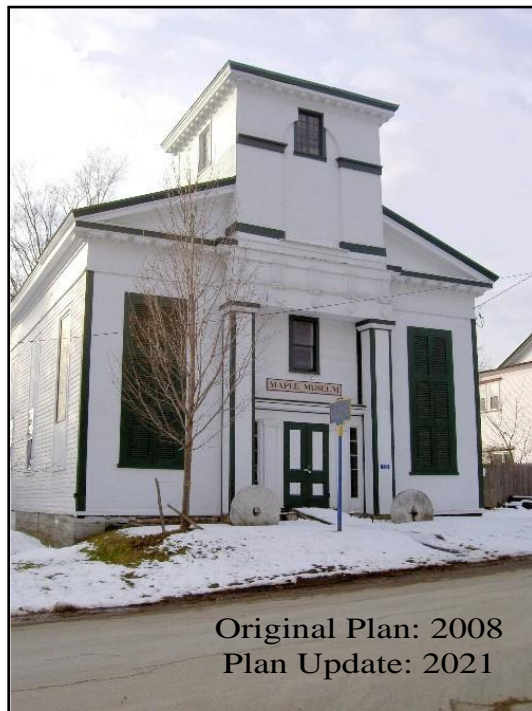


Town of Jefferson Schoharie County, NY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



Prepared by:

Town of Jefferson Comprehensive Plan Committee
Town of Jefferson Town Board

With assistance from:

Schoharie County Office of Community Development
Services and Shepstone Management Company (2008)

Town of Jefferson, Schoharie County, New York

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Foreword

This Plan was prepared by the Town of Jefferson Comprehensive Plan Committee with support from the Town of Jefferson Planning Board and Town Board as well as the Schoharie County Office of Community Development Services. We also received tremendous help from the hundreds of individuals who took the time to return our planning survey.

Town of Jefferson Comprehensive Plan Committee (2008)

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1.0 Introduction

This Comprehensive Plan sets forth a combination of strategies to deal with the growth and future needs of the Town of Jefferson. Needs are largely based upon a "Town of Jefferson Planning Survey" conducted in 2019. The survey was distributed to approximately 971 Jefferson taxpayers/residents and 303 persons (31%) responded. This is an excellent return rate. The results are attached as Appendix A.

The survey, completed by a mix of old, new and second-home residents (majority of responses from year-round residents in the area for more than 25 years), indicated several things about how Town of Jefferson taxpayers/residents perceive the Town and the land development challenges and opportunities it faces:

- The largest share (49%) of respondents felt the Town hadn't changed noticeably in its desirability as a place to live. 31% thought it had become less desirable, but 16% said it had become more desirable.
- A total of 70% of respondents said they were influenced to come to or stay in the area by its rural nature and farmland.
- 52% of those surveyed said the costs of services and taxes were what they liked least about the Town of Jefferson. 29% of respondents cited property maintenance as a concern. 28% of respondents stated it was the lack of shopping in the area that concerned them and 26% cited poor job offerings.
- A high 74% of respondents noted that reviewing junkyard and property maintenance aspects of development were important. 62% indicated it was impacts on streams that mattered. Other notable responses include natural gas drilling (56%), right to farm (54%), mining (52%), and condition of vacant parcels and buildings (50%).
- Some respondents indicated they supported adding, expanding, or improving certain activities with tax money. Ambulance (50%), property cleanup (45%), fire protection (41%), high speed internet (35%), town green (34%).
- 35% of respondents stated that they had come from the New York City/Westchester/ Rockland/Long Island area. 27% from elsewhere in upstate New York.
- High rankings of quality: Fire protection (52%), water quality (49%), ambulance (46%), Town Road maintenance (44%). Low rankings of quality: Cellular (61%), opportunity for young adults (52%), enforcement of junk law (49%).
- Respondents favored establishing or improving local control with respect to the following (in order of priority):
 - Junk vehicle storage (60%)
 - Streams (54%)
 - Natural Gas (54%)
 - Condition of vacant parcels and buildings (52%)
 - Mining (51%)
 - Proximity of commercial development to homes (50%)
 - Cellular towers (46%)
 - Scenic Impacts (45%)

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- Historic (43%)
 - Wind Turbines (40%)
 - Solar (41%)
 - Noise (40%)
 - Lot Sizes (39%)
 - Business Signs (38%)
 - Density of Development (38%)
 - Site Design (33%)
- There were strong feelings toward finding a balance between land use regulation and protecting private property rights (49%). 23 % viewed zoning as an infringement on private property rights. 15% wanted a strong zoning law and 14% had no opinion. The bulk of respondents also rated preservation of existing character more important than economic development; and preserving scenic character (37%) more highly than harvesting resources.

The survey results suggest the direction the Town should take to deal with development and change. The Town should maintain basic land use controls that help sustain rural character without intruding too much on property rights.

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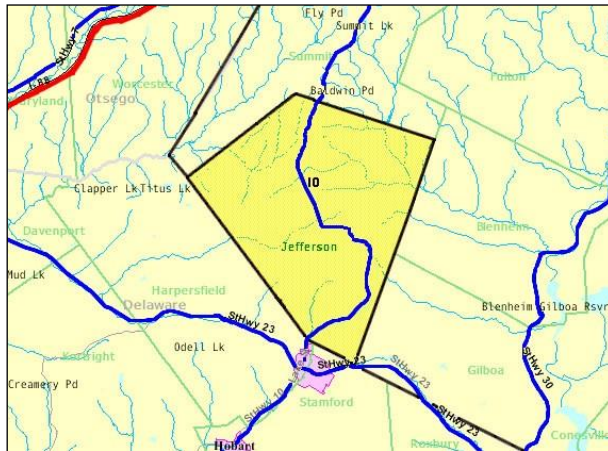
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2.0 Background Studies

2.1 Regional Location and History

2.1.1 Regional Setting

The Town of Jefferson is located at a latitude of 42.4812 degrees North and a longitude of 74.6104 degrees West (coordinates for the hamlet of Jefferson) in the southwestern portion of Schoharie County, north of Stamford and south of Richmondville, New York. Adjoining municipalities include the Towns of Harpersfield and Stamford in Delaware County, Worcester in Otsego County and Blenheim, Gilboa and Summit in Schoharie County.



NYS Route 10 bisects the Town with much of the area to its east draining to the Delaware River and much of the area to its west falling into Susquehanna River Basin. It is a relatively hilly area of higher elevation and colder temperatures than most of Schoharie County. The Town consists of approximately 27,800 acres or 43.4 square miles of land.

2.1.2 History

According to the *History of Schoharie County* by William E. Roscoe, the Town of Jefferson was first settled by emigrants from the Berkshires of Massachusetts and the Lebanon hills of Connecticut in 1793 and 1794. Originally a part of the Town of Blenheim, it was set off as a new town on February 12, 1803, by act of the New York State Legislature. The first Town meeting was held at the house of Stephen Judd and the first Supervisor was Ezra Beard. William P. Hilton was the first Town Clerk.

Herman Hickok was the first schoolteacher and instrumental in founding the Jefferson Academy on the ground known as the Military Square through sales of stock subscriptions. The building frame was erected in the latter part of 1812 and first occupied by a school in 1817, the intervening period being used to finish raising funds and build the school in sections. Stephen Judd gave one hundred and eight rods of land (the $\frac{2}{3}$ acre constituting the current village green) to his brother, William Judd, for the use of the Academy, which, as the deed says, "was intended for the instruction and education of youth in the arts and sciences."

The building when fully completed, in about 1822, was 45 feet square and three stories in height. It cost about \$4,000. Unfortunately, the Academy didn't do especially well over the years and was closed about 1851, but it served to further the development of the hamlet of Jefferson, the green remaining a focal point of Town activities and adjoined by the Maple Museum, "Heartbreak Hotel" and several other attractive historical structures.

