



# TOWN OF SCHROON Comprehensive Plan Update

Clothier Planning & Consulting



## What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A Comprehensive Plan is a guidance document that sets goals, policies, and priorities for investing in the Town. The Comprehensive Plan is both a vision for the future and a roadmap for how to achieve the vision. It can support grant applications for high priority projects and also provides direction to the Town Board for making decisions about:

- Improvements to Town infrastructure,
- Recreational opportunities/projects
- Revising zoning regulations,
- Economic Development
- Allocating resources in the annual budget

In short, a Comprehensive Plan seeks to answer the following questions: **Where are we now? Where are we going? Where do we want to be? and How do we get there?**

## Why update the Comprehensive Plan?

Schroon's current comprehensive plan, "the Master Plan", was adopted in 1977. Much has changed over the past 45 years. The new Comprehensive Plan will provide a framework for achieving a community vision that is reflective of the current community conditions and builds on the progress that has been made to date.

## What is involved in this process?

Research, stakeholder interviews, focus group meetings, surveys and Committee meetings will be conducted to help draft the plan. The Draft Plan will be shared with residents & business owners for review and comment before it is considered for official adoption by the Town Board. **Public input is crucial to the entire process.**

## How long will it take?

The Comprehensive Plan Update process is anticipated to take about 15 months to complete. The process began in September 2023.

## Who can take part?

You, your neighbors, local business owners, resident of all ages, and Town Officials, will help craft the new Comprehensive Plan.

To learn more about the planning process and view the draft plan, visit the Town website!



## GET INVOLVED!

Feel free to direct any questions, comments, or concerns to

Committee Chair, Roger Friedman:  
[friedman50@hotmail.com](mailto:friedman50@hotmail.com)





# VISION STATEMENT

The Vision Statement describes the desired future state of the Town of Schroon and provides a picture of what the community is working towards. The statement is a combination of existing conditions that the community desires to protect and aspirational elements that the community has not yet achieved but wishes to see manifested in its desired future state. This Vision Statement serves as the organizing feature of the Comprehensive Plan's goals and recommendations. The following narrative describes the Town of Schroon's future vision for the community



The Town of Schroon is a beautiful walkable community that cherishes its small-town character and strong sense of community spirit while embracing the values of friendliness, inclusivity, and sustainability. The Town fosters a strong sense of place that grounds residents to stay in the community and serves as a magnet for others to return, visit or invest in the community. At the heart of it all lies an engrained spirit of volunteerism and civic engagement where active volunteers embody the true essence of community. Access to the shores of the lake serves as a cornerstone of our identity, offering recreation and exceptional views of the mountains and forests. The Town offers the perfect blend of modern convenience and superb amenities in a classic Adirondack setting.

The main street is a dynamic hub of commerce, arts, and culture that hugs the beautiful Schroon Lake shoreline. We strive to maintain a supportive environment for local businesses, nurturing economic growth while preserving the charm and authenticity that defines our main street. Town services are reliable and responsive to the residents and local economy, supporting a high quality of rural life and opportunities for growth while maintaining the lowest possible tax rate.

Through a distinctive branding message, the Town promotes expanded local and regional recreational, environmental, and heritage tourism opportunities, evoking unique visitor experiences. As an arts and culture destination with elite performance and visual arts venues, the Town promotes these assets to shape the identity of the Town and draw visitor interest. The condition, accessibility, and connectivity of all recreational facilities, along with related tourism infrastructure and visitor support services are continually maintained and upgraded to meet the needs of residents and visitors.

To enable the Town to expand opportunities for residential and business growth while maintaining the Adirondack character of the community, land use and zoning tools are updated and obstacles to growth are addressed. A diversity of affordable housing attracts new families while allowing existing residents to retire in their community. To enhance opportunities for growth, a proactive approach is implemented for upgrading and expanding sewer and water infrastructure.

Natural resources are protected long term from invasive species, flooding, erosion and impacts from development. A proactive approach has been developed to address the short- and long-term impacts from extreme weather events. Successful lake management continues through the strategic, proactive, and collaborative approach of local lake associations. Lake associations are empowered to educate residents, monitor water quality, and manage invasive species.



## Does this vision statement match your view of the Town's future?

Yes

No

Questions, Comments, Concerns?



