



# Town and Village of Lowville Comprehensive Plan 2022

Date: October 20, 2022

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# **INTRODUCTION**

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## **Location**

The Town and Village of Lowville are in central Lewis County on the eastern edge of the Tug Hill plateau approximately 25 miles southeast of the city of Watertown and approximately 50 miles north of the city of Utica. The Town of Lowville encompasses 38.1 square miles and contains the hamlets of Dadville and West Lowville and the Village of Lowville. The Village of Lowville is composed of 1.9 square miles (~1100 acres) and is a separate municipality within the Town of Lowville.

## **Purpose of the Plan**

A comprehensive plan is a legal foundation for land use regulatory activities. This plan provides guidance for the physical development of the Town and Village of Lowville and provides a framework for future land development and land subdivision controls. State, County, other local governments, and the private sector may find the plan useful in shaping their future development activities.

## **Community Vision Statement**

Both the Town and Village's vision of the future is perhaps the single most important guiding principle used throughout the planning process. The vision states that: both the Town and Village of Lowville envision themselves as distinctive rural communities. They are thriving, family-friendly, and economically viable places for families and individuals of all ages to live and work. There is a variety of local and regional opportunities for employment, education, recreation, and cultural activity. The Town and Village place high value on small town feeling and wish to retain the character of both the Town and Village while allowing responsible smart growth to occur.

## **The Comprehensive Planning Committee and Community Input**

A Comprehensive Planning Committee was established in October 2020 to update the Town and Village of Lowville Comprehensive Plan 2008. The committee was assisted by the New York State Tug Hill Commission, the Lewis County Historical Society, and the Lewis County staff. Input from Town and Village residents was gathered through a community survey, a visioning exercise, and public hearings (January 5, 2022, October 19, 2022 and October 20, 2022). The draft plan was completed in July 2022 and was officially adopted by the Town and Village Boards on October 20, 2022 and October 19, 2022, respectively.

The Comprehensive Planning Committee recommends this plan be updated by the municipal boards every three years to reinforce the link between day-to-day development decisions and longer-range Town and Village policies without the need for a large-scale comprehensive planning efforts in the future.

# PART I: CURRENT LAND USE

## Town of Lowville

In the Town of Lowville (calculated as outside the Village of Lowville), agriculture is the largest land use with approximately 17,548 acres and much of this land is active agricultural land. Residential properties are in a far second position of active land use at 2,810 acres and new single-family residential development is targeting agricultural land. Vacant or undeveloped land comprises 1,178 acres in the Town and includes parcels of inactive farmland and parcels that may have significant development constraints (e.g., floodplains, wetlands, critical habitat, stream courses, and steep slopes). The Town contains 225 acres of industrial use land currently used for rock mining and located on the Rice Road and New York State (NYS) Route 26. A total of 141 acres are currently used for commercial purposes. The most intense concentration of commercial development in the form of strip development is along County Route 26 (Number Four Road) with other commercial properties scattered throughout the Town.

**Table 1. Town of Lowville (Outside the Village) Land Use by Acreage, 2022**

Land Use	Acreage
Agriculture	17,548.3
Commercial	141.0
Community Services	239.0
Industrial	225.0
Public Service	176.0
Recreation	7.4
Residential	2,810.3
Wild, Forest, Parks	160.0
Vacant	1,178.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>22,485</b>

Source: Lewis County Real Property Tax Services Department (2022)

## Village of Lowville

In the Village of Lowville, residential use represents the largest land use by acreage at 445 acres with single-family residential use as the predominant sector. Residential growth in the Village is minimal due to limited vacant lands. Commercial properties are the second largest existing land use with 128 acres. Most of these commercial properties consist of strip commercial and commercial office use development and are located along the main NYS Route 12/Utica Boulevard corridor through the center of the Village. Additional commercial properties are in other areas of the Village with concentrations on Shady Avenue to East State Street. Retail development opportunities exist on Utica Boulevard and NYS Route 26/Turin Road. Industrial parcels within the Village comprise approximately 52 acres located in three main areas. Two industrial manufacturers are located at the southern entrance to the Village on NYS Route

12/Utica Boulevard. A concrete plant is located on River Street and a third industrial manufacturer is located on the northern edge of the Village on Bostwick Street. The Village has approximately 143 acres of vacant or undeveloped land and 61 acres of agricultural land.

**Table 2. Village of Lowville Land Use by Acreage, 2022**

<b>Land Use</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
Agriculture	61.8
Commercial	127.8
Community Services	103.5
Industrial	51.9
Public Service	100.6
Recreation	64.5
Residential	445.4
Vacant	143.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,099</b>

Source: Lewis County Real Property Tax Services Department (2022)

## Taxable Land

Tax-exempt property is located within the Village and Town boundaries. The properties are owned by Federal, State, County, Town and Village Governments and tax-exempt organizations.

**Table 3. Town of Lowville (Outside the Village) Total Assessed and Town Taxable Values by Land Use, 2022**

<b>Land Use</b>	<b>Assessed Value</b>	<b>Town Taxed Value</b>
Agriculture	\$ 64,930,000	\$ 52,406,353
Commercial	\$ 14,948,900	\$ 13,423,814
Community Services	\$ 69,027,200	\$ 1,000,400
Industrial	\$ 3,181,600	\$ 2,817,200
Public Service	\$ 5,227,711	\$ 3,290,792
Recreation	\$ 969,400	\$ 644,600
Residential	\$ 60,222,100	\$ 57,671,792
Wild, Forest, Parks	\$ 201,000	\$ 89,100
Vacant	\$ 3,342,000	\$ 3,198,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 222,049,911</b>	<b>\$ 134,542,051</b>

Source: Lewis County Real Property Tax Services Department (2022)

**Table 4. Village of Lowville Total Assessed and Village Taxable Values by Land Use, 2022**

<b>Land Use</b>	<b>Assessed Value</b>	<b>Village Taxed Value</b>
Agriculture	\$ 1,547,900	\$ 1,475,244
Commercial	\$ 37,726,700	\$ 30,217,416
Community Services	\$ 70,121,900	\$ 455,400
Industrial	\$ 16,980,800	\$ 15,110,800
Public Service	\$ 2,700,947	\$ 1,218,347
Recreation	\$ 1,808,200	\$ 748,200
Residential	\$ 133,903,500	\$ 129,481,047
Vacant	\$ 2,222,900	\$ 1,851,100
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 267,012,847</b>	<b>\$ 180,557,554</b>

Source: Lewis County Real Property Tax Services Department (2022)

## **PART II: PLAN GOALS AND STRATEGIES**

### **Economic Development**

**VISION: Promote a diverse economic base that provides income, employment, and fiscal resources to the community in a manner that is compatible with the rural and natural character of Lowville.**

The primary goal for economic development in Lowville is to promote a diverse economic base by retaining the current businesses and attracting new businesses, including agricultural, industrial, commercial and home-based businesses. Together these businesses provide income, employment, and fiscal resources to the community. New economic development should be in a manner compatible with the rural and natural character of Lowville while protecting environmental quality and historical properties.

