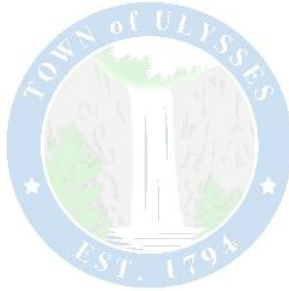


ULYSSES UNITED



Public Involvement Plan

2025-2045 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update

September 24, 2024



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction	PG 3
2. Purpose & Goal	PG 4
3. Members of the Public and Stakeholders	PG 5
4. Community Engagement	PG 7
5. Role of Decision Makers	PG 10
6. Schedule and Opportunities for Public Involvement	PG 11
7. Evaluation, Accountability, Equity, & Empowerment Framework	PG 12
8. Contact Information and Document Repository	PG 13

1. Introduction

The Necessity of Public Engagement

The Town of Ulysses, in partnership with a wide and diverse group of stakeholders, is starting a planning process that will prepare the Town for future public and private development and growth. When discussing planning and long range planning projects, people tend to focus on the built environment and infrastructure: the buildings, the streets, the roads, transit, etc., and how these intersect with the natural environment: the woods, the fields, the streams and wetlands, and the gorges and lakes. But planning is fundamentally about people: the communities we call home, where we go to work and school, where our families grow and prosper, and where and how we connect with one another.



It is important then, that the planning efforts and process for the Town's periodic update to its comprehensive plan be grounded in the needs of the people, the locations where they live and work, and the broader community as a whole. It's a process in a constant state of flux, addressing the needs of today while assessing those of the future, and ultimately this process will help guide us in connecting how we live, work, and play. In order to understand the values and aspirations of the community and specific neighborhoods or locations, we need to engage the people from that context in these discussions.

Community members are instrumental in assessing the long-term needs of their personal experiences and interactions with the places they live and work. This public involvement plan (PIP) recognizes people as full and equal partners in the Town's decision making processes at all levels. Specifically, it outlines the responsibilities and commitments of the Town to engage the public and key constituencies in Town planning.

The following sections provide the context in which we plan (the state, regional, and local policy framework), information about key projects scheduled for the upcoming year, the adoption process and key decision-making authorities, and lastly, a strategy for coordinating public notification and engagement opportunities as part of this legislative process.

2. Purpose and Goal

PURPOSE

The periodic update to the Comprehensive Plan will address population, housing, employment and economic development, environment and natural resources, public facilities and services, historic preservation and building design, transportation, community well-being, and the policies at the state, regional, and local level that impact them. The Town is looking to citizens, property and business owners, and other interested groups to help develop an inclusive plan that both meets their current needs, and promotes a healthy environment and a vibrant economy for upcoming decades.

The purpose of this document is to assert the goal of the PIP, identify community stakeholders and interested citizens, devise a project approach and schedule for effective public participation, and identify roles and responsibilities. This document may be updated over time to reflect the needs of the Comprehensive Plan periodic update and the responses with outreach to ensure public participation is effective as much as possible.

GOAL

The overall goal of the PIP is to make the planning process for the periodic update to the Comprehensive Plan accessible, inclusive, and engaging to stakeholders and all members of the public. To achieve this goal, the Town will:

- Provide objective information to assist the public and stakeholders in understanding issues;
- Seek early and continuous involvement of the public and stakeholders;
- Offer opportunities for feedback to appointed and elected officials and staff through all phases of the process;
- Utilize a variety of participation methods (such as public meetings, social media, mailers, etc.);
- Support community-driven planning; and
- Use a flexible, phased approach



3. Mememebers of the Public & Stakeholders

The Town of Ulysses has identified the following groups of those potentially interested in participating in the Comprehensive Plan periodic update planning process; this is not an all-inclusive list and may be updated administratively when additional groups have been identified:

Members of the Public

- Neighborhood residents
- Interested citizens
- Property and business owners

Business Community

- Tompkins-Cortland Building Trades Council
- Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council
- Ithaca Area Economic Development
- Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce
- Trumansburg Chamber of Commerce
- Tompkins County Industrial Development Agency
- Tompkins Cortland Home Builders & Remodelers Association
- Landlords Association of Tompkins County
- Ithaca Neighborhood Housing Services
- Tompkins County Development Corporation

Environmental Stakeholders

- Tompkins County Environmental Management Council
- Tompkins County Climate Protection Initiative
- Cayuga Lake Watershed Intermunicipal Organization
- Sustainable Tompkins
- Tompkins County Water Resources Council
- Cayuga Nature Center
- Tompkins County Soil And Water Conservation District
- Cayuga Bird Club

