



TOWN OF COEYMANS

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT

ADOPTED MAY 27, 2021



Engineering and
Land Surveying, P.C.



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Comprehensive Plan Amendment

May 2021

INTRODUCTION

In July 2020, the Town of Coeymans initiated a targeted amendment to its 2006 Comprehensive Plan to reflect the current needs, opportunities, and vision for the community. The Town has experienced significant industrial growth in recent years and seeks to update the plan to strike a balance that supports industry while maintaining and enhancing residential areas and natural resources.

Project Overview

This effort is intended to be a targeted amendment and serves as an amendment to the existing 2006 Comprehensive Plan. The existing plan will continue to serve as the guiding document for the Town of Coeymans with the additional topic areas and recommendations that have been identified for the amendment. A planning process has guided this effort with several tasks, including public engagement, a review of past planning efforts, a Comprehensive Plan Report Card, supplemental existing conditions assessment and coordination with the Coeymans Town Board. Each of these tasks is discussed in further detail below.



View from NYS Route 143, Coeymans

The Planning Process

The planning process for the Comprehensive Plan amendment was led by the Coeymans Town Board. The Town Board's role was to oversee the development of the Comprehensive Plan amendment and provide insight and feedback to guide the process prior to the plan's adoption. The process was facilitated by M.J. Engineering and Land Surveying, P.C. of Clifton Park, New York. This plan represents the Town Board's effort to synthesize opinions from stakeholders and respond to the challenges and opportunities facing the community.

Existing Conditions

Prior to the initiation of the Comprehensive Plan amendment process, the Town completed an analysis of existing conditions. This included the preparation of a community profile by the Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC) and a Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) prepared by the Town of Coeymans Conservation Advisory Council. An Existing Conditions Supplement and Comprehensive Plan Report Card were also prepared by the consultant team to evaluate existing conditions not included in the previous efforts and to identify relevant recommendations from the 2006 Comprehensive Plan. Following is a description of each of these components.



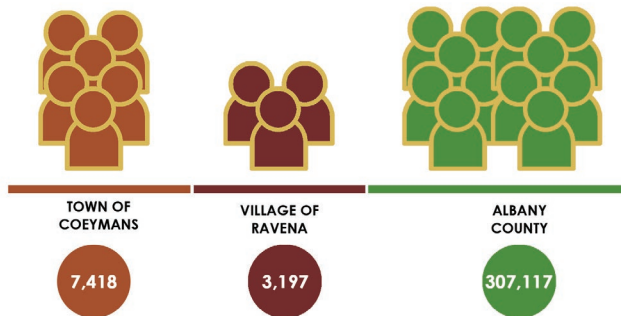
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- **Town of Coeymans Comprehensive Plan Update Report** - In March 2020 the Town utilized the services of the CDRPC to prepare a community profile, entitled “Town of Coeymans Comprehensive Plan Update Preparation Report” (Community Profile). This effort was part of the CDRPC and Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC) Technical Assistance Program. This program is intended to offer staff time and expertise to local governments undertaking small scale community planning initiatives. The Community Profile included the following:
 - Key demographic, economic, and development trends of the Town in comparison with local, regional and national trends.
 - A summary of Prior Planning Efforts.
 - Guidance on the best practices and recommendations for comprehensive planning.
 - Potential funding opportunities to assist with the Comprehensive Plan amendment.
- **Town of Coeymans Natural Resources Inventory (NRI)** – Another component of the existing conditions assessment was the Town of Coeymans NRI, completed in July 2019. The NRI was prepared by the Coeymans Conservation Advisory Council and was carried out through a partnership with Cornell University and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Hudson River Estuary Program with funding from the New York State Environmental Protection Fund. The purpose of this inventory was to provide the building blocks for comprehensive land use and conservation planning. The NRI is also a resource to provide information about natural resources in Coeymans for planning and zoning related matters.
- **Existing Conditions Supplement** – The consultant team completed a supplemental review of existing conditions to examine areas not included in the Community Profile and NRI reports. This included key information about infrastructure related to water and wastewater and stakeholder interviews to better understand key challenges and opportunities in the community.
- **Comprehensive Plan Report Card** - The report card was intended to evaluate the 2006 Comprehensive Plan to understand what has been accomplished, is in progress or may not have been addressed in the current plan. The current plan was adopted more than a decade ago (2006) and many changes have occurred since that time in the community, regionally and nationally. The report card served as one of several components to gather information to support the identification of proposed topic areas to target for the Comprehensive Plan amendment.

The Town Board and various Town staff members provided input through a web-based form and during a Town Board workshop on which recommendations from the 2006 Comprehensive Plan had been implemented, those that were in progress and those that had not yet been initiated. In addition, the relevance of those recommendations today were also considered. The project team also completed an internal review of the Comprehensive Plan to evaluate the completeness and relevance of the recommendations using information gathered from stakeholder discussions, public engagement, and Town Board feedback.



Community Snapshot

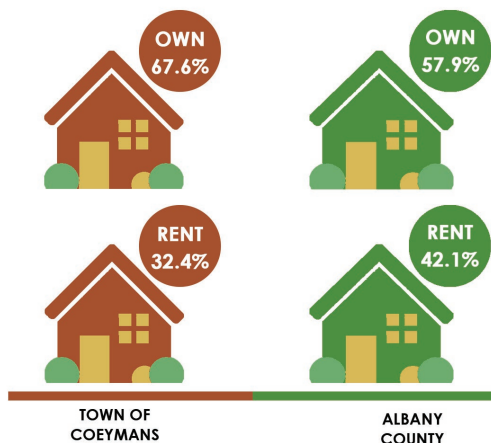
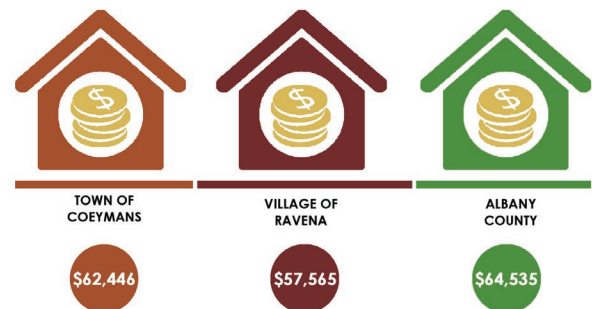


Population

- In 2018 the Town of Coeymans had a total population of 7,418
- The Village of Ravena makes up approximately 43% of the Town population with 3,197 residents
- The population of Coeymans makes up approximately 2.4% of the total population of Albany County

Median Household Income

- In 2018, the Median Household Income for the Town of Coeymans was \$62,446 which is slightly lower than the Median Household Income of Albany County as a whole at \$64,535
- The Median Household Income of the Town at \$62,446 was higher than the Village of Ravena at \$57,565 in 2018. This indicates that there generally higher income earners outside of the Village within the Town



Housing Tenure

- As of 2018, the Town had a total of 3,458 housing units. Of those, approximately 88% were occupied and 12% were vacant.
- Of the occupied housing units, approximately 68% were owner-occupied and 32% were renter-occupied



Public Engagement

A key component in the development of the plan amendment was public engagement. Participation of residents, landowners, developers, business owners, farmers, elected officials and other stakeholders was critical to the effort.

A variety of engagement methods were utilized throughout the development of the plan amendment process. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and restrictions mandated by the State of New York via Executive Order No. 202.1, the public engagement process was modified to adhere to health and safety guidelines. In-person events were modified for virtual formats and social distancing requirements were in place for any in-person activities or were held outdoors.

The following is a list of engagement opportunities that have occurred.

Public engagement included:

- Key Stakeholder Interviews
- Information Pop-up Tables
- Online Community Survey
- Albany County Summer Youth Employment Program Survey
- Project Website and Social Media Outreach

In addition to these engagement opportunities, the Town Board held a public hearing prior to the adoption of the plan in accordance with Section 272-a of New York State Town Law. The Public hearing opened on January 28, 2021 and remained open until March 11, 2021.

Key Stakeholder Interviews

The purpose of key stakeholder meetings was to learn more about critical challenges and opportunities in the Town based on particular topic areas. Key stakeholders included property owners, business owners, Town staff, regional partners and community leaders with focused knowledge or expertise about a topic area. Five stakeholder groups were held over the course of several days in August and September of 2020. The meetings were held at Town Hall following social distancing guidelines and procedures related to the COVID-19 pandemic. For those that were unable to attend the meetings in person, a follow-up meeting was scheduled via Zoom video conference. In addition to scheduled stakeholder meetings, input was gathered from the Building Department and the Planning Board/Zoning Board of Appeals to identify key issues related to land use and zoning.

Stakeholder groups included:

- Infrastructure, Mobility and Transportation
- Economic Growth, Land Development and Business
- Open Space, Recreation, Agriculture and the Environment
- Education, History and Culture
- Regional Partners



Information Pop-up Tables

Two Information Pop-up Tables were held as part of the public engagement process. A pop-up information table provides an opportunity to engage with community members at local community events or at locations where members of the community may congregate. The purpose of the pop-up tables was to inform the public about the project and to provide an opportunity for public input. Each table was staffed by members of the consultant team and included project information boards, a brief paper survey to collect comments and general comment cards for additional thoughts and ideas about the community. The tables also included information cards to direct visitors to the Online Community Survey, as well as a tablet set up for people to take the survey directly at the table. The date and location of each pop-up table are stated below:

- **Farmer's Market Pop-up Table** – August 5, 2020, Coeymans Landing Park, 4:30PM-7:30PM
- **Riverfest Pop-up Table** – September 12, 2020, Coeymans Landing Park, 12:00PM-8:00PM



Farmer's Market Pop-up Table



Riverfest Pop-up Table



Coeymans Farmer's Market



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Online Community Survey

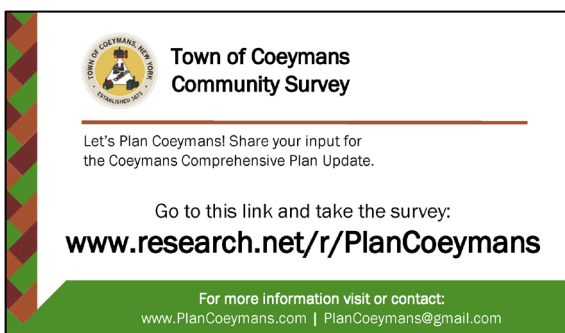
Online surveys provide a unique opportunity to reach a broad range of community members. For those that may not be able to make a public meeting or other events, an online survey can be a great way to collect public input about a variety of topic areas. The purpose of the online survey was to gather input from community members, business owners and other stakeholders about Coeymans. This information, along with other data collection efforts were used to help inform and shape the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan amendment. The survey was conducted using the Survey Monkey platform and went live from August through September 2020 with a total of 147 respondents.

