

# Town of Saranac Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy



2011



This Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy was prepared for the Town of Saranac and New York State Department of State Division of Coastal Resources, with funds provided under Title 11 of the Environmental Protection Fund.

*Town of Saranac*

*Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy*

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**ADOPTED**

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## *Introduction*

*Our lands and waters are our heritage and foundation. In 2030 the view from the surrounding hills remains much the same, overlooking a quiet, safe and welcoming rural Town of uncommon beauty. As community stewards, we protect irreplaceable resources: historic places, open spaces, scenic views and habitats for wildlife. These are the riches of our Town; these are the things that must be cherished.*

*We enjoy our growing and varied recreational opportunities. The Saranac River corridor remains a richly diverse and healthy ecosystem. There is improved access to recreational opportunities through well marked trails, parks and parking areas.*

*Controlled, responsible growth has taken place while protecting private property rights. Our economy thrives. Good jobs are available both locally and regionally and new shops and services prosper in our hamlets. Our agriculture and woodland resources are used productively and responsibly. Partnerships with others promote the Town while safeguarding our assets. We appreciate the importance of tourism and there is broad awareness of our year-round recreation resources. Small businesses, inns and restaurants meet the needs of local residents, visitors and outdoor enthusiasts. Long-term residents, newcomers, seasonal homeowners and visitors share commitment to Saranac, and this is what unites us.*

*--Vision Statement, Saranac Comprehensive Plan & Revitalization Strategy*

### **Setting the Scene**

The Town of Saranac has many opportunities to enhance its future. Many of these opportunities can be sought after and achieved with greater ease through thoughtful planning. The Town's existing Comprehensive Plan was developed in 1975 and has never been revisited. Town leaders recognized that in order to implement the ideas and projects that are desired, a Town Plan was needed.

The planning process began in 2007 when the Town of Saranac applied for and later received a grant from the New York State Department of State Division of Coastal Resources Local Waterfront Revitalization Program to develop a Vision and Revitalization Strategy that focused on the Saranac River and the hamlets along the Route 3 corridor. Additional financial assistance was received from Senator Betty Little, the creation of promotional



videos by SUNY Plattsburgh staff and students, and in-kind contributions from the voluntary time of community members.

A Project Advisory Committee comprised of fourteen community members was established to oversee the planning process with assistance from the Town's community development consultant, Melissa McManus. The role of the committee was, and continues to be, to guide and lead the planning process, communicate with municipal leaders, and help facilitate community involvement in the development of the Plan. Partners on the project were stakeholders such as Clinton County, the Department of State, the Adirondack Park Agency and the Department of Environmental Conservation.

In 2010 the Town began developing the Strategy with the assistance of River Street Planning & Development and AES Northeast. As the planning process evolved, many of the Town's identified future opportunities and issues of concern were not isolated to the riverfront and hamlets and it was clear a broader, more town-wide planning process was needed. As a result, the planning approach was modified and what was once a waterfront and hamlets revitalization strategy became the Town of Saranac Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy. Throughout the development of the Plan, the Project Advisory Committee met ten times to discuss critical issues, review research, findings and recommendations prepared by the consultant; develop the Vision Statement, Goals and the priority projects and actions included in the Plan; and plan for the community workshops. All meetings were open to the public.



Community workshops were held to engage residents in the planning process. A Visioning Workshop was held early on to obtain input from residents and stakeholders at which they provided insight into what they love about Saranac, what they would like to change or see accomplished, and what Saranac would be like when the changes have been made. The comments provided by residents and stakeholders present at the visioning workshop were used to develop the Plan. A summary of the community input is provided in Appendix A. Once a Plan was drafted, a community workshop was held to present and discuss the draft vision statement, goals and implementation actions and projects. Input from that workshop is reflected in the Plan