Goal 1.1 Further downtown revitalization efforts as an economic development tool

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*“The need to revitalize downtown commercial districts is clear. A healthy, viable downtown is crucial to the heritage, economic health, and civic pride of the entire community for several reasons. A healthy downtown retains and creates jobs. A healthy downtown also means a stronger tax base; long-term revitalization establishes capable businesses that use public services and provide tax revenues for the community. A revitalized downtown increases the community’s options for goods and services, whether for basic staples like clothing, food, and professional services or for less traditional functions such as housing or entertainment. Finally, revitalized downtowns are symbols of community caring and a high quality of life, factors that influence corporate decisions to locate to a community.” – National Trust for Historic Preservation (n/d)*

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The Village of Lowville has a downtown area that could benefit from physical enhancements. Various factors including perceived restrictive building codes, the need for off-street parking in an auto-oriented culture, property tax assessments that penalize building maintenance, excessive cost of maintenance, and big box retail make it challenging to generate a thriving downtown.

In alignment with Lowville's strong commitment to sustainability and decarbonization, the Village is interested in electric vehicle charging station infrastructure throughout the downtown area. Several Town- and Village-owned lots have been identified as feasible locations for charging stations for public use with the added benefit of promoting increased economic activity at nearby businesses. Several private property owners have also expressed interest in installing charging stations.

Strategies:

- 1.1.1. Encourage infill development with regard to furthering economic growth.
- 1.1.2. Pursue physical streetscape design improvements and expand outdoor opportunities for a more walkable and bikeable community, including the adoption of a complete streets policy, better signage for parking, and balance between curbs and sidewalk width.

Goal 1.2 Balance rural settings with business development and growth

The rural character of the Town and Village of Lowville and the surrounding area offer ample open space, farmland, and natural resources and promotes the quality of life sought and enjoyed by the residents. Commercial, retail, and industrial development or growth should aim to protect or enhance existing businesses, environmental quality and historic properties.

Strategies:

- 1.2.1. Inventory vacant commercial, office, industrial and agricultural sites.
- 1.2.2. Identify scenic, recreation, and tourist sites; enhance signage for these assets.
- 1.2.3. Support efforts to expand opportunities into outdoor spaces.
- 1.2.4. Encourage bed and breakfast, motel, and hotel growth to support tourism efforts and conferences.

Goal 1.3 Promote and encourage partnerships that accelerate economic development and improve communications and resources for developers, entrepreneurs, and residents

Improving outreach regarding Town and Village services, land use policies, and regionwide resources is an important step in successfully providing developers, entrepreneurs, and residents access to timely information. It is a goal to keep a record of resources for use by current businesses, developers, entrepreneurs, and residents such that development is consistent with this comprehensive plan.

Strategies:

- 1.3.1. Leverage partnerships to support existing or create new community and economic studies, including county-wide efforts to analyze markets and economic conditions.

- 1.3.2. Continue communication and collaboration with the Lewis County Chamber of Commerce, industrial and economic development agencies, and other organizations to promote business development and marketing initiatives, and continue to participate in workshops for strategic planning.

## **Historical Resources**

### **VISION: Recognize Lowville’s historical resources and preserve and enhance cultural opportunities in the community**

Historical sites and structures provide a visible link to the past, contribute greatly to sense of place and identity, and provide clues as to how early residents lived and worked. While the burden of historical preservation and protection of these properties lies primarily with individual building and land owners, resources are available to help accomplish preservation goals.

#### Goal 2.1 Foster historical design in any renovations and revitalization efforts

Instead of demolition, preservation of sound historical buildings and properties is a worthwhile endeavor for economic, cultural, aesthetic, and environmental reasons. However, preservation projects may be difficult to accomplish.

##### Strategies:

- 2.1.1. In collaboration with property owners, prioritize properties for preservation.
- 2.1.2. Assist property owners in their efforts to find available funding sources for renovation and revitalization projects.

#### Goal 2.2 Promote adaptive reuse of historical sites

The Village of Lowville may become a Certified Local Government (CLG) giving it access to CLG subgrants and technical assistance. Access to these programs requires the Village to adopt a review process for development in historic areas. Any review process, project, or program should incorporate adaptive reuse principles into the repurposing of historical buildings while protecting the uniqueness of the historical features including windows, woodworking, craftsmanship, details, and facades.

##### Strategies:

- 2.2.1. The Town and Village of Lowville Historian will create and maintain a list of historical structures and properties.
- 2.2.2. Promote adaptive reuse of historical sites to find a balance between acknowledging a site’s history while creating relevant, vibrant spaces, especially in vacant buildings.

## **Housing**

### **VISION: Foster a balanced blend of quality, affordable, and accessible mixed housing opportunities (range of housing types and price) for residents.**

Encouraging residential rehabilitation and renovations in the downtown area, especially historical buildings on State Street and Shady Avenue over newly constructed housing development is a priority. Mixed-use zoning is an example of flexible zoning allowing

different land uses to be combined into one zone. Mixed-income zoning specifically aims to eliminate areas with concentrated poverty and income-related segregation within the community. The goal is to encourage mixed use (primarily for residential and commercial use) and mixed income housing in historical buildings by renovating and preparing the buildings for occupancy.

A major concern for residents and local officials is the impact of property taxation on property improvement projects. Improvements raise assessed values of a property with the result of higher property taxes, the current assessing practices may disincentivize property maintenance, renovations, building on vacant lots, or restoration of historical buildings.

### Goal 3.1 Develop new housing design standards

The Town and Village will review development and design guidelines and recommendations that address housing issues. New recommendations should include mixed-use and mixed-income designs and factor in lowering development costs.

#### Strategies:

- 3.1.1. Review zoning lot size, mixed housing, and other development standards (e.g., off-street parking minimums) to lower development costs.
- 3.1.2. Collect design recommendations from regional partners and experts.

Goal 3.2 Consider updating zoning policies to allow for mixed use and mixed income housing opportunities

## Natural Resources

**VISION: Protect natural resources which contribute to the diversity, character, and general health and welfare of Lowville and encourage sustainable use of natural resources**

Through the Lowville community survey, many residents believe any economic or community development, and especially commercial, retail, and industrial development, should protect environmental quality, and green initiatives could reduce the environmental impact of development.

Goal 4.1 Protect drinking water, surface waters (especially Mill Creek, Black River, and Black River tributaries), groundwater, and wetlands, especially from point source pollution and erosion

Land use decisions can have significant and unanticipated impact on groundwater and surface water resources. To protect source water quality and quantity, the region's water recharge areas should be kept free from overdevelopment. Development of a comprehensive source water protection plan by identifying groundwater sources, analyzing undeveloped land, determining susceptibility to new growth, and implementing protection measures is necessary. Evaluating whether sufficient water is available for future development and generations and preserving ecological balance is a growing concern.