The survey was promoted through a variety of outreach methods, including the following:

- Press release
- Flyers (digital and paper)
- Survey business card
- Project website
- Town website
- Town Board and stakeholder outreach
- Riverfest and Farmer's Market outreach

The survey included 25 questions that covered the following topics:

- Demographic and Background Information
- Quality of Life
- Land Use
- Suggestions for the Future



Survey Business Card

Scan the QR code
with your phone
camera or barcode
scanner to access
the survey!





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Albany County Summer Youth Employment Program Survey

Since 2016, Riverview Missionary Baptist Church (Riverview) has served as a summer youth employment site for the Albany County Summer Youth Employment Program (Summer Youth Program). Riverview hosts a Summer Day Camp where interns from the Summer Youth Program work as counselors. In the Summer of 2020, Riverview did not conduct the Summer Day Camp due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Although the camp was not held, the Summer Youth Program asked Riverview to continue to be a worksite so that youth from the community would have employment over the Summer months. As part of this program, Riverview employed five teenagers ages 14-18 as Ecological Management Interns who developed a survey instrument to learn more about community needs and desires in the Coeymans Landing area of Town. The survey was conducted by phone and included 17 multiple choice questions that covered a variety of topics. Topics included demographic information, what people like and do not like about Coeymans Landing, and recommended improvements to buildings, recreational resources and the riverfront area. A total of 50 respondents were interviewed for the survey. Riverview participated in the key stakeholder meetings and offered the survey to assist in the Comprehensive Plan amendment.

Virtual Public Information Meeting

The Virtual Public Information Meeting was held on March 4, 2021 via Zoom Webinar. The purpose of the virtual meeting was to provide information about the draft Comprehensive Plan amendment, including its preparation and key recommended actions. The event included an overview presentation by the Town's consultant team followed by a question-and-answer session focused on the comprehensive planning process. Community members were encouraged to review the draft Comprehensive Plan amendment which was available on the Town website and project website. Registration for the event was required and participants could register via the project website. Approximately 60 members of the public registered for the event and a total of 40 people participated.

Project Website and Social Media Outreach

Outreach through the project website and the Town's social media was conducted throughout the duration of the project. A dedicated project website was developed for this effort that was utilized to share project information and notify the public of engagement opportunities. The website was located at www.PlanCoeymans.com. A link to the website was also located on the Town's website. The Town's Facebook page was also utilized to publicize the project and provide information about engagement opportunities.



Project Website

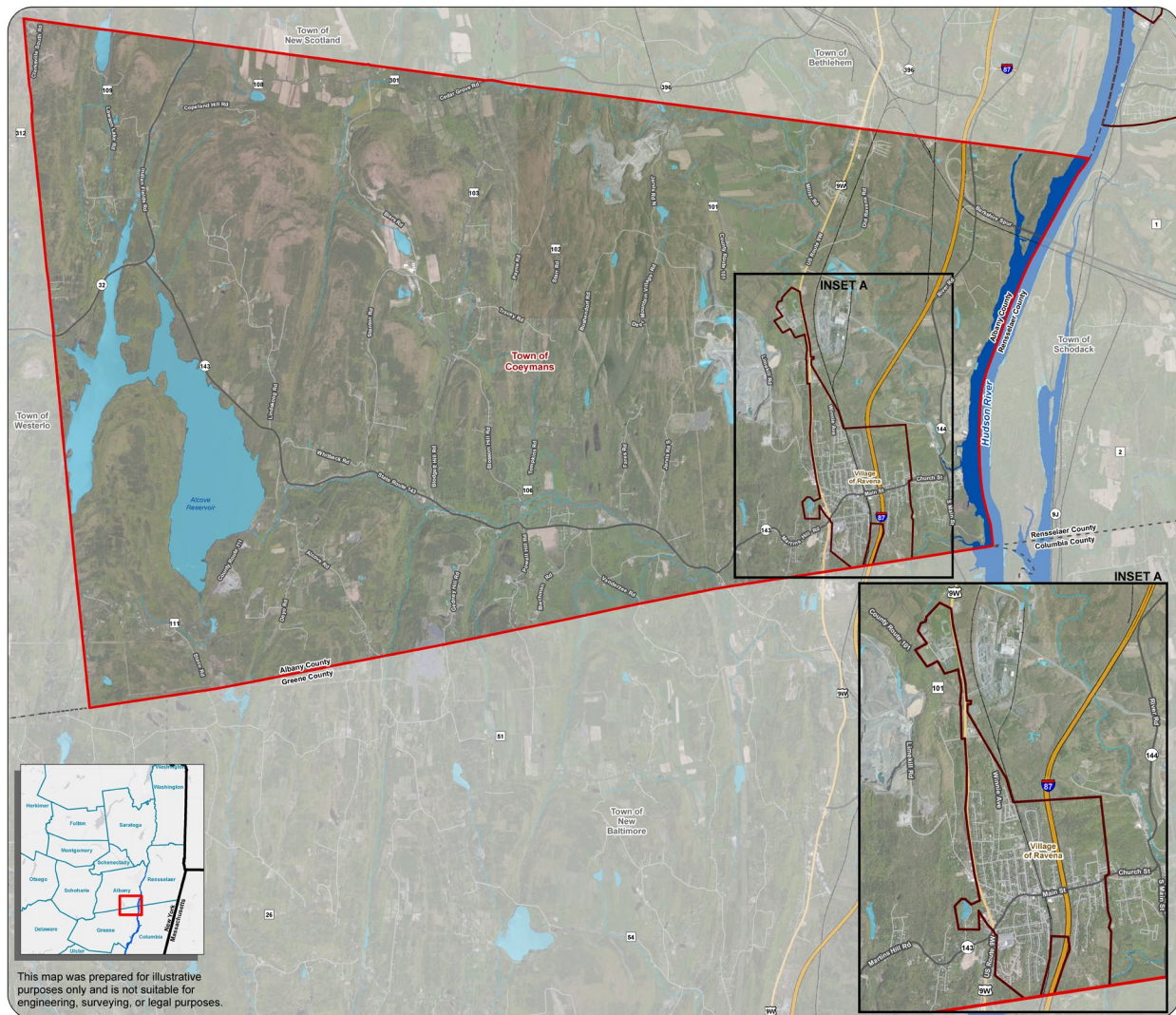


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Regional Context

The Town of Coeymans is situated along the Hudson River's western shoreline in the southeast corner of Albany County, approximately 15 miles south of the City of Albany. The Village of Ravena is located in the southeast corner of the Town. NYS Route 9W runs north and south through the heart of the Town and NYS Route 143 provides a direct east-west route to the western Hamlets of Coeymans Hollow and Alcove, and Coeymans Landing to the east. Interstate 87 (I-87) extends through the eastern portion of the Town with access approximately five miles south of the Town off exit 21B, or one mile north of the Town at exit 23.

Figure 1. Study Area





TARGETED AMENDMENT AREAS

The following is a series of targeted topic areas and recommended actions for the Comprehensive Plan amendment. These topic areas were identified based on information collected through a variety of sources, including the Comprehensive Plan report card exercise, public engagement, stakeholder discussions and discussions with the Town Board.

Target amendment areas include:

- Economic Development
- Infrastructure
- Transportation
- Natural Resources and Agriculture
- Land Use and Zoning
- Government Administration and Policies

Economic Development

Economic development describes the targeted economic growth of a community, encompassing all sectors, including employment, business development, industry, housing, education and recreation. A strong and healthy local economy can lead to employment opportunities, a stable or decreased tax burden and a better quality of life for residents and business owners. The Town has experienced a number of changes over the years and has the potential to grow its economy and develop into a regional destination to live, work and play.

Industry

The history of the Town has always included a close connection to industry, its natural resources, and locally owned businesses. Access to the Hudson River, lumber, limestone deposits and waterpower from the Hannacroix and Coeymans Creeks drove the initial development of the community since the late-17th century and continues to influence economic growth in the community today. Since the adoption of the 2006 Comprehensive Plan, the industrial sector has grown significantly in the Town with the development and continued expansion of the Port of Coeymans, Lafarge North America and the Coeymans Industrial Park. The success of industrial development in Coeymans is a unique opportunity in a time when many communities have experienced a decline in industrial activity as many operations have become obsolete or relocated out of the United States.



Port of Coeymans



Business

The Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk Community Business Association (RCSCBA) serves as a community resource that seeks to advance the prosperity of the Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk region and surrounding communities by providing a unified voice and effective network for business, civic, cultural and educational organizations. The organization works to host events, promote local businesses, and cultivate connections among community members with local businesses. This organization is a resource that local businesses can tap into to help promote and support their business.

Most of the local business activity in Coeymans occurs in the Village of Ravena, Coeymans hamlet and the Route 9W corridor. The Route 9W corridor contains primarily an automobile-oriented form of commercial development, while the Village of Ravena and Coeymans Hamlet offers a mix of commercial and residential uses in a more compact and walkable area.

