

CHAPTER 4
IMPLEMENTATION

TOWN OF PITTSFORD



1. INTRODUCTION

The Town of Pittsford's 2009 Comprehensive Plan Update represents a significant investment in understanding the needs and aspirations of the community. It will be important to continue this community dialogue into the future, in order to take the ideas set forth in this plan from concept to reality. At the end of the day, a comprehensive plan can be judged on the tangible contributions it makes to a community's quality of life. Using this standard, the town's previous two comprehensive plan updates qualify as successes. The 1986 Comprehensive Plan Update developed, among others, the concept of the town's "50-50" open space protection zoning. The network of open spaces enjoyed by residents today, is a direct legacy of the 1986 plan. Likewise, the 1995 Comprehensive Plan Update built a foundation for the Greenprint plan and project, which led to the eventual protection of over 1,200 acres of working farms in the town. Working together, town residents can help to ensure that the 2009 Comprehensive Plan Update follows in the footsteps of its predecessors. A brief discussion on funding, identification of priority implementation projects, and ideas for monitoring progress on the plan, follows.



2. FUNDING

Invariably, and for good reason, the question of “How are we going to pay for these ideas?” arises. Given the current state of the economy, this question is all the more relevant to town residents. While the purpose of this plan, first and foremost, is to set forth ideas and desired outcomes, it is true that the implementation of a number of the ideas in this plan will require some level of financial commitment from the town (i.e., taxpayers). This is not to say that the long-term vitality of town depends entirely or even mostly on the public sector. In fact, long-term community vitality depends on the residents themselves, who every day commit their own personal resources to bettering the community around them. However, by taking its cues from the community and town residents, the public sector, including the town government, can make decisions and pledge resources efficiently and effectively to encourage positive outcomes.

A. GRANT PROGRAMS

There are a number of grant programs available to support town efforts to implement this plan. Since such programs and available resources are subject to frequent change, it is best to research options when an idea from this plan is being considered for implementation. Public sector agencies, particularly those at a regional scale, as well as consultants and grant specialists, can assist communities in matching goals and projects with available grant funding. That being said, two New York State grant programs bear mentioning here, as they are particularly geared to support community efforts. And while these grant programs undergo some changes from year to year, they are expected to be a reliable source of grant funding for the foreseeable future.

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYSOPRHP) Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) grants

NYSOPRHP-EPF grants can provide funding to a number of different kinds of projects. Most relevant to the Town of Pittsford are grants to support park planning and development of park resources, and trail projects. NYSOPRHP-EPF grants are available for historic preservation as well, although a public or not-for-profit ownership stake in the historic resource is required. Federal tax credits for restoring and rehabilitating historic structures are also available, and are implemented in partnership with NYSOPRHP. There are a number of eligibility requirements for tax credits, including the listing of the resource or structure on the National Register of Historic Places or in a locally certified district.

New York State Department of State (NYSDOS) Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) grants

NYSDOS provides EPF grant funding through the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP). The Town of Pittsford is eligible to receive such grants because the Erie Canal is an officially designated “Inland Waterway.” NYSDOS EPF-LWRP grant priorities and funds vary from year to year, but typically cover everything from

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parkland acquisition, feasibility studies and park improvements, to downtown revitalization – all of which are relevant to many of the concepts and recommendations contained in this plan, and the town and village’s adopted LWRP (2005). The Town and Village of Pittsford are currently implementing a joint concept study for lands adjacent to the Erie Canal that was funded through a grant from NYSDOS.

New York State Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

Grant applications to the state for park and recreation projects are strengthened when they are supported by the goals and objectives set forth in New York State’s Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). The SCORP is periodically updated, at which time local communities are given the opportunity to ensure that their own priorities are included in the plan.

3. PRIORITIES

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan Update sets forth many ideas and concepts to guide the future of the town. However, the town is not in a position to implement all or even many of the concepts at one time. Nor should it. Even individual projects will likely need to be implemented in stages. For instance, addressing the town’s parks and recreation needs starts with a study to better understand such needs and evaluate the best methods for meeting them. Additional community conversations and involvement will be needed as the details of projects move from concept to reality. An example of this is the town’s 1995 plan, which recommended protecting working farmland in the town based on community and landowner input. However, it took a series of in-depth community conversations after the adoption of the 1995 plan to advance the concept of farmland protection to reality – every step of the way.