### ***What is a Comprehensive Plan?***

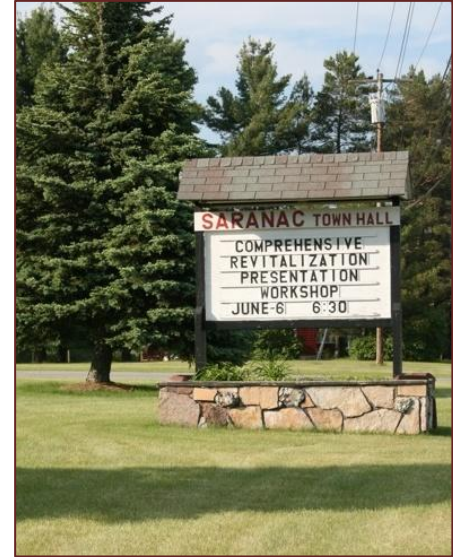
Under New York State law, municipalities are granted the authority and responsibility to prepare and adopt comprehensive plans. As defined in the state legislation, a comprehensive plan is a document that presents goals, objectives, guidelines and policies for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and community development. Also known as a master plan or land use plan, a comprehensive plan provides guidance to municipal



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leaders and helps to ensure that the needs of the community will be met. Other units of government are mandated to honor the Town's comprehensive plan in taking actions that may affect the Town.

The action items described in the plan are not requirements. Rather, they are recommendations designed to provide focus and direction as Saranac moves ahead to reach its preferred future. It will be up to the local community to decide on an ongoing basis which initiatives should be implemented in which order and how they wish to proceed to implement those initiatives. Town government will support, facilitate and remove barriers during the implementation process. Continued active citizen participation will be key to the ultimate success of this plan. Although any future land use regulation must be in accordance with the principles of the Comprehensive Plan, there is no legally binding requirement that the Town implement each of the action items proposed in the plan. The Town should carefully examine proposed land use strategies to minimize the implementation cost to residents and protect private property rights.



