



Town of Ticonderoga Comprehensive Plan Update

Public Workshop #1 Summary

The first public workshop for the Town of Ticonderoga's Comprehensive Plan update took place on Wednesday, April 15 from 6:00 to 7:30PM at Ticonderoga Elementary School. The workshop was attended by about 12 community members. The in-person workshop was accompanied by an online form of engagement – a survey that included the same information/feedback questions displayed at the in-person event. The survey was open for two weeks after the workshop and gathered 50 total responses. This summary combines and analyzes all responses from both the in-person meeting and online survey.

The workshop opened with a short presentation from the project team to describe the purpose of comprehensive planning, progress made to date, and how public engagement informs the process. The presentation was followed by an open house where attendees could browse a series of information and feedback-driven boards with specific questions. The goal of the workshop and associated online engagement was to select a vision statement, assess the draft goals, identify key housing issues, suggest ideas for future land use and development, and brainstorm opportunities for recreation.





Participants at the first public workshop for the Town's Comprehensive Plan Update.

Quality of Life

A series of questions related to how residents experience daily life in Ticonderoga and what could make it better. Topics related to quality of life included economic development and tourism, recreational opportunities (in all seasons), and youth activities. Both feedback mechanisms noted the wide range of current recreational and tourism amenities in Ticonderoga and asked respondents to identify where the gaps are.

Additional **recreational tourism options** identified by respondents included a bowling alley, movie theater, mountain biking trails, a performing arts center, a La Chute River historical tour, and an indoor recreation facility like a YMCA.

Suggestions for **regional events and amenities** included a food festival, public art installations, a small tubing or skiing hill, expanding existing events that utilize the Lake (like fishing tournaments), a restaurant overlooking the La Chute River, and improved cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, and snowshoeing trails.

Suggested new **recreational opportunities for youth** in the Town included a skate park, open gym nights at schools, a multi-sport indoor recreation space, a roller rink in the ice rink space, a rifle team, and a children's wildlife educational center.

Housing

When asked what housing is needed most in Ticonderoga, respondents indicated that single family homes are the greatest need, though the general consensus was that the Town just needs more housing in general, especially for young families and seniors. Small multi-family (3-4 units) and duplexes were also selected as needed housing types. It was noted that single family homes are often the easiest to develop/rehabilitate both in terms of zoning and attracting potential developers.

Vision, Principles, and Goals

Two options were presented for the vision statement. Most respondents favored Option A and indicated that they liked the references to small town character, rural nature, and natural resources. Suggested edits to the Option A Statement included a clearer emphasis on children, youth, and families.

Preferred Vision Statement (Option A): "Ticonderoga is where history, nature, and community come together. We're proud of our past and ready to build a stronger future. Our vision is simple: make Ticonderoga a great place to live, work, and visit for everyone whether you've been here for generations or just arrived. We will revitalize our downtown, support local businesses, and create good jobs so young people can stay and build their lives here. We will maintain our beautiful lakes, mountains, and historic sites while making sure everyone can enjoy them. We will improve our neighborhoods, fix our infrastructure, and offer activities for all ages, all year long. Ticonderoga will be known as a welcoming, safe community with a thriving downtown, diverse economy, and opportunities for all. We will preserve what makes us special, including our small-town charm, natural beauty, and tight-knit community, while embracing the changes needed to help us grow. By working together and staying true to our values of honesty, hard work, and looking out for each other, we will create a Ticonderoga that honors its heritage and secures its future."

Option B was noted as being too specific and limiting, particularly the stated end date which was interpreted as potentially setting the plan up for failure.

Participants were asked to review the guiding principles of the Plan to ensure they aligned with community priorities. The proposed guiding principles were developed based on the community survey, stakeholder interviews, focus groups, and committee discussions. The principles include population retention, affordability, strategic implementation, and smart growth. 80% of survey respondents agreed that the principles were reflective of what is most important to Ticonderoga's future. Suggested improvements to the guiding principles included incorporating language about preserving Ticonderoga's historical significance and expressing support for local businesses.

