

# Introduction

## Purpose

The purpose of the Sodus Comprehensive Plan is to guide local officials and community members in making decisions that will affect the future of the Town and Village of Sodus. Future Town and Village actions that will be based on the policies and recommendations in the Plan include revisions to zoning and other local laws and regulations, capital budgeting, and providing services to the community. The Comprehensive Plan addresses the full spectrum of issues facing the Town and Village, and balances competing needs and interests in the community.

## Legal Basis

The Comprehensive Plan has been prepared pursuant to NYS Town Law §272-a and Village Law §7-722. These sections of the Town and Village Law specify that the Town and Village Boards are responsible for preparing and adopting a Comprehensive Plan. As the law also permits the Town and Village Boards to delegate this responsibility to an ad hoc committee established for the express purpose of preparing Comprehensive Plans, the Town and Village Boards appointed a Comprehensive Plan Committee (CPC) to guide the preparation of the joint Comprehensive Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan is a policy document that does not, in itself, have the force of law. However, the Plan will influence changes in Town and Village laws and regulations as well as funding decisions and other Town and Village actions during the next 10 to 15 years. In particular, local zoning regulations must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

## Process of Preparing the Plan

The Sodus Comprehensive Plan represents the culmination of a planning process that began in April 2004. The Comprehensive Plan Committee met monthly for more than a year to coordinate the preparation of the Plan.

Members of the CPC included representatives from the Town and Village Boards, Planning Boards, and Zoning Boards of Appeals, as well as citizens at large. The following persons served on the Comprehensive Plan Committee:

- David Burlee
- Donna Chittenden
- John Cook
- Dan Datthyn
- Sue Datthyn
- Mike Garlock
- Mark Johnson
- Don Lessord
- Steve LeRoy
- Mary Jane Mumby
- Earl Patton, Jr.
- Brenda Rowe
- Mike Sullivan

The Town and Village retained a team of consultants led by Stuart I. Brown Associates, a planning and management consulting firm based in Fairport, New York, to facilitate the planning process and prepare the plan document. MRB Group, based in Rochester, New York, provided engineering assistance, prepared the maps, and assisted in public participation and coordination.

Public participation included a Residents' Survey, distributed in June 2004, a public informational meeting to present the results of the Residents' Survey (September 2004), a CPC public hearing May 16, 2005 and a joint public hearing of the Town and Village Board (\_\_\_\_\_).

Several CPC meetings also included focus group discussions with representatives of various interest groups. Focus group discussions were held on the following topics:

- Farmland and Agriculture
- Parks and Recreation
- Economic Development
- Housing and Residential Neighborhoods
- Downtown Business District Walking Tour

### **Plan Organization**

The **Land Use Overview** presents an overview of the community, summarizes the issues addressed in each section, and shows how the individual topical areas relate to one another. It also presents an introduction to zoning and subdivision regulations, which are the primary tools available to the Town and Village to help achieve the land use goals of the Plan.

A **Future Land Use Map** presents the Town and Village policies regarding land use, and will be used as a guide in revising the Town's and Village's zoning maps.

Topical sections of the Comprehensive Plan address the major issues identified by the community:

- **natural resources and environmental protection;**
- **agriculture and farmland;**
- **housing and residential development;**
- **business and economic development;**
- **downtown business district revitalization**
- **transportation and infrastructure**
- **community facilities and services**

- **parks and recreation; and**
- **historic resources**

In each section, the Plan presents:

- **goals;**
- **background information;**
- **issues and opportunities;**
- **tools and techniques; and**
- **recommended actions.**

The **Implementation Strategy** summarizes the recommended actions by topic, with a proposed time frame, responsible agency, cost estimate, and potential funding sources. A summary of the recommended actions by time frame provides a year-by-year guide to implementing the Plan.

“**Sidebars**” within the Plan document present additional information that supports and/or provides the context for the recommendations in the Plan.

- Relevant Plans and Programs include summaries of plans prepared by the Town and Village or other government agencies and descriptions of State or County government programs.
- Residents’ Survey Highlights present the relevant findings from the survey of Sodus residents conducted in Spring 2004. The final report from the Residents Survey is available at the Sodus Municipal Building and is included as an appendix to the Comprehensive Plan.
- Highlights of Focus Group Discussions summarize the issues and recommendations presented by residents and resource people who met with the CPC.

### **Monitoring and Updating the Plan**

The Town and Village of Sodus are not static, but are in a constant state of flux and change. Over time, the changes which occur in the community may render the Comprehensive Plan outdated or inappropriate if the Plan is not updated to take the changes into consideration. Accordingly, it is essential for the Town and Village Boards to monitor changes in the community and to periodically reevaluate the relevance and appropriateness of the goals set forth in the Plan and the measures recommended to achieve the goals. The Plan should then be updated, as necessary, to appropriately revise the goals and recommended actions so the Plan may continue to serve as useful and relevant guide for Town and Village officials.

In communities that experience a slow rate of change, reviewing and updating the Plan at 5-year intervals may be sufficient. In communities that experience rapid change, the Plan may need to be reviewed and updated more frequently, perhaps at 2- or 3-year intervals.

The Town and Village Boards would be wise to enlist the Town and Village Planning Boards and Zoning Boards of Appeals to assist with reviewing and updating the Plan as the Planning Boards and Zoning Boards of Appeals may have much information and insight that may be beneficial in determining how the Plan should be revised. As with the initial adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, future amendments to the Plan will require both environmental reviews to evaluate potential adverse impacts and public hearings to provide members of the public an opportunity to comment on the proposed amendments.