farming types in Easton.

Table 7. Average, Minimum and Maximum Parcel Size by Farm Type.

Major Farm Types (Identified by Parcel Code)	Average Size of Parcel by Farm Type	Minimum/Maximum Parcel Size by Farm Type
Vacant Farmland	58 acres	1.3/291 acres
Dairy Farm	179 acres	5/561 acres
Cattle Farm	119 acres	24/360 acres
Horse Farm	61 acres	11/128 acres
Field Crops	89 acres	2/877 acres

FARMS AND FARMLAND IN EASTON

Field crops and dairy farms are the most common farmland uses in Town. Most of the rural residential/agricultural parcels are also used for field crops. Most of those farmlands support the dairy farms in Easton (See the Figures for Farm Type by Number of Parcels and Total Acreage by Farm Type. These pie charts show the dominance of field crops and dairy farm activities in Easton. All other farm types occur on about 11% of farmland parcels and acreage in Town.

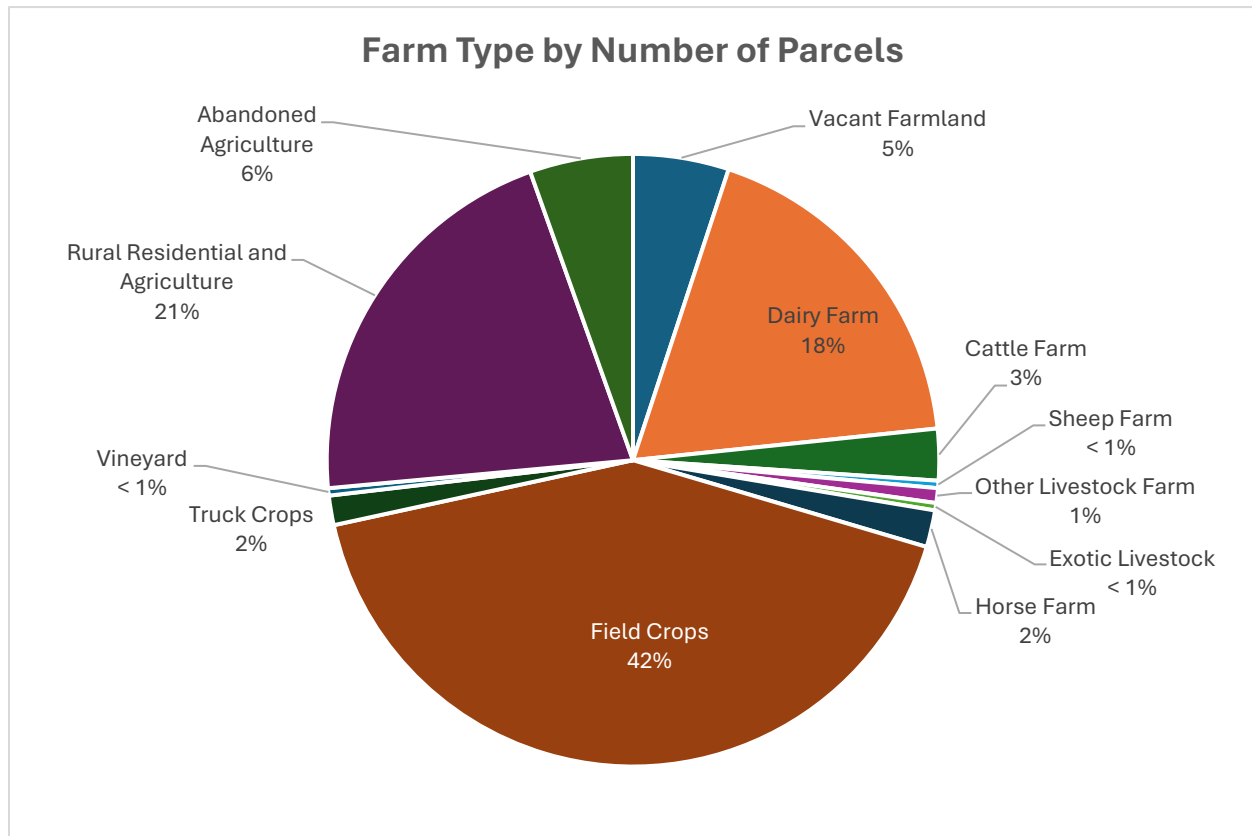


Figure 16: Farm Types by Number of Parcels

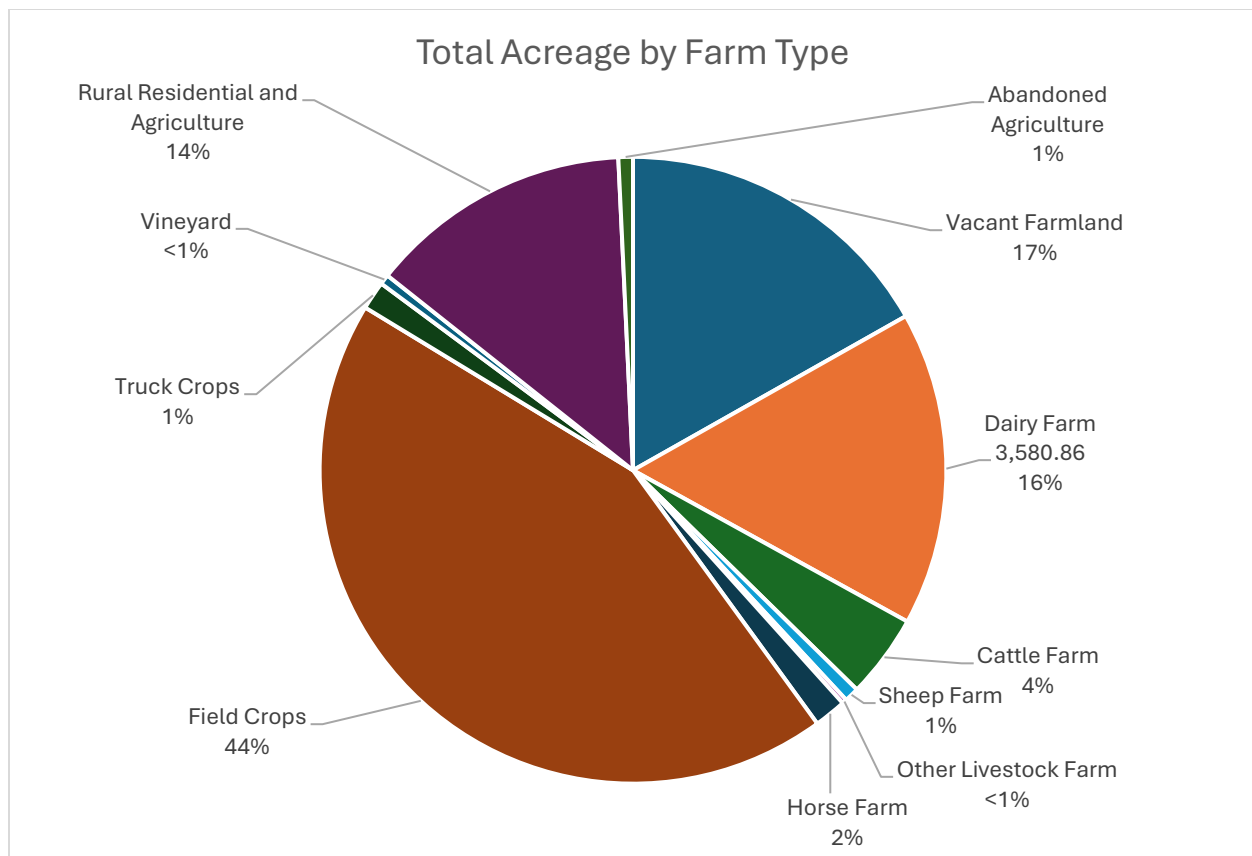


Figure 17: Farm Type by Acreage

- There is more diversity in the types of farming taking place on smaller parcels.
- Among the many dairy farms in Easton, three are permitted as Concentrated Animal Feed Operations (Allenwaite Farm, KA Sunset View Farm, Brotherhood Farm).
- The diversity of farming and ag-related activities taking place in Easton is large: dairy, beef, horses, sheep, vegetables, fruit, field crops, emus, alpacas, goats, and poultry are among the crops and products. Other ag-related businesses are also part of the agricultural community including meat processing, a veterinary clinic, farm machinery business, farm stands, and homemade ice cream.
- Easton is home to the Washington County Fair.
- Other types of agricultural activities taking place in Town include:
 - Borden's Orchard – apples and other fruits, cider, farm store;
 - Dough Haven Farm – mixed vegetables, fiber, meat;
 - Elihu Farm – sheep, lambs, wool, meet, hens for eggs;
 - Northern Cross Vineyard – a NYS winery with tasting room;
 - The Farm Store at Tiashoke – dairy, farm store (meat, cheese, pumpkins, more);

- Victory View Vineyard and Winery – Craft beverages and tasting room;
- Shaftsbury Alpacas – Alpacas;
- The Alleged Farm – vegetables, herbs, fruits, heirloom varieties, CSA;
- Our Farm CSA –mix of naturally grown vegetables, small fruit, herbs, flowers, pasture raised laying hens, broilers, hogs, CSA and sells at farmers markets;
- Elsworth Family Farm Feeds and Grains – feeds and grains for livestock growers;
- Booths Blend Compost – a former dairy now producing compost as well as beef;
- Hand Mellons (and farmstand).

Conserved Agricultural Parcels

“The Agricultural Stewardship Association (ASA) is a nonprofit, community-supported land conservancy dedicated to protecting local farmland and working forests from encroaching development.” They have helped conserve over 30,890 acres on 171 properties in Washington and Rensselaer counties in the Upper Hudson River Valley. ASA is one of the very few land trusts in New York State focused exclusively on conserving working farms and forests.”¹⁶

There are 36 easement properties in Easton that encompass 6,048 acres of farmland that are permanently conserved in the Town of Easton (See **Farm Type and Agriculture District Map** and **Agriculture Assessed Lands Map**). The conserved working lands are termed or considered ‘Farmland Cores’. This is because these are locations that are legally set to be permanently used for agricultural purposes based on these protective easements. They also often overlay the best soils, or other agricultural attributes and are places with large lots and many, but varied, farm operations adjacent to one another.



¹⁶ <https://www.agstewardship.org>

PLACEMAKING

Placemaking: Provide for distinctive, attractive community character that builds upon and fits with the Town's historic pattern of rural, agricultural development.

In town planning, placemaking involves establishing and bolstering quality places and environments where people live, work, and play. For Easton, placemaking requires that residents engage with one another to identify features of the Town that are unique and valued, and identify common needs and aspirations for the community. Placemaking flows through multiple elements of the comprehensive plan (including transportation, housing, economic development, environment, and recreation) to enhance a sense of place, create desirable forms and layouts of development, and reinforce community identity to help guide growth and managed change.

Placemaking often involves using public resources to leverage desirable patterns of land use, and may focus on the design and arrangement of public spaces so they are high value and reflect local culture, identity, and history, while acting as a platform for desired growth. In exploring community patterns and future development, this section touches on the features of existing buildings and different land uses and growth trends. Likewise, it reviews aspects of the system of local land development regulation, so insight can be gained that will assist users in understanding possible ways to manage and regulate future changes in land use law, which is an important component for advancing the Comprehensive Plan.

GOALS & STRATEGIES FOR PLACEMAKING IN EASTON

PLACEMAKING GOAL 1: Preserve the Town's rural character and scenic beauty.

- A. Promote land uses and policies that advance low density growth.
- B. Repair, replace, and install historic markers.
- C. Consult inventories of historic structures and resources, and promote the conservation and enhancement of these assets when development occurs, to reinforce sense of place and assist placemaking.
- D. Support farmland preservation and conservation.
- E. Map and inventory of significant views of the landscape visible from public roads, and support efforts to conserve them.

PLACEMAKING GOAL 2: Safeguard agricultural character and encourage development that compliments the historic landscape and enhances Easton’s sense of place.

- A. Provide for land development that adheres to good practices, for example by enabling Cooperative Farm Subdivisions.
- B. Consider forming rural design guidelines that depict preferences for compatible commercial and residential growth in agricultural area, hamlets, and crossroads. These can assist landscape and view management, building placement and site design, frontage treatments, curb cut layouts, landscaping and screening, and the use of signage, fencing, and lighting.
- C. Amend the subdivision law to allow for creation of new lots when these are designed to avoid farm fields. For example, enable minor subdivisions which add a limited number of small, compliant lots located adjacent existing roads, when adequate frontage is available that has acceptable access. This would provide for continuing Easton’s unique subdivision framework, which limits cumulative lot divisions on a parent parcel, while also enabling housing lots which fit with patterns of existing land use and infrastructure.

PLACEMAKING GOAL 3: Direct significant future residential or retail growth towards northern parts of Town, including around Greenwich.

- A. Focus municipal capital / infrastructure spending in the northern part of Town to reinforce existing development patterns, avoid sprawl, and economically provide adequate, sustainable infrastructure.

REGIONAL/COMMUNITY FORM

In furthering placemaking goals, it is important to understand commercial and residential patterns of development, and public and quasi-public uses on the land. This understanding can help in finding compatible and complimentary uses and scale for growth that adds to a sense-of-place within such vital areas.

The Town’s pre-automobile development pattern is still evident today, with a handful of historic centers within and adjacent to its borders. The primary hamlet centers within Easton include North Easton, Easton (Barker’s Grove), South Easton, Archdale, and Crandall’s Corners.

The primary commercial center for the Town’s residents is the Village of Greenwich. The Village is split between the Towns of Easton and Greenwich, with the majority of development on the Greenwich side with over half of the Village’s land area on the Easton side.

While the centers of the Village of Schuylerville, Hamlet of Middle Falls, Hamlet of Clarks Mills, and Hamlet of Vly Summit lay adjacent to the border of Easton, there are significant contributing areas of each within the Town’s boundaries.

COMMERCIAL PATTERNS

The pattern of commercial uses is considerably different from that of 150 years ago when it was concentrated in the hamlet centers. Today, the majority of Easton's commercial development is spread out along NYS Route 29 running east-west in the north and NYS Route 40 running north-south through the center of Town.

The commercial core of the community is found at the intersection of these state highways along NYS Route 29 adjacent to the Hamlet of Middle Falls. While this area is not located within a hamlet, it is the Town's most heavily



traveled corridor as the link between the Villages of Schuylerville and Greenwich. This area also includes the Town's largest employer (Fort Miller Group) and the Washington County Fairgrounds.

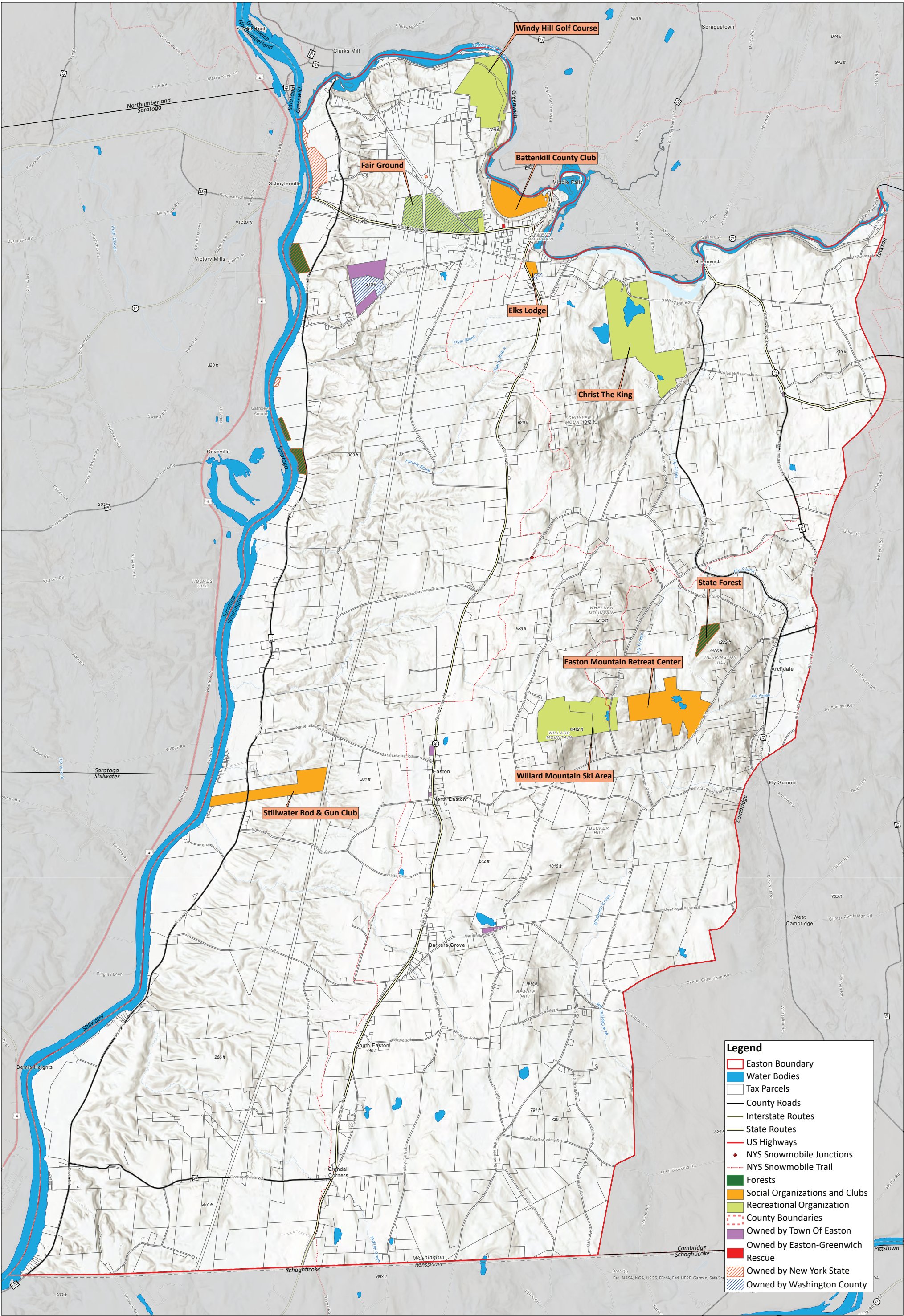
In this same area, including on nearby side streets within the Town's jurisdiction outside the Village of Greenwich, there are a range of retail uses. There is a hardware store, a farm stand (Hand Mellon), financial businesses and some restaurants. The location is bolstered by the proximity of residential populations living in and around the Village, including in adjacent areas within the Town. There are relatively high levels of vehicle trips along these corridors.

RESIDENTIAL PATTERNS

Residential development is relatively evenly spread throughout the whole town at low density. A higher density of housing is found in the northernmost section along the Battenkill River from the Village of Greenwich to Clarks Mills—accounting for roughly 40% of the population.



Moderate density is found in the hamlet centers and a couple of areas along the Hudson River. Approximately 62% of all parcels within the Town possess a residential structure, accounting for 55% of the total acreage of Easton. Since many of these parcels are associated with either a primary or secondary agriculture or commercial use, the total acreage is not reflective of only residential usage.