Along with the Vision Statement and guiding principles, participants were asked to review and rank the goals that were most important to them. The presented goals were:

- Goal 1: Economic Development & Commercial Vitality
- Goal 2: Infrastructure & Essential Services
- Goal 3: Recreation, Parks & Waterfront Access
- Goal 4: Arts, Culture & Historic Resources
- Goal 5: Land Use & Zoning

62% participants ranked **Goal 1 as their top priority**. 25% of participants ranked **Goal 3 as their second priority**. 30% of participants ranked **Goal 2 as their third priority**.



Participants in the workshop interacting with feedback materials.

Workshop and survey participants were also asked to identify specific strategies to help achieve each listed goal. Suggestions for Goal 1 were primarily related to strategies that support increased development density, actively recruiting businesses that could be a good fit for Ticonderoga’s local market, filling vacant buildings, attracting light industrial activities, and supporting new employment opportunities.

Strategies for Goal 2 included creating a document to detail the operation and maintenance of infrastructure in the Town, incorporating specific repairs, inspections, and projected cost. Other recommended strategies were sidewalk repair and maintenance schedules and improved drinking water quality. It was also noted that **Goals 1 and 2 are related**, especially if the Town is looking to increase population and population density, which could be limited by existing infrastructure.

Recommended strategies for Goal 3 related to the maintenance of existing outdoor parks and recreation resources rather than the creation of new ones and supplementing what amenities currently exist with indoor recreation venues like gymnasiums and pickleball courts. Responses to the survey also noted encouraging boaters and Lake-users to stop (and stay) in downtown Ticonderoga rather than just passing through.

Strategies for Goal 4 included increasing awareness and promotion of the La Chute River, both in terms of its natural features and its history. Other strategies included supporting the existing arts community through elements like murals, social media, and more annual events that center around the arts.

On Goal 5, there were no suggested strategies to assist with implementation, but it was noted that the current zoning code needs improvement and that an updated code should be easier to navigate, especially for potential future developers. There was also a strong sentiment that large solar fields and the visual impact of battery storage and solar facilities should be addressed and regulated in the Town's zoning code.

Zoning & Land Use Regulations

Workshop participants and online survey respondents were asked to suggest specific areas where current zoning districts should be changed to facilitate future development. Suggestions for the *Town* included **expanding the business zoning district off Route 9N** and putting **commercial** or **mixed-use zoning between Route 9N and Baldwin Rd**, near the Lake. Suggestions for the *Hamlet (former village)* included putting a **mixed-use corridor along Racetrack Road and Route 9N**, **mixed-use areas along Alexandria Ave**, specifically the large parcels just outside of the southwestern edge of the Hamlet, and a **district that allows auto services at the corner of Route 9N and St. Clair Street**.

Participants in the workshop and in the online survey were asked to select a series of common zoning issues based on whether they were concerned about them. On housing and development in a zoning-related sense, workshop participants were in favor of allowing for **more housing diversity** and *reducing barriers to housing development*. Related to downtown and business development and zoning, workshop respondents indicated they

would like to **improve signage regulations** and **allow for more mixed-uses or home-based businesses** in certain areas.

The workshop and online materials offered a series of potential regulations that could help stem the uncontrolled expansion of short-term rentals (STRs). Most respondents were in favor of a **regulation that establishes health, safety, and nuisance standards for STRs**. This would help minimize the impact of rentals on neighbors while not majorly impacting STR owners. Other favored regulations included creating a local registry system or permit system for STRs.

Future Redevelopment Areas

Workshop participants and online survey respondents were asked to identify areas where future redevelopment should occur in both the Town and Hamlet. Suggestions for the *Town* included turning some of the **northern agricultural areas into community service space** and **encouraging commercial uses off Route 9N** near the southern border of the Town, near Hague. For Hamlet, respondents recommended developing the **area by the water/Lord Howe Street into commercial and business uses** to better take advantage of the shoreline. Respondents also recommended uses like a park with a playground or a small eatery.