Key Challenges and Opportunities

A significant opportunity in the Town is the growth and expansion of industry along the riverfront and along NYS Route 144. The growth of the Port of Coeymans, the Coeymans Industrial Park, Lafarge North America and the development of additional industrial parks along NYS Route 144 create numerous opportunities for employment and support for the local economy and school system. While this growth provides many opportunities to the community, it comes with challenges, including the balance of residential, commercial and industrial growth and protecting the health and safety of residents and the environment. The environmental impacts of industrial growth should be considered to ensure the best quality of life for all members of the community. To ensure this balance, industrial development should be directed to existing industrial areas and maintain a substantial buffer from residential areas to maintain the character of existing neighborhoods. Currently, there is still room for growth within existing industrial zoning districts. Additional industrial growth is only intended to occur within existing industrial areas. No geographic expansion of existing industrial zoning districts is recommended at this time.

Another challenge that has been identified is truck traffic generated from the industrial activities in the Town. The construction of a new bridge along Coeymans Industrial Park Lane has reduced a significant amount of truck traffic through residential areas of Coeymans Landing on Riverview Drive. However, with main truck routes that travel through Town, including NYS Route 9W and NYS Route 144, truck traffic is still a concern to many residents.

A significant challenge for the community is the decline in business activity along Main Street in the Village of Ravena and in Coeymans Landing. There are a number of vacant store fronts and buildings in need of façade improvements in an area that at one time was bustling with activity. Despite this decline there are still a number of active and vibrant businesses in Coeymans. One challenge that has been identified during stakeholder focus group discussions is a need for branding and marketing for both the Town and Village of local offerings and business opportunities. This is an area that the two municipalities can collaborate on and form a unified front to draw visitors and retain residents. There is a lot to offer in Town, including direct public access to the Hudson River, scenic parks and natural lands, local shops and restaurants and popular community events, including Riverfest and live music throughout the summer at Coeymans Landing Park.

Coeymans strives to be a business-friendly community. Opportunities exist to help the local business community by creating an inviting and supportive environment to do business. This can include small business loan and grant programs, grants for façade improvements through the New York Main Street



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Program and tapping into regional resources like the Albany County Industrial Development Agency and Albany County Capital Resource Corporation. Business growth and development should be directed and concentrated in the traditional commercial areas of Town, including the Village of Ravena, Coeymans hamlet and the Route 9W commercial corridor.

The Town's locational advantage is another opportunity to help drive and promote business. Coeymans offers all the benefits of small town and rural living while being accessible to all the Capital Region has to offer, including employment, shopping and entertainment centers. This locational advantage should be promoted and celebrated to encourage new businesses and residents to locate in Coeymans.

Recommended Actions

- ED1. Encourage economic growth in existing industrial areas, the Coeymans Hamlet, Village of Ravena and commercial areas along Route 9W.
- ED2. Collaborate with the Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk Community Business Association and the Village of Ravena to develop a branding and marketing strategy to promote small businesses and offerings in the Town and Village.
- ED3. Support economic development in the Town of Coeymans by fostering a healthy business environment and promoting the development and growth of new and established businesses.
- ED4. Encourage property owners and business owners to invest in and improve the aesthetic appeal of their properties.
- ED5. Explore opportunities for grants to support small businesses, including the New York Main Street Program, Community Development Block Grants and Empire State Development grants.
- ED6. Balance the protection of the environment and public health with the expansion of industrial development within existing industrial zoning areas only.



Infrastructure

The availability and condition of key public infrastructure is an important factor to consider for the success of a community. The location of water and wastewater infrastructure is directly related to the pattern of development and types of land uses that occur within a municipality. While the majority of the Town of Coeymans relies on private wells and septic systems, certain areas are connected to public sewer and water, including the Village of Ravena and the Hamlet of Coeymans. The Town has a unique intermunicipal partnership with the Village of Ravena, whereby the Village operates and maintains the water system and the Town of Coeymans operates and maintains the wastewater system. The availability of high-speed internet is another key piece of infrastructure necessary for business, education, modern agriculture and local government efficiency.

Water

The majority of the Town obtains its water supply through privately owned individual wells while the more highly populated sections of the Town, bordering the Village of Ravena, obtain municipal water through an agreement with the Village. Sections of the Town running south from Ravena to the Albany-Greene County line, along NYS Route 9W, receive Village water as do Town residents bordering Route 9W heading north up to and including the Ravena-Coeymans High School. Other sections of the Town located to the east of the Village and extending from the Village to the Hudson River and bordering both NYS Routes 143 and 144 are also connected to the Village system.

Through an agreement with the Village, all water lines within the Town served by the Village system are maintained by the Village of Ravena.

Approximately, 400+ Town residences are currently served by the Village water system. Through the existing agreement, water from the Village is made available for residential and commercial users. Village water however is not available for industrial users unless approved by the Village board. Currently the two principal industrial facilities within the Town, the LaFarge cement plant and Caver Industries in the Coeymans Industrial Park rely principally on private wells for their industrial water supply requirements. LaFarge currently has a 3" water line solely for domestic use.

Individual residential customers within the Town are billed semi-annually, directly, by the Town. Only commercial users are metered. The current fee for residential users in the Town is \$187 every six (6) months. Metering should also be installed at all residential connections, both within the Village and the Town, to reduce system demand and similarly to reduce inflow into the sewer collection system and wastewater treatment plant.

Wastewater

The Town operates and maintains an activated sludge sewage treatment facility located off of NYS Route 144 and is adjacent to the Hudson River in the southeast corner of the Town. The wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) serves Town residents located principally in the Hamlet of Coeymans as well as for the entire Village of Ravena. Approximately 1,600 residences are served by the system plus industrial and commercial users. The majority of residences, 1,200, are located within the Village with the remaining 400 in the Town. Although the plant is owned and operated by the Town, the Village provides for 75% of the operating expense of the facility with the Town providing the remaining 25%.



Broadband

In today's world, high speed internet is a critical piece of infrastructure that is necessary for commerce, education, agriculture, healthcare, public safety and local government efficiency. In 2015, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo established the New NY Broadband Program to invest in an expansion of high speed internet to underserved areas of New York to ensure the availability of quality internet service to all New Yorkers. Through this program, \$236,800 was invested in Coeymans that addressed 631 locations in the Town. While these investments have expanded internet service to many areas of the Town, certain areas still remain underserved.

Key Challenges and Opportunities

Water

The WTP is currently rated at 1.2 million gallons per day (MGD). Improvements to the existing sedimentation basin, expected to occur in 2021, will conceivably permit an increase in treatment capacity. As the current daily production rate is less than half of the rated capacity of the WTP, expansion of the water system to serve new customers and adjacent areas within the Town is possible.

Wastewater

The WWTP and collection system were built in the early 1970s and are in relatively good condition. Improvements were recently made to the WWTP, including the installation of new digesters, a screw press for sludge dewatering, and rehabilitation to the six-million-gallon overflow lagoon. A new 15" transmission line was also installed, commencing at the intersection of Westerlo Street and Main Avenue at the Ravena Coeymans Town line and running directly to the treatment facility. These improvements were necessary for the maintenance and longevity of the wastewater system, however additional improvements are still required to upgrade the sewer collection system and physical condition of the WWTP.

On average, the plant processes approximately 400,000 to 500,000 gallons per day. The influent to the plant can increase dramatically during storm events ranging anywhere from 2 to 3 million gallons per day (GPD). Inflow and infiltration (I&I) greatly increase the flow both from issues with the existing sewer collection piping network and manholes, as well as from sump pumps in individual residences that discharge illegally into the collection system. Rehabilitation of manholes and slip lining of sections of the collection system is being considered to reduce I&I.

With modifications, the treatment capacity of the plant could conceivably be increased to well over 1.0 MGD. This would permit additional growth within the Town for both industrial as well as residential expansion. Two areas of potential expansion would be to the north of the Hamlet along NYS Route 144 and along Martin Hill Road, NYS Route 143, to the west of the Village of Ravena. Expansion of the sewer district to the north could conceivably be handled through connections to the Riverview pump station. Martin Hill Road may require the establishment of a new sewer district with connections to the sewer collection system running through the Village of Ravena. Studies would be required to determine the overall capacity of the existing Ravena system and new sewer mains may be required to accommodate increases in sewerage flows.

Coupled with improvements to the existing sewer collection network, metering of water service connections both within the Town and the Village should also be provided to reduce water consumption and resulting flow into the sewer system. As most industrial customers are not connected with the existing water system, metering of their waste disposal systems should be considered.



Broadband

While significant state, local and private investments have previously been made to address areas of Coeymans that are underserved by high-speed internet service, there are still some areas that remain underserved. The Town should identify these areas and develop a plan to ensure all areas of Coeymans are serviced by high-speed internet. The COVID 19 Pandemic has highlighted the importance of this infrastructure with so many Americans having to work and attend school from home. Widespread broadband connection also presents an opportunity to market the Town as being open for business, allowing people to work remotely from any location.

Recommended Actions

- I1. Continue to maintain and upgrade existing sewer system and wastewater treatment plant as needed.
- I2. Explore opportunities for appropriate expansion of the water and wastewater systems in Town.
- I3. Pursue funding opportunities, including state and federal infrastructure grants.
- I4. Continue to coordinate with the Village of Ravena on maintenance and potential expansion of water infrastructure.
- I5. Investigate the feasibility of establishing a metering system for water and wastewater in residences.
- I6. Investigate areas of Town that are underserved by broadband and ensure internet connectivity Town-wide.



Transportation

Transportation systems are critical to the movement of people and goods through a community. Efficient and effective transportation provides for a variety of travel options that meet the needs of multiple modes, including vehicular, bicycle, pedestrian, and public transit. The transportation network within the Town of Coeymans is comprised of State, County and local roads. The major north/south commercial and commuter routes, such as the New York State Thruway, NYS Route 9W and NYS Route 144 pass through the Town carrying thousands of vehicles and passengers on a daily basis. These routes are major arteries connecting suburban and rural residents within the surrounding communities, large business districts in the City of Albany, and government agencies at the State Capital and the New York State Office Complex.