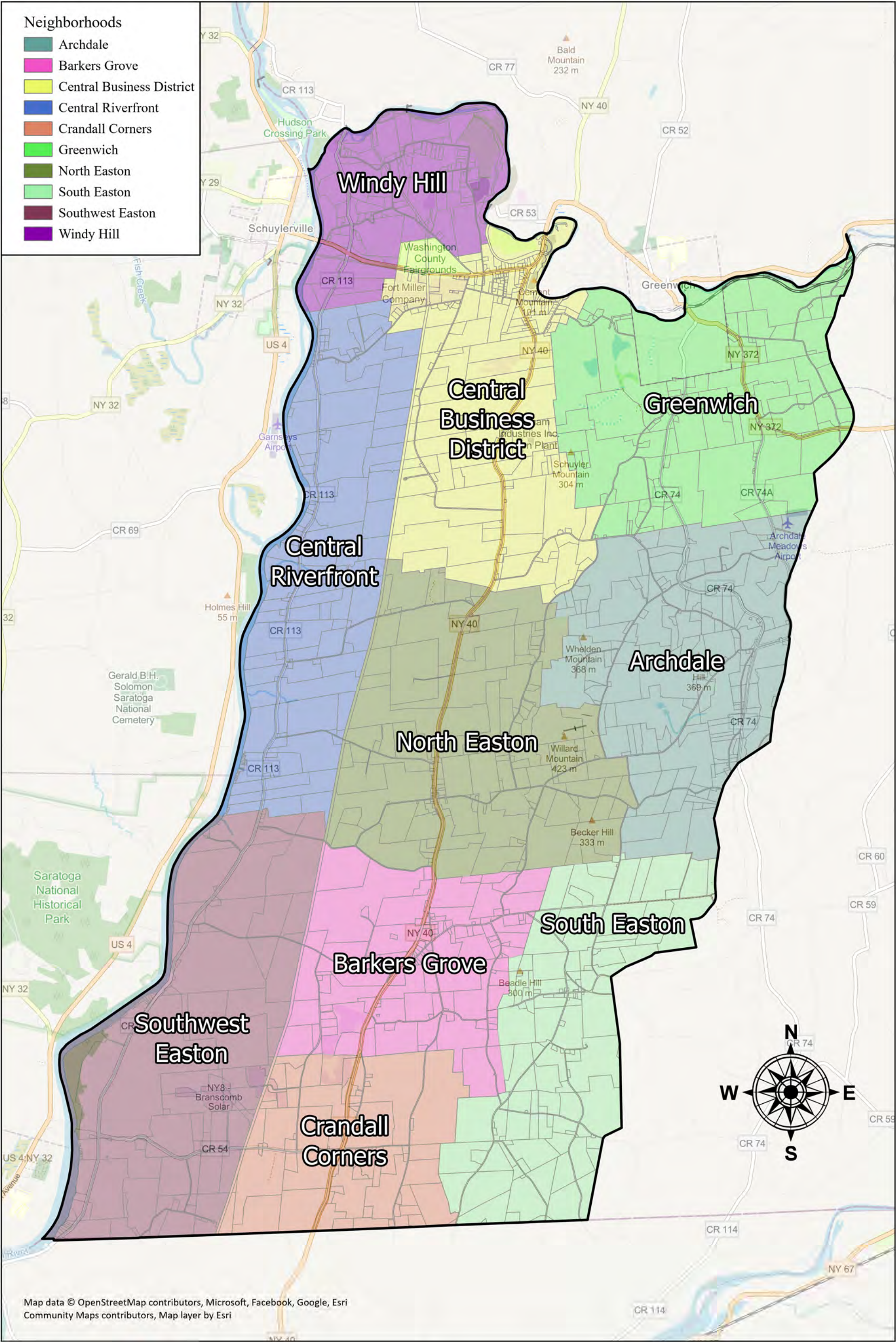
PUBLIC & QUASI PUBLIC LAND USES

Following is a description of many of the Town-owned parcels (which only account for 1% or 344 acres of the total area of the Town), as well as select public and quasi-public land uses:



- Town-owned parcels include Burton Hall, the Easton Library, and the Easton Highway Garage—all located in the Hamlet of North Easton. Also within this hamlet is a 51.6-acre parcel, surrounding the former Town landfill.
- Two parcels are under the control of Washington County, a Highway Garage at 2230 State Route 40 and the former landfill at 185 General Fellows Road.
- Easton Volunteer Fire Company Inc. owns two parcels: 11804 State Route 40 and 599 County Route 74A.
- A parcel is owned by the Easton-Greenwich Rescue Squad located at 441 State Route 29.
- The historic schoolhouse at 305 Cooke Hollow Road is a public asset owned by the Olde Time Easton Association.
- The State of New York owns five parcels consisting of:
 - A health office building at 239 General Fellows Road on 2.8 acres.
 - A 22.4-acre state forest preserve lot between Waters Road and Herrington Hill Rd.
 - Three State forest parcels along the Hudson River with a combined 48.4 acres.
- Riverfront Park is a Village of Greenwich owned property fronting on the Battenkill.
- The Middle Falls Kayak Launch is a public-use site located on property owned by the Middle Falls Limited Partnership.





NEIGHBORHOODS & HAMLETS

The neighborhood analysis examines how natural features, land use patterns and infrastructure may influence the emergence of distinct areas in Easton. An effort to generally describe the extent or borders of neighborhoods and hamlets can assist planning for the enhancement of community character. It may support future efforts to tailor precise regulations, or reinforce a neighborhood's or a hamlet area's sense of place and its role in placemaking across the Town of Easton. For this Plan, a



neighborhood can be defined as an area within which residents are settled in relation to one another and may share some common services and facilities in the vicinity of their dwellings and possess some overlap in terms of social activities and activity patterns. Specifically, there is identification of areas with clusters of houses and land uses beyond agriculture, with locations centered-on and based primarily around historic hamlets, including: Greenwich, Clarks Mills, Crandall's Corners, North Easton, Archdale, Middle Falls, Barker's Grove, and South Easton.

Central Business District (Route 40/Route 29/Wilbur Avenue)

This area has a high variety of land uses, particularly on its northern side by the State roads, and is the highest order commercial and industrial area within Easton. It is served by State Routes 29 and 40 and is well connected with the Hamlet of Middle Falls in the Town of Greenwich. The area runs along the Battenkill from Hegeman Bridge to the railroad bridge west of the Battenkill Country Club, southwest to Route 29 at United Ag & Turf, south to BJ Farms, east to the high voltage lines, south to just north of Cheese Factory Road, east to Mountain Road, and north to the Battenkill.

The Washington County Fairgrounds is a prominent use fronting on Route 29. Industrial uses include: The Fort Miller Group, Peckham Materials Corporation, Tymetal Corp, and BDP Industries. The retail uses include: Aubuchon Hardware, restaurants and product sales. Non-profit and utility type uses include: Battenkill Country Club, Middle Falls Hydro Electric and a solar energy facility. In the northern section



Figure 18: Tymetal Corp

residential and non-residential uses are sometimes located in close adjacency, so there may be opportunities to buffer uses. As part of planning orderly growth in this area, it may also be advantageous to plan for public water.

Windy Hill (Route 113/Hogsback Road/Old Schuylerville Road)

This area is a more settled location compared with more open and rural locations in the middle and southern parts of Town. It has a variety of non-residential as well as residential uses. Non-residential uses include Hollingsworth & Vose (manufacturing), Windy Hills Golf Course, Maplewood Center for Common Craft, SRN Trucking, AJS Residential Glass, Ginny's Grooming and Boarding, JRD3 Landscaping, the Black Hat Bar and Grill, an electric substation, and a solar field. This neighborhood is well connected with both the Village of Schuylerville in the Town of Saratoga and the Hamlet of Clarks Mills in the Town of Greenwich. The neighborhood is within Schuylerville Central School District. The area runs along the Battenkill from the railroad bridge at Battenkill Country Club west to the Hudson River, south along the Hudson to the midpoint between Route 29 and General Fellows Road, east to Fort Miller Company property, north and west around the fairgrounds to Windy Hill Road, and north along the railroad tracks to the Battenkill. There is a high variety of land uses, so there may be potential for residential uses to be impacted by adjacent uses, although there may be opportunities to buffer adjoining land uses.

Greenwich (Northeast Easton)

This neighborhood occupies whole of the incorporated Village of Greenwich and covers the areas within the Town of Easton that are up to roughly 1.5 miles outside of the Village's boundary. This area is associated with NY Route 372, County Route 74, County Route 74A, Louse Hill Road, Burton Road, Center Falls Road, Old Cambridge Road, and Christ the King Center. The Christ the King Center is a large, open non-profit use that is used for religious and other gatherings as well as outdoor recreation activities and is owned by the Trustees of the Diocese of Albany.



Archdale (East-Central Easton)

The Archdale neighborhood is a low-density area of Easton on the border of the Town of Cambridge. Archdale is more of a location than a hamlet, as there is no area of density within the neighborhood. Main thoroughfares



include County Route 74, The Intervale Road, Herrington Hill Road, County Route 74A, Vly Summit Road, Waters Road, and Easton Station Road. It includes Whelden Mountain, Herrington Hill, and Archdale Meadows Airport.

North Easton (Central Easton)

North Easton is the heart of the Town. Town facilities include Burton Hall, Easton Library and the highway garage. This area centers on the hamlet located at NY Route 40's intersections with Wells Road, Vly Summit Road, and Sarles Ferry Road. The other main roads include Mountain Road, Becker Road, Herrington Hill Road, Waite Road, and Cheese Factory Road. Attributes include Willard Mountain, Becker Hill, Allen Wait Farm, Victory View Vineyard, Kuzmich's Christmas Tree Farm, Easton United Methodist Church, and Sievers-Gabriel Pumpkins.

Central Riverfront (West Easton)

This neighborhood is centered around the Hudson River along River Road (CR 113) between Saint Canvinette Way and General Fellows Road with the high voltage lines as its eastern edge. Commercial uses include James Nulty Used Cars, Slate River Farms, Booth Blend Compost, Access Anvil, and Dough Haven Farm. The Stillwater Rod & Gun Club has a large property with river and frontage. This area primarily consists of farmland except for three clusters of riverfront homes at Saint Canvinette Way, Deerfield Road and at County 113 / General Fellows Road.

Southwest Easton

The southwest section of Easton is the riverfront portion of Town within the Stillwater Central School District and is characterized by woodlands and farmland, with woodlands on the east and farmland more concentrated west of River Road. The area runs from Wrights Road to the southern Town boundary with the high voltage lines as the eastern boundary and includes portions of County Route 54, Wright's Road, and Verbeck Avenue. There is a portion of a solar facility that is accessed from McGowan Road. There are clusters of riverfront homes at the southwestern most part of Town, Marcellus Lane, and Starboard Way.

Barkers Grove (Easton Hamlet)

This neighborhood is the historic town-center and is positioned on the intersections of Grove Road, Valley Falls Road, Meeting House Road, and NY Route 40. Other roads include McGowan Road, Wrights Road, Hoag Road, Waite Road, Wood Road, Brayton Road and Becker Road. Non-residential development includes: The Farm Store at Tiashoke, The Veterans Motorcycle Club, Allen Waite Farm, Casa Reyes Mexican Restaurant, Brownell's Sales and Services, and a portion

of a solar energy facility. Easton Rural Cemetery is on Meeting House Road. Groupings of houses are found along Grove Road and on Meeting House Road between Grove Road and NY Route 40.

Crandall's Corners (South-Central Easton)

The Hamlet of Crandall's Corners is at the center of this area at the intersection of NY Route 40 and County Route 54 and Crandall's Corners Road. At this intersection is Crandall's Corners Farm and examples of commerce in this area



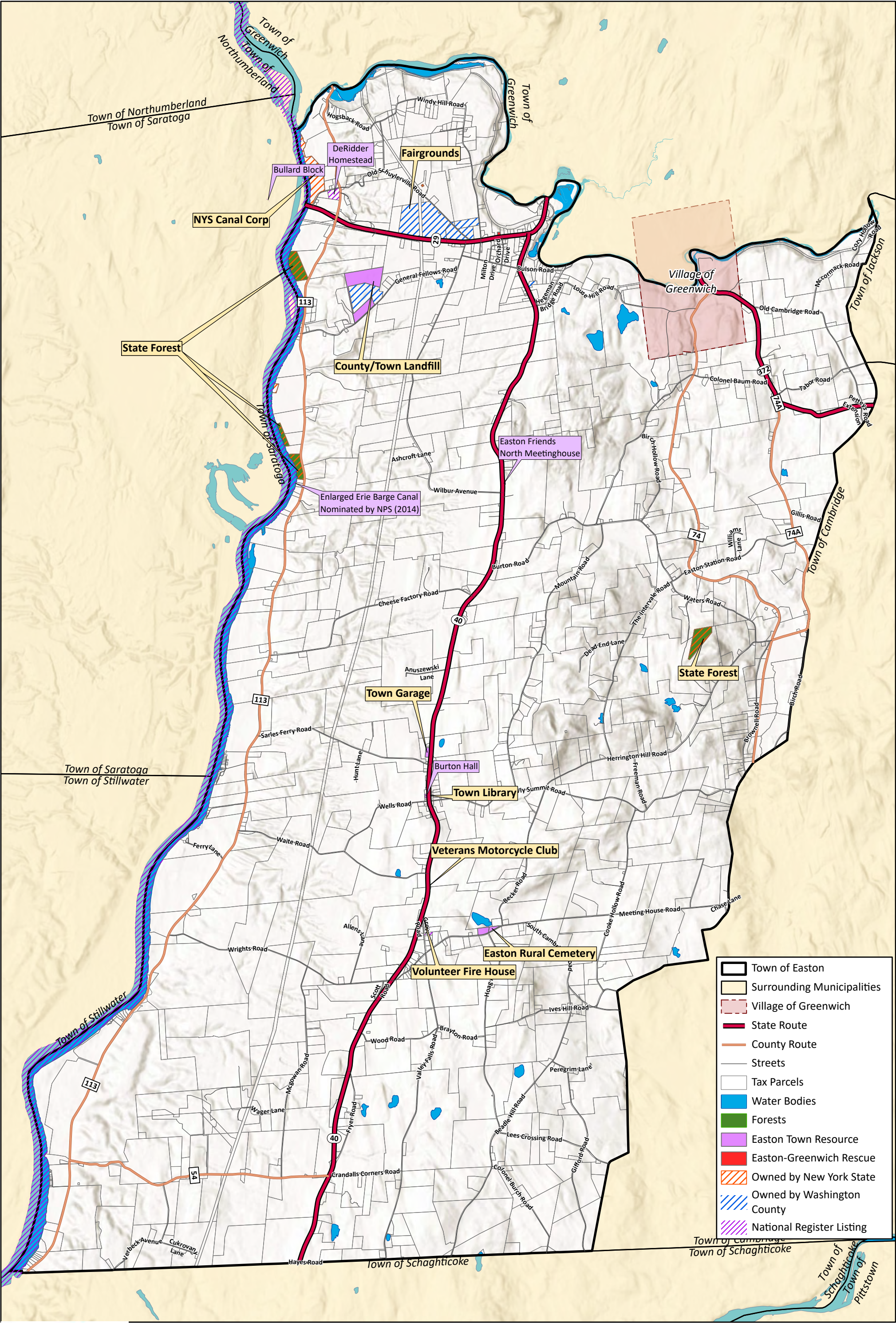
include Beecroft's Shooters Supply, Laser Focus Custom Engraving, Borden's Orchard, and a solar energy facility. Other higher order roads include Valley Falls Road, Fryer Road, and McGowan Road. The area is characterized by large swaths of farmland interspersed with woodland at the southern part of NY Route 40 at the Town of Schaghticoke border. Based on relative proximity and easy highway access, people residing in this area are likely routinely travel to Schaghticoke to access services available there.

South Easton (Southeast Easton)

This neighborhood centers around the historic hamlet in the vicinity of Ives Hill, South Cambridge Road, Hill Road and Beadle Hill Road. The boundaries run from Beadle Hill and Hog Road to the eastern border with the Town of Cambridge and from the southern boundary with the Town of Schaghticoke to just north of Meeting House Road. Businesses in



the hamlet include Easton View Outfitters, Northern Cross Vineyard and Sam's Trans-Fur-Mations Pet Salon. Business active here cover: Sunset Ridge Alpacas, The Barn at Hansen Hill Farm, Hoof 'n' Paw Veterinary Services, Windflower Farm and Alleged Farm. Brownell Cemetery is located here. Streets include Cooke Hollow Road, Meeting House Road, Lees Crossing Road, Gifford Road, and Colonel Burch Road.



Recreation Environment

The availability of recreational outlets and their position on the landscape influences placemaking. Recreational amenities abound within the Town's attractive mix of forest, mountains, and waterfronts and account for approximately 4% of the total area of Easton. This includes 499 acres overlaying the Hudson River up to its shoreline and 338 acres covering the Battenkill River.

Features of recreation are displayed on the **Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation Map**. Multiple major recreation attractions which cover significant land areas. These include: the 185-acre Willard Mountain Ski Area (alpine skiing); 292-acre Christ the King Center; 76-acre Battenkill Country Club; 163-acre Windy Hills Golf Course; the 102-acre Stillwater Rod and Gun Club; and the 174-acre Easton Mountain Retreat Center. As discussed in other parts of this Plan, the Washington County Fairgrounds are also in Easton. That facility is routinely used for recreational and cultural activities, including but not limited to as a staging area for organized sporting events.

There are 33 miles of Snowmobile Trails leased by the SnoBlazers (40 acres) including north-south running segments on either side of Route 40. There are also sections around the high elevation mountains in the central east side of the Town with segments north of Willard Mountain connecting eastward towards the Town of Cambridge in the vicinity of Gillis Road.

The Middle Falls Kayak Launch is a public-use site located in the Town on property owned by the Middle Falls Limited Partnership. The boating put-in accesses the Battenkill River and is located just off Routes 29/40 adjacent to the bridge connecting north with the Town of Greenwich, just northeast of the waterfall there. The launch enables fishing and boating access upstream towards the east. There is ample parking available at this site which is also a location for nature viewing.

There are no Town-owned public parks in the incorporated Town of Easton; yet, Riverfront Park is owned by the Village of Greenwich, and is situated along the Battenkill, in the part of the incorporated Village that is in the Town south of the Battenkill. Located at 35 Rock Street, Riverfront Park has fishing and boating access with a small dock. Primarily passive in design, there are picnic tables and open lawns adjacent to the water's edge to enable nature viewing.

These recreational traits contribute to sense of place and distinctive community character with a notable concentration of assets in the more highly populated northern portions of Town. This includes open lands owned by the New York Canal Corporation (quasi-public) that front along the Hudson River northwest of Old Schuylerville Road. Assets like this provide potential places to reinforce well-planned and well-placed public spaces, when opportunities arise.

In addition, River Road corridor's position relative to the Hudson River provides notable river and agricultural environment scenic character. The roadway is popular for recreational bicycling. It is possible to connect east of here, on the opposite side of the Hudson River, in Schuylerville and in

Stillwater by crossing over the river in those locations and using the regional Empire State Trail, which runs along Routes 32 and Route 4, between those Villages. The Saratoga National Historical Park sets distinctive historical character for those environments on the opposite side of the Hudson and set the distinctive landscape character that overlies this whole region.

Impact of Land Use Change on Rural Character

Low-density rural residential development is characterized by spread out, large-lot subdivisions, increases in agricultural land that is adjacent to or surrounded by non-farm development, and areas where individual houses are spread out along rural roads.

The American Farmland Trust has found that low-density residential development (LDR) “paves the way for further urbanization.” Agricultural land in LDR areas was 23 times more likely to be converted to Urban Higher Density (UHD) than other agricultural land. In other words, once land has been converted to low-density residential land use, new development rapidly occurs on the remaining farmland and ranchland in the area. Low-density residential land use threatens working farms and ranches by fragmenting the landscape and disrupting agricultural economies. ¹⁷

This type of development can lead to “rural sprawl,” which often results in an increase in vehicles on the roads—making it difficult for farmers to get into their fields, travel between fields, or move equipment. New residents may value the rural character and open space of a place like Easton, but many may not be used to living next to agricultural operations. This can lead to nuisance complaints related to noise, odors, or agricultural practices such as manure spreading and the spraying of crops.

Based on the risks of sprawl to community character in Easton, it is important to consider what tools are available for managing land use and structuring placemaking. The next section describes land development regulations. But prior to that, it is important to consider other possible factors, that if not countered, can contribute to the weakening of farming and the loss of farmland:

- An aging farm population, without a new generation wanting to carry on the family farm, means that many farmers may need or want to sell their land for financial reasons. Programs that keep such lands in farming sustain this part of rural land use.
- Increased land values make it harder for farmers to compete with developers in buying land for farming purposes. If significant proportions of land transition away from farming, this could inhibit land access and land assembly by farmers.

¹⁷ <https://farmland.org/fut-national-pr/#:~:text=In%20other%20words%2C%20once%20land,fields%20or%20travel%20between%20fields.>

- New and young farmers often have significant barriers to entry into farming because of the lack of available and/or affordable land. A lack of a new generation of farmers adds to the difficulty of keeping farms going due to skilled labor shortages and a smaller pool of trained and qualified farmers available to work the land.

TOWN OF EASTON LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

Easton does not have zoning regulations. Rather, the regulation of land use is primarily provided through subdivision controls. There are some limited design standards within the subdivision code. There are also local laws related to managing development, with one major component comprising a requirement for building permits (the Town employs a qualified Building Inspector). There is also a local Flood Damage Prevention code as well as the aforementioned local Critical Environmental Area (CEA) standards. The CEA standards are described in the Living Environment section of this Plan.

Town of Easton Subdivision Law

The Town of Easton Subdivision Law was last revised and adopted in 1999. This Law regulates creation of new parcels of land through the subdivision process. This Law's policy establishes:

"...(T)hat subdivision shall be carried out in accordance with the declared policy to conserve and protect the Town's natural resources and scenic beauty and encourage the development and improvement of its agricultural lands for the production of food and other agricultural products; that agriculture is the licit, preferred and dominant land use, ..."

This Law seeks to accomplish that policy by defining various agricultural terms, waiving field survey requirements when land is subdivided expressly for agricultural purposes. It also establishes a review process and standards which include ensuring consistency with the intent and purpose of the Washington County Agricultural District. This includes identifying and mitigating impacts on commercial agriculture, use of the Agricultural Data Statement to inform nearby farmland owners of a proposed project, and the establishment of various land use conflict mitigations, such as separation distances and buffers from farmland.

The subdivision code sets land use conflict mitigation and considers agricultural land activity as an already developed use so that conflict mitigation measures may be applied. These include authorizing the Planning Board to site residential subdivisions sufficient distances from agricultural activities and to protect agricultural lands from development and to be retained in contiguous pieces without fragmentation. It also establishes that the Planning Board require permanent, well-defined buffers when a subdivision is adjacent or close to being affected by operations on

agricultural land designated as prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance. The buffer is set at no less than 50 feet and up to 200 yards wide to be determined by the Planning Board. Mitigation also includes the encouragement of voluntary donation of conservation easements for agricultural purposes.

