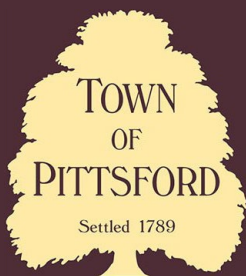


Adopted on October 1, 2019

Town of Pittsford

Comprehensive Plan Update





BERGMANN
ARCHITECTS ENGINEERS PLANNERS

Acknowledgments

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Jeffrey Donlon, Town Planning, Vice Chairman

George Dounce, Chairman, Town Zoning Board

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Pittsford Town Hall.

Chapter 1:

Introduction

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

At its broadest level, a comprehensive plan presents a shared vision for the future of a municipality. The Plan you are reading provides direction and guidance for the Town of Pittsford. It includes statements of policies and goals whose purpose is to shape the course and substance of future growth in the Town. It describes as well the means to achieve its stated goals. A comprehensive plan constitutes the legal basis for a municipality's zoning laws, their revision from time to time and their application.

Having a comprehensive plan improves opportunities for Pittsford to obtain funding to accomplish its goals. When a municipality formalizes in a comprehensive plan clear ideas for its future, funding agencies are more likely to support initiatives that derive from the plan.

The New York State Town Law, at Section 272-a, defines a comprehensive plan as:

"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 municipality. The comprehensive plan shall...serve as a basis for land use regulation, infrastructure development and public and private investment, and any plans which may detail one or more topics of a comprehensive plan."

According to State law, in order to have legal effect the comprehensive plan must be adopted by the Town Board, following a public hearing. The law permits amendment of a plan once adopted, as a municipality evaluates its plan over time. Conditions change, so a comprehensive plan must be subject to change accordingly. This Plan is intended to provide guidance for a decade. The Town will review it regularly to measure progress and to identify any need to update it.

Pittsford's 2015-2019 Update

It is generally deemed advisable to update a municipal comprehensive plan every 10 years. Pittsford updated its plan most recently in 2009. In order to allow ample time and opportunity for a thorough review and the fullest public participation, the Town began the process early, in 2015, mindful of the 10-year mark in 2019.

In broad outline, updating our Plan has consisted of three major analyses: (1) understanding existing conditions in the Town; (2) defining and articulating the Town's goals and vision for its future; and (3) determining the means to accomplish those goals and give life to that vision. For these purposes, our planning effort brought to the table identifiable stakeholding constituencies in the Town, all of whom were willing to participate. It has involved extensive community participation, in a series of well-publicized and well-attended meetings; also through extensive solicitation of public advice and comment, all discussed in more detail below.

This undertaking produced the document you are reading now. It represents an update of Pittsford's Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2009. At the most fundamental level, it addresses the questions: **“What is our way of life?”**
“What do we want it to be?”

It is intended to account for changing conditions as well as projected trends in the economy, in demographics and in the course of future development. It considers the condition of existing infrastructure, current land uses and likely land uses in the future. It anticipates potential threats to the character of the Town, to our quality of life and discusses means to mitigate or avoid them.

This most recent comprehensive planning effort takes into account matters of particular interest to the Pittsford community. These include preservation of scenic vistas, of remaining farms and open countryside. They include access to parks, trails and opportunities for recreation. They include potential effects of future growth, both within the Town and without, on services provided to Town residents, on infrastructure such as the Town's roads, trails and bikeways, among others.

Perhaps most importantly and in the broadest sense, the planning whose results appear in these pages held at the center of its focus that bundle of factors – aesthetic, environmental, patterns of human activity – that, collectively, we refer to as “character” and “quality of life.” These factors define Pittsford's sense of community and will be affected by the policy choices we make. This Plan states those choices.



*A view across the Erie Canal
from Carpenter Park.*

Community Engagement

Community engagement in comprehensive planning is indispensable to getting the plan right and applying it successfully over time, with public support. Therefore, planning for this update involved significant public participation, as summarized below.

Steering Committee

For this update the Town convened a Steering Committee, to bring to bear multiple perspectives and areas of expertise in identifying issues requiring attention and in considering them thoroughly. The Committee brought together representatives of business, community groups and local government. It included residents with experience in agriculture, transportation systems, elder care, residential housing development, historic preservation, law, real estate, sustainability practices and other backgrounds. From the outset, Committee members assisted in identifying key stakeholders in the Town and inviting colleagues, neighbors and friends to the public meetings. The Committee was involved in all aspects of developing this Plan, including identifying key issues, assuring public participation and reviewing every element of the Plan. Over the course of the process, the Committee met nine times.

Stakeholders

Town staffers, the Steering Committee and the town's professional advisers for this project identified community stakeholders representing a broad range of backgrounds, and interests: business owners, property owners, residents, historic preservationists, St. John Fisher and Nazareth Colleges, senior citizens, bicycle and pedestrian advocates, developers and others. Stakeholders were asked about the Town's strengths and challenges, and about the reasons why they live, work or own a business in Pittsford.

Planning began with one-on-one and small group interviews with all stakeholders identified. This represented a critical first step in understanding specific needs, opportunities and matters deserving attention.



Meeting attendees generate ideas during a visioning session at Public Meeting #1.



Town Supervisor, William Smith, welcomes the community to the visioning workshop.

Public Meetings

The Town organized community-wide meetings to gain the knowledge and advice obtainable only from direct dialogue with residents. The body of information and advice obtained from residents from those meetings and by other means as well, has been critical to informing the entire process. It suffuses every page of this Plan and every recommendation.

The public workshops were well-attended. They were publicized as rigorously and extensively as possible, in order to draw the greatest number of residents. Means of promotion included:

- Postcard mailings to all households
- News release to all local media outlets (TV, radio, print) and PCSD for each meeting
- Publicized on Cable channel 12
- Special Notice email to all eNews subscribers
- Stories on Town website
- eNews stories (initial and reminders)
- Postings on Facebook and Twitter (initial and reminders)
- Pittsford Central School District eNews articles
- Supervisor's columns (invitation to meetings, encouraged input via website)
- Poster boards at Town Hall, Library, Community Center and Senior Center
- Pittsford Messenger, the Town newsletter, sent to every home

Meeting #1 Summary:

Approximately 75 residents attended the first public workshop on November 5th, 2015 at the Pittsford Community Library. The purpose of the workshop was to give attendees the chance to participate in an interactive visioning exercise. Through this exercise, participants created a "Rich Picture" of their vision for the Town of Pittsford in 10 years.

Meeting #2 Summary:

Approximately 35 community members attended the second workshop on March 30th, 2016 at the Pittsford Fire Station #2. The purpose of this workshop was to provide information about land use and design best practices and to enable community members to offer feedback for future land use and design in the Town.

Participants provided their ideas, comments and advice at five different stations which focused on residential growth and development, commercial growth and development, community character, open spaces, and other miscellaneous topics.



Public Meeting #1.



A resident at Public Meeting #2.

Meeting #3 Summary:

On January 28, 2019, almost 100 residents and interested participants attended an interactive open house workshop at Pittsford Fire Station #2. The purpose of the meeting was to provide a brief recap of the project, review community engagement efforts held to date, and review the vision, goals and actions framework. After the presentation, attendees were provided stickers and were asked to review and provide feedback on all of the proposed actions identified as part of the comprehensive planning process.

The open house format allowed people to participate at their own pace and provided opportunities for one-on-one conversations with members of the consultant team and Town staff. In addition to voting “Agree” or “Disagree” with the proposed recommendations, community members were also provided the opportunity to provide comments. There was overwhelming support for the large majority of draft recommendations within the plan update.

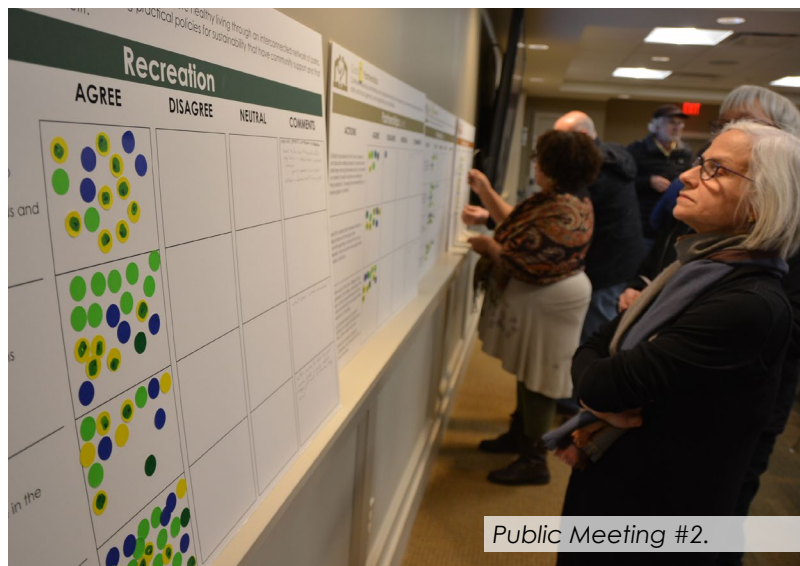
Additional Promotion

The Town created a project-specific website, to provide a central location where residents could download maps and other relevant documents, at www.pittsfordplan.com. The website also included project updates, meeting announcements and meeting summaries.

In addition to website updates, the Town mailed notices about upcoming meetings and included updates and meeting information in weekly newsletters.



Public Meeting #2.



Public Meeting #2.



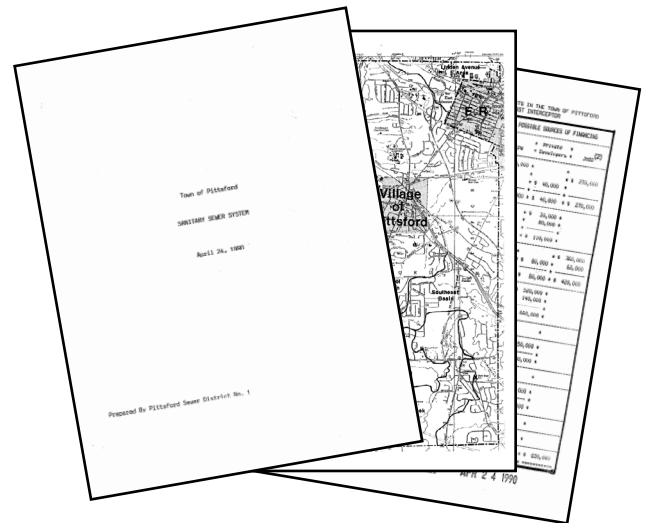
Supporting Local Plans & Studies

Plans should be updated periodically. Conditions change. So do the community's goals. Moreover, it is important to understand previous plans, since they provide the context and basis for future planning. The Town has been diligent in its planning efforts to date, completing a variety of studies, plans, and reports to guide progress for the community's future.

Plans and studies most relevant to this update include the following:

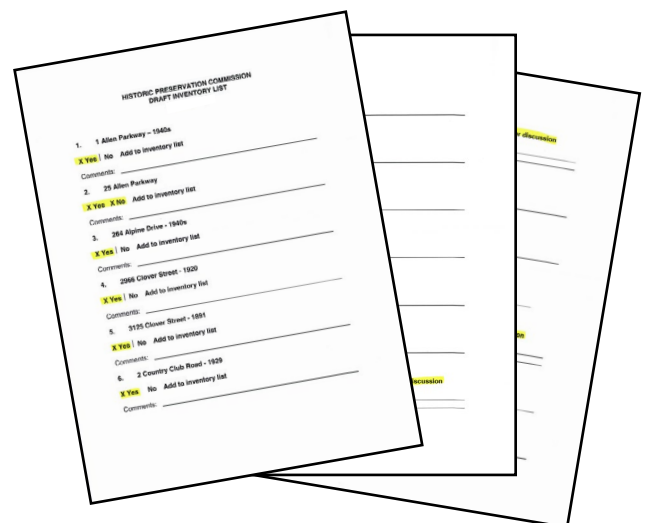
Sanitary Sewer Master Plan - 1990

This master plan identified 25 community sewer projects to improve the Town's system. The projects chosen involve increasing capacity, providing relief for septic system failures, serving dry sewer areas, eliminating need for additional septic systems, serving more than one basin, or preparing the way for other projects identified as necessary.



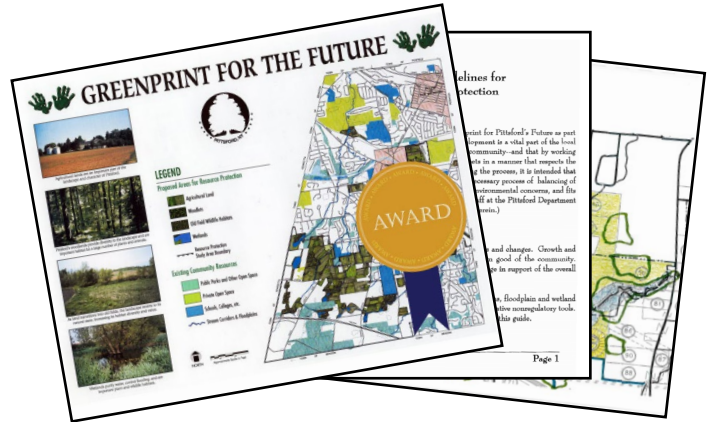
Resource Inventory & Evaluation Report - 1996

This report studied each undeveloped parcel over 5 acres in size located in the Town of Pittsford. The important agricultural, ecological, and scenic resources – including greenways and open spaces – within each parcel were inventoried and areas appropriate for development were identified. This report acted as the foundation for the “Greenprint for Pittsford's Future” plan and also served as an important resource during the development review process, helping developers better understand existing on-site resources so that they could plan in advance for their protection.