Town Officials

- Town Supervisor
- Town Board
- Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee
- Planning Board
- Ag Committee
- Bee Committee
- Board of Zoning Appeals
- Conservation and Sustainability Advisory Council
- Habitat Nature Preserve Advisory Committee
- Tree Advisory Council
- Water Source Protection Plan Committee
- Youth Commission

Town Departments and Services

- Building, Code, Planning, & Zoning
- Highway Department
- Recreation Department
- Town Clerk
- Town Court
- Town History
- Water District
- Youth Programs

Other Local Government

- Tompkins County
- Seneca County
- Schuyler County
- Village of Trumansburg
- Trumansburg Fire Company
- Town of Covert
- Town of Hector
- Town of Enfield
- Town of Ithaca

- Trumansburg Central School District
- Ithaca City School District

Public Transit & Transportation

- Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit, Inc.
- Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council
- New York State DOT
- Gadabout Transportation Services
- Center for Community Transportation
- Bike Walk Tompkins

Tribes

- Haudenosaunee Confederacy
- Cayuga Nation

State Government

- Department of State
- Department of Environmental Conservation
- Empire State Development
- Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation - Taughannock Falls State Park
- Department of Health
- Department of Agriculture and Markets

Federal Government

- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Housing and Urban Development
- US Fish and Wildlife

Social Service Agencies

- Tompkins County Whole Health
- Department of Social Services
- Tompkins County Workers' Center
- Office of Children and Family Services
- Human Services Coalition of Tompkins County
- Family & Children's Service of Ithaca
- Tompkins Community Action
- Office for the Aging
- Rescue Mission Alliance

Other

- Namaste
- Smart Start
- Hammerstone School Carpentry for Women
- Trumansburg Rotary
- Ithaca RC
- American Legion, NY Post 0770
- Trumansburg Conservatory of Fine Arts
- Ulysses Philomathic Library
- Ulysses Historical Society
- NYS Electric and Gas
- Bolton Point
- Other Advisory Committees
- Neighborhood Associations
- Health Care Providers
- Financial Institutions
- Religious Institutions
- Service Clubs
- Design Professionals
- ESL groups
- ADA groups
- Cayuga Lake Wine Trail
- Greater Ithaca Art Trail

4. Community Engagement

The Town of Ulysses is committed to authentic public engagement and recognizes that the complexity and changing character of planning issues, technology, and the Town itself requires thoughtful innovation to ensure inclusive and equitable community engagement. Diverse demographics, as well as past hurdles to fully engage all members of the community, point to the need for new approaches to citizen engagement that promote inclusive participation. Advances in communication technology provide the Town new avenues for engagement and collaboration.

APPROACHES TO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Town will offer a range of public participation strategies to encourage and facilitate widespread community involvement in the planning process. The Plan is flexible and may be refined as the review process progresses. The following strategies will act as a toolbox which the Town may utilize to facilitate public participation during the planning process.

- **Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meetings and Work Sessions**
The Committee will conduct monthly meetings and public work sessions/open houses to gather public comment on the draft Comprehensive Plan periodic update before scheduling a final public meeting to develop recommendations that will be forwarded to the Town Board. Public notice of the meetings will be published in the Ithaca Journal and on the Town's website. In addition, notice may also be provided through such means as a press release, the Town Newsletter, email listserv, and the Town's Facebook page.
- **Town Board Public Work Sessions and Hearing**
The Town Board will conduct several public work sessions to gather public input on the draft plan forwarded by the Comp Plan Steering Committee before scheduling a public hearing. Public notice of the public hearing will be published in the Ithaca Journal and on the Town's website at least 15 days, but preferably 30 days prior to the date of the hearing. In addition, notice may also be provided through such means as a press release, the Town Newsletter, email listserv, and the Town's Facebook page.
- **Planning Board and Board of Zoning Appeals**
The Planning Board typically meets the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month, and the BZA typically meets the 3rd Wednesday of the Month. The Boards will be briefed on the work of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and the progress on the Comp Plan update. The Boards will have opportunity to review and provide feedback on components of the draft plan (e.g., land use, housing, environment, transportation, etc.).