The Subdivision Law also:

- Excludes agricultural farm management practices, farm buildings and land use changes consistent with generally accepted principles of farming from being considered 'development' reviewed via the subdivision law.
- Allows for a waiver of field survey for new parcels when land is to be used for commercial agricultural purposes.
- Requires consideration of the County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan.
- Establishes a sketch plan conference early in the process to evaluate consistency with the intent and purpose of the Agricultural District and Critical Environmental Areas in Easton and requires the Planning Board to consider impacts on commercial agriculture.
- Includes agriculture in determinations of Significance for SEQRA including whether a new subdivision would result in change in use of agricultural land.
- Provides for Washington County review of actions when they are within 500' from the boundary of a farm operation located in a NYS Agricultural District.
- Requires major subdivisions to have a statement from the Commissioner of the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets certifying a review under Section 305 (4) of Article 25-AA to minimize or avoid adverse impacts on agriculture.
- References and requires an Agricultural Disclosure Notice (Section 21) to inform new land buyers that the land they are purchasing is within an Agricultural District.

[Right-to-Farm Law](#)

New York State's Agricultural and Markets Law 25-aa includes a Right-to-Farm provision. This requires the Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets to resolve disputes about farm practices within a certified NYS Agricultural District. While New York State has a Right-to-Farm law (RTF), many municipalities have adopted their own RTF law, including Easton and most of the other Towns in Washington County.

Easton's RTF Law was adopted in 1993 (Local Law 1 of 1992). Its purpose was to recognize the rural tradition and character of the Town to permit continuation of farming, to protect operation of existing farms, and to encourage new and expanded farming businesses. More specifically, Easton's RTF law states:

“In recognition of the fact that there are many practices and activities which are inherent to and necessary for the business of farming, it is the specific purpose and intent of this Local Law to attain the aforementioned goals and objectives by providing that such practices and activities may proceed and be undertaken free of unreasonable and unwarranted interference of restrictions. The Town Board further finds that the continued maintenance and growth of farming are essential elements in the economic stability of the Town of Easton and so declarers, in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan of the Town of Easton, that agriculture is the preferred and dominant land use. An additional purpose is to promote a good neighbor policy between agricultural and nonagricultural residents of the own and encourage farmers to be considerate, responsible and careful with their practices so as to minimize the effect on others as much as possible.”

The RTF Law accomplishes this by creating a local Grievance Committee to resolve disputes that cannot be resolved directly between the parties involved. It also prohibits interference that unreasonably, intentionally, knowingly, or deliberately interferes with, prevents, or in any way deters the practice of farming in the Town by setting fines. Further, it declares that farming practices in the Town shall not be considered a public or private nuisance, provided that those farming practices are consistent with management practices recommended by the USDA Soil Conservation Service or the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets. Finally, the RTF Law establishes a notification of prospective real estate buyers that they are considering purchasing or occupying land that within the Agricultural District and that buyers should expect and accept agricultural activities and operations as a normal and necessary aspect of living in Easton.

Code Audit

Easton does not have either site plan review regulations or a zoning law. A site plan review process could be used to regulate land activities so that their arrangement protects public health and fits with defined standards for community character. As this Plan was under preparation, Town officials were considering forming a site plan approval regulation. When this Plan is adopted, there could be legislative process in order to consider the adoption of site plan approval regulations. In the future, should there be consideration for establishing any zoning framework, such regulations should prioritize agriculture, and channel more intense residential and nonresidential growth in the north and in distinct locations targeted for growth, such as in traditional hamlets or cross roads.

Some elements of subdivision that are not included in the Subdivision Law but that would enhance protection of agriculture while enabling modest compatible growth, including in housing, include:

- Provisions for voluntary or mandatory clustering or conservation subdivisions which would require a percentage of the original parcel to remain as open space and available for agriculture.

- Rural siting standards to require or encourage for non-farm development that would maximize protection of agricultural lands and rural character either for minor or major subdivisions.
- Identification of secondary agricultural businesses that would be compatible with farm uses (such as a tasting room, direct sales, or agritourism) to ensure they are exempt and not considered reviewable.
- Required subdivision plat information to be provided should require mapping or depiction location of prime or important farmland soils.
- Buffers and setbacks as may be required by the Planning Board should be included in the list of plat information to be provided to the Town.
- More emphasis on the many natural resources that are also important to the character and environment of the Town as well as to agriculture. Protection of fertile soils, forest lands, wetlands and streams, and other natural resources should have a more prominent role in the subdivision law.

As almost the entire area of the Town is included in a NYS DEC/SEQRA established Critical Environmental Area (CEA), use of the Full Environmental Assessment Form (FEAF), as required under SEQRA for CEA's, is not articulated or required in local laws. The Planning Board in its review of subdivisions is required under SEQRA to evaluate potential impacts on lands within an Agricultural District. Little information about adjacent farming, potential farmland fragmentation, and other features is required to be submitted. The use of a FEAF can aid in data collection and assist the Planning Board in conducting the required evaluation of impacts on agriculture during subdivision.



ECONOMIC VITALITY

Achieve a diversified economic base which centers on the agricultural and natural resource-based enterprises that underpin Easton's rural character.

A discussion of economic vitality in Easton involves examining features of the economic base, along with strategies that have been used, or may be proposed, at the local or regional level, in order to enhance economic resilience, growth, and quality of life. In a broad sense, economic vitality relates to the features of different sectors and economic diversification, workforce development, market characteristics, land use planning, and financial and institutional supports.

In Easton the economy is deeply rooted in the agricultural heritage and farming traditions. Yet, there are other noteworthy attributes of this area's economy. There are a variety of businesses which cover manufacturing, energy production, stone and gravel, retail, and professional services.

GOALS & STRATEGIES FOR ECONOMIC VITALITY IN EASTON

ECONOMIC VITALITY GOAL 1: Support and embrace agricultural industry and the Right-to-Farm in Easton.

- A. Support a purchase of development rights (PDR) program to enable farmers to derive value from properties.
- B. Encourage farm stores, farm stands and farmers' cooperatives.
- C. Assist young farmers in securing places to farm, through lease or purchase.
- D. Support growth and diversification of local agricultural markets and help leverage efforts by producers. Examples may cover food processing, storage, plant nurseries, or forestry.
- E. Establish Easton agriculture brand and identity.

ECONOMIC VITALITY GOAL 2: Support business retention, economic diversification, and availability of basic retail services in Town.

- A. Create a farmers' market in Easton that does not conflict with other nearby farmers' markets (perhaps start by attempting a once or twice a year event at or inside Burton Hall).
- B. Help establish and sustain agricultural-related businesses, such as machinery repair or veterinary services.

- C. Support home-based businesses / cottage industries, promoting the migration of successful enterprises to locations specifically equipped to accommodate these mature and growing commercial business.
- D. Encourage economic and commercial activities in and around Herrington Hill Road and Intervale Road that are compatible with surrounding recreational land uses, such as at Willard Mountain and Easton Mountain Retreat Center,

ECONOMIC VITALITY GOAL 3: Support agritourism to diversify the economy and preserve Easton’s rural character.

- A. Encourage farm breweries, wineries, and farm-based recreation and tourism. Compatible examples may include event venues, bed & breakfasts, u-pick, hunting, fishing, camping, nature viewing, or other enterprises that support the sustainability of farming.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ENVIRONMENT

Some notable features of the regional economic environment overlaying Washington and Saratoga Counties is the relatively high amount of manufacturing in Washington County, a vital agricultural sector, and a growing technological base that centers on Saratoga County. There is also a significant influence from recreation and tourism.

In Easton, as discussed in this Plan, there is a considerable and varied agricultural economic base. There are many enterprises that serve agricultural sector in one way or another. Meanwhile, the Fort Miller Group, which develops precast concrete products, has a sizable facility adjacent to Route 29. The manufacturer for industrial applications Hollingsworth and Vose has a plant, including a turbine powered by the Battenkill River, in the northwest end of Town. There is also a small retail business concentration in the north part of Town near the State highways located in that area.

Capital Region Economic Development Council (REDC)

The Regional Economic Development Council initiative (REDC) is a key component of New York State’s transformative approach to State investment and economic development. In 2011, the Governor established 10 Regional Councils to develop long-term strategic plans for economic growth for their regions. The Councils are public-private partnerships made up of local experts and stakeholders from business, academia, local government, and non-governmental organizations.

The local REDC is generally responsible for outlining priorities and overseeing funding for state-wide grant programs with the intent to fund projects that promote beneficial local economic development. The REDCs allocate substantial funding for shovel-ready projects to stimulate New

York's economy. This is the single most beneficial financial support mechanism for local governments seeking to leverage community and economic development, including job creation.

Employment Patterns

According to the Demographic & Economic Profile prepared as backing for this Plan¹⁸, there are 773 jobs situated in Easton. Some 478 jobs, or 62% of the total were within Manufacturing, while 90 (12%) were in Agriculture. The other sectors within the top five out of 20 categories for the jobs based in Easton were: Construction (55 jobs), Finance & Insurance (35 jobs), and Other non-public services (31).

It is notable that that these top five sectors within the local jobs base all grew. Each of these five sectors added rather than lost jobs between 2002 and 2021. The Town's top sector by current employment – Manufacturing added 448 jobs in this period. During this same 20 year period, Agriculture added 60 jobs. As the workforce ages regionally, as well the Town's resident population ages, it will be worth monitoring whether there is job growth in the same sectors.

The labor force participation rate among adults age 16 years or older in Easton was approximately 59.1%. Drawing on the data sources and methodologies, as shown in the graphic that follows, among the adult resident population, Easton's workforce stands at 1,005 persons.

¹⁸ 4Ward Planning. (2024). Easton Comprehensive Plan, Demographic & Economic Profile, p-34.

The vast majority of residents of Easton who are participating in the labor force, some 90% (900 workers), travel outside of the Town of Easton to their places of employment. The Inflow/Outflow graphic and chart (Inflow/Outflow Job Counts, 2021 and Table 9) shows residents who commute outside Easton's borders for work. Meanwhile, the same graphic and the data table show a significant number of workers (680 persons) that commute into Town for purposes of work.

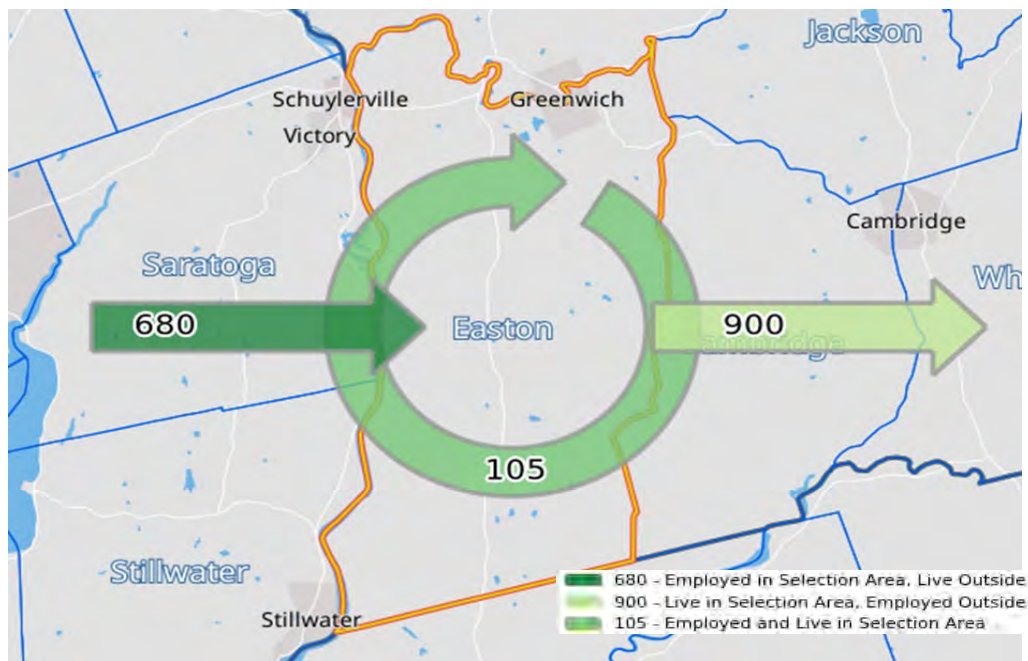


Figure 19: Inflow/Outflow Job Counts, 2021

Table 8. Workforce Inflow/Outflow

Workforce Inflow/Outflow, 2021		
Worker Categories	Count	Share
Work in Easton	785	100%
Work in Easton, Live Outside	680	86.6%
Share of Workers Living in Easton	105	13.4%
Easton Resident Workforce	1,005	100.0%
Live in Easton, Work Outside	900	89.6%
Share of Residents Working in Easton	105	10.4%

As shown in the graphic and table, there is a relatively large number of jobs located in this community. Ten percent of the jobs located in Easton are held by people who reside in Easton. Not shown in the Jobs by Distance table is that ‘Average Travel Time to Work’ by Easton residents was 29 minutes according to the American County Survey (ACS). This was slightly higher than the average in Washington County, at 26 minutes in 2023. The bulk of the workforce, as judged from the figure above depicting ‘where Easton workers are employed’, likely appear to have workplaces in and by the Village of Greenwich. There are smaller, but sizable numbers of residents commuting to Saratoga Springs and Mechanicville for work.

Table 9. Distance Workers Traveled to Jobs

Distance Workers Traveled, to Jobs Located in Easton 2021		
Work to Home	Count	Share
Total Jobs	785	100%
Less than 10 Miles	314	40%
10 to 24 Miles	352	44.8%
25 to 50 Miles	62	7.9%
Greater than 50 Miles	57	7.3%

For people who travel into Easton for work (Table 9) a large segment, 44.8% traveled 10 to 24 miles from their places of residence in order to reach their job sites in Easton. Some 40.0% draw from less than ten miles away, likely from places such as Schuylerville, Greenwich and Mechanicville.

The Demographic & Economic Profile compares employment patterns in Town with a broader overlapping Primary Market Area (PMA) covering the Town and locations outside it that are up to a 20-minute drive away from a center point established in Town. That center point is at State Route 40 and Sales Ferry Road. Using statistics for the 20 minute PMA, there are more jobs located in Easton in manufacturing and agriculture compared with the PMA covering parts of the Towns of Greenwich, Jackson, Cambridge, Schaghticoke, Stillwater, Saratoga and Northumberland.

Considering occupational features, for the civilian-employed population aged 16 years and over:

- There are 43.4% engaged in management, business, science and arts type jobs;
- Some 20.7% are employed in service occupations; and
- Another 13.4% in sales and office occupations.

A smaller percentage is involved in natural resources, construction, maintenance occupations, production, transportation, and material moving occupations. The data suggests a diverse occupational landscape in Easton, with concentrations in certain sectors, such as manufacturing, potentially reflecting regional economic priorities and opportunities.

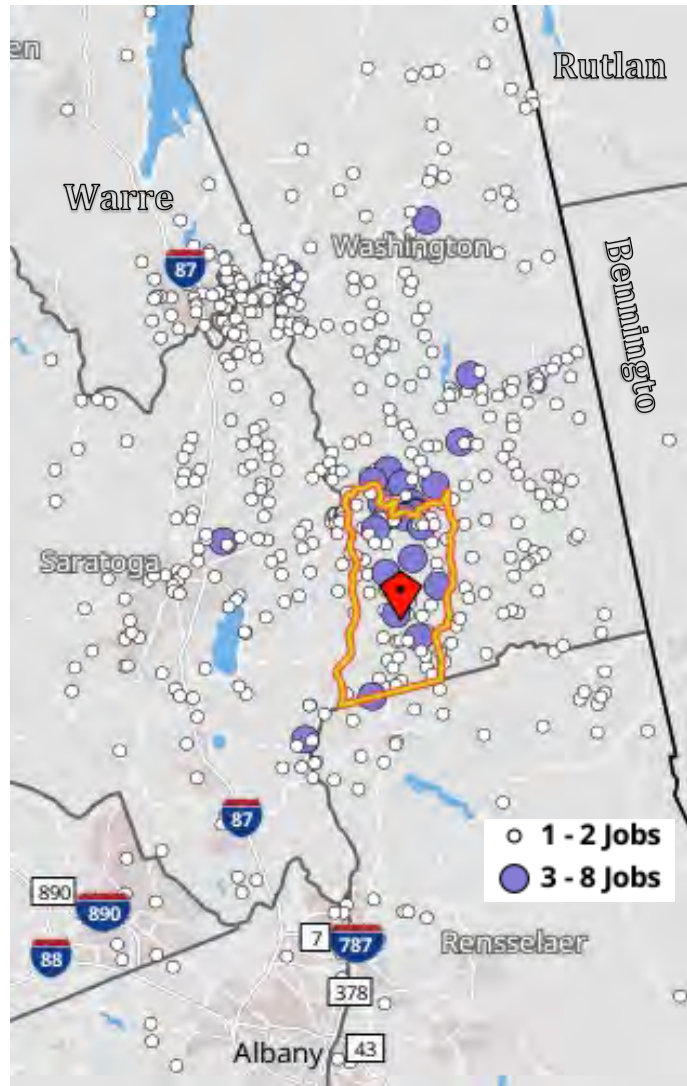


Figure 20: Where Easton Workers are Employed

Business Activity

Standard Industry Classification (SIC) data for Easton (bars in the graph) shows that the most active industries are agriculture/mining at 20.0%, retail trade at 20.0%, and service at 18.9%. There is a diverse economy and the bars depict higher levels of agriculture, construction and manufacturing as compared with the white dashed lines with triangle data points that depict the comparative rates for each category in Washington County. In other words, Easton as a subdivision differs from Washington County in that its jobs are more mining/agricultural and Construction based, compared to disproportionately higher levels of Services in the County overall.

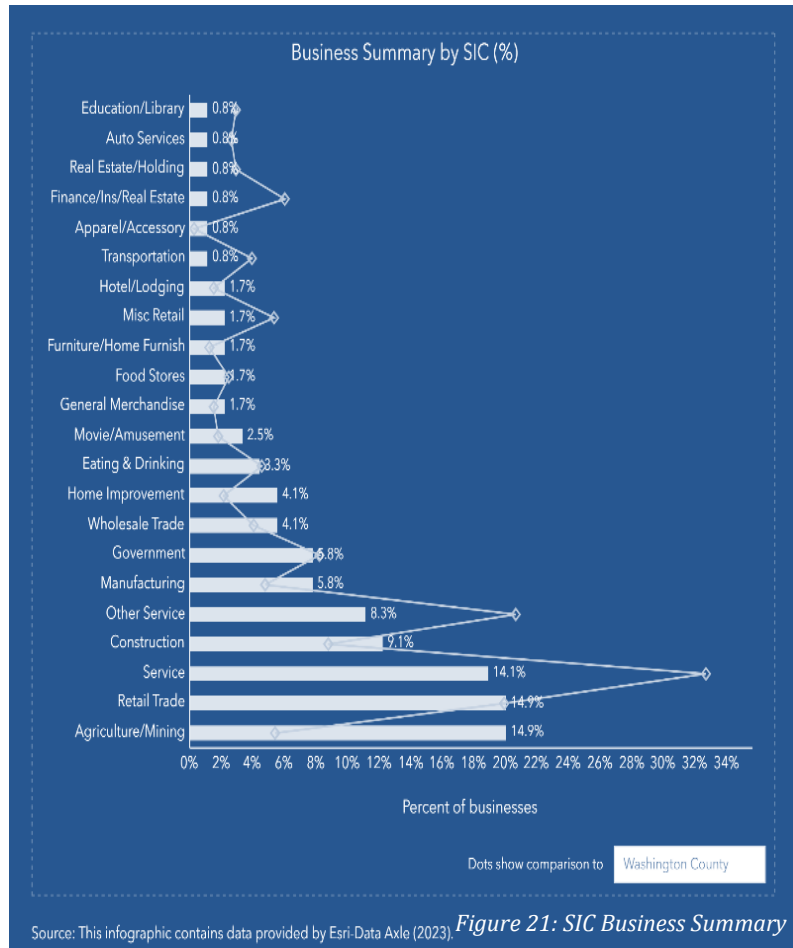


Figure 21: SIC Business Summary

Agricultural Economy

As part of working toward a diverse economic base, it is beneficial to consider attributes of agriculture and ways to support not established farms, emerging agribusinesses and value-added agricultural production. Moreover, the utilization of sustainable practices can ensure that farming thrives while preserving natural resources. Agricultural economic planning can also involve enabling farmers and local entrepreneurs to adapt to changing markets and environmental challenges.

In Easton, increasing land values, including because of farmland conversion pressures, can make it difficult for farmers to afford to buy land for farming purposes. New and young farmers often have significant barriers to entry into farming because of the lack of available and/or affordable land¹⁹. A lack of a new generation of farmers adds stress to the maintenance of significant farming. Focusing on Easton's agricultural assets and strengths, key features include:

¹⁹ Community Profile & Future Trends – Agricultural Resources, prepared by Nan Stolzenberg, FAICP, CEP,

- A critical mass of farmland remains available for agricultural activities. Easton is an agricultural hub that supports surrounding places and farming remains as the dominant land use.
- The Town has abundant farmland soils conducive to agriculture.
- Preserved farmland already exists in Easton that forms a core critical mass.
- The Town has consistently shown its commitment to agriculture and this ties into complimentary local policies, such as:
 - A Right-to-Farm Law.
 - Subdivision laws that favor agriculture.
- As discussed in the descriptions of agricultural uses and types in the Living Environment section, there are numerous small farms that offer diversity and value-added products.
- Easton’s location and access to Albany, Saratoga, Clifton Park, and Glens Falls is an asset.
- The Town supports agritourism.