# LAND USE, GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

Goal:	Comments, Concerns, Ideas
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**Develop a land use plan that will encourage economic growth and infill in appropriate locations while protecting the natural resources and social quality of life in the community.**

Recommendations:	Place a dot next to the recommendation you think is the highest priority for this topic	
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- Rewrite the Town zoning code as a unified development code.
- Continue focusing higher density commercial and residential development within the hamlet where there is access to municipal water and sewer infrastructure.
- Promote mixed-use development within the Route 9 corridor.
- Encourage a variety of low to moderate density residential development outside of the hamlet.
- Expand or upgrade the water and sewer districts to accommodate new housing development. Explore potential for hamlet expansion at Pickard Lane and other areas if water and sewer system can be expanded beyond the hamlet.
- Given the lack of available land and sewer capacity within the hamlet, encourage infill development and redevelopment of commercial properties. Develop incentives for adaptive reuse of buildings within the Route 9 corridor.
- Consider adoption of design guidelines for the main street corridor to ensure that new development or redeveloped properties are consistent with the community character and promote walkability.
- Review procedures for enforcement of zoning regulations, property maintenance and building codes.
- Establish a noise ordinance for the Town that includes enforcement mechanisms.



# HOUSING

Goal:	Comments, Concerns, Ideas
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**Increase the supply and diversity of affordable housing options for all households.**

Recommendations:	Place a dot next to the recommendation you think is the highest priority for this topic	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish an affordable housing committee or task force to partner with regional housing organizations to develop or rehab properties and facilitate implementation of housing recommendations.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commission a housing market study that can be used to attract developers or secure funding/financing for housing development. The study should also identify housing typologies needed in the town and inventory existing underutilized properties and areas that are suitable for residential development.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preserve existing housing stock. Partner with local housing organizations to provide home repair, mobile home replacement, and rehabilitation programs to prevent homes from falling into major disrepair.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase supply and variety of housing, including single-family homes, small homes for seniors and first-time buyers, and quality long-term rentals.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider offering discounted application and permit fees for affordable housing, including tiny homes, accessory dwelling units, and manufactured (mobile) homes.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage residents to add homes to the Adirondack Community Housing Trust to ensure workforce housing remains perpetually affordable.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilize the Adirondack Park Agency Community Housing Density Relief to encourage housing development in Moderate and Low Intensity zones outside of the hamlet.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create short-term rental policies that balance tourism and other economic considerations with the need to provide for workforce housing. A variety of regulatory options should be considered as part of a community discussion aimed at limiting the negative impacts of short-term rentals on residents and neighborhoods while encouraging opportunities for local income. Create incentives for creating or retaining long-term rentals.</li> </ul>		



# TOURISM & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Goals:

**Develop an economic development model that strives to reach new visitors through a strong and distinctive branding message that evokes a unique experience and results in a growing population and economy.**

**Strengthen and diversify the business community.**

## Comments, Concerns, Ideas

## Recommendations:

Place a dot next to the recommendation you think is the highest priority for this topic

- Develop a marketing plan for Schroon's creative economy that blends outdoor pursuits with the fine arts and performing arts venues. Expand signature community events and expand winter events. Create a brand strategy for the Town that highlights Schroon as the place for the "Ultimate American Adirondack Experience."

- Create and participate in a sub-group of chambers that are working on regionally cooperative tourism initiatives and events that recognize their unique resources and create synergy between communities.

- Become a Certified Trail Town, a year-round economic development strategy that welcomes short and long-distance hikers, mountain bikers, road bikers, skiers and snowmobilers.

- Develop a set of trail experiences that draw people to the trails throughout the community. Expand existing trail and water itineraries that cover up to a week of challenging adventures. Provide visitors with detailed information and a comprehensive map of town and state trail systems in the Town of Schroon.

- Fund a position for an economic development professional that would concentrate on revitalization of the business district.

- Explore the feasibility of developing a pilot arts business incubator program to attract artists and artisans to vacant buildings in the downtown.

- Review the viability and function of the Town's existing revolving loan fund. Explore options for providing financial assistance to upgrade existing accommodation businesses through the Business Loan Fund. Identify an entity to provide underwriting support for the revolving loan fund.



# NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION & LAKE MANAGEMENT

Goals:	Comments, Concerns, Ideas
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- Address stormwater management and erosion control issues.**
- Support Invasive Species Management in Schroon Lake and Paradox Lake.**
- Support continuous water quality monitoring efforts.**
- Support stewardship of local waterways.**

Recommendations:	Place a dot next to the recommendation you think is the highest priority for this topic	
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- Follow the guidance and detailed recommendations for stormwater management for Schroon Lake and Paradox Lake as outlined in the Schroon Lake Watershed Management Plan Addendum (July 2019).
- Follow the guidance and detailed recommendations for erosion control for Schroon Lake and the Schroon River as outlined in the Schroon Lake Watershed Management Plan Addendum (July 2019).
- Prepare a plan to address the sandbar delta that has built up where Schroon River flows into northern Schroon Lake.
- Continue prevention methods including performing aquatic plant survey every five years, annual Asian clam surveys, boat steward program (expand coverage), and Milfoil Scout Program, and boat wash decontamination program. Continue current maintenance plan for hand harvesting and monitoring results for Eurasian watermilfoil control in Schroon Lake.
- Support the existing Eurasian watermilfoil management strategy in Paradox Lake.
- Increase boat launch steward coverage as funds allow. Conduct an invasive species survey of all wetlands and inlet areas and map infestations.
- Expand water quality monitoring program to include e-coli and/or other bacterial assessments.



