

# TOWN OF HAMDEN DELAWARE COUNTY, NEW YORK COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024



Prepared by:  
Delaware County Planning Department  
Town of Hamden Town Board  
Town of Hamden Planning Board

## **Foreword**

The 2024 update of The Town of Hamden’s Comprehensive Plan was prepared by the Town of Hamden Planning Board with the support of the Town of Hamden Town Board and the Delaware County Planning Department. The Comprehensive Plan received tremendous engagement and guidance from Hamden residents who participated in surveys. Their responses were invaluable to the construction of this document. Funding for the Comprehensive Plan was made available through the Delaware County Planning Department’s Town Planning Advisory Service (TPAS).

The Comprehensive Plan is intended to serve as the backbone of good community planning for present and future generations. It offers a concise description of the Town of Hamden, its strengths, and its needs as of 2024. It is designed to guide future growth and development that is in alignment with the character and vision of the Town of Hamden.

Due to the Town of Hamden’s rich farming history and agricultural identity, this document also includes an Agricultural and Farmland Preservation Plan. This component serves to identify agricultural land and other key areas to protect, provide strategies and programs to implement, and promote the conservation of working agricultural landscapes in the Town of Hamden.

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TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024

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## Table of Contents

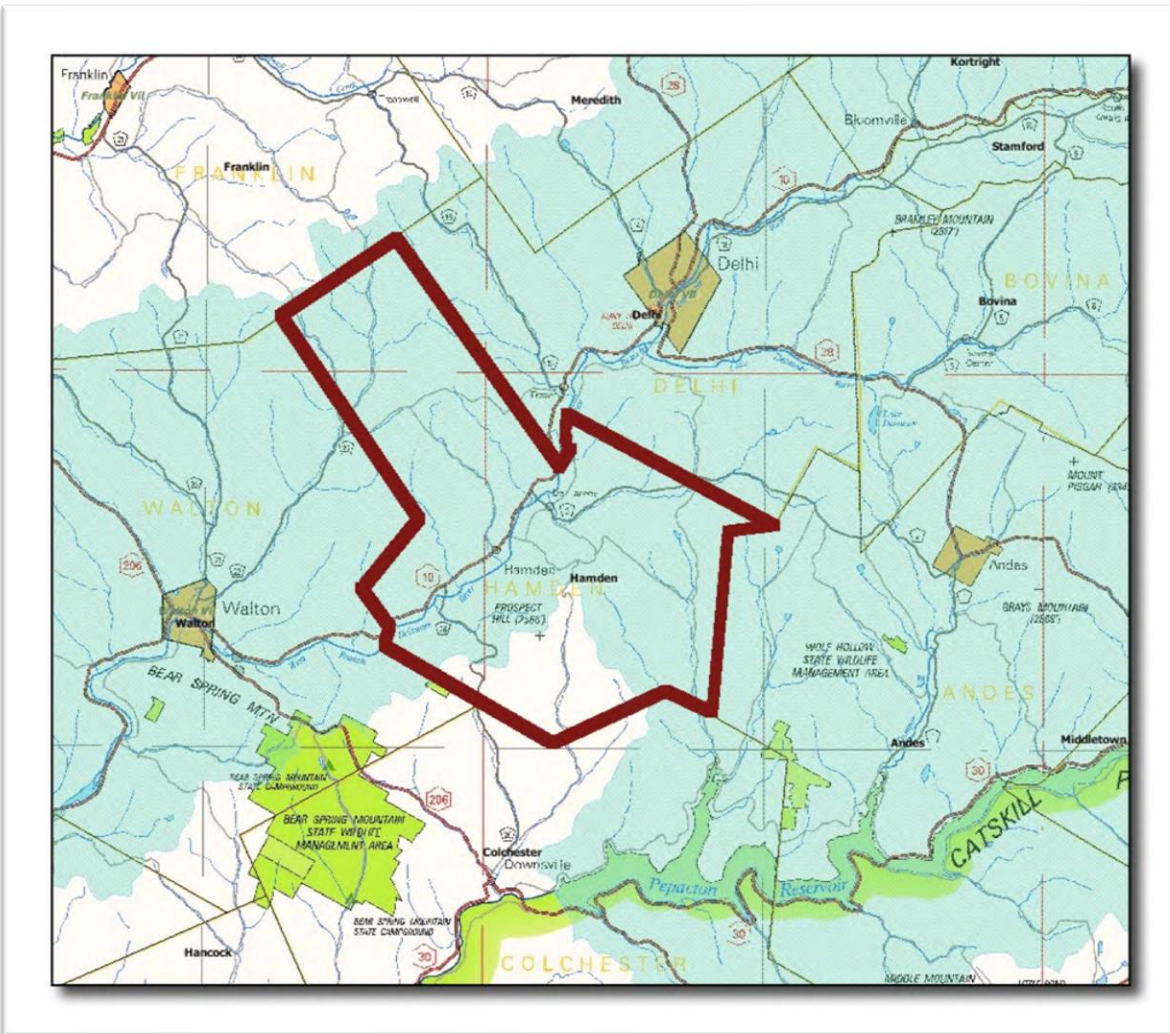
Foreword.....	2
Table of Contents .....	3
<b>1.0 Background Studies .....</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1 Regional Location and History .....	4
1.2 Natural Features .....	6
1.3 Existing Land Use.....	10
1.4 Population and Economic Base.....	14
<b>2.0 Goals and Objectives .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>3.0 Plans.....</b>	<b>22</b>
3.1 Land Use.....	22
3.2 Community Facilities and Recreation .....	27
3.3 Transportation .....	28
3.4 Economic Development .....	30
3.5 Housing .....	36
<b>4.0 Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan .....</b>	<b>38</b>
4.1 Introduction .....	38
4.2 Value of Agriculture to Hamden .....	40
4.3 Inventory of Agricultural Resources and Conditions .....	42
4.4 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.....	43
4.5 Existing Plans, Policies and Programs .....	44
<b>5.0 Recommendations for Implementation .....</b>	<b>46</b>
5.1 Policy Changes and Updates .....	46
5.2 Strengthening Partnerships .....	46
5.3 Farm Viability Programs .....	47
<b>6.0 Appendix .....</b>	<b>48</b>
A. Sample Comprehensive Plan Survey .....	49
B. Comprehensive Plan Survey Response Summary .....	58
C. 2022 Census of Agriculture.....	89

## 1.0 Background Studies

### 1.1 Regional Location and History

#### 1.1.1 Regional Setting

The Town of Hamden is located at a Latitude of 42°13'N and Longitude 74°59'W in the central portion of Delaware County, northeast of Walton, southwest of Delhi and south of Oneonta, New York. Adjoining municipalities include the Towns of Andes, Colchester, Delhi, Franklin and Walton. New York State Route 10 bisects the Town and links it to other portions of Delaware County and to New York State Route 17 and 1-86, also known as the Southern Tier Expressway. The Town consists of approximately 53 square miles of land, of which 80-85% lies within the New York City water supply system watershed (indicated in green shading on map below) and the remainder feeds into the East Branch of the Delaware River below the reservoir.





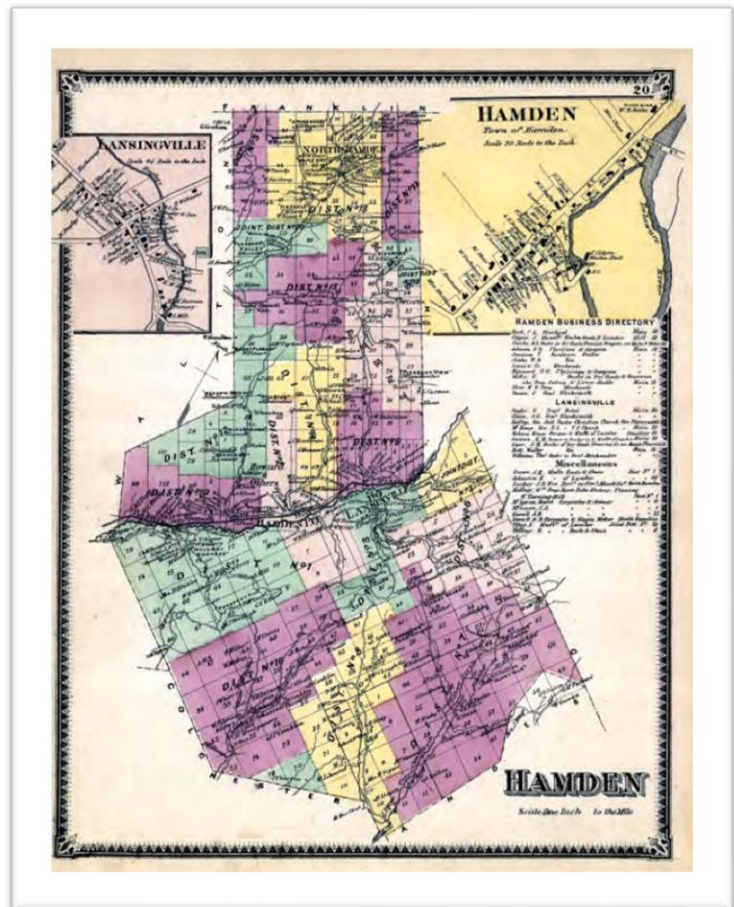
*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

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*1.1.2 History*

Long before the arrival of European settlers, Delaware County was stewarded by the Haudenosaunee (to the northwest) and the Munsee Lenape (to the southeast). The name Haudenosaunee translates to “the people of the long house”. Their traditional housing structures were built to accommodate large extended families, measured up to 200 feet long and 18 feet wide, and were often constructed out of wood fibers and animal hides. The name Munsee Lenape translates to “the people of the stony country”, a band of the Lenni Lenape people who were the original inhabitants of eastern Pennsylvania, western Connecticut, and a swath of land from Albany to New York City. They often chose to build their homes near rivers due to the abundance of food, water, and ease of transportation. They farmed in the rich soil, fished in the Delaware River, hunted and trapped in the wooded hillsides until the late 1740’s due to the arrival of European settlers, disease, and the forced removal from the land.

The territory represented by the Town of Hamden was, prior to 1797, part of Otsego and Ulster Counties. Hamden was formed from the Towns of Delhi and Walton. The Town of "Hampden" was created from Walton and Delhi on April 4, 1825. Its name was corrected to "Hamden" on March 17, 1826. The Town name was derived from the close resemblance to the countryside of Hampden County, Massachusetts. David Harrower and his family were the earliest settlers of the area. Development of Hamden during the early years was neither rapid nor extensive since Hamden was part of Delhi and Walton until 1825. There were several mills along the West Branch of the Delaware River. These formed a nucleus for the hamlet and aided in the growth that soon after resulted in the formation of the Town. Interestingly, the Census counts indicate the Town had an 1835 population of 1,349 persons and this grew to 1,919 persons by 1850, about 800 more people than today, over 150 years later.



*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

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Rafting down the river was an early means of transportation during the 19th century, but by the 1800's the Kingston Turnpike was constructed. Three covered bridges were built by the Town in 1859 at a cost of \$1,000 each. The Hamden Covered Bridge remains in use today and is a historical landmark. The O & W Railroad line also ran through the Town and is of historical and recreational interest today. The first blacksmith shop in the Town was established in 1810 by the Darrow brothers, who came up from Walton to open their shop in the hamlet of Hamden. Samuel Tiffany started a shoe shop as early as 1810 in Lansingville, which is known today as Delancey. The two hamlets were bustling with businesses and other civic life. There were numerous establishments including churches, mills, grocery stores, a tavern, cooper, and distillery. Many structures of architectural or historical interest still stand today. These include the Octagon Farm house south of the hamlet of Hamden. *Sources: Text by Jill Lehmann, [dcnyhistory.org](http://dcnyhistory.org) and The History of Delaware County, W.W. Munsell. [www.haudenosauneeconfederacy.com](http://www.haudenosauneeconfederacy.com) and [www.mohican.com](http://www.mohican.com)*

## **1.2 Natural Features**

### *1.2.1 Geology*

The relief of the Town was formed by glaciers and can be characterized by both steep slopes and depressions. The glacial deposits of sandstone, shale, and other conglomerate contribute the great variety of soils present in the area. The Town is part of the glaciated low plateau section of the Appalachian Plateaus Province. Bedrock formations began some 350 million years ago during the Upper and Middle Devonian Period when the ancient Catskill Delta served as a sedimentary trap. The resulting Catskill Formation is the oldest bedrock in the County. It typically produces very good quality water in moderate supplies.

### *1.2.2 Terrain*

Hamden has many areas of high elevation, there are 23,010 acres or 60% of land characterized by slopes of 15% or greater. Areas of high elevation are known as the "Cobble," the "Devil's Backbone" and "Prospect Hill", with the highest elevation in the town measuring 2,582 feet. The high elevation creates spectacular scenery, however can prove to be a challenge for development.

The lowest point is along the West Branch of the Delaware River where it crosses the border with the Town of Walton. Approximately two-thirds of the Town drain into the West Branch of the Delaware and into the Cannonsville Reservoir. The other third falls into the East Branch with about half of this area draining into the Pepacton Reservoir and the remainder below the dam. Both branches later feed into the Delaware River.

### *1.2.3 Water Resources*

The hydrology of the Town consists entirely of Delaware River tributaries, the East and West Branches, and sub-tributaries such as Bagley Brook. There are no major water bodies within the

*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

Town itself. Water quality, as a practical matter, is very high and this is why New York City has been able to avoid the filtering of its water supply.

Hamden does not have traditional sewage treatment plant systems. There is a large community subsurface sand filter system serving the hamlet of Hamden; as well as a series of on-lot individual systems within the hamlet of Delancey. Buffering of such disposal areas, farm activities and new development, particularly in steep slope areas, is appropriate as a means of reducing phosphorous loadings and permitting economic growth.

#### *1.2.4 Soils*

Much of the area along the West Branch of the Delaware River consists of Tunkhannock soils that are deep well drained and suited for agriculture. They also are generally acceptable for development. The lands in between the ridges and hilltops often include Lackawanna and Bath soils that are quite variable in condition. Where slope is not an issue, these soils are also suitable for agriculture and development. Barbour and Basher soils that often flood also constitute some of the best farmland.

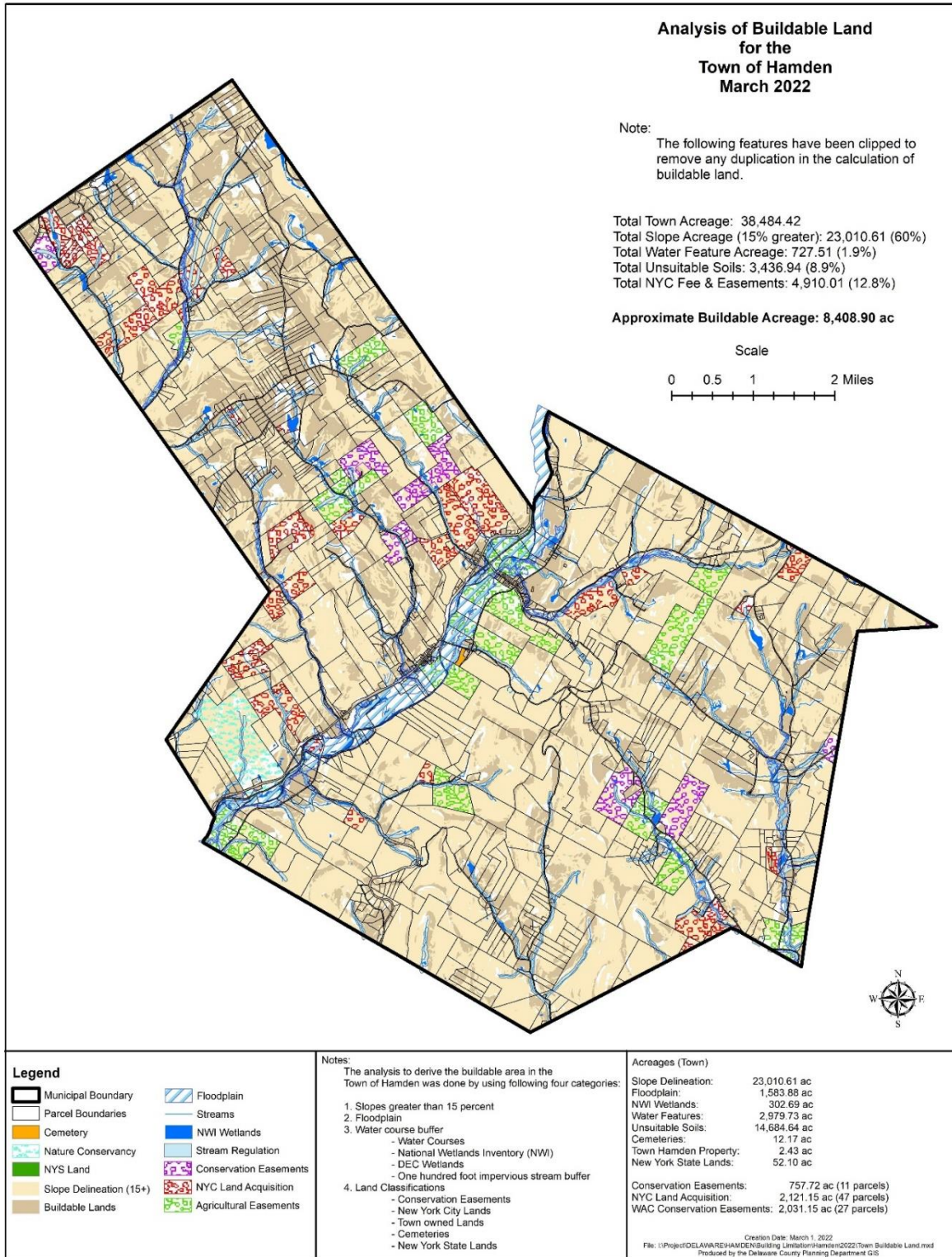


The ridgetops and steep slopes bellow them are frequently characterized by Halcott, Mongaup and Vly soils with shallow depth to bedrock. They are typically unsuitable for agriculture and development.

A *Preliminary Analysis of Buildable Land* prepared by the Delaware County Planning Department in 2022 (see map following) indicates there are 3,436 acres of unsuitable soils in the Town. After considering factors that limit development such as shallow depth to bedrock, wetlands, flooding, slope, and conservation easements, there are 8,408 acres of buildable land in the Town.



# TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024





### 1.2.5 Vegetation and Wildlife

The Town of Hamden is heavily wooded, much like it was during the time the region was first settled. The wide variety of deciduous hardwood trees is both an economical and recreational asset and part of what makes the area special. Hunting and fishing are very popular due the abundance of fish and game and the wooded environment has attracted a large number of second homeowners as a result. There is also a small maple syrup industry.



Timbering is an economic activity that needs to be promoted and protected, provided best management practices are applied. There is a strong need to create economic incentives for land to remain under sustained forestry management programs. The New York State § 480-a program offers landowners forestry tax benefits but, because the remaining taxpayers have to pick up the costs of any tax benefits given to woodlot owners, the burden of this program is squarely upon municipalities, and this does not allow the Town to promote the program. Amendments to this legislation are needed to spread the burden Statewide in the manner of the Farmer's School Tax Refund so that all taxpayers who benefit from the open space preserved can help to pay the costs. Then the Town can safely promote the program without fear of weakening its tax base.

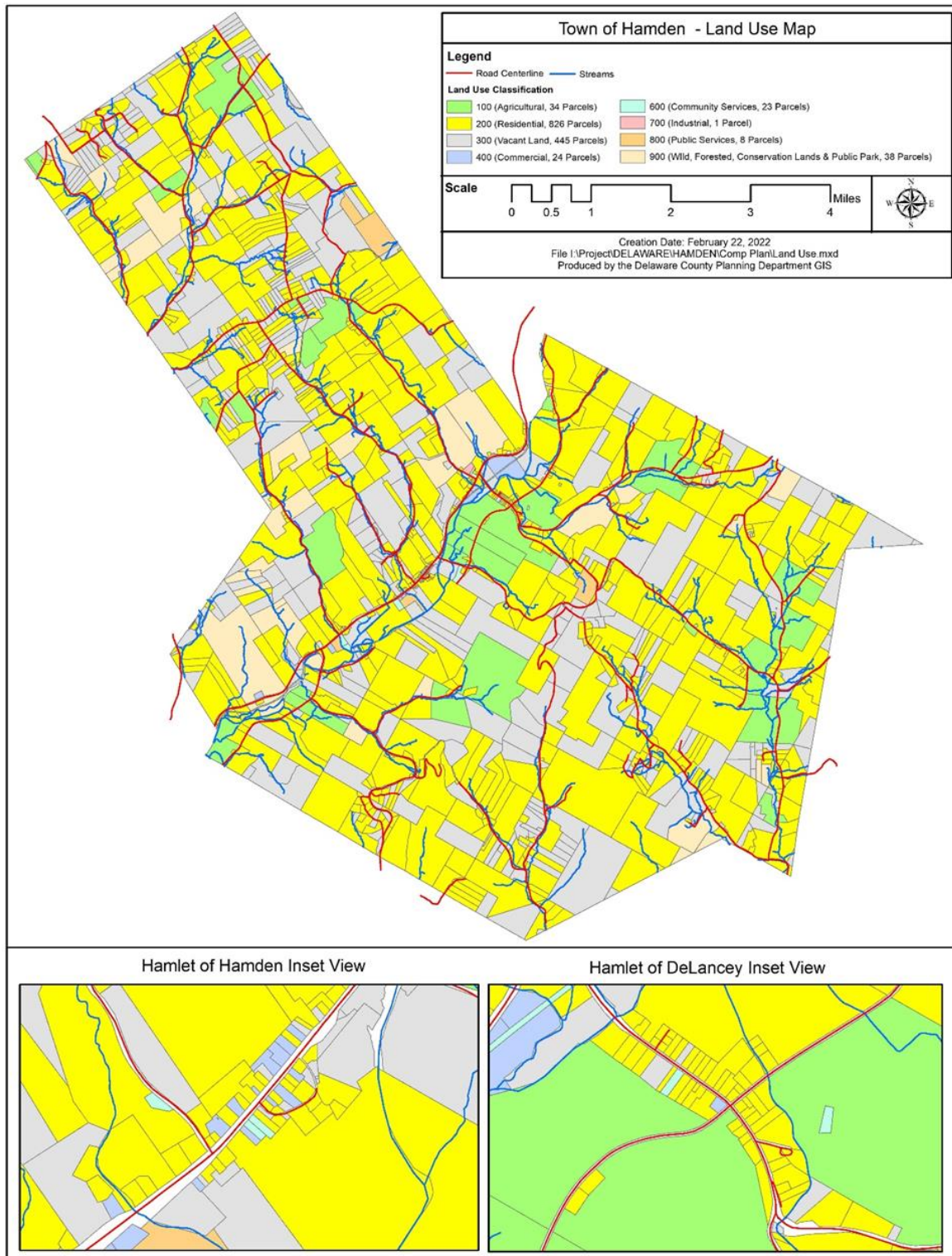
### 1.2.6 Wetlands

The National Inventory of Wetlands maps for the Town of Hamden indicate that most of the wetlands in Hamden are small and located along the West Branch of the Delaware River and other streams. There are DEC classified wetlands near the West Branch north of Delancey, along Bagley Brook, near Launt Hollow Road and adjacent to Platner Brook. There are some other significant wetlands west of Basin Clove Road, north of Feak Hollow Road and north of Crystal Creek Road.