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) has mapped major wetlands of greater than 12.4 acres and include areas northeast of the Village between the Black River and East Road as well as a few isolated large wetlands throughout the Town. Development projects located within 100 feet of wetland areas or disturbance of streambed may require a NYSDEC permit.

The unique geology of the Lowville area facilitates movement of pollutants into the water supply. The NYSDEC and NYS Department of Health (NYSDOH) are working on new regulations and guidelines regarding pollutants in water supplies.

Local flood hazard areas are most of the length of the Mill Creek corridor and the area almost entirely located in close proximity to the Black River (east of Ridge Road and Waters Road). Flooding paired with the disturbance of riparian zones creates opportunities for erosion.

Strategies:

- 4.1.1. Continue working closely with NYSDEC, neighboring municipalities, Lewis County Soil and Water Conservation District, and others to address concerns over the impact of pollution and disturbances.
- 4.1.2. Consider the impact of specific local uses (e.g., mining activities, factories, and sewage treatment plants) and the need for zoning restrictions to reduce point source pollution.
- 4.1.3. Support local river cleanup efforts, continue to implement the Black River Watershed Management Plan when funding opportunities arise, and other efforts to address point source pollution concerns.
- 4.1.4. Review the new NYSDEC and NYSDOH regulations when made publicly available.
- 4.1.5. Continue to enforce the requirement for an erosion and sediment control plan for new development, as well as a full State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) review process, when applicable for non-residential uses.
- 4.1.6. Develop a comprehensive source water protection plan. The Town may consider updates to Stormwater Management and Erosion Control (Chapter 198) using the NYS Pollutant Discharge Elimination System regulation as a guide.

Goal 4.2 Address stormwater and combined sewage overflow concerns

The volume of stormwater flow can exceed the capacity of the combined sewer system or treatment plant causing an overflow to discharge into waterways and waterbodies. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) has a national framework for controlling combined sewer overflows through the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System plus technical guidance to assist local governments and authorities achieve their goals in a flexible as well as a cost-effective way.

Goal 4.3 Protect soil and air quality as well as native plant and animal species

Soil quality is important for a healthy and productive ecosystem, successful farming, and healthy forests and forest products. Of particular interest to the Town and Village are prime farmland soils, farmland soils of statewide importance, and prime farmland if drained. Air quality in Lowville could be improved and efforts to support the U.S. EPA's

Air Quality System are encouraged. Zoning and other land use tools can be used to ensure safe and responsible land use in order to reduce negative impact on soil quality, air quality and native plant and animal species.

Strategies:

- 4.3.1. New development should be discouraged on soils identified as prime, of statewide importance and prime, if drained.
- 4.3.2. Collaborate with NYSDEC, Lewis County, neighboring municipalities, and other potential partners to address concerns over the impact of development on native plant and animal species.
- 4.3.3. Continue to enforce the requirement for an erosion and sediment control plan for new development, as well as a SEQR review process, when applicable for non-residential uses.

## **Agriculture**

**VISION: Preserve and protect land that is suitable for farming and open space to ensure that farming remains an important part of the local economy. Improve outreach, communication, and information distribution with the agricultural community in Lowville**

Agriculture comprises up to 80% of the land use by acreage in Lowville and more than any other single factor creates the rural Lowville landscape. The soils in general are well-adapted for farming and grazing and plans protecting land for agricultural use will help ensure agricultural opportunities for future generations. Over time there has been a shift to larger dairy farms and crop farming raising concern for the abandonment of agricultural buildings formerly belonging to family farms. In recent years, however, the Town has seen growth in the number of traditional family farmers which is helping the Town maintain rural characteristics.

Goal 5.1 Encourage, support, and improve the viability of farms

Strategies:

- 5.1.1. Create incentives, including financial and regulatory tools, for property owners to protect working land and develop criteria for their application. In collaboration with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Lewis County, develop regulatory tools and promote outreach.
- 5.1.2. Encourage diversity in size of agricultural enterprises especially small farms, family-owned farms, and hobby farms.
- 5.1.3. Encourage diverse agricultural enterprises including dairy, livestock, and crop production (e.g., vegetables, fruits, wildflowers, nurseries, orchards), maple production and organic farming.
- 5.1.4. Collect data on potential challenges and benefits of food, milk, and slaughterhouse operations to inform decisions related to zoning and future development.
- 5.1.5. Collaborate with NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Lewis County to identify potential issues and areas of concern related to permitting prior to developing new or revising zoning and regulatory tools.

- 5.1.6. Support and encourage agribusiness by allowing “as of right” businesses and non-residential uses, when appropriate.

Goal 5.2 Explore opportunities to locate resources to invigorate and protect the farming economy

The Lewis County Agricultural and Farmland Enhancement Plan (April 2021) outlines resources and strategies to protect and invigorate the farming economy. The Lewis County Soil and Water Conservation District is undergoing efforts to complete soil mapping by 2023. The soil mapping effort will allow the Town and Village to identify prime agricultural soils for agricultural uses, soil conservation, and protection efforts.

A measure that can promote farming and community compatibility is the development of small anaerobic digesters using livestock and poultry manure and other feedstock generated on site by one farm and are designed and intended solely to generate power to offset utility costs.

Strategies:

- 5.2.1. Host links to the Lewis County Soil and Water Conservation District soil map, Chamber of Commerce, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Lewis County etc.
- 5.2.2. Explore the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service’s practice standards for greenhouse gas emission reduction and carbon sequestration.
- 5.2.3. Apply for a Lewis County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan Grant and NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets Protection Plan Implementation funding.
- 5.2.4. Support strategies outlined in the Lewis County Agricultural and Farmland Enhancement Plan, as necessary, and any other agriculture and farmland protection plans, as appropriate.

Goal 5.3 Protect farmland from development pressures

NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets approves “agricultural districts” as established by the county for the protection of farmlands. Agricultural districts are designed to protect against over restrictive zoning, excessive real property taxation assessments, ad valorem assessments for special improvements, the exercise of eminent domain, and certain policies of State agencies. Lewis County has one agricultural district. Nearly the entire Town of Lowville lies within this district with the exception of some lands on State Route 12, Bardo Road, and Waters Road. Conserving the Town’s prime agricultural soils and working agricultural land should be codified in the zoning and subdivision laws.

In addition, New York Environmental Conservation Law provides measures affording some protection to farmers from excessive land taxation through voluntary conveyance of conservation easements to another entity such as a local government or a nonprofit organization. Similarly, the purchase of development rights, lease of development rights, and transfer of development rights programs are designed to remove development rights from selected farmlands and thus afford their preservation as viable agricultural operations.

Since the passing of the NYS Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act and the resulting growth in renewable energy development, it is important to analyze the relationship between renewable energy development and farmland viability. The value of agricultural activities compared to leasing land for solar energy systems can be compared using the interactive Agriculture/Solar Calculator – NEW YORK STATE (tughill.org). Any proposed renewable energy project should promote prime farmland protection and farmland mitigation plans, and delineate the renewable energy project decommissioning plans.

