

Cooperstown Comprehensive Plan Outline
SECTION 5: VISION, GOALS & RECOMMENDATIONS - DRAFT

Vision Statement

Cooperstown is and will continue to be an attractive, vibrant, year-round community that provides an excellent quality of life.

The Village of Cooperstown is committed to:

- protecting its natural and cultural resources
- recognizing the important role that art, history, and tradition play in the community's character
- encouraging a range of housing options accessible to people of all ages, incomes, and abilities
- continuing to improve neighborhoods, municipal properties, infrastructure, and commercial districts
- attracting and retaining a diverse mix of year-round retail shops, businesses, and restaurants that cater to both residents and visitors
- being a model for environmental sustainability, with a focus on energy efficiency, renewable resources, alternative transportation, and reuse of historic properties
- fostering a climate in which local government is inclusive and responsive to the needs of residents and businesses

Goals and Recommendations

A. NEIGHBORHOODS

Housing

Goal: Encourage a mix of year-round housing types in a variety of price ranges, including rental housing options, to meet the needs of a wide range of Village residents, including families, seniors, and the workforce.

- A.1 Promote current property tax incentives for mixed-use development to encourage the rehabilitation of downtown buildings to allow for upper-floor residential uses.
- A.2 Update zoning and planning regulations to ensure that a diversity of housing types is permitted within the Village.

A.3 Enforce registration procedures for tourist accommodations and take violators to court, ensuring that short-term rentals do not overrun residential options.

A.4 Conduct a Housing Needs Assessment.

Community

Goal: Maintain safe, welcoming, pedestrian-oriented, and family-friendly neighborhoods that promote a sense of community.

A.5 Enhance neighborhood quality of life by holding more community building events.

Historic Preservation

Goal: Protect, promote, and enhance Cooperstown's historic assets to encourage the viable reuse of historic buildings and to preserve the character of the Glimmerglass Historic District.

A.6 Increase awareness of local historic resources and the availability of historic homeowner tax credits through public education.

A.7 Work with the Otesaga Resort Hotel to distribute self-guided walking tour brochure.

A.8 Maintain the Village's participation in the federal Certified Local Government (CLG) program and use designation to leverage funding.

A.9 Establish a recognition program for privately owned historic buildings.

B. RECREATION

Waterfront Access

Goal: Enhance public access to and awareness of Otsego Lake and the headwaters of the Susquehanna River.

B.1 Improve the ability to launch boats, both motorized and non-motorized, on Otsego Lake.

B.2 Evaluate consolidation of municipal boat launches at Fair Street and Fish Road.

B.3 Explore avenues to link existing neighborhoods, open space, and recreational areas including Fairy Spring and Three Mile Point Parks via public transit and safe pedestrian and bicycle access.

B.4 Provide better visual and pedestrian access for non-boaters of all ages and abilities to waterfront within the Village of Cooperstown.

B.5 Provide informational and directional signage along Main Street to increase visitor awareness of Otsego Lake.

B.6 Partner with local and regional organizations to promote Otsego Lake as a destination.

B.7 Assess feasibility of additional seasonal slip rentals at Fairy Spring Park.

Recreation Facilities and Programming

Goal: Provide a variety of outdoor recreation and programming opportunities throughout all four seasons to accommodate the needs of residents and visitors of all ages and abilities.

B.8 Update the *Village of Cooperstown Parks & Recreation Plan*.

B.9 Assess the demand/feasibility of creating a municipal dog park within the Village.

B.10 Partner with neighboring communities and appropriate agencies to identify possible winter trail routes and connections.

B.11 Work with existing public and private entities to promote year round recreation activities, including boating, fishing, wildlife enjoyment, sledding, ice skating, and ice fishing.

B.12 Investigate opportunities to expand and/or relocate the public ice rink.

B.13 Work with local merchants to explore the feasibility of establishing recreation equipment rentals (kayak, canoe, bike) within the Village.

Lakefront Park

Goal: Enhance the use of Lakefront Park by promoting cultural and culinary events, as well as recreational opportunities throughout the year.

B.14 Enhance the view shed and access to Lakefront Park.