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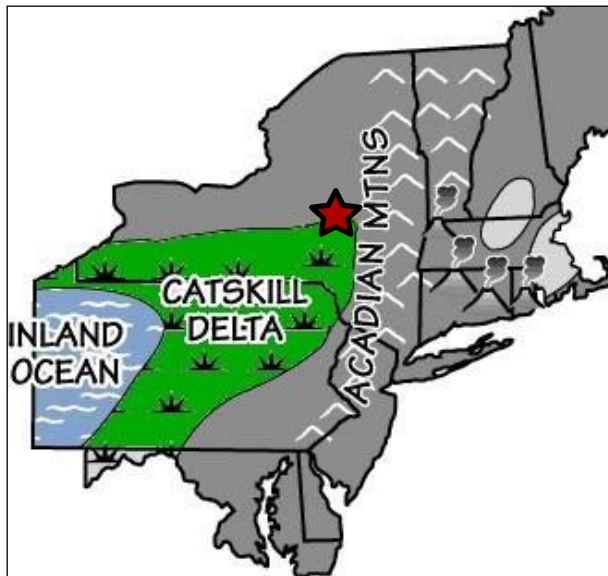


Historical hamlets of the Town include not only Jefferson, but also Arabia, Baird Corners and East Jefferson in the northern part of the Town, South Jefferson on Route 10 between Jefferson and Stamford and West Jefferson on the western side of the Town.

2.2 Natural Features

2.2.1 Geology

The Town of Jefferson is located at the very northern edge of the Allegheny Plateau. This plateau was formed from sedimentary deposits due to the erosion of the Acadian Mountains to the east. They washed into what was an ancient inland ocean, resulting in the formation of the "Catskill Delta."



Bedrock found in the Town of Jefferson is part of the Oneonta formation created during the late Devonian Genesee period that extended from 410 to 360 million years ago. It consists of conglomerate and sandstone interspersed with shale. The coarse-grained layers of bedrock have proved to be very erosion resistant, leaving in place many of the ridges that define the character of the area. This bedrock has also been uplifted over the eons by tectonic forces and shaped by glaciers and erosion to produce the current mountainous landscape. It tends to yield good supplies of water, but is often found near the surface, thereby limiting building development and agricultural potential.

The Catskill Center for Conservation and Development describes area surface geology as follows:

"The majority of the surficial geology of the Catskills was determined during the last 1.6 million years. Four ice ages inundated this area, most recently the Wisconsin advance. The Wisconsin glaciers finished retreating from this area only approximately 14,000 years ago. The majority of the region is composed of glacial till. Till (material deposited by a glacier) is unstratified, unsorted, and is made up of a wide range of sizes. For this reason, glacial till generally acts as an aquifer, holding large amounts of groundwater. The high peak regions are entirely comprised of bedrock. These sandstone and conglomerate mountaintops were scoured and scraped by glaciers moving around and over their summits, leaving virtually no loose material."

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2.2.2 Water Resources

The Town of Jefferson is located partly within three major river basins: the Delaware, the Hudson, and the Susquehanna. It is generally a plateau area, characterized by relatively few areas of floodplains and wetlands. There are scattered Federal wetland and hydric soil areas along many of the roads throughout the Town, but they do not constitute a major development limitation.

Substantial areas of the Town where the soil depth to the seasonal high-water table is less than 20" making it quite difficult to install functioning on-lot sewage disposal systems that are essential for development in this rural area. More than 50% of the Town may fall into that category. Interestingly, however, the hamlet of Jefferson does not possess this limitation and, therefore, can accommodate somewhat more intensive development. Some of the newer subdivisions do fall under this limitation, but relatively large lot sizes are an indication of the difficulty of finding suitable building areas.

2.2.3 Topography

A *Slope Map* (June 2020) has also been developed for the Town. It indicates that, other than the southernmost portion of the Town (including the ski slope on Bald Mountain and Mine Hill) and the northeastern section (on both sides of Hollow Brook and the West Kill), slope is not a major development limitation for the Town of Jefferson.

2.2.4 Agriculture and Forest Resources

The Town of Jefferson includes several important farms and niche agricultural enterprises as well as major timber resources. Among these are dairies, beef operations, maple syrup producers and other specialized farm activities. The area's relatively high elevation and cooler climate is well-suited to grass production and grazing. Several former dairies are still in use as hay farms and provide valuable open spaces that both sustain tourism and create residential appeal.

The Town's hardwood forests provide similar benefits and support an active regional timber industry.



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2.3 Existing Land Use

An *Existing Land Use Map* has been prepared using data from real property tax records. This map reveals a large proportion of the Town consists of Rural Residential land uses. Vacant land and agricultural acreage are also large, indicating major potential for further development if the demand for second homes continues to be strong. Between 2005 and 2020, the number of agricultural coded properties decreased by 14 and residential increased by 60.

Residential uses, moreover, represent the largest share of the parcels in the Town of Jefferson. Commercial properties are mostly limited to the hamlet of Jefferson, but there are also numerous

home occupations throughout the Town.

2.4 Population and Economic Base

2.4.1 Population Trends

Table 2-2 illustrates the growth of Jefferson compared to Schoharie County and the State:

Based on the Census Bureau data for 2010, the Town of Jefferson grew by 18.49% between 1990 and 2010. New York State grew by only 7.71% during this same period with much of that growth occurring in the Metropolitan New York City area. Schoharie County experienced an increase in population of only 2.85% between 1990 and 2010, so the Town increase demonstrates some vitality.

Also, the Bureau of Census estimates Jefferson's population increased slightly to 1,443 persons in 2017. The 2020 Census numbers should be available by 2022.

Growth in residential uses is increasing, particularly in second homes. The increase in second home ownership typically leads to second home conversions to permanent residences. This is anticipated to continue especially with some city dwellers moving to less dense communities in response to pandemic fears.

The increase in second home ownership will likely lead to steady, though modest, growth in the Town's population over the next decade. This will occur as second homeowners choose to make the Town of Jefferson their permanent residence for retirement or other purposes.

**Table 2-1
Parcels by Land Use, 2005 & 2020**

| Broad Use Category | Land Use Desc. | 2005 Parcel Count | 2020 Parcel Count |
|--|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 100 | Agricultural | 51 | 37 |
| 200 | Residential | 804 | 864 |
| 300 | Vacant Land | 543 | 537 |
| 400 | Commercial | 57 | 11 |
| 500 | Recreation | 7 | 7 |
| 600 | Community Services | 24 | 24 |
| 700 | Industrial | 5 | 5 |
| 800 | Public Services | 33 | 9 |
| 900 | Public Parks & Conservation | 26 | 21 |
| Total Parcels in All Categories | | 1,550 | 1,515 |

Source: NYS Office of Real Property Services

**Table 2-2
Population Changes, 1990 - 2010**

| Year | New York State | Schoharie County | Town of Jefferson |
|-------------------------|----------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1990 | 17,990,778 | 31,840 | 1,190 |
| 2000 | 18,976,457 | 31,582 | 1,285 |
| 2010 | 19,378,102 | 32,749 | 1,410 |
| 1990-2010 Change | 1,387,324 | 909 | 220 |
| % Change | 7.71% | 2.85% | 18.49% |
| Persons Per Square Mile | 411.2 | 52.7 | 32.6 |

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2.4.2 Age of Household Members

The Town population between 2000-2010 is illustrated in Table 2-3. There were relatively large numbers of workers. The 35-54 years group is the largest age cohort, with the Town population showing some aging from 2000 to 2010.

Some 18% of persons were 65+ years of age in the Town compared to 16% in the County. The 65-74 age cohort, accounted for 11.2% of Town residents, compared to only 8.9% for the County.