- **Town Advisory Committees and Commissions**
The Town has a diverse set of citizen's advisory committees and commissions which will be engaged throughout the planning process as needed. These groups will review and provide feedback on components of the draft plan (e.g., land use, housing, environment, transportation, etc.). These committees and commissions are comprised of volunteers who commit their time and expertise to serving the Town and the residents of Ulysses.
- **Partner Agencies**
The Town of Ulysses is not the sole provider of services within the Town. We work collaboratively with multiple agencies to ensure that plans, investments and actions are aligned and that the needs of our citizens are met. These partner agencies include the Trumansburg Central School District, Ithaca City School District, State Parks, TCAT, Tompkins County Whole Health, among others.
- **Neighborhood and Business Groups**
The Committee Spokesperson/consultant/staff will meet with neighborhood and business groups to talk about the process upon request and seek their input. Staff will ensure that interested groups are made aware of project proposals and milestones and offer opportunities for submitting comments.
- **Community Events**
During the course of the update, the Committee Spokesperson/consultant/staff will attend community events as available and appropriate to provide additional information on the work and status of review. These events will likely include the [insert] but may include other fairs, festivals, or attendance and presentation at meetings by other agencies as requested.
- **Farmers Market and Pop-Ups**
Informational fliers on the work and status of review and upcoming meeting dates will be distributed at the Farmer's Market. Committee Spokesperson/consultant/staff will be available to answer questions and discuss current planning topics.
- **Online Survey(s)**
An online survey(s) will be distributed to assess community priorities. The visions, goals and policies in the existing plan will serve as a starting point for developing survey questions. Members of the public and stakeholders will be notified of the survey via email, the Town's project webpage, the Town Newsletter, the Town's Facebook/Instagram/Twitter, the Ithaca Journal, and fliers posted in strategic locations throughout the Town.
- **Hard Copy of Survey(s)**

Hard copies of the online survey will be distributed to neighborhood social groups and other interested parties, and then these groups can circulate the survey(s) to their members.

- **Map-app**
An online map-app will be used to solicit public comments on proposed land use amendments once those are drafted and members of the public and stakeholders will be notified similar to the online survey.

TOOLS FOR NOTIFICATION

- **Website**
The Planning Department will maintain a calendar of events, project updates, committee meeting information, and project documents on the web site. The website is available at www.ulyssesunited.org
- **Stakeholder List**
Staff will maintain a list of interested members of the public and stakeholders who will be notified of meetings and other information related to the planning process.
- **Listserv**
An electronic mailing list will be used to provide updates to interested parties regarding meetings, events and new products. Hard copy notices of important events such as public hearings will be mailed to interested parties. Utility mailings or other community newsletters may be used to disseminate information to a broader audience that includes tenants as well as property owners.
- **Media and Press Releases**
Announcements for key events, surveys, and document releases will be distributed to local media outlets including the Ithaca Journal, Seneca Shopper, Tburg free press, Ithaca voice, 14850.com, Ithaca.com, Tompkins weekly and other outlets.
- **Social Media**
Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter will be used to announce project news and promote and document events. Social Media will also be used to make connections to similar efforts, organizations and individuals in Ulysses.
- **Fliers**
Fliers advertising the survey and public meetings will be posted in strategic locations throughout the Town.

5. Roles of Decision Makers

Comp Plan Steering Committee

The Committee will act as the Stakeholder Committee during the planning process, provide policy recommendations for the 2025-2045 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update (Comp Plan Update), and ensure that the public is involved throughout the process. The Committee's meetings are open to the public and advertised on the Town's website. The Committee will review the draft plan on a chapter by chapter basis, providing opportunities for public comments while providing feedback and recommendations to Town staff. All public workshops will be noticed appropriately so that all Committee members are able to fully participate in these events in the event of a quorum. The Committee will forward and present its final recommendations to the Town Board.

Town Staff

Town staff will assist in consultant work oversight related to the Comp Plan Update. They will facilitate public meetings and help in the presentation of draft materials to the Town Board review. They will revise documents as needed and provide all materials to Committee and Town Board members in a timely manner.

Town Board

The Town Board will provide policy guidance and will make the final decisions and adoptions for the Comp Plan Update. All public workshops will be noticed appropriately so that all Board members are able to fully participate in these events in the event of a quorum. The Board will receive periodic briefings on the planning process and will review the Comp Plan Steering Committee's recommendations on the Comp Plan Update. The Board will hold a public hearing on the final draft to the Comp Plan Update prior to taking final action.

Role of the Public

The Comp Plan Update will be primarily written for and with guidance from the public. The plan will reflect their preferences, ideas, and input received throughout the process. During the planning process it is important to retain the public's interest by making citizen participation as accessible as possible. The process is driven by the community and guided by the Town's professional staff to ensure continuous, effective public participation. This will be accomplished through advertising, outreach, stakeholder involvement, and numerous public events.