Coeymans is primarily an auto-dependent community, and a vehicle is needed for most daily trips. The Village of Ravena and hamlet areas offer a higher-density pattern of development that lend themselves to pedestrian friendly streets with sidewalks and easy access to goods, services and recreational opportunities along the riverfront.



NYS Route 143, Coeymans

A significant amount of truck traffic passes through the Town on designated truck routes, including, NYS Route 9W, NYS Route 32, NYS Route 143 and NYS Route 144. Industrial activity at the Port of Coeymans, Lafarge North America (Lafarge) and the Coeymans Industrial Park is the principal driver of truck traffic through the Town, primarily utilizing NYS Route 144 and NYS Route 9W.

I-87 passes through the Town, however there is currently no direct access to the Town via the interstate.

Key Challenges and Opportunities

A significant challenge that has been identified by stakeholders, Town staff and officials and through public input is truck traffic through the Town and Village. The active industrial areas of Town, including the Port of Coeymans, Lafarge and the Coeymans Industrial Park create a high demand of truck traffic to transport goods and materials. The two main truck routes that service these areas, NYS Route 9W and NYS Route 144, pass directly through the Coeymans hamlet and the Village of Ravena, creating little separation between heavy truck traffic and the community. As state routes, the Town does not have jurisdiction over these roads, limiting options for improvements to or diversion of truck traffic.

A potential opportunity to reduce truck traffic is the possibility of a dedicated off-ramp from I-87 to the Coeymans Industrial Park. This would eliminate much of the truck traffic going to the industrial park



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and the port from NYS Route 144 and would support the expanding industrial opportunities of the Town. While this would significantly reduce truck traffic, an effort of this magnitude would be a significant challenge and would require coordination with the New York State Department of Transportation, the New York Thruway Authority, the Governor's Office and the Town. While this is a potential long-term solution to truck traffic, other more feasible options should also be explored in the nearer term. Another option may include reduced speed limits.

The compact and more densely developed areas of the Village of Ravena and Coeymans hamlet present opportunities for improved pedestrian infrastructure to create better connections between residences, businesses and recreational areas like the riverfront. Efforts have been made to improve some sidewalks on Main Street in Coeymans Landing, however there are still areas of improvement needed to make the areas more accessible to people of all abilities. There are also opportunities to improve circulation patterns within the Coeymans hamlet, particularly in the Coeymans Landing area. This area of Town is a central meeting place for community, recreation and waterfront activities. Potential improvements to evaluate may include changing Westerlo Street Extension and Dock Street to a one-way loop. This would allow for less conflict between pedestrians and vehicles while creating a safer space for community members to enjoy the waterfront. Other improvements may include additional sidewalks and crosswalks.

The Town should consider the adoption of a Complete Streets Policy to guide the development of the Town's transportation system to be more inclusive of all modes of transportation and user groups. Complete streets include design features that accommodate and facilitate convenient access and mobility by all users, particularly pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and individuals of all ages and abilities. Complete streets may also play a role in making a community healthier, reducing environmental impact, and leading to private investment in a corridor. Complete Street policies are set at the state, regional, and local levels and are frequently supported by roadway design guidelines.

A key resource for the Town is the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC). CDTC is the dedicated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Capital Region, encompassing all of Albany County, including Coeymans. CDTC can provide technical assistance on transportation related projects and can assist with complete streets, freight studies, linkage programs and is a key player in determining how federal funding for transportation related projects are spent in Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Schenectady Counties.

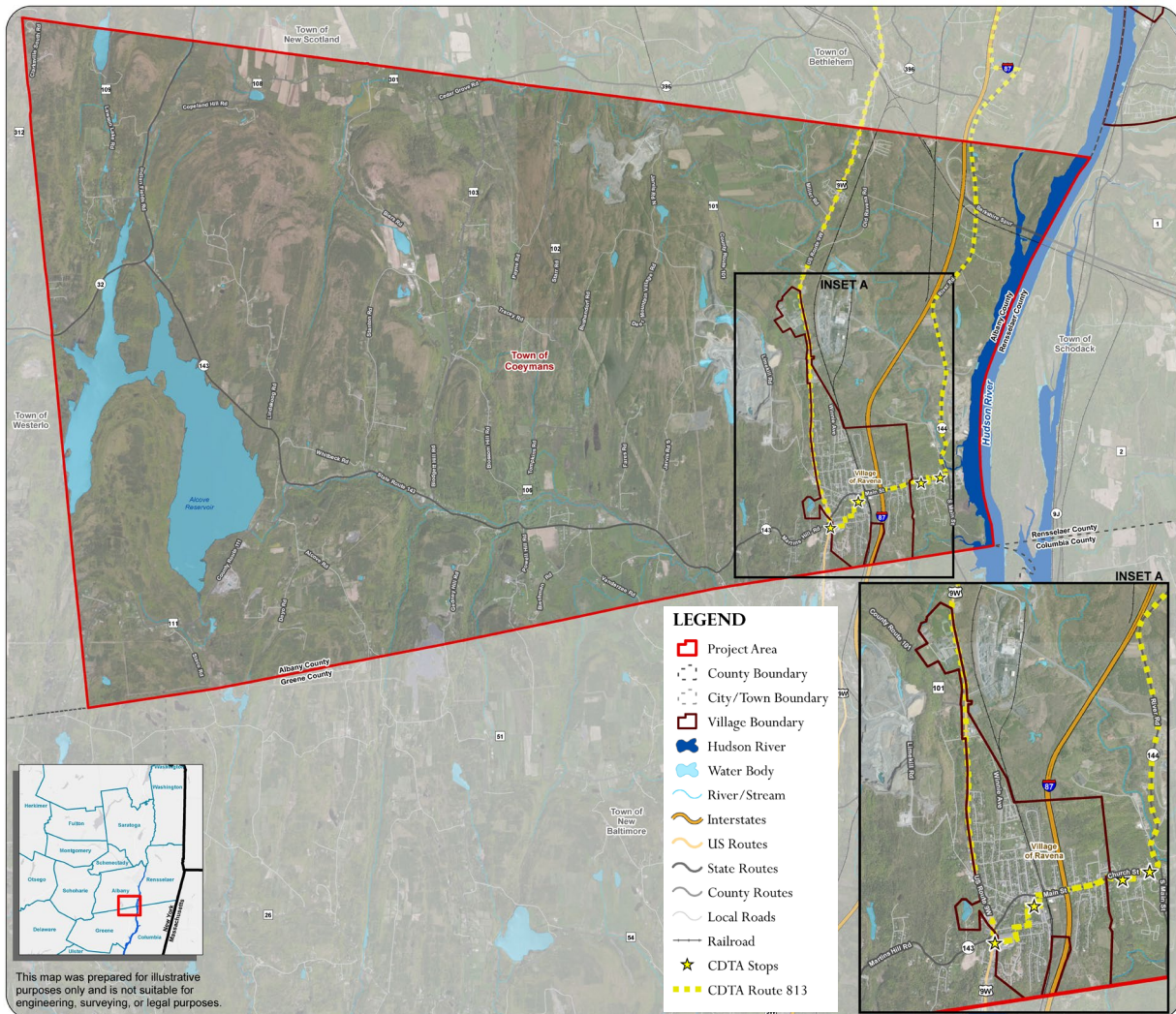
Recommended Actions

- T1. Consider the adoption of a Complete Streets policy to be more inclusive of all modes of transportation and people of all abilities.
- T2. Explore the feasibility of a dedicated off-ramp from I-87 to the Coeymans Industrial Park. This will require coordination with NYSDOT, NY Thruway Authority, the Town and other entities.
- T3. Explore opportunities to reduce or divert truck traffic through the Town and Village or reduce impacts of truck traffic.



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Figure 2. Transportation





Natural Resources and Agriculture

Coeymans is a Town rich in natural resources which have been the lifeblood of the community for centuries. Dense forests, limestone deposits, prime agricultural soils and water resources provide a unique mix of scenic beauty, recreational and economic resources for the Town.

In the areas of Town west of the Village of Ravena the landscape is characterized by rolling hills, farms, small hamlets, low-density residential properties and the Alcove Reservoir. The Alcove Reservoir is owned by the City of Albany and serves a population of approximately 101,000 people in the City. The reservoir is a total of 1,426 acres and reaches a maximum depth of 75 feet. The reservoir provides a significant scenic resource to the Town and provides drinking water to the Village of Ravena and the Coeymans Hamlet through an agreement with the City of Albany.

The majority of the land in Coeymans lies withing the Hannacroix Creek and Onesquethaw-Coeymans Creek sub-watersheds which ultimately drain to the Hudson River Estuary. The Town's major streams and waterbodies include the Hudson River, Coeymans Creek, Hannacroix Creek, Alcove Reservoir and Lawson Lake.

The large, forested areas in Town are also a key resource with numerous benefits, such as wildlife habitat, clean water, climate moderation, forest products and recreational opportunities. Across the region many large tracts of forest have been cut and fragmented into smaller forest patches to make way for roads and new development. This fragmentation results in decreased wildlife habitat, disruptions in wildlife movement and the spread of invasive species. Coeymans is unique in the region, in that it still supports large tracts of contiguous forest, including a regionally significant forest patch that measures over 13,000 acres that extends from south Coeymans into New Baltimore and Greenville. Forests in this size range are able to maintain a wider range of habitats and conditions often required by forest dependent species.



Alcove Reservoir



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Agriculture has played a significant role in Coeymans both past and present when it comes to the economy, the environment and food production in the town. Farms supply locally grown food, provide jobs in the community, generate sales, and contribute property taxes. In addition, farmland provides open space, scenic values, wildlife habitat, and buffers for sensitive natural resources and contributes to the rural character that is valued by residents. There is a small percentage of prime farmland scattered throughout the Town, primarily in the areas surrounding Coeymans and Hannacroix Creeks. Most of the larger areas of contiguous prime farland soils are actively farmed and are enrolled in the Albany County Agricultural Districts Program under Agricultural District #3.