Overall, though wetlands are numerous throughout the Town, they do not represent major land areas or substantial obstacles for development. The *Preliminary Analysis of Buildable Land* indicates there are 303 acres of wetlands, although this does not include unmapped Federal wetlands.

*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY*  
*COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

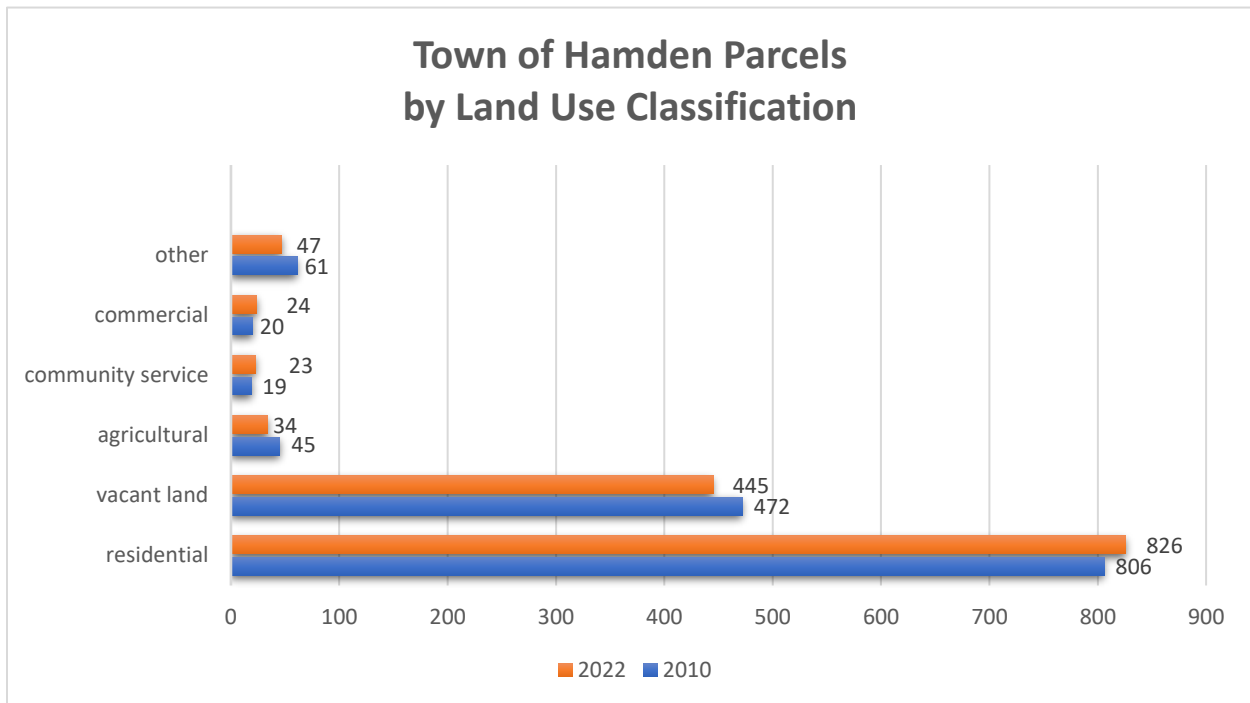
**1.3 Existing Land Use**



*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY*  
*COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

As the map indicates, much of the Town of Hamden is classified as agricultural or forested land use, as is the case throughout most of Delaware County. There are large residential parcels that contribute to the agrarian aesthetics of the town. There is some commercial development along Route 10 and within the hamlet.

The land use pattern in 2022 is similar to what it was in 2010. Although there have been some shifts, with the number of agricultural and vacant parcels declining and residential parcels increasing in number. There has also been a large gain in the number of public parcels (some representing land acquired by the New York City Department of Environmental Protection), as the following chart illustrates:



Business activity in Hamden is quite extensive. There is significant diversity to the economic base of Hamden. There are tourism businesses, County agencies and a variety of small home-based enterprises. There are many service-related businesses. It should also be noted the Town includes a number of farms and forestry operations and stone quarries that contribute valuable businesses to Hamden. They provide an important foundation to the local economy and identity of Hamden. An updated list of Hamden Area Businesses and Institutions as well as Agricultural Operations are found in the following pages. They can also be found on the Town of Hamden's website.

*Source: [www.hamdenny.com](http://www.hamdenny.com)*



*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

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*1.3.1 Hamden Area Businesses and Institutions*

- ❖ American Medical Response (AMR)
- ❖ Anderson Painting
- ❖ Back River Road Fine Carpentry
- ❖ Catskill Mountain Antique Engine & Machinery
- ❖ Cooperstown Medical Transport
- ❖ Cornell Cooperative Extension
  
- ❖ Delhi Telephone Company (DTC)
- ❖ Delaware County ARC
- ❖ Delaware County 4-H Youth Program & Agriculture Program
- ❖ Delaware Pipe Fitters and Welding
- ❖ Delaware Opportunities
- ❖ Dibble's Garage
- ❖ DIRECTV
- ❖ Dollhouse Spa
- ❖ Frontier Communications
- ❖ Hamden Antiques/Frame Shop & Gallery
- ❖ Gear Jammerz Auto Repair
- ❖ Hamden Congregation of Jehovah
- ❖ Hamden Filling Station and Food Shack
- ❖ Hamden General Store
- ❖ Hamden Highway Department
- ❖ Hamden Schoolhouse Museum
  
- ❖ Hamden Hill Ridge Riders Snowmobile Club
- ❖ Hamden Inn & Lounge
- ❖ Hamden Presbyterian Church
- ❖ Hamden Senior Citizens
- ❖ Hamden Wine Shop
- ❖ Meat and Flowers
- ❖ Mountain Transport
- ❖ New York State Electric and Gas (NYSEG)
- ❖ Octagon Motor Lodge
- ❖ River Valley New Holland
- ❖ Round Notch Kennels
- ❖ Silver Scissors
- ❖ Silver Thistle
- ❖ Spirit Filled Stables
- ❖ Steve's Greenhouse
- ❖ Steadfast Timberworks
- ❖ Ty's Taco-ria (Commissary Kitchen and Food Truck)
- ❖ Tweedie Construction Services
- ❖ US Post Office
- ❖ VanDusen Backhoe & Landscape Service
- ❖ Vecc Videography
- ❖ Vroman's Auto & Equipment Repair

### 1.3.2 Hamden Area Agricultural Operations

The following list of Hamden’s agricultural operations is extensive and increasingly grows in diversity of products and services including beef, poultry, bison, organic vegetables, maple, honey, horses, and flowers.

- |                                    |                          |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| ❖ Berrybrook Farm                  | ❖ LaLaLand               |
| ❖ Brookside Maple & Farm           | ❖ Lansingville Farm      |
| ❖ Bishop Hay                       | ❖ Lucky Dog Organic Farm |
| ❖ Catskill Agrarian Alliance (CAA) | ❖ Miller Beef            |
| ❖ Catskill Mountain Dressage       | ❖ Potter Family Ranch    |
| ❖ Cipperly Family Farm             | ❖ Reed Beef              |
| ❖ Cody Shane Acres                 | ❖ Sajobe Farms           |
| ❖ Delancey Farms                   | ❖ Sparling Horse         |
| ❖ Donnelly Farm                    | ❖ Spirit Filled Stables  |
| ❖ Dunlop Beef Farm                 | ❖ Sticky Lips Honey      |
| ❖ Echo Orchard                     | ❖ The Rogers Ranch       |
| ❖ Elsewhere Farms                  | ❖ Graf von Schoenborn    |
| ❖ Kilmer Farm                      | ❖ Wickham Dairy Farm     |
| ❖ Kingsbury Dairy Farm             |                          |

## 1.4 Population and Economic Base

### 1.4.1 Population Trends

According to the 2020 Decennial Census, the Town of Hamden has a population of 1,137, a 14.1% decrease since 2010. The Town of Hamden had a 42.1% housing vacancy rate, likely influenced by the number of seasonal occupants and other non-resident landowners. The events following the Covid-19 Pandemic had increased the number of residents migrating from downstate into Delaware County.

The 2022 American Community Survey recorded the median age of residents in the Town of Hamden at 50.8, which is slightly older than the Delaware County average of 48.9 years old. The population of residents aged 65 or older made up 32%.

Among all Hamden residents, 19.7% identify with some form of disability; independent living (7.7%), self-care (4.1%), hearing (5.4%), vision (1.0%), cognitive (5.5%), and ambulatory difficulties (11.4%) are among the most common disabilities in the Town of Hamden.

### 1.4.2 Income

The median household income for Hamden residents, after being adjusted for inflation, was \$63,750 in 2022, a near double from the median household income in 2010 at \$38,125. According to the 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 9.6% of

*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

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residents in Hamden experienced poverty. Residents aged 65 years and older were more likely to experience poverty than other age groups.

#### *1.4.3 Employment by Industry and Occupation*

The 2022 American Community Survey found the employment rate in Hamden was 50.9%, which is consistent with the employment rate in Delaware County. Nearly 15% of Hamden residents were self-employed, 18.2% percent worked in governmental positions, 11.7% of residents worked from home and 5.8% of residents were unemployed. The dominant employment types are private companies and non-for-profit organizations.

<b>Town of Hamden Employment by Occupation</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Private wage and salary workers	384	69.2
Government workers	101	18.2
Self-employed in own not incorporated business workers	66	11.9
Unpaid family workers	4	0.7
<b>Total Workers</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

*Source: U.S. Census, 2022 American Community 5-Year Estimates*

<b>Town of Hamden Employment by Occupation</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	189	34.10%
Service occupations	160	28.80%
Sales and office occupations	93	16.80%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	54	9.70%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	59	10.60%
<b>Total Workers</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

*Source: U.S. Census, 2022 American Community 5-Year Estimates*

The largest industry of employment was education, health care, and social assistance, employing 205 residents. Agriculture, forestry, and mining accounted for 6.1% the total workforce.



TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024

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Town of Hamden Employment by Industry, 2020	2020	% of Total
Education, Health, Social Services	205	36.90%
Retail and Wholesale Trade	54	9.70%
Agriculture, Forestry, Mining	34	6.10%
Public Administration	17	3.10%
Construction	54	9.70%
Manufacturing	33	5.90%
Other Services	38	7.00%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Service	63	11.40%
Transportation, Utilities	25	4.50%
Professional, Managerial, Administrative Services	24	4.30%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	8	1.40%
<b>Total Workers</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: US Decennial Census 2020, 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

## 2.0 Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives can only succeed in providing direction if they reflect the community's vision of the future. These goals and objectives are representative of Hamden's desire for logical and environmentally sensitive growth. The following are the goals and objectives on which this Plan is based:

### 2.1 Provide for the orderly future growth and development of the Town of Hamden.

- 2.1.1 *Discourage the removal of historic or traditional uses and structures by promoting coordination with local businesses or the County IDA to repurpose vacant or unutilized properties.*
- 2.1.2 *Encourage new developments that function as extensions of existing development patterns, reflecting the historically mixed-use growth of the Town.*
- 2.1.3 *Maintain upgraded Town sewer and water supply systems serving Hamden and Delancey and pursue expansion funding opportunities as appropriate to allow for future growth.*

TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024

- 2.1.4 *Identify and solicit key compatible businesses for development, expansion or relocation to within the Town's designated hamlets and hamlet extension areas. Align economic assistance for businesses by engaging the Catskill Watershed Corporation and/or the Delaware County Industrial Development Agency. Negotiate economic incentives to attract those businesses such as PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) Agreements.*
- 2.1.5 *Work with property owners to develop and promote the recreational resources of the Town as a means of attracting tourism based economic activity as well as addressing the needs of residents.*
- 2.1.6 *Support activities in which businesses complement each other and support business retention such as the creation of a local Chamber of Commerce or Business Improvement Districts.*
- 2.1.7 *Work with local internet service providers and the NYS ConnectAll Office to encourage the continued expansion of broadband and cellular services to all Hamden residents so that they may fully engage in opportunities such as working from home, pursuing online education, telehealth and other civic life activities.*
- 2.1.8 *Maintain and expand the existing town website. Update current information to promote local businesses, services, and attractions for both residents and tourists.*
- 2.1.9 *Support and promote farmers markets, harvest festivals, and other agricultural events and businesses to enhance the rural and agrarian charm of the Town of Hamden.*



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**2.2 Provide adequate light, air and privacy; secure safety from fire, flood and other danger; and prevent overcrowding.**

- 2.2.1 *Use the Town's Floodplain Damage Prevention law as a tool to steer development away from dangerous flood locations.*
- 2.2.2 *Implement riparian buffers as recommended by the Local Flood Analysis (LFA) to provide streambank stabilization, improve habitat for fish and birds, provide biofiltration to improve water quality, and to help minimize loss of agricultural land due to flooding events.*
- 2.2.3 *Secure funding, where possible, to address the most serious flooding problems along town stream corridors and utilize stormwater management tools to reduce associated risks.*

**2.3 Preserve the character of existing rural highways and promote safe, efficient, and uncongested pedestrian and vehicular circulation.**

- 2.3.1 *Require new roads to preserve natural topography and tree cover and minimize cut and fill, provided the ability to properly maintain such roads is assured.*
- 2.3.2 *Require new development to comply with the adopted Complete Streets policy and to provide for walking as well as vehicular connections to adjacent land uses.*
- 2.3.3 *Implement traffic calming devices and encourage universal design that is consistent with the existing rural character and increase safety and accessibility for all roadway users.*

**2.4 Protect surface and groundwater supplies from pollution, maintain high quality physical environments and preserve wildlife habitats.**

- 2.4.1 *Evaluate and secure funding, when possible, to remedy severe streambank erosion problems prevalent in various parts of the Town, employing natural stabilization techniques to do so.*
- 2.4.2 *Incorporate stormwater management and erosion and sedimentation control planning requirements in both site plan and subdivision regulation reviews to minimize runoff and improve water quality.*



TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024

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2.4.3 *Implement recommendations of the adopted Local Flood Analysis (LFA) to improve flood resiliency. Promote the restoration of riparian buffers along streams and projects that improve individual property protections.*

2.4.4 *Work with the Delaware County Soil and Water Conservation District (DCSWCD) to achieve stormwater management goals, minimize erosion, and improve water quality. Taking advantage of their annual Tree and Shrub Sale to source plants for related projects and looking to their Stream Management Implementation Program (SMIP) or the Catskill Stream Buffer Initiative (CSBI) for further information on grants and strategies.*



**2.5 Encourage uses of land and building designs that are harmonious with the existing and desired character of the town.**

2.5.1 *Require preservation of the landscape in its natural state, insofar as practicable, by using topography, tree cover, and natural drainage ways to determine road and lot configurations.*

2.5.2 *Require new development be specifically related to the terrain and to the use, scale, and architecture of existing surrounding buildings that have functional relationships to the proposed buildings.*

2.5.3 *Require, as part of the site plan review process, landscaping around new commercial uses to provide a separation of these activities from the highway and/or adjacent residential*

TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024

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*uses. Parking lots and service areas should be properly screened from the street or adjacent properties.*

*2.5.4 Require the filing of a development plan and the obtaining of Town permits before allowing clearing or excavation of commercial sites.*

*2.5.5 Encourage smaller numbers, heights and sizes of signs and use of ground-type signs as opposed to pole signs.*

*2.5.6 Seek key locations to expand parking availability within the Hamlet. Foster partnerships with Delaware Opportunities and the NY Department of Transportation to increase a variety of parking options and support Hamden businesses.*

**2.6 Encourage the development of a variety housing types that serves the current and anticipated needs of residents in all stages of life. Looking to the Delaware County Housing Study as a guide when possible.**

*2.6.1 Define key areas to expand residential growth in the appropriate density and to development standards within the town of Hamden. Encourage the rehabilitation of the existing stock of deteriorating housing in Hamden. Prioritizing the facades of homes in the Hamlet and those visible from highly travelled roads.*



2.6.2 *Encourage a diversity of attractive and affordable housing types to attract year-round residents and expand opportunities for starting families and tenants.*

2.6.3 *Encourage the development of senior housing, assisted living facilities, and a variety of other options for Hamden's aging population.*

2.6.4 *Support workforce housing development and expand affordable options for young professionals. Look to the NYS Plus One ADU Program for available funding and information regarding new and retrofitting accessory units that comply with local code.*

**2.7 Regulate new energy generation and storage projects to comply with the Solar Energy Systems Law and work with NYSERDA to continue to lead Delaware County as a clean energy community.**

2.7.1 *Secure funding and expand clean energy projects within the Town of Hamden, engaging with Community Solar and similar efforts to do so*

2.7.2 *Help manage the cost of electricity to the owners of residential and commercial properties using a safe, abundant, renewable, and non-polluting energy resource*

2.7.3 *Identify key locations for projects that mitigate impacts of solar energy on vital community and environmental resources such as agricultural lands, forests, wildlife, and other protected resources.*

2.7.4 *Implement Solar and Battery Energy Storage Systems Laws to promote a cleaner electric grid.*

2.7.5 *Participate in the developing practice of Agrivoltaics, securing funding where possible to aid in the research, design, construction and operation of these new systems.*

2.7.6 *Locate key locations for EV charging stations or Compressed Natural Gas Stations to encourage alternative energy vehicles*

2.7.7 *Increase education, employment and business opportunities in the Town of Hamden in parallel with the installation, maintenance, and decommissioning of solar energy and battery storage systems.*

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**2.8 Protect and promote the historic community resources in the Town of Hamden as a source of pride for residents and to attract new residents and tourists.**

- 2.8.1 Advertise and expand upon the Town of Hamden's rich history highlighting key features such as vintage baseball, the Covered Bridge, the schoolhouse museum, and Hamden's 2025 Bicentennial Celebration.*
- 2.8.2 Support the development of community events such as farmers markets, harvest and holiday festivals, and other events to attract residents and tourists alike.*
- 2.8.3 Promote the use and expansion of recreational trails to encourage walking, hiking, biking, fishing, and snowmobiling within the Town of Hamden and adjoining towns.*
- 2.8.4 Continue and promote preservation efforts at the Covered Bridge and other historic structures and buildings in the Town of Hamden.*

## 3.0 Plans

### 3.1 Land Use

#### 3.1.1 Land Use Development Trends

Active farmland and commercial farms in Hamden have declined in part due to non-resident land owners. Farmers have tended to shift away from the dairy industry and move into beef and crop farming. There has been an increase in a diversity and numbers of small-scale farming operations including goats, horses, honey bees, maple, and organic vegetable production.



The community has seen some recent commercial development within the Hamlet, mainly due to the ongoing downstate migration to Delaware County spurred by the COVID-19 pandemic. Main Street has a post office, church, general store, café, storage facility, restaurant, butcher, florist, chiropractor, and furniture maker. South of the hamlet, employing about 300 people dedicated to improving the living conditions for residents in Delaware County, is Delaware Opportunities (DO). In late 2023, DO expanded their building to increase their capacity to further serve the community. Further south is the ARC of Delaware County, offering services for adults with disabilities, NYSEG office and electrical line department. North of the hamlet is the Hamden Filling station with gas, diesel and a market, and adjacent to that is an auto repair facility, a trucking depot, and a welding and pipe fitting shop.

The town of Hamden is continuing efforts to lead all other towns in Delaware County with points collected in conjunction with NYSERDA's Climate Smart Community (CSC) program. The adoption of a Solar Energy Systems Law guides and encourages the future development in the Town of Hamden to create employment opportunities that are consistent with the character and standards of the town. Some completed projects include the installation of a 50-panel solar array collection system on the Town Hall, energy enforcement training, clean energy upgrades with the Town Hall furnace and lighting. The town has also upgraded the street lights in Hamden and Delancey to LED's and continue to see much participation from residents in a Community Solar initiative.



### 3.1.2 Existing Land Use Controls

There is a relatively sound body of local laws now in effect in the Town of Hamden that serves to guide development. This legislation, a mixture of Town laws and Watershed Regulations, includes the following:

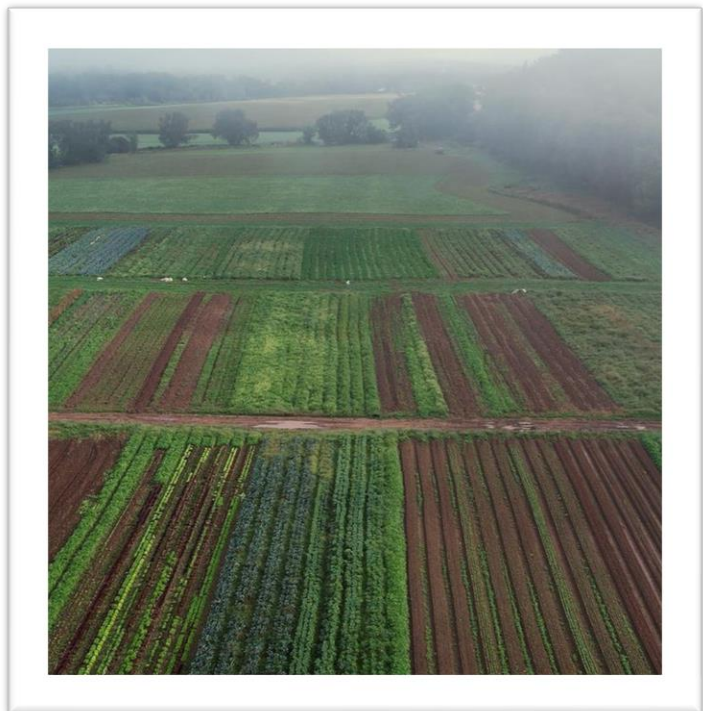
#### A. **Subdivision Regulations (2006)/ Conservation Easements (2010)**

The Town Planning Board first adopted Subdivision Regulations, pursuant to § 268 of the Town Law, in 1985. It subsequently amended these in 1989, 1990, 1995 and 2006. The Town Board approved these Regulations in each instance and also adopted a local law in 1985 to provide penalties for offenses against them. The Regulations are straightforward and have been generally effective.

The regulations for Boundary Line Adjustments and Simple Subdivisions could use some clarification. It would be useful in both instances to specifically exempt these matters from being classified as subdivisions because the Town Law demands public hearing for all subdivisions. The Town could, as an alternative, enact the entire set of regulations as a Local Law and include a supersession clause pursuant to the Municipal Home Rule Law.

The procedures allowing for establishing escrow deposits for lot improvements are also somewhat unusual and should be re-evaluated. Design standards are adequate for most issues but stormwater management could use more attention and there should be a general requirement that post development run-off not exceed pre-development conditions. Stream buffers, limitations on steep slope development and provisions to encourage the use conservation subdivisions.

In 2010, the Town of Hamden adopted Conservation Easements into their Subdivision Regulations. The addition requires any parcel or portion of land that is being placed into a conservation easement to be reviewed by the Town of Hamden Planning Board to ensure compliance with acceptable local state and federal regulations. This is a perpetual agreement for the purpose of conservation of open space, agricultural land, and natural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources.