Strategies:

- 5.3.1. Identify ideal areas for large solar energy system development in the Town.
- 5.3.2 Encourage continued agribusiness in conjunction with large solar energy system opportunities on farmland identified for large solar energy systems.
- 5.3.2. Consider the impact of biofuels development.

## **Transportation and Mobility**

**VISION: Provide safe, convenient, and efficient transportation options for people and goods within Lowville, which are supportive of the community’s land use policies, and which minimize the impact of traffic on community character and quality of life**

The Town is comprised of 84.6 miles of public roads with approximately 19.7 miles under State, 11.5 miles under County, 40 miles under Town jurisdiction, and 13.4 miles are Village streets. The Town and Village have local law road standards. In 2019, NYS Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) estimated the most traveled segment of road in Lowville is the overlap of NYS Route 12 and NYS Route 26 in the Village core with an annual average daily traffic count of 11,568 vehicles.

With regards to parking, most Lowville community survey respondents answered no change to current parking is needed. However, traffic congestion concerns caused by parking issues exist around the post office, the intersection of State Street with Shady Avenue, the school, and several other key areas within the Village of Lowville. The parking lot on the corner of State Street and Dayan Street was praised as a good example of a parking improvement. Parking improvement priorities would potentially address traffic congestion concerns, along with repaving, repainting, and redesigning existing parking lots.

Lowville residents desire more walking opportunities and sidewalk widening for comfort of walking, general pedestrian safety and Americans with Disabilities Act compliance. Streetscapes should be enhanced through sidewalk repair, new sidewalk construction, and plantings between streets and sidewalks, defined bikeways, strengthened pedestrian crosswalks, street-side amenities, pedestrian lighting, street furniture, and wayfinding signage.

Goal 6.1. Create a multimodal transportation network in the Town and Village

Implementing complete street polices that create a cohesive network between routes and destinations, both safe and accessible for all users, regardless of age, income level,

or ability, is the goal. Such complete streets policies should address walkability maps, bike lanes, shared use paths, updated sidewalks, multimodal uses on roads, advisory or paved shoulders, agricultural vehicles on roads, and concerns of highway traffic in downtown and rural residential areas. Street furniture such as benches, bike racks, and covered accommodations for livestock should also be considered. Funding is available for implementing complete street projects.

The Town and Village will consider lighting in the downtown area, additional parking, and the possibility of shared parking for adjacent lots. In addition to parking, the need for electric vehicle infrastructure is growing.

Rural communities are car-dependent and barriers due to cost or mobility can make transportation in rural areas difficult. Innovative rural mobility transportation options such as van or carpooling, ridesharing, or those matching passenger demand with operator and vehicle supply on the fly, such as microtransit which involves using small-scale vehicles instead of buses to deliver public transportation should be considered.

Strategies:

- 6.1.1. Consult the Village of Lowville Infill Development Study of 2005 for more detail on improving connections, especially with the Veteran's Memorial Park.
- 6.1.2. Collaborate with Lewis County and other municipalities to identify public transportation priorities for the existing public transit system and any proposed public transportation systems.
- 6.1.3. In partnership with other organizations, pursue financing options, including but not limited to the Transportation Assistance Program and Climate Smart Communities Grants.
- 6.1.4. Develop a map of future roads and streets.
- 6.1.5. Continue to support siting of electric vehicle infrastructure.

Goal 6.2 Improve pedestrian safety and sidewalk quality

The Village of Lowville contains public infrastructure for pedestrians in the form of crosswalks, curbing, sidewalks, and street trees. These features add greatly to the character and livability of the Village, calming traffic and providing shade in the summer. In the winter, snow removal from sidewalks creates a safer walking environment. The maintenance of a quality pedestrian environment is a significant factor in luring new businesses to locate in the Village however, the current pedestrian infrastructure is in various states of quality. The Village plans to complete the Lowville Village Center Pedestrian Trail.

Strategies:

- 6.2.1: Enhance the pedestrian experience and safety by including street crossings, improved crosswalk signals and speed limit modifications where necessary.
- 6.2.2. Develop a comprehensive walking and pedestrian plan with high and low priority areas to improve connections.
- 6.2.3. Consider updates to zoning to require sidewalk construction for new development.

Goal 6.3 Maintain and enhance highway facilities and roadways as prescribed in NYSDOT guidelines

Lowville street and drainage repair is a priority area in both the Village and the Town.

Strategy:

- 6.3.1. Continue to maintain and improve highway facilities and roadways, when possible.

## Recreation

**VISION: Provide and promote diverse, affordable, and accessible recreational and tourism opportunities for all Town and Village residents and visitors**

Lowville is near State Forests and Forest Preserves, the Tug Hill Wildlife Management Area, Whetstone Gulf State Park, and has access to the Black River, local parks, and trails. The Town of Lowville is home to an 88-acre NYSDEC Demonstration Area in Dadville. The site features a nature trail, an arboretum, and a trout pond. Lowville became the home to the County Fair in the 1870s and the 49-acre fairground located in the Village features a racetrack with a grandstand, a baseball diamond, soccer and football fields, a playground and a skating rink. Veteran's Memorial Park is also located within the Village and features green space, a bandstand, playground and tennis courts. Lowville Academy and Central School is a leader in providing recreation and community facilities in Lowville. The facilities include a pool, weight room, athletic fields, a playground and tennis courts. The school facilities are used for adult and youth recreation for both indoor and outdoor programs including the Summer Recreation Program. Together, these resources make Lowville rich in recreational assets.

The Lowville community survey results highlighted interest in new and improved recreation opportunities that protect environmental quality and historical properties, and promote using green buffers around parking lots, converting old rail lines to walkable and bikeable trails, increasing access to the Black River for non-motorized recreation, and improving open space for indoor and outdoor multigenerational recreation.

The Town and Village are supportive of the existing recreation opportunities and welcome collaboration with other municipalities and organizations to assess the need for additional community recreational infrastructure.

Goal 7.1 Highlight Black River and its tributaries as a blueway opportunity and natural assets for businesses, tourism, and recreation

The Black River is a prime recreation and tourism draw. The Town and Village share the goal of enhancing the quality of the Black River and developing additional recreational opportunities with this natural asset.

Strategy:

- 7.1.1 Establish and implement goals for conservation and recreation.

Goal 7.2 Encourage the development and expansion of infrastructure that supports tourism and recreation in the Town and Village

## Strategies:

- 7.2.1. Consider the need for upgrades to the existing Veteran's Memorial Park while maintaining, expanding, or updating features.
- 7.2.2. Encourage conservation and recreation throughout the Town and Village.
- 7.2.3. Explore expanding signage in the Town and Village and use of platforms where the public can geolocate themselves on maps.
- 7.2.4. Encourage development of private land for projects or initiatives expanding year-round, indoor, and outdoor youth and adult athletic, recreational, and cultural programs.