Regional Agricultural Context

Examining the broader, regional context of agriculture, the United States Agricultural Census offers a comprehensive picture of farming in the County. The Town holds an important role in Washington County as a critical location for farming.

Overall, the County has lost farms (18%) between 2017 and 2022 – but not farmland. The last Agricultural Census showed there is 5% more land in farming, and a 28% increase in the average size of farms in the County²⁰ This likely reflects farmland that was absorbed by other farms. Even with an 18% loss of those farms, the economic strength of agriculture in the County continues, with a large increase in market value, income, and value of sales.



Community Planning & Environmental Associates, page 23 (report prepared as a subcomponent of this Comprehensive Plan).

²⁰ 2022 Census of Agriculture - County Profile for Washington County.

Agricultural support networks such as Cornell Cooperative Extension, the County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), the Agricultural Stewardship Association, and other organizations exist and are accessible to farms in-town. The support network also consists of agricultural-businesses that operate on a regional level. Interest and focus on bolstering the agricultural economy represent an opportunity to tap into regional networks and promote multi-party collaboration, aiding in advancing objectives identified in Washington County's Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan. Tapping into a regional approach to agricultural economic development, involves expanding planning and implementation across jurisdictional lines to increase effectiveness, sustainability, and resiliency. Building and maintaining a strong farming web will enable local farmers to innovate and prepare for market and climate changes and marshal resources to promote future health and success for their farms and the whole farming community.



In addition to agritourism, which is discussed more below, the following are ways to advance agriculture and related businesses in Easton:

- Have an Easton Market where farmers can sell directly to consumers.
- The Town should support landowners and farmers who voluntarily wish to conserve their land through agricultural conservation easements (whether purchased, donated or a bargain sale). Grant funders, including New York State, typically require letters of support or resolutions for such easements from the Town.
- Support other tools like pre-emptive purchase rights and other mechanisms that make land affordable and/or more accessible for the next generation of farmers.
- The Town could support efforts such as community farms/forests and trails that provide a community benefit while allowing people to experience working lands. Connecting people to the working landscapes is a growing need to build support for agriculture.
- Encourage the diversification of agricultural activities to support the industry.
- Continue to uphold and promote Easton's identity as an agricultural community.
- Ensure that infrastructure improvements, such as broadband internet, support agricultural businesses. This relates to improving and maintaining infrastructure that supports agricultural operations, such as roads, and utilities to enhance the viability of farming.
- Provide support for agricultural property owners to maintain and enhance their operations. Offer incentives for landowners to preserve agricultural land, such as tax breaks, grants, or use conservation easements, to ensure that farmland remains dedicated to agricultural use.

Tourism Environment

Tourism is a facet of the economy of many upstate areas. The community has notable visitor attractions. There is regional attention on ways farms can integrate agritourism offerings into their operations to create revenue generating activities and help ensure long term economic resiliency.

Local planners can contemplate ways to facilitate compatible agritourism, including agricultural-related educational offerings, event space, farm-based activities, and food and beverage offerings. To support continuing diversification of farming and farming related activities, some recommendations and opportunities are:

- Become part of the Upper Hudson American Viticultural Area. Reinvent and encourage wine trails among multiple communities.
- Utilize relationships with local wineries as a model to attract other agritourism businesses.
- Promote farm to table efforts.
- Expand direct sales of Easton agricultural products.
- Encourage businesses related to agritourism and agricultural activities to promote economic growth.

Accommodations and Food Services is a growing sector in the PMA around Easton and in a broader three County area analyzed for the Plan in the Demographic and Economic Profile. Visitor spending drives the region's tourism economy, but this spending is largely in Saratoga County. While rates of traveler spending are low in Washington County, anecdotally, it does seem that attractions like Willard Mountain and activities at the Washington County Fairgrounds do underpin tourism spending in Easton. Also, substantial parts of this type of spending in Washington County is associated with the upkeep of seasonal second homes for recreational use. Construction trade jobs that service this segment of tourism spending have relatively desirable mid-range earnings, and could be an important source of support for the construction sector overall.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION/ MOBILITY

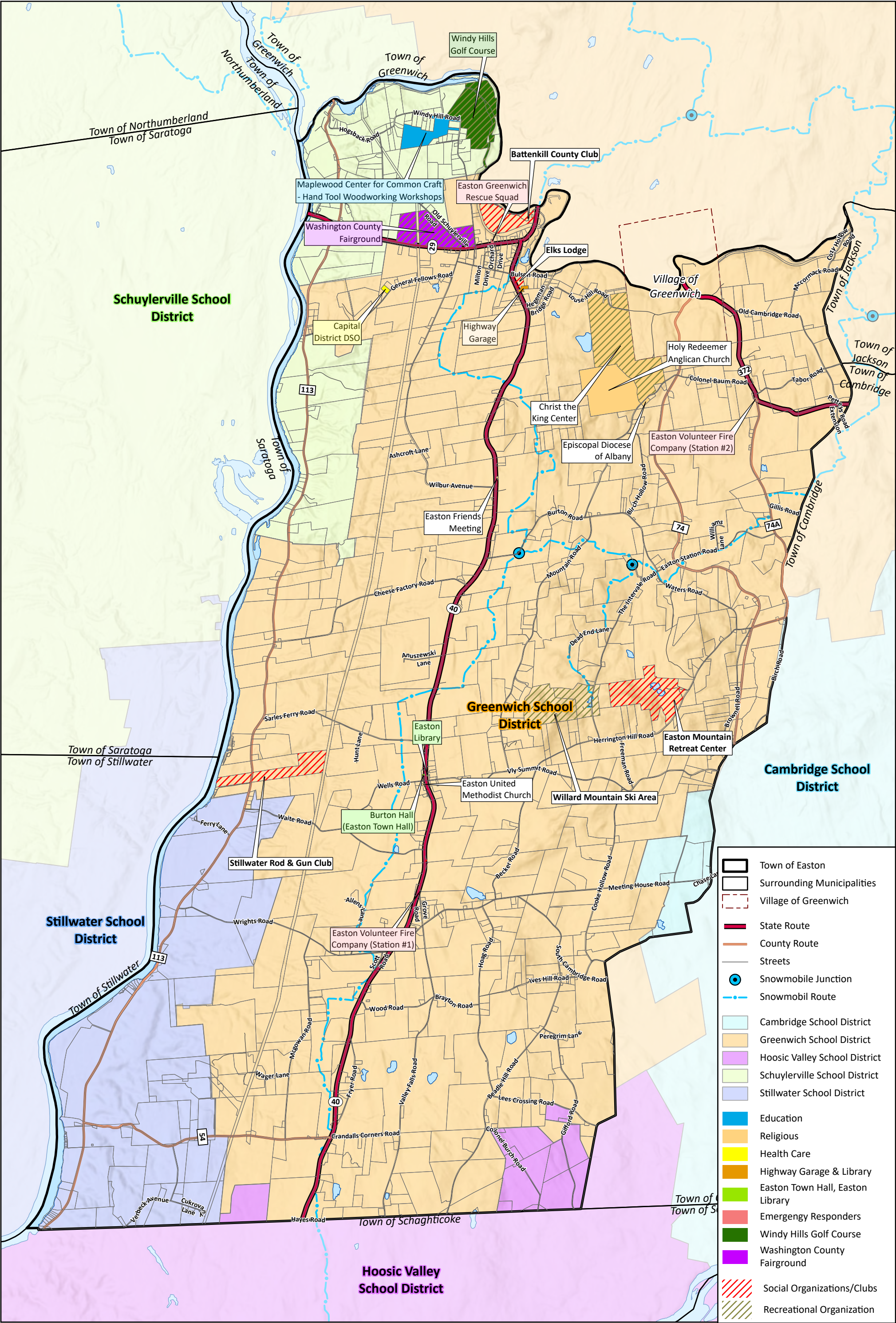
Provide for capital investments which enable quality and resilient growth, assist transport safety, and spur mobility options for residents.

This category or section of the Plan covers foundational systems, such as public and quasi-public facilities, and services, that support the functioning, sustainability, and well-being of Easton. These facets of the physical and social-economic environment are integral to addressing growth, development, and quality of life. Features of the transportation environment are described here because mobility influences land use capacity and it enable connections between different land uses and areas. This linkage is fundamental in establishing coherent community patterns. These types of attributes are displayed on the **Community Resource Map**

This part broadly addresses and describes characteristics of government as an aid to defining context, but it focuses on capital items, such as buildings, public properties, utility systems and recreation assets, as well as roads and bridges, while also touching on patterns of mobility in and around Easton. Certainly, the operation and upkeep of the transportation system is a major focus of local government and it does influence patterns of land use and development.

Community infrastructure also influences the economic base, environmental quality, as well as physical resilience and emergency preparedness. Capital facilities have a durable dimension and their upkeep or enhancement often involves major expenditures. Therefore, considering government organization and structure and planning for community infrastructure and mobility and new major expenditures are powerful considerations in terms of implementing the Comprehensive Plan.





CIT GOAL 1: Advocate for broadband and cellular communications infrastructure upgrades so that all parts of Town receive quality services.

- A. Work with Washington County officials, emergency preparedness entities, and cellular providers to improve cell service coverage throughout Town and leverage federal or state incentives that aim to eliminate service gaps. Require colocation where practicable, and utilize existing structures where available.
- B. Utilize up-to-date mapping, actively support grant appeals, and meet periodically with County officials on strategies to assemble needed resources and forge partnerships with internet service providers to fill service gaps plus achieve ultra high-speed broadband/internet coverage in the Town and region.

CIT GOAL 2: Strategically invest in road and drainage systems in order to cost-effectively sustain these public assets plus bolster resilience to flooding.

- A. Identify culverts that should be replaced and could be resized to accommodate stormwater surges and avoid failure from flooding.
- B. Consider needed enhancements/investments in roadways and drainage systems to prevent deterioration of road beds and maintain pavement quality, while developing a road investment cycle/ schedule to ensure that no road degrades to the point that highly costly reconstruction is required.

CIT GOAL 3: Explore potential to extend public water in the north of Town, without exceeding budget capacity, or disrupting farming.

- A. Examine the feasibility of extending public water service from Greenwich into the unincorporated parts of Town around the Village to sustain a vital community center.

CIT GOAL 4: Foster transportation safety townwide.

- A. Form a strategy for providing traffic calming within key streets and intersections and enhancing walk- and bicycle-ability around higher traffic areas in northern parts of Town between Schuylerville, the County Fairgrounds, Greenwich, and streets east of there.
- B. Explore options for enhancing the Routes 29/40 intersection, including pedestrian safety, driveway access, curb cut reductions, and potential traffic flow improvements.
- C. Encourage regional transportation officials to study crashes and develop recommendations for improving traffic safety all around Town.
- D. Inventory and create a long-term plan to repair and replace any non-ADA compliant Town infrastructure.

CIT GOAL 5: Enable trail connections throughout Town.

- A. Assess ways to support bicycling and walking and identify strategies for trails, and access to trailheads, within a trails element of a recreation master plan, or through a trails plan. This can allow Easton to capitalize on its pleasant setting, waterfront, and proximity to the Empire State Trail.

CIT GOAL 6: Advocate for regional transport solutions that aid mobility and better connect residents and businesses.

- A. Promote Washington County’s development of rural public transport and workforce mobility project(s) with involvement of stakeholders such as the Capital District Transit Authority (CDTA), human service agencies, large employers, and service providers covering taxis, Uber, or Lyft, to support community mobility for people who cannot or do not drive or own a car in this part of the region, building off the 2023 Rural Workforce Transportation Plan.

CELLULAR & BROADBAND SERVICES

New York State provides broadband mapping data to allow the public to analyze the availability of broadband services across the State for individual addresses. This information is required to be updated on a yearly basis. Although it was not possible to definitively depict areas of low coverage in the Town, the website for the NY State Broadband Map provides statistics regarding the status of broadband service and the types of service available. According to this website, approximately 12.6% of the Town is not served by broadband service (and 0.8% is underserved). This is slightly more than Washington County (8.7% not served). Internet service providers include multiple satellite providers and one using coaxial technology.²¹ The Lake Champlain Lake George Regional Planning Board (LGLCRPB) is expected to issue a Regional Broadband Deployment Plan in 2025. This will provide strategies for broadband build-out efforts to reach underserved and unserved households, businesses, and anchor institutions within a five-county region²².

In 2024, the LGLCRPB, in partnership with the NYS Connect ALL Office, was awarded a \$250,000 grant to complete a North Country Cellular Deployment Plan, which will identify main travel corridors and developed areas lacking cell service, and help identify solutions. According to LGLCRPB’s mapping, there are areas of no service in the southern part of the Town of Easton straddling State Route 40 in the vicinity and north of Crandall Corners and west of Gifford Road²³.

²¹ <https://mapmybroadband.dps.ny.gov/>

²² <https://www.lclgrpb.org/cellular-broadband>

²³ <https://warrencountyny.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/reporter/> (accessed March 25, 2025)

ROADS & DRAINAGE

The Town Highway Department maintains roads and drainage structures within the Town road rights of way. There are a series of culverts and open swales depending on the physical arrangements of the stormwater management systems.

The Town maintains approximately 88 centerline miles of Town Roads. It does not provide road maintenance within the Village of Greenwich, as that is a separate municipal jurisdiction. Generally, County and State routes are maintained by those respective owners.

The Highway Superintendent indicates there were a few undersized or damaged culverts that need to be replaced because of their age, with such projects completed on a managed schedule. There are some culvert / stream crossing projects identified for Easton in the Upper Hudson River Watershed Revitalization Plan some of which could be eligible for mitigation funding available from the NY State Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP).²⁴

WATER & SEWER

Residents and businesses within the Town are serviced predominantly by onsite well and septic systems in order to address their drinking water and sewerage disposal needs. One exception is a small area in the incorporated Village of Greenwich serviced by a public water system. A water line extension comes from the north across the bridge and services areas in the southern end of the Village around Rock Street and Barber Avenue. There is also a municipal sewer in the north side of the Village of Greenwich, but it does not extend south across the Battenkill River.

The onsite well and septic systems are approved by the County Public Health Department prior to approval of development. According to available information from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, six commercial operations are permitted for water withdraws. Three are associated with agricultural uses, one with an industrial use, and one is associated with a golf course.

MUNICIPAL RESOURCES

Town Government

The Town of Easton was incorporated in 1789. The Town government consists of a Town Supervisor, who is elected to a two-year term, and four Town Board members all of whom are

²⁴dos.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2023/06/upper_hudson_river_watershed_revitalization_plan_2020.pdf

elected to four-year terms. The Highway Superintendent, the Town Clerk, and the Town Justice are also elected to four-year terms. All other positions within the Town are appointed. Appointments vary as some are appointed by the Town Supervisor, the Town Clerk, and the Town Highway Superintendent and approved by the Town Board. The Judges make their own appointments to the court clerk. Additionally, the Town Board appoints other positions in the Town.

The Town of Easton provides a wide range of services for the residents. Key services provided by the Town include:

- Highway Services
- Justice Court
- Building Inspector
- Planning Board
- Animal Control Services
- Fire Department (support)
- Historian
- Archivist

Education

The Town of Easton is served by five school districts. The largest area of the Town is covered by the Greenwich Central School District, towards the northwest is the Schuylerville Central School District, southwest is the Stillwater Central School District, and on the southern part of the Town are the Cambridge Central School District and Hoosic Valley Central School District. Although Easton spans across five school districts, no school is within the Town's boundary.

School enrollment data is required to be reported for each school district in October of every year, and is made available on the New York State Education Department Website for each school district. The size of the School Districts vary, and the enrollment date for each Central School District (CSD) shown in the table below:



Table 10. School Districts Serving Easton

School District	2022 Enrollment	2023 Enrollment	Change in Enrollment
Hoosic Valley CSD	856	835	-1%
Stillwater CSD	996	986	-1%
Cambridge CSD	810	770	-5%
Schuylerville CSD	1,369	1,350	-1%
Greenwich CSD	855	825	-4%

Source: NYSED BEDS data.

As shown in Table 10, district numbers are declining by a few students every year. In Washington County, NYSED reported 7589 students in the 2022-2023 school year and 7438 students in the 2023-2024 school year, and indicates that at some point, the school districts would need to consolidate to be more efficient. However, in rural areas like the Town of Easton, where topography and access to roads are a concern, consolidation would mean that children may be bussed longer distances, depending on the location of the school. The need consolidate districts and create efficiencies would have to be weighed against the cost of educating children in the school district.

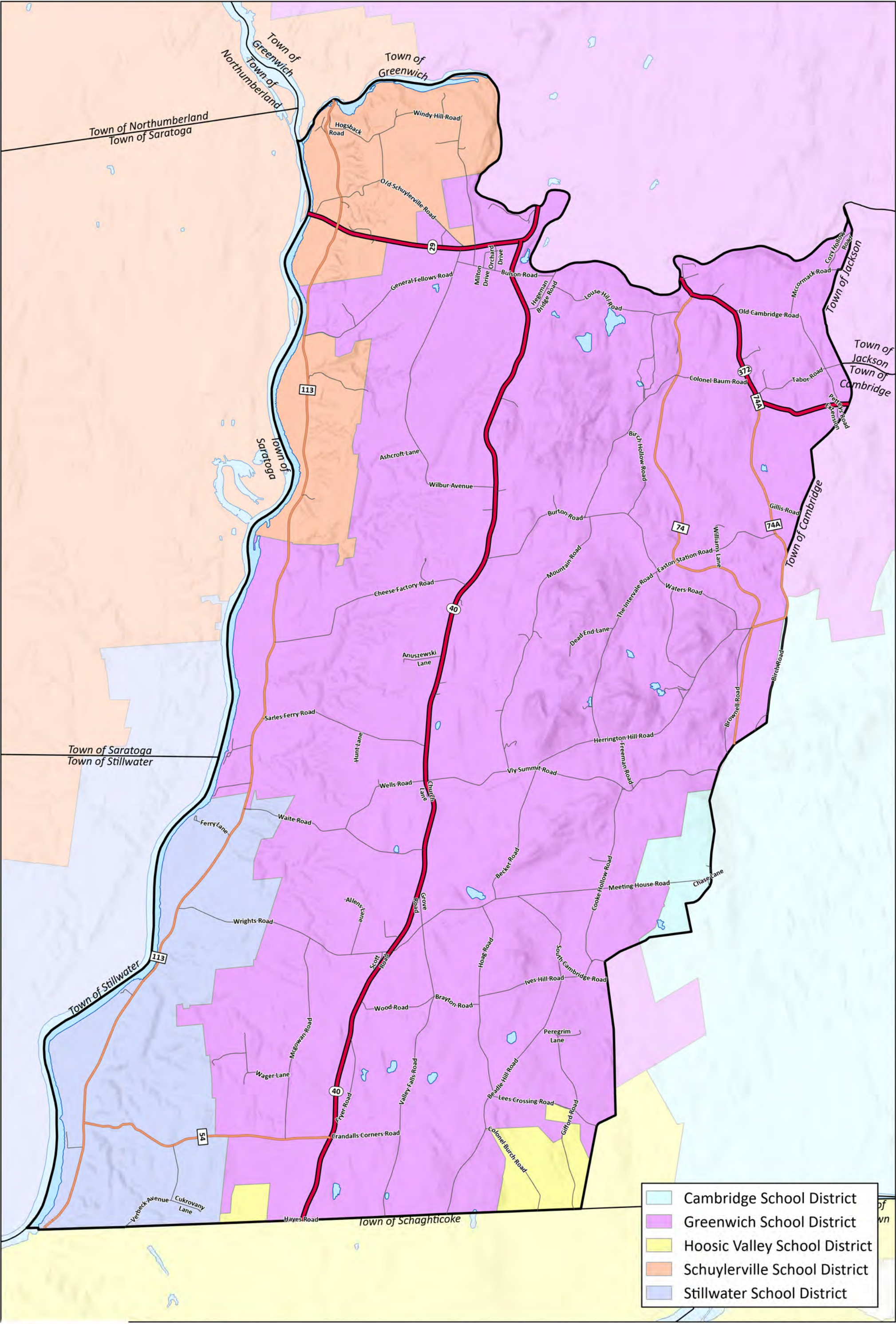
School district enrollment was estimated in Town of Easton for all school districts, as shown in Table 11, which was estimated based on residential parcels and estimated number of children under 18 using 2022 Census Data.

Table 11. School Districts Populations (within Easton)

				2020 Census Data				
School District	Total Parcels	Residential Parcels	Agriculture	Population	Population <18	% of Pop <18	Housing Units	Total Households
Hoosic Valley	12	3	6	18	3	0.69	9	9
Stillwater	94	51	19	113	21	4.85	57	55
Cambridge	6	4	2	30	6	1.39	8	7
Schuylerville	153	80	21	250	49	11.32	95	88
Greenwich	1,046	572	199	1868	354	81.76	868	776
Total	1,311	710	247	2279	433	-	1,037	935

Source: 2020 Census; 2023 Washington County RPS Data

As shown on the table and when compared to the map on the following page, a few of the CSDs serve only a few residential parcels within the Town, and Greenwich covers most of the Town of Easton. The largest provider of public school is Greenwich, and is located within the Village of Greenwich, and children are most likely placed in schools that are nearest to their home.