#### B. **Road Takeover Law (2014)**

The Town updated the Road Takeover Law in 2014 in accordance with the Town Highway

Law. Its purpose is to be both consistent and fair to proposed developers and existing taxpayers in the Town of Hamden. To propose any new roads at current Highway Tax rates, the Town requires a sufficient new tax base, including both land and building asset values. In return, the Town agrees to take over approved roads that are built to the accepted Town specifications and that have the required amount of Assessed Value to support them. Total highway costs are based only on the amount to be raised by tax. All road takeover and assessed value requirements may be found in Local Law No. 2 of 2014.

**C. Dumping Law (1990)**

The Town Board, pursuant to § 130(6) and (15) of the Town Law, enacted a local law regulating the dumping of waste, refuse and garbage. The law is a very simple one, limited to prohibiting dumps and the private dumping of paper, garbage, rubbish, trash, toxic substances and other waste materials. The law does not cover abandoned vehicles, organic agricultural wastes or construction wastes. The regulations are both basic and effective. No changes are warranted.

**D. Right-to-Farm Law (1990)**

This law takes positive steps to protect the Town's agricultural industry. It defines farming practices, makes them lawful and prohibits any party from preventing or deterring such practices. The law is adequate insofar as it goes but needs some improvements to be truly effective and withstand legal challenges. References to New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets policies and definitions of "sound agricultural practices" would provide a more solid legal foundations for the Law. It should also include some manner of dispute arbitration. Such revisions would be relatively simple to implement without changing the intent of the Law.

**E. Unsafe Buildings Law (1992)**

This is a very specific law targeted at unsafe buildings and dangerous properties. It is structured as a nuisance regulation pursuant to § 130(16) of the Town Law. It defines unsafe buildings and dangerous properties in terms of threats to public health and safety as well as violations of the Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code. It also declares such situations to be public nuisances and provides for notice to landowners to repair, secure or demolish such structures where emergency conditions exist. Where the landowner fails to remedy problems, the Law authorizes the Town to take action and assess the costs. This is a common approach and the Law is more than adequate as written.

**F. Adult Oriented Business Law (1997)**

This Law is a carefully drafted regulation of sexually oriented businesses and other adult uses. It does not prohibit such uses but, rather, confines them to specific areas away from churches, public buildings, residences and other institutions and protected areas. It also includes introductory language regarding the purposes of the regulations that serve to give the Law a good legal foundation. All of the provisions of the Law appear to comply with

Federal case law on this subject.

The various setback requirements arguably belong in a Zoning Law but these do not by themselves provide reasons to enact one. Given the very specific construction of this Law and fact that it regulates rather than prohibits such uses, it is generally adequate as written. Links to authorities for such regulations under the Town Law and/or General Municipal Law would be helpful. Such authority may be found in § 130(11) of the Town Law.

**G. Flood Damage Prevention Law (2016)**

This local law applies to all areas of special flood hazard within the jurisdiction of the Town of Hamden. It includes all revisions to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) through October 27, 1997, and seeks to ensure the Town of Hamden remains eligible to qualify and maintain participation in the NFIP. Its purpose is to protect human life, health, and property in the case of a flooding event. The law is designed to minimize expenditure of public money for costly flood control projects, and minimize the need for rescue and relief efforts. The law regulates uses that are dangerous to health, safety and property due to water or erosion hazards, or which result in damaging increases in flood heights or velocities. It controls the alteration of natural floodplains, stream channels, and natural protective barriers as well as filling, grading, dredging and any other development which may result in increased erosion or flood damages or increase flood hazards to other lands. This law requires any applicant seeking to develop land within the floodplain to obtain a Floodplain Development Permit from the Code Enforcement Officer.

**H. Site Plan Review Law (2017)**

The Law was enacted under the authority of § 274 of the New York State Town Law. It authorizes the Planning Board to review and approve, approve with conditions or disapprove a site plan as required under the Law. Such plans are required for commercial and industrial uses, enlargements and expansions of 10% or more, as well as any site that includes a communication tower or facility. Agricultural, forestry, and home occupation uses are exempted from these requirements.

This law encourages additional review by communities of the uses and activities which will have a greater impact on the surrounding properties, environment, and community character. The town provides the opportunity to accommodate them in a safe, orderly, and efficient manner.

The review criteria includes traffic impacts, screening, environmental quality and related factors and provide an adequate basis for the Planning Board to deal with most site plans. A tie-in to the adult oriented business regulations would also be appropriate. It would be useful to incorporate stormwater management review criteria and standards into the Law requiring post-development stormwater run-off to not exceed pre-development flows.

Finally, reference to the Watershed Regulations and the goal of phosphorus reduction as a basis for the review of site plans would improve the Law. More importantly, this would put

the Town in more of a leadership role with respect to land use regulation within the watershed portion of the Town.

**I. Opt. Out of Retail and Dispensary and On-Site Consumption of Cannabis (2021)**

With this law the Town of Hamden Opted-Out of the Retail Dispensary License and On-Site Consumption License Provisions of the Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act/ New York Cannabis Law. The town may opt in if decided it appropriate.

**J. New York State Fire Code and Energy Conservation Code (2022)**

The intent of this local law is to provide for the administration and enforcement of New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code (the Uniform Code) and the State Energy Conservation Construction Code (the Energy Code) in the Town of Hamden. The law is adopted pursuant to section 10 of the Municipal Home Rule Law. All buildings, structures, and premises, regardless of use or occupancy, are subject to the provisions of this local law.

**K. Sidewalk Maintenance Local Law (2023)**

This local law requires property owners and occupants to be responsible for the removal of snow and ice from sidewalks in the Town. This law also prohibits the discharge of water over said sidewalks. The use of sand, ash or other similar material may be used in the event that frozen snow or ice cannot be removed, then as weather permits, the material shall be thoroughly cleaned from the sidewalk surface.

**L. Transient Rental Regulations (2023)**

As a response to the recent increase in tourism, this law was enacted with intent to ensure that rental properties meet certain safety and regulatory requirements. The appointed code enforcement officer is responsible for issuing permits to property owners who wish to operate a Transient Rental Unit. This law protects the general health, safety, and welfare of persons occupying the transient rental property and neighboring properties.

**M. Solar Energy Systems Law (2024)**

This law establishes regulations for the installation and use of solar energy systems. It acts as a guide for taking advantage of this renewable energy source, increasing business opportunities, and mitigates the potential impacts of solar energy systems on the environment and prime agricultural land. This law requires a site plan review and solar energy systems permit for larger systems. The review is subject to SEQR, a public hearing and must include a plan for decommissioning these systems when they are no longer in use.

In addition to Solar Energy Systems, Hamden has current plans to establish regulations and a review process for Battery Energy Storage Systems.

**N. New York City Watershed Regulations (1997) (Amended 2019)**

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*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

The New York City Watershed covers 33,530 acres (87%) of the Town of Hamden. In order to protect high quality drinking water of nine million residents in New York City, land use and activities within the watershed are significantly impacted and regulated.

The Watershed Regulations include the following requirements:

- ❖ New petroleum storage facilities (including those used for home heating fuel storage) must be located at least 100 feet from a stream and 500 feet from a reservoir.
- ❖ All new subsurface sewage disposal systems must be approved by the City's Department of Environmental Protection and be located at least 100 feet from a stream or wetland and 300 feet from a reservoir (increased to 250' and 500', respectively, for "raised systems").
- ❖ The construction of a new residence or an impervious is prohibited within 100 feet of a stream or wetland or within 300 feet of a reservoir.
- ❖ Stormwater pollution prevention plans for review by the City are required in connection with new subdivisions, earth disturbances of two or more acres, and the creation of impervious surfaces of 40,000 sq. ft. or more or located within commercial zones.

The key to improving the workability of these regulations may be for the Town to use its site plan review authority to address them up front so major issues are resolved before the New York City DEP is called upon to render a decision. The land use controls in place within the Town are fairly extensive already and there is no obvious reason for the Town to do more than consolidate a few of them, update some others and fill in a few gaps. A Zoning Law is not warranted at the present level of development.





### **3.2 Community Facilities and Recreation**

Providing Hamden residents with essential public services and facilities is the subject of this Community Facilities and Recreation Plan. Town government bears direct responsibility for a large portion of these needs and, therefore, is the logical entity to implement programs addressing them.

#### *3.2.1 Parks and Recreation*

The primary active recreation facilities and programs serving the Town are located in the Village of Delhi. The Town has financially supported these and should continue to do so, provided the cost sharing is fair to the taxpayers of Hamden. Hamden has a playground at the Town Hall grounds, a boat ramp located at Covered Bridge Park that provides access to the river for canoeing and kayaking. There are also more passive recreation opportunities on DEP parcels such as hiking, birding, hunting, and trapping.

#### *3.2.2 Fire and Ambulance*

The Town of Hamden is well served by both public and private emergency medical services. The American Medical Response (AMR) is located near the Town line in Delhi, as well as service from the Hamden Town Hall, and the adjacent towns of Delhi, Walton, and Downsville. There are no current needs to expand emergency services.

#### *3.2.3 Sewage Facilities*

Given the mixed nature of development within the Town, septic systems are designed with respect to the unique needs of the community being serviced. Many septic projects have been funded and continue to receive funding from New York City's environmental protection and water quality programs. The Catskill Watershed Corporation (CWC) is a not for profit organization that has completed numerous projects around Delaware County and the adjacent counties within the Catskill and Delaware Watershed in the efforts of maintaining high-quality drinking water for residents in New York City.

A 26,000 gpd community septic system was designed by the CWC for the Town of Hamden. This project provides 91 connections that are serviced by a large diameter gravity collection system. Wastewater is directed to a recirculating sand filter and then flows into shallow absorption beds. The CWC also designed 59 individual septic systems for residents of the Hamlet of Delancey. All systems are inspected every 1-3 years and repaired or replaced as needed.

It is worth noting that the further development of the Town of Hamden is limited to the ability to tie into either the community septic system or one of the individual lot systems. The future of expansion in Delancey and Hamden will depend upon the quality of septic infrastructure.

*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

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#### **3.2.4 Library Service**

The Town is served by excellent libraries in Delhi and Walton. Additionally, Delaware County belongs to the Four County Library System, meaning that residents in Hamden can utilize libraries throughout the county as well as in Broome, Chenango, and Otsego County.

#### **3.2.5 Solid Wastes**

The Town is served by private haulers who take solid wastes to the County landfill located outside the Town. The County implemented composting options that have extended the lifespan of the landfill life to 2050. There are no current unmet needs.

#### **3.2.6 Water Supplies**

There are public water supply systems in both Delancey and Hamden. Both have been fully updated and there are no further unmet needs.

### **3.3 Transportation**

Highways influence the direction of overall growth as well as the location of specific commercial, industrial and residential developments. This plan addresses the needs of this highway system, as well as other modes of transportation to the extent they exist.

#### **3.3.1 Functional Road Classifications**

Some roads are travelled more than others; therefore, it is necessary to evaluate the role and function of each road as the Town continues to develop. The following list identifies Town of Hamden highways and roads by the functions they must play in the future (as opposed to current use) to achieve an efficient flow of people and goods through the area.

Town of Hamden Functional Highway System		
Classification	Functional Description of Highway or Road	Hamden Routes
<b>Arterial Highways</b>	Carry medium-to-heavy volumes of traffic at moderately high speeds and provide access to major traffic generators.	<b>NY Rt. 10</b>
<b>Collector Roads</b>	Provide connections between Arterials and Local Roads at comparatively slower speeds and carry moderate volumes of traffic.	<b>CR No. 2 CR No. 26 East Brook Road Terry Clove Hamden Hill/Feak Hollow</b>
<b>Local Roads</b>	Provide direct access to abutting properties and channel traffic to Collector Roads.	<b>All Other Roads</b>

### 3.3.2 Other Recommendations

- ❖ Highway maintenance should be directed towards reducing traffic hazards, cutting back the long-term cost of highway improvements and increasing highway capacity. Accident-prone areas should be continually documented for justification of improvement projects and continue to work cooperatively with NYS-DOT.
- ❖ Some public transportation is provided by the Office for the Aging, which stops at the Hamden Town Hall on Fridays with service to Oneonta, Norwich, and Binghamton. There is also public transportation available in Delhi to various destinations using the Trailways system. A transportation study done by the Chamber of Commerce suggested a potential county bus system were to be established in Delaware County, it could run along the Route 10 corridor placing Hamden in the middle of the service and could greatly benefit residents and businesses alike.
- ❖ Railroad freight service is available in nearby Deposit and Oneonta and the reasonable accessibility of the Broome County and Albany Airports suggests the Town has no further needs in either of these categories.

*Source: <https://delawarecounty.org/wp-content/uploads/TRANSPORTATION-REPORT-1.pdf>*

## 3.4 Economic Development

This section of the Comprehensive Plan contains a SWOT analysis that explores the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that face Hamden. Identifying these factors allow Hamden to better plan for future development and an economically advantageous future. It also seeks to point out some challenges within the town, additional opportunities, and how to avoid potential pit falls.

### 3.4.1 Strengths

The Town of Hamden possesses several strengths insofar as future economic development is concerned. These include the following:

- ❖ Hamden has a unique charm that is derived from its scenery, history and natural features. The West Branch of the Delaware, the forested hillsides rich with a diversity of hardwoods, the historic Covered Bridge and the farms all contribute to a high-quality marketable rural character.
- ❖ Hamden has a vibrant agricultural sector. These farms are of great diversity in operation and enhance the identity of Hamden as a farming community.
- ❖ The Watershed Agricultural Council (WAC) manages a program called Pure Catskills. This program was designed to promote the economic viability of working landscapes, support local producers, and preserve water quality.

- ❖ The Town is located in the geographic center of Delaware County and is convenient from all directions. It is also located midway between Walton and Delhi, the two principal Villages serving the region. This location makes it an advantageous for County services and other business. This is likely why Cornell Cooperative Extension, The ARC, NYSEG, Delaware Opportunities, Inc., and others have all chosen the Town as a place to do business.
- ❖ Because the Town is located within the New York City's watershed, it has access to funding made available by the City. There is major support given to the Catskill Watershed Corporation for economic development and other initiatives within the community.
- ❖ Proximity to several major metropolitan areas proves to be a substantial economic asset for tourism and travel. Hamden is located 2-3 hours away from New York City, Albany, Syracuse, and other densely populated areas.

#### *3.4.2 Weaknesses*

There are, to be sure, weaknesses that accompany these strengths. They include the following:

- ❖ The further development of the Hamlet of Delancey and Hamden is limited by geography, DEP land acquisition, WAC easements, and septic infrastructure. These factors create additional challenges when attracting new business and the expansion of existing businesses.
- ❖ New York State is, generally, a highly taxed state and is perceived as such by persons and businesses who might otherwise like to locate in the Town of Hamden. The proximity of lower taxed locations in Pennsylvania makes it difficult for Hamden sites to compete.
- ❖ Students in Hamden attend school in Delhi at Delaware Academy or at Walton Central School District. Based on data collected from the New York State Education Department, school enrollments for students attending Delaware Academy School District have increased since 2010 after a decade of declining school enrollments and have remained relatively stable since 2014. However, enrollments at Walton CSD have declined.
- ❖ Second home owners as well as transient rental properties are great for attracting new potential resident to Hamden and promoting tourism around Delaware County, however, they also contribute to the housing shortage and create higher prices for renters and first-time home buyers.

#### *3.4.3 Opportunities*

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*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

There are many opportunities available to the Town for economic development if it is realistic regarding these strengths and weaknesses. The opportunities include:

- ❖ While it is difficult for farmers to compete in large scale commodity markets, smaller scaled operations selling more niche products prove to be a substantial asset. Farms also attract visitors and second home residents in the form of agricultural tourism.
- ❖ The marketing needed to attract tourism can also be used to attract new full-time residents and second home development. Although many oppose further such development, second homes bring in new investment without creating excessive service or infrastructure demands. They also support the construction industry.
- ❖ There are opportunities to sell value added products. These include not only food, but also high-quality hay, bio-fuels, woodchips, grass pellets and other products.
- ❖ There are not only possibilities for further harvesting of hardwood products but also the development of new added value operations on a small scale. The Catskill Watershed Corporation (CWC) has already helped fund such enterprises. There are clearly opportunities in the Town of Hamden for small wood products producing items such as cabinets and crafts.
- ❖ The Town of Hamden is also a logical location for additional county agencies, both public and semipublic, and other service industries. Most of these facilities are of sufficient size to provide for their own infrastructure needs and are very compatible with the Town environment.
- ❖ Other small-scale industrial enterprises (e.g., small metal fabrication) with relatively minor infrastructure needs also have potential. These operations generate very low demand for community services, are





conducted entirely inside, pay well because they are capital intensive and cause little or no impact on the environment.

- ❖ Additional commercial development in and around the hamlet of Hamden could service the needs of other businesses. There are a significant number of people employed in the enterprises south of the hamlet, and as employees grow in number, so will the need for support services.

#### *3.4.4 Threats*

There are also some clear future threats to the Town's economic development. These include the following:

- ❖ The increasing regulation of water quality and development within the New York City Watershed has the potential to stifle the future growth of Hamden.
- ❖ The number of second home owners and short-term rentals are growing and can be an effective means to jump starting the economy. The experience of other second home areas, however, suggests such second homes eventually become first homes with the attendant costs for schools and other services. Unless the Town carefully manages the extra income during the early years, as it does now, it could find the future tax burden quite onerous.
- ❖ The manner in which many agricultural products are priced threatens the stability of the small farms that form the backbone of the Town of Hamden's agricultural sector. Many small farmers are not ready to compete in the marketplace in the manner needed to survive.
- ❖ The migration of downstate residents into Delaware County following the events of the COVID-19 pandemic have reversed the impacts of a population collapse. However, an aging population, lack of diversity, and growth could deprive the area of the critical mass of younger people needed to sustain the local economy, making it increasingly difficult to support community institutions and other services.

#### *3.4.5 Recommendations*

Given the above analysis, the following recommendations are offered for the economic development and growth of the Town of Hamden:

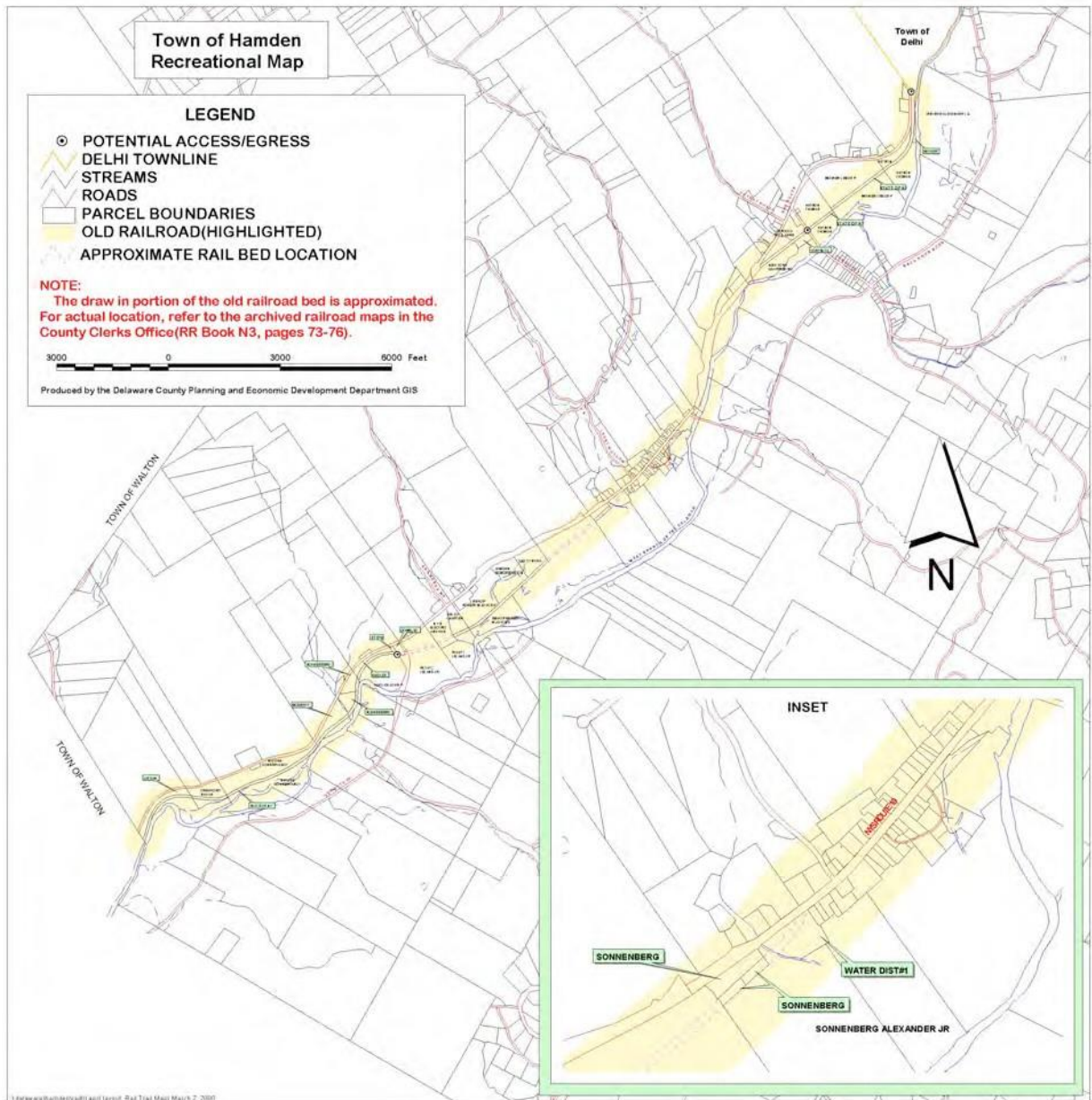
- ❖ The Town should maintain the availability of land along Route 10 between the hamlet of Hamden and the Town of Walton for potential commercial or industrial development.

*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY*  
*COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

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- ❖ Further development would help to enhance the viability of this area as a community and service center. The types of uses that now exist or that would be attracted in the future are generally located on large lots where it is possible to retain stormwater on-site and adequately provide for sewage disposal with subsurface systems.
- ❖ The town of Hamden has created a brochure indicating historical, recreational, and other significant locations and trails within the town. This brochure should remain up to date and promoted widely to tourists and residents alike.
- ❖ The Town should work with the County Planning Department to identify sites suitable for target industries such as health care services and assist the owners in securing financing through CWC or otherwise to improve and/or upgrade these sites and facilities. Such efforts need to be approached on a voluntary basis with interested landowners.
- ❖ The Town should encourage the development of home-based businesses by allowing them everywhere in the Town with minimal oversight, relying upon the Site Plan Review Law as opposed to arbitrary zoning classifications that might restrict locations. Home-based businesses demand flexible approaches and should not be subject to the same tests as other businesses.
- ❖ The town should continue to maintain, expand, and promote their website. Providing a clear and accessible guide for residents and tourists to local businesses, services, events, and other resources available within the town.
- ❖ The Town of Hamden should expand its hamlet areas that are exempt from further NYC-DEP land acquisition and protected, to the extent possible. The Town Board adopted a resolution, on December 2, 2009, affirming its support for cluster development (also known as "conservation subdivision" in its most desirable variation) as an option. This is very important to economic development in Hamden, as the only realistic area for new business is along Route 10, adjacent to the two existing hamlets, both of which are currently too small to accommodate any significant new business.

**TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY**  
**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024**



### **3.5 Housing**

Following the events of the 2019 COVID Pandemic, there has been an influx of residents from downstate into Delaware County. The exact numbers in Hamden are difficult to quantify due to some inaccuracies with the 2020 US Decennial Census. Much of the recorded 'data' comes from the American Community Survey 5-Year estimates with a significant margin of error. However, based on physical observations we can note there has been an increase in population around the county.

#### *3.5.1 Number of Persons Per Household*

American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates report the average house-hold size is around 2.46 persons. Over 60% of households have one or more people aged 60 years and older. There are an estimated 93 households with children under 18 years old.

#### *3.5.2 Housing Stock*

According to the American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, the total housing stock of the Town of Hamden has remained relatively static since 2000, growing only from 902 to 909 in 2022. This is likely a case of new homes being constructed and older homes being demolished at similar rates.

About a quarter of the housing stock was built in 1939 or earlier, and the bulk of the housing stock, about 400 homes, were built between 1970 and 2010. The diversity of housing stock age is a true strength to the Hamden character; however, it will require investment to maintain the older structures. There are an estimated 506 occupied housing units and 329 vacant units (including seasonally occupied units).

#### *3.5.3 Housing Values*

The value of homes in Hamden vary widely between \$27.5K and \$975K. However, according to the Zillow Home Value Index (ZHVI), the average Delaware County Home Value in 2023 was \$220,946, compared to an average of \$130,163 in 2015.

#### *3.5.4 Housing Type and Ownership*

The most common housing type, making up 649 units, is the single unit detached home. The second most common type, making up 127 units are mobile homes. An estimated 77.5% of homes are owner-occupied while 22.5% are renter occupied units.

#### *3.5.5 Contract Rents*

The median rent in the Town of Hamden was \$845, slightly higher than the median rent for the county at \$785. However, these numbers continue to rise as of 2024.

*Source: US Decennial Census 2020, 2022 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates*

### 3.5.6 Recommendations

- ❖ The Town should ensure that its land use regulations do not unnecessarily raise the cost of moderate-income housing by requiring excessive lot sizes or adding too many regulatory oversight costs. This can be accomplished using cost-effective Conservation Subdivision designs. The Town will also continue to benefit from working with Delaware Opportunities, Inc. to help Hamden homeowners upgrade units.
- ❖ The town should continue to enforce their Transient Rental Regulation Law in order to provide a framework for property owners in Hamden to ensure the safety, welfare and health of all persons occupying the transient rental property and neighboring properties.
- ❖ Additionally, Hamden may look into issuing permits for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU), looking to the NYS Homes and Community Renewal Plus-One Program. Permitting ADU's would help Hamden take advantage of existing accessory structures and diversify the variety and availability of housing types on the market.







## **4.0 Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Hamden has long been an agricultural community with widespread support for farming among residents. The Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan seeks to identify and implement strategies that can work for the Town of Hamden to support agriculture and keep farms as productive, viable operations with sound farming practices. Preserving farmland as active, working landscapes, and not otherwise vacant conserved open space, is vital to Hamden's future.

Included in this plan is an inventory of Hamden farms and operations, the economic impacts of agriculture, and a summary of existing plans, policies, and programs. The plan analyzes the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that Hamden farmers are challenged with as of 2024.

*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY*  
*COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

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*4.1.1 Agriculture in Hamden*

Agriculture in Hamden is diverse, ranging from beginning and small farms, to multi-generation and commercial farms.

Dairy farming has historically been the predominant type of agriculture in the Town, however, as the local dairy industry continues to decline, the number of diversified agricultural operations have increased. The Town has commercial vegetable and nursery operations. A number of farms produce beef, sheep, goats, berries and maple products. Below is a growing list of agricultural operations and the product or service provided.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| ❖ Berrybrook Farm <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Organic Vegetables, CSA</li></ul>          | ❖ Kingsbury Dairy Farm <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Dairy</li></ul>                     |
| ❖ Brookside Maple & Farm <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Maple, Beef, Poultry</li></ul>      | ❖ LaLaLand <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Flowers</li></ul>                               |
| ❖ Bishop Hay <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Hay</li></ul>                                   | ❖ Lansingville Farm <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Honey, Eggs</li></ul>                  |
| ❖ Catskill Agrarian Alliance (CAA) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Vegetables, CSA</li></ul> | ❖ Lucky Dog Organic Farm <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Organic Vegetables, CSA</li></ul> |
| ❖ Catskill Bloom <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Flowers</li></ul>                           | ❖ Miller Beef <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Beef, Crops</li></ul>                        |
| ❖ Catskill Mountain Dressage <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Horse Stables</li></ul>         | ❖ Potter Family Ranch <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Beef</li></ul>                       |
| ❖ Cipperly Family Farm <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Maple, Beef, Pork</li></ul>           | ❖ Reed Beef <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Beef, Crops, Maple</li></ul>                   |
| ❖ Cody Shane Acres <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Bison</li></ul>                           | ❖ Sajobe Farms <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Lamb, Pork, Beef</li></ul>                  |
| ❖ Delancey Farms <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Pork, Hay</li></ul>                         | ❖ Sparling Horse <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Horse Stables</li></ul>                   |
| ❖ Donnelly Farm <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Crops</li></ul>                              | ❖ Spirit Filled Stables <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Horse Stables</li></ul>            |
| ❖ Dunlop Beef Farm <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Beef</li></ul>                            | ❖ Sticky Lips Honey <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Honey</li></ul>                        |
| ❖ Echo Orchard <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Pumpkins</li></ul>                            | ❖ The Rogers Ranch <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Honey</li></ul>                         |
| ❖ Elsewhere Farms <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Microgreens</li></ul>                      | ❖ Graf von Schoenborn <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Horses</li></ul>                     |
| ❖ Kilmer <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Beef, Crops</li></ul>                               | ❖ Wickham Dairy Farm <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Dair</li></ul>                        |

#### 4.1.2 Agriculture Statistics

According to the 2022 Census of Agriculture, there were 111 producers under the age of 35, 509 producers between the age of 35 and 64, and 464 producers aged 65 and older in Delaware County. The average age of farmers in Delaware County is 59.7. The total number of farmers in Delaware County have decreased from 1,224 farmers in 2017 to 1,084 farmers in 2022. In the Town of Hamden, 6.3% of the labor force were employed by agricultural, forestry, or mining industry.



In addition to farms themselves, other farm-related businesses were specifically credited by farmers for their beneficial impact to the community. The opening of New Holland tractor supply has been a major help to farmers in Hamden and reduced the travel time to get needed parts. The Hamden General Store, Hamden Inn, and the Hamden Filling Station all support local farms by selling locally grown vegetables, meat and maple products to the community. Both farmers and community members surveyed have indicated a desire to see more locally grown foods available for purchase at farmers markets in the Town of Hamden.

*Source: (2022) U.S. Census of Agriculture*

## 4.2 Value of Agriculture to Hamden

Agriculture and farmland protection is integral to the sustainability of Hamden because of the numerous benefits it provides the community. These include:

### 4.2.1 Contributions to Quality of Life and Tourism

An online community survey conducted during the update of this *Town of Hamden Comprehensive Plan* found that 72% of residents cited that agriculture and the rural atmosphere of Hamden was one of the features they liked most about living in the town.

There are several working farms visible from Route 10 which contribute to Hamden's agricultural identity and are also beneficial to the agritourism industry.

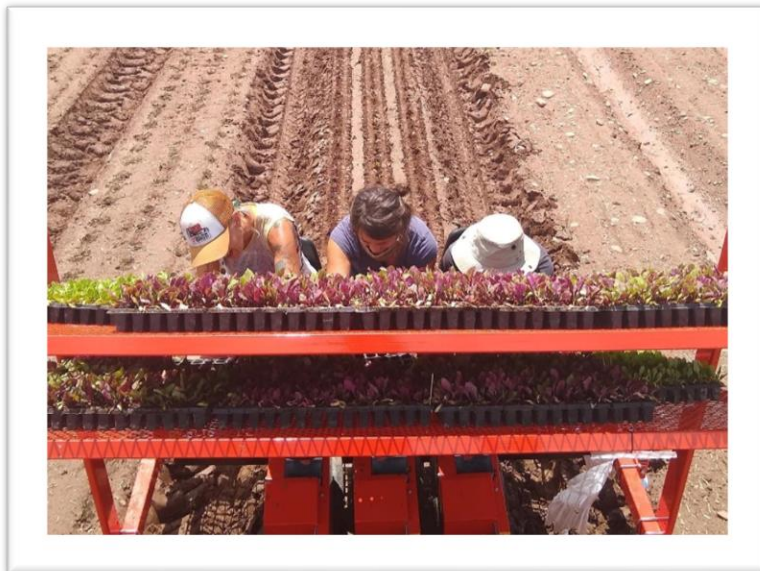
#### *4.2.2 Food Security*

Food security is defined as the physical and economic access to a variety of safe, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food options that meet the dietary needs for an active and healthy life. According to the 2022 American Community Survey, an estimated 9.6% of residents in Hamden live at or below the poverty line. Those who are economically disadvantaged, combined with the increased distance from a full-service grocery store, creates a greater risk for experiencing food insecurity.

Many local farms make their produce available to residents year-round. Produce is sold at the Hamden General Store and the farmers market in Delhi. Local organizations that support food security efforts include Delaware Opportunities, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and the 607 CSA Project. These efforts promote the availability and access to fresh and locally grown foods. Delaware Opportunities has a food bank serving the community Monday-Friday from 8am-4pm, they offer free programs such as food demonstrations where they teach clients how to prepare economical, nutritious, and delicious meals. They also assist people applying for Food Stamps, WIC, and other nutrition assistance programs.

#### *4.2.3 Water Quality and Wildlife Habitat Protection*

Much of Hamden is located in the NYC Watershed, where farming is recognized by the NYC- DEP (Department of Environmental Protection) as a 'preferred land use' because of its contribution to watershed protection. Farms protect water quality, and preserve wildlife habitat through their proper management of stream buffers, wetlands, and forests.



The Watershed Agricultural Council (WAC) works with farm and forest landowners within the NYC watershed to protect water quality for New York City residents and promote the economic viability of agriculture and forestry. Through conservation easements and sustainable public-private partnerships WAC ensures working landscapes are protected for future generations.

### **4.3 Inventory of Agricultural Resources and Conditions**

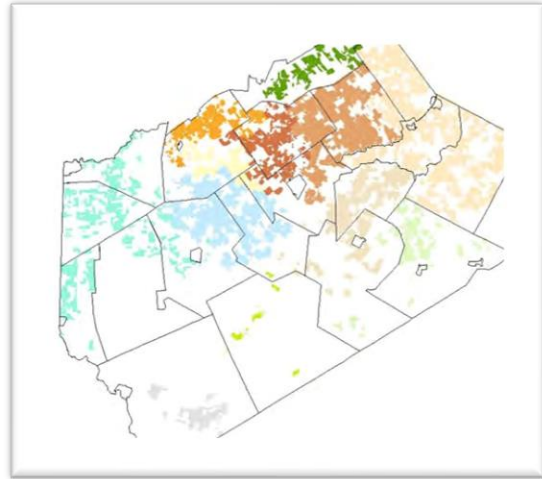
Hamden is located in the heart of the Northern Catskills region of New York State. Like much of Delaware County, the Town is characterized by its rural nature, a patchwork of farm fields and forests. The town is approximately 60 square miles, or 38,000 acres. There are 10,656 acres located in Delaware County Ag District No. 2. Currently, 7,306 acres in the Town of Hamden

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receive the agricultural tax exemption.

#### 4.3.1 Current Land Use

There are 1,399 unique parcels making a total of 38,484 acres in the Town of Hamden. The dominant land use in the Town is residential, making up 826 parcels (59%). There are 445 parcels classified as Vacant Land (32%). Agricultural Land use makes up 34 parcels (2.4%), Forested or Conserved Land Use makes up 38(2.7%). Industrial and Commercial land use makes up 25 parcels (1.7%). Community Services and Public Service make up the remaining 31 parcels (2.2%).



Many residential parcels contribute to the agricultural aesthetic of the town, however, may not fall under the land use classification as such.

Non-local ownership is a growing trend as second homeowners and the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYC-DEP) are buying property in the Town. As of 2009, NYC-DEP owned 1,419 acres in Hamden. In 2022, this number grew to 4,910 acres, or 12.8% of the total Town acreage.

The Watershed Agricultural Council (WAC) purchases agricultural easements for the purpose of protecting water quality in the NYC Watersheds. In 2010, WAC held 908 acres of easements on farmland in the Town. As of 2022, WAC held 2,031 acres of easements in Hamden.

#### 4.3.2 Soils and Topography

Hamden enjoys some of the most productive prime agricultural soils in the county. There are 3,029 acres of prime agricultural land in the Town, mostly in the valley along State Highway 10 and the West Branch of the Delaware River. Along this valley, farms harvest vegetables, corn, hay, blueberries, and small grains. The rest of the Town is characterized by steep slopes and poor soils. There are 23,010 acres, or 60% of the town, with slopes of 15% or greater. These factors place additional pressure on the prime soils and buildable land, and require careful planning to balance competing needs.



#### 4.4 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Central Route 10 Corridor</li> <li>Prime Farmland Soils</li> <li>Increasing markets for local products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing age and declining number of farmers</li> <li>Conversion of farmland for municipal and non-agricultural uses</li> <li>Topography limits growth of large-scale commercial agriculture</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing diversity of niche agricultural operations</li> <li>Agri-business and Agri-tourism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NYC DEP purchase and conversion of farmland to unused open space</li> <li>Alternative Energy Development</li> <li>High cost of farmland prohibits beginner farmers from accessing land</li> <li>Low commodity prices</li> </ul>

##### 4.4.1 Analysis of Strengths and Opportunities

A. State Highway 10 cuts through Hamden, and is the main road in the County connecting Walton, Hamden, Delhi and Stamford. It presents an opportunity for Hamden farmers to market their locally grown products, with approximately 4,000 cars a day traveling this busy corridor. Local produce is sold at the Hamden General Store, and featured on the menu at the Hamden Inn. Steve's Greenhouse sells bedding plants and U-pick blueberries. There is an opportunity for new or expanded farm stands and markets to be located along this well-traveled corridor.

B. Hamden has a greater percentage of its soils in prime farmland than Delaware County as a whole. This is an asset for agriculture but these soils also represent some of the best buildable acreage for future development. Hamden can meet this challenge by encouraging cluster development. Siting buildings closer together will maximize and preserve larger parcels of contiguous open space for farmers and foresters.

C. The topography of Hamden does not support the expansion of large farms. However, many farmers have diversified from the traditional dairy industry and moved into value added, direct marketing, and niche markets for high-value products. Hamden farms are exploring

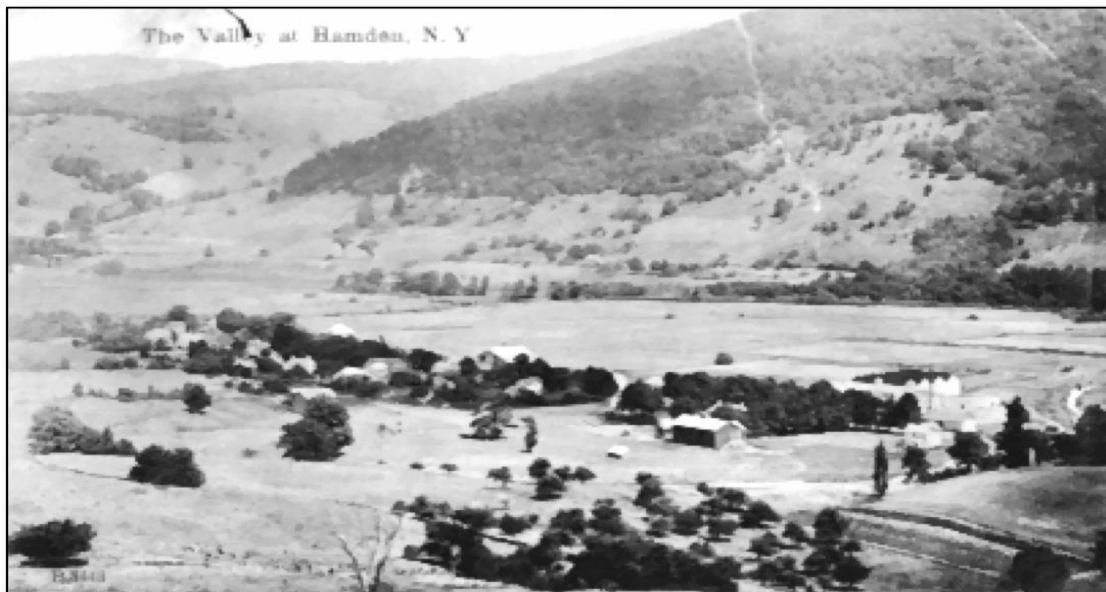
*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

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season extension of vegetables and berries through high tunnel hoop houses. Others are selling meats directly to restaurants in New York City for a higher price than could be achieved through traditional commodity channels.

D. Delaware Opportunities, Inc. is located in the Town of Hamden, and provides social services to low income families throughout the county, including distributing emergency food resources to food banks, and operating the senior meal programs. Delaware Opportunities, Inc. purchases food from local farmers for its meal programs and grows food on its own land in Hamden for the Food Bank. Other institutions, including SUNY Delhi and the schools could follow suit and increase purchase of locally grown foods.

E. New tools are needed to protect farmland, and farmland affordability. Because of the nature of development in Hamden (generally simple subdivisions with one or two new houses built at a time), tools like cluster subdivision, while useful, are not the sole solution. Site plan review could help protect farmland by improving the siting of a building lot to preserve larger swaths of agricultural land and mitigate the loss of farmland to solely residential properties. Both the NYC-DEP and the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets should be encouraged to fund tools to address farmland affordability, such as the option to purchase at agricultural value.



*A view of the river valley in Hamden from an old postcard*

#### **4.5 Existing Plans, Policies and Programs**

The *Delaware County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan* was updated in 2016. It lays out economic, educational, and farmland protection goals for agriculture in Delaware County. It also identifies specific strategies for accomplishing these goals. These

TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024

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recommended strategies for farmland preservation and agricultural development in Delaware County include the following:

4.5.1 *Coordinate with the Delaware County Department of Economic Development's Agricultural Economic and Marketing Specialist.*

4.5.2 *Promote agricultural tourism-based businesses in Delaware County. Provide the tools necessary for agricultural business management and development.*

4.5.3 *Coordinate with WAC and the Center for Agricultural Development and Entrepreneurship to design and implement a regional food distribution system. Expand the use of NYS "Share NY Food" and Community Supported Agriculture.*

4.5.4 *Support and promote local brands that help connect urban and local consumers to Delaware County farms and strengthen the local agricultural identity.*

4.5.5 *Work with the Cornell Cooperative Extension 4-H, and BOCES to increase educational programs, resources, and opportunities for children to learn about agriculture.*

4.5.6 *Provide educational outreach to farmers to increase skills in sustainable production, farm business planning, marketing, regulatory compliance, forest management, succession planning and diversification.*

4.5.7 *Continue to develop community understanding and support for farmers and farming.*

4.5.8 *Support the voluntary purchase of development rights on farms through the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, the Watershed Agricultural Council and land trust initiatives.*

4.5.9 *Increase educational outreach to county officials, community leaders, and the public regarding contributions of farms to Delaware County's economy, community life, rural character, tourism, and scenic beauty.*

4.5.10 *Ensure that all Solar and Battery projects are sited thoughtfully and that Tier 3 and 4 Systems do not occupy more than fifty (50) percent of an area of prime agricultural soils without incorporating use of the land as a farm operation.*



## **5.0 Recommendations for Implementation**

### **5.1 Policy Changes and Updates**

- 5.1.1 Engage in systematic data collection on assessments to update the Town's tax assessments and ensure that farms in the town are valued at their agricultural value, including all farm buildings and improvements. The Delaware County Planning Department and Office of Real Property could potentially aid in this effort.
- 5.1.2 Begin charging landowners for the conversion of farmland from agricultural use as allowed by NYS Agriculture and Markets Law. Such conversion charges should be applied to new property owners or users who might take a property out of agricultural use, thereby encouraging sales for continued agricultural use.
- 5.1.3 Follow the NYS Assessment Guidelines as written in the Farmland and Farms Tax Policy Analysis (2009). This will raise the assessment value of land while lowering the assessment value for farmhouses and farm structures. Overall, keeping active farmland more accessible for future generations.
- 5.1.4 Explore the creation of a leased development rights (LDR) program to encourage farmers to keep lands in active agricultural production and to keep land from being developed without requiring it to be part of a permanent protection program.
- 5.1.5 Consider the implementation of a property transfer tax on land or homes that sell for greater than the agricultural value of land or greater than the median home price, as a funding mechanism for locally-driven farmland protection efforts.

### **5.2 Strengthening Partnerships**

- 5.2.1 Work with the Delaware County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board to conduct outreach with farmland owners to understand the benefits of the agricultural districts and to file the necessary paperwork to be part of the district.
- 5.2.2 Encourage NYC-DEP to develop alternative strategies to protect farmland from being purchased through the Land Acquisition Program. Also encourage the lease of farmland to keep valuable parcels accessible for agriculture.
- 5.2.3 Advocate for funding for new tools to address farmland affordability, for example the Option to Purchase at Agricultural Value.
- 5.2.4 Work with Economic Development to promote the expansion of the agri-business sector of the economy.

### **5.3 Farm Viability Programs**

- 5.3.1 Work with local farm service organizations to access NYS funding for micro-enterprise development, to offer business training and grants to farm business owners for job creation and new business development activities.
- 5.3.2 Seek funding for the development of a riverwalk along the West Branch of the Delaware River to increase access and recreational opportunities in the Town and strengthen agriculture and ecological tourism.
- 5.3.3 Work with the Delaware County Chamber of Commerce to catalog and promote all agri-tourism and outdoor recreation opportunities in the Town.



## **6.0 Appendices**

- A. Sample Comprehensive Plan Survey
- B. Survey Response Summary
- C. 2022 Census of Agriculture Summary

# **Appendix A**

## **Sample Comprehensive Plan Survey**

TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024

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**TOWN OF HAMDEN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SURVEY**

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Please help us provide for Hamden's future by checking the appropriate box or by writing in the answer. Some questions will ask for only one response while others will ask for multiple answers.