## Infrastructure and Public Utilities (Essential Services)

### **VISION: Provide a utility and infrastructure system that meets the demands of the current residents, maintains existing investments, and supports future development**

The Village and portions of the Town are supplied with public water through a NYSDEC permitted system originally constructed in the 1890s. The system serves approximately 4,000 users in the Village and 350 in the Town of Lowville and two properties in Martinsburg by rent payment. The system also serves six districts in the Town of Watson, one in the Town of Martinsburg, and one in the Town of New Bremen.

The Village of Lowville public sewer was built in 1939 and updated in 1994, 1998, 2001, 2006, and yearly since 2016. The system serves approximately 3,500 users and has a NYSDEC permitted flow of over two million gallons per day. The system covers the entire Village and parts of the Town along portions of Waters Road, Number Four Road, NYS Route 12, NYS Route 26, and NYS Route 812.

Effluent flows to a treatment plant in the Village. The 2006 treatment plant upgrade improved aeration capacity and replaced much of the aging infrastructure. Based on a NYSDEC mandate, the Village constructed a discharge pipeline to take the effluent directly to the Black River. The Town has its own pumping station to pump effluent to the Village system.

Since the last comprehensive plan in 2008, the Village has taken on three major water and sewer infrastructure projects. The Five Streets Project upgraded three miles of water mains, storm drainage, waterlines, curb stops, fire hydrants, and more across Water Street, Stowe Street, Park Avenue, Shady Avenue, Trinity Avenue, and portions of East State Street, and fixed some storm drainage concerns near 7550 South State Street and on James Street. Sewer mains were replaced and a new sewage pump station was built on the corner of East State Street and Water Street. Some additional valves and aerators were incorporated into the new sewage pump station. Aeration was also incorporated into the three-million-gallon water tank to maintain the quality of the water. Another positive outcome from this Five Streets Project was the regrading and repaving of these streets to NYSDOT specifications.

The second project involves the development of more groundwater wells with a total investment of approximately \$5.7 million. Currently, several groundwater wells have been installed, developed, and approved while two new wells are in development. Upon

completion of the two news wells and the transmission lines to the water treatment plant, the Village will seek approval from the NYS Department of Health (NYSDOH). NYSDOH recommends the Village develop two water treatment plants with one serving as a backup.

The third water and sewer infrastructure project is a two-phased sewer project undertaken by the Village. The first phase of this project began in 2016 to service the increased sewage demands due to industrial development within the Village. About \$3 million was invested to add a new sewer line from the industrial zone to the sewer plant. The second phase began construction in October 2021 with a total cost of \$9.2 million with an estimated completion by fall 2022. The sewer plant will receive significant upgrades to nearly all system components, including the desludging of lagoons, new liners, aeration tubing, and power upgrades.

According to the Lowville community survey results, public works services, infrastructure, and utilities are considered average by Town and Village residents; water and sewer services should expand to more households; and solar and wind renewable energy development and broadband expansion has support of residents.

Goal 8.1 Improve and expand public water and sewer in the Village and Town to the extent practicable

To maintain the efficiency and capacity of the system, proper maintenance of roads, hydrants, manholes, and storm drainage projects should continue and upgrading water delivery lines and water meters should continue, as needed.

Strategies:

- 8.1.1. Continue developing a joint sewer and water capital plan to evaluate future expansion projects.
- 8.1.2. Stormwater and drainage infrastructure, and sewer treatment capacity requirements should be monitored and assessed, as needed.
- 8.1.3. Upgrade water delivery lines and meters, as needed.
- 8.1.4. If a well water quality concern is brought to the Town or Village, it should be addressed as soon as possible.

Goal 8.2 Continue to coordinate with Lewis County leaders to improve and expand infrastructure and public utilities

The Town and Village will continue to maintain road, bridge and culvert infrastructure.

The Town and Village will continue to consider the impact of renewable energy systems on the land use, economy, and quality of life in Lowville. The Town of Lowville adopted wind energy regulations in 2009. Together the Towns of Lowville, Harrisburg and Martinsburg are home to the largest wind energy producer east of the Mississippi River. The entire project features 195 towers providing 322 megawatts of energy.

The NYS Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act of 2019 requires New York to reduce economy-wide greenhouse gas emissions which resulted in a significant increase in proposed solar facilities in rural areas. Allowable areas for principal solar development are: industrial, commercial, and agricultural zones. Renewable energy development should comply with the Lewis County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan Farmland Soils and Wetlands map to preserve prime farmland soils and soils of

statewide importance. Payment-in-lieu-of-taxes may be considered when negotiating with renewable energy developers.

Strategy:

- 8.2.1. Continue to support studies and communication with other municipalities for improvements to Lowville's infrastructure and public utilities.

Goal 8.3 Update regulatory tools whenever necessary

To achieve many of the strategies outlined in this section, the Town and Village will review and update local laws, permit procedures, and regulations when necessary.

## **Community Facilities**

**VISION: Ensure a high-quality level of public facilities and services are provided to Town and Village residents**

The Village of Lowville includes Federal, State, County, Town and Village Government buildings. It is important these facilities remain in the Village as they strengthen collaborative functions due to proximity. The Town and Village plan to maintain an inventory of municipally owned and other community facilities. It is important to work with other municipalities' officials to determine the location of future building projects within the Village and Town of Lowville.

Goal 9.1 Improve local governance

Local laws should be reviewed and updated as needed based on progression of development. Municipal cooperation and shared services should continue.

## **PART III: LAND USE PLANS AND POLICIES**

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This section of the comprehensive plan identifies the land use policies that, when implemented, will guide development in the Town and Village over the next 10 years. The policies provided in this section may be implemented through existing or new Smart Growth management techniques such as zoning and subdivision regulations.

The Town of Lowville is comprised of the following zones:

- Residential (Residential High Density(R-30), Residential Low Density (R-40), and Commercial/Residential (CB-R)),
- Commercial (Commercial (CB) and CB-R),
- Industrial (Industrial (I-1), Highway Industrial (I-2), Industrial/Commerce (I-3)),
- Agricultural (AG),
- Open Space and Conservation (OC), and
- Planned Development (PD)

The Planned Development zone allows for special types of development projects under certain circumstances. Some areas of the Town have overlay zones to allow for multiple uses.

The Village of Lowville is comprised of zones including:

- Village Center (VC),
- Residential (R),
- Neighborhood Commercial ((NC-1) and (NC-2)),
- Auto Commercial (AC)),
- Industrial (I), and
- Park/Open Space (P)

As with other municipalities where a county seat is located within a village, migration from a village's higher density center into lower density properties and into a more rural town is customary. In planning for the Town and Village of Lowville, the land use policies provide for deliberate growth while preserving scenic views, natural resources, and rural lands.