6. Schedule and Opportunities for Public Involvement

The Comp Plan Update planning process will occur in four phases. In each phase the Town will utilize various approaches to public participation listed above in order to engage stakeholders and members of the public. The following is the estimated timeline for developing and adopting the Comp Plan Update. The actual timeline may be different depending on the complexity of issues and changes identified through the public participation process.

Project Timeline



Phase 1: Initial Outreach and Assessment, September 2024 – March 2025

During Phase 1, the Committee, staff, and consultant will begin to review the visions, goals and policies in existing plans, compile available data and statistics, and organize the information. The public, stakeholders, and targeted focus groups will be introduced to the planning process and asked to prioritize the plan's visions, goals and policies.

Phase 2: Drafting the 2025-2045 Comp Plan, January 2025 – June 2025

In Phase 2, feedback gathered through the Committee's and Town Board meetings, survey, open houses, and other means (e.g. emails, Facebook page, letters, etc.) will be incorporated into the draft 2025-2045 Comprehensive Plan.

Phase 3: Finalize the Draft 2025-2045 Comp Plan, July – October 2025

In Phase 3, the Committee, staff, and consultant will finalize draft versions of all chapters of the 2025-2045 Comprehensive Plan. An open house will provide the public and stakeholders with an opportunity to see the draft plan and provide feedback for the draft final plan.

Phase 4: Adopting the 2025-2045 Comp Plan, October – December 2025

Phase 4 consists of the Steering Committee formalizing its final recommendations to the Town Board, and the legislative process for plan adoption, which will include a public hearing held by the Town Board. The process will culminate in the adoption of a new Comprehensive Plan.

7. Evaluation, Accountability, Equity, & Empowerment Framework

Public Involvement Evaluation

As part of this PIP, staff will be responsible for gathering and disseminating the public's input to decision makers and back to the public at large. This is a necessary component for a successful project. Staff will compile public comments throughout the planning process. Comments will be integrated into ongoing work and reported to the Steering Committee. The Committee Spokesperson and staff will brief the Town Board on the progress of the plan, results of outreach efforts and public input. Committee recommendations and Board decisions will be communicated to stakeholders and the general public through the website, electronic/hard copy mailings and local media outlets.

Evaluation of the public involvement will be completed upon completion. Tools for evaluation will include:

- Informal feedback from stakeholders
- Short questionnaires following events
- Team debriefs following meetings and events to discuss needed adjustments
- Steering Committee feedback following recommendation

Equity and Empowerment Framework

In order to consider all community members' needs and concerns, particular efforts must be made to improve communication with traditionally under-represented and under-served groups, including low-income communities and communities of color. Meaningful engagement is inclusive of voices in our community that may have been historically marginalized and excluded. Consistent with the Town's core values and vision for government performance, deep and inclusive community involvement is essential to transparency and equity in long-range planning decisions. It also makes it possible to create and work towards a shared vision for the future.

The Town's commitment to diverse and inclusive public engagement is demonstrated by the framework of the Town's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy, which was adopted by the Town in July 2021 (see page 13). The framework has been incorporated into the PIP for the Comp Plan Update to guide the Town's outreach and engagement efforts.

8. Contact Information and Document Repository

Contact Information

Written comments are welcome at any time during the Comp Plan Update planning process. For Steering Committee and Town Board public meetings and hearing, formal written comments should be submitted by the deadline included in the public notice information. Staff will publish all formal comments, in addition to responses, on the Town's website prior to the final public hearing. The public will be able to comment and provide testimony at each public meeting and at the public hearing.

This PIP may be updated administratively as conditions change or additional resources to support outreach activities become available. A current copy of the PIP will be available for viewing at the office of the Planning Department and on the Town's website.

To find out more about the PIP and to comment on the draft 2025-2045 Comprehensive Plan, please contact Niels Tygesen at the contact information listed below.

Planning Department
10 Elm Street
Trumansburg, NY 14886
Phone: 607.387.9778 x222
Email: planner@Townofulyssesny.gov

To be notified of up-coming meetings, process updates, and to comment on the draft 2025-2045 Comprehensive Plan, send an email to:

CompPlanSteeringCommittee@Townofulyssesny.gov

All documents related to the 2025-2045 Comprehensive Plan are located here:

www.Townofulyssesny.gov/pages/document-library