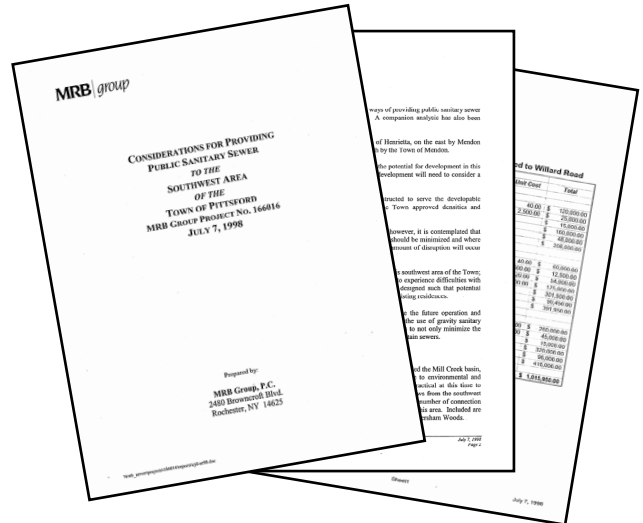
Greenprint For Pittsford's Future - 1996

The "Greenprint for Pittsford's Future" was created as a strategy to preserve a significant portion of open countryside in Pittsford, accounting for approximately 67% of undeveloped land in the Town at the time. The Greenprint included an inventory of natural and scenic resources and recommended specific actions for resource protection. These include purchasing development rights of 1,200 acres, incentive zoning and applying "50/50" zoning to another 800 acres. The 50/50 provision in the Town's Zoning Ordinance applies to development on parcels larger than 10 acres and located in the RRAA zoning district. It requires that at least 50 percent of the land on the parcel become conservation land, while the remaining 50 percent may be developed.



Southwest Area Sanitary Sewer Study - 1998

This study identified the most efficient ways of providing public sanitary sewer service to the southwest area of the Town of Pittsford. The study notes that sanitary sewer upgrades should be constructed to serve the developable property, but should not encourage development beyond approved densities and locations. The study highlights the needs for upgrades that minimize future operation and maintenance costs.



Monroe Avenue Design Guidelines - 2002

The goal of this effort has been to improve the appearance of the commercial corridor along Monroe Avenue. The Guidelines focus primarily on that portion of Monroe Avenue extending from the gateway at the Pittsford-Brighton border, southward to the Village gateway at the Erie Canal. For each section of the corridor, the guidelines prescribe a specific set of architectural and site design provisions for the physical design and layout of each section. The goal is to transform Monroe Avenue into more of a "Main Street," presenting an attractive setting of human scale. In general, the Guidelines encourage traditional pedestrian-friendly design, with buildings to be sited close to the street line and entrance to face the street. The Guidelines encourage new development to incorporate sidewalks, plantings, benches, bike racks and other pedestrian-friendly features.



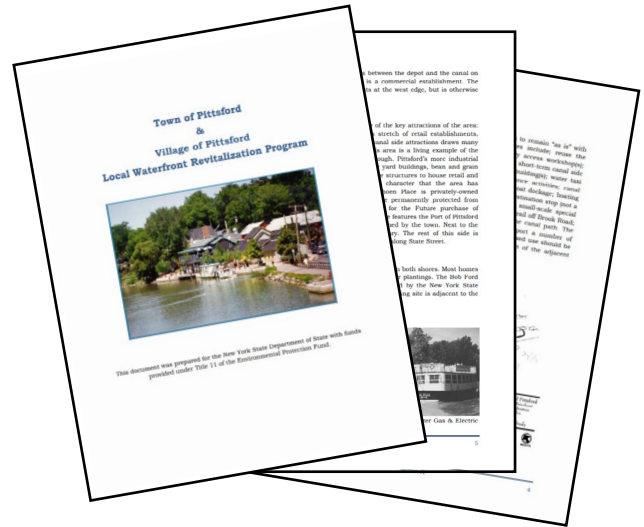
South of Thruway Update to the Comprehensive Plan - 2004

In response to concern about potential growth patterns in the area south of the New York State Thruway, the Town prepared an update to the Comprehensive Plan to address that area specifically. The area is rural in character, containing farms, homes, and portions of Mendon Ponds Park. The plan recommends low-impact development that blends visually with the surrounding park lands and countryside. The plan also recommends changes to the Town's Zoning Code that would incorporate conservation design principles, such as allowing higher densities in exchange for open space preservation.



Erie Canal Local Waterfront Revitalization Program - 2004

The Town and Village completed a combined Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP) and generic environmental impact statement (GEIS) that addresses revitalization of the canal waterfront. In addition to guiding private sector projects along the canal, the plan suggests community waterfront enhancement projects. These projects include improvements to the canal trail system, potential open space and recreation opportunities, as well as addressing key community infrastructure needs such as traffic safety improvements and additional public parking.



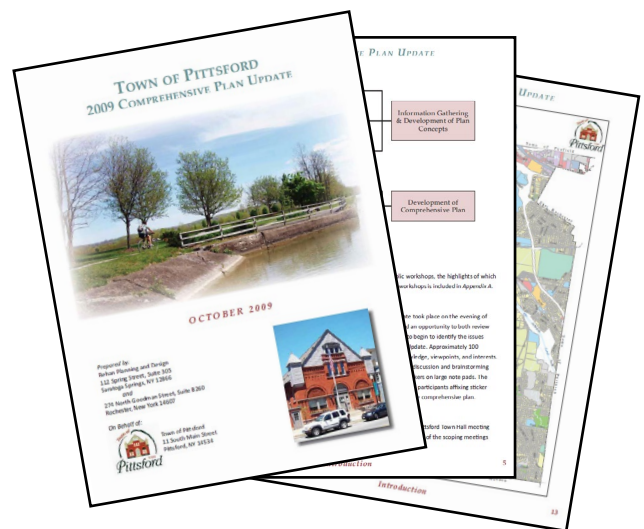
Comprehensive Plan Updates - 1995 & 2009

The 1995 Comprehensive Plan Update provided a framework for the preservation of the Town's environmental resources, agricultural lands, and open space. The 2009 Comprehensive Plan Update addressed three categories:

- Land Use;
- Transportation; and
- Parks and Recreation.

Under the Land Use section, the Plan identified growth, build-out and preserving the Town's character as its primary concerns. For Transportation, the Plan identified limiting capacity improvements, reducing the impacts of regional growth and increasing opportunity and infrastructure for walking and biking in the Town. Finally, the 2009 Plan identified improving access to parks, trails and interpretive facilities as key priorities.

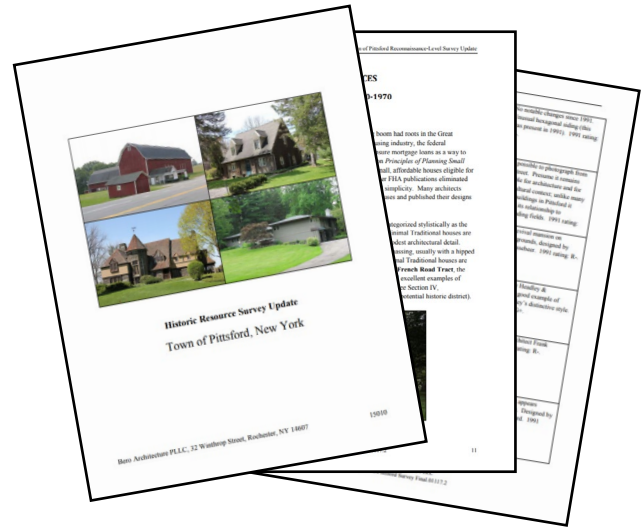
The 2009 Comprehensive Plan Update proposed strategies to put into effect the policies identified and to achieve the stated goals. Priorities included (1) updating zoning regulations in order to balance renovations, infill and lot partitions while still ensuring that the Town's character is preserved, (2) promoting the Town Trail and Park systems, and (3) improving and managing the Town's transportation network.



Historic Resource Inventory - 2017

The 2017 Historic Resource Inventory updated the 1991 Architectural and Historical Survey Report. It provides the Design Review and Historic Preservation Board with an up-to-date historic resource inventory for use in preservation planning. The Inventory identifies more than 30 historically significant properties not included in the 1991 survey and provides an historic overview of development of the Town of Pittsford from 1940 to 1970.

The Inventory includes recommendations for determining whether areas previously deemed to meet the criteria for listing as local, State or National resources still merit that classification. The Inventory also identifies areas suited to designation as historic districts and maps them.



Active Transportation Plan - Pending

The purpose of this plan is to increase opportunities for walking and bicycling as means of getting around Pittsford. It focuses on improving infrastructure and safety for both activities and on-road improvements that address the interests and safety of pedestrians and cyclists as well as motorcars. Findings and recommendations identified in this plan will be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan, as necessary. This plan is an ongoing collaborative effort between the Town and Village of Pittsford, and is being undertaken in conjunction with this Comprehensive Plan update.

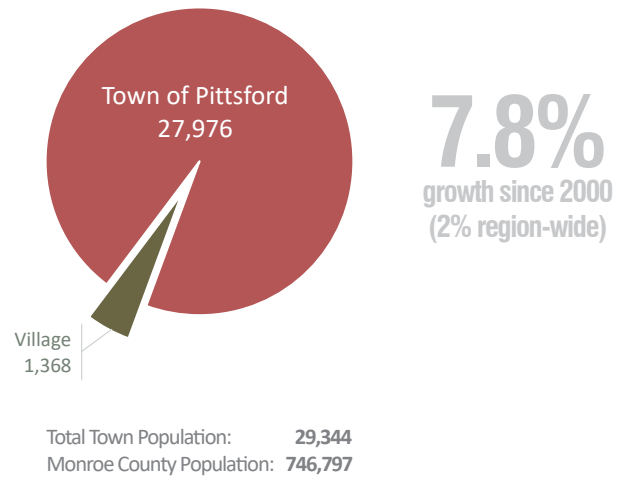


Community Profile

At 23 square miles, the Town of Pittsford is home to 29,344 residents and 10,819 housing units. The Town is known for its high quality of life, embodied by its historic character, rural landscapes, shopping opportunities, and excellent schools.

This section provides a snapshot of existing conditions in the Town. More detail about demographics, growth trends, and physical characteristics of the Town can be found in **Appendix A, Existing Conditions.**