Public Safety

Law enforcement services in Town of Easton are provided by the Washington County Sheriff's Office as well as the New York State Police. The Sheriff's Office is a full-service law enforcement agency that provides many services to the residents and visitors of Washington County. These include Law Enforcement, Civil Enforcement, Drug Task Force membership, correctional facility operations, and marine navigation. In 2021, the Sheriff's Department responded to 510 calls for service in the Town of Easton²⁵.

Easton has four fire districts: Easton, Greenwich Village (situated in the part of the incorporated Village of Greenwich that is located within Easton), Middle Falls, and Schuylerville. Most of the Town is within the Easton Fire District boundary and includes the two fire stations. The Town established the Easton Fire District as the mechanism to provide financial support to the Fire Company.

The Washington County Public Safety 911 Communications Center provides emergency call and dispatching services centrally. The Center is the sole public safety answering point (PSAP) in Washington County and receives and dispatches services for 35 fire departments, 10 law enforcement agencies, multiple public works agencies, and the County Departments of Social Services, Public Health, and Sewer.

Library Services

The Easton Library is located at 1074 NY-40, Greenwich, New York 12834, across the street from Easton Town Hall. The library is open to the public with regularly conducted activities and an openness to support new initiatives. Various clubs such as the knitting club and storytelling club meet in the library every week. The library plays a crucial role as the Town's de facto community center and works to strengthen Easton's sense of community.

The Easton Library was established in 1879 as part of the Friends' Seminary. The library received its first charter from the University of the State of New York on February 18, 1895. With the closing of the Seminary, the library was housed in several local homes until May 8, 1902, when it moved into one room of Burton Hall. It remained there until the completion of the present building. The formal opening took place on September 10, 1955. Construction that doubled the size of the existing structure began in 1994. The new addition was dedicated on November 5, 1995. The Easton Library functions under the Easton Library Association. It is governed by a board of seven trustees elected by this Association for a term of seven years. It is financially supported by the Town of Easton, the Greenwich Central School District, and the Library Extension Division of the

²⁵ <https://www.washingtoncountyny.gov/DocumentCenter/View/3900/2021-Annual-Report-?bidId=>

University of the State of New York. The library also pursues special grants each year to assist in providing additional materials and programming. The Easton Library is a member of the Southern Adirondack Library System. For the past 130 years the Easton Library has been a center of information, community culture, recreation, and lifelong learning.

Nonprofit & Community Organizations

The Washington County Fairgrounds are located in the Town of Easton along the northern side of NYS Route 29. The fairgrounds are over 130 acres with ample parking, buildings, permanent bathrooms, and numerous amenities to accommodate events throughout the year. The Fairgrounds has a Farm Museum that is open from May to October. Their mission is to cultivate an appreciation for agricultural life by providing education on rural heritage. The Southern Adirondack Homesteading Festival and the Adirondack Wool & Arts Festival were hosted at the Washington County Fairground in 2024.



Figure 22: Washington County Farm Museum

The Farm Museum displays artifacts of rural life in Washington County from the early 1800s to the 1940s. Exhibits show the many aspects of agriculture throughout the county including dairy, poultry, potatoes, crop production, and ice harvesting. Local farmers developed many tools to make their work easier and faster. Some inventions were very successful, and others never got off the local homestead. Items in the Farm Museum collection were all used or manufactured in Washington County. Additional authentic outbuildings were moved to the museum complex including a corncrib, summer kitchen, milkhouse, and an 1853 one-room schoolhouse complete with woodshed and outhouses.

Christ the King Center

In 1999, The Right Reverend Daniel W. Herzog, the eighth Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Albany, empowered a committee to evaluate the existing diocesan camp and conference facilities while creating a Christ-centered program for people of all ages. After nearly two years, the committee concluded the facilities failed to meet current and future needs. The committee identified more than 700 potential sites and evaluated dozens. In December 2002, the Diocese of Albany purchased 612 acres of attractive property in the rolling hills of Washington County.

Once a working bull ranch called Leatherstocking Farms, the property had been idle for years. The site includes inspiring views of the countryside, a private lake, ponds, wetlands, miles of hiking trails, and 1,600 feet on the Battenkill River.

Hundreds of volunteers with many construction crews worked hard on the former farm to evolve it into the Christ the King Center, a thriving community facility that today includes more than 20 buildings and serves hundreds of groups and thousands of individuals from across the globe annually. This 600-acre property also provides public facilities including lodging, dining, walking trails, lake access, horseback riding, dog walking, and a disc golf course.

Transportation Infrastructure

The transportation network within the Town of Easton is comprised of three (3) state routes, four (4) county routes, and numerous local roads. The Town of Easton is responsible for 139.7 centerline miles of roads.

Table 12. Easton Road Categories

Easton Road Categories	Miles
State Routes	16.04 Miles
County Routes	23.66 Miles
Other Streets	100.01 Miles

Source: NYS Streets 2023 Database

Currently, there is no regional transit system serving the Town of Easton. The Capital District Transportation Authority provides services in Albany, Schenectady, Rensselaer, and Saratoga Counties. CDTA's Northway Express provides commuter service reaching as far north as Wilton for riders to have access to the Albany area. There are commuter park and ride lots available; however, the closest is in northern Saratoga County.

The closest rail depot is the Fort Edward train station, which is closer than Saratoga Springs station. Both are served by Amtrak's daily Ethan Allen Express. The Amtrak Adirondack line that runs between New York City and Montreal was suspended in 2020 and reopened in 2023. Fort Edward station is also served by Greater Glens Falls Transit's Hudson Falls/Fort Edward line (Route 4) bus service connecting to Glens Falls and surrounding communities on Monday through Saturday.

Albany International Airport is the closest full-service commercial airport to the Town of Easton. As the major air center for the Capital Region, Northeastern New York and Western New England, the Albany International Airport offers a wide range of facilities and services.

Transportation / Mobility

The attributes and character of the transport environment influence local and regional land use relationships and overall development. These effects can shape the economy, environment, public health, and social equity. People do not merely travel through Easton but experience Easton as they move along its corridors. Visitors often travel great distances to access attractions or

activities, such as the Washington County Fair, for example, and residents often travel for work into and out of Town. How people connect with areas outside of the community is important to consider, as are the patterns of mobility inside of the Town. Moreover, it is important to contemplate how the road system influences sense of place in Easton's different regions, as well as to recognize how regional transport policies and planning may influence area activity patterns.

Transportation and mobility directly influence economic vitality, environmental sustainability, social equity and overall community well-being. These systems need to be understood within a regional planning context, including private motorized transport methods, non-motorized active transport and public transit mobility. Residents often rely on regional transport systems to access jobs, goods and services. Transit can potentially provide a form of cost-effective mobility for the workforce, as well as support tourism mobility. In an era of rising costs and an aging population, the Town of Easton needs to look for ways to incorporate transit alternatives into the rural model.

Town Road Abandonment

To keep resources and costs in check, the Town is considering the abandonment of some Town-owned roads. It has been emphasized that the Town Board should conduct a road prioritization analysis to best understand the use and condition of these roads, the impact of potential closures on municipal administration, as well the broader potential benefits or constraints that may arise in conjunction with taking, or not taking, such possible actions. Abandonment includes qualified abandonment, turning over of Town-controlled public roads to private roads, as well as turning some "back-to-nature".

LEADING FOR THE FUTURE

*Steward strategic and resilient growth that
compliments regional development frameworks
and aids governmental efficiency.*

This Comprehensive Plan presents a Vision for the community's future. There is substantial content that explores the possible ways to sustain the health and wellness of the Town and enhance the quality of life of residents. In Easton's case, with a small population, there is a correspondingly small local government public administration, even though the Town occupies a large land area. While the local government is lean, Town leaders are still engaged in administering basic services and managing infrastructure, as well as supporting a quality community. This part of the Plan addresses the effective application of local and regional resources in order to improve governmental processes and provide effective programming that meets the varied needs of residents.

Given the small size of Easton's local government, it is important to align with development initiatives of Washington County, neighboring communities, as well as regional and state agencies. By expanding planning efforts across jurisdictional lines, partnering with interested groups, and sharing resources, there can be streamlining of efforts to address pressing needs and leverage action on complex problems. Though multiparty collaboration it should be possible to increase the effectiveness, sustainability, and resiliency of efforts.

LEADING FOR THE FUTURE GOAL 1: Enhance regionalism through shared services, and coordinated leveraging of community identity and amenities.

- A. Establish ways for the Town Board and citizens to engage with school officials in efforts to adjust to enrollment declines and define ways to provide school services, downsize, or consolidate, and enable use of school facilities for adult learning or other public programming.
- B. Plan for long-term sustainability and interoperability of fire departments and safety services by promoting a County shared services study that examines how to gain efficiencies without degrading levels of service. Pinpoint ways to organize and integrate emergency and public safety functions, covering dispatching, volunteer fire districts and departments coverages, ambulance services, policing, and emergency preparedness (including addressing declines in volunteerism and potential personnel shortages).
- C. Involve Town leaders and staff in updating the County Hazard Mitigation Plan and engage the community on ways to advance recommendations at the local level.

- D. Form a local Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) that addresses infrastructure needs, rationales, costs, and sequencing. Use the CIP to identify projects to undertake locally and pinpoint ones which Town stakeholders want to target for organizing regional action and support.

LEADING FOR THE FUTURE GOAL 2: Plan community resilience to severe rains/ floods and heat waves and build capacity for the agricultural sector to adapt to changing conditions and opportunities.

- A. As updates to regional flood maps advance, examine if there are significant changes in 500- and 100-year flood hazard areas and reinforce a need to steer incompatible growth, such as new housing, outside such locations as a means of hazard avoidance/prevention.
- B. Promote and participate in regional partnerships that can help farmers prepare for and adapt to changing climate conditions.
- C. Establish siting regulations for renewable energy development, ensuring minimal environmental and visual impacts. Limit coverage, direct installations away from high value soils, or other vital resources, and require community benefit fees to provide mitigation, inclusive of the conservation of high value agricultural lands
- D. Provide vulnerability assessments of the local public sector and emergency providers and identify potential capital sources that could aid in their resilient operations when hazard events arise.

GOVERNMENTAL EFFICIENCIES

The Town of Easton has a five member Town Board that includes the elected Supervisor, who is considered the Chief Elected Official. There are also elected and salaried positions for Town Clerk, Highway Superintendent, and Town Judge. School Districts overlapping with the Town are profiled in the section on Community Infrastructure & Transportation. Schools certainly can be a focus for assessing potential consolidation based on the trend for declining enrollments.

The New York State Department of State offers financial assistance to aid local governments with studying and implementing new opportunities for savings and modernizing public services delivery. Funding assistance is available from the Local Government Efficiency Grant (LGE Grant), the Citizens Reorganization and Empowerment Grant (CREG), and the Countywide Shared Services Initiative (CWSSI).



There have been efforts in Washington County to examine the feasibility of intergovernmental cooperation. One project focused on developing shared regional highway operations center(s) in order to optimize the delivery of highway and maintenance services and reduce costs. In Fort Ann, the Town and County share a DPW garage. In Easton, the road and drainage system are the Town's largest class of capital asset. It can make sense in conjunction with Town budgeting and capital planning to explore future opportunities for financial savings and highway operational efficiencies involving the Town, the County and/or adjacent municipalities.

Expenditures on roads and drainage can potentially be costly and require sudden surges in capital spending. Highway operations are capital intensive, requiring specially equipped vehicles and facilities. General examples of topics in this subject area that could potentially be explored are:

- Road maintenance, though workforce cooperation, or the economical joint purchasing of goods.
- Sub-contracting arrangements for snow and ice removal.
- Partnerships in bridge and culvert systems design, reconstruction or upgrade, or maintenance.
- Other aspects of centralized administration and services delivery.

Considering general government operations, there would have to be examination of topics needing exploration for their potential to offer efficiencies. There may be opportunities to gain efficiencies or restructure operations which are supplied across many municipalities. For instance, it may be possible to provide for regionalization of services, or countywide service consolidation such as information services and record keeping, permitting and enforcement, or tax assessing.

HAZARD PLANNING

A Washington County Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) Update is underway with this regional programming being led by the Washington County Department of Public Safety²⁶. The plan will detail potential risks from hazards that could affect this area. It is a mechanism for the County and participating municipal jurisdictions to be eligible for mitigation funding. Mitigation is any sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to life and property from hazard events²⁷.

Hazard mitigation planning can serve to assess impacts from natural or manmade risks and identify ways to break the cycle of damage and repair in hazardous areas. Linking with hazard planning, climate resiliency planning in New York State involves proactive, non-regulatory

²⁶ <https://washingtonconyhmp.com/>

²⁷ <https://www.dhSES.ny.gov/hazard-mitigation#:~:text=Hazard%20mitigation%20is%20any%20sustained,and%20repair%20in%20hazardous%20areas.>

planning that assesses the potential to reduce a community's exposures and vulnerabilities from changing climate conditions, including drought or extreme rains²⁸. Washington County is under contract with the New York State Department of State to develop a Countywide Resiliency Plan²⁹. There is an opportunity for the Town of Easton to structure stakeholder participation that can inform this resiliency planning and leverage concerted and consistent action on mitigating significant risks.

Objectives of Washington County's HMP planning are:

- Conduct a thorough risk assessment using the most recent disaster data and information.
- Provide opportunities for public input throughout the HMP development and drafting.
- Formulate hazard mitigation goals, objectives and actions to help reduce loss of life and property from natural and human-caused hazards.
- Obtain state and federal approval of the HMP.



Figure 23: Diagram from Washington Co. 2024 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

The County was scheduled to finish the HMP in 2024, but it remains incomplete. Despite potential lags, Town leaders can advocate for finalizing the HMP. They can also encourage Town Building and Highway staff, emergency response personnel, and other key interested groups or entities that are involved in planning and reducing risks, or delivering needed services, to participate in the process, and engage the community on prioritizing the allocation of limited Town resources to address and mitigate risks identified by the HMP. The risk assessment, the public involvement, and the blueprint for reducing the potential losses are important components of increasing the Easton community's resiliency to extreme weather events.

²⁸ https://climatesmart.ny.gov/fileadmin/csc/documents/Climate_Smart_Resiliency_Planning_V_2.0.pdf

²⁹ New York Department of State February 26, 2025.

Additionally, it is important to identify locations for shelters and emergency heating and cooling centers within the Town and surrounding areas. This will help determine the level of investments needed to ensure the continued and uninterrupted availability of these essential services.

CLIMATE RESILIENCY & SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES

Climate Smart Communities (CSC) Program - This NYSDEC initiative provides local governments with guidance and funding to plan for a changing climate—helping to formulate strategies to lower greenhouse gas emissions and adapt infrastructure and local operations so the community is resilient in the face climate change. It is a choice of local leaders whether to join the CSC Program. Doing so could provide a platform and access to incentives that Town stakeholders could use as they coordinate efforts, prioritize, and plan actions to reduce emissions and counter rising temperatures. This may include establishing a role for local stakeholders to join in building regional capacity for advancing climate-smart farming methods that can assist mitigation and adaptation in the agricultural sector to help sustain and protect the food supply.

Clean Energy Communities: As a means of prompting a sustainable environment and investment in future-focused clean energy solutions, the New York State Energy Research Development Agency’s (NYSERDA) Clean Energy Communities (CEC) initiative provides resources to help municipalities execute local sustainability goals. Through the support of regionally positioned Clean Energy Coordinators, communities subscribe within a framework that is used to guide and define whether and how to advance high-impact clean energy actions to support compatible local development, and qualify the Town for funding based on progress with actions on this checklist. It will be a choice whether the Town may seek entry into the CEC program. Doing so fits within a smart growth principle to promote and integrate clean energy resources and related incentives. For Easton, it may be feasible to package this effort along with the pursuit of State grants in order to qualify for low or no cost electric or hybrid passenger vehicles or light duty pick-up trucks for use by the Town’s Building official, or highway staff.

NYSERDA has 15 categories of possible action³⁰. The following are some select excerpts and examples of categories for action available for Easton under the CEC initiative:

- Benchmarking and annually reporting of energy used in municipal buildings.
- Providing Build Readiness, which can help define how to advance compatible large-scale renewable energy projects at locations involving underutilized lands, including landfills.
- Clean Fleets, including electric vehicles and charging infrastructure to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and pollutants.

³⁰ NYSERDA High Impact Actions. <https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/All-Programs/Clean-Energy-Communities/High-Impact-Actions>

Green Infrastructure

The Town is known for its agricultural base. The crops, grazing areas, and forest edges provide core vegetated open spaces in the region. These represent green infrastructure that contrasts with nearby urban areas while Easton's farming products underpin a local and sustainable food supply for New Yorkers. Moreover, New York State programs are emerging that focus on the use of agriculture as a practice area that can be used for sequestering carbon within soil, and in forests adjoining active farmland.

Smart Growth and Green Infrastructure as an extension of it, can relate to many facets of the promotion community. Looking ahead there may be opportunities in Easton to promote clean energy facilities, green buildings, the utilization of energy conservation measures, as well as onsite residential use of renewable energy. With significant housing over 50 years old, housing sustainability could be encouraged by making homeowners aware of State incentives. These programs and grants provide assistance with energy-related upgrades, helping to defray the costs of updating heating and cooling plant technologies for more efficient ones. Likewise, it may be possible to promote access to financing that offsets part of the cost for replacing aged windows or upgrading insulation. This can aid economical homeownership and higher assessments and a stable tax base.

Renewable Energy

In Easton, an electrical transmission line corridor runs north-south in the Town and a number solar farms have been established. These solar facilities represent sustainable green energy.

Notably, it is possible to integrate different scales of solar energy systems within and around agricultural uses in potentially complimentary patterns. *Solar Installations on Agricultural Lands*, a guidebook by the New York State Energy Research Development Authority (NYSERDA) demonstrates practices specifically available for blending different scales of solar energy with agriculture, thereby generating multiple benefits for farmers and residents, within desirable patterns of land use.

Stakeholder feedback obtained during Plan formation identified a need for establishing local regulations that will simultaneously guide solar development and agricultural protection. Solar systems can provide a revenue source for agricultural land owners, as well as integrating farming and solar facilities, through agrivoltaics. The guidebook describes models of dual-use solar practices covering techniques such as solar grazing and crop production, as well as pollinator-friendly and conservation-oriented approaches.

In Easton, there is a need to establish standards for different types or tiers of solar arrays, with removal of unnecessary barriers for solar development, and criteria specified for mitigating the

impacts of solar development on agricultural lands. New local regulations and standards provide requirements for application submissions, construction stage development, including the protection of priority agricultural soils, wetlands, and water resources, adjacent farms, provisions for dual-use, as well as decommissioning and property restoration and reclamation. Through attention to the last item, there can be assurance that farming uses may occur in the future, when solar energy systems have been removed.

There are other forms of renewable energy technology that proponents may explore for deployment in Easton. For instance, there may be efforts to locate commercial-scale Battery Electric Storage (BES) adjacent to or as part of solar installations, since solar energy is generated when the sun shines, but using batteries enables energy storage and its release. This would ensure that power is available in evenings when demand for it peaks in the Town and region. Local management of BES through formation of regulations that will guide siting of them is recommended. It would also be beneficial to establish standards for siting of different tiers of wind energy conversion technologies. This would provide a proactive identification of how Easton's planners want to manage the proposed construction of turbines, should interest arise among landowners in the Town.

Water Quality Protection

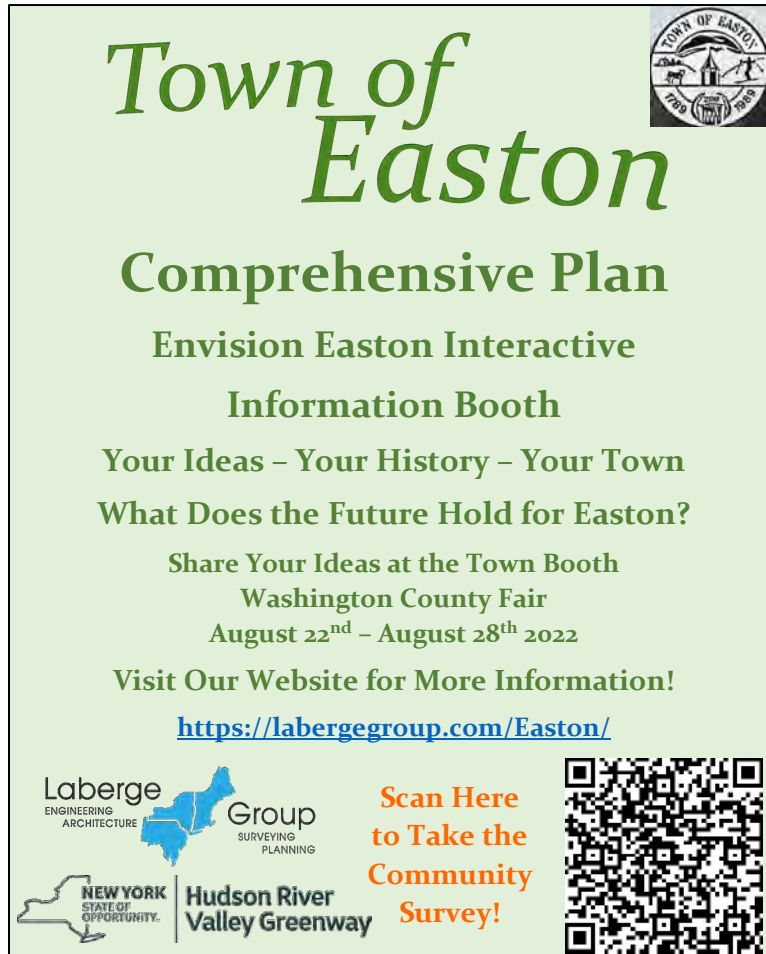
Poorly treated or managed stormwater runoff, whether it be on agricultural properties, along roadsides, or at businesses, is a factor that can impact surface and groundwater water quality in the Town and region. Planning stormwater system upgrades and green infrastructure extensions and retrofits can help counter a warming climate and residents' participation in helping ensure sound land-use and water quality management. Such upgrade planning can involve examining the potential use of preferred practices for nonpoint stormwater management on farm operations. It can also involve examining ways to aid and increase resiliency to extreme weather events ranging from droughts, to intense or prolonged rain events.