The location and character of the Town of Lowville area is rural. The Town consists of woodlands, farms (active and abandoned), and low-density residential development made up of single-family dwellings and manufactured homes. Scattered non-residential uses are also present and include commerce, industry, large acreages of NYSDEC regulated wetlands, flood hazard areas, and steep slopes. Some environmental development constraints can be located on the NYSDEC Environmental Resource Mapper located at: <https://gisservices.dec.ny.gov/gis/erm/>

The Village of Lowville functions as the center of the Lowville community and the county seat of Lewis County. The Village Center zone encompasses the existing central business district offering social, cultural, and historical resources. Iconic buildings with unique and interesting exterior façades and historical architecture can be found throughout downtown Lowville. Downtown Lowville has a traditional development pattern of store fronts along a common front building line, façades often unbroken between stores, and building heights of one to three stories. The traditional character of the core includes brick, masonry, glass, iron, and wood. Modernized façades include metal and vinyl siding, and detract from traditional aesthetics. Historical building façades with original materials, when properly maintained, conserve a sense of individuality and authenticity to the Village's origins.

Residential zones in the Village of Lowville consist of single-family small residential neighborhoods surrounding the central business district. These neighborhoods are of three types. The traditional neighborhoods of a village core consist of residences close together on long narrow lots with strong orientation to the street and include uniform front yard setbacks, street trees and sidewalks. The second type of neighborhood includes lot arrangements similar to the traditional neighborhoods but lack street amenities such as street trees or sidewalks. The third distinctive neighborhood is a new area of housing on very large, wide lots with virtually no street orientation or amenities.

Parks are interspersed throughout the Village and provide places to recreate, congregate, and meander through.

Neighborhood Commercial zones in the Village are mixed use areas and include small-scale retail sales and service establishments, and light manufacturing uses which are

closely surrounded by dwellings. The design of more recently developed neighborhood commercial areas contrasts sharply with the character of the residential neighborhoods.

A commercial area is located within the Town and Village on the Number Four Road. This zone allows for different types of non-residential uses and can be serviced by municipal utilities. A commercial area is typically an ideal location for uses that are generally unsuitable for village locations due to space requirements or potential negative impacts on adjacent residential uses. However, this area may not be large enough to support future industrial development.

The Village also has an industrial area located along the historical railroad corridor east and south of the Village Center and is largely built out. Though this area is currently industrial, the vision is to encourage mixed uses within the zone.

Non-residential areas are located along NY Route 12, NYS Route 26 and NYS Route 812 with the most concentrated area along South State Street and Utica Boulevard. These areas were developed for non-residential uses with an automobile orientation rather than a pedestrian orientation. However, the goal is to make these areas more consistent with a complete street layout and design.

The Town and Village municipalities should consider the following policies and request review and comment from the joint municipal Planning and Zoning Boards prior to implementation.

## **Development Design Standards**

1. The intensity of development in the Town should be compatible with a rural environment and lower than that of the Village. (Zones R-30, R-40, OC, AG)
2. Encouragement should be provided to property owners and potential developers of deteriorated and vacant buildings in both the Town and Village for restoration and/or conversion. Mixed use restoration projects should be considered. (All zones)
3. Infill development of existing buildings and structures is highly encouraged in the Village Center. (Zone VC)
4. Medium- or high-density development in the Town should be located as close to the Village limits as possible. Infill development of existing buildings and structures is highly encouraged particularly in the Village Center. (Zones R-30, R-40, AG, VC)
5. Support and encouragement should be provided to agribusiness allowing “as of right” businesses and non-residential uses, when appropriate. (All zones)
6. Low density zoning in agricultural areas should be maintained to minimize subdivision activity. Consideration could be given to making minimum lot sizes larger than the 40,000 square feet currently allowed for residential uses in certain zones. (Zones R-40, OC, AG, CB-R, CB)

7. Nonfarm intrusions into agricultural areas should be minimized, thus minimizing conflicts with existing agricultural operations. (All Town zones)
8. Lots should remain in the 9,000 to 40,000 square feet range to allow for efficient use of existing infrastructure (water, and sewer system, sidewalks, etc.) within the current sewer and water districts in both the Town and Village. (All zones within the municipal water and sewer districts)
9. Municipalities should consider updating policies to define lot coverage with a calculation procedure which includes any impervious space in development uses. (Village: all nonresidential use; Town: All zones)
10. If cluster development is to be encouraged, the municipalities should consider a percentage of land to remain green space as well as who and how the green space will be maintained. (R-30, R40, CB, CB-R, AG, OC, R, NC-1, NC-2, VC)
11. Uses should comply with drainage controls. (All zones)
12. The Town could consider increasing the road frontage requirements along principal highways outside the Village in an effort to limit access points. (Including Zones R-30A, CB, CB-R, AG, OC, I-2 Overlay)
13. Land and buildings should be developed in an aesthetically pleasing way following design recommendations on properties located at entrance roads and streets into the Village. (Zones R, R-30A, R-30C, CB, I, AC, I3)
14. Buildings should respect a maximum setback or "build-to" line within the Village. (All Village zones)
15. Building scale, form, and materials (i.e., roof pitch, building materials, building styles), and building colors should be consistent with the neighborhood. (All Village zones)
16. The Village should consider a standard for determining when a structure is of historic significance in an effort to enforce the standards in this plan. (All Village zones)
17. New construction should respect the architectural character of neighboring buildings. Blocky, one-story buildings with vinyl siding and no detailing should be prohibited in new developments and renovations in the Village Center. (Zone VC)
18. All development should encourage mixed uses that promote livability and improve the lifestyle of residents and visitors. (All zones)
19. Home occupation (e.g., home businesses) should continue to be accommodated but regulated to promote harmony with the neighborhood. (All zones)
20. High density office uses and retail sales and services should be encouraged with retail located on ground floors and office or residential uses above particularly in the Village Center. (Zone VC)

21. Mixed use and complete streets policies could be considered for incorporation into new development and subdivision standards. (All Village zones)
22. Future streets should be developed in a block pattern that respects the current street pattern. Cul-de-sacs should be discouraged unless necessary to preserve environmental features. (All zones)
23. Wide sidewalks from the Village Center to industrial zones should be included in development plans to allow workers walking access to and from work and are preferred in commercial zones. (VC, AC, R, I along State Street/South State Street/Utica Boulevard, NC-1, NC-2)
24. The Village could implement minimum sidewalk construction standards including requiring sidewalk construction with new development of residential and non-residential uses in certain zones. (All Village zones)
25. The Town should consider the outward migration and shortage of office space in the Village. The Town could revisit zoning allowing for office space in certain zones. (Zone CB, R-30A, R-30-C, R-40)
26. The Village could consider revisiting the AC zone on Outer Stowe Street replacing it with a more appropriate zone which would encompass the County lands and buildings. (Zone AC)
27. Construction, reconstruction, or other improvements should emphasize streetscaping and wayfinding, with pedestrian amenities, façade enhancements, and signage to create a welcoming, cohesive, and safe environment. (All Village zones)
28. Uses that are high automobile traffic generators (i.e., drive-through banking, convenience stores, etc.) should be prohibited within the Village Center and residential zones. (Zones VC, R)
29. The industrial zones in the Town including the commercial area on the Number Four Road and the existing industrial areas within the Village should be utilized for appropriate non-residential and mixed uses. (Zones I, I-3)
30. Front yards in industrial zones should be minimized to prevent waste of valuable land. Requiring minimal front setbacks may allow for easier implementation of side and rear yard parking for non-residential uses by the Planning Board. (Zones I, I-1, I-2, I-3 including I-2 Overlay)
31. The Town and Village should consider zoning for tiny house development similar to a conventional housing development. (All residential zones)
32. The Town and Village should consider implementing zoning to address short-term rentals. Regulations could include noise and nuisance regulations, parking requirements, special use permitting requirements and/or licensing, a cap on the number of days within a calendar year a dwelling is allowed as a short-term rental, and limits placed on the number of guests allowed per rental. (All zones)