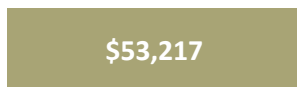
POPULATION



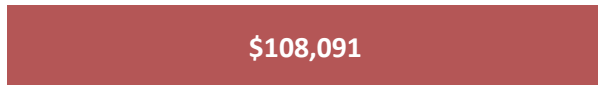
INCOME

median household income

US



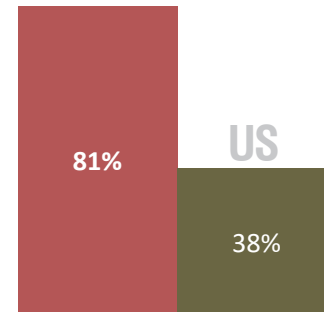
Pittsford



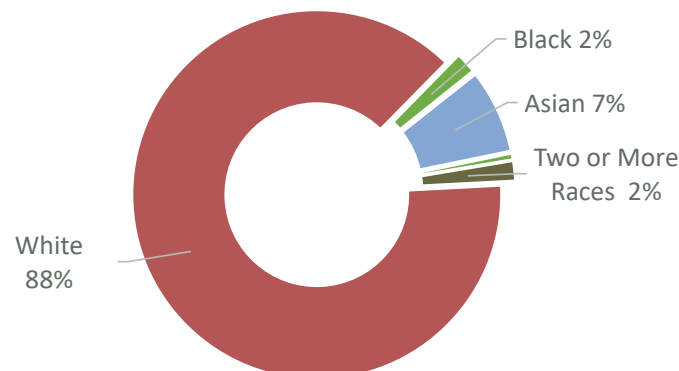
EDUCATION

population with a college degree

Pittsford



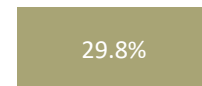
RACE



AGE

population over 55

US

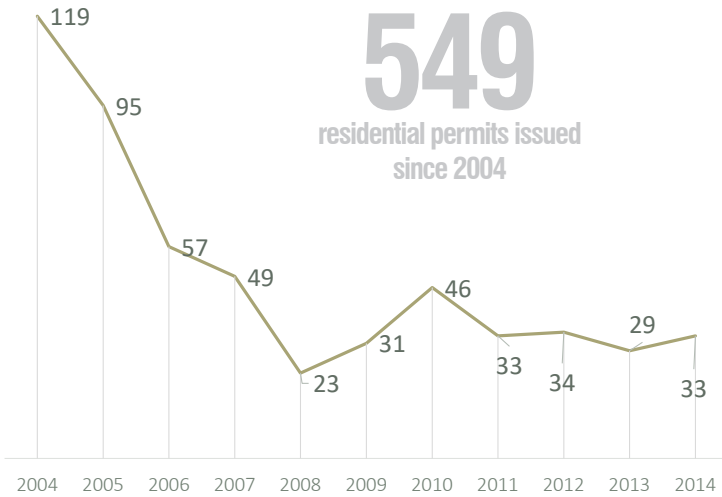


Pittsford

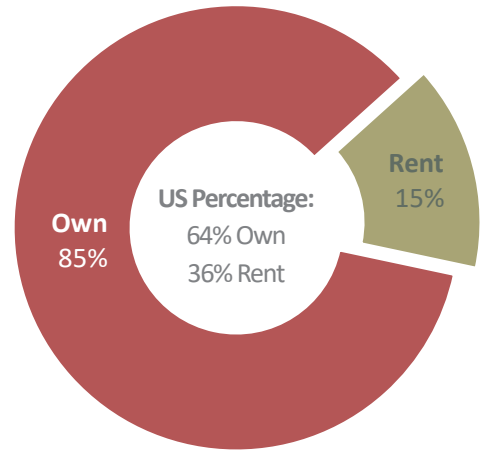


DEVELOPMENT

residential building permits



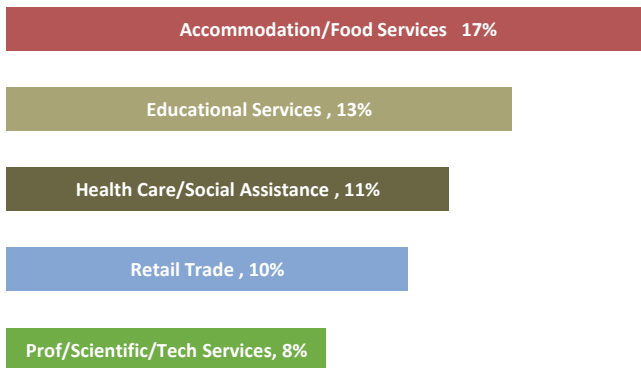
HOME OWNERSHIP



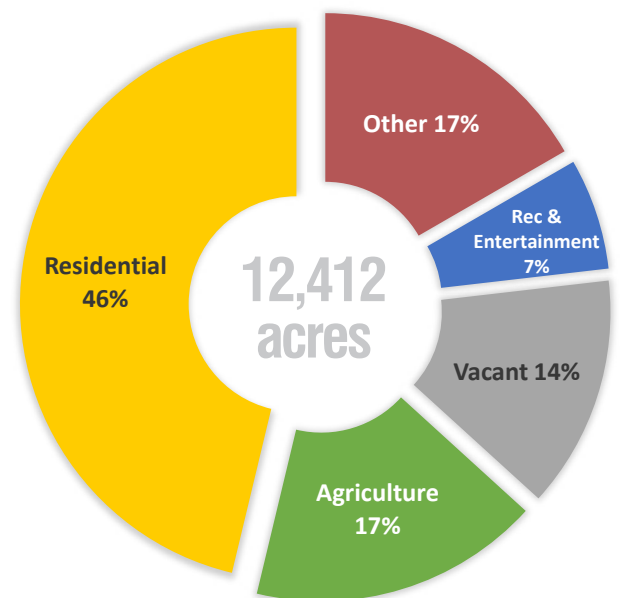
Town Median Home Value: **\$275,626**
US Median Home Value: **\$200,006**

TOP 5 INDUSTRY SECTORS

out of 15,798 total employees



LAND USE



Sources:

US Census, American Community Survey, ESRI, NYS Dept. of Labor, Town of Pittsford Parcel Database. Graphics created by Bergmann Associates.

Key Findings: Factors that Influence Policy Development

By almost all measures described in the Existing Conditions Analysis (**Appendix A**), the Town of Pittsford is a prosperous and stable community. The Town is, on average, older and more affluent than Monroe County and the surrounding region. The Town has higher incomes, average net worth, levels of education, rates of homeownership, and labor force participation. Residents and business owners in Pittsford cite numerous assets that contribute to the Town's overall quality of life, including aesthetic character, historic architecture, scenic views, safety, convenience, commercial amenities, and a highly rated school district.

Of course Pittsford is not an island unto itself. It is affected by forces and influences that affect the entire region generally. Planning for the Town's future needs to consider all the factors, both within Pittsford and without, that may influence future growth and development.

Future Growth.

The Town's growth has slowed since 2000. The slowing of the growth rate had been projected to continue at a steady rate. However, since late 2016 and into 2018, the Town has seen an increase in applications for residential development, and an increase in inquiries that characteristically precede new applications. Regional economic factors, such as loss of businesses or relocation of major new employers, could change this trajectory.

A newly constructed home in the Greenpoint Trail development.



Barn at the Hopkins Farm on Clover Street.

It is expected that major drivers of growth will continue to be schools, retail and commercial businesses and recreational amenities. If the Town's remaining undeveloped land were built to maximum allowed densities, the Town could accommodate over 900 new residential units. Depending on the rate of future growth, this could bring the Town to the point of "build-out" in 20 years. "Build-out" refers to the point where all of the land that can be developed has been developed. The scale and timing of future growth in Pittsford will depend, in part, on land supply, population growth and regional economic factors. In large measure, the factor affecting growth most significantly will be local policy decisions about how the Town manages its remaining developable land.

An Aging Population.

The Town's population is projected to continue getting older. This conforms with statewide and national trends. Consequently, this means the proportion of residents over the age of 55 will increase in the next 15 to 20 years. An aging population requires specific types of services, different types of housing, recreation, and more transportation/mobility options. Future land use and transportation policies should consider how the community's older population can remain comfortably within the community. The Town Board should consider the establishment of a residential zoning district for senior citizens to accommodate the special housing needs and interests of this growing segment of the Town's population.

A Centrally-Located Village.

The Village of Pittsford is one of the Town's principal assets. It is unique, in the most positive aspects of that term. The Village's architecture and history, its businesses, services and venues, its ambiance generally, impart to the entire Town a sense of identity and community that is not found in most suburban environments today. To a significant extent, the Village helps to anchor and define the character of the entire Town. An independent municipality within the Town, the Village has its own government. The respective Village and Town administrations have a long-standing collaborative relationship. This works on many levels to the benefit of the entire community.

As an independent municipality, the Village writes and maintains a comprehensive plan of its own. Therefore, this document does not include statements of policy pertaining specifically to the Village. As of this writing, the Village is updating its comprehensive plan.

Natural Resources, Agricultural Lands, Viewsheds, and Trees.

The Town includes a significant expanse of agricultural land, natural resources, and scenic views. These represent a critical part of the Town's character, sense of place and identity. It will be important for the Town to develop policies specifically related to protecting and enhancing these resources.

The Town's trees are also a differentiator, and they play a special role in defining Pittsford's character. They contribute to its ecological

health. They represent an historic asset as well. In its early history, Pittsford comprised a community of farms with woodlots and hedgerows that marked property lines, served as windbreaks and provided firewood, lumber and maple syrup. Remaining woodlots, hedgerows and roadside trees play the same role today. Pittsford's roadways traditionally were lined with trees, yet as the Town's roads were widened throughout the 20th century, many trees were cut down.

Today, much of Pittsford's current aesthetic character derives from the growth of trees over time, with surviving historic wooded areas combining with newer woods to beautify the town, provide a habitat for wildlife, filter the air, and contribute to sustainable development. Examples of old-growth woodlots are the 29-acre Hopkins' forest and the Lomb Woods at Sutherland High School; both contain 200 to 300 year-old trees. An upland hardwood wood lot remains in the area north of Calkins Road, on a remnant of the Aldridge Farm.


An Extensive Network of Conservation Lands and Open Spaces.

The Town has over 1,000 acres of lands identified as open space. Many of these areas were created by operation of the 50/50 zoning provision. These lands are owned by the Town. Some are maintained as parks, but not all. The Town should establish clear policies for the management of these parcels and for their future use, in order to increase Pittsford's open space and put it to its best use for the Town's residents.

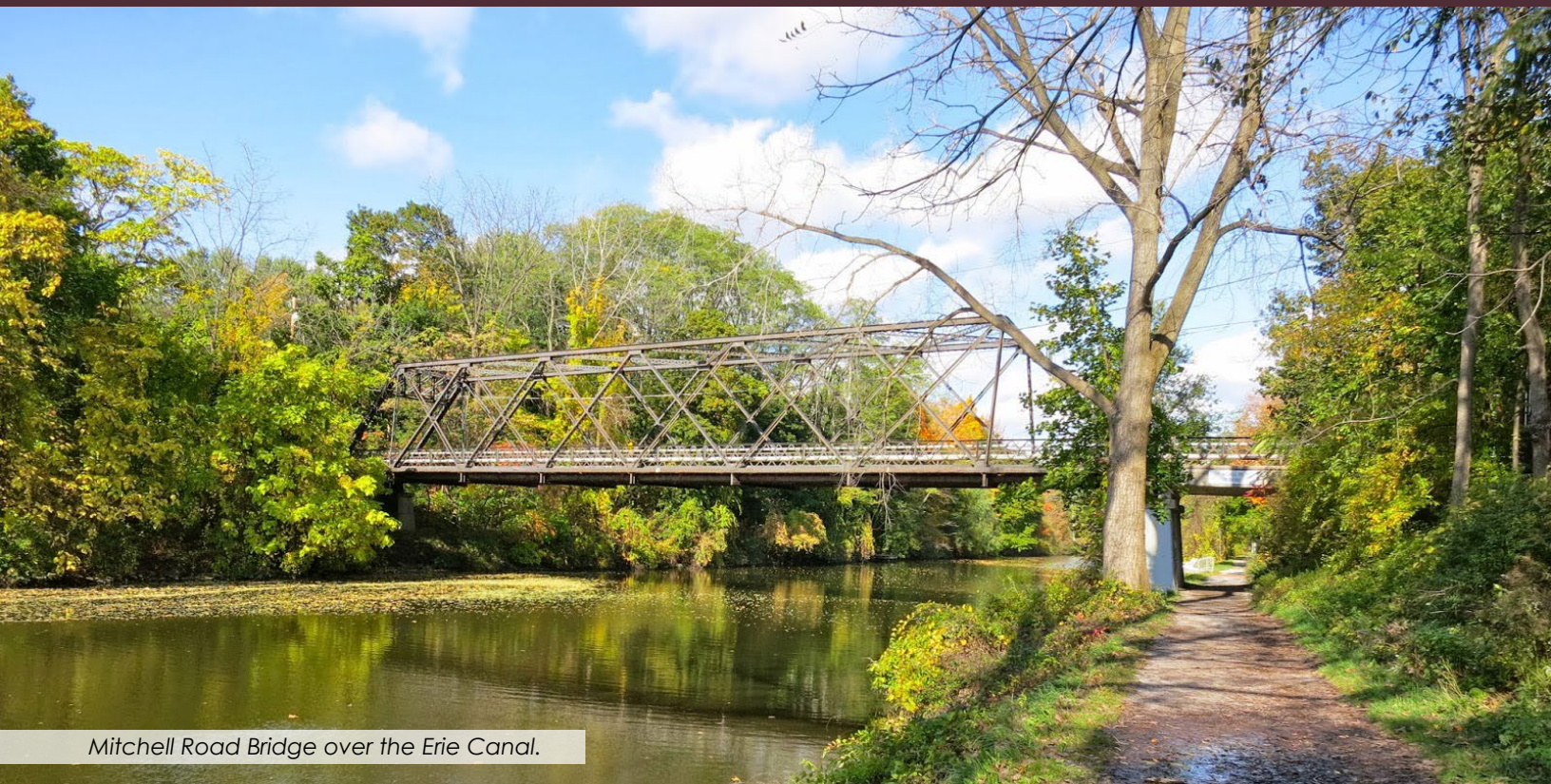


The Erie Canal Heritage Trail tunnel under Clover Street near Lock 32.




OLDEST HOUSE
BELIEVED TO BE THE OLDEST
HOUSE IN PITTSFORD. FIRST OWNER
SIMON STONE II, AN EARLY RESIDENT
AND RELATIVE OF TOWN FOUNDERS.
PRACTICED LAW FROM 1800-1827.
TOWN OF PITTSFORD

Oldest House in Pittsford,
located on Stone Road.



Mitchell Road Bridge over the Erie Canal.

Historic Resources.

Pittsford's history has shaped the Town's character. The physical manifestations of this history, seen especially in our architecture, farms and patterns of growth over time, have heavily influenced the Town's aesthetic fabric. These, in turn, contribute significantly to the quality of life. It is important that goals and policies for historic preservation provide methods to preserve neighborhoods, viewsheds and historic structures, as well as clear and practical guidance for reviewing bodies, such as the Planning Board and the Design Review and Historic Preservation Board.

Transportation and Mobility.

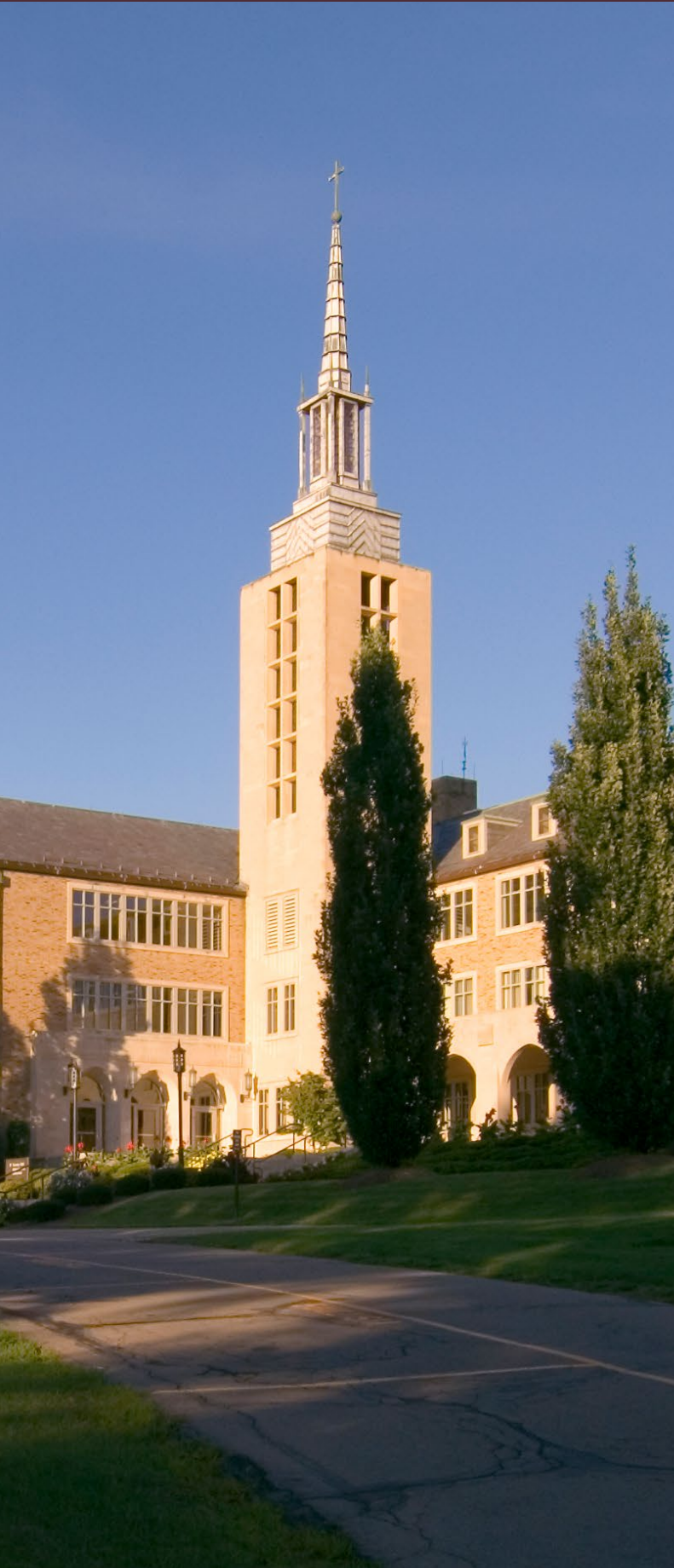
The Town is committed to addressing transportation issues affecting quality of life in Pittsford both now and in the future. Congestion, traffic speeds, roadway character, and pedestrian/bicycle safety present particular concerns. Currently the Town and Village are preparing an Active Transportation Plan, to include detailed recommendations, policies, and actions to improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists.