1. How many years in total have you lived in the Town of Hamden?  

<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 5 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 to 14 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 20 to 24 years
<input type="checkbox"/> 5 to 9 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 to 19 years	<input type="checkbox"/> More than 25 years
<input type="checkbox"/> None, I am a second-home owner		
  
  2. What made you choose Hamden over other communities? **(Please check no more than 5)**  

a. <input type="checkbox"/> Close to friends or relatives	e. <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of Town services
b. <input type="checkbox"/> Rural atmosphere/farmland	f. <input type="checkbox"/> Low taxes
c. <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor recreational opportunities	g. <input type="checkbox"/> Proximity to Route 17 and downstate areas
d. <input type="checkbox"/> Affordable housing costs	h. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____
  
  3. What most influenced your ORIGINAL decision to live here? **(Please check no more than 5)**  

a. <input type="checkbox"/> Born or raised here	g. <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of Town services
b. <input type="checkbox"/> Close to work	h. <input type="checkbox"/> Affordable housing costs
c. <input type="checkbox"/> Close to friends or relatives	i. <input type="checkbox"/> Low taxes
d. <input type="checkbox"/> Rural atmosphere/farmland	j. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____
e. <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of schools	k. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____
f. <input type="checkbox"/> Low crime rate	l. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____
  
  4. Why do you continue to live in the Town of Hamden? **(Please check no more than 5)**  

a. <input type="checkbox"/> Born or raised here	g. <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of Town services
b. <input type="checkbox"/> Close to work	h. <input type="checkbox"/> Affordable housing costs
c. <input type="checkbox"/> Close to friends or relatives	i. <input type="checkbox"/> Low taxes
d. <input type="checkbox"/> Rural atmosphere/farmland	j. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____
e. <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of schools	k. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____
f. <input type="checkbox"/> Low crime rate	l. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____
  
  5. Which BEST describes how Hamden has changed since you moved here? (Please check ONE.)  

a. <input type="checkbox"/> The Town of Hamden has become a more desirable place to live.
b. <input type="checkbox"/> The Town of Hamden has become a less desirable place to live.
c. <input type="checkbox"/> The Town of Hamden has not changed noticeably in its desirability as a place to live.
d. <input type="checkbox"/> I have not lived here long enough to form an opinion.
  
  6. What do you like LEAST about The Town of Hamden? (Please check TWO.)  

a. <input type="checkbox"/> Cost of services/taxes	d. <input type="checkbox"/> Housing costs
b. <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of services	e. <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of cultural/recreation options
c. <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation difficulties	f. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify) _____
  
  7. Please indicate below how you use your property (check all that apply, and consider all parcels of land that you own in the Town):  

a. <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Residence	e. <input type="checkbox"/> Vacation/Seasonal home
b. <input type="checkbox"/> Farming/Agriculture	f. <input type="checkbox"/> Rental property
c. <input type="checkbox"/> Investment	g. <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial
d. <input type="checkbox"/> Home business	h. <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation
	i. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
-

*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY*  
*COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

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8. Please indicate the importance of each of the following aspects of the Town's environment:

	Important	Not Important	Undecided
a. Farmland	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
b. Historic buildings	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
c. Scenic views	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
d. Open Space/Recreation	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
e. River access	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
f. Mature forests	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
g. Stream water quality	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
h. Stream corridors	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
i. Air quality	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
j. Drinking water quality	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
k. Wildlife habitat	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
l. Wetlands	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
m. Other _____	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

9. How important is it for the Town to review each of the following aspects of developments?

	Important	Not Important	Undecided
a. Historic character	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
b. Business signs	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
c. Site design and layout	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
d. Landscaping	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
e. Preserving large trees at new commercial sites	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
f. Scenic impact	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
g. Impact on streams	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
h. Protection of farmland	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
i. Density of development	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
j. Hillside/ravine development	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
k. Proximity of commercial development to residences	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
o. Wind turbine projects*	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
p. Solar energy projects*	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

\* Wind turbine and solar projects are intended to mean commercial large scale projects not for individual household use.

*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

10. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:  
The Town of Hamden should promote and encourage:

	Agree		Disagree		Undecided
a. Farming and Agriculture-related businesses:	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
b. Building of shopping malls:	[ ]		[ ]		[ ]
c. Management of wildlife areas:	[ ]		[ ]		[ ]
d. Light industrial development:	[ ]		[ ]		[ ]
e. Heavy industrial development:	[ ]		[ ]		[ ]
f. Bluestone quarrying and processing:	[ ]		[ ]		[ ]
g. Logging / timber industry:	[ ]		[ ]		[ ]
h. Management of steep slopes:	[ ]		[ ]		[ ]
i. Commercial development:	[ ]		[ ]		[ ]
j. Tourism related businesses:	[ ]		[ ]		[ ]
k. Improvement of scenic vistas:	[ ]		[ ]		[ ]
l. Protection of stream corridors:	[ ]		[ ]		[ ]
m. Home occupations:	[ ]		[ ]		[ ]
n. Development of inter-municipal projects and services:	[ ]		[ ]		[ ]
o. Wind turbine projects*	[ ]		[ ]		[ ]
p. Solar energy projects*	[ ]		[ ]		[ ]

\* Wind turbine and solar projects are intended to mean commercial large projects not for individual household use.

11. How compatible do you feel each of the following forms of NEW residential/commercial development would be for the Town of Hamden?

	Compatible Everywhere	Compatible Some Places	Incompatible Everywhere	Not Sure
a. Single family residences on large lots	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
b. Public Facilities	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
c. Mobile home parks	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
d. Townhouses/Apartments	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
e. Conservation subdivisions*	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
f. Shopping plaza	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
g. Office buildings	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
h. Motel/hotel	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
i. Wood manufacturing & processing	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
j. Wood processing (e.g. sawmill)	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
k. Metal fabrication (e.g. tool & die shops)	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
l. Other light manufacturing	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
m. Mini-storage warehousing	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
n. Trucking terminals	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
o. Commercial junkyards	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
p. Landfill operations	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
q. Wind turbine projects**	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
r. Solar energy projects**	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
s. Other _____	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

\* Conservation or cluster subdivisions use smaller lots so most of the subdivision can be dedicated to permanent open space, increasing density on part of the property to do so but not for the overall tract.



*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY*  
*COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

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\*\* Wind turbine and solar projects are intended to mean commercial large projects not for individual household use.

If you feel any of the above are compatible only in some areas within the Town, please indicate where below or use additional paper:

Form of development

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---

Appropriate Area to Locate

---

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12. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:  
The Town of Hamden should regulate the development of:

	Agree	Disagree	Undecided
a. Commercial wind deriving energy	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
b. Private wind deriving energy	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
c. Turbines less than 200 feet in height	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
d. Turbines greater than 200 feet in height	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
e. Private solar array installations (personal use only)	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
f. Commercial solar array installations (corporate development)	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
g. Community solar installations (community development for local use)	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

13. How much additional NEED is there in the Town of Hamden for the following types of consumer establishments?

	Need	No Need	No Opinion
a. Convenience store	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
b. Supermarket	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
c. Department store	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
d. Home improvement center	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
e. Adult clothing store	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
f. Children's clothing store	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
g. Appliance store	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
h. Fast food restaurant	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
i. Other restaurant	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
j. Auto repair shop	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
k. Medical/dental office	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
l. Junkyard	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
m. Other _____	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
n. Other _____	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

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14. How would you rate the quality of the following public and semi-public services within the town?

	High Quality	Fair Quality	Poor Quality
a. Health care services	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
b. Utilities (e.g. electric)	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
c. Highway maintenance	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
d. Overall code enforcement	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
e. Schools	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
f. Recreational facilities	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
g. Other (please specify)_____	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

15. Are you in favor of seeing tourism grow as an industry / economic force within Hamden?

[ ] Yes [ ] No [ ] No Opinion

16. Do you or members of your household work in a field that would benefit from increased tourism and greater numbers of people visiting Hamden?

[ ] Yes [ ] No [ ] No Opinion

17. The Comprehensive Plan Committee would like to know your opinion on how to attract its young people to remain in the area, or returning to Hamden after pursuing other types of opportunities (college, military, training, etc.).

i. Of your children that do NOT plan to stay in Hamden, or return, what are their reasons?

ii. Of your children that WILL STAY, OR RETURN after college / military / other, what are their reasons?

18. Where do you go for your needs? (If more than one answer applies please rank them with #1 being the most common location)

	Work	Groceries	Shopping	Medical	Recreation
a. Delhi	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
b. Walton	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
c. Downsville	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
d. Andes	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
e. Binghamton	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
f. Oneonta	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
g. Albany	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
h. Sullivan County	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
i. Internet	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
j. Pennsylvania	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
k. Other	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

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19. Why do you travel outside of Hamden for your needs? (Check all that apply)

- a. ☐ Convenience / closeness to other daily activities
- b. ☐ Prices
- c. ☐ Selection / variety of products or services
- d. ☐ Availability of products and services
- e. ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

20. Do you partake in any of the following activities in the Town of Hamden?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hunting           | <input type="checkbox"/> Fishing                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hiking            | <input type="checkbox"/> Biking                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jogging/walking   | <input type="checkbox"/> Snowmobile/ATV                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canoeing/kayaking | <input type="checkbox"/> Nature watching / photography |

21. Would you encourage or discourage continued NYCDEP land acquisitions? Why?

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22. Do you utilize NYC DEP lands and/or the reservoirs? If yes, for what purpose(s)?

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23. Do members of your family volunteer and participate in Town and/or community activities, such as: fire company, town committees, civic clubs, faith based, scouting, others?

- ☐ No ☐ Yes (If yes, please list them)

24. What community events should the Town of Hamden consider/promote/encourage?

- ☐ Vintage Baseball ☐ Farmer's Market ☐ Harvest Festival
- ☐ Holiday Festival ☐ Other (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Other (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

25. Would you be interested in volunteering to help the community achieve its goals?

- ☐ No ☐ Yes (add contact info below)

*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

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26. What would you change in Hamden?

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27. Are you satisfied with the following services from town government (yes or no)? If you have no opinion please leave blank:

- |    |   |       |
|----|---|-------|
| a. | Hours of operation for town offices?          | <hr/> |
| b. | Access to town officials and employees?       | <hr/> |
| c. | Responsiveness of town officials to concerns? | <hr/> |
| d. | Access to town records/minutes from meetings? | <hr/> |
| e. | Building and code enforcement process?        | <hr/> |
| f. | Building permit process?                      | <hr/> |
| g. | Planning Board?                               | <hr/> |

28. What is your age?

- a. ☐ Under 18 years of age  
b. ☐ Ages 18 through age 44  
c. ☐ Ages 45 through 64  
d. ☐ Age 65 and over

28. Which of the following best describes your current employment status?

- a. ☐ Employed by others full-time  
b. ☐ Employed by others part-time  
c. ☐ Self-employed full-time  
d. ☐ Self-employed part-time  
e. ☐ Retired  
f. ☐ Unemployed  
g. ☐ Working from home/remote

30. Please feel free to add any additional insights, suggestions, comments, etc. in the space provided below.

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*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

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A copy of the results of this survey will be made available to the public after they are compiled.

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION

\_\_\_\_\_(Optional)  
Name  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Address  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone and/or email address



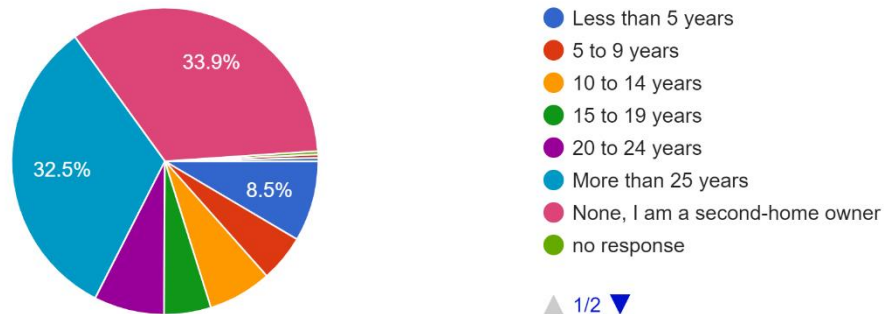
# **Appendix B**

## **Comprehensive Plan Survey Summary**

## Town of Hamden Comprehensive Plan Survey Response Summary

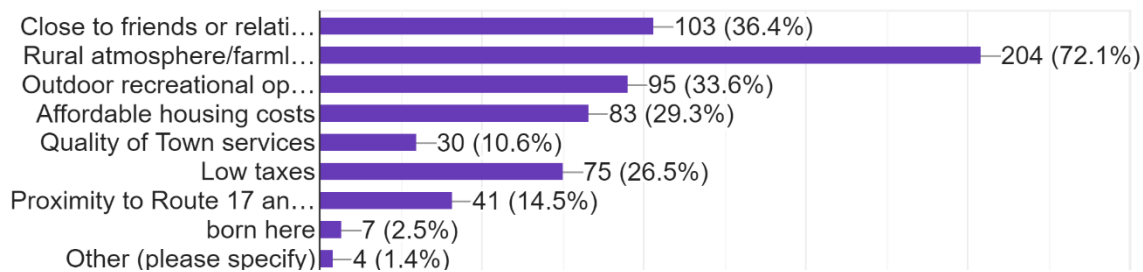
1. How many years in total have you been a fulltime resident of the Town of Hamden?

283 responses



2. What made you choose Hamden over other communities? (Please check no more than 5)

283 responses

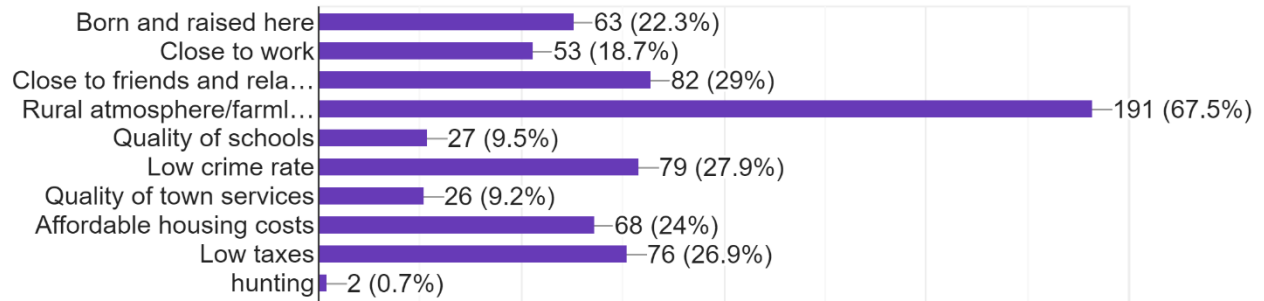


*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY*  
*COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

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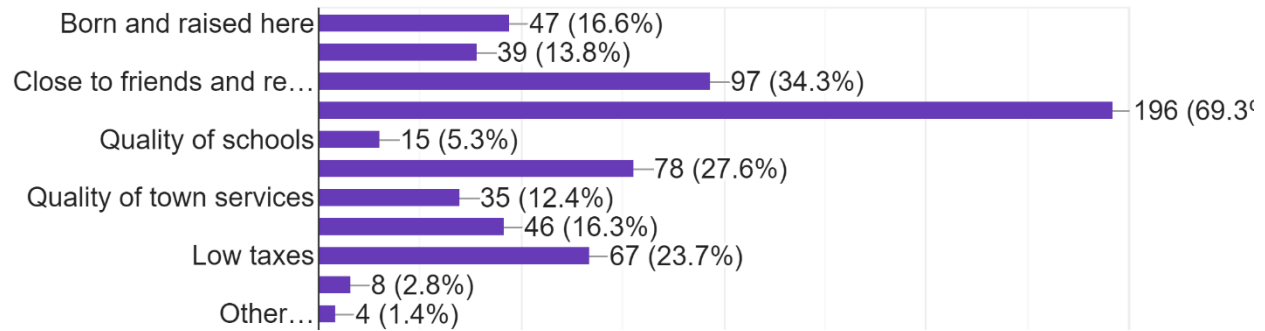
3. What most influenced your ORIGINAL decision to live here? (Please check no more than 5)

283 responses



4. Why do you continue to live in the Town of Hamden? (Please check no more than 5)

283 responses

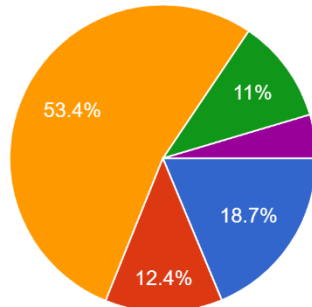


*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY*  
*COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

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5. Which BEST describes how Hamden has changed since you moved here? (Please check one.)

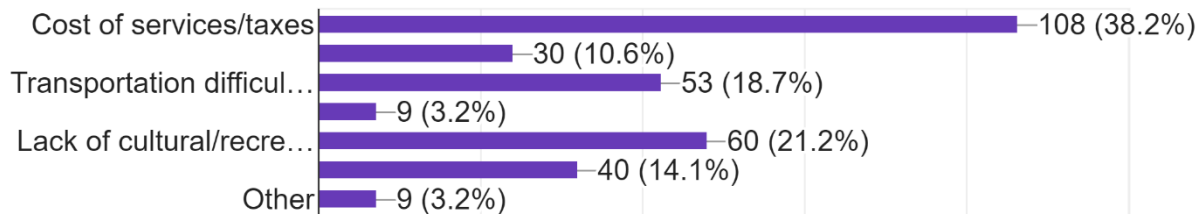
283 responses



- The Town of Hamden has become a more desirable place to live.
- The Town of Hamden has become a less desirable place to live.
- The Town of Hamden has not changed noticeably in its desirability as a place to live.
- I have not lived here long enough to form an opinion.
- No opinion

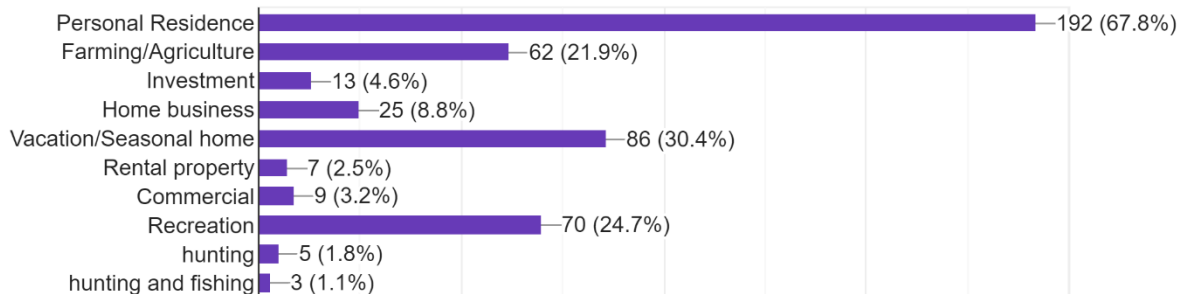
6. What do you like LEAST about The Town of Hamden? (Please check two)

283 responses



7. Please indicate below how you use your property (check all that apply, and consider all parcels of land that you own in the Town):

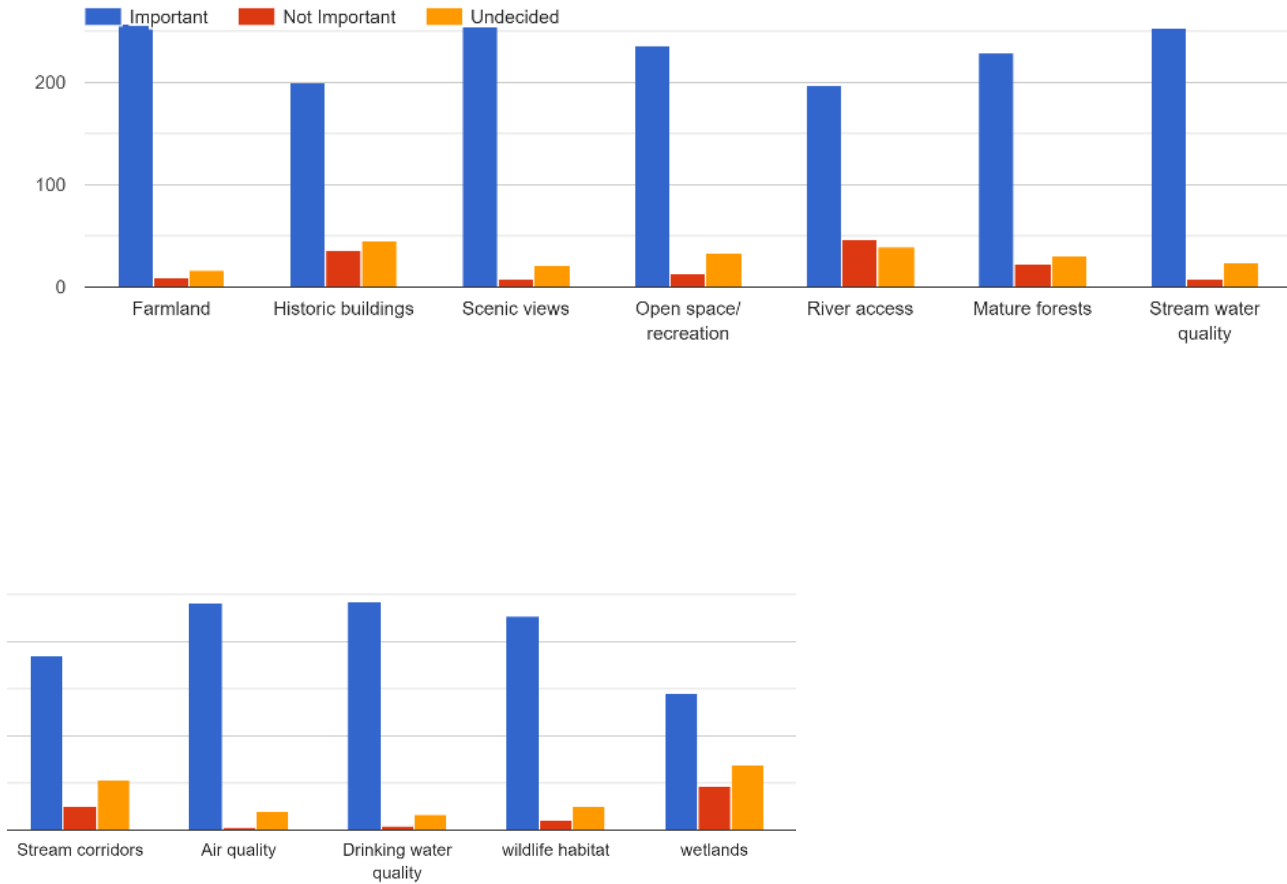
283 responses



*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

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8. Please indicate the importance of each of the following aspects of the Town's environment

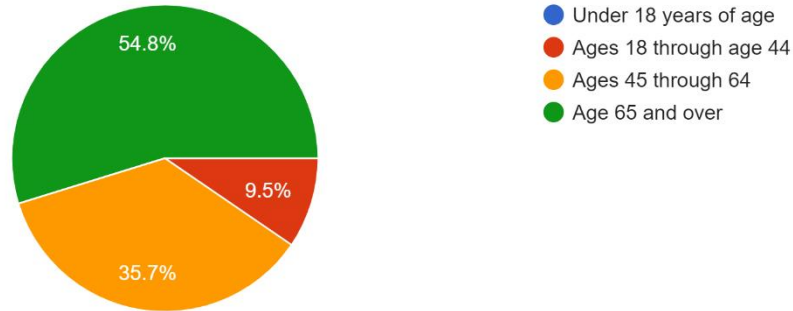


TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024

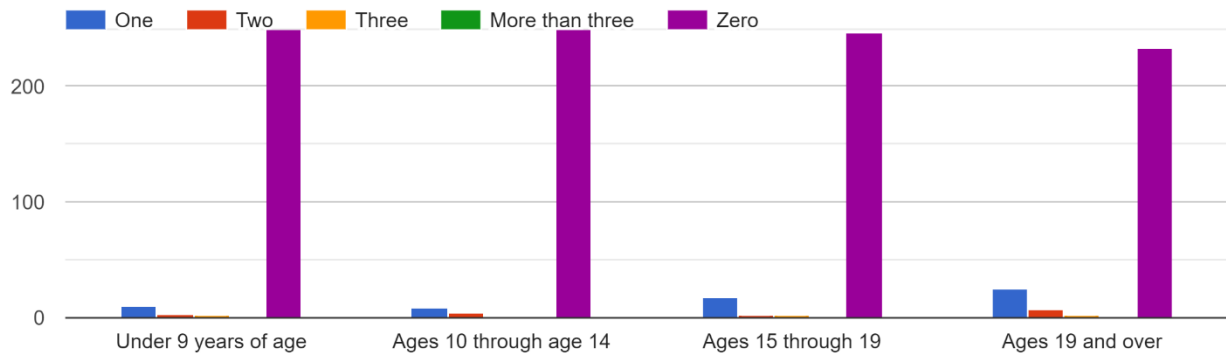
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9. What is your age