2.4.3 Years of Education

The 2017 Census estimates indicated that 879 persons or 81.2% of the Town population age 25 years or more had a high school diploma. In comparison, 86.2% of the New York State population had a high school diploma in 2017. 31.6% of Town residents possessed a college degree (Associate or higher), compared to 34% for the County and 44% for the State.

**Table 2-3
Population by Age, 2000 - 2010**

| Year | Jefferson | % | County | % |
|---------------------|-----------|-------|--------|-------|
| Under 5 years 2000 | 73 | 5.7% | 1,757 | 5.6% |
| Under 5 years 2010 | 69 | 4.9% | 1,501 | 4.6% |
| 5 to 9 years 2000 | 64 | 5.0% | 2,075 | 6.6% |
| 5 to 9 years 2010 | 93 | 6.6% | 1,761 | 5.4% |
| 10 to 14 years 2000 | 98 | 7.6% | 2,262 | 7.2% |
| 10 to 14 years 2010 | 98 | 7.0% | 1,967 | 6.0% |
| 15 to 19 years 2000 | 87 | 6.8% | 3,014 | 9.5% |
| 15 to 19 years 2010 | 73 | 5.2% | 2,803 | 8.6% |
| 20 to 24 years 2000 | 39 | 3.0% | 1,794 | 5.7% |
| 20 to 24 years 2010 | 39 | 2.8% | 2,273 | 6.9% |
| 25 to 34 years 2000 | 111 | 8.6% | 3,480 | 11.0% |
| 25 to 34 years 2010 | 126 | 8.9% | 3,267 | 10.0% |
| 35 to 44 years 2000 | 215 | 16.7% | 4,800 | 15.2% |
| 35 to 44 years 2010 | 179 | 12.7% | 3,946 | 12.0% |
| 45 to 54 years 2000 | 224 | 17.4% | 4,608 | 14.6% |
| 45 to 54 years 2010 | 237 | 16.8% | 5,129 | 15.7% |
| 55 to 59 years 2000 | 94 | 7.3% | 1,724 | 5.5% |
| 55 to 59 years 2010 | 115 | 8.2% | 2,542 | 7.8% |
| 60 to 64 years 2000 | 76 | 5.9% | 1,371 | 4.3% |
| 60 to 64 years 2010 | 127 | 9.0% | 2,340 | 7.1% |
| 65 to 74 years 2000 | 111 | 8.6% | 2,485 | 7.9% |
| 65 to 74 years 2010 | 158 | 11.2% | 2,919 | 8.9% |
| 75 to 84 years 2000 | 75 | 5.8% | 1,625 | 5.1% |
| 75 to 84 years 2010 | 65 | 4.6% | 1,693 | 5.2% |
| 85+ years 2000 | 18 | 1.4% | 587 | 1.9% |
| 85+ years 2010 | 31 | 2.2% | 608 | 1.9% |

**Table 2-4
Education Levels, 2017**

| Education Level | Town of Jefferson | Town % | County % |
|--------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|
| < 12 Yrs Education | 203 | 18.8% | 11.4% |
| 12+ Years | 537 | 49.6% | 54.6% |
| Associate Degree | 111 | 10.3% | 12.4% |
| Bachelor's Degree | 132 | 12.2% | 12.7% |
| Graduate Degree | 99 | 9.1% | 8.9% |
| TOTAL | 1,082 | 100% | 100% |

Source: U.S. Census – 2013-2017 5-Year Estimates

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2.4.4 Incomes

Data gathered during the 2017 American Community Survey Census indicates per capita income for the Town of Jefferson was, at \$29,847, higher than that of the County as a whole (\$27,916). Per capita income Statewide, nevertheless, was \$35,908, indicating a greater need for economic development within the Town, County, and this region of New York State as a whole. The State's tax burden, based on higher incomes downstate, cannot be borne without economic growth.

**Table 2-5
Incomes, 2000 - 2017**

| Incomes | Town 2000* | Town 2017 | County | NY State |
|-------------------------|---------------|--------------|----------|-------------|
| Per Capita | \$27,856 | \$29,847 | \$27,916 | \$35,908 |
| Gain 00-17 | - | \$1,991 | \$2,609 | \$2,615 |
| % Gain | - | 7.2% | 10.3% | 7.9% |
| Median Household | \$49,821 | \$56,278 | \$53,820 | \$62,990 |
| Gain 00-17 | - | \$6,457 | \$1,743 | \$1,222 |
| % Gain | - | 13.0% | 3.4% | 2.0% |
| Median Family | \$61,592 | \$63,866 | \$67,468 | \$77,487 |
| Gain 00-17 | - | \$2,274 | \$6,091 | \$3,908 |
| % Gain | - | 3.7% | 9.9% | 5.3% |

* Adjusted for inflation to 2017 dollars.

It is interesting, also, that median family income in the Town was, at \$63,866, below the County figure of \$67,468. Conversely, the Town median household income was, at \$56,278, somewhat higher than the County median of \$53,820. One explanation for the discrepancy is the higher percentage of households in the Town with Social Security income, some 34.2% versus 32.6% for the County and the overall trend toward smaller households and families within the Town. The single most important fact with respect to incomes is that both the Town and County are economically gaining in every category.

Economic growth can probably be attributed to the in-migration of wealthier households.

2.4.5 Employment Status

**Table 2-6
Workers by Job Class, 1990 - 2018**

| Class | 1990 | % | 2000 | % | 2018 | % |
|----------------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|---------------|
| Private wage/salary | 280 | 59.6% | 367 | 65.7% | 371 | 61.0% |
| Self-employed | 78 | 16.6% | 48 | 8.6% | 78 | 12.8% |
| Unpaid family | 3 | 0.6% | 1 | 0.2% | 7 | 1.2% |
| Total Private | 361 | 76.8% | 416 | 74.4% | 456 | 75.0% |
| Government | 109 | 23.2% | 143 | 25.6% | 152 | 25.0% |
| TOTAL | 470 | 100% | 559 | 100% | 608 | 100.0% |

The Town of Jefferson had an estimated workforce of 608 employed persons over 16 years of age in 2018, of which 311 or 53.8% were female. It experienced a small shift in private industry versus government employment between 1990 and 2018. The percentage of government workers increased from 23.2% in 1990 to 25% in 2018. This compares to a Statewide average of only 15.3% of employees. Self-employment dropped from 16.6% in 1990 to 12.8% in 2018.

Over time, such a continued shift in employment from private industry to government will place a major burden on the local tax base to support municipal and State government. There is a need for more private industry employment and such growth is slow.

2.4.6 Employment by Industry

Table 2-7 breaks down the employed Town population aged 16 years or more estimated in 2018 by industry. The largest single industry in which Town residents are employed is educational, health and social services, comprising an extremely high 32.6% share of the employment base. Many are the government (public school) employees discussed above.

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Table 2-7
Employment by Industry, 2018

| Industry | Persons 16+ Years Employed | % |
|--|---|-------------|
| Educational, health, social services | 198 | 32.6% |
| Manufacturing | 73 | 12.0% |
| Retail trade | 60 | 9.9% |
| Construction | 52 | 8.6% |
| Transportation, warehousing, utilities | 60 | 9.9% |
| Arts, recreation, lodging & food | 58 | 9.5% |
| Public administration | 35 | 5.8% |
| Wholesale trade | 0 | 0.0% |
| Professional, management, admin. | 6 | 1.0% |
| Finance, insurance, real estate | 21 | 3.5% |
| Other services (except public admin.) | 33 | 5.4% |
| Information | 6 | 1.0% |
| Agriculture, forestry, hunting, mining | 6 | 1.0% |
| TOTAL | 608 | 100% |

U.S. Census 5-year Estimates 2018

Those persons involved in manufacturing made up another 12.0% of the local labor force. Retail trade at 9.9%, construction at 8.6%, transportation and utilities are growing since 1990 and stands at 9.9% tourism (arts, entertainment, recreation, lodging and food service) at 9.5% rounded out the estimated 2018 employment base of the Town of Jefferson. Together, these industries comprised 82.5% of jobs held by Town residents.