Given the large number of local road miles in the Town, it may be advantageous to examine the potential to plan green stormwater system upgrades, and green infrastructure extensions and retrofits that will support water quality protection. This higher performance of the roadside drainage network would enhance resiliency to extreme rains. In Easton this could involve identifying particular stream corridors to focus on for promoting better water quality classifications, or as a means of reducing potential erosion and the impacts of flooding. Focusing on planning for roadway drainage systems may involve assessing the potential to establish open-air drainage designs, rather than piped systems. The latter can be more expensive over time to operate and maintain. When the right conditions are present, such as in crossroads and hamlets, prescribing the utilization of low impact, natural design solutions within the road drainage network can aid and enhance community character.

TOWN OF EASTON PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The following is an overview of the process along with some high-level summary insights received during the outreach efforts performed as part of the public engagement. The Comprehensive Planning Committee (CPC) helped with wide project publicity to provide community awareness and garner input for the vision of the Easton Comprehensive Plan. There was substantial feedback obtained during the robust first phase of public participation that included the community survey, an information gathering booth at the County Fair, stakeholder roundtables, and the first major public workshop. The public participation helped form the basis of the Phase 1 Vision Report.

Overall, between Phase 1, and Phase 2 of this Comprehensive Planning initiative, there have been nine (9) committee meetings, a series of stakeholder roundtable meetings, two (2) public workshops, a community survey, as well as a presence at the Washington County Fair. A schedule of meetings is provided below, and summary of public workshops, stakeholder meetings and a public survey, is also provided within this Section.



The advertisement is a green rectangular poster. At the top right is the Town of Easton seal. The main title 'Town of Easton' is in a large, green, serif font. Below it, 'Comprehensive Plan' is in a smaller, green, serif font. Underneath that, 'Envision Easton Interactive Information Booth' is in a green, sans-serif font. The text 'Your Ideas – Your History – Your Town' and 'What Does the Future Hold for Easton?' are in a green, sans-serif font. Below these, 'Share Your Ideas at the Town Booth' and 'Washington County Fair' are in a green, sans-serif font, followed by 'August 22nd – August 28th 2022'. Then, 'Visit Our Website for More Information!' is in a green, sans-serif font, followed by the URL 'https://labergegroup.com/Easton/'. At the bottom left, there are logos for 'Laberge ENGINEERING ARCHITECTURE' (with a blue map of New York), 'Group SURVEYING PLANNING' (with a blue map of New York), and 'NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY' (with a blue map of New York). To the right of these logos is the text 'Hudson River Valley Greenway'. On the far right, there is a QR code and the text 'Scan Here to Take the Community Survey!' in orange.

Figure 24: Advertisement for County Fair Booth

Table 13. Meeting/Workshop Dates

Meeting / Workshop	Date
PHASE 1	
Committee Meeting 1	June 13, 2022
Committee Meeting 2	July 18, 2022
Committee Meeting 3	September 19, 2022
Committee Meeting 4	November 14, 2022
Committee Meeting 5	April 10, 2023
Washington County Fair	August 22-28, 2022
Public Workshop 1	February 4, 2023
PHASE 2	
Phase 2 Kick-Off	July 10, 2023
Committee Meeting 1	December 19, 2023
Committee Meeting 2	February 12, 2024
Committee Meeting 3	March 26, 2024
Committee Meeting 4	July 31, 2024
Public Workshop 2	September 26, 2024
Committee Meeting 5	March 12, 2025
Stakeholders Roundtable Meeting	January 11, 2023
Stakeholders Roundtable Meeting	January 21, 2023

The Phase 1 Vision Report provides a summary of the outreach and public input gathering during the first portion of Comprehensive Plan development which identified community interests, perspectives, and needs, with this feedback used to inform the vision, and provided for establishing a first draft of planning goals. The May 2023 Envision Easton Visioning Report highlights considerable public engagement efforts undertaken by the Town to identify the needs and direction desired in the future. As agriculture holds a critical role in all aspects of the Town, it was noted as a key priority of Easton’s new vision, goals and objective statements.

The CPC set up an information booth at the Washington County Fair in August of 2022 throughout the week. This was the first public effort at educating the community and garnering public input on the Vision and Goals for the Town of Easton. It was also a tool to steer residents towards greater participation through a community survey and comment box. These outreach resources continued to be available at Town Hall for one month following the County Fair.

The Comprehensive Plan Committee developed a Community Survey. The survey consisted of a mix of eleven (11) multiple-choice and short-response questions. The purpose of the questionnaire was to gain a better understanding of the community's priorities to help inform the Vision Report. The findings are also used in forming the goals and strategy recommendations presented in this Plan.

All responses were kept anonymous for confidentiality purposes and to help cultivate more honest results. The survey was held open for four (4) months and attracted a total of 114 respondents. Some question responses are aggregated and presented in graphs or in word clouds below. The findings were used to form Easton's Vision and Goals since they help identify respondents' common needs, desires, and concerns. Likewise, the results also aid in forming Plan recommendations. The Community Survey Summary is contained in the Vision Report.

The Word Cloud below shows the most common words used by survey respondents to describe terms that capture how they think about Easton. By far the most common word used was RURAL.

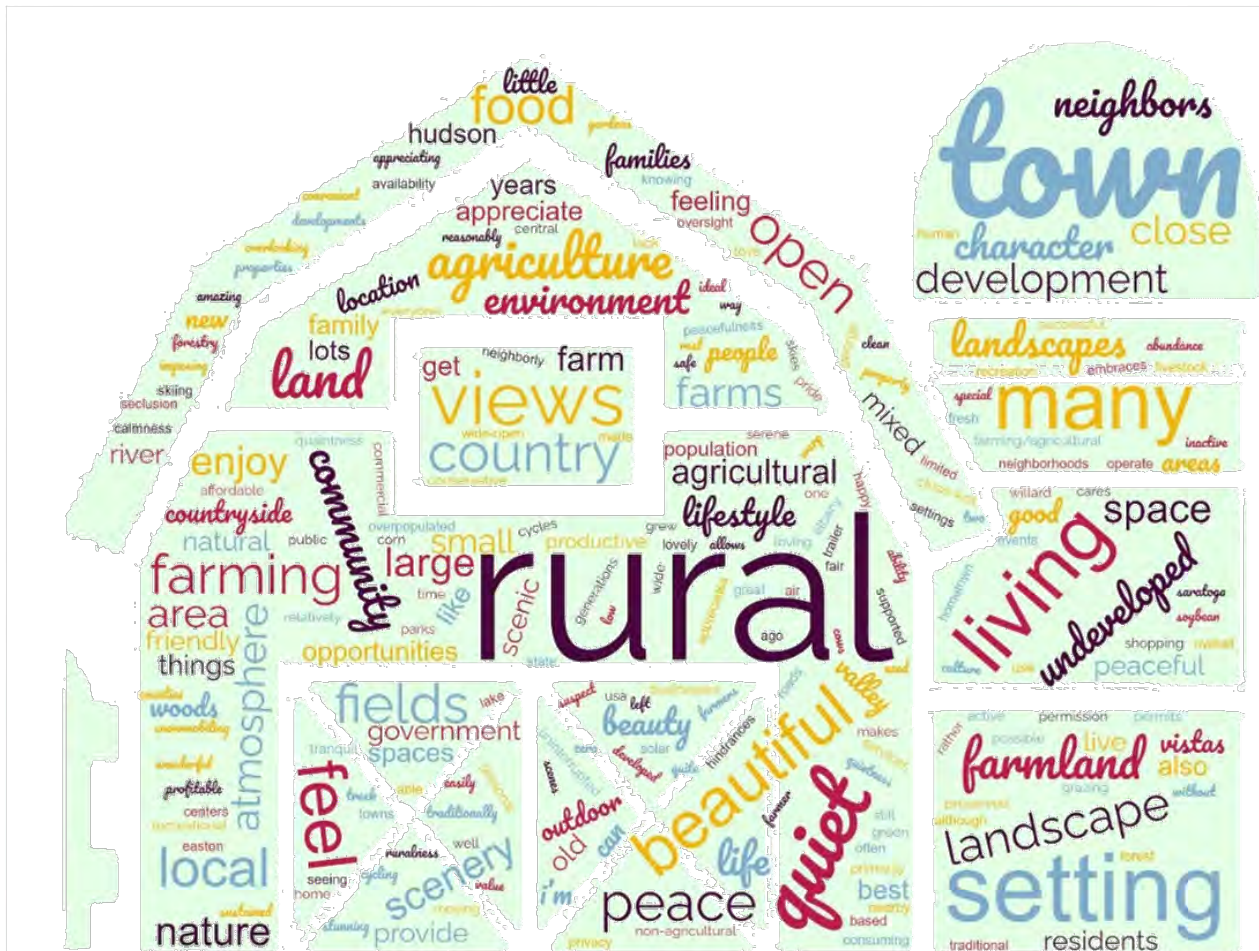


Figure 25: Most Common Words Used to Describe Survey Respondent's Vision for Easton

The word TOWN was the second most common, most likely due to its pairing with other words in the cloud such as RURAL, QUIET, and BEAUTIFUL. Other pertinent words included COMMUNITY, FARMLAND, NEIGHBORS, LANDSCAPE, SETTING, and VIEWS.

The survey responses highlighted the importance of preserving the agricultural landscape and maintaining the Town's rural character. Many respondents emphasized their appreciation for the Town's farming community and agricultural heritage. Agriculture has the highest level of support among all types of land uses in town among survey respondents, with even higher support than scenic views.

Understanding a community's demands for public services informs its public officials as to where future investment should be allocated. Responses to Question 9 below demonstrate overwhelming support for Road Repairs, with over 50% of respondents choosing it as the largest infrastructure need. Broadband was the next most popular response with 23% selecting other and filling in this choice, while the need for Public Parks was the third most popular response with 11% selecting this as their top choice. Public Parking was not chosen as an infrastructure need by any of the respondents, while public sewer and lighting were each only chosen by a single respondent. These results primarily show there is little support or few saw the need for additional services within Easton, but rather expansion and improvement of existing infrastructure is the priority amongst respondents.

The types of and lack of land use regulations within the Town of Easton has been a topic of much discussion throughout the community. In the survey, Question 10 asks respondents to rank four (4) different types of land use regulations, from their most supported to their least supported. The results clearly demonstrated that respondent's number one regulatory priority is to revise the current Subdivision Law which is highly limiting of any new subdivision of land. Over 50% of the respondents choose it as their most supported initiative, while conversly, 40% chose implementing a zoning code as their least supported initiative.

The regulatory initiative that was ranked as second most supported by respondents was Implementing a Site Plan Review Law. Over half (52%) of survey users listed it as their first or second priority. Creating Design Standards was a first or second choice for 44% of people taking the survey. Despite the fact that people taking the survey overwhelmingly value the community appearance and setting, based on the low responses for zoning, they may not be fully aware of how it can be used to assist with maintaining community character and providing for compatible future growth.

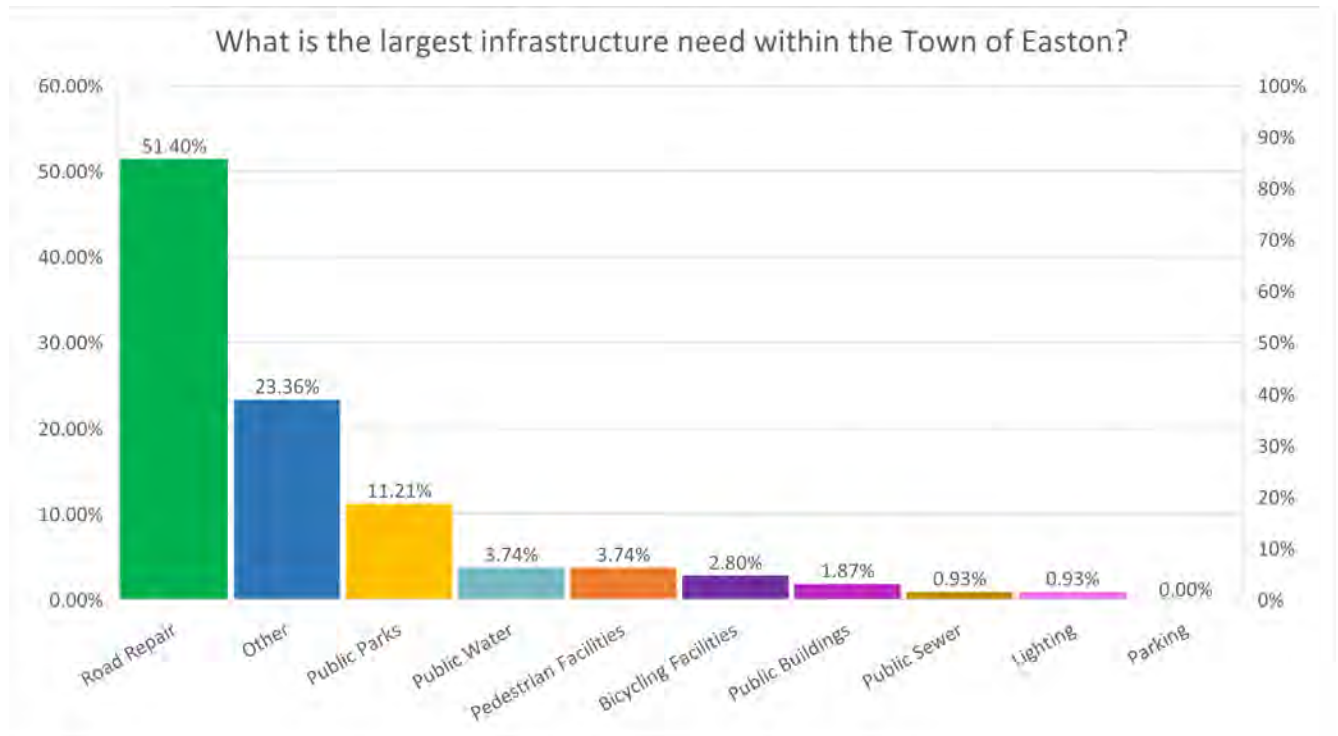


Figure 276: Question 9 Responses from the Community Survey

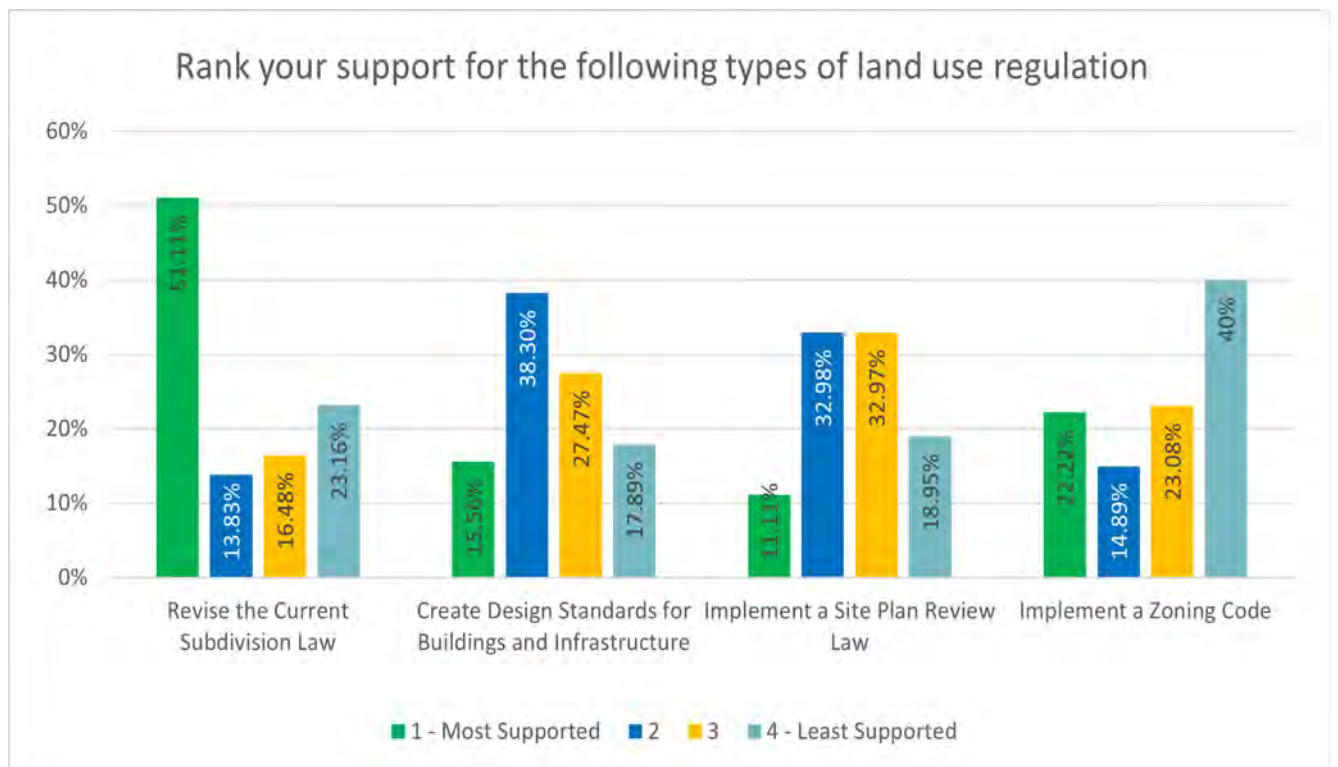


Figure 267: Question 11 Responses from the Community Survey

STAKEHOLDER ROUNDTABLES

Two Easton Community Stakeholder Roundtable Discussions were held on Wednesday, January 11, and on Saturday, January 21 of 2023 at Burton Hall. The Comprehensive Planning Committee defined a Community Stakeholder as any party who is a large landowner or business owner in Easton and any community leader who has invested significant time and/or resources within Easton. Thirteen (13) stakeholders attended the first meeting and (10) stakeholders attended the second. The discussion explored the Community Survey results, economic development, change and development of agriculture, recreational opportunities, short-term rental permits, shared services, workforce development, renewable energy development, and funding opportunities.

During stakeholder meetings, participants expressed strong support for the agricultural industry and the need to protect and promote farming activities. There was a consensus on the importance of maintaining Easton as an agricultural community. Notions were identified for supporting tourism, especially through day-trips, and reinforcing the sector by promoting orchards and vineyards in Easton as part of a wine trail and innovative farm brewery attractions. There were discussions of farmers taking advantage of the farm to table movement, as this form of retailing could directly benefit the bottom line for farmers. It was noted there should be support for solar installations that are structured so they are compatible with agriculture.

There was also interest expressed in finding ways to provide for compatible commercial growth and it was noted many business types complement the agricultural economic base. Stakeholders supported efforts to enhance broadband access in the community. They felt that Greenwich is a



Figure 28: February 4th, 2023, Public Workshop at Burton Hall

hub of the community. Overall, there was an emphasis on maintaining rural character and maintaining a small local government.

PUBLIC WORKSHOPS 1 & 2

A community-wide public workshop was held on February 4th, 2023, at Burton Hall. The goal of the workshop was to gather community input on Easton's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. A group of 25 participants braved the sub-30-degree windchills to provide ideas to establish an updated vision for the Town by providing recommendations for community and economic development opportunities while maintaining the historic character of Easton. Much of the workshop consisted of a presentation as well question-and-answer session on the survey results, needs and opportunities, and next steps. This meeting helped the Comprehensive Plan Committee prioritize its Goals and Objectives to better reflect the resident's needs and desires.



**Town of Easton
Comprehensive Plan Update**

**Saturday Feb 4, 2023
Public Workshop : 10am to 1pm**

Burton Hall (Easton Town Hall), 1071 NY-40, Greenwich, NY 12834

Provide your input on future land use and town development at the public workshop event. We would like your ideas to establish an updated vision for the Town. Participants will be asked to contribute their recommendations on opportunities and how to improve and maintain the beauty of Easton.