Inclusivity.

Pittsford is committed to being a community that values and welcomes people of all backgrounds, all walks of life, all ethnic origins, of all faiths and of ancestry from countries around the world. We seek to create a sense of belonging and social connectedness for all who work, live, visit and learn here.

What is Quality of Life?

Quality of life is a measure of the general well-being of individuals. It reflects their sense of satisfaction with various factors including: physical health, the environment, family well-being, educational quality, and safety among others. It is the goal of any policy or action undertaken by the Town to improve or sustain quality of life for residents.



Kearney Hall at St. John Fisher College.

Chapter 2:

Future Land Use Plan

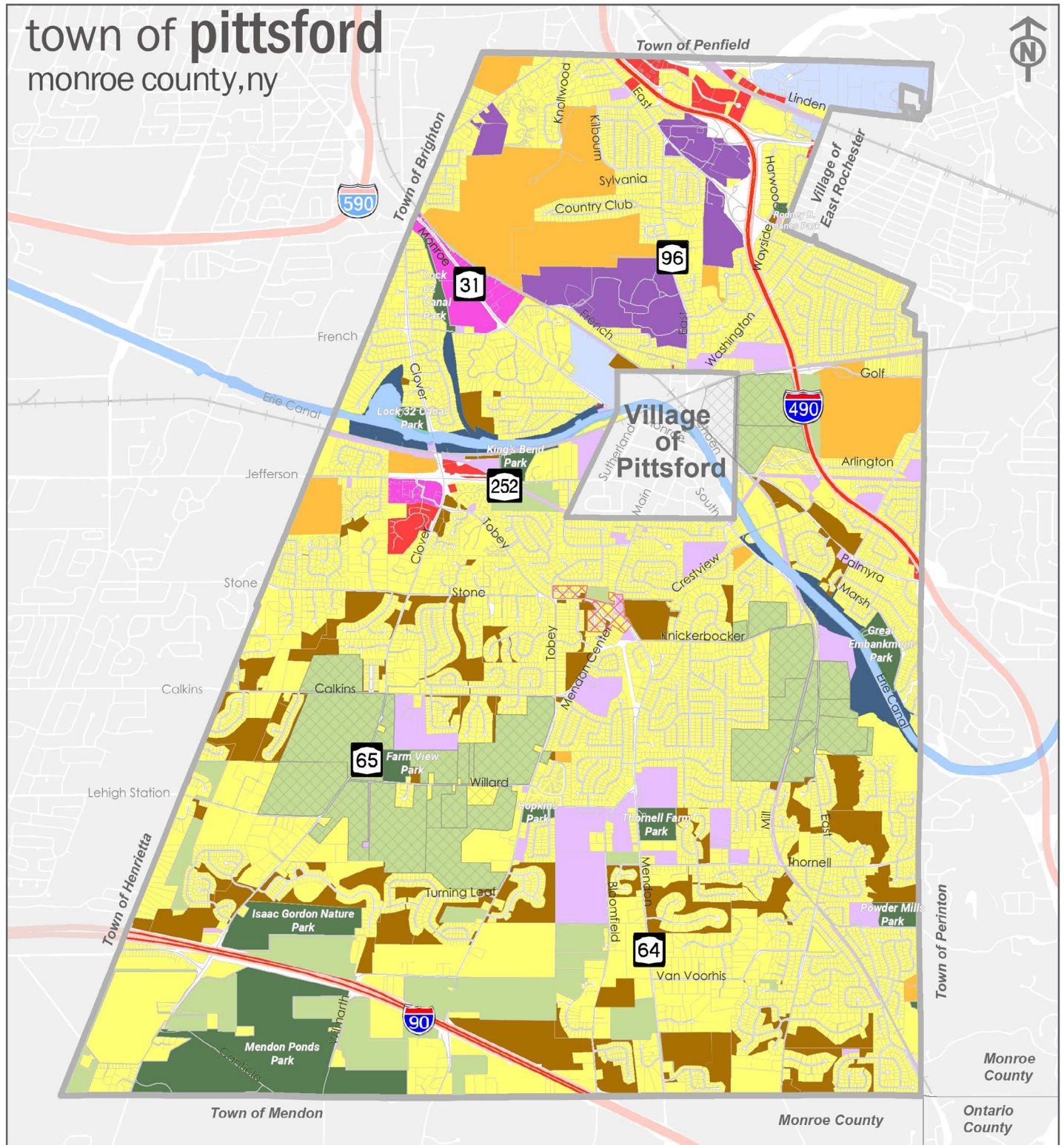
Introduction

A Future Land Use Plan describes an optimal vision of how land within the Town should be used in the decade to come. Such a plan is intended to:

- represent graphically uses and patterns of usage desired;
- identify where types of development would be most appropriate and most consistent with the Town's vision, goals and policies as stated in this plan;
- convey a vision of Pittsford's future.

The Future Land Use Plan is intentionally kept undefined, since it represents a statement of generalized purpose. It is not intended to restate existing land uses or to conform to current zoning district designations. Together with the Comprehensive Plan, the Future Land Use Plan provides a basis for updating the Town's Zoning Code.

Pittsford's Future Land Use Plan is presented on **page 18**. It shows how the Town envisions its development over the next 10 years, and is used to guide the policies and actions that follow in the **Vision & Policy Framework** section.



- Commercial
- Residential
- Light Industrial
- Open Space
- Parks
- Agriculture
- Mixed Use
- Recreation & Entertainment
- Public & Community Services
- Campus
- Local Waterfront Overlay District
- PDR
- Mile Post / Stone Town Historic District

future land use



Commercial

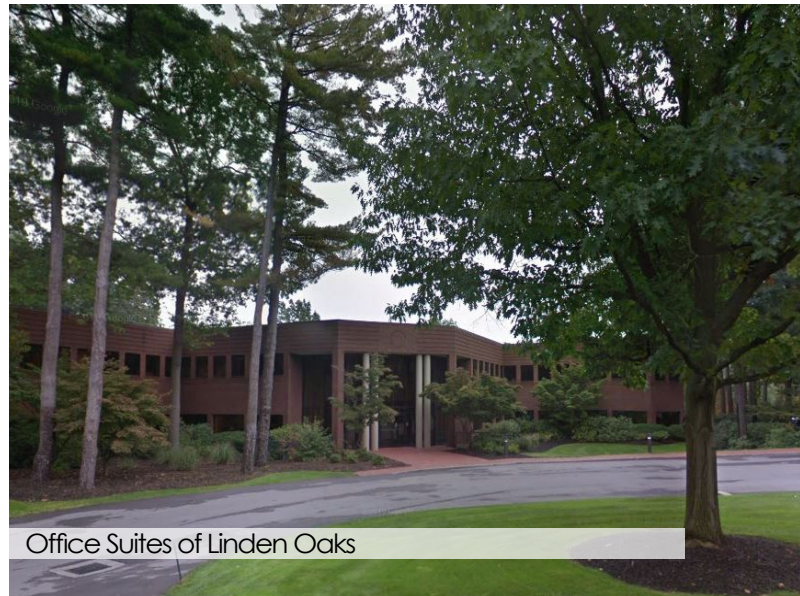
The Commercial character area reflects areas of the Town suitable for limited commercial business development as well as large scale multi-family residential development.

There are four general areas designated as part of the Commercial character area. The first area is located between I-490 and Linden Ave and is the location of several professional office buildings. The second area is located between I-490 and Pittsford Palmyra Road and is the location of The Highlands at Pittsford retirement community and open space.

The third area is located along Monroe Avenue to French Road and contains the Carriage Hill Apartments and Pittsford Garden Apartments. The fourth area is located at the southwest corner of West Jefferson Road and Clover Street and contains a variety of professional office buildings, retail and the Cloverwood Senior Living facility.

POTENTIAL FUTURE LAND USES

- Business parks
- Office buildings
- Retail
- Multi-family residential



Office Suites of Linden Oaks



The Highlands at Pittsford



Pittsford Garden Apartments

Residential

Residential character areas indicate appropriate locations for existing or future residential development, including single and multi-family homes that range from low to high density.

Variations in residential area development requirements shall be defined in the Town's zoning code.

Residential character areas are located throughout the Town of Pittsford with higher concentration of development east of NYS Route 64 and north of Calkins Road. The Residential areas are adjacent to parks and open spaces. The majority of residential areas include existing development or planned residential development.



Representative Images

POTENTIAL FUTURE LAND USES

- Detached single-family homes
- Carriage homes
- Townhomes
- Apartments
- Attached homes

Light Industrial

Lands designated as Light Industrial encourage employment-related uses and light industry that does not negatively impact adjacent land uses.

There are two general areas designated as part of the Light Industrial character area. The first is located between Linden Road and the northern Town of Pittsford boundary. The area includes JML Optical Industries, Universal Imports of Rochester and MCM Natural Stone.

The second area is along Monroe Avenue northwest of the Village of Pittsford boundary. This area includes Concentrix, Pittsford Printing and Maxiums Federal Services.



POTENTIAL FUTURE LAND USES

- Light industrial facilities, and associated, or complementary uses, such as office space



Concept Images Only

Mixed Use

The Mixed Use character area represents locations in the Town where a range of uses - mixed horizontally and vertically - are appropriate. These areas would typically be subject to design standards similar to those currently applied to residential and commercial areas to ensure high quality design.

Mixed Use areas are intended to promote a walkable, pedestrian friendly environment, including compact buildings and public gathering spaces that allow people to live, work and play.

The Mixed Use character area is identified along Monroe Avenue between French Road to the South and the Town of Brighton town line to the north.

POTENTIAL FUTURE LAND USES

- Retail
- Multi-family residential
- Office
- Restaurant
- Public space



Representative Images

Open Space

This character area is defined by existing open space areas that are protected from future development and intended to remain as open space assets for the community to enjoy.

The Open Space character area includes pockets of open space surrounded by residential and agricultural uses, predominately located on lands south of the Erie Canal.



POTENTIAL FUTURE LAND USES

- Parks
- Conservation Areas
- Undeveloped Natural Areas
- Agriculture



Representative Images

Parks

This character area is defined by existing community parks devoted to public use for a range of passive and active recreational uses.

The Open Space character area includes County and Town Parks such as Mendon Ponds Park, King's Bend Park and Powder Mills Park. A majority of the existing parks are adjacent to or located south of the Erie Canal with the exception of Lock 62 Canal Park north of the Erie Canal on Clover Street between Jefferson Road and French Road.

POTENTIAL FUTURE LAND USES

- Parks, either active and passive
- Open Space



Mendon Ponds Park



Lock 32 Canal Park



Powder Mills Park

Agriculture

This character area identifies lands appropriate for active farming practices, reflecting the Town's commitment to preserving active agriculture uses in the Town.

The Agriculture character area includes farm lands which are located predominately south of the Erie Canal with a large cluster of agricultural land surrounding Mendon Ponds Park, Isaac Gordon Nature Park and Farm View Park. A smaller cluster of agricultural land is located along Mill Road south of the Erie Canal.

POTENTIAL FUTURE LAND USES

- Agricultural Land
- Open Space
- Natural Areas



Rolling hills off of Clover Street



Fields off of Clover Street



Pittsford Village Farmers Market

Campus

This character area refers to lands where large educational campuses are located. These areas have distinct development potential based on the existing uses. Future development and growth should be considered unique to each.

The Campus character area includes educational institutions north of the Erie Canal such as Allendale Columbia, St John Fisher College, and Nazareth College.



