



NEW PALTZ CONSOLIDATION: WHAT IS CONSOLIDATION?

This document overviews the differences between the Town of New Paltz and Village of New Paltz, what consolidation is, and why the Town Board and the Village Board have decided to explore consolidation.

Critical Context: The Town of New Paltz and the Village of New Paltz

New Paltz has two separate local governments: the Town of New Paltz and the Village of New Paltz. The Village sits entirely within the Town's boundaries, meaning that Village residents are governed by and pay taxes to both governments. Residents in the Town outside the Village (TOV) are governed only by the Town.

Each government has its own elected board, budget, staff, and set of services. The Town Supervisor and four Councilmembers govern the Town, providing services like recreation to the entire town and services like highway maintenance and planning for the TOV. The Mayor and four Trustees govern the Village, providing water and sewer, parking, and planning to the Village. Despite being separate governments, both already collaborate on a number of services, including fire and police protection.

What Is Consolidation?

Consolidation is a locally driven process through which two governments merge into a single government. In New Paltz, consolidation would mean that the Village government would cease to exist, and all of its functions and responsibilities would be absorbed into a single, unified Town government. Both governments are being assisted by a consultant, Laberge, in planning the details of how the consolidation would work.

Why Consolidate? Proponents of consolidation in New Paltz typically point to the following:

Administrative and Operational Efficiency: Running two governments means duplicating certain functions. Consolidation could reduce administrative duplication and streamline operations.

Simpler Government and Even Taxation: A single governing body would consolidate the budgetary process, decrease the tax burden using CETC while spreading the property tax burden more evenly across the full town, and give residents trying to navigate local services one clear point of accountability.¹

Comprehensive Planning: A single government could take a more unified, community-wide approach to land use, economic development, and long-term planning. Much of what happens in the Village impacts those that live outside the Village and vice-versa.

Why Keep Things as They Are? Skeptics of consolidation in New Paltz typically point to the following:

Service Needs: The Village and the TOV have some different service needs – its denser character requires services like sidewalk maintenance and other infrastructure needs that are largely unnecessary in the TOV.

Representation: Some have voiced concern about whether Village residents will be adequately represented on a consolidated Town board and committees.

Identity and Community Character: The Village and TOV have their own histories and senses of place, and some residents may worry that consolidation may dilute those characteristics.

¹ The Citizen Empowerment Tax Credit (CETC) is an annual payment that NYS provides to municipalities that successfully reorganize. The credit is expected to result in an additional \$1,000,000 in annual revenue for the Town of New Paltz if consolidation is approved.