The agricultural, forestry and mining sector employed only 6 individuals, down from 41 in 1990 and only 1% of the Town labor force. This does not include all self-employed individuals, however, many of whom work at non-employer enterprises.

Those employed in the arts increased from 9 workers in 1990 to 58 individuals or 9.5% in 2018, reflecting the migration of metropolitan area employees to the Town as permanent residents and the growth in importance of tourism.

Data on employment by occupation from the 2018 5-year estimates is summarized in Table 2-8. The data

indicates that 221 or 36.3% of Town residents were employed in management, professional or related occupations. An additional 101 persons, or 16.6%, were employed in sales and office occupations, confirming the importance of service industry jobs.

2.4.7 Travel to Work

It is estimated that some 30 persons, or 5.1% of workers within the Town work from home. This was somewhat less than the County, but the trend to work from home is evolving quickly and in 2020 is increasing. The commute time was slightly higher than northern County Towns (about 40 minutes), reflecting the relative isolation of the southern portion of the County.

Town of Jefferson residents use of public transportation is on par with other rural Towns.

Table 2-8
Employment by Occupation, 2018

| Occupation | Persons 16+ Years Employed | % |
|----------------------------|---|-------------|
| Management, professional | 221 | 36.3% |
| Sales, office | 101 | 16.6% |
| Service | 98 | 16.1% |
| Construction, maintenance | 85 | 14.0% |
| Production, transportation | 103 | 16.9% |
| TOTAL | 608 | 100% |

Source: U.S. Census, 2018 5-year estimates

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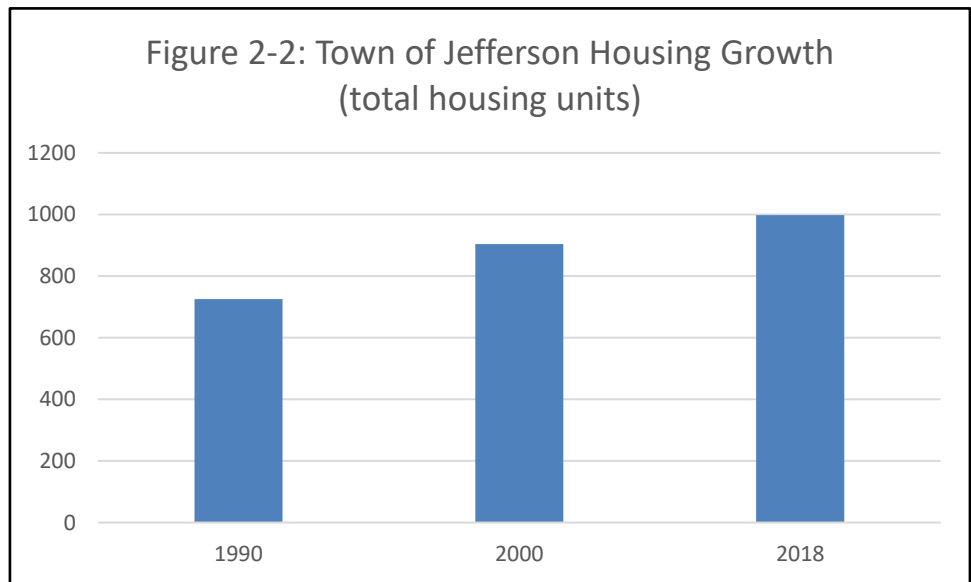
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2.5 Housing

2.5.1 Housing Stock

In 2018, there were 998 housing units in the Town of Jefferson. The number of housing units in the Town has increased since 1990 by 273 units (37.6%). In 2018, there were 561 occupied houses, and 437 vacant. Approximately 87% of occupied housing units are owner-occupied, while the remaining 13% of units are rentals. Except for the Hamlet of Jefferson, most housing is highly

scattered. Median value for owner-occupied housing in 2018 in Jefferson is \$170,700. Manufactured homes accounted for 141 units or 14.1% of the housing units in the Town. Typical in rural areas, multi-family housing is rare in the Town with only 3 housing units with 3 or 4 units and none higher than 4 units.



2.5.2 Contract Rents

Town of Jefferson rents continue to be relatively low in 2018, the median being only \$667. The median rent Countywide was higher at \$792.

2.5.3 Housing Needs

The Town needs to ensure its land use regulations do not unnecessarily raise the cost of moderate-income housing. A practical approach to land use regulation that recognizes the varying needs of different segments of the population and different parts of the Town is warranted. Improving the quality of the existing Town housing stock can be achieved through programs with Western Catskills Community Revitalization Council and the Schoharie County Rural Preservation Corporation. Enforcement of the NYS Building Code for new residential construction will help ensure quality housing for the future.

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3.0 Goals and Objectives

The following are the goals and objectives identified for 2020 and beyond:

3.1 Base all land use regulations on a foundation of protecting private property rights.

3.1.1 Preserve and respect the rights to use of private property by limiting land use regulations to those essential to the health, safety, and welfare of the community and for addressing land use conflicts.

3.1.2 Employ the Town's Rural Land Development Law and Subdivision Regulations to allow Jefferson to develop in a traditional mixed-use fashion, with regulations directed more toward the quality of development.



3.1.3 Incorporate as much flexibility as possible into land use standards to fit individual development circumstances and offer density bonuses or other incentives for developers who provide additional open spaces, protect important environmental features, or otherwise contribute to quality forms of development.

3.1.4 Encourage home occupations, and limit oversight to those features having a direct bearing upon adjacent land uses (e.g. noise, landscaping, lighting, outdoor storage, parking, signage).

3.2 Provide for the orderly growth and development of the Town.

3.2.1 Create incentives for use of those subdivision and land development techniques that best preserve the valuable open spaces and working landscapes of the Town of Jefferson.

3.2.2 Establish land development performance standards applicable to steep slopes, wetlands, and other areas of the Town with natural resource limitations.

3.2.3 Maintain reasonable minimum lot sizes (e.g. 1-5 acres) in Town land development regulations.

3.2.4 Ensure a high-quality housing stock at various price ranges by allowing for manufactured homes.

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3.3 Make the Town secure from the dangers of fire and other hazards.

3.3.1 Maintain firefighting equipment needed to ensure the proper capacities of the local fire companies to address emergencies and institute volunteer recruitment incentives.

3.3.2 Apply the Town's Floodplain Damage Prevention Law as a tool to steer development away from dangerous flood locations.

3.3.3 Apply the Schoharie County Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan and undertake the projects in the plan identified for the Town.

3.4 Preserve the character of existing rural highways and promote efficient and safe circulation of traffic through the Town.

3.4.1 Require, where feasible, use of joint highway accesses onto Town, County and State roads.

3.4.2 Reduce speeds on roads with safety hazards and avoid hazards by applying traffic calming measures to new and existing development.

3.4.3 When reviewing site plans and subdivisions, require new roads to be designed to preserve natural topography and tree cover, minimize cuts, and fills and preserve important views and features such as stone walls.



3.4.4 Where practical, scale street widths and alignments to neighborhood size (typically 18 feet width) while meeting minimum standards for safety and maintenance.

3.4.5 Require developers to mitigate existing traffic safety issues, wherever possible, with onsite and offsite improvements.

3.4.6 Limit highway dedications to those roads imposing low maintenance burdens on the Town, by incorporating Town highway specifications into a Town Road Law setting high standards for construction.

3.5 Protect surface and ground water quality, maintain high quality physical environments, and preserve wildlife habitats through

3.5.1 Incorporate stormwater management and erosion control planning requirements in both site plan and subdivision reviews to reduce phosphorous loads and turbidity to streams.