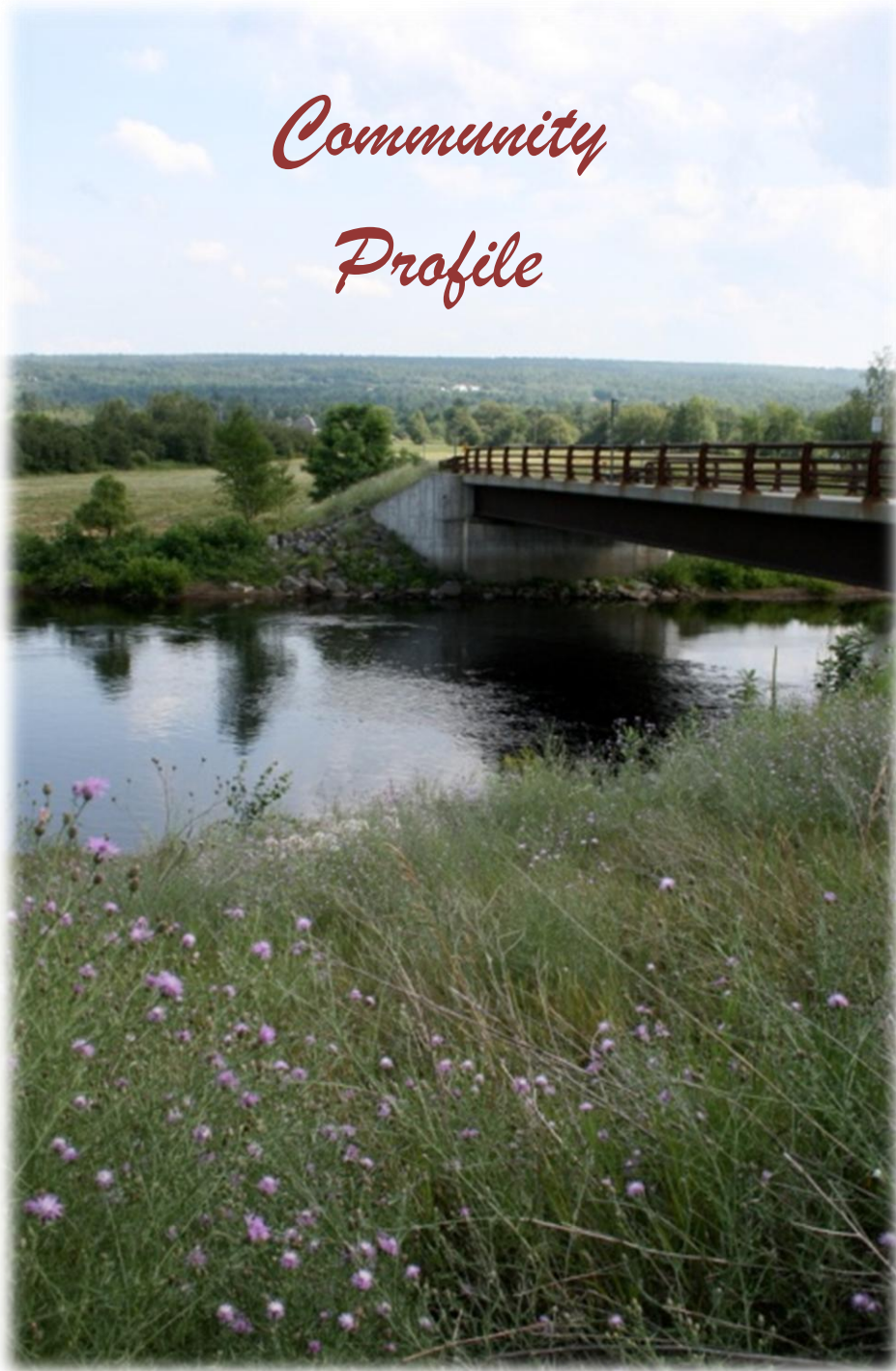
The Comprehensive Plan is divided into two parts: a Community Profile which is a summary of existing conditions, and the Action Plan, which identifies specific short- and long-range projects and planning efforts to improve the Town going forward. Based on research and interviews conducted by the project consultant and the public input process described above, the Community Profile describes the Town, its residents and its resources; identifies needs; and discusses key issues, opportunities, and challenges impacting the future of Saranac. It provides a profile of the Town's population, land uses, historic and natural resources, economic development, housing, community services, real estate tax base, transportation and infrastructure and recreation. The Community Profile serves as a basis for developing community goals, objectives, strategies and policies.

The Action Plan component of the Comprehensive Plan is intended to provide Town leaders and other stakeholders, both current and future, with guidance for achieving the Town's desired future. It includes a future vision statement, a set of goals to achieve the future vision, and actions, including projects, initiatives and policies identified to achieve each goal and the overall vision. The Action Plan consolidates the inventory of initiatives that the Town of Saranac will pursue into an "Implementation Matrix" which includes steps toward their implementation and potential partners and sources of funding as applicable. The Action Plan will guide decision-making by focusing resources on shared goals, actions and priority projects, and strategies for their implementation.





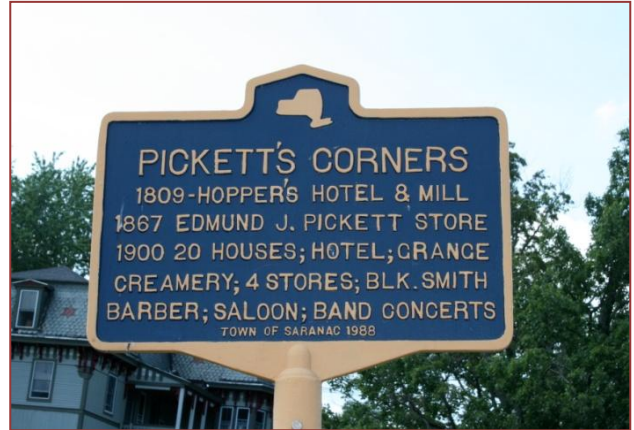
# *Community Profile*





**A. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The Saranac River has been the focal point for the Town since it was first settled around 1802 and then established in 1824 when it was separated from the Town of Plattsburgh. The Town was named after the River, which was named for an Indian term variously translated as "river flowing under a rock" or "entrance of a river into a lake." The first villages within the Town were Saranac Hollow, Redford and Russia. Before there were roads, the Saranac River was a means of transportation and was used for log drives for lumber mills. In later years it was used for water-powered industry and today it is used for clean and green hydro-electric power and recreation.