POTENTIAL FUTURE LAND USES

- Educational
- Open Space
- Parks
- Mixed use (supporting educational use)
- Housing (supporting educational use)
- Commercial (supporting educational use)

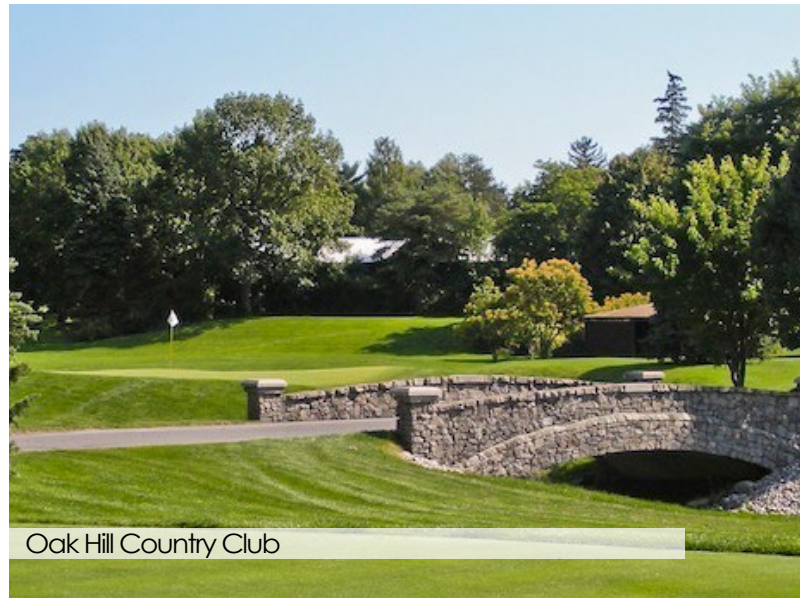
Recreation & Entertainment

This character area reflects areas of the Town suitable for large scale recreational uses that provide both active and open space value.

There are four golf courses located in the Town of Pittsford, three north of the Erie Canal and one south of the Erie Canal on West Jefferson Road. The golf courses provide not only recreational activity but contribute to the natural open spaces and viewsheds in the Town of Pittsford.

POTENTIAL FUTURE LAND USES

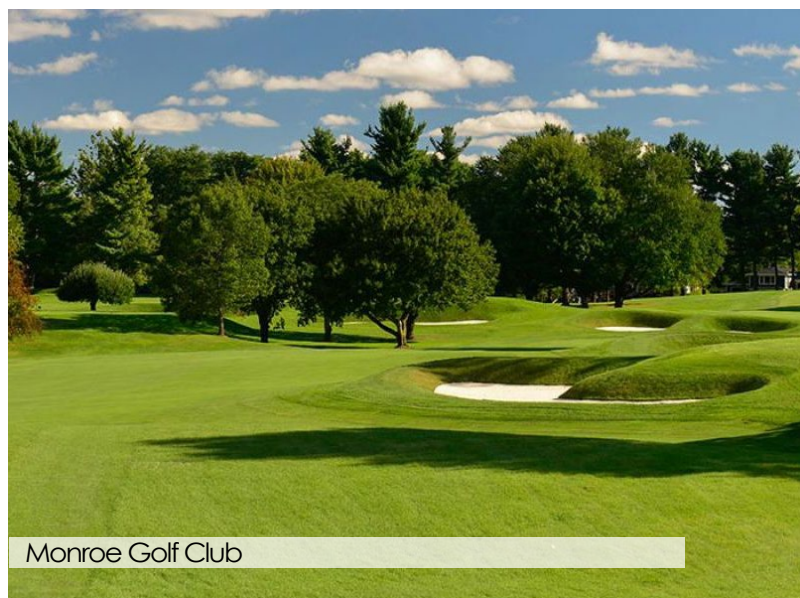
- Golf courses
- Recreation centers
- Open Space



Oak Hill Country Club



Irondequoit Country Club



Monroe Golf Club

Public & Community Services

This character area refers to lands where schools, town services and county services/agencies are located. These uses support the citizens of the Town of Pittsford and surrounding community.

The Public & Community Services character area contains numerous elementary and high school campuses, as well as the Pittsford Highway Department, and a reservoir for the Monroe County Water Authority.



Monroe County Water Authority



Pittsford Highway Department

POTENTIAL FUTURE LAND USES

- Schools
- Open Space
- Parks
- Libraries
- Town facilities
- County facilities



Calkins Road Middle School



Chapter 3:

Vision & Policy Framework

Introduction

A Comprehensive Plan ties together broad ideas, goals derived from them, policies derived from the goals and actions to achieve the goals and fulfill the policies. This chapter includes a vision statement, goals, and policies, developed from work of the Project Steering Committee and from members of the community. Policies, goals, and actions guide the Town in carrying out the Comprehensive Plan. In particular, they guide the Town in making future land use decisions. The components of this policy framework are described below:

- The **Vision** represents a general statement about the future condition or state of the community.
- **Goals** broadly describe the direction Pittsford wants to pursue and comprise a basis for Town-wide planning policy.
- **Policies** are statements of specific direction that expand on the goals and that guide decisions affecting the built and natural environment of the Town as a whole, as well as specific areas and parcels of land.
- **Actions** are specific items that should be implemented in order to carry out the Plan's goals and policies.

A view of the Pittsford Flour Mill and Grain Tower at Schoen Place.

Vision Statement

The foundation for Pittsford's Comprehensive Plan update is a vision statement. It informs goals, policies, and actions. It lays the groundwork for the Town's future. The update began with defining that vision, based on insights and advice from the project Steering Committee, from residents, from community stakeholders and from participants in the public meetings.

Our vision for Pittsford:

A community that embraces its unique character and history to inspire a livable and sustainable future.



Residents enjoy the Memorial Day Parade on Main Street.

Goals

The goals below describe the Town's desired future direction. The policies and actions derived from these goals are intended to guide and serve as recommendations for the Town's decision-making. Four key goals form the organizational framework and basis for policies and actions.



1

Community Character

Maintain and enhance Pittsford's physical character and quality of life by managing future growth and development and protecting existing resources.



2

Mobility

Maintain and improve a balanced and efficient transportation system that provides choices, supports the Town's future land use plan, protects neighborhoods from adverse transportation effects and reinforces livability.



3

Healthy Living

Increase the use of parks and open space, and promote healthy living through an interconnected network of parks, trails, and open spaces, and by promoting practical policies for sustainability and resiliency that have community support and that provide a net community benefit.



4

Partnerships

Continue to pursue partnerships and collaborative efforts with residents, community and business organizations, state and local agencies, and neighboring municipalities.

Policies and Actions

The policies and actions that follow provide focused direction for carrying out the overarching goals of this Plan. Policies are larger themes that guide decision-making while actions are specific tasks that can be implemented to effectuate these policies.

Residents sketch their vision and goals for the future of the Town at Public Meeting #1.





Goal #1: Community Character

Maintain and enhance Pittsford's physical character and quality of life by managing future growth and development and protecting existing resources.

Community character refers to the way the community looks and functions for residents and visitors. Goals relating to community character involve policies that relate to the location and type of desired future land uses, appearance and aesthetics of both the natural and built environments, and those features that contribute most significantly to the unique character of the community, such as scenic, agricultural, and historic resources.

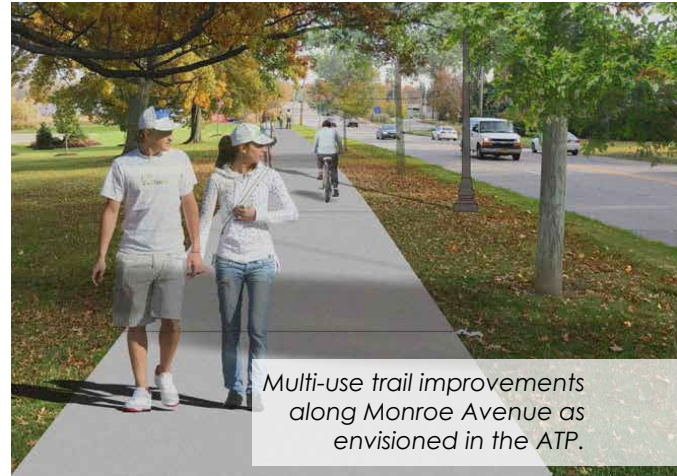
Future Land Use

Policies

- Follow the Town's Future Land Use Map (**page 18**) to guide future development, including the placement and mix of uses.
- Ensure that land use patterns and decisions take into account opportunities for walking and bicycling.
- Require a Build Out Analysis for new developments to evaluate cumulative effects on the existing road network and to ensure that the development does not overwhelm existing capacity.

Actions

1. Update the Town's Zoning Map, as necessary, to conform to the Future Land Use Map.
2. Carry out recommendations stated in the Active Transportation Plan.
3. Count and analyze traffic volumes on all arterial and major collector roads, and consider the cumulative impacts of potential developments when reviewing proposals.
4. Require the Planning Board to evaluate potential impacts of new developments on infrastructure and services, including school capacity.



Multi-use trail improvements along Monroe Avenue as envisioned in the ATP.

Active Transportation Plan

The Town and Village are jointly developing an Active Transportation Plan (ATP) to complement this Comprehensive Plan and the Village's Comprehensive Plan.

Active transportation includes walking, biking, and other human-powered modes of mobility. Providing safe and accessible opportunities to engage in these active transportation modes is important to residents' health, to quality of life, to the perceived desirability of Pittsford as a place to live, and therefore to the community's continuing economic viability.

For many, walking and biking can provide realistic and affordable choices for getting around other than by car. These alternative modes of transportation are also more sustainable than fossil fuel-dependent vehicles, contributing to conservation of sensitive natural areas. Likewise, in a community where more people can be out walking and cycling, there is greater social interaction and more eyes on the street.

Residential Development

Policies

- Focus future residential development within areas identified on the Future Land Use Map to ensure consistency with desired land use patterns and efficient use of infrastructure.
- Ensure that new residential development contributes to Pittsford's character through complementary design standards.
- Allow for diversification of housing stock within the Town to accommodate shifting preferences, including housing options specifically suited for residents of age 55 and older.
- Ensure open space is configured into large areas that are usable for passive recreation and to preserve viable agricultural use.
- Ensure careful consideration is given to all demolition requests.

Actions

1. Encourage cluster development as a way of protecting the Town's scenic views, hillsides, agricultural land, and natural resources. Revise current residential zoning standards to incorporate cluster development practices including: promoting walkability, encouraging compatibility with physical context, protecting viewsheds, respecting topography and nearby landmarks, and considering infrastructure. Develop incentive standards that preserve the quality of the open space and provide the greatest public benefit.
2. Revise current residential standards to allow for a variety of housing styles, housing sizes and residential development site plans compatible with the existing character of the Town. This recommendation refers to architecture, density and site plan configuration, recognizing that pricing of houses is subject to market conditions.
3. Amend the Town's current cluster development standards to provide that open space required to meet minimum requirements, or to be provided in exchange for increased density or other accommodations, be situated along roadway corridors. This places it where it can be seen, therefore providing the greatest community benefit. Such open space should be required in addition to the landscaped buffers referenced elsewhere in this section. Development placing housing next to a road or close to it, with open space on the other side of the houses, should be discouraged.
4. Amend the Town's current cluster development standards to clarify that open space required for greater density must consist of buildable land. Land where building is legally prohibited should not count toward the open space requirement in cluster development ordinances or incentive zoning ordinances.



The Bromsgrove Hill neighborhood, exhibiting the Town's abundant open space resources and a compact style of residential development.

Cluster Development & Zoning

Cluster zoning is a method of designing residential subdivisions that clusters houses in one section of a site and preserves the rest of the site as open space. The open space remaining can be used for recreation, neighborhood amenities, conservation, storm water management or agriculture, or it may serve simply to preserve an aesthetically pleasing view.

Some years ago, Pittsford adopted a set of cluster development standards, referred to as "50/50 zoning" because the standards often require 50

percent of a subdivision to be allocated as open space. As a consequence of its existing cluster zoning, Pittsford now holds an extensive network of open spaces integrated into neighborhoods throughout the Town. This is valuable community asset, but experience demonstrates that, alone and without more, it is insufficient. Placement and configuration of the open space matters. The section of the Zoning Code providing for the 50 percent set-aside should include standards for design and layout of the open space to be obtained. In order to accomplish this, potential amendments to the Zoning Code may:

- establish clear objectives for the function and purpose of open spaces;
- include standards that address the design of cluster groups;
- require landscape buffers between clusters and major roads; and
- grant authority to the Planning Board to configure open space in a way that meets the Town's goals, through a Code amendment and by other appropriate means.



The Cottages at the Highlands at Pittsford are an example of a cluster development.

Conventional Development



32 house lots | small open space

Cluster Development



32 house lots | large open space

5. Review existing Residential Neighborhood (RN) zoning districts to ensure they are effectively meeting the goals and objectives of the Town.
6. Review and update residential zoning requirements to require landscaped buffers (minimum 50 feet) between all new residential developments and major road corridors, sufficient (a) to permit growth of a mature line of trees; and (b) to substantially preserve the rural or semi-rural character of the existing corridors.
7. Review and amend the section of the Town Code governing residential development in the south of Pittsford to conform fully to requirements for RRSP zoning set forth in the 2004 Comprehensive Plan update.
8. Evaluate zoning in the areas (a) between the Water Authority property at the reservoir and the Thruway, bordered by Mendon Center Road and West Bloomfield Road; and (b) west of Mendon Center Road, the area south of the Autumn Woods development, between Autumn Woods and the Thruway.
9. Evaluate extending the RRSP zoning district, or comparable districts, to other locations in the Town consistent with the Future Land Use Plan.
10. The Town Board should consider a moratorium on development in the RRSP Zone and the area described in Section 8, above, until Zoning Code modifications can be addressed.
11. Rezone existing golf courses to RRAA status to ensure future development is subject to requirements that are consistent with the Town's open space development goals.
12. Adopt hillside development standards as a means of preserving rural character, scenic views, and watersheds and retaining natural topographic features.



A residential development on Greythorne Hill.

13. Review Residential Design Guidelines as needed to ensure future development is achieving specified goals and objectives.
14. Provide neighborhood amenities like grills, playgrounds and pavilions (in new and existing neighborhoods) where possible and supported by the neighborhood, to bring communities together and provide social connectedness among residents.
15. Consider providing incentives to developers to develop more affordable housing in the Town of Pittsford for residents aged 55 and over.
16. Conduct a town-wide traffic safety assessment to identify areas where vehicular and pedestrian safety are a concern and to identify subsequent actions to improve safety.
17. Enact a policy for review and public notice of demolition applications.