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3.5.2 Allow for and provide density bonuses as an incentive for conservation subdivision designs where lots are clustered to provide open space buffers that can trap stormwater run-off.

3.5.3 Incorporate the highly ranked objectives from the community survey into a set of rural land regulations.

3.5.4 Update and aggressively enforce junkyard and property maintenance rules, including inspection and renewal procedures to ensure continued compliance.

3.5.5 New parcels should preserve existing stone walls when possible.

3.6 Economically revitalize the Town and Hamlet of Jefferson.

3.6.1 Continue to seek out assistance in identifying buildings of historical significance for purposes of tourism promotion, erecting historical signs and securing tax credits or other forms of funding assistance for restoration and other improvements, including the historical school renovation and upgrade of the Maple Museum as the central feature of the Hamlet.

3.6.2 Allow for the development of convenience shopping opportunities and niche service businesses in the Town land subdivision and site plan review regulations.

3.6.3 Maintain community welcoming signs at major entrances into the Hamlet of Jefferson.

3.6.4 Ensure that all land use regulations are accommodating to small business and home occupations as well as natural resource industries.

3.6.5 Promote tourism and other Town businesses through promotional materials, a town website linked to businesses offering services and materials identifying potential sites for businesses.

3.6.6 Explore undertaking a sewer system feasibility study for the Hamlet of Jefferson.

3.6.7 Explore ways to improve pedestrian access in the Hamlet of Jefferson. Refer to the Complete Streets Plan that was completed for the Town. Improvements could involve replacement/repair of existing sidewalks, new sidewalks, new trails/paths, and/or utilization of the shoulder of existing roads marked for pedestrian/bike usage.

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3.7 Encourage agricultural niche enterprises and other similar industries with the potential to improve incomes, support tourism and protect working landscapes.

3.7.1 Work with landowners, the Schoharie County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board, the Watershed Agricultural Council, the Schoharie Land Trust, the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets and others to promote agricultural conservation easements as a public/private tool to preserve valuable farmland.

3.7.2 Actively promote the Town of Jefferson as a location for new farm and agri-business enterprises by working with a Chamber of Commerce and others.

3.7.3 Promote the use of the New York State Agricultural District program within the Town as a means of offering farmers additional protection of their rights to farm, complementing local legislation, extending these opportunities, also, to small niche agricultural enterprises.

3.7.4 Arrange for training of Town officials on agricultural planning issues through Cornell Cooperative Extension of Schoharie County and the Schoharie County Administrator's Office.



3.8 Protect the Town's valuable scenery through incentives.

3.8.1 Provide and promote options for property cleanup, including identifying and promoting junk hauling services and disposal locations and sponsoring cleanup days and similar events.

3.8.2 Develop growth-neutral design standards and incentives that will allow economic use of property without excessive clearing, applying measures that reward preservation of ridgelines and other areas of valuable scenery.

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4.0 Regulations

4.1 Land Use

There are Land Subdivision Regulations, a Rural Land Development Law, and individual ordinances and local laws in effect in the Town of Jefferson that serve to guide development. There are also *New York City Water Supply Watershed Regulations* applicable in a small part of the Town. The details of these various regulations as they impact upon future land use are as follows:

SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS

The Town Board authorized its Planning Board to regulate land subdivisions and the Planning Board subsequently prepared subdivision regulations, adopted in 1986 and updated in 2016 in accordance with recommendations in the original comprehensive plan.

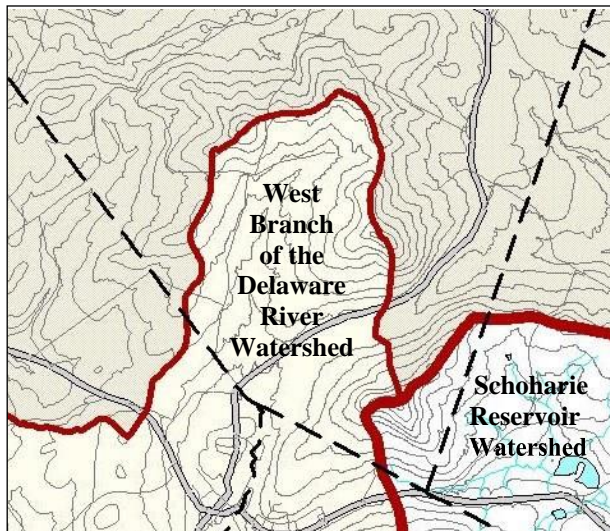
An exemption for lot combinations, boundary line adjustments and natural subdivisions already divided by roads, may be useful in the subdivision regulations.

NEW YORK CITY WATERSHED REGULATIONS

The regulations adopted for the New York City water supply watershed are comprehensive in scope. Procedurally, they have an impact on all development in that portion of the Town inside the watershed boundaries (see map following).

The *Memorandum of Agreement* between local and City authorities defines many of the relationships between the parties but there are still difficulties that result from the procedurally top-heavy approaches employed by City agencies to make decisions. This often results in excessive delay and added costs from a local perspective.

NYC Watershed in the Town of Jefferson



Nevertheless, the *Watershed Regulations* are less of an obstacle to development than the procedures used to apply them. The standards, in fact, are not substantially different from those imposed by many communities on their own initiative. They include the following requirements:

- New petroleum storage facilities (including those used for home heating fuel storage) must be located at least 100 feet from a stream and 500 feet from a reservoir.
- All new subsurface sewage disposal systems must be approved by the City's Department of Environmental Protection and be located at least 100 feet from a stream or wetland and 300 feet from a reservoir (increased to 250' and 500', respectively, for "raised systems").
- Impervious surfaces constructed in connection with new commercial uses are prohibited within 100 feet of a stream or wetland or 300 feet of a reservoir (not prohibited within designated hamlets, but still subject to review and permit).

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- New residences are generally prohibited within 100 feet of a stream or wetland or 300 feet of a reservoir.
- Stormwater pollution prevention plans for review by the City are required in connection with new subdivisions, earth disturbances of 5+ acres and new impervious surfaces of 40,000+ sq. ft. within commercial zones.

That portion of the Town affected by these regulations is limited, as the map shows. Also, new EPA stormwater pollution control requirements for disturbances of one acre or more have now been incorporated in State regulations mandating the preparation of SWPPP's, this reduces the impact of City requirements on a relative basis. The Town may wish to assume more control of these matters for itself by developing compatible local standards that serve to resolve the major issues before they reach the New York City Department of Environmental Protection or the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation for decision.

OTHER REGULATIONS

The Town of Jefferson has also enacted several other specific laws and ordinances having a bearing on land development in the Town. These regulations include the following:

➤ *Town Highway Specifications*

Like most towns in New York, Jefferson has a set of adopted highway specifications setting out criteria applicable to dedication of streets to the Town. These regulations are referred to the *Subdivision Regulations* as the baseline standard for all new roads. They require a 60 feet wide right-of-way, an 18 feet wide roadbed, 5 feet wide shoulders, 10% maximum grade and 500 feet minimum length.

➤ *Junkyard Law*

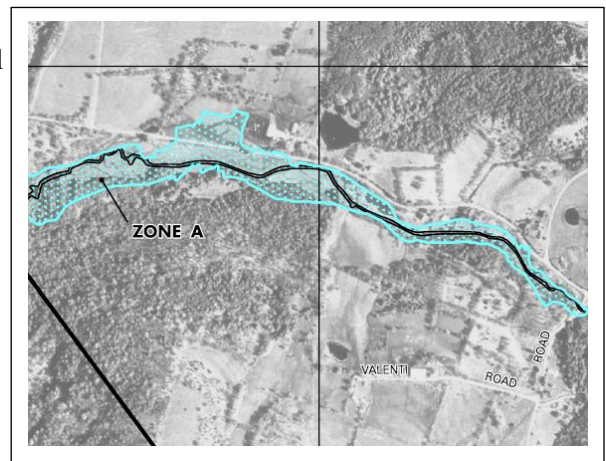
The Town adopted a *Junkyard Law* in 2000 and is working on an update for commercial junkyards. This *Law* establishes licensing requirements for junkyards. It requires, also, that all junkyards be fenced. Authority for this *Law* is found in Sections 136 of both the *Town Law* and the *General Municipal Law*.