The Town of Saranac had several industries early in its settlement. Construction on the Redford Crown Glass Works began in the fall of 1831 and operated in glass making for a period of about 20 years until 1851. The once booming industry is said to have been discontinued because of severe competition in Pennsylvania. Iron ore became a booming industry with the first forge in Saranac being built in 1826 on the Saranac River. It became one of the largest and most efficient forges in the Adirondacks. Iron was also mined on Lyon Mountain and other sites in Town. Saranac iron was used for the construction of warships such as the Monitor.

The Town of Saranac has a good deal of Civil War history. It is home to the only Civil War monument in the County and the oldest Civil War monument in the Country. Saranac provided more people per capita to the Civil War than any other town in New York State. As stated above, Saranac Iron was used in the construction of the warships.





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### **B. LOCAL AND REGIONAL PLANNING INITIATIVES**

Local planning initiatives for specific projects and activities are currently underway in the Town of Saranac as the Town is developing a Park Master Plan for improvements to the Town Park and just completed a feasibility study for the Town owned underutilized Industrial Park on Trudeau Road. Prior to that, the only local planning initiative in Saranac was the 1975 joint Town of Saranac and Town and Village of Dannemora Comprehensive Plan which is summarized below.



On a regional level, the Town of Saranac is almost entirely located within the Adirondack Park. The Town is therefore affected by the regional planning initiatives of the Adirondack Park Agency and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. The most relevant Plans to Saranac are summarized below.

#### *Comprehensive Plan for the Town and Village of Dannemora and Town of Saranac (1975):*

This Comprehensive Plan was developed in response to the Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan of August 1973. Its goal was to refine that Plan to only include information about the two municipalities. The plan focuses on natural characteristics of the areas, a visual analysis of both Towns and the Village including vistas; critical environmental areas that have been established by the Adirondack Park Act, existing land use, growth factors including transportation, public utilities, community facilities, educational facilities, population and analysis and economics of each Town. The economic section makes some recommendations on how Saranac could further their economic growth, especially through increased and improved recreational facilities. The Plan also includes a policy statement and then based on that policy statement a series of goals and objectives developed by the residents of each Town and Village. The plan concludes with a land use plan that makes justifications for amending some of the land use intensities that are in the Adirondack Park Plan that would facilitate development within the Towns of Saranac and Dannemora and the Village of Dannemora.

#### *Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan (APLUDP):*

Nearly the entire Town of Saranac is within the Adirondack Park. The Adirondack Park was created in 1892 by the State of New York amid concerns for the water and timber resources of the region.<sup>1</sup> Today the Park is the largest publicly protected area in the contiguous United States. The boundary of the Park encompasses approximately 6 million acres, 48 percent of which belongs to all the people of New York State and is constitutionally protected to remain a “forever wild” forest preserve. The remaining 52 percent is private land which includes settlements, farms, timber lands, businesses, homes and camps. The Park’s boundary, usually referred to as the “Blue Line” includes all or portions of 12 counties and 103 municipalities.



Some aspects of private land use and its development patterns with the Adirondack Park are managed by the Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan (APLUDP) which was enacted in 1973 with periodic updates. In addition there is a State Land Master Plan for state-owned lands within the Adirondack Park. The APLUDP classified all land within the Park into six categories based on existing settlement patterns, physical limitations related to soils, slopes and elevations; unique features such as gorges and waterfalls; biological considerations such as wildlife habitat, rare or endangered plants or animals, wetlands and fragile ecosystems; and public considerations such as historic sites, proximity to critical state lands, and the need to preserve the open space character of the Park. The six categories manage density, some land uses and the APA permitting process for most development.