Agriculture comprises a relatively small percentage of the Town's land uses. Most of the prime farmland soils east of Route 9W are zoned industrial or residential while most of the productive farmland to the west is zoned residential/agricultural. The predominant types of agriculture in the Town are dairy and livestock, crops, and hay. Some vegetables are grown in the eastern portion of the Town. Except for a large dairy farm, most farming in the Town is small-scale.

The Town's natural resources are closely aligned with key parks and recreational opportunities in the Town. Parks include Coeymans Landing Park, Joralemon Memorial Park, Valley Paper Mill Park and Lawson Lake County Park. These resources provide numerous opportunities for recreation and enjoyment of scenic resources. These parks are also destinations that can attract visitors and residents to the Town, supporting the local economy and tax base. The protection and preservation of these natural resources are critical to preserving the character of the community and providing recreational opportunities to residents and visitors.

Key Challenges and Opportunities

In general, there are fewer threats to the natural resources in Coeymans compared to other communities in the Capital Region. The lack of water and sewer infrastructure in a significant portion of the Town has resulted in a low level of land development for residential and commercial uses. Protection of these key resources should still be considered, however, due to the important water resources, forests and prime agricultural lands still available. The rich and diverse landscape of Coeymans is unique and its character should be protected, not only from an environmental health perspective, but also from a community character perspective.

Agricultural lands can be protected through a variety of means, including local laws, programs, and initiatives such as zoning, Agricultural Districts, conservation easements, Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM), Right to Farm Laws, and Agricultural and Farmland Protection plans. At the site level, best management practices used on agricultural land help to increase productivity and efficiency while improving and protecting water quality. For example, certain mowing and grazing schedules and patterns can improve habitat for nesting birds and turtles; soil and water conservation practices like stream buffers help protect streams and other aquatic habitats; maintenance of field borders can improve pollination and support wildlife; and integrated pest management techniques support healthy crops and habitat.

The Hudson River waterfront is an important resource as a recreational and community resource, but also as a significant natural resource. Coeymans has approximately 4.4 miles of Hudson River shoreline which is identified as a tidal shoreline habitat. Natural shorelines are an important transition zone between water and land and provide habitat for diverse plants, fish, and wildlife. Natural shorelines located in the tidal wetland pathways may also allow tidal wetland and shoreline habitats to move to higher ground as sea level rises. There are opportunities to conserve, restore, and manage



shoreline habitats throughout the Coeymans waterfront area. Parks, preserves, and regulated wetlands may offer a starting point to conserve or restore natural shorelines that will allow tidal wetlands to move with sea level rise.¹ Even along working waterfronts there are ways to improve the habitat value of the shoreline.

Other important waterways in the Town include Coeymans Creek and Hannacroix Creek. The mouth of Coeymans Creek is designated by the NYSDOS as part of a Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitat, meaning that any activity that would substantially degrade water quality, increase turbidity or sedimentation, or alter flows, temperature or water depths in this area could result in significant impairment of the habitat and it is important that the creek be protected from encroachment by industrial activity. As such, the Town should consider establishing 100ft buffers on both sides of Coeymans Creek and Hannacroix creek to prevent encroachment of industrial activities and to protect these important resources.

Protecting key environmental resources also has the added benefit of providing opportunities to enhance and provide additional recreational opportunities. Coeymans Landing Park and direct public access to the Hudson River are key features of the Town. This area serves as a meeting place and attracts visitors during festivals, weekly farmer's markets and much more. The maintenance and enhancement of these resources are critical to the character of the community and for improving the quality of life for residents.

The Town should consider expanding its trail network and promote opportunities for hiking and biking. The development of an Open Space, Recreation and Trails Plan could help to identify areas to expand parks, recreation and trail opportunities. The Town should also consider collaborating with adjacent municipalities like the Town of New Baltimore on developing regional trail connections. A new trail could potentially link the Coeymans Landing Park with the established trail system of the Hannacroix Creek Preserve in New Baltimore. Several other publicly-owned waterfront parcels could also be incorporated into a trail system.

As a riverfront community it is important to capture as much stormwater as possible before entering waterbodies like the Hannacroix Creek, Coeymans Creek and the Hudson River. Impervious surfaces like roads, roofs and sidewalks increase the amount of stormwater runoff that ends up in waterways, leading to increased turbidity, erosion and the transfer of pollutants that collect on road surfaces and from industrial and agricultural processes. One way to reduce stormwater runoff is to introduce green infrastructure into the built environment to capture and filter stormwater before entering major waterbodies. Green infrastructure is a cost-effective, resilient approach to managing wet weather impacts that provides many community benefits. While single-purpose gray stormwater infrastructure, including conventional piped drainage and water treatment systems, is designed to move urban stormwater away from the built environment, green infrastructure reduces and treats stormwater at its source while delivering environmental, social, and economic benefits. At the Town or county scale, green infrastructure is a patchwork of natural areas that provides habitat, flood protection, cleaner air, and cleaner water. At the neighborhood or site scale, stormwater management systems mimic natural ground cover by absorbing and storing stormwater. The Town should consider adding green infrastructure in key areas like Coeymans Landing Park to reduce stormwater runoff and improve water quality of the Hudson River.

¹ Town of Coeymans Natural Resources Inventory, 2019



Environmental and economic resiliency are inextricably linked to one another. Utilizing natural resources in a sustainable way ensures that those resources are available to the community for future generations to come. This is particularly true in Coeymans where the local economy is still greatly connected to the quality and availability of natural resources. The Hudson River waterfront is a key example of a natural and economic driver in the community which may be impacted by the threat of sea level rise in the future. The Hudson River is connected to and influenced by the sea; therefore, it experiences tides and is rising as global sea levels rise due to global climate change. According to data from the NYSDEC, projections for sea-level rise along the Hudson River range from five to 27 inches by mid-century. The Town should consider future planning for resiliency along the waterfront to protect the key environmental and economic resources in the Town. Private property owners along the waterfront should be informed of ways to increase resiliency against sea level rise in the future. More information about the risk of sea level rise is available in the Town of Coeymans Natural Resources Inventory along with a Sea Level Rise Scenarios Map that shows projected sea level rise scenarios.

Another opportunity related to climate change and the environment is for the Town to consider Clean Energy Community (CEC) and Climate Smart Community (CSC) designation. The CEC program, administered by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), provides grant opportunities and technical support to communities that complete a series of high-impact actions that save energy and improve the environment. The CSC program is administered by the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and helps local governments take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate. Both of these programs help communities achieve sustainability and climate resilience goals and open the door to grant opportunities to help fund a variety of infrastructure and energy related projects. These programs are typically administered by local governments are often delegated to a working group or Town committee.

Recommended Actions

- NR1. Consider the development of an Open Space, Recreation and Trails Plan to ensure that future parks are developed and programmed in a manner consistent with resident needs and desires.
- NR2. Continue to provide special events at parks like Coeymans Landing Park and Joralemon Park to attract visitors and for the enjoyment of residents.
- NR3. Continue to support coordinated youth programs and activities between the Town, Village, School District and the Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk Community Library.
- NR4. Explore the development of additional recreational amenities at the Town's various riverfront and lakefront areas.
- NR5. Consider tools to protect the Town's environmentally sensitive lands identified in the Natural Resources Inventory in order to protect them from adverse impacts that development may have on land, air, water quality, natural habitats, unique land formations and public health, welfare, and safety.
- NR6. Protect the Town's water bodies and lands that serve as important natural drainage channels, provide drinking water, and function as wildlife habitat and groundwater recharge areas.



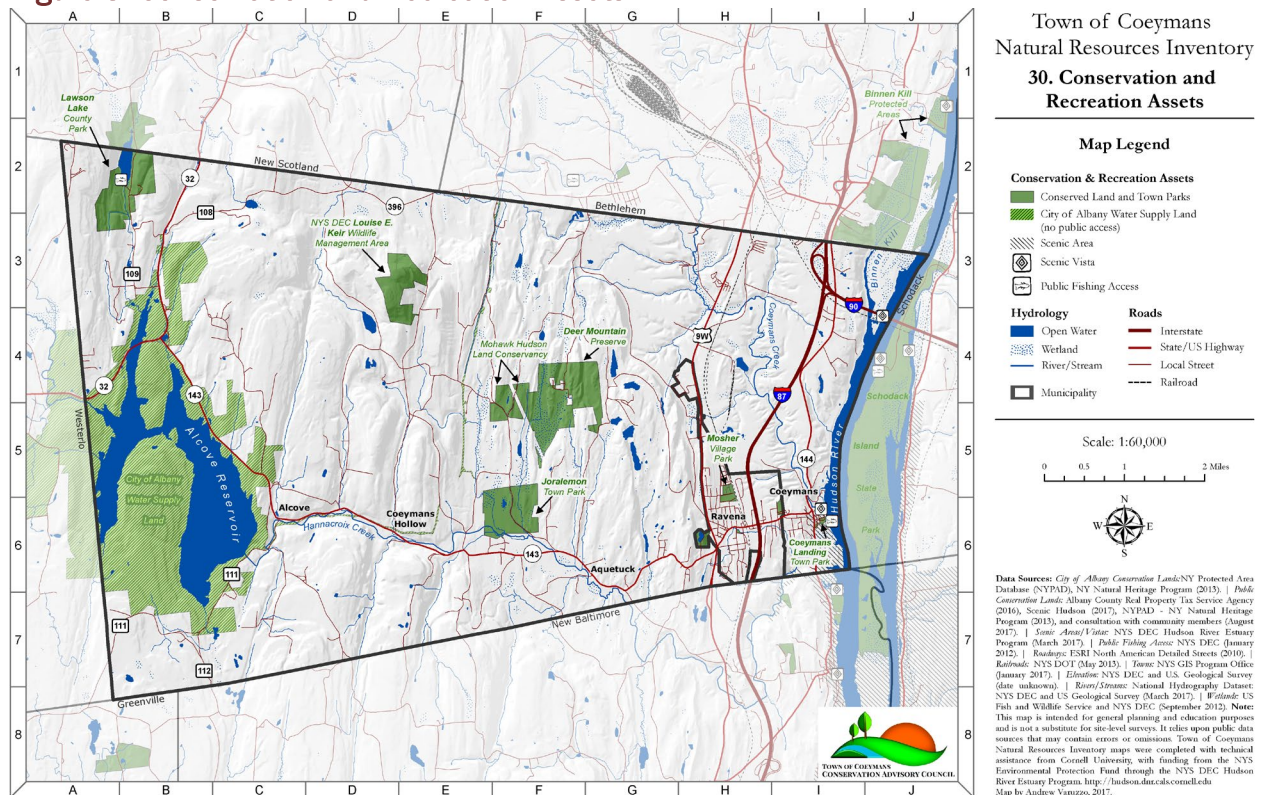
Town of Coeymans Comprehensive Plan Amendment