Aging-in-Place

The policy recommendations for residential development in this Comprehensive Plan (**page 34**) contemplate diversification of housing stock to accommodate shifting preferences. Many Pittsford residents have expressed interest in more housing options suited specifically for people in their retirement years, and at a broader range of price points than may be available currently.

The Plan's recommended actions regarding residential development specifically include (**page 36**) considering incentives for developers to provide more housing options for residents of age 55 and older at lower cost than typically available in Pittsford.

New York Law makes specific provisions for action by towns along these lines. In accordance with it, the following actions are recommended:

1. Consider creating a retirement community zoning district for occupancy by people 55 years old and older.
2. Consider creating a senior citizen residence district "floating zone" specifically for multi-family dwellings arranged as individual units for people 55 and older.
3. Review current codes pertaining to suites in single-family homes for their effectiveness at providing suites for elderly family members that promote maximum independence.
4. Evaluate public support and efficacy of additional means of encouraging senior housing at lower cost, including public-private partnerships.



Representative Image - 55+ Active Adult Community



The Highlands at Pittsford.

Commercial & Mixed-Use Development (Town-wide)

Policies

- Focus future commercial and mixed-use development within and near established commercial areas (as identified on the Future Land Use Map) to preserve the character and real estate value of non-commercial areas and efficiently use existing transportation and building infrastructure.
- Ensure that new commercial and mixed-use development contributes to the Town's physical character through high-quality design that incorporates safe pedestrian and bicycle access.

Actions

1. Provide pedestrian-scale lighting that illuminates places where people walk, such as sidewalks, walkways, and building entrances. Minimize glare and light pollution.
2. Require that building façades have abundant windows and entrances facing the street and create a human-scaled wall near the street.
3. Require open space buffers between residential, industrial, and other incompatible uses.
4. Limit the proportion of street frontages and rights of way lined by parking lots, blank walls, or empty lots.
5. Require a pedestrian path from the street to the building entrance where parking lots are located between commercial buildings and streets.
6. Implement the recommended changes to the Town's Zoning Code as listed under "Commercial and Mixed-use Design Standards".



An example of a vegetated buffer between residential and agricultural land uses.

What is a Buffer?

Buffers reduce the visual impact of a use of land on other adjacent areas which are different in use, character, or density. Buffers can be made of various materials including vegetation, landscaping, fencing, or berms.

Commercial and Mixed-Use Design Standards

A strong sense of place is important to the health and vitality of any commercial district. A distinct place has a character, look, and feel that are unique to the community and reflect the heritage and experiences of the residents and business owners.

What creates a sense of place?

- Vitality and human activity
- Pedestrian friendly features
- Human-scaled buildings
- A sense of safety and security
- Proportions and architectural detailing that reflect regional traditions

How can design standards help?

Design standards can help create a sense of place by establishing objective, measurable, and enforceable requirements for development. By establishing clear goals at the beginning of the application process, design standards can expedite project review.

For this purpose, this Comprehensive Plan recommends amendments to Pittsford's Zoning Code as follows:

- Reduce minimum lot widths (currently 150 feet minimum).
- Strengthen provisions regarding signs to address specific types of signs, sizes, colors, materials, lighting, and location.
- Require a minimum percentage of windows along a building façade.
- Require standards that prohibit parking lots to be constructed between a building's façade and Monroe Avenue.
- Require pedestrian connections between parking lot and building entrances, and between adjacent lots; create design standards for those connections to address location, pavement markings, safety features, and lighting.
- Specify landscape design requirements (total amount of landscape area required, species, maximum distances between plantings, and location).
- Require frontage trees and specify density and spacing.
- Specify architectural standards (roof pitch, building materials, awnings, cornices/eaves, windows, height encroachments, etc).

Main Street in the Village of Pittsford exhibits many good elements of streetscape and building design.



Monroe Avenue Corridor

Policies

- Improve the aesthetic character, safety and walkability of the Monroe Avenue corridor, from the Brighton Town line to the Village of Pittsford line.

Actions

1. When considering updates to the Monroe Avenue Design Guidelines, the following should be strongly considered for new projects:
 - Develop landscape screening and buffering requirements for all new projects along Monroe Avenue, designed to enhance the visual character of the corridor.
 - Require frontage landscaping, including frontage trees.
 - Require buffering to protect adequately the aesthetic quality of trails, parks, and existing residential neighborhoods.
 - Incorporate walkability standards from the Active Transportation Plan for the Monroe Avenue corridor and for any new development within the corridor.

2. Convert the Monroe Avenue Design Guidelines to standards.
3. Develop design standards for all commercial areas (Clover/Jefferson, Monroe Ave and Linden Ave), consistent with Active Transportation Plan (ATP) recommendations. Ensure that potential future redevelopment incorporates green infrastructure, landscape buffers, and pedestrian friendly features.
4. Require that any development applications within the designated corridors addressed in the Design Standards demonstrate there will be no discernible detriment to traffic flow in the corridor or impacts to nearby neighborhoods.
5. Require street-oriented buildings; locate parking lots, if provided, in rear of retail and business centers.
6. Amend the Town's zoning requirements to allow for vertical mixed-use and residential development along the section of the Monroe Avenue corridor between Clover Street and French Road.

Monroe Avenue Streetscape

The Monroe Avenue streetscape is not particularly inviting at present, especially for pedestrians. Potential walkability improvements may include landscaping, pedestrian lighting, site gateway features, and a 10-foot wide multi-use path.



Existing conditions along Monroe Avenue.



Potential improvements.

A More Pedestrian-Friendly Monroe Avenue

The following images compare Monroe Avenue at Pittsford Plaza today, with simulations of the same area after improvements recommended in this Plan. In the simulations, buildings vary in height from 2 to 3 stories and are located close to the sidewalk, creating a sense of enclosure and human-scale. Building facades include sidewalk-facing entrances, transparent windows and awnings, all of which are inviting to pedestrians. Crosswalks are differentiated with pavement color, signaling to drivers to be aware of pedestrians and bicyclists.



Monroe Avenue Transitional Zone (MATZ) & MATZ Planned Unit Development (PUD)

Policies

- Review potential for new development in the MATZ zone, to protect the corridor itself, adjacent neighborhoods and the Village from detrimental effects of further development including but not limited to increased traffic.
- Improve the function of Monroe Avenue as a traffic transitional zone, slowing and calming traffic traveling toward the Village and neighborhoods from the commercial corridor west of the MATZ zone.

What is the MATZ PUD?

The Town adopted a zoning district in 2011 called the Monroe Avenue Transitional Zone (MATZ) Planned Unit Development (PUD), which is comprised of 60 acres of land between Pittsford Plaza and the Village of Pittsford. The MATZ PUD is located along Monroe Avenue, near the village/town border and is considered a gateway into the community. The PUD ordinance established specific development thresholds and design requirements for the parcels within the zone.

Actions

1. Consider a moratorium on development in the MATZ, including the PUD, pending completion of review of the recommendations below.
2. Review the MATZ PUD, to evaluate whether it continues to serve the best interests of Pittsford and its residents and to determine whether it is conducive to accomplishing goals for the Monroe Avenue corridor stated in this Comprehensive Plan and in other statements of Town policy.
3. Consider standards for significant buffering and landscaping, pedestrian lighting, site gateway features, and pedestrian or multi-use paths, as wide as 10 feet, along Monroe Avenue in the MATZ PUD.
4. Consider reducing development thresholds allowed in the MATZ PUD to ensure that any future development, if it occurs, (a) is fully consistent with the policy goals stated herein; and (b) does not negatively affect roadway capacity, function of intersections, comfortable and safe pedestrian/bicycle access, community aesthetics, visual character, or residential quality of life.
5. Require that plans for any additional building or redevelopment within the MATZ PUD must affirmatively demonstrate steps taken to minimize negative impacts to traffic flow in the corridor covered by the MATZ, or downstream in either direction.
6. Amend the MATZ PUD as necessary to give effect to actions recommended above.



The Monroe Avenue corridor at the edge of the Town boundary.

What is the MATZ Corridor?

The MATZ corridor refers to the section of Monroe Avenue between French Road and the Erie Canal. A mixed use area, it represents an important and sensitive transitional zone. On its south side lies the historic Long Meadow neighborhood and wooded lots. The north side of the corridor includes multiple uses and presents a haphazard visual character. It is home to apartments built in the '60s and '80s, as well as a 1950s industrial complex now primarily used for commercial offices and industrial garages. To the west, the MATZ corridor connects to the Town's principal commercial district on Monroe Avenue. To the east, it serves as the gateway to the center of the Village. As such it provides a significant buffer between the Village and the intensity of the commercial corridor west of French Road. This buffering benefits the entire Long Meadow neighborhood. It is important to retain this buffering by preserving the best aesthetic features of the corridor, improving its worst features and by preventing the intensity of use currently found west of French Road from creeping eastward.

Monroe Avenue is one of the most heavily-used arteries in the town. Traffic currently operates at full capacity throughout much of the day. Additional development, at the 50s-era industrial complex in particular, would degrade the quality and character of adjacent residential areas and the Village center. Its consequences would be detrimental to the French Hills neighborhood, compromising neighborhood character, quality of life and depressing property values. The quality and character of the Auburn Trail, which provides a natural buffer between this neighborhood and the industrial complex, also would be damaged.

In 2011 the Town adopted a zoning district, the MATZ Planned Unit Development. It comprises 60 acres along the MATZ corridor, north of Monroe Avenue, incorporating the entire industrial complex. The PUD established development thresholds and design requirements for the parcels within the zone. In important respects the development thresholds for the PUD are incompatible with the policies and goals set forth in this Comprehensive Plan, as are other of its provisions.



Scenic Corridors and Viewsheds

Policy

- Protect and enhance Pittsford's viewsheds with particular focus on rural and semi-rural views.

Actions

1. Update Pittsford's Scenic Resources Inventory to include character-defining features. The updated inventory should evaluate remaining undeveloped land to identify scenic features of significance (corridors, hilltops, etc). The updated inventory should incorporate goals consistent with this Comprehensive Plan and should be used by the Town Planning Board as guidance.
2. Develop a Scenic Resource Protection Plan that incorporates the updated inventory and designates significant scenic resources in the Town as well as policies and regulations to preserve scenic resources.
3. Adopt a Scenic Resource Overlay District to identify appropriate corridors and establish standards for maximum heights, signs, and landscape screening. Corridors should include, but are not limited to: Clover Street, Knickerbocker Road, Calkins Road, Lehigh Station Road, Route 31 east of the Village of Pittsford, Mendon Road, Mendon Center Road, Jefferson Road west of the Village, East Jefferson from Mitchell Road to the Town Line, East Avenue, Willard Road, and Washington Road from the Village Line to I-490.
4. Consider the requirement to buffer Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) lands so that surrounding land uses do not encroach on or detract from protected lands.



Semi-Rural Views

In the Town of Pittsford, semi-rural areas transition from higher-density, suburban neighborhoods closer to the Village and along Monroe Avenue to the much lower-density, rural areas south of the Town boundary. Semi-rural lands are generally residential, agricultural, or recreational in use, with larger lot sizes and design treatments that attempt to blend the development with the natural landscape. These treatments are intended to protect scenic features like hillsides, rolling hills, ridgelines, and valleys that create and contribute to semi-rural viewsheds.

Rolling hills off Clover Street.



Historic Resources

Policy

- Affirm and strengthen the Town's commitment to historic preservation.

Actions

1. Consider applying for Certified Local Government (CLG) status. Use SHPO as a resource to facilitate achieving CLG status.
2. Consider updating the Town preservation code to allow designation of additional local historic districts, utilizing the following process:
 - Educate the public about the value of historic preservation and historic designation status. Encourage feedback from the public about local resources they believe qualify for designation.
 - Seek public feedback on proposed designations, particularly from residents who live or own property in the identified districts.
 - Considering the results of public feedback, decide whether to move forward with official designation. If designation is desired by the residents of the district, establish a historic district to encompass the identified resources and update the code to recognize this district.

Certified Local Government

The CLG program is administered by the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation. The program encourages municipalities to develop and maintain community preservation efforts in coordination with land use planning. Participation in the CLG program allows municipalities to partner with state and federal agencies in identifying and evaluating community resources and protecting historic properties.

Benefits of the program include:

- Access to technical assistance and training.
- Ability to apply for grants to support local preservation activities.



Historic Districts

A historic district is defined by the National Park Service as “a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.” District designation recognizes that in many cases properties are significant not primarily as individual artifacts, but as part of a larger grouping of multiple buildings, structures, objects, and landscape features.

The Milepost/Stonetown area, which includes residences and the Pioneer cemetery and schoolhouse, was designated a local Historic District in 1991. Currently, Long Meadow and San Rafael Drive are examples of neighborhoods that are eligible for local historic district status. Research shows that historic district designation stabilizes and enhances property values by ensuring that incompatible development does not erode the area's fundamental historic character.

Local historic district designation does not prevent new development or changes to individual properties, but would include board review for exterior changes. This review can be guided by consistent standards to ensure exterior alterations are compatible and the significant elements that contribute to the area's historic character are preserved.

3. Review recommendations in the Updated Historic Resource Inventory and develop a Historic Preservation Plan.
4. Continue to provide technical and financial assistance and resources to the Design Review and Historic Preservation Board as needed to facilitate implementation of the plan objectives.
5. Promote the social and economic benefits of historic resources through a comprehensive outreach campaign that includes signage, marketing, local tours, and special events. Partner with local organizations that have similar historic preservation objectives.