Jefferson's requirements are like those of the *General Municipal Law* and apply to all automobile junkyards with two or more abandoned vehicles. A site plan is required of all junkyards, which is subject to public hearing and review by the Town Board. There are no specific landscaping or natural buffering standards but there is generic authority to impose such measures during site plan review. There is also a rule that any junkyard must be separated by 1,000 feet from any church, school, hospital, public building, or place of public assembly. Existing junkyards are effectively treated as legal non-conforming uses although fencing and site plan requirements still apply.

➤ *Flood Damage Prevention Law*

This *Law* is based upon the models generated for the *National Flood Insurance Program*. It establishes detailed building and floodproofing standards and several specific prohibitions regarding development in areas designated as flood hazard zones on the *Flood Insurance Rate Maps* for the Town of Jefferson.

These maps were produced in 2004 by the Federal



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Emergency Management Agency and are occasionally updated with further studies. Some communities have enacted higher standards for floodplain development than

required under the national program. Jefferson fully complies with the Federal requirements but has not imposed any such stricter regulations. It has relatively few flood hazard areas. The flood hazard areas were delineated with road signs to help residents and prospective property purchasers be more aware of flood threats.

➤ ***Unsafe Buildings Law***

The Town of Jefferson has an *Unsafe Buildings Law* since 2003 providing for the identification of unsafe buildings that could present safety hazards, notice to owners to repair or remove such buildings and establishing a procedure for the Town to do so by default and assess the costs to the owner. There is also a requirement that abandoned buildings be secured by boarding up of the windows and doors.

➤ ***Wellhead Protection Law***

The Town Board enacted *Land Use Regulations for the Protection of Wellhead Areas* in 1994, using



Municipal Home Rule Law authority. This *Law* designates a specific wellhead protection area within the Town and establishes regulations governing land uses within that relatively confined area. Somewhat similar regulations, enacted by the Department of Health, apply to the Jefferson Water District, which encompasses the hamlet.

Development activities affecting 5 acres or more, involving the use or storage of fertilizers and pesticides, mining, sewage disposal, solid wastes disposal and several other land uses are regulated under the *Wellhead Protection Law*. A Certificate of Compliance with this *Law* is required to obtain any building permit. There are

also provisions for Planning Board review and *SEQRA* compliance. There are no variance procedures but conditioned approvals by the Code Enforcement Officer are permitted. Refer to Rural Land Development Law #2 of 2015 for enforcement.

➤ ***Noise Law***

The Town of Jefferson enacted a *Noise Law* in 1988 and updated it in 1992 and 2015 to delete exceptions for organized shooting events and to add other exemptions. This short law contains no specific standards or procedures, although there is a penalty provision, that may help address repeat violators.

➤ ***Right-to-Farm Law***

The Town enacted a *Right-to-Farm Law* in 2000 as recommended in the *Schoharie County Agricultural Development and Protection Plan*. This law establishes a Town policy encouraging agriculture as a land use, protects the use of sound agricultural practices by the farm community and, provides a local mechanism for resolving landowner disputes over such practices.

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➤ *Wind Energy Facilities Law*

This local law was adopted in 2013. It establishes setbacks and other environmental standards for siting wind energy facilities. Requirements for utility scale projects is the focus, but it distinguishes between industrial size and small on-farm type windmills and establishes standards for each. These include location and building standards, site safety measures, traffic route and access road criteria, setbacks, noise standards and numerous other specific regulations intended to allow for both types of wind energy generation facilities with protections for adjoining property owners.

➤ *Solar Energy Systems Law*

This local law was adopted in 2016. It establishes setbacks and other environmental standards for siting solar energy facilities. Requirements for utility scale projects is the focus.

➤ *Rural Land Development Law*

This local law was adopted in 2015. It establishes two zoning districts – a Hamlet District and a General Rural District. Area requirements and site plan procedures were put in place for most uses except one and two-family dwellings. Site layout, not specific uses of land, is regulated with this law.

Overall, the Town's land use regulations have been updated and improved since 2008. Many of the recommendations for law improvement have been followed. It is anticipated that the Rural Land Development Law will continue to evolve and improve to offer more oversight and public input for certain types of land uses in the Town.

4.1.2 Future Land Use

The Town of Jefferson can expect continued residential growth, particularly second home growth and conversions of these units to permanent residences. This is changing the face of the community, especially with the aging population. There will be an increase in interest of issues to retirement and near retirement age groups and associated land use impacts. The in-migration of new households, nevertheless, is what will separate Jefferson from much of the Upstate New York region, which is facing an exodus of young people with little or no growth among other cohorts, leading to general decline. The Town of Jefferson has a future because of appeal to second home and retirement households.



Commercial activity is largely limited to the Hamlet of Jefferson, but there are various large recreation uses, home occupations and agricultural enterprises scattered about the Town. Residential development will stimulate some demand for new commercial uses, but the level of demand is likely to be modest. Home occupations are likely to grow in number as in-migrating urban households bring jobs with them and do more telecommuting. Agricultural niche activity and small-scale industrial enterprises will also expand, along with natural resource industries, including alternative energy generation, for example.

Accordingly, land use controls must continue to provide the flexibility to accommodate development in all areas of the Town but in a manner that allows the Town to exercise reasonable control to deal with the impacts of the development.

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4.1.3 Land Use Recommendations

Specific recommendations relating to land use in the Town of Jefferson are provided below:

A. *Rural Land Development Law*

The Town of Jefferson needs to occasionally update the *Rural Land Development Law #2 of 2015*.

The *Rural Land Development Law* is intended to provide a procedure, thoroughly grounded in the *New York State Town Law* while also using the *Municipal Home Rule Law* to tailor an approach to land use regulation suitable for meeting Jefferson Township's particular needs. The *Rural Land Development Law* includes minimum lot size and other development standards, stormwater management provisions and numerous other general standards for development in the Township that would not be covered by the *Town of Jefferson Subdivision Regulations*. It established a low-density formula for most of the Town, combined with maximum lot sizes that ensure open space protection. It can be expanded as needed to address specific needs such as time- shared multi-family development (very possible near the ski slope), cellular towers and other specific issues of interest to the Town.

The *Rural Land Development Law* can also be modified to include additional detail on parking, signs or other special aspects of development that have been problems for the Town. This is the proper place, for example, to deal with the air emissions and noise matters.

4.2 Community Facilities & Amenities

Planning and budgeting for community facilities and public services is important, even if the needs are not now pressing. The following is a discussion of the major needs:

4.2.1 Parks and Recreation

The Town should continue to develop Town owned land behind the Town Hall for recreational use over the next 10 years. The property should be largely oriented toward passive recreational facilities with some picnic areas, trails, and wildlife viewing. Outdoor sports continue to be accommodated at the school. Playground and game courts are available to the public. The Hamlet Green and Maple Museum should be improved for community events, however; construction of new facilities and improvements should rely on volunteer support and contributions more than public expenditures. Improvements can be made for the food bank, senior center, thrift shop, and recycling facility.

Consideration should also be given to working with the School District to share facilities and thereby minimize costs.