- NR7. Consider the protection of lands and scenic resources that contribute to the Town's unique character and scenic vistas. This may include the expansion of parks, development of additional trails and protection of agricultural lands and open space through a voluntary conservation easement program.
- NR8. Consider establishing a 100ft buffer along each side of the Coeymans Creek and Hannacroix Creek to protect these critical resources and to improve water quality of the Hudson River.
- NR9. Strive to become a community resilient to climate risks to ensure environmental and economic sustainability through community educational activities.
- NR10. Consider participation in the Clean Energy Communities and Climate Smart Communities programs to reduce energy demands and greenhouse gas emissions and to provide potential grant opportunities.
- NR11. Consider establishing a new committee to oversee the implementation of the Clean Energy Communities program and Climate Smart Communities program.
- NR12. Continue to adhere to all local, county, state and federal air quality regulations to ensure the protection of the environment and public health.



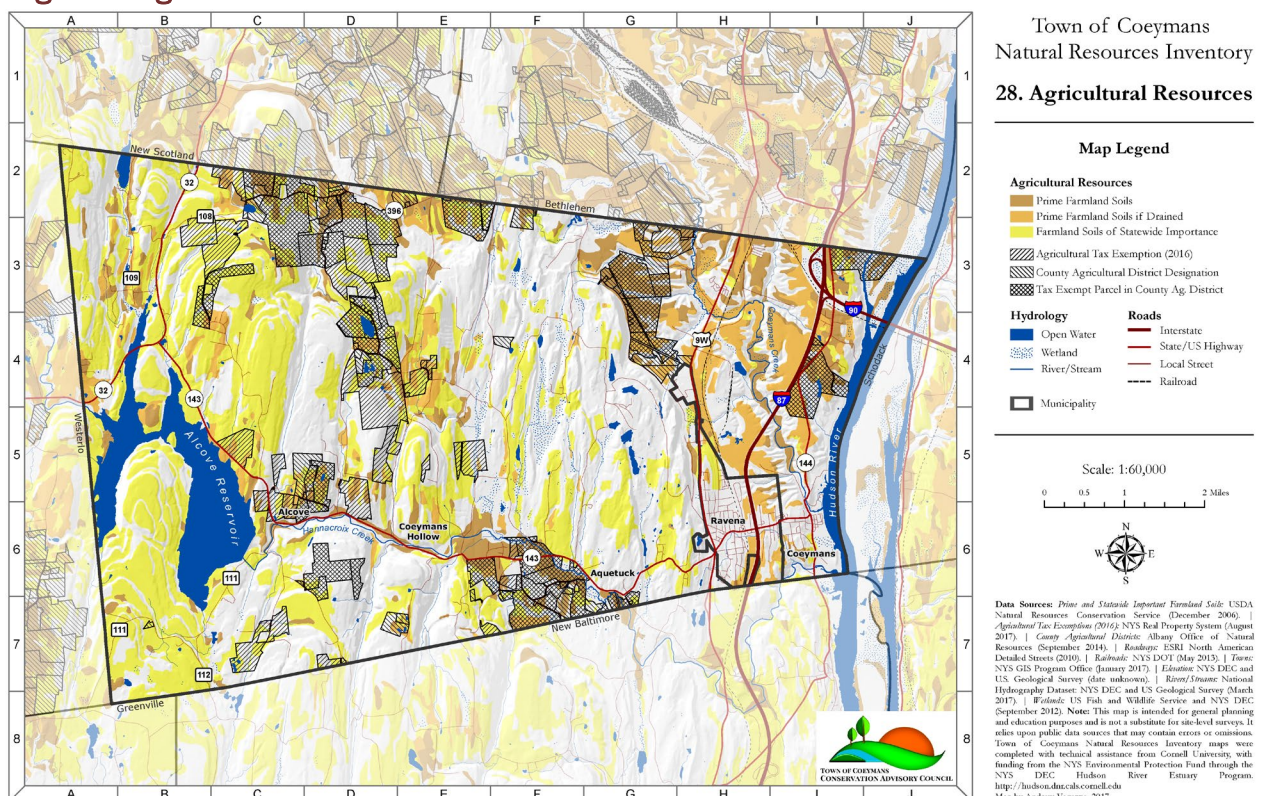
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Figure 3. Conservation and Recreation Assets



Source: Town of Coeymans Natural Resources Inventory, 2019

Figure 4. Agricultural Resources



Source: Town of Coeymans Natural Resources Inventory, 2019



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The primary land uses within the Town are low-density residential at 31% and vacant land at 26% of assessed properties. The western portion of the Town is primarily composed of residential and vacant lands. Agricultural uses are scattered throughout and make up approximately 5% of the Town's assessed properties. The Alcove Reservoir, which is the primary source of drinking water for the City of Albany and the adjacent lands, are designated as a Public Service use. This is one of the largest single continuous uses within the Town,

Industrial uses make up approximately 13% of the Town's assessed properties. This area consists of multiple mines, quarries, industrial parks, and port facilities. Industrial areas are located in several areas, which include the area between River Road and the waterfront, Between I-87 and NYS Route 9W and a large portion of land that extends from Martins Hill Road to the south, to the Bethlehem Town border in the north. The large areas of industrial lands is associated with lands owned by Lafarge North America and its mining operation as well as the Port of Coeymans and Coeymans Industrial Park

Commercial lands make up about 3% of the Towns assessed properties and is centralized along the Route 9W corridor and along Main Street in the Village of Ravena. Additional commercial uses are scattered throughout the town. The northeastern corner of Coeymans is devoted to residential use. The Coeymans Landing area, east of Ravena, is a densely developed mixed use area.²

Zoning

The Town of Coeymans first adopted a comprehensive zoning law in 1961. Since that time there have been minimal updates to the zoning code. The stated purpose of the Town's zoning code is as follows:

- Facilitation of the provisions of adequate public services and facilities;
- Preservation and protection of residential lands, both visually and physically from those of nonresidential use, and wherever reasonable, the elimination of nonconforming uses, which have deleterious effect on their surroundings;
- Reduction and prevention of traffic hazards and congestion;
- General enhancement of the town appearance;
- Conservation of property values through the encouragement of the most appropriate use of land within the municipality.

The Town's zoning code includes thirteen zoning districts, grouped into four broad categories stated below:

- Residential
 - RA: Residential/Agricultural
 - R-1: Single-Family Residence
 - R-2: Single- and Two-Family Residence
 - R-3: Multifamily Residence
 - R-4: Planned Residential
- Commercial
 - C-IP: Planned Commercial
 - B-1: General Business

² Town of Coeymans Natural resources Inventory, 2019



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- Industrial
 - I: Industrial
 - I-2: Industrial
 - I-3P: Planned Industrial
 - I-B: Industrial Buffer
- Community Facility / Town Owned Properties
 - CF-1: Community Facility
 - CF-2: Town Owned Properties

The predominant zoning district in the Town is the RA-Residential/Agriculture in the western portion of Town, and in some areas between County Route 101 and NYS Route 9W and in the Coeymans Hamlet. Industrial zoning makes up the next largest area of the Town located west of County Route 101, between NYS Route 9W and I-87 and between I-87 and the Hudson River waterfront. The main commercial areas of Coeymans are located along NYS Route 9W and stretches from the Town's northern border with the Town of Bethlehem to the southern border with the Town of New Baltimore.³

Key Challenges and Opportunities

The key challenge regarding zoning will be to update the existing zoning code to reflect the current needs of the community and to be consistent with the 2006 Comprehensive Plan and this amendment. A number of changes have occurred since the adoption of the existing zoning code, including an expansion of industrial areas. Discussions of the expansion of water and wastewater infrastructure should also be taken into consideration when planning for future updates to the zoning code to ensure a proper balance of industrial and residential areas and the protection of natural resources.

In addition, an update to the zoning code should include coordination with the Village of Ravena to ensure compatibility of zoning districts and land uses between the two municipalities. This will ensure a smooth transition or continuation of development and help to create a sense of place.

A key challenge related to land use in Coeymans is the prevalence of zombie properties, property maintenance issues and absentee landlords. Zombie properties are homes that the homeowner has abandoned, typically in the face of a foreclosure action. Oftentimes, with no homeowner present to perform basic maintenance, these homes and properties can fall into a state of serious disrepair. Zombie properties can have a number of negative impacts on a community, including lowering property values, attracting criminal activity, creating health and safety hazards, and imposing extra costs on local governments due to additional need for police, fire and building safety resources. State legislation exists to address zombie properties as well as a Zombie Property Registry through the New York State Department of Financial Services to help identify and contact responsible parties. The Zombie Property Remediation Act of 2019 authorizes local governments to compel mortgage lenders to either complete a mortgage foreclosure proceeding or to issue a certificate of discharge of the mortgage for any abandoned property, allowing local government officials to deal with these properties.