B.15 Encourage use of Lakefront Park for existing or new special events.

B.16 Continue to offer Concerts in the Park during the summer season.

B.17 Promote existing municipal day slips.

C. BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Business Diversity / Year Round Business

Goal: Encourage diversity in year-round retail, service, and commercial business to meet the needs of Village residents and visitors alike.

C.1 Encourage businesses to stay open year-round and to remain open during the evening in the summer.

- C.2 Use comprehensive plan and zoning law to recruit businesses that will serve residents as well as visitors and provide a mix of products and services.
- C.3 Develop a program to make unoccupied/seasonal storefronts active and more appealing through actions such as the installation of public art.
- C.4 Consider establishing a Downtown Business Association to encourage a cohesive Main Street business group.
- C.5 Promote Cooperstown as a year-round destination and business community.
- C.6 Work with property owners and real estate professionals to analyze, improve, and market existing commercial spaces.

Business Attraction, Expansion and Retention

Goal: Encourage the retention and expansion of existing businesses and support entrepreneurial and new business development, making Cooperstown competitive in small business growth.

- C.7 Create a more business-friendly environment.
- C.8 Continue dialog with the Bassett Healthcare Network as it adapts to changing needs in medical education, healthcare, and physical plant
- C.9 Encourage private entities to establish and support shared workspace and/or maker spaces within the Village.
- C.10 Partner with private and not-for-profit entities to encourage entrepreneurship by providing educational resources on marketing, finances, technology, web design, and other related business topics.
- C.11 Continue to provide and expand opportunities to create a vibrant Main Street atmosphere including outdoor dining, public art, and activities such as music and entertainment in public spaces.
- C.12 Encourage creation of new businesses such as home offices and small craft shops within residential areas.
- C.13 Continue to participate in Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Council and regional economic development discussions.

Railroad Avenue

Goal: Promote greater and more diverse business development activity in the Railroad Avenue district.

- C.14 Work with local business and property owners to determine current needs and opportunities for future development.

- C.15 Partner with Otsego Now to explore potential redevelopment opportunities.
- C.16 Seek funding to conduct a hotel/conference/entertainment center feasibility study.
- C.17 Provide a trolley stop in the Railroad Avenue District.
- C.18 Work with the County to better develop the County building, property and parking lots as a link between Main Street and Railroad Avenue.
- C.19 Use rail trail to provide walking and bicycling corridor from Blue Trolley Lot to the Railroad Avenue District.
- C.20 Develop a walking map that illustrates connection between Main Street and Railroad Avenue, and consider streetscape improvements along Main Street and Leatherstocking to add visual interest for pedestrians.

D. INFRASTRUCTURE

Parking

Goal: Work with public and private sector to ensure that the supply of convenient parking spaces meets the demands of residents, employees, and visitors.

- D.1 Conduct a Parking Study and Demand Analysis to assess existing conditions and year-round demand.
- D.2 Ensure that residents and visitors are well-informed about the Village's parking rules and policies.
- D.3 Enforce current parking laws.
- D.4 Explore economic feasibility of building municipal or private garage parking structures.

Supportive Infrastructure

Goal: Continue to seek revenues via grants, user fees, donations, and avenues other than taxation to share the burden of maintaining Village infrastructure.

- D.5 Continue to pursue funding, both through grants and private donations, for infrastructure improvements including the purchase and installation of benches, bike racks, street trees, and trash and recycle receptacles as part of upcoming Main Street project.
- D.6 Engage volunteers to clean rain gardens and storm drains and clear snow from fire hydrants.

E. ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainable Practices

Goal: Encourage practices that reduce energy consumption, encourage the reuse of existing resources, make use of local products, and transition away from fossil fuels in both public and private projects.

- E.1 Reduce dependence on fossil fuels within the Village.
- E.2 Adopt best practices for energy efficiency in municipal buildings.
- E.3 Increase public education regarding environmental sustainability practices.
- E.4 Support the Economic Development and Sustainability Committee in its efforts.
- E.5 Support efforts to construct a boat washing facility by organizations promoting lake stewardship.
- E.6 Evaluate a community garden as a way to improve access to sustainable, healthy food, improve social connections, and offer expanded recreation and education opportunities.