Value of Historic Preservation

Through protecting and maintaining important structures, historic preservation strengthens the Town's character by:

- **Preserving Historic Structures.** Historic preservation prevents locally- or nationally-important buildings and structures from being replaced by new development or from falling into disrepair.
- **Cultivating a Unique Identity.** Historic structures add character and charm to the Town, giving it a unique identity that makes Pittsford a place where people want to live and visit.
- **Celebrating Our Local History.** By maintaining important elements of the Town's history, preserved structures can be a source of community pride, fostering a shared, cultural identity among residents.
- **Promoting Local Tourism.** Historically-important buildings are heritage tourism destinations, attracting both visitors and investment to the community. In addition to promoting tourism spending, historic buildings increase their own and nearby property values, with buyers being willing to pay more for homes in historic districts.

The Hopkins Farm and the locally designated Homestead are located in a nationally-recognized, 370-acre historic district.

6. Interpret the Erie Canal Corridor's history through wayfinding signs, each describing the history of a particular feature or place. Refer to the Town and Village of Pittsford Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) to ensure consistency with local waterfront laws and policies.
7. Promote the preservation of historic resources through the Town of Pittsford Landmark Property Tax exemption.

The Town and Village of Pittsford's Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP)

In 2005, the Town and Village of Pittsford adopted a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) to provide a framework for addressing issues along and identifying improvement projects for its Erie Canal waterfront. The LWRP was officially approved by New York State in 2006, giving the Town and Village access to financial and technical resources for the implementation of identified projects and establishing a long-term partnership between local municipalities, community-based organizations, and the State.

The LWRP developed a set of policies to guide future land and water uses for the Town and Village's natural, public, and developed resources along the canal. These policies covered a range of issues including enhancing scenic resources, mitigating impacts of flooding, protecting ecological resources, and improving public access to the canal. The LWRP also included a strong emphasis on protecting and leveraging historic resources along the waterfront.



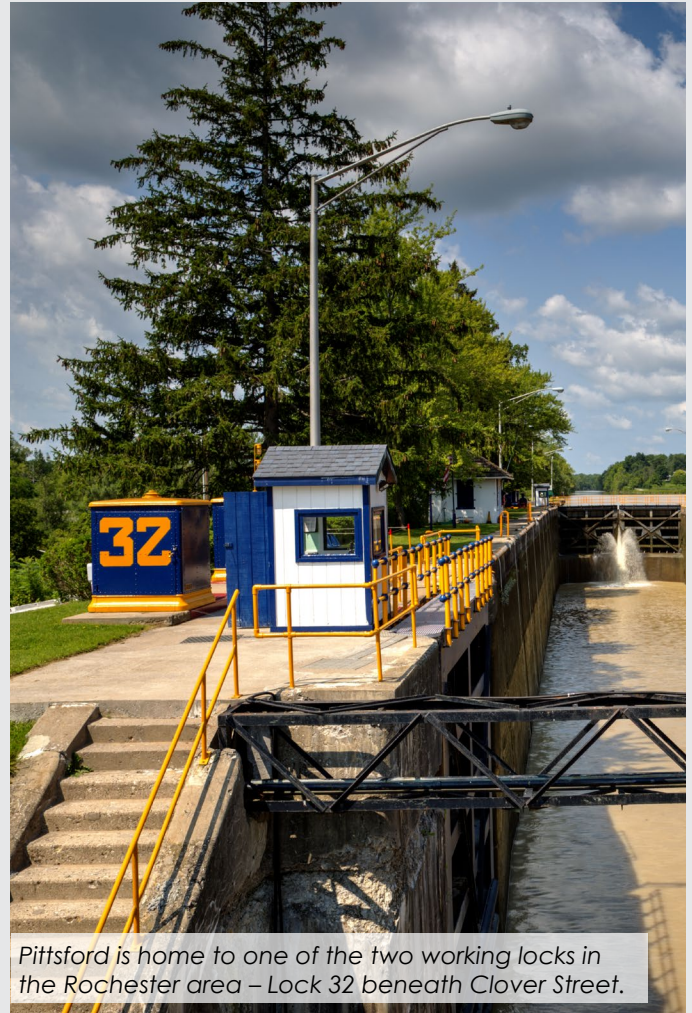
The Erie Canal at Schoen Place.



In 2000, the U.S. Congress – in partnership with the National Park Service – recognized the historical significance of the Erie Canal in shaping the growth of the country by officially designating it as a National Heritage Corridor. The corridor encompasses all 524 miles of the Erie Canal from Albany to Buffalo, 450 miles of which were also given National Historic Landmark status – the most exclusive designation on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Town and Village of Pittsford encompass 6 features that contribute to the corridor including:

- Lock 32;
- Mendon Ponds Park;
- Bushnell's Basin Boat Dock;
- Schoen Place;
- The Sam Patch; and
- Village of Pittsford Historic District



Pittsford is home to one of the two working locks in the Rochester area – Lock 32 beneath Clover Street.



Natural Resources

Policies

- Continue to preserve and protect the Town's remaining natural resources, including water quality, soil quality, wetlands, forest lands and wood lots, wildlife corridors, agricultural lands, and stream corridors/riparian systems, and manage them properly.
 - Encourage use of rain gardens, bioswales, and green infrastructure in site development.
6. Consider requirements that limit development on scenic topographic features, such as hillsides.
 7. Consider adoption of dark sky lighting standards that limit light trespass for residential, agricultural and commercial uses. Set maximum exterior standards for lighting levels.

Actions

1. Incorporate into the Town's Zoning Code and other ordinances green infrastructure standards for new development, consistent with the policies stated above and in compliance with applicable State laws and current best practices.
2. Review the Town's existing ordinances and management practices related to managing water resources. Update them as necessary to ensure protection of key watersheds. Such updates would include, for example, standards for riparian and stream buffering.
3. Consider measures to plant and maintain growth appropriate to local biological systems and habitats, including native, pollinating and indigenous plants as part of the Town's efforts.
4. Grading and excavation requirements should provide criteria for minimizing erosion and sediment impacts from construction activity involving soil disturbance.
5. Review the Town's Zoning Code, and amend if necessary, to require that Erosion/Stormwater Control Plan for any new development must conform to State standards and specifications for erosion and sediment control.



A dark sky street lamp that directs its light downward.

Definition of Dark Sky Lighting

Dark sky lighting requires that light be on only when needed, illuminate only the area needing light, be no brighter than necessary, minimize blue light emissions and that it be fully shielded, directing emitted light down toward the ground.

Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure can help protect water quality and reduce storm water runoff by using vegetation, soils, and natural processes to manage and treat storm water. A site outfitted with green infrastructure can mimic nature by soaking up and storing water. Green infrastructure elements can be easily incorporated into parking lot designs to help mitigate the effects of storm water runoff. Some elements of green infrastructure include the following:

- **Bioswales.** Vegetated open trenches designed to temporarily store and infiltrate storm water.
- **Pervious pavements.** A porous pavement surface that lets storm water percolate and infiltrate, rather than going directly into the public drainage system. In addition to reducing runoff, pervious pavements can trap solids and filter pollutants from the water.
- **Native plants.** A diverse mix of low maintenance, deep rooting wildflowers and grass species can provide shade, storm water infiltration, and a pleasant visual experience.
- **Tree box filters.** There are multiple types of tree box planters that collect and absorb runoff from sidewalks, parking lots, and streets. They are placed at the curb, typically where storm drain inlets are positioned and are ideal for locations where space is limited. Within the Town, tree box filters are only appropriate along Monroe Avenue.



An example of a bioswale in a parking lot.

Agricultural Resources

Policies

- Identify, preserve and protect the remaining agricultural lands in the Town.
 - Support a viable farming industry in the Town and continuation of regional agriculture.
 - Support continuation of State and County agricultural districts, by farmers and landowners.
3. Promote policies and activities that foster growth of farming and farming-related businesses, such as farm stands, farmers' markets, and pick-your-own farms.
 4. Prohibit topsoil removal from areas identified as agricultural.
 5. Protect, maintain and improve the existing agricultural drainage network. Collaborate with farmers to improve draining on Town-owned land that is leased to farmers.

Actions

1. Support and promote programs for agritourism and the purchase of local agricultural products, through the development of marketing materials and brochures.
2. Review residential open space zoning regulations to ensure that cluster zoning requirements prioritize the protection of farmlands in the Town.
6. Update the Town's existing Natural Resources Inventory.
7. Seek partnerships and funding resources to continue to expand the Town's Greenprint through the identification or purchase of suitable parcels, properties, and development rights.

The sunflower field off Calkins Road.



Open Spaces

Policies

- Expand and maintain the Town's network of open spaces in a manner that retains native topography, topsoil and plants.
- Continue to promote the Town's trail system and expand it to establish a comprehensive network.
- Expand on the Greenprint Plan to ensure that the Town's open spaces and scenic resources are preserved.

Actions

1. Create a Regulating Plan for the remaining open space in Pittsford, to identify areas of undeveloped parcels of land to target for preservation as open space. This will involve:
 - Updating the 1996 Scenic Resources Inventory;
 - Identifying the regulatory tools necessary to preserve undeveloped land; and
 - Mapping the targeted parcels proposed for preservation as open space.
2. Consult with NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets and the Genesee Land Trust to identify opportunities for partnerships to acquire PDR lands and easements.
3. Develop a Town-wide Open Space Management Plan that inventories types of open spaces and identifies desired uses, maintenance, and promotion.
4. Use the Open Space Management Plan in conjunction with cluster development zoning to create contiguous areas of open space.
5. Provide training and education for Planning Board members about cluster zoning, open space management, agriculture and connectivity, so the Board can apply these concepts in evaluating future development applications.
6. Prioritize planting of native landscaping.

Open Space Management Plan

The Town of Pittsford holds over 1,000 acres of open land. Much of it was acquired through application of zoning regulations that offer developers greater density of development in exchange for setting aside up to 50 percent of a proposed subdivision as open space. The Town's holdings represent an extensive network of open space and comprise a valuable asset that complements the Town's system of trails and parks.

A community can devote its open space to many purposes, among them recreation both active and passive, agriculture, ecological purposes, storm water management and protection of natural habitats. Pittsford does all of these.

An Open Space Management Plan is an effective way to ensure that open spaces are maintained and used appropriately and remain safe, connected, and accessible to residents.

An Open Space Management Plan would include the following components:

- Detailed inventory of open and agricultural spaces (location, type, size, identified natural features);
- Classification system (by type of use, features, or function);
- Identification of native plants and habitats and provisions for their protection;
- Determination of desired uses (passive/active recreation, ecological, agricultural, storm water, viewshed, forests, meadows);
- Maintenance Plan (tree maintenance, weed and noxious/invasive plant abatement, wildlife);
- Encroachment plan and enforcement; and
- Signage, wayfinding and promotion programs.

Services Provided by the Town

Policies

- Maintain and upgrade the Town's drainage network and sanitary sewer infrastructure.
- Ensure that planning for services takes into account anticipated and potential future growth, as well as the community's changing demographics, such as the aging of its population.

Actions

1. Continue to monitor and assess the capacity and condition of the Town's storm water and sanitary sewer infrastructure.
2. Protect and maintain the existing agricultural drainage network.
3. Continue to evaluate, plan for, and implement necessary repairs and upgrades to the Town's infrastructure, taking into consideration future changes in the community, necessary maintenance, improvements and costs.
4. Monitor the amount and scale of potential future development, forecasted population changes and demographic shifts that may affect needed infrastructure and services for Pittsford residents.

The Pittsford Town Hall, constructed in 1890.





Goal #2: Mobility

Maintain and improve a balanced and efficient transportation system that provides choices, supports the Town's future land use plan, protects neighborhoods from adverse transportation effects and reinforces livability.

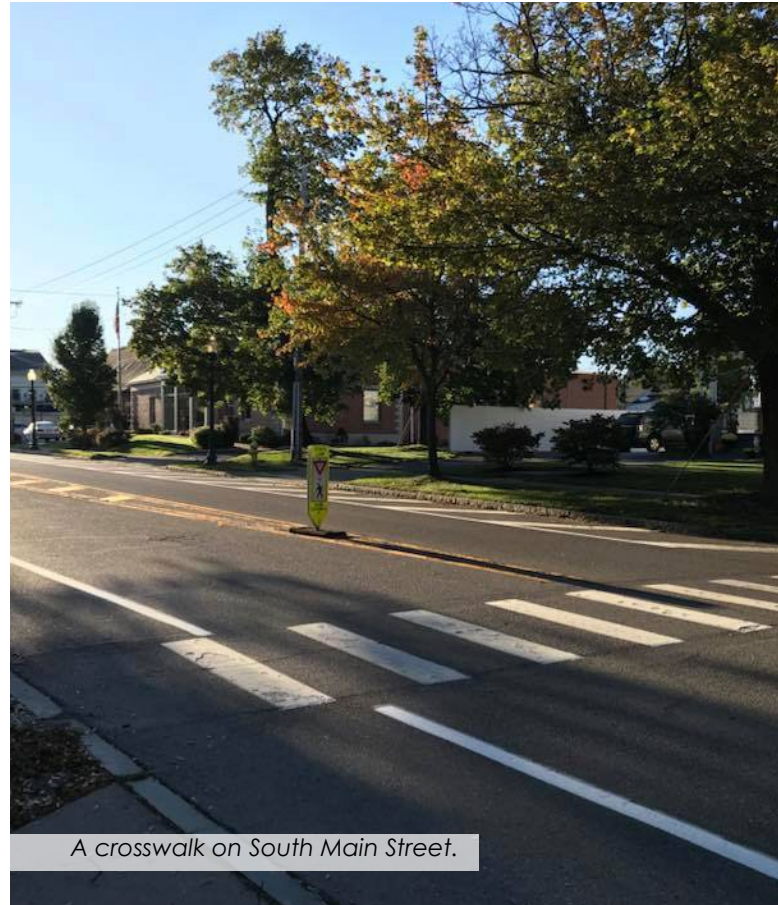
The Town's transportation system consists of highways, roads, sidewalks, bicycle facilities, transit facilities and trails. This section includes policies to guide future decisions that will help to maintain a balanced and efficient transportation system conforming to the policies, goals and recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan and to improve it over time.