The Hamlet Green is an existing park and recreational resource that is a true gem. This resource should receive continued support and improvement. It is a distinguishing feature of the Town and Hamlet, providing many opportunities for celebrations and events. It could be further improved with additional benches, landscaping and other minor embellishments that would serve to make it more accommodating for seniors and others desiring to enjoy the park.

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4.2.2 Town Hall & Highway Department

The Jefferson Town Hall is a modern facility that can easily accommodate reasonably large groups of people. It offers adequate space for services now provided. School facilities and other nearby community buildings are available for occasional large group events. Religious facilities, Calvary Assembly of God, Baptist, and Methodist churches are also available for community use. The Town Highway Department is too small for the current equipment and may need updating. Therefore, there are currently no unmet needs with the Town Hall, but the Town Highway Garage may need to be rebuilt in a new location.



4.2.3 Fire and Ambulance

The Town of Jefferson is well-served by existing fire and ambulance services. The Jefferson Volunteer Fire Department and its Rescue Squad provide those services on a volunteer basis with backup from similar entities in Stamford, Summit, and other nearby communities. The organization has about 40 volunteers. Residents and taxpayers who responded to the community survey rated fire and ambulance protection as two of the highest quality services among all public and semi-public services provided within the Town of Jefferson. They enjoy very broad support for the work they have accomplished on a volunteer basis. This volunteer support is increasingly difficult to obtain for many communities, especially during the daytime, indicating the very high value of those volunteers who do serve the community in this fashion.

Volunteer incentives, including awards and other recognition, the best equipment and other support services need to be provided on a continuing basis to maintain the high levels of commitment demanded of volunteers. The Town should participate with its neighbors and the Schoharie County Office of Emergency Services in supporting emergency providers through these types of incentives.

4.2.4 Sewage Facilities

Given the scattered development within the Town and increased sophistication of design with respect to on-lot sewage disposal systems, continued use of such systems is warranted. Subsurface disposal is also the preferred option for reducing impacts on both ground and surface water from excess nutrients. Nevertheless, there are, as discussed earlier, serious soils limitations throughout the Town for subsurface sewage disposal, indicating the importance of soil and percolation testing, requirements for engineered system designs and review of such information while processing development plans. The recommended *Subdivision Regulations* and *Rural Land Development Law* should be used to reinforce County Department of Health requirements for soil testing and sewage system design in connection with new homes and businesses.

The hamlet of Jefferson may be an appropriate candidate for either an on-lot sewage maintenance program or installation of a community subsurface sewage treatment system, given its density. Either approach will take much investigation and funding from outside sources, which the Town should begin to search out by working with its Town Engineer, recognizing this requires a long-term effort to assess need, determine feasibility and secure funds and permits for the work itself.

Fortunately, the provision of public water in the hamlet from a central source that is protected reduces the

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threat of contamination from sewage system malfunctions. This is a very important piece of infrastructure to the hamlet.

4.2.5 Water Supplies

There is one public water supply system serving the Town of Jefferson, that being the one operated by the Jefferson Water District and encompassing the hamlet. It serves a population of approximately 300 persons.

Other Town of Jefferson homes and businesses are supplied by individual wells. The groundwater supply is both high-quality and plentiful. In order to protect this high-quality Town water supply, the recommended *Subdivision Regulations* and *Rural Land Development Law* should be useful in minimizing subdivisions and controlling land use in the Well Head Protection Area.

4.2.6 Stormwater Management

There are no stormwater collection systems in the Town other than those connected with individual new construction projects. *Watershed Regulations* have required stormwater planning for some time in that portion of the Town. More importantly, however, new State permitting requirements extending regulation to projects disturbing as little as one acre in size are now in effect.

These standards effectively mandate stormwater management throughout the Town of Jefferson. The Town should continue to integrate stormwater management through provisions of the *Rural Land Development Law* and *Subdivision Regulations* to ensure this issue is not neglected as the Planning Board processes development proposals.

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4.3 Transportation

4.3.1 Functional Road Classifications

Highways support economic development by allowing the efficient movement of people and goods and, thereby, influence the overall direction of Town growth as well as the location of specific commercial, industrial, and residential activities. Every road plays a special function in moving people and goods within and through the Town of Jefferson and the surrounding region.

Table 4-1 identifies State, County and Town roads by those functions based on current conditions, nearby development, and future traffic growth expectations. Many of these highways are already functioning adequately in their suggested capacities. Nonetheless, increased subdivision activity and economic development needs both suggest some upgrading and other improvements are warranted to bring about a more functional highway system that will serve anticipated needs. These include recommendations offered below.

A. Collector Road Upgrades

The Town is continuously engaged in upgrading its road system. The greatest attention should be given in this regard to those highways identified as existing or potential collector roads that collect and carry traffic from local roads to Routes 7, 10, 23, 30 and I-88. Subdivision activity in the northern end of the Town strongly suggests the combination of County Road 64 and Morrisville and Peraglia Roads will become more and more important in the future as the connection to Route 10. A 10-year capital budget for such road improvements should be developed to address these and other similar issues.

A. Town Road Law

The Town should continue to use its Local Road Law to implement standards for highways being dedicated to the Town. This law addresses procedural and enforcement issues and ensures the Town is not burdened with unnecessary new upgrading or maintenance expenses for sub-quality roads.

B. Stormwater Management

The Town should consider using an engineer to develop a stormwater management plan for highway maintenance activities (e.g. culvert replacements) that will reduce nutrient loadings and stormwater flows to all water bodies. Implementation of best management practices used by towns in other regions of the Northeast would simultaneously improve roads, reduce flooding, decrease pollution and help lower the area's burden for phosphorous reduction within all three watersheds, this being of particular

Table 4-1

Town of Jefferson Highway Functional System

ARTERIAL ROADS

FUNCTION: Carries medium-to-heavy volumes of traffic at moderately high speeds and provides access to major traffic generators.

ROADS:

- NYS Route 10

COLLECTOR ROADS

FUNCTION: Provides connections between Arterials and Local Roads at comparatively slower speeds and carries moderate traffic volumes.

ROADS:

- County Route 2 (North Road)
- County Route 2A (North Harpersfield Road)
- County Route 12 (Blenheim Hill Road)
- County Route 13 (Shew Hollow Road)
- County Route 15 (Moxley Street)
- County Route 16 Wharton Hollow Road)
- County Route 42 (Peck Street)
- County Route 43 (West Kill Road)
- County Route 45 (Churchill Road)
- CR 64 (Meade Road) & Morrisville/Peraglia Rd.'s
- County Route 71 (Taber Road)
- Clapper Hollow Road
- Enid Road

LOCAL ROADS

FUNCTION: Provides direct access to abutting properties and channels Local Road traffic to Collector

ROADS:

- All other roads

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importance in the Delaware and Susquehanna River watersheds. Grant funds may be available through the Environmental Protection Agency, New York City DEP or other sources to develop such a plan.

The Town Planning Board also needs regular access to a Town Engineer (on a consulting basis) to review development plans for their stormwater impacts, especially on the Town of Jefferson road system. The costs of such reviews can be charged back to developers so there are minimal, if any, impacts on the Town budget.

The Town of Jefferson includes many large properties with potentially large stormwater impacts if subdivided. The Town needs to protect its own infrastructure while simultaneously ensuring that all new roads and accompanying stormwater management systems are designed, constructed, and operated using best management practices that will avoid these improvements from coming back to the Town or creating unusual future burdens on lot buyers.

4.3.2 Other Recommendations

A. Highway Maintenance Program

Highway maintenance should, employing a highway capital improvement program, be directed towards reducing traffic hazards, cutting back the long-term cost of highway improvements and increasing capacity. New large-scale maintenance projects are not required and could even be counterproductive in stimulating additional traffic too quickly.

B. Accident Analysis

Accident-prone areas should be continually documented to justify improvement projects, working cooperatively with the New York State Department of Transportation and the Schoharie County Department of Public Works.