33. The Town and Village should consider implementing stronger regulations for development that requires a special use permit. (All zones)
34. The Town and Village should consider covered accommodations for livestock used for transportation for all new non-residential development. (All zones)
35. Road right-of-way distances should be defined for all zones. Current measurements are taken from the center-line or edge of the roadway. (All zones)
36. Maintenance easements should be required for lot line development in the Village Center. (Zone VC)
37. The municipalities should strive to obtain consistency with terminology in zoning with terminology used by real property and New York State Fire Prevention and Building Code. (All zones)

### **Natural Resources / Alternative Energy**

1. Extraction of natural deposits, soil, sand, gravel or stone (mining) should be carefully controlled within NYSDEC guidelines. (Zones I-1, I-2, AG, OC)
2. Alternative energy systems should be properly screened with natural vegetation and have increased setbacks from property lines to minimize any negative impacts on neighbors, pedestrians, and the community. Alternative energy systems should be discouraged from prime farmland to the greatest extent possible. (Village: Small Solar: all zones; Principal Solar: AC, I; Town Wind Energy Conversion System (WECS) or Windmill Farm: AG, OC; Small WECS: all zones; Small Solar: all zones; Principal Solar: CB-R, CB, I, AG, I; Small Anaerobic Digester: accessory use to farm operation with restrictions)
3. Small or accessory solar energy systems are permitted in specific zones. Ground-mounted small solar energy systems should be properly screened with natural vegetation. (Town: all zones; Village: VC, R, NC-1, NC-2, AC, I)
4. Principal solar systems are allowed in specific zones within the Town and Village, should be prohibited in or within a certain distance to residential uses, and prohibited in all other zones. (By special use permit in Town: Zones CB, I, AG; Village: AC, I)
5. Green infrastructure features including bio-retention ponds, culvert daylighting, and additional tree planting should be encouraged in development plans for non-residential uses. (All zones)

### **Screening**

1. Trees, vegetation, and other landscape features should be retained as much as possible. Non-residential uses should be landscaped to blend with the rural setting.

- The municipalities could consider suggested landscaping patterns, a percentage of property requiring landscaping, and the location of such landscaping. (All zones)
2. Buffering and screening should be considered for non-residential uses adjacent to residential uses and public roads. (All zones)
  3. Standalone commercial, office, industrial, and warehouse site development is allowed in certain areas of the Town and Village. Standards for setbacks, buffer areas, screening, and vegetation, building size and bulk, impervious surfaces, lighting, noise, odor, signs, on-site circulation, parking and loading, access, drainage, and erosion control should be used to ensure the impacts of development are controlled and fit with the character of the neighborhood. (All zones allowing the uses)
  4. The side and rear yards of non-residential buildings should not face public roads, especially if they include dumpsters, outside storage or other unsightly features. (All zones)
  5. Street views should be kept neat, clean, and complementary to the surrounding neighborhood, using existing regulations such as the Property Maintenance and Unsafe Structures local laws as well as the International and New York State Fire Prevention and Building Code Property Maintenance Codes. (All zones)
  6. Driveways should not visually overpower the principal use of the property. (All zones)

## **Signs**

1. Signs should be limited and placed to minimize impacts on natural, aesthetic viewsheds. (All zones)
2. Signs should not encroach upon road right of ways. Though municipalities cannot control most content on signs, content should be concise and informative with a simple design that is easy to read. (All zones)
3. Free standing signs should be limited and follow design standards provided by the Town and Village. (All zones)
4. New or re-designed freestanding signs should be maintained and complementary to the area. (All zones)
5. Non-residential signs should fit the local character of the community. (All zones)
6. Non-residential businesses should be encouraged to contact NYSDOT sign division to obtain tourist-oriented directional signage when appropriate. (All zones)
7. Murals on the blank sides of non-residential buildings should be considered with site plan review. (All Village zones)

## **Parking**

1. In the Village, parking areas should generally be to the side or rear of buildings, and screened from public view, paved and repaved as needed with clearly delineated parking spots. (All non-residential zones)
2. In the Town, parking areas should generally be to the side or rear of buildings and screened from public view. Delineated parking spots are preferred. Electric vehicle charging station infrastructure should be considered. (All non-residential zones)
3. Multi-family dwellings should have parking to the rear, adequate space, screening, bulk control, sidewalks, and proper street orientation. Multi-family dwellings and accessory dwelling units should be in visual character with single-family dwellings and the neighborhood in which they are located. (Village VC, R, NC-1, NC-2; Town R-30C, CB-R)
4. Parking in side yards should be screened with vegetation to maintain the front building line. When parking lots abut residential land uses, buffering and screening should be provided. (All zones)
5. Electric vehicle charging station infrastructure should be incorporated into new parking designs to the extent practicable. (All Village zones)

## **Aesthetic Views**

1. Scenic roadsides and viewsheds should be identified and preserved. (All zones)
2. Design recommendations could be supplied for new development and construction that fit the character of the community where the property is located. (All zones)
3. Original woodwork, stone, brick, metalwork, and windows should be preserved on existing buildings when practicable. (All zones)
4. Architectural elements in new developments and renovations of non-residential buildings, whether simple or ornate, should be encouraged with placement around the eaves, trim, and porches to avoid blocky buildings with no detailing. (All zones)
5. All existing residential buildings should maintain their historical styles and architectural elements around the eaves, trim, and porches. Original porches and original woodwork, stone, and brick detailing should be preserved on historical buildings. (All zones)
6. New residential homes within the Village should strive to include detailing and materials that are complementary and compatible with the character of the neighborhood. (All Village zones)
7. Manufactured homes and accessory dwelling units should be permitted in some areas and be subject to design and review standards appropriate for the areas in which they are located. (Village VC, R, NC-1, NC-2; Town R-30B, R-40, CB-R, AG, OC)