Policies

- Maintain and improve the Town's roadway system consistent with the Future Land Use Plan with policies affecting community character, and with the Scenic Resources Overlay District, respecting the unique aesthetic and historic character of the Town, and reviewing pertinent provisions of the Active Transportation Plan.
- Ensure that new development is consistent with the identified function and capacity of affected transportation facilities, such as roads, sidewalks, bikeways and trails, and with performance measures applicable to those facilities.

Actions

1. Develop and implement a local Complete Streets policy to encourage and create safe and inviting transportation facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, and cars.
2. Develop a long-term plan for bicycle use that meets the needs of recreational cyclists, families, commuters, and seniors, including providing bike racks at key destinations.



A crosswalk on South Main Street.

What is a Complete Street?

A complete street, as defined by the National Complete Streets Coalition, is "a transportation facility that is planned, designed, operated, and maintained to provide safe mobility for all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities."

New York's Department of Transportation defines a complete street as "a roadway planned and designed to consider the safe, convenient access and mobility of roadway users of all ages and abilities including children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities."

Both definitions support the same goal: to create an accessible, safe, comfortable, and convenient connection for all users, not just motorists.

3. Conduct periodic walkability and bikeability audits along routes to schools to identify opportunities and needs for safety and infrastructure improvements.
4. Continue to assess traffic speeds and volumes around schools. Implement traffic calming mechanisms in areas immediately around schools where indicated by speed and volume.
5. Continue to pursue Safe Routes to School funding to fill gaps in the sidewalk network.
6. Strengthen enforcement and safety at pedestrian crosswalks, including but not limited to improved signage and flashing lights or beacons on either side of crosswalks.
7. Implement recommendations identified in the Pittsford Active Transportation Plan related to complete streets and bicycle facilities.
8. Consider options for expanding transportation alternatives to support and provide expanded service to residents 55 and over and those with disabilities.



A Calkins Road Middle School student bikes to school.

Safe Routes to School

The Safe Routes to School program is a partnership between national, state, and local agencies to enable and encourage children to safely walk and bicycle to school, and to facilitate walkability and bike-ability more broadly. The NYSDOT provides funding for projects that advance Safe Routes to School objectives through the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP).



Goal #3: Healthy Living

Increase the use of parks and open space, and promote healthy living through an interconnected network of parks, trails, and open spaces, and by promoting practical policies for sustainability and resiliency that have community support and that provide a net community benefit.

Infrastructure conducive to healthy living includes amenities such as parks, playgrounds, open spaces, sports fields, sidewalks, trails, the Erie Canal and the Spiegel Community Center. The Town of Pittsford provides an exceptionally fine infrastructure. It is inventoried and described under “Existing Conditions” in **Appendix A**. This section includes recommendations for future support of healthy living features that will contribute to the quality of life of Pittsford’s residents.

Clean Energy

Policy

- Identify and pursue alternative clean energy technologies that benefit residents of the Town, including solar, wind, and geothermal energy technologies.
- Review the existing incentive zoning rules to encourage environmentally sustainable building design, materials, and technologies.

Actions

1. Revisit the practicality of rooftop solar panels on municipal buildings to see if technological changes since 2011 now make it practical.
2. Evaluate replacing conventional street lights with energy efficient LED technology.
3. Identify Town-owned lands that could be used for solar energy collection installations and confer with energy advisors and other towns that have implemented such programs.
4. Evaluate Community Choice Aggregation as a technique for providing cheaper and greener electric power to Pittsford residents.



Concept image of a home with a roof-mounted solar array

Clean Energy Community

Pittsford has a record of leadership in the area of pursuing and implementing clean energy practices. Pittsford was the first Town in Monroe County in the “smaller communities” category to earn “Clean Energy Community” designation from the State. The Town Administration traditionally has shown interest in alternatives for cleaner energy use in Pittsford and has considered using solar energy.

Community Choice Aggregation

Community Choice Aggregation is an energy procurement model by which participating local governments work together to put out for bid the total amount of electricity needed for customers within their jurisdictional boundaries. This shared purchasing model pools demand, giving communities more power to negotiate with private suppliers. These negotiations often lead to lower rates for consumers and can also enable communities to choose cleaner energy by requiring that the supplier provide a greater percentage of electricity from renewable sources.

5. Continue to install Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations; consider zoning changes to require EV charging compatibility in garages of new construction and for garage renovations in existing homes.
6. Review the Town's existing Design Guidelines to ensure that they allow for non-traditional building designs and materials that are more energy efficient and environmentally sustainable.

5. Continue the Town's sidewalk expansion program.
6. Consider existing and future agricultural uses to avoid conflicts between trails and sidewalks and these uses.

Sidewalks and Trails

Policy

- Make Pittsford's network of trails and sidewalks as contiguous as possible throughout the Town, with connections to parks, open spaces, commercial sites, the Village of Pittsford and inter-jurisdictional trail systems and adjacent communities.

Actions

1. Use the Active Transportation Plan to guide priorities for trail and sidewalk connections, with emphasis on the following:
 - Monroe Avenue between the Village and Pittsford Plaza; and
 - Connections between the southern portion of the Town, through the Village: (a) west to Pittsford Plaza; and (b) north to the colleges and beyond to the town line with Brighton.
2. Work with land owners to develop trail and sidewalk connections.
3. Apply for funding to complete connections. Opportunities include the Consolidated Funding Application: Recreational Trails Program, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Environmental Protection Fund, and GTC Bicycle and Pedestrian STP set aside.
4. Identify near term priorities for sidewalk and trail projects as part of the Town's planning for capital projects.



Bicyclists near Erie Canal Park.

Promotion _____

Policies

- Promote open space, parks and trail facilities to residents and visitors.
- Promote use of the renovated Spiegel Community Center.

Actions

1. Design and implement a Town-wide Signage and Wayfinding Plan.
2. Develop and distribute a brochure for the parks, open space, and trail system.
3. Collaborate with community organizations including the Village of Pittsford, the Towns of Perinton, Brighton, Victor, and Mendon to promote the trail system.
4. Use the Town's newsletter, website, and other methods of communication to promote Pittsford's healthy living assets, including recreational facilities, sports fields, open spaces, parks, trails, and the Erie Canal.

Recreation _____

Policies

- Maintain and expand indoor and outdoor active and passive recreation facilities for the continued use and enjoyment of residents and visitors of all ages.
- Increase access to public recreational facilities via safe routes for bicycling and walking.

Actions

1. Review the Parks Master Plan periodically to identify necessary updates to reflect changing demographics, conditions, needs and improvements.
2. Identify and establish bike rack locations throughout the community.
3. Carry out recommendations made in the Active Transportation Plan.
4. Continue to maintain and improve recreational access to the Erie Canal for residents and visitors. Explore ways to target and develop parks and public spaces along the canal, including the Town-owned and Village-owned canalside parcels between the Monroe Avenue Canal bridge and the North Main Street bridge. These Nature Preserve Tracts should be integrated with adjacent land and trails, including the open space behind the French Hills neighborhood and the Auburn Trail.

Erie Canal Nature Park + Preserve Project

The Erie Canal Nature Park and Preserve project will open up to public access a forgotten piece of prime, unspoiled Town-owned land of approximately 15 acres in the heart of Pittsford. It includes 4 ponds and adjacent wetlands that comprise an active and healthy habitat for amphibious life. Located along the Erie Canal path, next to the Monroe Avenue Canal Bridge on the north bank of the Canal and running east, the Nature Preserve creates a centerpiece for Pittsford's "Ribbon of Green" along the Canal. The Town won a State grant for this project in 2014. Work will include trails to make the property publicly accessible, connections between the Erie Canal Path and the Auburn Trail, interpretive signage, and a boardwalk and overlook for observing wetland areas. It would add native trees in some areas now overtaken by weeds and would include, in places, some low-impact landscaping compatible with the existing natural environment. The Village of Pittsford, at its option, could include its adjacent 15 acres in what would then be a joint Town-Village Nature Preserve. In recognition of this possibility, Village representatives are participating in the planning. This project makes an important resource along the Erie Canal publicly accessible in a manner appropriate to preserving its natural state.



Goal #4: Partnerships

Continue to pursue partnerships and collaborative efforts with residents, community and business organizations, state and local agencies, and neighboring municipalities.

The Town of Pittsford has developed relationships with the Village of Pittsford, the Pittsford Central School District, community organizations and adjacent communities, in order to work together on matters of common concern. Examples include: the Fields Improvement project with the School District, the Active Transportation Plan with the Village, cable channel 12 operations with East Rochester, snow-plowing arrangements with Brighton and much more. It has benefited Village and Town residents to be able to use school facilities for recreational programs and for overnight shelter during the power outage of March 2017.

Most notably, the Town has benefited by the Finger Lakes Municipal Health Care Trust, that was founded by Pittsford and that has resulted in lower employee healthcare costs for the 18 participating municipalities.

In particular, the Town Supervisor, Village Mayor and the School Superintendent have formed a joint Leadership Committee and meet together regularly throughout the year for the purpose of exchanging information and pursuing projects and policies for our mutual benefit.

Continued cooperation of this character will be important to improving trail and sidewalk connections, agricultural viability, access to parks, planning for infrastructure and mitigating potentially detrimental effects of new development. Existing inter-municipal agreements should be continued where practical and appropriate.



Residents work together at Public Meeting #2 to identify areas in the town that would benefit from improvement.

Policy

- Maintain relationships and build cooperation with the Village of Pittsford, the Pittsford Chamber of Commerce, state and county agencies, the Pittsford Central School District, neighboring municipalities and local organizations, as a means of improving quality of life for Pittsford residents.
5. Establish procedures for the Town's advisory and decision-making boards to communicate effectively among themselves and to comment on matters of public importance relating to their jurisdiction. Develop recommendations to resolve gaps or conflicts.

Actions

1. Identify opportunities for additional collaboration with voluntary organizations that contribute to quality of life in Pittsford, such as the Chamber of Commerce, the Fire Department, Pittsford Ambulance, Historic Pittsford, the Pittsford Food Cupboard and others.
2. Identify opportunities for additional collaboration with neighboring communities, including the City of Rochester
3. Identify opportunities for additional collaboration with St. John Fisher College and Nazareth College.
4. Explore and pursue partnerships with private sector entities, such as the YMCA, to help fulfill the vision of this Comprehensive Plan.
6. Provide for collaboration between decision-making boards of relevant jurisdiction and the agricultural community regarding construction and use of sidewalks, trails and paths near agricultural land under cultivation.
7. Continue the work of the Town-Village-School District Leadership Committee, consisting of the Village Mayor, School Superintendent and the Town Supervisor and identify more opportunities for mutual assistance, potentially including:
 - Addressing potential impacts of growth and development on regional infrastructure (transportation, storm water, etc); and
 - Joint applications for funding of inter-municipal projects, such as trails, sidewalks, parks and for improvements to local destinations and parks.

Town, Village, and School officials march in the Memorial Day Parade.







Chapter 4:

Executing the Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan represents the Town's vision for the growth, development, and preservation of Pittsford. Representing the work of residents and elected leaders, this Comprehensive Plan will guide the Town Board, the Planning Board, the Zoning Board of Appeals, the Design Review and Historic Preservation Board, Town staff and the public in evaluating future planning decisions. It is intended to shape decisions about infrastructure, development, farming, historic preservation and the natural environment. The Plan's principal purpose is to guide decision-making by the Town and to provide a rational basis for evaluation.

Adoption of the Comprehensive Plan is the first step in the implementation process. It is the product of many years of efforts on the part of the Town, including elected leadership and residents. Continuing action to implement the plan will be necessary to have a lasting impact. There are a variety of mechanisms used to implement the policies and actions in the Comprehensive Plan.

A family walks by Town Hall.

Techniques

Zoning Code

The Zoning Code prescribes how a property may be used. It defines the type and intensity of such uses. Every parcel of property in the Town falls within a particular zoning district. The Zoning Map, as adopted by the Town Board and revised from time to time consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Plan, illustrates the organization of zoning districts within the Town.

Subdivision Regulations

Subdivision regulations control the division of parcels of land, stating regulations for dividing parcels into lots of any size. These regulations specify those public amenities, such as sewers or storm water runoff arrangements, that the Town may require in a subdivision plan.

Capital Improvement Plan

The Capital Improvement Plan ("CIP") guides upkeep and improvement of the Town's public facilities. Published annually, it schedules construction, upgrading and replacement of municipal infrastructure over time. The CIP establishes priorities and schedules work accordingly. It estimates the cost of each project and proposes means of funding for each.

Additional Studies & Special Topic Plans

Additional planning studies that focus on specific topics are a means to implement recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. Examples include Open Space Management Plans, the Parks Master Plan, Scenic Corridor Plans, the Greenprint and Historic Resource Survey Updates, Monroe Ave Transitional Zone (MATZ), Local Area Waterfront Programs (LWRP), Active Transportation Plans (ATP) and the Monroe Avenue Design Guidelines.

Updating the Plan

Updates and Periodic Review

The Town should update the Comprehensive Plan periodically and at least every 10 years to keep it current in light of changing conditions.

Amendments to the Plan

The Town should adopt procedures for amending the Plan based on changing conditions, or based on suggestions by residents, elected officials or others. Procedures should include an appropriate level of study of a proposed amendment, public notice and public involvement appropriate to the comprehensive planning process.

The Sam Patch docked alongside the Erie Canal.