**LEARN MORE
JOIN US!**

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Visit Our Website for More Information!
<https://labergegroup.com/Easton/>

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Valley Greenway

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Figure 29: Community Flyer Announcing Public Workshop #1

At the public workshop, attendees prioritized the preservation of farmland and the agricultural way of life. They supported initiatives that enhance and protect agricultural activities in the Town.



Figure 30: Public Workshop #2: Goals & Strategies

A second major public outreach involved a community-wide public workshop on September 26, 2024, covering potential Comprehensive Plan goals and strategies, and was also held at Burton Hall. The purpose of this workshop was to gather public input on the proposed planning vision for Easton, obtain comments on map displays, and examine alternative planning strategies that were presented within display stations. There were exercises for participants to identify preferences and relative assignments of priorities around potential planning and development techniques that were presented. There were 23 participants at this workshop. Attendees registered their opinions and ranked preferences on the pre-assembled display poster boards using sticker dots and by writing any additional thoughts. This commentary supplied perspectives on the community's beliefs and preferences for managing change and taking actions to benefit future development in Easton. The results of this meeting were used by the CPC in refining the proposed planning goals and in prioritizing and structuring various selected strategies consistent with the interests of residents.

THE PLAN

This element brings together all findings and recommendations, setting the course for future action. The **Vision** for Easton is at the heart of the Plan, with 18 goals assigned to guide overall development. In delving into the Plan, it is important to consult the vision often. Linked to the vision is a detailed **Implementation Plan** which identifies multiple steps and alternatives to consider in the next five years. The implementation plan suggests timing, stakeholders to involve, and resources to leverage for achieving the specific strategies laid out in this Plan. Moreover, once the Plan is adopted, this part describes five potential Key Actions that demonstrate examples of programming which residents can work together on, to ensure it remains an actionable Plan.



Figure 31: Southwest Corner of Easton
Source: Town Website

The Vision

The Town of Easton's Vision was determined through the results of the community survey along with feedback gathered through the stakeholder meetings and public workshops. This Vision was created with the intent of protecting the agricultural-based community, economy and landscape.

Easton Vision Statement

Easton is unique because it offers a remote lifestyle yet is surrounded by modern conveniences. The Town's quality of life aligns with the small-town character that is embraced by those who live, work, and visit Easton.

Envision Easton promotes rural planning and preservation. Protecting the agricultural landscape and industry, enhancing tourism amenities, and capitalizing on regional relationships will sustain and support a high quality of life and move the Town forward.

The Town of Easton's high quality of life has been maintained through the preservation of its strong tradition as a working rural landscape providing for multi-generational housing options and economic growth that strengthens the tax base while enhancing community character. The community's rural character enables recreational activities throughout the Town, which connect residents with one another as well as with nature.

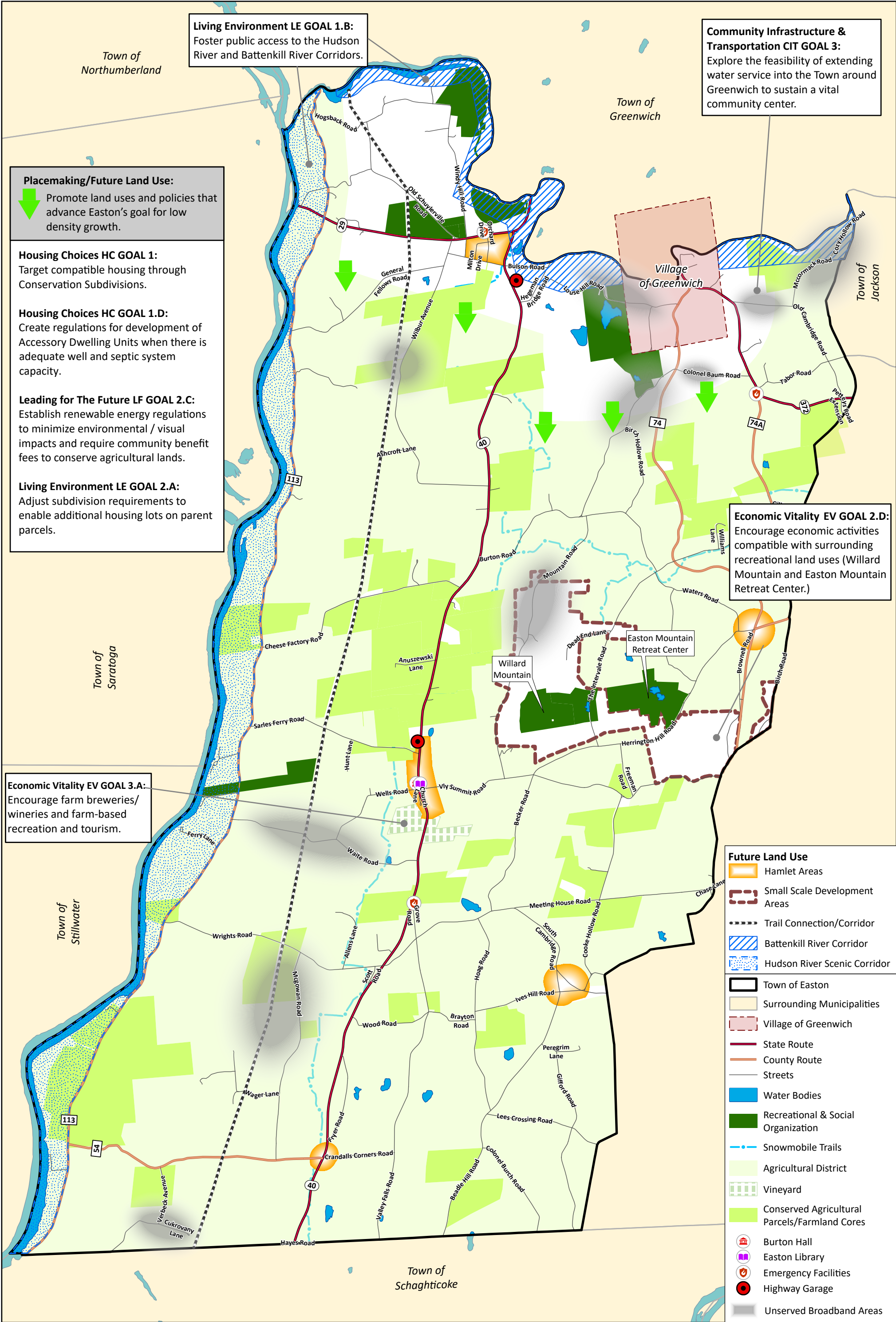
Easton protects and bolsters its scenic, quiet, friendly, affordable, and sustainable small-town character through the continued preservation of farmland and open space, the promotion of compatible infill development, and the enactment of stronger land use regulations.

Future Land Use Plan

Planning for the Town's future growth and adjusting land use regulations will set the stage for implementing the Town's Vision. Likewise, the local government can work to align spending reasonably and practically with development strategies outlined in this Plan.

NYS Town Law requires that land use regulations shall be in accordance with the adopted Comprehensive Plan. As such, the Town should proceed with a series of updates upon adoption of this Plan. Key Actions identifies priority recommendations for land use laws and regulation updates, while stakeholders can identify process requirements. Overall, future development should generally be low density.

When new growth occurs, significant portions should be guided to occur around the Village of Greenwich and along Route 29 and the upper portion of Route 40. The area along Route 29 has gradual slopes, proximity to more concentrated and mixed land uses in the Village of Greenwich



(on the north side of the Battenkill), and access to main roads - making it a place suitable for development.

The **Future Land Use Map** depicts major land use recommendations presented in this Plan. It shows this general area in the north as a place to provide limited land use regulation. Recognizing there is a need to provide fit between industrial, commercial and residential properties, the Future Land Use Map explores limited growth through consideration of water service extension into the Town, from the Village, providing service to locations including Old Cambridge Road, in order to sustain a vital community center.

Considering other parts of Town, new growth should also be channeled into identified Hamlet areas, as well as lower order crossroads. These are places where there is already a unique built form. It makes sense to build on these patterns by providing for compatible new housing when lots are sufficiently large, as well as through the additions of Accessory Dwelling Units that complement the scale and do not detract from the character of such locations.

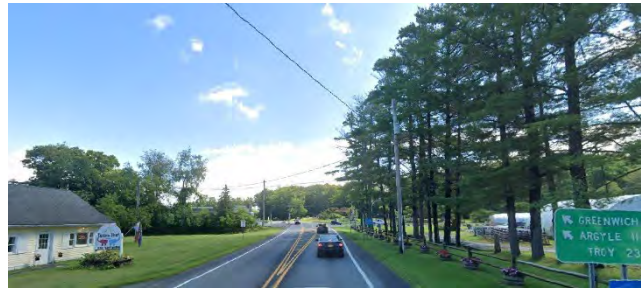
Around hillsides in the northeast part of Town, there is an area is demarcated as a 'Small Scale Development Area' on the **Future Land Use Map**. This is a location to potentially enable housing growth, as well as encourage economic activities that are compatible with the surrounding recreational land uses at Willard Mountain and Easton Mountain Retreat Center. To provide for the conservation of natural resources, such as stream corridors, scenic and character-laden hillsides, and the forested open spaces in this location around Mountain Road and Herrington Hill Road, (when development is proposed) the Plans advises targeting compatible housing through conservation subdivision techniques. Concurrent with such an effort, the utilization of rural design guidelines can help provide for a compatible fit of commercial and residential growth that does advance forward.

The **Future Land Use Map** delineates vast portions of Town that are in the County's Agricultural District. There is a demarcation of the many permanently protected properties, or parts of lots, that denote conserved farmland cores. These cores are focal points for farming and conservation within the broader areas that should be promoted for agricultural development. There may also be opportunities to target housing through Conservation Subdivisions compatible with the farming uses which have primacy. A controlled subdivision of lands in the future can enable modest growth and ensure that farming uses do not decline or experience threats from sprawl. The current regulation framework does not enable more lot divisions after two subdivisions, which may restrict some planned and measured growth in the housing supply.

Considering the future land use pattern throughout Easton, including its sweeping agricultural areas, there is a need to establish renewable energy regulations. Such standards can guide the placement of such infrastructure, addressing techniques and standards to minimize environmental and visual impacts, require treatments to blend such uses with farming, mitigate the potential for

undesirable effects on agriculture, and provide for the land's return to agriculture at the end of the renewable energy facility's life-cycle.

The efforts to manage and guide future land use in Easton will benefit from local leaders and collaborators rolling up sleeves in order to form project investment priorities. In addition, such thinking should include the development of a capital improvement plan (CIP) that can assist with careful budgeting, while determining the local and regional resources that can possibly be tapped-into in order to leverage implementation of the Vision. Providing coordinated action can ensure future growth is beneficial, in line with articulated goals, and does not negatively impact community character, the environment, or the quality of life in Easton.



Envision Easton's Key Actions

Based on goals and strategies put forth under each Plan element, the following Key Action prescriptions are identified which draw upon and advance these recommendations. These Key Actions are measures suggested for assisting Plan implementation. They are formed, based on stakeholder consultations as well as public outreach, and relate to themes which are important to the community. Often, they are cross-



Figure 32: Battenkill Country Club

cutting actions that address or relate to multiple Plan goals and strategies. Advancing Key Actions is consistent with and can further the measures put forth in this Plan.

Key Action (KA) #1 - Recreation & Trails Master Plan

As a way to strategically address community recreational needs and boost sense of place, the Town should develop a local recreation and trails plan. This plan would examine the Town's overall recreational gaps and community needs, while identifying strategies to advance recreation in Easton. This type of plan could be a useful tool to create a community park, establish a children's playground, increase multi-use trails, and/or improve access for water recreation to the Hudson River and other water bodies in Town.

- The specific analysis and recommendations provided in a recreation plan assist in setting priorities, marshalling resources, and enabling community partnerships and initiatives. This plan would also assist with developing and sustaining community-based recreational and cultural offerings, such as sports leagues, activities for youths, and programming for seniors.
- Easton has many recreation-related assets, whether it be the County Fairgrounds, golf courses, or Willard Mountain. A recreation plan can help identify ways to sustain these offerings and ensure that the community benefits from them. It can also examine how to optimize the use of Easton's Burton Hall as an indoor space for community programs like a winter farmers' market, toddler play groups, or other gatherings and civic meetings—which can all help build community



Figure 33: Dix Road Pedestrian Bridge (Greenwich)

interaction and pride. Consideration should also be given to revenue-producing uses such as wedding receptions, or as a rental for other special events.

KA#2 – Town Capital Improvement Plan

Given a large land area and small local government, it is recommended that the Town Board establish a three- to five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to help prioritize and manage its investment needs. Preparing this budgetary planning and forecasting tool can help Easton identify and sequence municipal infrastructure or facilities improvements, and proactively prepare for replacing equipment, or obtaining new types of equipment. A CIP can assist annual budgeting and stewardship of Town fiscal resources and be used to structure and pursue projects that may be offset through grant funding.



- The CIP can support detailed analysis with Highway officials on road and drainage needs, ensuring these assets are regularly maintained and modernized. It can also assist budgeting for new parks or forming new trail access, and support priority economic development actions by assisting planning for strategic expenditures on public infrastructure enhancements or development. At a minimum, the CIP should include upgrades to Town Hall, the Highway Garage, highway equipment, local road, and bridge network improvements.
- To support resilience to extreme weather, the Town Board should assess potential projects to reduce or prevent damage or risks during major floods. The Town Board should also confirm an ability to operate during prolonged heatwaves or other severe weather. This assessment should include the need for emergency generators to ensure continuity of operations of public facilities. It should also include radio communication upgrades, structural improvements, or other building and facility upgrades. Although fire and rescue services are organized as separate taxing jurisdiction and are responsible for their own capital upkeep, it is crucial for the local government to coordinate with emergency service providers to ensure they also remain operational during storm disasters and maintain critical public safety functions that the community depends upon.



Figure 34: FEMA Critical Facility/ Community Lifeline Attributes

KA#3 - Progress Land Use Laws & Regulations Updates

The Town should advance a series of recommended land development law updates following the adoption of this Comprehensive Plan. The Plan itself is a visionary rather than a regulatory tool and it provides a foundation for policy making; therefore, this Key Project focuses on undertaking the legislative process needed to implement regulatory changes. The Town Board could explore whether the County and/or the regional Planning Board could assist this process as a means of sustaining momentum.



Figure 35: Solar Development

- **Renewable Energy Facilities.** Regulations to guide and control the establishment and operation of various sized solar and battery storage facilities is a priority. The regulations should allow for these operations, but ensure they achieve a complimentary fit with agriculture and the Town's landscape character. As part of this effort the Town should consider environmental benefit fees that could be used to mitigate the loss of agricultural lands.

Given high commercial interest in siting renewable energy facilities, and potential changes in the regional regulatory framework, local officials must monitor changes in State laws as they consider adjustments to local laws. Moreover, these regulations may need to be periodically reviewed to ensure the Town keeps its standards effective and in-line with best practices, technological advances, and state and federal regulations. Additionally, standards for siting wind energy facilities should be considered and address potential demand for larger turbines and multiple tower installations around Easton.

- **Subdivision Law.** Easton's Subdivision Law is in need of an update to provide reasonable flexibility for creating additional new lots on parent parcels. The adjustments should ensure any new lots created are buildable, with adequate permanent dedicated access to improved roads. The updated regulations should define setbacks for buildings, onsite wells, and sanitary systems. Soils protection will continue to be an important density limiting factor for future buildout in Easton; therefore, the subdivision law should consider incorporating conservation design and clustering regulations that will enable smaller and more flexible lot sizes to reduce sprawl and maintain setbacks and buffers, while conserving high-quality soils for agriculture. The subdivision law should consider housing incentives and techniques that result in the permanent preservation of agriculture.
- **Agriculture Critical Environmental Area (CEA).** It is recommended that the Town create standards for use in evaluating land development actions under its long-established local

Agriculture Critical Environmental Area (CEA) that was setup in accordance with the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) enabling standards. It is sensible to develop, or adjust, local definitions of minor and major SEQRA actions. Impact and mitigation criteria and review thresholds could be developed to aid Easton's Planning Board during SEQRA reviews of subdivisions or other development applications.

KA#4 – Promote Up to Date Regional Agricultural Planning

The future of this community depends largely on sustaining agriculture. However, there are a number of possible challenges, such as climate change and constant variations in the economy and agricultural markets. Additionally, there is limited ability for Easton's small local government to allocate resources or staffing in order to facilitate agricultural planning. Rather than forming a local agricultural plan, Town leaders should advocate for a comprehensive update to the regional agricultural and farmland protection plan. Using a regional approach ensures there will be broad-based agricultural systems support. It allows many stakeholders to contribute to designing and implementing programs and projects that can protect, reinforce, and diversify farming in and around Easton.

- As part of such efforts, stakeholders in Town can periodically assess possible ways to help advance the unique needs identified for Easton. They can identify ways for stakeholders to bolster the farm economy, examine ways to conserve lands that owners want to protect, as well as examine ways to stimulate local farming opportunities, and help form complementary economic development strategies as suggested in this Comprehensive Plan.



- The recommendations in this Comprehensive Plan are structured to conserve high value agricultural soils and guide future land use away from the County Agricultural District—positively influencing the success of local agriculture. Still, it is important to note that recommendations for developing housing options, or focusing greater amounts of other non-residential growth and infrastructure investments toward the Town’s northern tier, while pursuing economic development strategies identified in the Comprehensive Plan, are structured to influence the success of supporting agriculture.



Figure 36: Farm Credit East on Route 29

KA#5 - Fostering Rural Housing Options

This Key Project advocates for homeowner assistance to rehabilitate aging housing, as well as an increase of housing options in the Town.

- **Home Rehabilitation Assistance.** Around 50% of Easton’s stock was built before 1970. Based on age alone, it suggests a significant share of these homes could benefit from rehabilitation, or modifications to meet today’s lifestyles. An early action to undertake in collaboration with the County involves exploring tools and programs available that assist homeowners with replacing windows, roofing, adding insulation, or upgrading HVAC equipment. Using these programs, homeowners may be able to pursue solar panels, or stand-by auxiliary power from batteries or generators, as these type actions can ensure a high quality of housing, protect Easton’s rural residents during power outages or heat waves, and assist with managing housing costs, which is often a major burden for families as well as people living on fixed incomes.
- **Planning for Greater Housing Options.** There should be steps to plan and implement greater housing options in Easton. The Town leaders should consider a partnership approach, collaborating with housing stakeholders in Washington County and adjacent

communities to thoroughly identify and assess local housing needs and possible ways to enhance the available supply. These efforts will serve to address home ownership opportunities, identify gaps in different housing types, and identify tools to establish a diverse housing supply at different price points to address local needs.

The Town should collaborate with the wide variety of groups involved in housing planning, finance, and construction, to explore what would be needed to create new types of housing near the Village of Greenwich and limited other target locations that are identified as places to focus in the Town and within the surrounding region. Planning for housing may provide older residents the options to age in place or stay in the community, allowing them to transition into housing that requires less upkeep. This also enables housing to be planned near existing services. Likewise, creating housing options near the Village center can align with a preference among younger cohorts that are seeking modern and smaller homes which are right-sized for their incomes and smaller household sizes. This can also mesh with efforts to site new housing in locations that are convenient to schools and job centers, and where the new residential development can occur in concert with promoting walkable, bikeable neighborhoods, vital public spaces, and transit viability convenient to all generations.



IMPLEMENTATION PLAN - STRATEGIES & RESOURCES MATRIX

In this portion of the Plan, all of the Goals and Strategies are arranged in tabular format under the six (6) Guiding Principles. The 15 corresponding NY State Smart Growth principles, as follows, are also keyed to the strategies in order to show how each particular strategy relates to furthering smart growth.

1. Mixed Land Uses (*Promote mixed land uses in focus areas*)
2. Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices (Create an adequate range of housing opportunities and choices)
3. Development and Redevelopment in Existing Communities (Promote development and redevelopment where infrastructure is adequate and sustainable)
4. Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place (Build on Traits that make a Distinctive, Attractive Community with a Strong Sense of Place)
5. Density (Promote Sustainable Compact Neighborhoods)
6. Clean Energy (Promote and Integrate Clean Energy Resources and related incentives)
7. Climate Change (Promote Sustainable Mass Transit that reduces the Local Levels of Greenhouse Gas Emissions)
8. Resiliency (Increase Resiliency to Weather Events)
9. Green Infrastructure (Improve Green Infrastructure and Resident's Participation in this Effort)
10. Social Diversity and Integration (Encourage social diversity and Integration)
11. Regional Planning and Coordination (Expand planning and implementation efforts across jurisdictional lines, to increase effectiveness, sustainability, and resiliency)
12. Walkable/Bikeable Neighborhood Designs (Promote Walkable/Bikeable Neighborhood Designs)
13. Variety of Mobility Choices (Increase Mobility and Circulation within Jurisdictional Lines and Improve Connectivity with areas outside Jurisdictional Lines)
14. Well-Planned and Well-Placed Public Spaces (Promote Well-Planned and Well-Placed Public Spaces)
15. Community and Stakeholder Collaboration in Planning (Promote community and stakeholder collaboration in planning)

When a strategy is identified to align with a Key Action (KA), the table is annotated to indicate a KA-number corresponding with the Key Action description that is provided earlier within the Comprehensive Plan. Advancing Key Actions should provide for alignment with this Plan's Vision and the strategies suggested to advance the identified goals. The Future Land Use Map highlights

areas suggested for growth as well as agriculture and select strategies are labeled on that map in order to highlight how they potentially link with and relate to various locations in Easton.