There are several turns and intersections on sections of County Roads where the sight distance is limited, and realignment is justified.

The intersection of Route 10 with County Roads 13 (Shew Hollow Road) and 71 (Tabor Road) is poorly aligned. Additionally, other poorly aligned intersections are County Road 64/Morrisville Road with Route 10, County Road 42 (Peck Street) with County Road 45 (Churchill Road), and Moxley Street with County 2A. These intersections need to be examined and considered for safety improvements. The busiest stretch of road in the Town is Route 10 from the Delaware County line to the Hamlet of Jefferson. This stretch averages 1,800 – 1,900 vehicles a day according to NYSDOT Average Annual Daily Traffic Counts. Road intersections in this stretch should be closely monitored.

C. Public Transportation

Schoharie County Transportation provides limited service to the Town of Jefferson on a regular basis. Information is available online or at the Town Hall.

D. Rail and Air Service

Railroad freight service is available in nearby Oneonta and other locations of similar distance away. The reasonable accessibility of the Albany International Airport suggests the Town has no further needs in rail or air transportation for the foreseeable future.

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4.4 Economic Development

4.4.1 Economic Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

Economic development planning always begins with an analysis of the basic strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the economy being studied. These include, in the Town of Jefferson's case, the following (from original 2000 plan):

STRENGTHS

- Reasonable proximity of the Town of Jefferson to urban centers of various sizes (Albany, Cobleskill, Oneonta, and New York City) combined with relative isolation, which serves to make the area appealing as a residential and second-home environment.



- Working landscapes of farmland, with an abundance of attractive views, architecture and scenery that draw visitors to the area for camping, second homes, hunting, fishing, riding, and various other outdoor recreational pursuits.
- An existing agricultural base, including a Maple syrup industry and heritage that provide opportunities for niche agricultural economic development.
- A reservoir of varied talents associated with the economic pursuits of existing residents combined with access to a few executives, professionals and managers who have retired or moved to the area as seasonal residents.
- A plentiful supply of natural resources ranging from high-quality soils for growing forage and grazing to superior hardwood timber resources and mountain peaks and plateaus capable of generating wind power.
- A growing population and housing market that stands in contrast to much of economically depressed Upstate New York.
- Open spaces that provide the rural character so many new residents and visitors are seeking.

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WEAKNESSES

- A declining population of younger people that will make it difficult to pursue economic development and sustain valuable traditional institutions such as the School.
- A shrinking labor force that makes it difficult to employ workers for certain enterprises.
- A relatively cold climate that makes year- round occupancy less appealing than some other areas.
- Relatively steep roads to the area that inhibit the potential for trucking products in and out.
- A high New York State tax burden combined with relatively low incomes locally that make it difficult to hold onto properties or stay in the area with jobs elsewhere.
- A rapidly changing culture with groups of competing interests (e.g., earning a living versus enjoying a vacation) that will engender some community conflicts.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Further tourism development focused on the scenery, Maple heritage, and natural resources of the Town.
- Niche agricultural development that takes advantage of market proximity and an intrigued visitor population.
- Further natural resources development, including timber industries and related offshoots and wind power generation.
- Home occupations that rely upon proximity to the various centers for business but allow owners to still reside in a vacation area.
- Additional outdoor recreational facility development (e.g., campgrounds, hunting preserves).

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THREATS

- Careless development that depreciates the value of the working landscapes that attract people to the Town of Jefferson.
- Continued growth of the Upstate New York tax burden, making it impossible to hold land or use it productively for uses that preserve the open space.
- NIMBY attitudes that make it difficult to pursue new economic development projects within the Town.
- A demographic collapse of younger age cohorts that deprives the Town of needed earners, workers, customers, and vibrancy.

Such factors as those listed above do not necessarily limit the Town's potential. The actions of individual entrepreneurs and the marketplace will do far more to determine Jefferson's future than any government action.

Nevertheless, this overview analysis does suggest the likely future and proper direction of Jefferson's economy toward agriculture, tourism and second- home development, natural resource industries and home occupations. There are several ways the Town can marginally assist in realizing the maximum benefits from economic development. There are, additionally, some actions the Town could take that would unnecessarily interfere with the marketplace and, therefore, should be avoided in the interest of allowing economic development to take place.

4.4.2 Recommendations

Given the above analysis, the following recommendations are offered for the economic development of the Town of Jefferson:

A. Town Website

Continued promotion of the Town for tourism and other economic development purposes can be encouraged through improvement and use of the Town website: Jeffersonnewyork.com. The site lists private businesses and promotes visitation to the area. This site should be continued and updated regularly to include more information on tourism offerings, agricultural buying opportunities and special attractions such as the Town Green, for example. It could also offer self-guided tours of the area and even promote business real estate offerings in the manner of many downtown business improvement districts.

B. Home-Based Businesses

The Town should promote the development of home occupations through its website and ensure its *Rural Land Development Law* gives such businesses broad discretion to establish such business in the Town of Jefferson.

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C. Agricultural Marketing Initiative

The Town should consider promoting the use of Community Development Block Grant Microenterprise funds for marketing assistance to qualified farmers in the area, particularly those farmers engaged in

niche enterprises with growth potential.

Successful small farms have diversified into or specialized in niche businesses where margins are higher, and prices are less subject to the wide swings typical of commodities. The key to a diversification or specialization strategy, however, is marketing. Acquiring those skills, therefore, is critical.

A mini-grant program to equip interested farmers with marketing skills or provide them with the outside marketing expertise to pursue new ventures and new markets will go far in addressing this need. It is recommended that \$25,000 to \$50,000 be sought through USDA Rural Development, Schoharie County Economic Enterprise Corporation, or similar sources for the purpose of funding this program. Such programs could be administered through the County or a not-for-profit with the staff capacity and experience in administering mini-grant and loan programs.



D. Agricultural Promotion Initiative

A loose organization of Schoharie or Southern Schoharie agricultural producers might be assembled with the goal of developing a common signage program to complement use of the website. The Town should consider sponsoring a design competition for a sign logo. The signs should be of the “wayfinder” types used to mark wine trails, scenic byways, and similar attractions.

A bus or van tour of agricultural tourism sites should also be considered along with promotion of agricultural tourism events involving multiple farms or attractions. Packaging of visits with restaurants, lodging places and other attraction should be considered.

There is also a need for agricultural education of the seasonal population regarding matters such as the necessity to respect slow-moving vehicles and understanding the importance of farms as open space and contributors to the working landscape.

E. Natural Resource Development

Timber resources present opportunities. The area offers high-quality hardwoods that provide a potential source of income for owners of open space. The income opportunities also extended to wood processing ventures. The Town should consider enacting a Right-to-Practice Forestry Law to protect the rights of forest industries to grow and expand. Such a law would be like the Right-to-Farm protections already enacted by the Town.

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Current Status of Town Laws Regulating Land Use

| | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Subdivision Regulations – | Adopted June 14, 2016 | |
| Rural Land Development Law | Adopted 2015 | Reviewed August 2019 |
| Wind Energy Facilities Law | Adopted Nov 18, 2013 | Reviewed October 10, 2018 |
| Junkyard Law | Adopted Aug 29, 2000 | Reviewed October 10, 2018 <i>being revised</i> |
| Road Usage Law | Adopted Aug 27, 2015 | Reviewed February 2, 2019 |
| Unsafe Building | Adopted May 15, 2003 | Reviewed November 10, 2018 |

5.0 Appendices

A – 2019 Survey Results

B – 2019 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats Results

C – 2020 Maps (**Note: Large Copy Versions Available at Town Hall**)

Existing Land Use Map

Hamlet District Map

Waterbody Map

Wellhead Protection Map

Road Map

Floodplain Map

Slope Map

Goods, Services, and Prominent Locations Map