# ARTS & CULTURE

Goal:	Comments, Concerns, Ideas
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**Establish Schroon as a destination for a variety of visual and performance art events and festivals.**

Recommendations:	Place a dot next to the recommendation you think is the highest priority for this topic	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create an arts alliance to work collaboratively towards implementation of all arts and culture recommendations, including creation of a consolidated arts marketing campaign (possibly combined with outdoor recreation), establishment of a co-op art gallery or storefront, and expansion of local events.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify or create a year-round, multi-purpose arts venue to enrich access to the arts, attract visitors and spur economic activity. The venue may include: gallery space, a stage, classrooms/studios, outdoor exhibition space, and events space.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visually brand Schroon as an arts destination through public art. Commission permanent and/or temporary public art installations to transform public spaces and create points of interest.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore the feasibility of creating of a local historic district and establishing historic markers for buildings.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore the feasibility of establishing a historic district in the town center and list it on the National Register of Historic Places. Buildings listed on the National Register or located within a listed historic district are eligible for historic rehabilitation tax credits.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a series of historic interpretation signs, kiosks, walking tours, and murals to highlight the local history and culture. Potential locations for signs include the six hotel sites and areas around the main street area.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess the need for an arts kiosk or billboard in the main street area to advertise upcoming events.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the wide variety of arts and cultural events and festivals that take place throughout the year (see the Culture, Music &amp; Art subcommittee report for a list of organizations, places, and events in the Town of Schroon).</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure Seagle Festival remains in Schroon Lake and continues to be an important arts organization and draw for the Town.</li> </ul>		



# TOWN SERVICES, TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal:	Comments, Concerns, Ideas
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**Provide high-quality, reliable, and sustainable infrastructure systems that support the current and future needs of the community, promote public health and safety, and facilitate economic development while minimizing environmental impacts.**

General Recommendations:	Place a dot next to the recommendation you think is the highest priority for this topic	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a Capital Improvement Plan, including funding strategies, to ensure that infrastructure systems, such as roads, utilities, and public facilities, are well-designed, properly maintained, and able to meet the community's needs reliably. The plan could be drafted to address all infrastructure related recommendations.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete a green infrastructure plan to determine how best to intercept stormwater runoff.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to work with National Grid on LED streetlight conversion. Ensure all exterior lighting on Town properties is compliant with Dark Sky Guidelines.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a building assessment and develop a plan for upgrading the Boathouse Theater and bandstand.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore options for generating revenue from visitor use of public amenities.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement a wayfinding signage system throughout the hamlet that provides direction to key destinations such as public parking, the beach, and boat launch.</li> </ul>		





# TOWN SERVICES, TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal:	Comments, Concerns, Ideas
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**Provide high-quality, reliable, and sustainable infrastructure systems that support the current and future needs of the community, promote public health and safety, and facilitate economic development while minimizing environmental impacts.**

Transportation Recommendations:	Place a dot next to the recommendation you think is the highest priority for this topic	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to improve walkability and address accessibility barriers by adding accessible crosswalks, benches, trash cans, streetlight banners, historic lighting, seasonal flowers, landscaping, and shade trees throughout the hamlet. Assess the conditions of all sidewalks and identify sidewalk segments in need of repair or replacement. Update the sidewalk inventory as repairs are made.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with NYSDOT and Town of Chester to provide marked bike lanes on both sides of the Route 9 shoulders and install signage.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider adopting a Complete Streets Policy to ensure that all modes of transportation are considered in any infrastructure project involving street construction or reconstruction.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve parking. Maximize on-street parking spaces within the hamlet and explore opportunities to create new public parking lots in the town center. Consider establishing parking time limits and a designated space for commercial deliveries along with enforcement mechanisms.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify funding and install EV stations in key areas of the town.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Place digital radar speed signs on Route 9, including on the curve south of the business district.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinate with DOT to change the name of Route 9 to Main Street within the hamlet.</li> </ul>		