Property maintenance issues related to absentee landlords is a challenge, particularly in the Village of Ravena and Coeymans hamlet. Many of these issues can be addressed through improved code enforcement and by pursuing funding opportunities to assist low-income property owners in making needed repairs and upgrades. The development of local neighborhood associations can also help to

³ Town of Coeymans Natural Resources Inventory, 2019



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foster positive changes in the Town's neighborhoods by organizing clean-up days, providing volunteer assistance to property owners and sponsoring incentive programs to homeowners.

There are a number of funding opportunities available to municipalities for improving dilapidated commercial and residential buildings. Potential grant opportunities include:

New York State Office of Homes and Community Renewal – New York Main Street Program

The New York Main Street Program (NYMS) provides resources to assist New York's communities with projects that provide economic development and housing opportunities and contribute to sustainable downtown and neighborhood revitalization. The NYMS funds are used to stimulate reinvestment in properties located within mixed-use commercial districts and adjacent neighborhoods. Eligible applicants to this program include units of government and not-for-profit corporations that have been providing relevant service to the community. Eligible activities that can be funded through the New York Main Street Program are categorized in four program types as described below:

- **Target Area Building Renovation Program:** Building renovations of mixed-use buildings in eligible target areas, and streetscape enhancements. NYMS funds will cover up to 75% of the project cost up to \$50,000 per building or \$100,000 per building renovation project.
- **Downtown Anchor:** Stand alone, single site, "shovel ready" projects that help to establish or expand cultural, residential or business anchors that are key to local downtown revitalization efforts through substantial interior and/or exterior building renovations. NYMS funds cover up to 75% of project costs, not to exceed \$500,000 and no less than \$100,000.
- **Downtown Stabilization Program:** Funding available to implement a Downtown Revitalization Program including funds to assist with environmental remediation and associated construction costs and other innovative approaches to stabilize and develop downtown, mixed-use buildings. NYMS funds will cover up to 75% of project costs not to exceed \$500,000 and no less than \$50,000.
- **Technical Assistance:** Funding available up to \$20,000 to complete projects that will improve a community's readiness to administer a future NYMS renovation project.

New York State Community Development Block Grant Program

The New York State Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is a federally funded program administered by New York State Homes and Community Renewal (HCR) that helps counties, cities, towns and villages with projects that improve communities and benefit residents across New York State. Eligible applicants for CDBG funding includes towns, villages and cities with a population less than 50,000 and counties with an unincorporated population of less than 200,000. Eligible activities for CDBG funding falls into two categories including:

- **Community Development Funding:** funding for housing, public infrastructure or public facilities.
- **Economic Development Assistance:** funding for economic development activities that support business creation, expansion or retention.



New York State Department of State Brownfield Opportunity Area Program

The Department of State's Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) Program provides communities with guidance, expertise and financial assistance, up to 90 percent of the total eligible project costs, to complete BOA Nomination Plans, which are revitalization strategies for neighborhoods or areas affected by brownfields or economic distress.

Brownfields are dormant properties where contamination or perceived contamination has impeded investment and redevelopment, making them an economic and environmental drain on localities. Through the BOA Program, brownfields are transformed from liabilities to community assets that generate businesses, jobs and revenues for local economies and provide new housing and public amenities.

The program provides a neighborhood or area-wide approach, rather than the traditional site-by-site approach, to the assessment and redevelopment of brownfields and other vacant or abandoned properties. The neighborhood approach enables communities to comprehensively assess existing economic and environmental conditions associated with brownfield blight and impacted areas, identify and prioritize community supported redevelopment opportunities, and attract public and private investment. The type of neighborhoods and areas where program resources are being applied include industrial/manufacturing, commercial corridors, residential, downtowns and waterfronts.

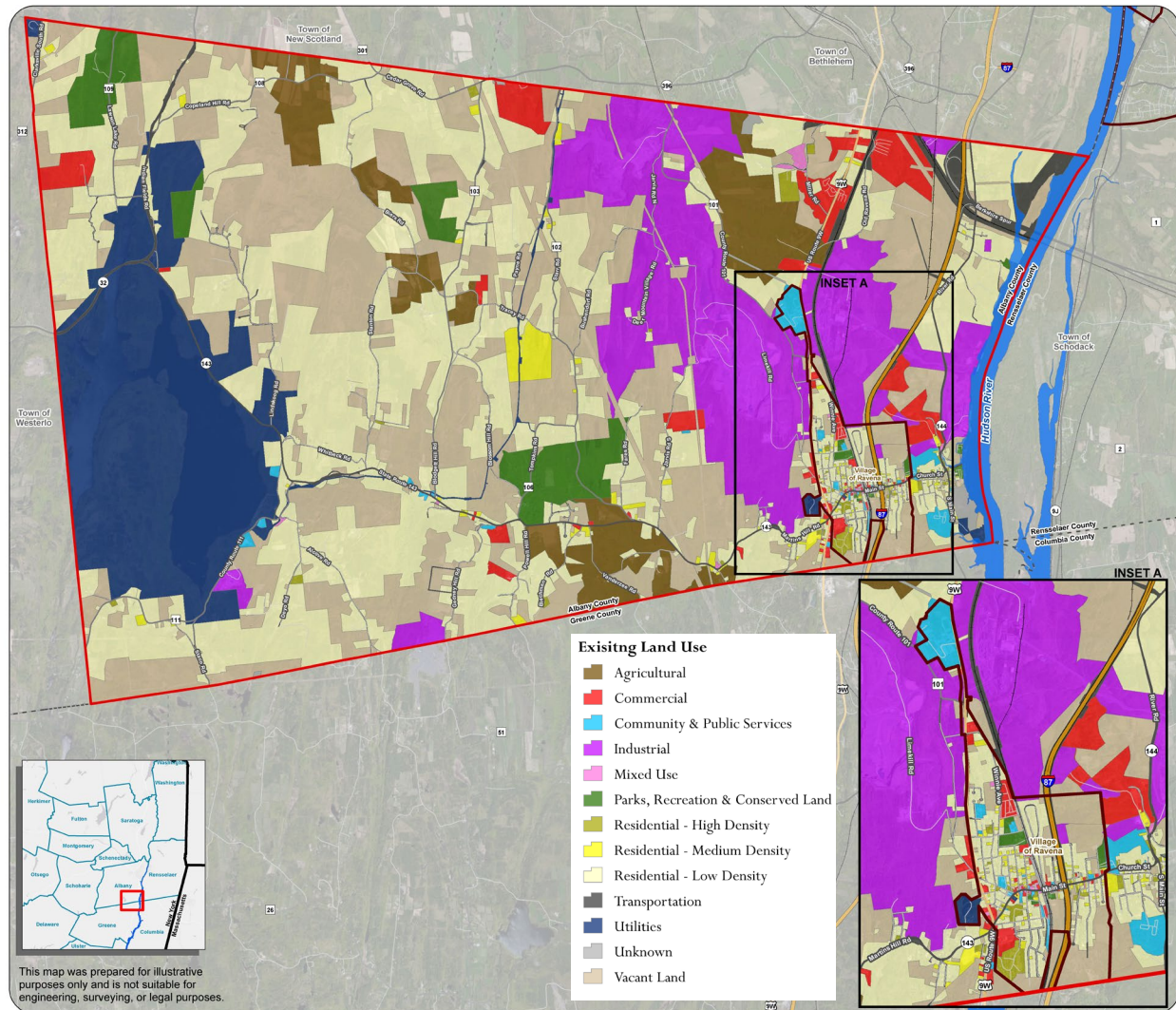
Recommended Actions

- LZ1. Update the zoning code to reflect the current needs of the community and for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan Update. Possible updates may include revising definitions and evaluating the zoning code for consistency with New York State Town Law.
- LZ2. Coordinate with the Village of Ravena to ensure compatibility of land uses and zoning districts with any subsequent zoning code updates.
- LZ3. Ensure a balance of industrial and residential areas of Town to protect and enhance community character. Industrial development should be focused in existing industrial areas and buffered from existing neighborhoods.
- LZ4. Continue enforcing existing land use regulations.
- LZ5. Consider adopting a Vacant Building Registry.
- LZ6. Foster the development of pro-active neighborhood associations that can work together to implement positive changes in the Town's neighborhoods.
- LZ7. Explore the implementation of a Town-wide Housing Rehabilitation Program.
- LZ8. Work with local and state partners to identify and combat zombie properties.



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Figure 5. Land Use





Government Administration and Policies

The Town of Coeymans was incorporated in 1791. The Town government consists of a Supervisor, who is elected to a two-year term, and four Councilpersons all of whom are elected to four-year terms. The Highway Superintendent, the Town Clerk, and two judges are elected to four-year terms. Most positions within the Town are appointed by the Supervisor and Town Council, including the Town Clerk, Bookkeeper, the Building Inspector, the Assessor, the Assistant to the Building Inspector, the Youth Services Director, and the Chief Sewer Plant Operator. The Deputy Town Clerk is appointed by the Town Clerk and ratified by the Town Board.

Towns are units of local government that are responsible for providing the practical needs of its citizens, including road maintenance, snow removal, parks maintenance, stormwater management and drainage, public safety, and the provision of public sewers and drinking water. The administration of local town policies and various town functions should work efficiently to provide the best service to the community while not overburdening citizens financially. Each of the services provided by the Town of Coeymans contributes to the overall quality of life, satisfies community needs and helps to define the character of the Town.

The Village of Ravena is located within the Town of Coeymans and makes up nearly half of the population of the Town. Therefore, the Village is a key stakeholder in the outcomes and decisions carried out by the Town. The Town and Village are connected geographically as well as through the lens of economic development and various shared services. Coordination and cooperation are key to the success of both communities and should continue in the future.

Key Challenges and Opportunities

The Town of Coeymans has taken a number of steps to increase efficiency and streamline the development review process, including the consolidation of the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals into one combined board. Combining the boards reduces the time that an applicant needs to appear before one of the boards saving both time and resources for the applicant and Town.