Environmental Health

Goal: Emphasize the community's role as a responsible steward of Otsego Lake, the headwaters of the Susquehanna River, and other important natural resources.

- E.7 Support the establishment of a Cooperstown Natural Resource Stewardship Consortium.

Bicycle and Pedestrian

Goal: Encourage bicycling on well-maintained roads and walking on well-maintained sidewalks.

- E.8 Implement the Village's newly adopted Complete Streets policy.
- E.9 Install additional bike racks throughout the Village to promote bicycle riding as an alternative form of transportation.
- E.10 Partner with Otsego Regional Cycling Advocates (ORCA) to promote the Bike to Work Day program in Cooperstown.
- E.11 Develop a Sidewalk Maintenance and Improvement Plan that includes an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan.

Alternative Transportation

Goal: Encourage alternative forms of transportation in the Village.

- E.12 Support taxis and vehicle sharing programs, within the framework of state legislation.

- Provide a system for the registration of taxis operating within the village.
- E.13 Transform the existing Trolley Committee to a Multi-Modal Committee and task it with developing and promoting public transit (bus and trolley), rideshare, pedestrian and bicycle programs, and conducting an annual review of the trolley route.
- E.14 Partner with Otsego Now to explore the feasibility of bringing passenger rail access to Cooperstown.

F. GOVERNMENT

Efficiency

Goal: Enhance the overall quality and efficiency of municipal services in Cooperstown.

- F.1 Maintain a strong Village Hall presence along Main Street fostering committed partnerships with businesses, as well as local arts and culture organizations.
- F.2 Continue to improve local laws, policies, and procedures to ease review process for those interacting with the Village.
- F.3 Seek opportunities for shared municipal services and consolidation of resources.
- F.4 Review the Village's current organizational structure and administrative leadership.

Communication

Goal: Improve communications between local government and the public regarding Village policies, events, and other activities.

- F.5 Continue to distribute *Village Voices*, a printed newsletter, which is mailed directly to property owners with the municipal water and sewer bill
- F.6 Assess usability and clarity of the Village's website and social media outlets.
- F.7 Enhance the Village's website and social media outlets as appropriate to ensure that the sites can provide up-to-date information about Village events, development projects, public works, and other policies.
- F.8 Explore the feasibility of enhancing the Village's website to include on-line permit applications.
- F.9 Provide regular press releases to print, radio, and television news outlets in Cooperstown, Oneonta, and the Mohawk Valley.
- F.10 Increase public notification, beyond legal requirements, to ensure awareness of public hearings for zoning issues and the passage/amendment of local laws.

- F.11 Develop a “Cooperstown Welcome Brochure” and link on the Village website that include information about Village government, including contact information, parking rules, and zoning regulations that could be shared with new residents and businesses.

G. DOUBLEDAY FIELD

Destination

Goal: Work with public and private entities to promote and enhance Doubleday Field and the surrounding area as a nationally recognized destination that residents and visitors can safely access by foot, private vehicle, or public transportation.

- G.1 Provide a safe route for pedestrians to access Doubleday Field from Main Street and Chestnut Street.
- G.2 Reconfigure the site/location of the Sandlot Kid so that it is a welcoming public space.
- G.3 Work with local business and property owners to determine current needs and opportunities for future development.
- G.4 Partner with Otsego Now and local developers to explore the feasibility of mixed-use (retail/parking/residential) development in the vicinity.
- G.5 Explore the feasibility of developing and marketing Doubleday Field as a large scale event venue for outdoor entertainment, sporting events, community events, and weddings.
- G.6 Explore National Historic Landmark designation for Doubleday Field.
- G.7 Conduct a study to quantify the number of visitors to Doubleday Field.

Building Preservation / Improvements

Goal: Pursue opportunities to enhance and develop facilities at Doubleday Field, making it more usable and marketable, while preserving and promoting its historic character.

- G.8 Develop a Master Plan to inventory and prioritize infrastructure, field, and building improvements.
- G.9 Seek funding to rehabilitate Doubleday Field.
- G.10 Design and install interpretive signage to educate residents and visitors about the history of Doubleday Field.