283 responses



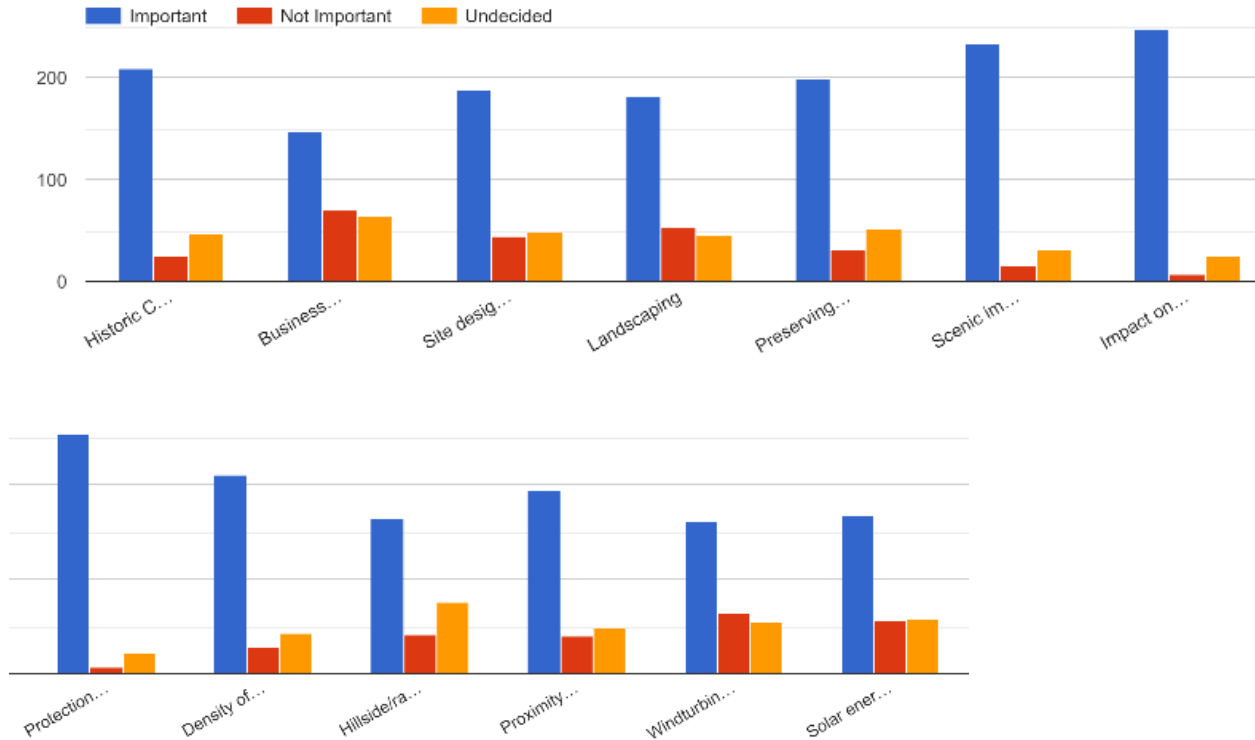
10. How many children live in your home?





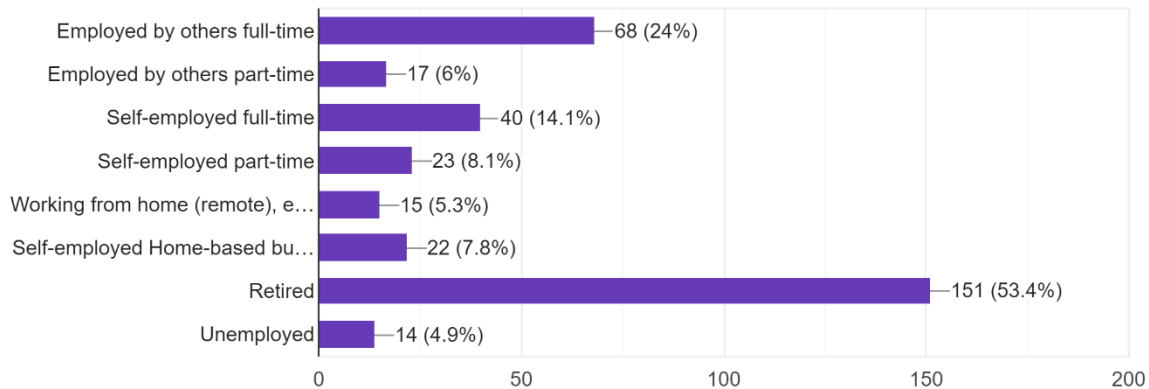
*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

11. How important is it for the Town to review each of the following aspects of developments?



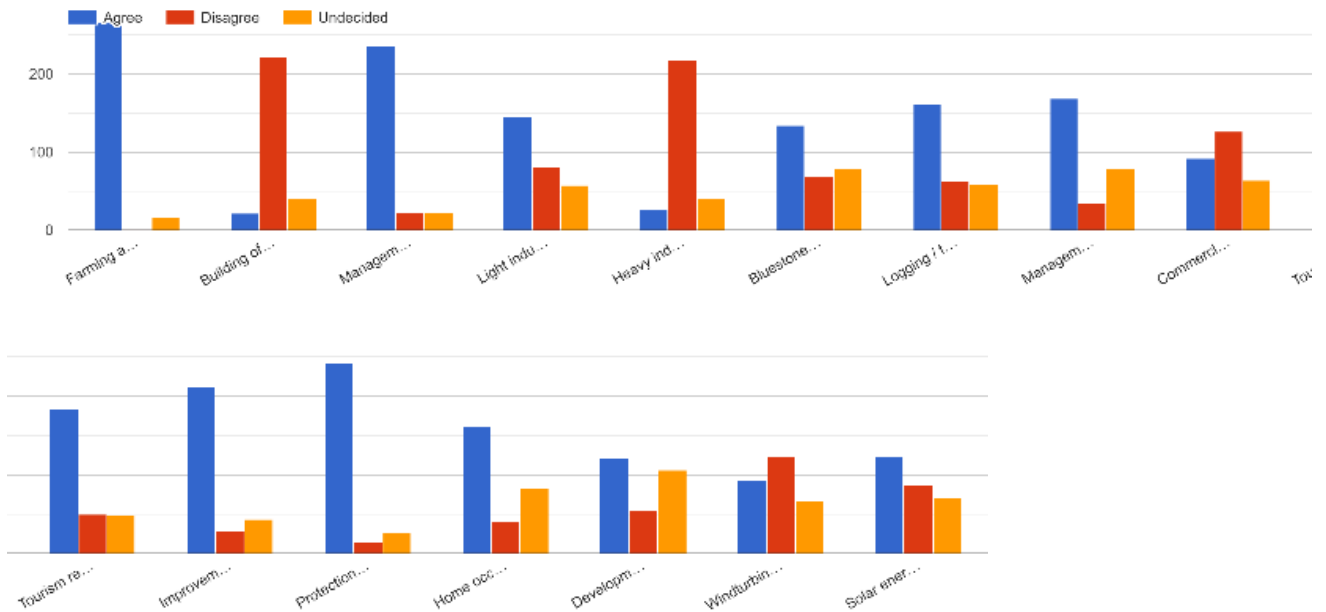
12. Which of the following best describes your current employment status? (Please check all that apply)

283 responses

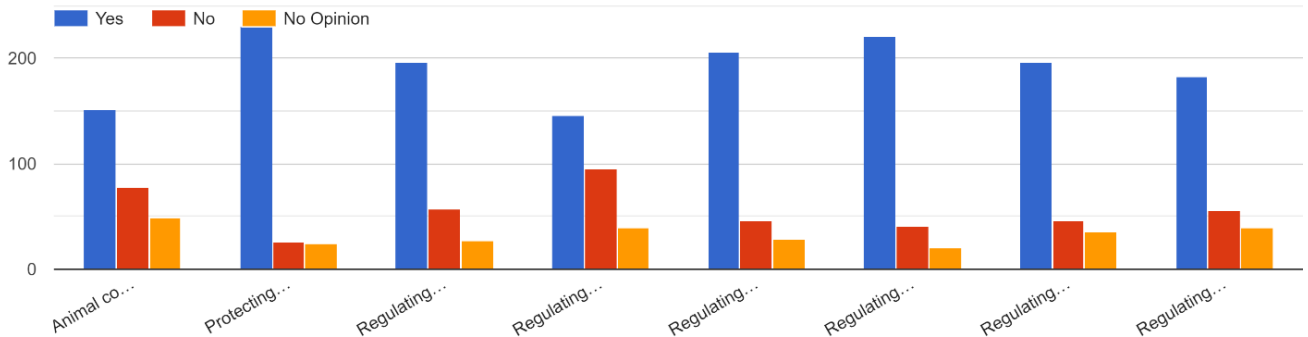


**TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY**  
**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024**

13. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements: The Town of Hamden should promote and encourage:

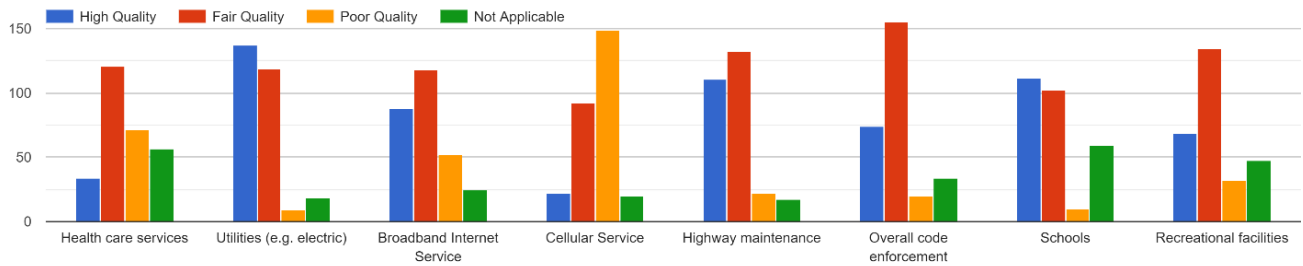


14. Should the Town establish or improve local controls with respect to the following:

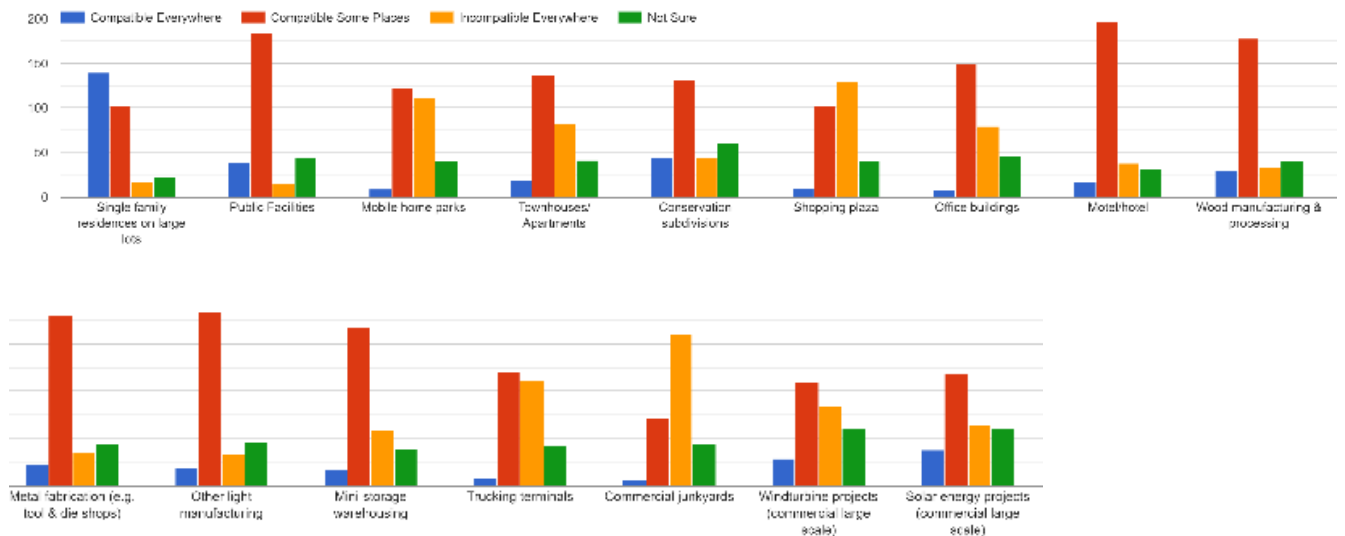


# *TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY* *COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

15. How would you rate the quality of the following public and semi-public services within the town?



16. How compatible do you feel each of the following forms of NEW residential/commercial development would be for the Town of Hamden?



If you feel any of the above are compatible only in some areas within the Town, please indicate where below or use additional paper: 52 responses

turbines/solar - out of scenic views  
 most need to be near the NYS highway systems or county roads - not on town roads  
 cell tower infrastructure compatible everywhere  
 wind turbine - very remote area, solar projects - not sure  
 non residential uses away from residential homes  
 Any commercial development - Along SR10, CR2 or CR 26  
 to be determined perhaps near to existing industry  
 wind, solar, or cluster developments not in any area of visibility to farms or private residences

*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

commercial uses - only in areas w/ road access straight enough to support

Depends on. The property

If the area isn't big enough or is too close to the village then it needs to be decided if it will work in the location, stream or river, close proximity to homes with children.

Hamden needs to do a better job of regulating what is visible from Route 10. Abandoned buildings and eyesore businesses like self-storage facilities actively prevent Hamden from becoming a thriving community.

cell phone service - everywhere for everyone

large residences on smaller lots

only along the Rt 10 corridor and away from residential areas

Common sense dictates that a shopping plaza or commercial junkyard does not make sense in certain places, such as the center of main street in town, the same thinking goes for the other items.

Businesses (shops and restaurants): Place in existing houses and maintain architectural character of the town by renovating these existing buildings. No windowless metal buildings!

Any & All should be located on Rt 10 or like main roads

manufacturing small scale - near center of town not residential, wind turbines - not in path of migratory birds, trailer parks - greenspace but not residential area

Any non-farm activities or redevelopment - keep segregated so as to preserve natural environment

commercial should be on Rt 10 only

wind and solar - both in a place so not an eye sore, and out of sight as much as possible

Outside the hamlet

Trucking terminals should be on State Route 10. Hotels/Motels, Apartments, and public facilities should be near the hamlet.

Light manufacturing and energy projects should not be near residential areas.

Industry should all be around the same area with strict guide lines no pollution!

most uses listed - in and around downtown

shopping plaza - Rt 10 near Fraser dairies. Industry/Office Rt 10 near New Holland dealer

offices and hotels - on route 10

keep commercial development downtown to preserve recreation is important

Cell Phone service - everywhere and anywhere needed to cover all of Hamden

It is important to respect the character of the village and the beautiful landscape of the town. We already have busy roads and large public works or big commercial projects would add to this problem.

wind projects - non prime agriculture land solar projects - non prime agriculture land

restaurants, Inns, small shops, gas station, stores - Along Rt 10

solar and wind should have setback requirements from neighbors

Any - keep open spaces

small business, apartments - in villages especially for senior citizens

junkyard - out of towns

Some of the above require specific conditions to be successful. Ex- solar and wind need to be in the appropriate places like tops of hills, and open space etc. Trucking terminals would need to be on main roads as our back roads would not handle large trucks all the time. Other public facilities are also best suited for main roads.

Each use should be properly sited to ensure the preservation of the rural beauty of the town

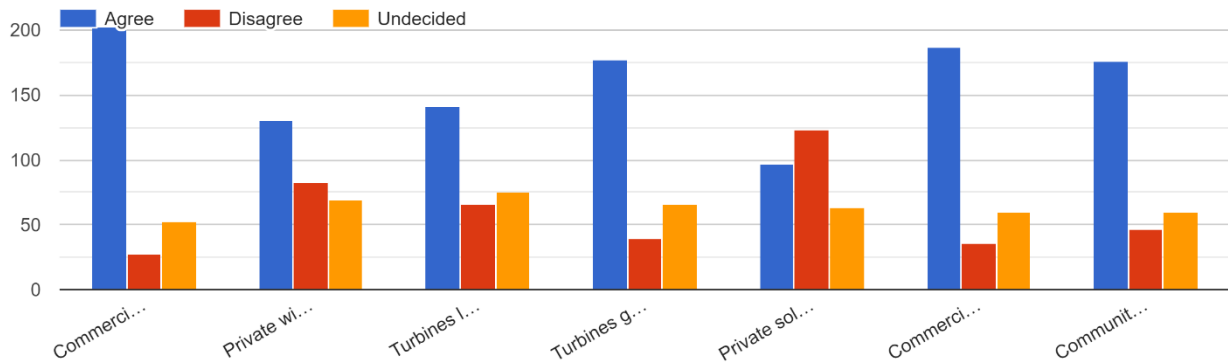
office bldgs, hotels, motels, metal fabrication, & wood manufacturing - away from residential areas

light manufacturing and metal fabrication should be grouped together and outside of town

*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

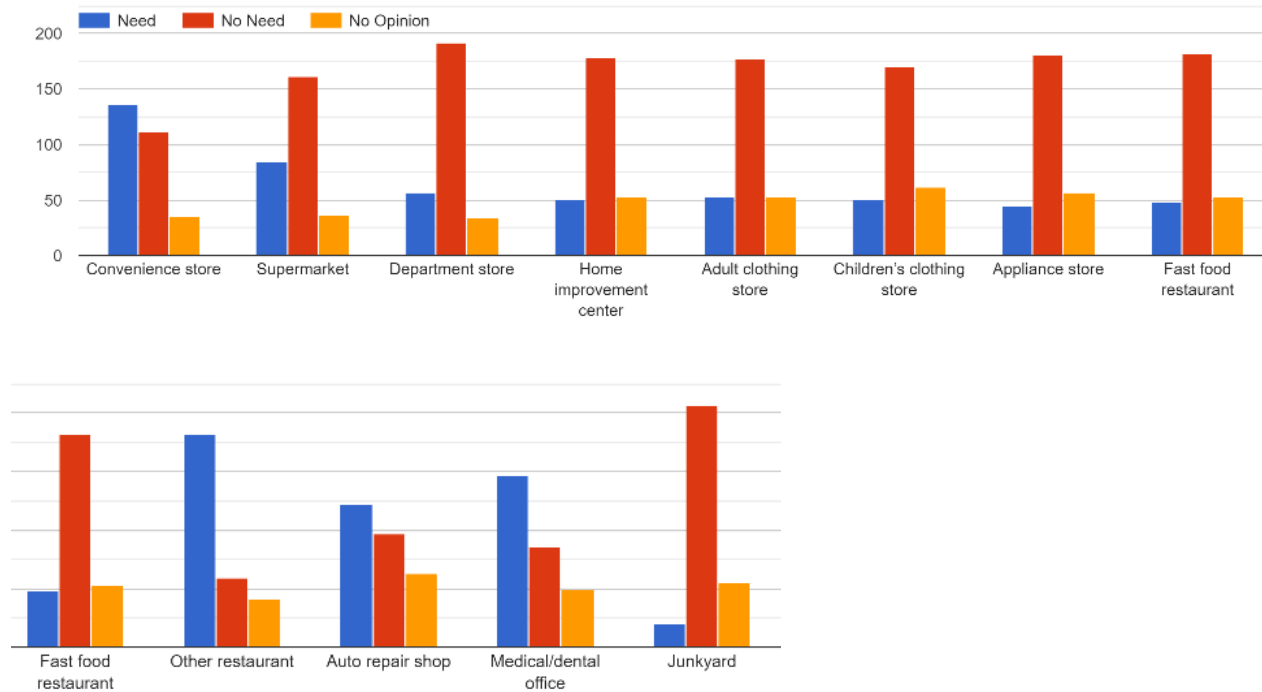
large industrial, commercial, junkyard, motel, shopping mall, office building should be in non residential areas  
I'm sure a lot of "NIMBY" people will not want various development in their backyard—myself included—I would be fine with solar panels in my backyard but not wind turbines for example.  
Trucking terminals, and apartments would be ideal on State Route 10, solar and wind turbines would be on a hillside for effectiveness.  
NO wind turbines. No solar panels.  
Office Bldgs, manufacturing, & fabrication - along Route 10  
Off Route 10 or main roads  
wind and solar projects - on state land or open areas  
wind and solar - anywhere except top of mountains  
manufacturing, hotels & shops - should be in hamlets (hamden or delancy)  
out of the town  
large buildings should be out of town proper

17. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements: The Town of Hamden should regulate the development of:



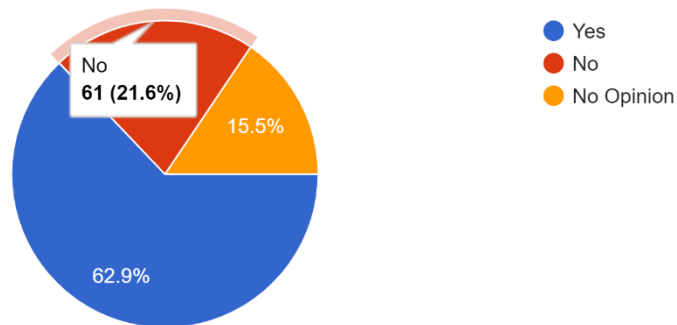
*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

18. How much additional NEED is there in the Town of Hamden for the following types of consumer establishments?



19. Are you in favor of seeing tourism grow as an industry / economic force within Hamden?

283 responses



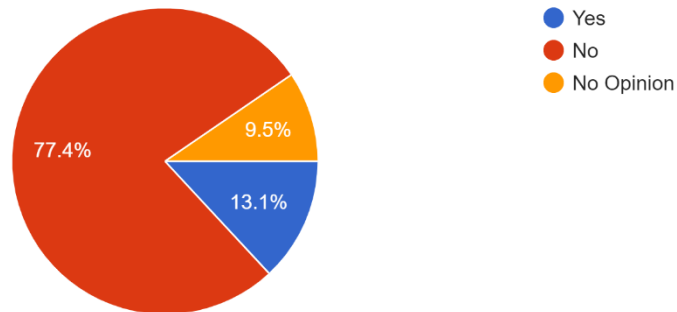


*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

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20. Do you or members of your household work in a field that would benefit from increased tourism and greater numbers of people visiting Hamden?