Implementation of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan Update will require the same degree of focus and community commitment, starting with the identification of “Priority Strategies” – a discrete and digestible group of strategies that the town can begin to implement, following adoption of the plan. These priority strategies – identified below – address the issues and opportunities that emerged as most important to town residents during the course

of this project. This by no means undermines the importance and value of all other recommended goals and strategies included in this plan. Rather, the priority strategies represent a starting point for the town. As progress is made on the initial group of priority projects, new projects can be added to the list. A matrix of all goals and strategies is included on pages 78 and 79 (Chapter 3).

A. PRIORITY STRATEGIES

Update the Town's Land Use and Zoning Regulations to Proactively Address Changing Land Use and Lifestyle Trends (Chapter 3, Strategy A1)

The town can address a number of community concerns regarding land use through a zoning and land use regulations update. Such an update would require additional community conversations and input, to ensure that solutions meet community goals and are customized to fit the Town of Pittsford's unique character.

Make it Easier for Town Residents to Know About and Use the Town Trail and Park System (Chapter 3, Strategy C2.2)

Pittsford's extensive system of trails and sidewalks lead residents to many great places - historic resources such as the Erie Canal and Schoen Place; beautiful natural open spaces such as the Isaac Gordon Nature Preserve; and places for recreation and social interaction such as the village and Thornell Farm Park. Even though Pittsford has one of the best pedestrian and trail systems in the state, many residents are not aware of the full extent of the opportunities that exist for recreation, travel and exercise along the town's trail and sidewalk network. Promotion of these existing opportunities would encourage more residents to get out and use these extraordinary amenities. This is a low-cost strategy that can be easily implemented by the town.

Update the Town Park and Recreation Master Plan to Identify and Provide Solutions to the Parks and Recreational Needs of the Community (Chapter 3, Strategy C1)

The town's park and recreation needs, specifically facilities for active recreation, are an important community concern that needs more study. Many residents raised concerns at the comprehensive plan meetings about specific recreation needs such as field space or a centralized/expanded recreation center. However, it is important that the town have a solid understanding of the current and potential future needs, as well as the associated costs, before any new facilities or expansions are furthered. Therefore, it is recommended that the town conduct more detailed assessment of the needs and desires of the community through a parks and recreation master planning process.

Continue to Strategically Manage and Improve the Town's Transportation Network within a Town of Pittsford Context

It is difficult to single out any one transportation strategy identified in this plan as a “priority strategy.” This is because of the complex, dynamic nature of transportation planning and management. To this end, this transportation “priority strategy” encompasses all of the transportation strategies contained in this plan. By its inclusion here in the Priority Strategies section of the plan, transportation in all its facets is deemed a town priority. This includes addressing not only transportation related issues, but opportunities as well. Obviously, not every transportation strategy contained in this plan will be implemented at once. Some strategies are simply a continuation of existing town practices and policies, while other strategies will need to be implemented strategically, or as opportunities arise. A new town policy statement on transportation improvements (see Goal B1 and Strategy B1), however, will provide an overarching framework for transportation related decisions and approaches. As the town moves closer to full build-out, the influences on its transportation network will increasingly originate from points beyond the town – especially newly developing communities at the edge of the metropolitan area. As such, the town will need to continue to work with regional transportation entities as well as neighboring communities to address town transportation issues. Looking to the future, the town’s biggest transportation challenge – and opportunity – will arguably be to strike the right balance between efficiency and safety of the transportation network for drivers, and similar needs for pedestrians and bicyclists. In the end, it is about ensuring that the town’s transportation network contributes to the town’s quality of life from a variety of perspectives, but within a distinctly “Pittsford” context.



4. BENCHMARKING SUCCESS

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan Update is a living document that can and should evolve to respond to changing circumstances and new and unexpected challenges and opportunities. In fact, New York State Planning and Zoning law requires that adopted plans be reviewed on a regular basis. To ensure the success and longevity of the plan, the town should establish a process for monitoring progress made in implementing plan goals and strategies. This process could involve periodic reviews to:

- 1) assess progress; and
- 2) make adjustments to the implementation program to reflect progress, new and revised priorities and changing circumstances.

Ideally, these reviews should occur on an annual basis, with a more comprehensive review and reassessment every 5 years.