# TOWN SERVICES, TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal:	Comments, Concerns, Ideas
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**Provide high-quality, reliable, and sustainable infrastructure systems that support the current and future needs of the community, promote public health and safety, and facilitate economic development while minimizing environmental impacts.**

Water and Sewer Recommendations:	Place a dot next to the recommendation you think is the highest priority for this topic	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install stand-by generators for water pumps that fail when power is lost, which happens often, and town staff must manually operate the pumps.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replace the leaking water tower, which may require acquisition of land.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replace the Hillside Avenue water line.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct an engineering study to explore options for adding capacity to the collection system south of Rogers Brook to support new development.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify strategies for protecting or relocating infrastructure that is vulnerable to flooding, including the two miles of sewer mainline along the shoreline and the Horseshoe Pond pump station.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop rules and regulations regarding septic inspection, regulation and treatments to limit wastewater pollution from getting into the Schroon Watershed.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt a local law that requires a full septic system inspection by a qualified inspector upon sale or transfer of a property.</li> </ul>		



# TOWN SERVICES, TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal:	Comments, Concerns, Ideas
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**Provide high-quality, reliable, and sustainable infrastructure systems that support the current and future needs of the community, promote public health and safety, and facilitate economic development while minimizing environmental impacts.**

Community Services Recommendations:	Place a dot next to the recommendation you think is the highest priority for this topic	
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- Continue to allocate funds for the Fire and Ambulance Districts to provide operating resources for the volunteer fire and rescue organizations and support investments in modern apparatus, equipment, and personal protective gear.
- Consider offering incentives like tax abatement, discounts, or pension plan contributions to attract and retain volunteers for the fire and ambulance districts.
- Work with local and regional partners to continue to expand and enhance access to high-speed broadband internet and cell service.
- Work with Essex County to improve the layout and efficiency of the Transfer Station.




# SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE

Goal:	Comments, Concerns, Ideas
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**Address stressed or impacted lands and facilities.**

Recommendations:	Place a dot next to the recommendation you think is the highest priority for this topic	
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- Appoint a local Task Force to address the sustainability of town resources and develop guidelines for future mitigation and resilience.
- Conduct an assessment that identifies community vulnerabilities and identifies and prioritizes actions to reduce risks to the community.
- Identify and map buildings, infrastructure and areas that are prone to flooding after large storm events and assess the need for culvert and other stormwater infrastructure improvements. At a minimum address the following areas that have already been identified as presently experiencing issues: Alder Meadow Road; River Road; Continental Drive; North Shore Road; Emerson Road; Miller Road; Hoffman Road; Johnson Pond Road; and public lands within 100-year flood plain.
- Consider the benefits of becoming a Climate Smart Community. Climate Smart Communities (CSC) is a New York State program that helps local governments take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate. The program offers grants, rebates for electric vehicles, and free technical assistance. The first action under the program is for the Town to pass the CSC pledge as a municipal resolution to join the program and become a Registered Climate Smart Community
- Work with DEC to conduct an assessment of the condition and changes in sediment at the Starbuckville Dam.

Place a dot next to the recommendation you think is the highest priority for this topic

Comments, Concerns, Ideas



# PARKS AND RECREATION

Goals:	Comments, Concerns, Ideas
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- Improve the facilities at Waterfront Park**
- Improve the current recreational activities and create new outdoor experiences**
- Address trail use policies and practices**

Recommendations:	Place a dot next to the recommendation you think is the highest priority for this topic	
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- Develop a comprehensive master design and plan for the waterfront park that may include the following Assign a location for a formal canoe/kayak/SUP launch area on the south side of the Boathouse.
- Conduct a building assessment and develop a plan for upgrading the Boathouse Theater and Schroon Lake Bandstand.
- Develop a Master Plan for the Golf Course including the Club House and Ski Hill. Consider expanding from 9 to 18 holes, adding snowmaking, and developing trail systems on town land above the ski hill.
- Develop a feasibility plan to develop a fitness path and dog park on existing town-owned lands or acquire new land for these purposes.
- Develop a Townwide Trail Plan that creates an organized network of trails with consistent information about permitted activities, etc. As part of the plan, develop a consolidated map of recreational trails and bicycle routes.
- Improve conditions and connections and expand opportunities for new hiking and biking trails.
- Explore the feasibility of utilizing snowmobile trails for public walking and biking in the non-winter seasons when permitted in UMPs.
- Develop a maintenance plan for abandoned town roads that could be used for hiking, running, mountain biking, cross country skiing, and snowmobiling.

Place a dot next to the recommendation you think is the highest priority for this topic

Comments, Concerns, Ideas