283 responses



21. The Comprehensive Plan Committee would like to know your opinion on how to encourage/attract its young people to remain in the area, or returning to Hamden after pursuing other types of opportunities (college, military, training, etc.). Of your children that do NOT plan to stay in Hamden, or return, what are their reasons? 226 responses

jobs  
lack of jobs  
lack of employment  
no comment  
no jobs  
lack of employment, quality jobs- not just hourly pay jobs  
wanted to live in another county  
job options things to do  
Our daughter returned from down state to pursue working with horses  
Lack of jobs  
better opportunities to follow dreams & dream jobs. Better salaries, taking a break from small town living  
all got married and moved to other states. High taxes, no jobs in chosen professions  
taxes deteriorating the economy and eliminating jobs  
light manufacturing of chips/processors for computers etc.  
LOWER YOUR INFLATED TAXES  
no local employment  
Jobs  
There needs to be more jobs in the area, homes for them to live in. Opportunity to do things outdoors and indoors. People need and want to have things to do in order to stay in an area. Most rural areas have no attractions for local people and you have to travel many miles to get something or to do something.

*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

They could create more opportunities to help small business owners get their start in the area. Also, there needs to be an emphasis on making the main business district in Hamden more desirable both aesthetically and economically. Nobody wants to live in a dying or depressing area.

my children have their own reasons and are retired in another state

better salaries and opportunities

increase work opportunities, lower taxes and increase enforcement of the regulations already in place

I think historically young people left the area to find jobs, there are very few in the surrounding area. With COVID and work from home, this may fundamentally change that and allow young people to live anywhere and work remotely

There is nothing here for them to do after 9-5 working hours. We only stop in Hamden to get gas or otherwise just pass through

school

no work for them

You know the answer

Cost of owning house/property is high due to the city (NYC) people have more money which drives up land price along with costly regulations (like septic systems)

must have strong broadband and ease of transportation

good paying jobs

spouse and career path that led to different location

lower property taxes

Keep it rural and pristine! Nature is the main asset!

keep the taxes down

work, weather

they stayed

career choice not available locally

employment opportunities

good luck!

you need more businesses jobs so that young people stay.

looking for work

our kids are young, but I would say a lack of high paying job opportunities would discourage those from returning

no jobs, followed spouses

high taxes

build out internet services for online job opportunities

moved for employment

Mesh/Add college or other training with job possibilities

better pay and jobs elsewhere

too rural

jobs, business opportunities, better schools, improved power, tax rates

LACK OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

not sure

no opinion, grown children will make their own decisions and will have to live with those decisions

We should promote the development of the village and regulate the speed limits- people drive so fast that is has become dangerous.

*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

both children live in the area  
No children of our own but tourism opens opportunity for a younger generation with jobs  
They live in other states  
no children living here  
little or no jobs  
nothing here  
Get rid of the confederate flags and racists, much to conservative  
unable to get suitable employment  
low paying jobs  
Avoid dreaming up ideas that spend tax money  
not enough employment opportunities  
no good jobs with advancement, no consistent cultural events or entertainment  
We need good paying jobs in the area. I think the majority of young people choose to live elsewhere because other places have a closer proximity to better jobs or at the very least, more actual jobs.  
no stores, no restaurants  
I do not have children, but trade related education and training would be a first step  
they have employment  
Eldest child moved away for employment . Youngest child remains in the area  
job opportunities (or lack of)  
"Hamden sucks" "I don't want to work in a milk plant" to quote them. Both live nearby but Hamden has limited opportunities for growth. I think many of us have to create our own opportunities and be self employed. Which works for some people, but not for everyone.  
I have no children, but I returned to the area after college because I did not like city life. I love this area and I want to see it grow and help people realize that country living is beautiful. Farming is needed and people can preserve the area while still make a comfortable living.  
no jobs, affordable housing  
more jobs  
keeping homes affordable, and promote good jobs with salary and benefits  
Lack of employment  
rural, no services, not convenient  
cold weather, few jobs for college educated  
warmer weather  
make hamden more hip  
Decrease taxes to make living her more affordable in comparison to neighboring towns like Downsville or even Walton that have similar or better scenic/land draws  
school and work  
little opportunity in their field of study  
lack of good paying sustainable jobs  
job opportunities

Of your children that WILL STAY, OR RETURN after college / military / other, what are their reasons? <sup>211</sup> responses

family

*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

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no comment

proximity to family

no opportunities in their fields and not enough diversions for their lifestyle - just a choice

work, easy to get around

love the land and agriculture in the county

rural lifestyle and ag opportunities

our children remained in Delaware County and found careers here

work with horses / rural setting

Be near family

one child stayed - low key area, clean, low crime, friendly

less restrictions, freedom, family

None have stayed, but will they be back???

Stuck here, couldn't afford to go elsewhere

no good jobs, beef farming would be a good reason to come back

NO JOBS

none will stay

They have left the area because there is nothing here for them to return too. Jobs are hard to find that will make them enough money to settle in. They like to do things, go places and see things.

Delaware Academy

school for their children - family

Jobs

school and recreation

they love the area

They won't stay

I know the main reason I left was because of the city

family close by - like small town living and schools

Works locally

family ties, good work

property taxes

raising family rural life

it is home. family and friends

No children in household.

born and raised here, family here

A slower paced lifestyle in a rural setting

be near parents

no future here

to work in the area

Facilitate cannabis farming to grow agriculture community amongst younger generation

family, lifestyle, country living

rural atmosphere

regulate, develop, bring light industry, bring cultural events to attract "2nd homers"

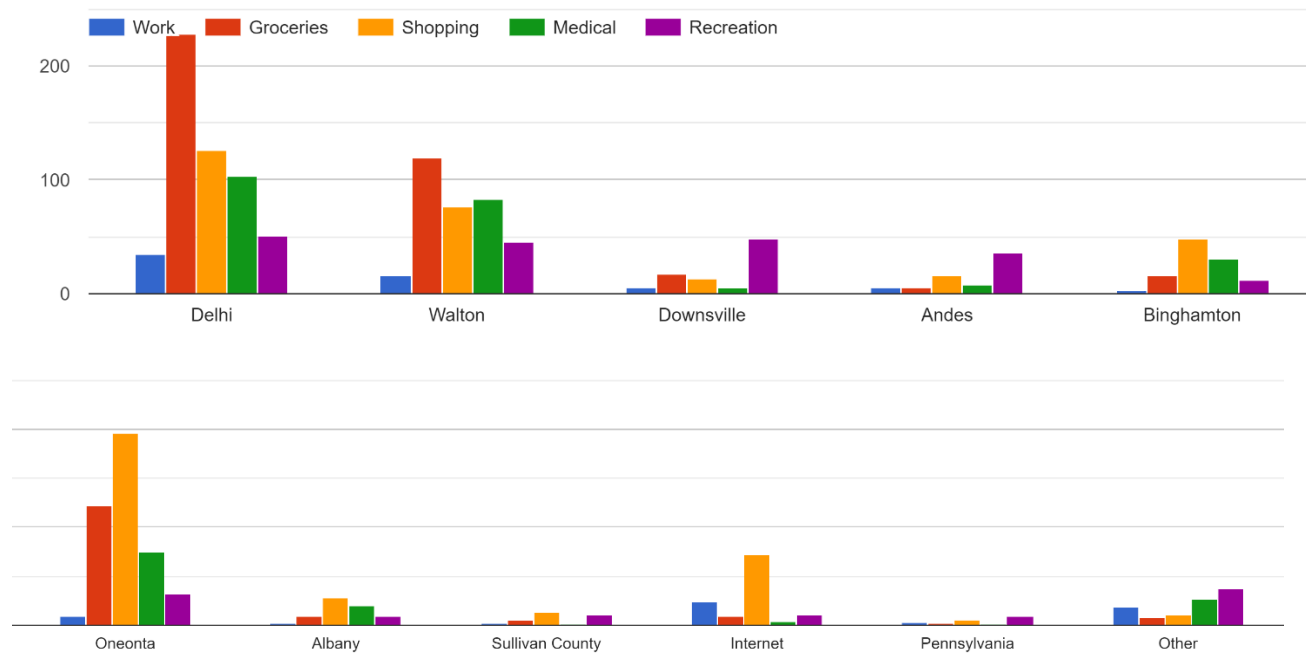
Family, Quality of schools

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*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

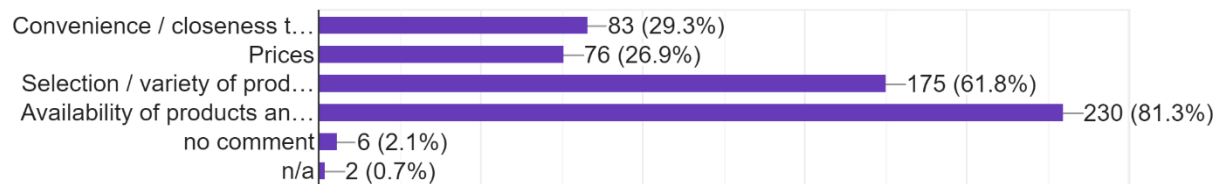
work - decent jobs  
rural life  
home sweet home  
school, work, and family  
If I had children it would be for employment opportunities  
enjoy rural setting  
family, school district  
want to start a business working with horses

22. Where do you go for your needs? (If more than one answer applies please select the most common location)



23. Why do you travel outside of Hamden for your needs? (Check all that apply)

283 responses

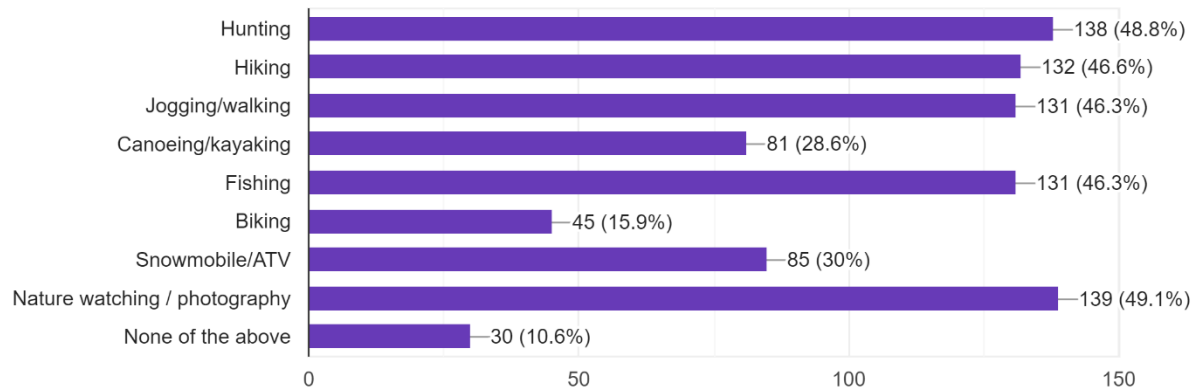


*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

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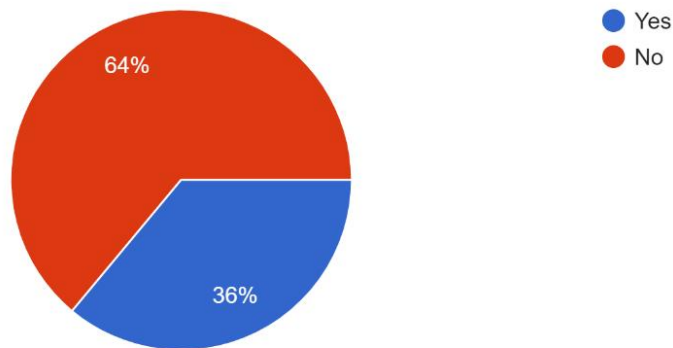
24. Do you partake in any of the following activities in the Town of Hamden?

283 responses



25. Do you utilize NYC DEP lands and/or the reservoirs?

283 responses



25. a. If yes, for what purpose(s)? 283 responses

n/a

fishing

hunting and fishing

hiking

hunting

N/A

recreation



*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

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no  
hunting, fishing  
Fishing  
fishing and hunting  
hiking, jogging, biking  
fishing and hiking  
walks  
fishing and boating  
hiking and walking  
Hiking, hunting, fishing  
biking, hiking, and swimming  
tourism  
all activities above  
hunt and fish  
FISHING AND HIKING  
I answered no, cant even get the form right  
fishing, hiking, biking  
Hunting  
kayaking, hiking  
hiking, fishing, kayaking  
walking, nature watching and photography  
hiking, bird watching  
exercise  
for whatever the hell I want!!  
hunting, hiking  
kayaking, walking, nature photography  
walking, hunting, fishing  
nature  
fishing, hiking, nature watching  
fishing, hiking, nature  
not tyet  
encourage  
None  
Fishing, Hiking  
Hunting  
fish and hunt  
hunting, hiking, fishing  
Hiking, fishing, hunting  
I don't use those lands  
hiking, hunting, and fishing  
n//a  
boating on the reserviors

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*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

hunting and hiking  
Fishing and Canoeing  
not at this time. maybe in the future  
hiking and photos  
canoeing and hiking  
hunting, fishing, photography  
N/a  
nature, wildlife, some fishing  
No  
hiking and nature  
fishing, hunting, nature watching  
hunting, fishing, hiking  
Hiking. Hunting in the past.  
Recreation/hiking/sight-seeing  
fishing, hunting  
kayaking  
Fishing and hiking  
hunting, fishing, and hiking  
recreation, hunting  
snowmobile and fishing  
walking

**26. Would you encourage or discourage continued NYCDEP land acquisitions?**

**Why?** 268 responses

no comment  
discourage  
encourage  
no opinion  
no  
Discourage  
not sure  
yes  
undecided  
Discourage-there is enough  
encourage to protect our lands  
Discourage NYCDEP land acquisitions, id they buy up too much more land you will have no where for young adults or businesses to settle.  
No, I think NYC has already acquired enough land in the area  
Discourage because they have pretty much saturated the area and they are reducing the assessment/taxes that could be collected from growing by this land not being accessed for building and growth.

*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

Neither - I'd leave it to the landowner

NO/ Bad for development

Discourage or make them pay taxes on it

encourage It's more natural land for us & the critters

Encourage

yes- for land conservation and outdoor activities. For stream and river management

ENCOURAGE

yes, don't need development

discourage because they make it so you can't afford more land and they pay more than what it's worth

encourage, tops of mountains for anything but hunting, trapping

Discourage- they have purchased an adequate amount already.

It is okay if they continue to pay their fair share. They need the clean water which is the area's most important asset

encourage. it would cut down on commerce/homes

Encourage, it's good for tourism

discourage, they have enough land

discourage, NYC control

YES

reduce development / keep more open space

discourage the city buying up our lands. They are restricting the growth of the area and creating higher taxes for us full time residents.

discourage - decreases opportunity for locals to buy and build on lands

discourage. inherent limits on use/development of such properties

encourage - limit housing development and paid taxes on well maintained lands

Yes, in certain circumstances. Environmentally sensitive areas (wetlands, forests, headwaters of streams and rivers) should be protected from development and misuse. Vacant properties that have sat unused for years should be purchased to prevent people from storing garbage and unregistered vehicles on them. Also, when the land is purchased by NYC, that is guaranteed tax revenue for the town.

Encourage to protect land from development.

not sure, do not know enough about this to have an opinion

mixed opinion. Yes, to protect natural landscape and farmland and water quality. No, because local residents need to be able to afford to live here and buy homes and we need tax revenue from these lands.

discourage! They already have enough

Both. encourage if the alternative is someone buying as a secondary vacation home that may let the place go derelict;

discourage if a local farmer or someone looking to live there full-time can use it/wants it.

encourage - to protect the environment

Discourage. Too easy to do land grabs if enforced by gov't. People rights and lives will be destroyed.

Discourage. We need land area to create jobs and for families to live or the town will die

no they own plenty of land

discourage - they are going to take over

do not know how more acquisition can help Hamden

discourage - some day they will stop paying taxes

discourage further acquisitions

*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

Discourage. Personally, I think they own plenty of our land already. Furthermore, the Watershed Ag Council does an amazing job assisting current landowners in best management practices for water quality. NYCDEP does not need to OWN the land to protect water.

discourage, anything the government touches turns to crap for the public!

encourage to preserve greenspace

Encourage if it's going to keep this area clean and less building of homes.

Discourage. The land becomes fallow. NYC is NOT a good neighbor. Does not allow much public uses in most cases.

Discourage. They have enough land and too many regulations making it extremely hard on locals to buy and build or expand.

Discourage. The less government the better

Discourage. There are possible tax implications in the future

Discourage. Lost tax base!

Encourage. More protected land means the beauty and wildlife of Hamden is protected.

Discourage. They already have enough

Discourage unless they remain on the tax rolls

encourage. keep it wild!

Encourage to increase recreation opportunities

encourage, to allow lands not used to remain undeveloped and provide economic gain to land owners

Discourage. They own too much now, we need them to let us harvest trees to previous owners

Encourage but only in specific areas (wetlands, stream bottoms, etc.)

Discourage. They have too much land already and it has hurt farming

Discourage. Their intent to own the property is, to a large extent, directly opposed to our intent.

Discourage. more regulations

Encourage. It protects their water quality and creates a tourism asset for the town

Encourage. It increases property values

Encourage. Increased opportunities to develop tourism

Encourage. I'm in favor of keeping as much land "wild" as possible

Discourage. Prefer private sector

Discourage. They own too much of Hamden. NYC will run Hamden soon

Discourage. Our tax base is dwindling

Discourage. Due to future loss of control and increased property taxes

Yes, it's beautiful. I would like to do it more myself

Encourage. The rural beauty of Delaware County and of Hamden is the greatest asset of both. As the saying goes: land; God ain't making any more. Maintaining rural character will encourage tourism; encourage craft and local farming, etc.

Yes preserve land and outdoor opportunities

Discourage. One landowner has too much influence and power and will control the market values.

Encourage. Keep Hamden wild

There seems to be a nice balance now

Encourage. For water quality and conservation

Discourage. They have too much control over our lives as it is.

Yes, preservation of landscape water quality quality of life

Yes, I would encourage within reason. Having these lands open for recreation has been great especially for the common person who can't afford otherwise.

*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

Encourage for conservation and water health

Discourage. Valuable land is being bought that could be used for more residential development if taxes were lower; already enough DEP owned land in the area

Yes, they offer more than local people would

encourage. to see areas remain undeveloped

Discourage. It limits growth of the town

Encourage. to maintain open space

Encourage to preserve open space

Discourage. It takes land away from potential use by locals

encourage. they are beautiful open public spaces

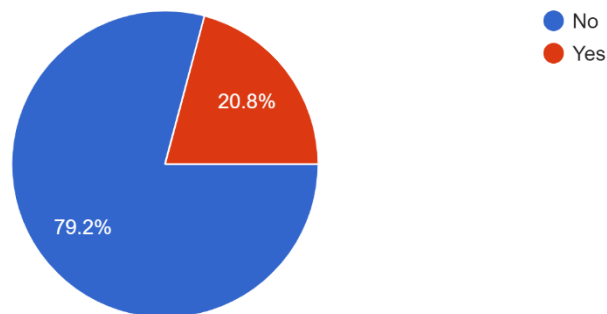
Encourage - it prevents overdevelopment and encourages conservation

Discourage - no more acquisitions; they stifle any growth

encourage. too many farms have gone to small lots with cabins or houses. have you looked around when leaves are off

27. Do you or members of your family volunteer and participate in Town and/or community activities, such as: fire company, town committees, civic clubs, faith based, scouting, others?

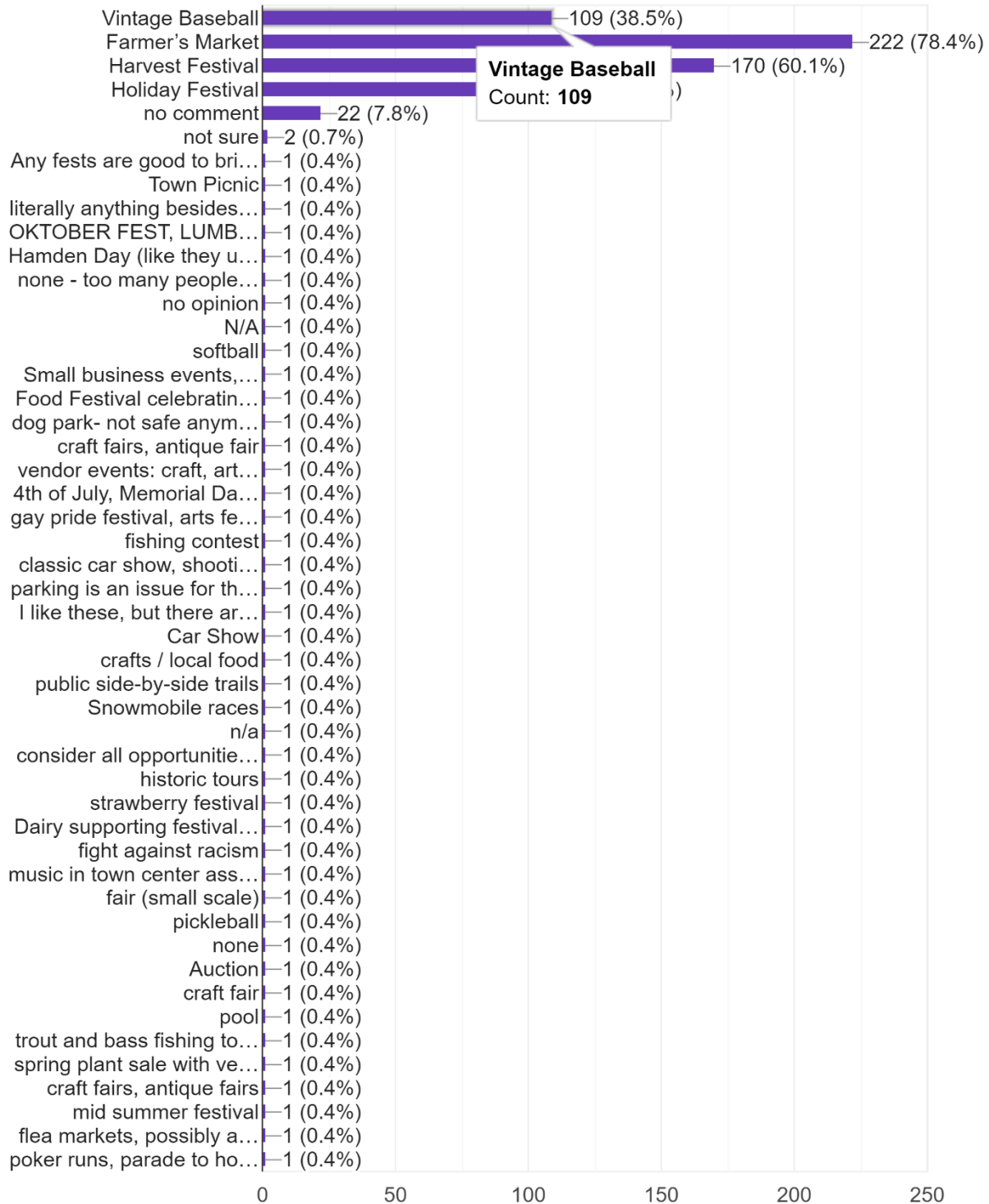
283 responses



**TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY**  
**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024**