Implementation Guide

Since this Plan is a starting point for future Plan implementation, Key Actions are examples of initiatives that can be used to advance smart and quality growth and sustainable development. There is no order for Key Actions, or requirement to complete all of them. Across all of the Key Action recommendations, residents and groups involved in community planning can help define and shape detailed programming and strategy implementation going forward.

Each individual strategy listed within a row in the Implementation table is assigned a recommended timeline for implementation as follows:

S = Short-term: Years 0-2;

M = Medium-term: Years 3-10;

L = Long-term: 10+ Years;

O = Continuously Implement Action/ Policy; and

KA = Key Action.

The Matrix identifies possible partners for aiding the implementation of a strategy. It identifies a lead entity along with possible collaborators. A Glossary or legend follows, naming the party that is linked with an acronym that is placed in the Matrix.

The Implementation table also uses acronyms to identify potential funding sources. Potential grant programs and funding sources identified for underwriting a particular strategy action are subject to change from year to year. A fuller examination of the funding source(s) would be required to assess the suitability for use in leveraging action on a particular strategy.

Key/ Glossary

As abbreviations are used in the Matrix, refer to this Glossary. The following list identifies parties that may be suggested to undertake or take part in implementing an action, including potential regional funding partners and non-profits. The list also identifies possible sources of funds that can be used to leverage action. It includes agencies that may have pass-through funding which may be available and accessed to assist strategy implementation.

A/GFTC: Adirondack/ Glens Falls Transportation Council

- PL: Metropolitan Planning Organization Planning Funds
- UPWP: Unified Planning Work Program funding

ASA: Agricultural Stewardship Association

Town of Easton:

- AO: Town Assessor's Office
- CPIC: Town Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee
- HS: Town Highway Superintendent
- PB: Town Planning Board
- TB: Town of Easton Town Board
- TH: Town Historian
- TRF: Town Recreation Fee Assessments (funding)

County: Washington

- CB: County Budget Appropriation
- CP: County Programs
- WCBT: Washington County Bed Tax
- WC: Washington County Board of Supervisors
- WCP: Washington County Planning Dept.
- WCDPW: Washington County Dept. of Public Works

DOL: NYS Dept. of Labor

DASNY: Dorm Authority of State of NY

- SAM: State & Municipal Assistance Grant
- Community Facilities & Town Operational Improvements funding

DOT: NYS Department of Transportation

- BNY: Bridge NY
- CHIPS: Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Program
- PSAP: Pedestrian Safety Action Plan funding

- PaveNY: Pave New York Program
- RTP: FHWA Recreational Trails Program
- SS4A: Safe Streets and Roads for All
- TAP: Transportation Alternatives Program

DOS: NYS Department of State

- BOA: Brownfield Opportunity Act
- LGE: Local Government Efficiency
- LWRP: Local Waterfront Revitalization Program
- NYF: New York Forward
- SGZ: Smart Growth-Zoning

EDA: United States Economic Development Administration (and programs)

EFC: Environmental Facilities Corp.

- CWSRF: Clean Water State Revolving Fund
- DWSRF: Drinking Water State Revolving Fund
- EPG: Engineering Planning Grant
- GIGP: Green Innovation Grant Program
- IMG: Intermunicipal Water Infrastructure Grants Program
- WIIA: Water Infrastructure Improvement Act

EFDs: Fire Districts in Easton (Easton Fire District (FD); Greenwich FD; Middle Falls FD; Schuylerville FD).

EFR: Easton-Greenwich Rescue Squad

EPA: Environmental Protection Agency

- STAG: State and Tribal Assistance Grant

ESD: Empire State Development

- BG – Broadband Grants (Broadband Program Office)
- GF: ESD Grant Funding
- EJP: Excelsior Job Program
- MarketNY: Market New York Program
- PFS: Planning and Feasibility Study
- RestoreNY: Restore New York Program

FEMA: Federal Emergency Management Agency

- HMGP – Hazard Mitigation Grant Program
- FMA – Flood Mitigation Assistance

HRVG: Hudson River Valley Greenway (& Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area)

- GCTC - Greenway Conservancy/ Trail Grant
- GPG - Greenway Planning Grant
- Other Greenway Appropriation

HUD: US Housing and Urban Development

- HOME – Home Investment Partnership Program

LCLGRPB: Lake Champlain Lake George Regional Planning Board

NG: National Grid

NP: National Parks Service

- The Land and Water Conservation Fund

NYSCA: New York State Council on the Arts

- ACI: Arts and Culture Initiatives
- ACF: Arts and Cultural Facilities Improvement Program

NYSDAM: New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets

- FMRGP: Farmers' Market Resiliency Grant Program
- FPPG: Farmland Planning Protection Grants
- FPIG: Farmland Protection Implementation Grants
- MNY: Market New York - Tourism Grant Program

NYSDEC: New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

- CSC: Climate Smart Community
- ISG: Invasives Species Program
- NANS: Non-Agricultural Nonpoint Source Planning Grant
- UCFP: Urban and Community Forestry Grants
- WQIP: Water Quality Improvement Program
- ZEV – Zero Electric Vehicle

NYSDHES: NYS Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Services

- CIGP: Critical Infrastructure Grant Program

NYSERDA: NYS Energy Research and Development Authority

- CEG: Clean Energy Communities
- FT- Flex Tech Program
- V2G – Vehicle to Grid Pilot Program

New York State Executive Branch (or not elsewhere listed)

- EBN:Excelsior Broadband Network
- BPOG: Broadband Program Office Grants

NYSHCR: New York State Homes & Community Renewal

- CDBG: Community Development Block Grant
- NSP: Neighborhood Stabilization Program
- NYMS: New York Main Street
- RARP: Rural Assistance Revitalization Program
- PHC: Pro-Housing Community Program

NYSP: New York State Police

OPRHP: NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

- OPRHP EPF: Environmental Protection Fund
- RTGP: Recreational Trails Grant Program

PLNYS: Preservation League of NY State

PPP: Public Private Partnerships

PTNY: Parks & Trails New York

SD: School District(s)/ School Superintendent(s)

USDA: United States Department of Agriculture

- CF: Community Facilities Program
- CRP: Conservation Reserve Program – Farm Service Agency
- FMLFPP: Farmers Market & Local Food Production Program
- RBDG: Rural Business Development Grant,
- RDG: Rural Development Grant
- RHS: Rural Housing Service
- RU: Rural Utilities Service Water & Environment Program

US - Federal funding not elsewhere listed

- BIL: Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (supports energy innovation, transit, et al)
- NOAA: National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration – such as for extension around climate mitigation.

Housing Choices:

Protect and enhance opportunities for existing and future residents to access diverse and affordable housing options.

HC GOAL 1: Foster strategic growth and investment in the supply of housing to provide options for residents, protect and enhance the economic base, and grow sustainably and minimize impacts to agriculture.	Timeline	Responsible Partner	Potential Funding Sources	Key Action Number	Smart Growth Principle
A. Collaborate with Washington County to identify rural housing choices and stimulate construction of a range of new housing opportunities that will strengthen community and economic development in Easton.	S	CPIC, WC	CP	KA5	2, 11, 15
B. Create standards that define how and when to enable or require Conservation/ Cluster Subdivisions that provide for compatible compact housing.	S	TB, PB	GPG	KA4 & KA3	2, 4
C. Promote walkable/ bikeable design when new housing is proposed in northern parts of Town, taking advantage of nearby existing services.	M	PB	-	KA5	3, 12
D. Create regulations for development of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) when there is adequate well and septic system capacity. Standards should require owner occupancy and establish primacy of the principal dwelling to minimize visual/ environmental impacts.	M	TB, PB	-	KA5	2, 3 ,8, 10
E. Advance strategies that provide a range of housing options for seniors.	M	CPIC, WC, TB, PB	CDBG	KA5	2, 10
F. Support the development of middle-income housing in the Town.	M	CPIC, WC, TB, PB	RHS	KA5	2, 3, 10
G. Collaborate with Washington County to secure grants and financial incentives that promote/ facilitate home repairs.	L	CPIC, WC, TB	CDBG, SFHRLG	KA5	11, 15
H. Consider short-term rental (STR) regulations and fees to guard against the loss of significant numbers of rental homes and ensure STRs are routinely inspected.	M	TB, PB	WCBT	KA5	2 10
I. Continue to support the availability of housing on large properties with agricultural operations, as a means to assist farmers and farm workers.	M			KA5 & KA4	2, 3, 4, 10

Living Environment: Safeguard the long-term viability of the Town's natural resources and open spaces for future generations, including its sensitive environmental areas, agricultural lands, and scenic resources.

LE GOAL 1: Protect the Town's natural and environmental resources.	Time -line	Responsible Parties & Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Key Action #	Smart Growth Principle
A. Protect stream corridors and wetlands to provide community resiliency against large rains storms and floods. Consider a horizontal setback from the mean high water/ top of bank/ edge of any wetland or stream, while detailing the allowable exceptions for development within such setbacks.	M	TB, PB	GPG, FPIG, CRP, LWRP	-	8, 9
B. Foster public access to the Hudson and the Battenkill River corridors as an aid to fishing, boating and general recreation, including nature viewing.	L	CPIC	TRE, LWRP	KA1	4, 11, 14
LE GOAL 2: Improve local development policies and processes to protect and preserve agriculture while achieving compatible growth.	Time -line	Responsible Parties & Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Key Action #	Smart Growth Principle
A. Adjust subdivision requirements to enable additional housing lots on parent parcels, providing for the ability to increase limited housing while protecting farmland.	S	TB, PB	FPIG	KA3	2, 4
B. Promote and participate in a Washington County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan update.	L	TB, WC, PB	FPPG	KA4	3, 11, 15
C. Formulate standards for quantifying, assessing, and analyzing potential development impacts in the Agriculture Critical Environmental Area (CEA). This can include criteria for defining how and where small-scale incompatible growth may be allowed, plus identify mitigation that will protect the primacy of agriculture.	M	TB, PB	FPIG	KA4	3, 4, 11
D. Create Town web page providing information on programs/financing for agricultural land owners.	L	TB, WC, ASA	-	KA4	11, 15
E. Periodically assess which local agricultural and economic development strategies to focus on consistent with the County's Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan.	O	CPIC, TB, PB	-	KA4	11
F. Consider drafting zoning to achieve desired land use patterns.	L	CPIC, TB, PB	SGZ	KA3	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 11
LE GOAL 3: Foster and invest in parks and recreational offerings to support a healthy community, improve quality of life for residents, and if possible, assist tourism.	Time -line	Responsible Parties & Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Key Action #	Smart Growth Principle
A. Develop a Town recreation master plan.	M	CPIC, TB, WC	LWRP, OPRHP EPF	KA1	4, 10, 11, 12, 14
B. Define community desires for a Town Park, establish alternative site requirements (sports field(s), court(s), playground, a pavilion, etc.) and form a community partnership to advance programming.	L	TB	RF	KA1	4, 10, 11, 14, 15
C. Work with farmers/ landowners to create easements that enable trails and interconnection (as an aid for hunting, fishing, hiking, snowmobiling access).	O/ L	CPIC, PB	FPIG, GCTC, RTP, RTGP	KA1	4, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15

Placemaking: Provide for distinctive, attractive community character that builds upon and fits with the Town's historic pattern of rural, agricultural development.

P GOAL 1: Preserve the Town's rural character and scenic beauty.	Time -line	Responsible Parties & Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Key Action #	Smart Growth Principle
A. Promote land uses and policies that advance low density growth.	S	TB, PB	HRVG	KA3	4, 5
B. Repair, replace, and install historic markers.	O	TB, TH	NPS, HRVNHA	-	4
C. Consult inventories of historic structures and resources, and promote the conservation and enhancement of these assets when development occurs, to reinforce sense of place and assist placemaking.	O	PB	-	-	4
D. Support farmland preservation and conservation.	O	TB	FPIG, EPF, LWCF, ASA	KA4	4, 11
E. Map and inventory of significant views of the landscape visible from public roads, and support efforts to conserve them.	M	CPIG, PB	HRVG, HRVNHA	-	4, 14
P GOAL 2: Safeguard agricultural character and encourage development that compliments the historic landscape and enhances Easton's sense of place.	Time -line	Responsible Parties & Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Key Action #	Smart Growth Principle
A. Provide for land development that adheres to good practices, for example by enabling Cooperative Farm Subdivisions.	S	TB, PB	-	KA3	3, 4, 5, 15
B. Consider forming rural design guidelines that depict preferences for compatible commercial and residential growth in agricultural area, hamlets, and crossroads. These can assist landscape and view management, building placement and site design, frontage treatments, curb cut layouts, landscaping and screening, and the use of signage, fencing, and lighting.	M	PB, TB	HRVG	-	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 15
C. Amend the subdivision law to allow for creation of new lots when these are designed to avoid farm fields. For example, enable minor subdivisions which add a limited number of small, compliant lots located adjacent existing roads, when adequate frontage is available that has acceptable access. This would provide for continuing Easton's unique subdivision framework, which limits cumulative lot divisions on a parent parcel, while also enabling housing lots which fit with patterns of existing land use and infrastructure.	M	PB, TB	-	KA3	2, 4, 5
P GOAL 3: Direct significant future residential or retail growth towards northern parts of Town, including around Greenwich.	Time -line	Responsible Parties & Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Key Action #	Smart Growth Principle
A. Focus municipal capital/ infrastructure spending in the northern part of Town to reinforce existing development patterns, avoid sprawl, and economically provide adequate, sustainable infrastructure.	O	TB, HS, WC, CPIC	-	KA2	1, 3, 11, 14

Community Infrastructure & Transportation/ Mobility: Provide for capital investments which enable quality and resilient growth, assist transport safety, and spur mobility options for residents.

CIT GOAL 1: Advocate for broadband and cellular communications infrastructure upgrades so that all parts of Town receive quality services.	Time -line	Responsible Parties & Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Key Action #	Smart Growth Principle
A. Work with Washington Co. officials, emergency preparedness entities and cellular providers to improve cell service coverage throughout Town and leverage federal or state incentives that aim to eliminate service gaps. Require colocation where practicable, and utilize existing structures where available.	M	WC, EFD; EFR; LCLGRPB	EBN, PPP	-	11
B. Utilize up-to-date mapping, actively support grant appeals, and meet periodically with County officials on strategies to assemble needed resources and forge partnerships with internet service providers to fill service gaps plus achieve ultra high-speed broadband/ internet coverage in the Town and region.	L	TB, WC	BPOG, RDG, PPP	-	11
CIT GOAL 2: Strategically invest in road and drainage systems in order to cost-effectively sustain these public assets plus bolster resilience to flooding.	Time -line	Responsible Parties & Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Key Action #	Smart Growth Principle
A. Identify culverts that should be replaced, and could be resized to accommodate stormwater surges and avoid failure from flooding.	M	HS, TB	BNY, HMGP, LWRP	KA2	8, 9
B. Consider needed enhancements/investments in roadways and drainage systems to prevent deterioration of road beds and maintain pavement quality, while developing a road investment cycle/ schedule to ensure that no road degrades to the point that highly costly reconstruction is required.	M	HS, TB	GIGP, HMGP, CHIPS, UPWP	KA2	3, 7, 8, 11
CIT GOAL 3: Explore potential to extend public water in the north of Town, without exceeding budget capacity, or disrupting farming.	Time -line	Responsible Parties & Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Key Action #	Smart Growth Principle
A. Examine the feasibility of extending public water service from Greenwich into the unincorporated parts of Town around the Village to sustain a vital community center.	L	TB, CPIC	CFLG, DWSRF, RU	-	2, 3, 5, 15

Community Infrastructure & Transportation/ Mobility (*continued*)

CIT GOAL 4: Foster transportation safety townwide.	Time -line	Responsible Parties & Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Key Action #	Smart Growth Principle
A. Form a strategy for providing traffic calming within key streets and intersections and enhancing walk- and bicycle-ability around higher traffic areas in northern parts of Town between Schuylerville, the County Fairgrounds, Greenwich, and streets east of there.	M	TB, A/GFTC	UPWP	KA2 & KA1	11, 12,13, 14
B. Explore options for enhancing the Routes 29/40 intersection, including pedestrian safety, driveway access, curb cut reductions, and potential traffic flow improvements.	L	TB, A/GFTC	TIP	-	11, 12, 13, 14, 15
C. Encourage regional transportation officials to study crashes and develop recommendations for improving traffic safety all around Town.	M	TB, A/GFTC	PL	-	11, 12
D. Inventory and create a long-term plan to repair and replace any non-ADA compliant Town infrastructure.	L	TB	Local	-	10, 11 12
CIT GOAL 5: Enable trail connections throughout Town.	Time -line	Responsible Parties & Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Key Action #	Smart Growth Principle
A. Assess ways to support bicycling and walking and identify strategies for trails, and access to trailheads, within a trails element of a recreation master plan, or through a trails plan. This can allow Easton to capitalize on its pleasant setting, waterfront, and proximity to the Empire State Trail.	M	CPIC, PB, TB	UPWP, OPRHP EPF, GCTG	KA1	4, 9, 12, 14
CIT GOAL 6: Advocate for regional transport solutions that aid mobility and better connect residents and businesses.	Time -line	Responsible Parties & Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Key Action #	Smart Growth Principle
A. Promote Washington County's development of rural public transport and workforce mobility project(s) with involvement of stakeholders such as the Capital District Transit Authority (CDTA), human service agencies, large employers, and service providers covering taxis, Uber, or Lyft, to support community mobility for people who cannot or do not drive or own a car in this part of the region, building off the 2023 Rural Workforce Transportation Plan.	L	TB, WCP, A/GFTC	UPWP	-	10, 11, 13, 15

Economic Vitality: Achieve a diversified economic base which centers on the agricultural and natural resource based enterprises that underpin Easton's rural character.

EV GOAL 1: Support and embrace agricultural industry and the Right-to-Farm in Easton.	Timeline	Responsible Parties and Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Key Action number	Smart Growth Principle
A. Support a purchase of development rights (PDR) program to enable farmers to derive value from properties.	O	PB, TB, ASA	OPRHP EPF, FPIG	KA4	3, 4, 11
B. Encourage farm stores, farm stands and farmers' cooperatives.	L	CPIC, PB, WC	RBDG, CF WCBT, ILNY	KA4	4, 15
C. Assist young farmers in securing places to farm, through lease or purchase.	L	CPIC	WC	KA4	11, 15
D. Support growth and diversification of local agricultural markets and help leverage efforts by producers. Examples may cover food processing, storage, plant nurseries, or forestry.	O	TB, WC	RBDG	KA4	11, 15
E. Establish Easton agriculture brand and identity.	L	CPIC	WCBT	KA4	4, 15
EV GOAL 2: Support business retention, economic diversification, and availability of basic retail services in Town.	Timeline	Responsible Parties and Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Key Action number	Smart Growth Principle
A. Create a farmers' market in Easton that does not conflict with other nearby farmers' markets (perhaps start by attempting a once or twice a year event at or inside Burton Hall).	S	CPIC, TB	WCBT, FMRGP, FMLFPP	KA4	11, 15
B. Help establish and sustain agricultural-related businesses, such as machinery repair or veterinary services.	L	CPIC, PB	-	-	15
C. Support home-based businesses / cottage industries, promoting the migration of successful enterprises to locations specifically equipped to accommodate these mature and growing commercial business.	L	CPIC	-	-	15
D. Encourage economic and commercial activities in and around Herrington Hill Road and Intervale Road that are compatible with surrounding recreational land uses, such as at Willard Mountain and Easton Mountain Retreat Center,	M	CPIC	-	-	4, 15
EV GOAL 3: Support agritourism to diversify the economy and preserve Easton's rural character.	Timeline	Responsible Parties and Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Key Action number	Smart Growth Principle
A. Encourage farm breweries, wineries, and farm-based recreation and tourism. Compatible examples may include event venues, bed & breakfasts, u-pick, hunting, fishing, camping, nature viewing, or other enterprises that support the sustainability of farming.	M	CPIC	CBMG, FFSP, MNY, BTS, RLF	KA4	4, 15

Leading for the Future: Steward strategic and resilient growth that compliments regional development frameworks and aids governmental efficiency.

LF GOAL 1: Enhance regionalism through shared services, and coordinated leveraging of community identity and amenities.	Timeline	Responsible Parties and Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Key Action number	Smart Growth Principle
	L	TB, SDs	LGE	-	15
	M	TB, LEPs, WC	LGE	-	11,15
	S/O	TB, HS, BD, WC, LEPs	-	KA2	3, 8, 11, 14, 15
	L	TB, HC, CPIC	-	KA2	3, 11, 15
LF GOAL 2: Plan community resilience to severe rains/ floods and heat waves and build capacity for the agricultural sector to adapt to changing conditions and opportunities.	Timeline	Responsible Parties and Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Key Action number	Smart Growth Principle
	O	TB, PB, HS, WC	HMG	-	8, 9, 11, 15
	M	CPIC, PB, WC	-	KA4	7, 8, 9, 11, 15
	S	PB, TB	-	KA3	6, 9, 15
	S	TB, WC	CSC	KA2	8, 11, 15