While the Town has engaged a number of ways to improve the development review process, there are additional opportunities to help streamline and create efficiencies in the system. One way to ensure a smooth and efficient system is to inform applicants of the information they need to provide to be approved by the local land use boards, including information to be included for the General Municipal Law §239M Referral and documentation required for the State Environmental Quality Review process. To improve this process, the Town should consider developing an Application Checklist that includes all the information an applicant needs for approval, including requirements for site plan, subdivision, variance and SEQR review. This allows applicants to come prepared to land use board meetings and increases the likelihood of approval at the local and county level.

A challenge identified during the stakeholder focus group meetings is the need for a new Town Hall, public safety building and Town and Village Court. The current building has a number of inefficiencies, including inadequate office space and lack of handicapped accessibility of entrances and restroom facilities. The size and location of the Police Station on the lower level of the existing Town Hall has also been identified as a significant challenge. There is a need for additional space to efficiently carry out the numerous duties of the police force to better serve the community. The Town of Coeymans and Village of Ravena have consolidated police departments and Courts into one Town Police Department and Town Court, which supports the need for a larger and more efficient use of space.



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Another opportunity for the Town to consider regarding government administration is the potential consolidation of the Village of Ravena and the Town. The Town and Village currently collaborate on a number of matters, including water and wastewater provisions, recreational resources, public safety and Town Court matters. The Village currently has a significantly higher tax burden than Town which could be distributed more evenly with consolidation. Possible benefits to consolidation include the potential to reduce costs and increase efficiency of service delivery through economies of scale, better coordination, a more flexible workforce, and/or elimination of redundant services. Fewer decision-making bodies for businesses to navigate can also create a more competitive advantage to attract businesses to a community.⁴

General Municipal Law Article 17-A provides a unified process for the consolidation and dissolution of local government entities. The New York State Department of State provides a number of resources to learn more about government consolidation as well as Local Government Efficiency grants to assist with studying the feasibility of consolidation or to assist with consolidation.

A challenge that has been identified through discussions with Town staff is the overall lack of digital mapping and documentation of Town infrastructure. Most of the Town's infrastructure has not been mapped, leading the Town to rely on institutional knowledge of current and former staff members. The Town should consider having all public infrastructure digitally mapped and evaluated to allow for more efficient maintenance. This also allows the Town to have a repository of information available if current and former staff members are not available or have retired.

Recommended Actions

- GA1. Develop an Application Checklist that includes requirements for site plan, subdivision, variance and SEQR review to help streamline the development review process and improve efficiency for the Town and applicants.
- GA2. Promote and encourage intermunicipal cooperation and communication with the Village of Ravena.
- GA3. Explore the feasibility of a consolidation of the Town and Village of Ravena.
- GA4. Continue to provide a high quality of public services for the safety, and comfort of residents and business owners in the Town.
- GA5. Continue to maintain public infrastructure, including water and sewer and other resources and services that meet the needs of current and future residents.
- GA6. Explore additional opportunities for shared services with adjacent municipalities to share the cost of certain community services.
- GA7. Explore opportunities to construct a new Town Hall, public safety building and Town Court or relocate to a larger space to increase efficiency of local government functions and better serve the community.
- GA8. Consider revisiting and updating the agreement between the Town and Village of Ravena regarding the 1982 Water Agreement.

⁴ NYS Division of Local Government Services, "The Citizens Guide for Petitioning for Local Government Consolidation"



GA9. Consider evaluating and digitally mapping Town infrastructure and utilities.

IMPLEMENTATION

Following the adoption of this comprehensive plan amendment the first step in the implementation process is to evaluate the zoning and subdivision regulations in Coeymans for consistency with the plan and update the zoning to be consistent with the comprehensive plan.

This plan is the result of considerable effort on the part of the Town of Coeymans Town Board, Town staff, the residents, business owners and concerned citizens. An active implementation process will be necessary for the plan to have a lasting impact. Working with a range of public, private and nonprofit implementation partners, the community can accomplish the recommended actions and continue striving toward its vision. It is recommended that the Town evaluate the Comprehensive Plan in its entirety at least every five years to ensure that the document meets the needs of the community and addresses changing trends in the future

Implementation Actions

The following recommendations are priority actions to be completed following the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.

- Review and evaluate the community's zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations to ensure consistency with this comprehensive plan. Specific considerations should include:
 - Update and revise definitions in the zoning code to reflect current needs.
 - Evaluate and update for consistency with New York State Town Law
- Establish a Comprehensive Plan Oversight Committee to guide the plan implementation effort and provide a status report of plan implementation to the Town Board on an annual basis.
- Continue enforcing existing land use regulations.
- Create a Citizen's Guide to Land Use and Development Regulations.
- Identify locations for future development and extend public utilities as needed and in keeping with smart growth principles
- Review this plan every five years



Implementation Table

The Implementation Table below provides a summary of recommended actions presented in this Comprehensive Plan Amendment.

The table was developed to assist elected officials, Town staff, residents, local business owners and other stakeholders to easily review the recommended actions identified through this Comprehensive Plan amendment. The table identifies each recommended action by topic area, as well as a timeframe to initiate the action, the responsible party and possible funding sources to assist with implementation.

Recommended Action		Time Frame	Responsible Party	Possible Funding Source
Economic Development				
ED1	Encourage economic growth in existing industrial areas, the Coeymans Hamlet, Village of Ravena and commercial areas along Route 9W.			
ED2	Collaborate with the Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk Community Business Association and the Village of Ravena to develop a branding and marketing strategy to promote small businesses and offerings in the Town and Village.			
ED3	Support economic development in the Town of Coeymans by fostering a healthy business environment and promoting the development and growth of new and established businesses.			
ED4	Encourage property owners and business owners to invest and improve the aesthetic appeal of their properties.			
ED5	Explore opportunities for grants to support small businesses, including the New York Main Street Program, Community Development Block Grants and Empire State Development grants.			
ED6	Balance the protection of the environment and public health with the expansion of industrial development.			
Infrastructure				
I1	Continue to maintain and upgrade existing sewer system and wastewater treatment plant as needed.			
I2	Explore opportunities for appropriate expansion of the water and wastewater systems in Town.			
I3	Pursue funding opportunities, including state and federal infrastructure grants.			



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Recommended Action		Time Frame	Responsible Party	Possible Funding Source
I4	Continue to coordinate with the Village of Ravena on maintenance and potential expansion of water infrastructure.			
I5	Investigate the feasibility of establishing a metering system for water and wastewater in residences.			
I6	Investigate areas of Town that are underserved by broadband and ensure internet connectivity Town-wide.			
Transportation				
T1	Consider the adoption of a Complete Streets policy to be more inclusive of all modes of transportation and people of all abilities.			
T2	Explore the feasibility of a dedicated off-ramp from I-87 to the Coeymans Industrial Park. This will require coordination with NYSDOT, NY Thruway Authority, the Town and other entities.			
T3	Explore opportunities to reduce or divert truck traffic through the Town and Village or reduce impacts of truck traffic.			
Natural Resources and Agriculture				
NR1	Consider the development of an Open Space, Recreation and Trails Plan to ensure that future parks are developed and programmed in a manner consistent with resident needs and desires.			
NR2	Continue to provide special events at parks like Coeymans Landing Park and Joralemon Park to attract visitors and for the enjoyment of residents.			
NR3	Continue to support coordinated youth programs and activities between the Town, Village and School District.			
NR4	Explore the development of additional recreational amenities at the Town's various riverfront and lakefront areas.			
NR5	Consider tools to protect the Town's environmentally sensitive lands identified in the Natural Resources Inventory in order to protect them from adverse impacts that development may have on land, air, water quality, natural habitats, unique land formations and public health, welfare, and safety.			



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Recommended Action		Time Frame	Responsible Party	Possible Funding Source
NR6	Protect the Town's water bodies and lands that serve as important natural drainage channels, provide drinking water, and function as wildlife habitat and groundwater recharge areas.			
NR7	Consider the protection of lands and scenic resources that contribute to the Town's unique character and scenic vistas. This may include the expansion of parks, development of additional trails and protection of agricultural lands and open space through a voluntary conservation easement program.			
Land Use and Zoning				
LZ1	Update the zoning code to reflect the current needs of the community and for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. Possible updates may include revising definitions and evaluating the zoning code for consistency with New York State Town Law.			
LZ2	Coordinate with the Village of Ravena to ensure compatibility of land uses and zoning districts with any subsequent zoning code updates.			
LZ3	Ensure a balance of industrial and residential areas of Town to protect and enhance community character. Industrial development should be focused in existing industrial areas and buffered from existing neighborhoods.			
LZ4	Continue enforcing existing land use regulations.			
LZ5	Consider adopting a Vacant Building Registry.			
LZ6	Foster the development of pro-active neighborhood associations that can work together to implement positive changes in the Town's neighborhoods.			
LZ7	Explore the implementation of a Town wide Housing Rehabilitation Program.			
LZ8	Work with local and state partners to identify and combat zombie properties.			
Government Administration and Policies				
GA1	Develop an Application Checklist that includes requirements for site plan, subdivision, variance and SEQR review to help streamline the development review process and improve efficiency for the Town and applicants.			



Town of Coeymans Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Recommended Action		Time Frame	Responsible Party	Possible Funding Source
GA2	Promote and encourage intermunicipal cooperation and communication with the Village of Ravena.			
GA3	Explore the feasibility of a consolidation of the Town and Village of Ravena.			
GA4	Continue to provide a high quality of public services for the safety, and comfort of residents and business owners in the Town.			
GA5	Continue to maintain public infrastructure, including water and sewer and other resources and services that meet the needs of current and future residents.			
GA6	Explore additional opportunities for shared services with adjacent municipalities to share the cost of certain community services.			
GA7	Explore opportunities to construct a new Town Hall, public safety building and Town Court or relocate to a larger space to increase efficiency of local government functions and better serve the community.			