**28. What community events should the Town of Hamden consider/promote/encourage?**

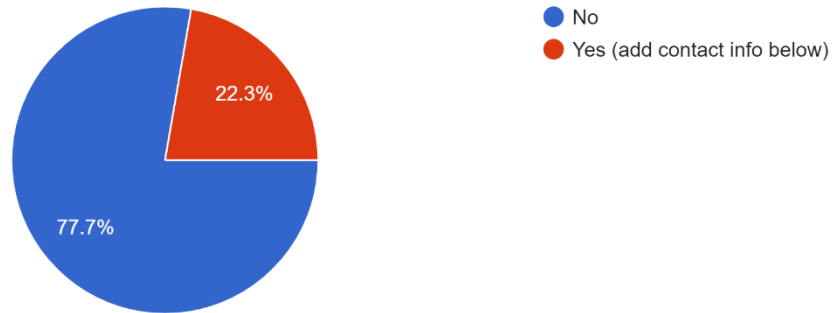
283 responses



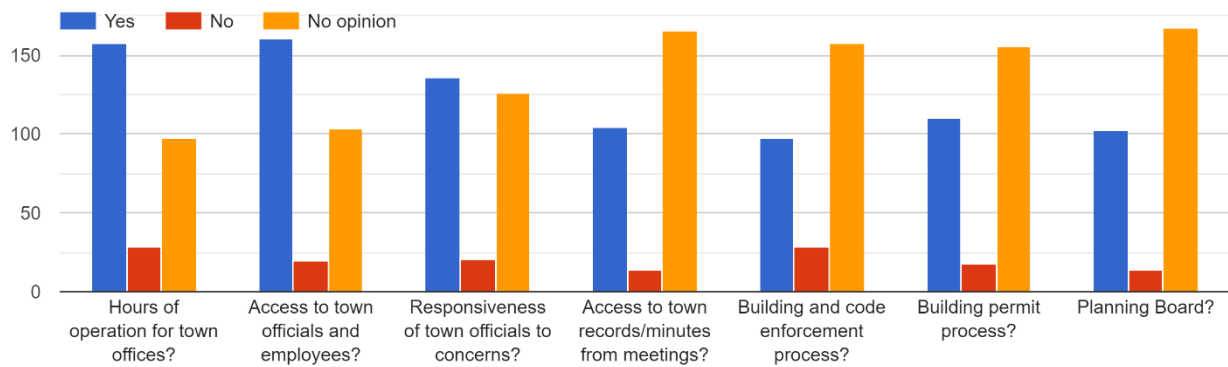
*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

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29. Would you be interested in volunteering to help the community achieve its goals?  
283 responses



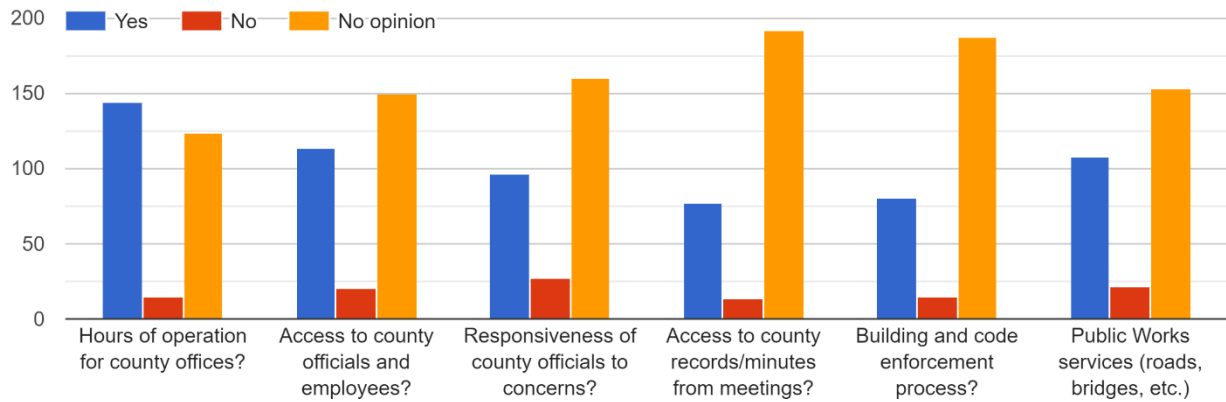
30. Are you satisfied with the following services from town government?



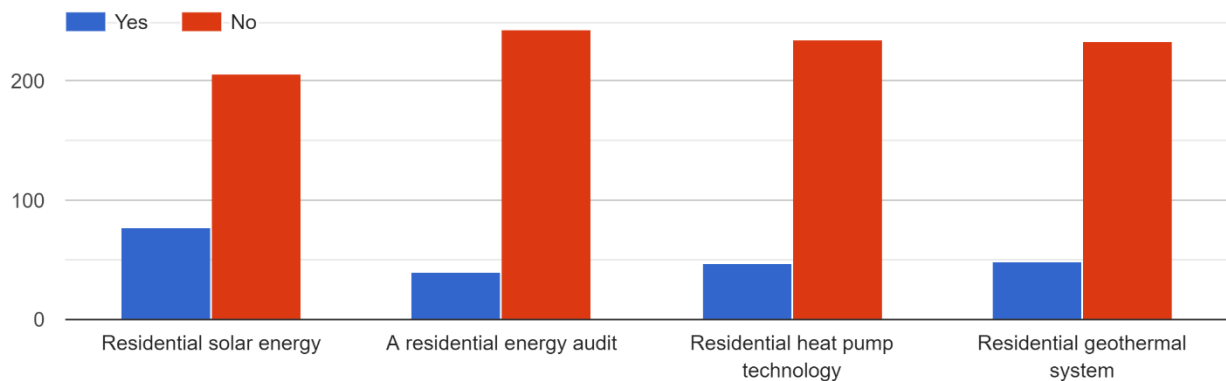


*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

31. Are you satisfied with the following services from Delaware County government?



32. Have you considered or are you interested in information regarding:



33. What would you change in Hamden? 283 responses

no comment  
nothing  
no opinion  
n/a  
Main street needs improvement. Looks rundown  
The speed limit in DeLancey and in the Hamlet of Hamden and the addition of children at play signs  
Bring in business

*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY*  
*COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

Do more to beautify main street and preserve the history. Adopt or enforce code which deters properties on main street from being left in, or entering into a dilapidated state and becoming eyesores. The current state of many properties along main street are eyesores and have an overall negative effect on the perception of the town. Read the broken window theory I think the covered bridge is a huge attraction and I wish there was a clear view from sitting area on state highway 10 side. I have often debated if I should rent canoes or floats for river.

The speed limit near farms

Increase communication with the public.

Buildings in severe disrepair and personal junkyards, especially on main thoroughfares

Fix Main Street

I would encourage the façade repairs to the town proper for starters so it would be more attractive to small business and tourism.

My view has been obstructed by wanna be farmers

more stores, places to eat,

NA

It has become a very run down looking town on route 10 there is no reason to stop, no shops, unsightly looking homes & businesses

Speed limit! and speed enforcement. Junk cleaned up in front of homes. Not allowing vacant properties in town to become derelict or drug flop houses. Please keep our taxes low.

Allow cell phone tower - bad phone service. Improve internet service

LOWER MY TAXES

not much. speed limit?

lower taxes for people who maintain their property and raise taxes for people to don't take care of their property

Code enforcement, have it actually enforced. Issues should not have to be reported. Code enforcement past and present should actively do their job.

Look further into the future. Progress is not always progress. Life quality counts.

Eliminate mini junkyards/derby car "collections" completely!! ruins views, vistas, & property values

improve roads

road conditions

The taxes have become too high and you need more stores and shopping in the local town

expand price chopper, add more restaurants

Go back 45 years. Representation on tax issues for seasonal residents

Try to improve main street. Hamden Inn & old lucky dog is a great start.

Clean up the look along the main drag in Hamden. The main drag through town is looking really bad. Also enforce the regulations and restrictions concerning the the pile of crap and junk yard on Hamden hill by the Ridge road intersection. Ya all know the place! That kid is the most disrespectful person!

junk car "farms" need to go, more restaurants, movie night?, icecream hang out, yoga studio

road maintenance

improve cellular service, on SR 10 corridor - enact rules to prevent houses & Buildings from staying covered in house wrap or other construction material which is supposed to be temporary, for unreasonably long.

maintain my road - lewis lane

regulate snow mobile noise and speed limit.

*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY*  
*COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

Enforcement of state laws regulating the storage of unregistered junk vehicles and stockpiling of garbage on private property .  
Improved enforcement of building codes in general. The speed limit on State Route 10 through the Hamlet should be lowered.  
More services like restaurants and hotels to incentivize tourism.

connection to community, zoom public meetings, protection of low traffic, promote outdoors: quiet environment, air/land quality  
more places to dine and gather, local craft store, bookstore/library, access to the arts: perhaps an arts building with painting  
and writing studios at low cost, classes for children, exhibitions, readings, and films

tax rate

To try to get homeowners to clear junk from porches and mow lawns... Main Street is the first thing people see. It is improving  
with sale of homes.

Less abandoned properties, encourage farming more, discourage people (downstaters) buying property as a vacation home  
just to let the property go derelict.

see accompanying email

not sure

My taxes doubled in one years time. A new unbiased evaluation of property value based on comparable land sales in the area  
needs to be made.

lower taxes and no more regulation

keep it rural and quiet

"Main Street" help homeowners fix houses to look better; and no I don't live on main st.

Tax rate calculation

have state clean streets yearly. Have state fix main road, lower speed limit

better road service, they plow up our grass every year. They need to do a better job sweeping the road sand in the spring

I would like to see the speed limit dropped to 30 through town, with designated walkways

The roads are not great. I personally do not know how to fix but it is strange that other nearby towns roads are much better.

The street lights

clean up town, make it nice

better internet access and social media awareness. Should have nature cams and river cams so the rest of the world can see  
the natural beauty of Hamden

no response

I would like to be able to have a Hamden address instead of a Walton mailing address! The town is too fragmented in  
mailing/postal addresses.

I like Hamden. That is why I live here. If I could change anything I would relocate it out of the NYS watershed.

more tourism for nature and farms

less political signs, otherwise a very open and welcoming community

Keep taxes down

what can you change? I watch it deteriorate

The town should consider regulating maintenance of houses on Main street

reduce light pollution at night. Security lights could be switched to motion sensors at. Consider electric charging station

Why not make the most of free fishing days (June 26-27) If you promote a fishing contest with drinks and snacks at the  
covered bridge park I would volunteer to run it

It would be nice to have a restaurant in town and a convenience store

keep working on making the town better, cleaner, more responsive!

*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

Easier access to internet and cell service. Promote immigration to deal with "brain drain". Ease restrictions on residential businesses. Support small businesses and community cultural activities

In order for any type of tourism, main street should look appealing to the eye. Small town USA is an attraction, give people a reason to come...

keeping residential and commercial properties looking better, less junk, keep lawns mowed, houses and buildings in better repair (painted/sided)

road services, maintenance better snow cleaning and salt to prevent snow from freezing

Need an ordinance for prohibition of storage of junk cars and household appliances

promote and support more small businesses

better road maintenance, winter snow removal and repair

Vote in Conservative (Never Trumpers) to Town Board

Property taxes are too high and go up too much each year

Hamden needs a brew pub and a theater

Cleaning out of all ditches on back roads

Someone please lower our taxes so we can afford to retire here!!

lower the property taxes

Put some dirt on Bedzunas Rd. The town only does the top of the road. It cost me over \$1,000/year for stone

Need for cell phone service. Small to mid size business to increase the tax base and provide jobs

more restaurants! Beautification of the town will bring in more money to local stores.

Ban new lighted business signage. Lighted business signs may only be lit during business hours.

I do not visit the town of Hamden much. I go to Walton most of the time when on vacation.

Development - even single family housing on large lots, must be monitored. It is important that Hamden does not become suburbia with large lots. There is a difference between rural and suburban on large lots.

Home restorations. Elimination of "junk yards"

lower taxes. Availability of closer small outlet for food, clothes, and hardware

Road main st. could be a bit better. Rough roads Winter times covered with snow so much use of dirt & stones that come down hillside in spring.

create businesses to support residents and attract tourism year round

Enforce speed limits! Extend the 35 MPH limit from main st delancey to bagley brook bridge on back river road. Get noise ordinance with enforcement teeth for animal control.

lower speed limit on Rt 10, make more pedestrian friendly

Pave the rest of Gregory Hollow to the basin clove ramp. we have a lot of traffic and sick of the mud and dirt on the cars

Lower the taxes significantly

people are nice but the town needs a little help

new blood in town officials

34. Please feel free to add any additional insights, suggestions, comments, etc. in the space provided below.72 responses

Thank you for putting this together and for all you do for the town

*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY*  
*COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

I also feel the vintage baseball game could attract more people if it was advertised and give to the new businesses coming to town

NA

We have some beautiful homes in town that allowed to become empty and derelict and it is depressing to watch. The speed limit needs to be lowered and enforced.

Hopefully Hamden remains as is not turned into a long island town. Small towns should remain as such not change into industrial, business center. To many people move here then decide they want it to be where they left! malls, gas stations on every corner, etc.!

This is a comprehensive questionnaire but it is not well constructed and, as such, will be difficult to analyze or follow up on. Skippy is doing a great job

The assessment of the property is too high. You can't get that much money when you sell. The part time resident is being out priced.

Look at seasonal tax structure so as not to discourage land purchase

Our town needs stop light or something to slow people down as they drive through,

I appreciate the opportunity to express my opinion and frustrations about this town that I had loved so much.

Hamden will develop by itself as long as there is good cellular service and broadband and the buildings on the route 10 corridor do not give the impression of blight and decay.

paint the "red" covered bridge

How does the town sustain long term if little development and increased costs? How do we get a balance of income/lifestyle to live in Hamden?

We need a gorgeous appealing, informative, and up to date Town of Hamden website! Pursue arts, culture, and humanities funding for town activities. Thank you for doing this survey. So glad that the general store and Hamden Inn are coming back!

Thank you for the survey!

see accompanying email

The Town of Hamden should become a right to farm town like are popping up in Sullivan Co before the city folks take over and push the farmers out.

It's a nice place to live with friendly people. We need a little more business but that's starting to happen!

Any and all businesses that could come to Hamden would be of value to our town. Real income is generated when people choose to live here. Not only do they pay taxes, but they choose to spend their money locally as well. Business creates jobs as well.

Get Cuomo out of office

I think it would be great to have a film festival with workshops and events. Make online payments available

fairly easy place to live

No dollar general!!!

run every buyout sell to the city

For new residents, a "Welcome to Hamden" booklet outlining public services (office locations and hours) local services (electricians, plumbers, etc.) and a section on "highlights and history"

This survey is a great idea. Keep following up on the ideas & suggestions from residents!

Encourage services & More young people in Hamden. Encourage technology & emerging energy industries

Thank you for your time!

Trying to regulate cell tower in town of Hamden left us with crappy cell service. Government regulation has some place, but can have unintended negative consequences.

*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY*  
*COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

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We moved here from Sullivan Co 23 years ago because it was getting too crowded. Please protect farmland, forests, and other open space

My property is legally within Hamden, but receives few services. I drive 7.5 to vote at town hall, and pay taxes for rules & Regulations my neighbors won't need to adhere to since they are in a neighboring town.

We love the town and hope you will keep the town historic rural looking not commercial

Never use Hamden's road. Use Rt 26 and 206 & 10

Very against large scale solar or wind farms

A tree in the park behind town hall would be nice for shade. ban outdoor digital display screens. light pollution and public eyesores.

It's a beautiful country in Delaware County. Very peaceful, people are wonderful. If I lived there I would have more input.

Work with DEP to acquire tracts of land that are contiguous / adjacent so as to create the largest tracts possible. This will preserve land and help wildlife habitat

Delancey could use a small coffee shop or ice cream shop (or post office back in town)

Thank you to all who work for the town!

High taxes are a major barrier to many choosing to establish residency in Hamden when neighboring towns are significantly less and offer much more in terms of businesses and services. For the cost of taxes, the town has little to show for it or to offer residents. Additionally, roads should be better maintained year round...too many pot holes and the ditches need work to preserve integrity of roads over time.

All development should be review. there is a proper place for most development

Enforcement of local codes regarding "junkyards". Especially on Hamden Hill between Launt Hollow and Covert Hollow

Seasonal property owners have great pride in owning in Hamden. Those of us would appreciate a monthly or quarterly publication with items specific to Hamden

government governs best that governs least

Love Hamden the way it is! Rural, farm, I know progress is inevitable but the local government should move slowly & with caution.

Build or create attractions to college age kids. They also bring in money. Support local businesses. Concerts, sports, go carts, fun park!! Just in the proper locations...

more benches would be nice in park area

term limits on all politicians and board members!

We thank you for our lovely Hamden and love our little place on the mountain. Please keep our taxes down and help us all to enjoy our little bit of heaven on earth! Angel Blessings to you!

Stop the insane snowmobile and ATV users. Enforce DMV and strict enforcement of trespass laws

more patrols of roads such as Basin Clove which is isolated

I LOVE HAMDEN!

Protect space, animals, and water. promote organic farms. help local farmers and residents open small businesses.

please do not eliminate the quiet rural areas available for homes. establish a noise ordinance

When we moved here Hamden was rural and agricultural. Now its full of governmental type offices (ARC, Del Opportunities, WAC, Fire training center, drug & alcohol center, etc.) These agencies have not positively contributed to the community & they don't support our tax base.

Thanks for the survey! We do sometimes host campers through hipcamp and do music too.

thank you

Please keep our town a small unintrusive place to live and enjoy

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*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

Hamden is a quiet scenic town with lots of wildlife and privacy. Commercializing it ruins it for all the people who built or bought homes in this area. We don't want to live in a commercial area with houses side by side

We love the quiet rural feel of Hamden and wouldn't want to impact that but we'd love a small "hub" where we could park and sit on a bench with ice cream or coffee and maybe walk into a shop. Delhi is great but I'm talking a much smaller more quaint scale.

I am only a seasonal resident

I am very concerned of the possibility of NYC holdings becoming exempt from property taxes. That would be the death of us all. We could not pick up that huge added expense.

I am not in favor of wind farm development. I feel this will greatly disrupt the character of the town and lands within the town

We could use some options for shopping for necessities

Discourage or ban Airbnb, tentR, etc. that encourage transients to remain. Minimize light pollution by raising awareness and encourage light shielding, low light illumination, etc.

I didn't answer all questions because I don't live there

A store like Downsville now has, Dollar General, would be good for the town

I feel when you respect one person way of life you respect everyone's. Our individual freedoms are most important

Need to maintain private small business entities and provide river access points for fisherman on west branch delaware with possible parking areas

People to clean their property up. Take down falling homes/barns and remove broken cars & farm equipment  
lower taxes will help greatly and allow people to fix their homes and property without punishing them with taxes. Help fix up building with a way for people to help towards ownership

# **Appendix C**

## **Census of Agriculture Summary (2022)**



*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

Delaware County		
<b>FARMS</b>		
Land in farms .....	farms	579
.....	acres	128,232
Harvested cropland .....	farms	416
.....	acres	51,714
<b>OWNED AND RENTED LAND IN FARMS</b>		
Owned land in farms .....	farms	562
.....	acres	87,999
Rented or leased land in farms .....	farms	191
.....	acres	40,233
<b>TENURE</b>		
Full owners .....	farms	388
.....	acres	48,426
Harvested cropland .....	farms	239
.....	acres	10,780
Part owners .....	farms	174
.....	acres	76,222
Owned land in farms .....	acres	39,573
Rented land in farms .....	acres	36,649
Harvested cropland .....	farms	163
.....	acres	39,403
Tenants .....	farms	17
.....	acres	3,584
Harvested cropland .....	farms	14
.....	acres	1,531
<b>NUMBER OF TOTAL PRODUCERS</b>		
Total producers .....	number	1,111
Farms by number of producers:		
1 producer .....		219
2 producers .....		270
3 producers .....		35
4 producers .....		39
5 or more producers .....		16
Total male producers .....	number	687
Farms by number of male producers:		
1 producer .....		430
2 producers .....		66
3 producers .....		25
4 producers .....		11
5 or more producers .....		1
Total female producers .....	number	424
Farms by number of female producers:		
1 producer .....		315
2 producers .....		35
3 producers .....		9
4 producers .....		3
5 or more producers .....		-
<b>PRODUCER CHARACTERISTICS 1</b>		
Producers (see text) .....		1,084
Sex of producers:		
Male .....		676
Female .....		408
Hired managers .....		32
Primary occupation:		
Farming .....		572
Other .....		512
Place of residence:		
On farm operated .....		837
Not on farm operated .....		247
Days worked off farm:		

*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY*  
*COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

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None .....	429
Any .....	655
1 to 49 days .....	132
50 to 99 days .....	55
100 to 199 days .....	103
200 days or more .....	365
Years on present farm:	
2 years or less .....	45
3 or 4 years .....	87
5 to 9 years .....	124
10 years or more .....	828
Average years on present farm .....	
Years operating any farm:	24.6
5 years or less .....	121
6 to 10 years .....	107
11 years or more .....	856

*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

Delaware County	
Farms .....	number
Land in farms .....	acres
Average size of farm .....	acres
Median size of farm .....	acres
Estimated market value of land and buildings:	
Average per farm .....	dollars
Average per acre .....	dollars
Estimated market value of all machinery and equipment .....	\$1,000
Average per farm .....	dollars
Farms by size:	
1 to 9 acres .....	
10 to 49 acres .....	
50 to 179 acres .....	
180 to 499 acres .....	
500 to 999 acres .....	
1,000 acres or more .....	
Total cropland .....	farms
	acres
Harvested cropland .....	farms
	acres
Irrigated land .....	farms
	acres
Market value of agricultural products sold .....	\$1,000
Average per farm .....	dollars
Crops, including nursery and greenhouse crops .....	\$1,000
Livestock, poultry, and their products .....	\$1,000
Farms by value of sales:	
Less than \$2,500 .....	
\$2,500 to \$4,999 .....	
\$5,000 to \$9,999 .....	
\$10,000 to \$24,999 .....	
\$25,000 to \$49,999 .....	
\$50,000 to \$99,999 .....	
\$100,000 or more .....	
Government payments .....	farms
	\$1,000
Total income from farm-related sources .....	farms
	\$1,000
Total farm production expenses .....	\$1,000
Average per farm .....	dollars
Net cash farm income of the operations .....	farms
	\$1,000
Average per farm .....	dollars
Livestock and poultry:	
Cattle and calves inventory .....	farms
	number
Beef cows .....	farms
	number
Milk cows .....	farms
	number
Cattle and calves sold .....	farms
	number
Hogs and pigs inventory .....	farms
	number
Hogs and pigs sold .....	farms
	number
Sheep and lambs inventory .....	farms
	number
Layers inventory .....	farms
	number
Broilers and other meat-type chickens sold .....	farms
	number

*TOWN OF HAMDEN, DELAWARE COUNTY, NY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024*

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Selected crops harvested:		
Corn for grain .....	farms	24
	acres	2,308
	bushels	309,011
Corn for silage or greenchop .....	farms	60
	acres	9,251
	tons	158,721
Wheat for grain, all .....	farms	3
	acres	(D)
	bushels	(D)
Durum wheat for grain .....	farms	-
	acres	-
	bushels	-
Other spring wheat for grain .....	farms	-
	acres	-
	bushels	-
Winter wheat for grain .....	farms	3
	acres	(D)
	bushels	(D)
Oats for grain .....	farms	4
	acres	212
	bushels	11,962