8. Windows on any building are encouraged to include shutters, mullions, window grids, and accent windows like arched, ornate, or textured-glass windows. (All zones)
9. Windows on any non-residential building should be well placed and proportioned to the extent practicable. (All zones)
10. Windows in historical residential and non-residential buildings should be restored and authentic to their historical design and style. Large glass windows for storefronts on main street are recommended. (All zones)
11. Sidewalks and mature street trees should be required and maintained. Cutting down healthy, mature trees should be avoided. (All Village zones)
12. Planted areas should be retained and maintained along the street, especially between the street and sidewalk. However, plantings cannot impede the sight distances from crosswalks, street intersections, driveways or sidewalks. (All zones)
13. Storage and parking should be located to the rear or side of buildings and screened from public view. The side and rear yards of non-residential buildings should not face public streets, if possible, particularly if they include dumpsters, parking, outside storage or other unsightly features. (All zones)
14. Parking areas around public facilities and walkways should have adequate lighting. (All zones)
15. Exterior lighting should be controlled by turning off or turning down when no longer needed, be dark sky compliant, and use energy-saving technology for residential as well as non-residential uses. (All zones)
16. Chain-linked fences should be prohibited in the Village Center. (Zone VC)
17. Chain-linked fences should be limited. If utilized, appropriate screening with vegetation shall be provided to obscure fencing from view. (All zones (except VC))
18. Agricultural support uses should be allowed near primary agricultural zones and uses. (All zones allowing and containing ag uses)
19. The pedestrian friendliness of the Village Center should be continued through building setbacks, street trees, and wide sidewalks. (Zone VC)
20. New curb-cuts should be limited, and shared access should be encouraged or required. (All zones)
21. An earth-tone color scheme, or unpainted masonry, or natural materials should be considered for building exteriors for all non-residential uses. (All zones)

It is the intention of the Town and Village of Lowville to collaborate with the joint Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals to implement these Land Use Plans and Policies through regulations, changes, or modifications to the appropriate zoning laws, to the extent practicable.

## **REFERENCES:**

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### **Documents:**

Code of the Town of Lowville

Code of the Village of Lowville

Farmland Soils and Wetlands, Town of Lowville (Lewis County Agricultural and Farmland Enhancement Plan, April 2021)

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Environmental Resource Mapper (<https://gisservices.dec.ny.gov/gis/erm/>)

New York State Department of State, Zoning and the Comprehensive Plan (Revised 2015, Reprint Date: September 2021)

Revitalizing Downtown, National Trust for Historic Preservation (1996)

Village of Lowville Infill Development Study of 2005

### **Acronyms:**

NYS – New York State

NYSDEC - New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

NYSDOH – New York State Department of Health

NYSDOT – New York State Department of Transportation

SEQR - State Environmental Quality Review

U.S. EPA - United States Environmental Protection Agency

### **Definition of Terms:**

Accessory dwelling unit - a secondary residential dwelling unit located on a single-family lot independent of the primary dwelling unit. (United States Office of Housing and Urban Development)

Agricultural district - a district established pursuant to the provisions of Agricultural and Markets Law Article 25-AA. (Code of the Town of Lowville § 240-5)

Area of Special Flood Hazard – The land in the floodplain within a community subject to a one-percent or greater chance of flooding in any given year. This area may be designated as Zone A, AE, AH, AO, A1-99, V, VO, VE or V1-30. It is also commonly referred to as the "base floodplain" or "one-hundred-year floodplain." (Code of the Town of Lowville §124-4; Code of the Village of Lowville §112-4)

Cluster development - A form of development for subdivisions that permits a reduction in lot area requirements for some or all lots in a tract, provided that there is no increase in the number of lots permitted under a conventional subdivision, and where the

resultant land is either devoted to permanent open space, or is permanently combined with the remainder of the lots, where only some of the lots are reduced in area. (Code of the Town of Lowville § 240-5)

Combined sewer overflows - volume of stormwater flow exceeds the capacity of the combined sewer system or treatment plant causing an overflow to discharge into waterways and waterbodies which may include untreated or partially treated human and industrial waste, toxic materials, debris, and stormwater. (United States Environmental Protection Agency)

Combined sewer system - collects rainwater runoff, domestic sewage, and industrial wastewater into one pipe... [and] transports all of the wastewater it collects to a sewage treatment plant for treatment, then discharges to a water body. (United States Environmental Protection Agency)

Complete Streets policy - is a roadway planned and designed to consider the safe, convenient access and mobility of all roadway users of all ages and abilities. (New York State Department of Transportation)

Comprehensive plan - is the culmination of a planning process that establishes the official land use policy of a community and presents goals and a vision for the future that guides official decision making. (New York State Department of State, Zoning and the Comprehensive Plan (Revised 2015, Reprint Date: September 2021))

- the materials, written and/or graphic, including but not limited to maps, charts, studies, resolutions, reports and other descriptive material that identify the goals, objectives, principles, guidelines, policies, standards, devices and instruments for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development of - *the town located outside the limits of any incorporated village or city*. (NYS Town Law §272-a); - *of the village*. (NYS Village Law §7-722)

Essential Services – erection, construction, alteration, operation or maintenance by municipal agencies or utilities of telephone dial equipment centers, electrical or gas substations, water treatment or storage facilities, pumping stations and similar facilities. (Code of the Town of Lowville § 250-8)

Groundwater - Groundwater is water that exists underground in saturated zones beneath the land surface. The upper surface of the saturated zone is called the water table. (United States Geological Survey)

Point source pollution - any single identifiable source of pollution from which pollutants are discharged, such as a pipe, ditch, ship or factory smokestack. (United States Environmental Protection Agency)

Public and Semipublic facility – any one or more of the following uses, including grounds and accessory buildings necessary for their use: religious, public parks, playgrounds and recreational areas, when authorized or operated by a governmental authority, schools, not-for-profit fire, ambulance and public safety buildings. (Code of the Town of Lowville § 250-8)

Seasonal use roads - an annual designation by the Town of Lowville Board which limits snow plowing on specified roads.

Small anaerobic digesters - using livestock and poultry manure and other feedstock generated on site by one farm and are designed and intended solely to generate power to offset utility costs. (Code of the Town of Lowville § 100-29)

Smart Growth – covers a range of development and conservation strategies that help protect our health and natural environment and make our communities more attractive, economically stronger, and more socially diverse. (United States Environmental Protection Agency)

Special Flood Hazard Area - the area that will be inundated by the flood event having a 1-percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. The 1-percent annual chance flood is also referred to as the base flood or 100-year flood. (Federal Emergency Management Agency)

Stormwater - Any flow occurring during or following any form of natural precipitation; also the flow resulting therefrom. (Code of the Village of Lowville §152-5)

Tiny house – a single dwelling unit that has a floor area of 400 square feet or less, excluding lofts; has at least one habitable room not less than 120 square feet of gross floor area, a minimum ceiling height for habitable spaces (not less than 6 feet 8 inches), as well as overall compliance with relevant emergency escape and rescue openings specifications. (International Residential Code, Appendix Q, 2018)

Tiny house development - A collection of tiny houses, typically of similar size and design, usually built and sold or leased by one management entity, on a contiguous site similar to cluster development.