### *Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan (revised 2001):*

The Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan (APSLMP) document sets forth the master plan for all state lands within the Adirondack Park. The classification system and guidelines set forth are designed to guide the preservation, management and use of these lands by all interested state agencies in the future.

State-owned lands, of which there are many large tracts totaling approximately 28,859 acres in the Town of Saranac, are separately classified into three categories of public usage: “wilderness” (prohibiting the use of motorized vehicles and bicycles), “wild forest” (allowing for bicycles and some motorized usage on designated roads and trails), and “primitive” (similar to wilderness in terms permitted usage). Within the Town of Saranac all state owned lands except the former NYS Department of Corrections lands are classified as “wild forest” or are pending classification as “wild forest.”

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<sup>1</sup> *Citizens Guide to the Adirondack Park Agency Land Use Regulations*, produced by the Adirondack Park Agency



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The State's recently acquired "Lyon Mt." tract will result in the development of a Unit Management Plan (UMP) by the NYS DEC in consultation with the APA. Unit Management Plans assess the natural and physical resources present within a State land unit. They also identify opportunities for recreational use and consider the ability of the resources and ecosystems to accommodate public use. Furthermore, these plans identify management objectives for public use which are consistent with the land classification guidelines and the wild character of these lands. The APA has responsibility for assuring plans are in compliance with APSLMP guidelines for management of forest preserve lands inside the Adirondack Park.

### *Sable Highlands Conservation Easement Interim Recreation Management Plan (2009):*

A Recreation Management Plan (RMP) is a plan developed by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation for DEC Conservation easement lands which is intended to assess the recreational resources present within a Conservation Easement, identify opportunities for recreational use and consider the ability of the resources and ecosystems to accommodate public use. This interim RMP addresses the conservation easement agreement dubbed the Sable Highlands Easement by DEC, which opens 28,105 acres of land and water located in designated Public Recreation Use Areas to the public for hiking, fishing, hunting, canoeing and a variety of other recreational uses. Some of the Sable Highlands Easement properties, the Bradley Pond Conservation Easement and the Barnes Pond Conservation Easement, are located in the Town of Saranac and are part of this RMP. Neither of these conservation easements are within the Waterfront Revitalization Area, however, their development or accessibility as recreational resources for residents and visitors will enhance the Town's efforts to increase recreation and tourism.

### **Key Observations**

- The Town's 1975 joint Comprehensive Plan with the Town of Dannemora, largely a response to the Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan of 1973, is 35 years old and should be updated.
- The Town's ability to develop land, particularly along the Saranac River and with regard to density town-wide, is significantly affected by the Town's location in the Adirondack Park.
- The recently acquired Lyon Mt. tract by New York State will require a Unit Management Plan that may provide for the development of new public recreational opportunities for the Town.
- The DEC's future plans for the conservation easements as described in the Sable Highlands RMP are a significant recreational opportunity for the Town that should be pursued to the extent possible.

### C. REGIONAL SETTING AND DEMOGRAPHICS

*The following characterization of Town's demographics analyzes 2000 Census data. As of June 2011, the Census Bureau has started releasing certain data from the 2010 Census on a rolling basis. 2010 Census data is included in the Community Profile for the Town of Saranac where available. Additionally, where 2010 Census data is not available, the Consultant has included 2010 estimated data from Claritas Inc. a private company that has been providing demographic data for marketing and other purposes for more than twenty years.<sup>2</sup>*

The Town of Saranac is located on the western edge of Clinton County and just inside the northeastern corner of the Adirondack Park. The Town is bordered by the Town of Dannemora to the north, Towns of Black Brook and Peru to the south, Towns of Schuyler Falls and Plattsburgh to the east and the Towns of Franklin and Bellmont in Franklin County to the west. The City of Plattsburgh is located approximately 20 miles to the east of Saranac. The Village of Dannemora is located in both the Towns of Saranac and Dannemora. Saranac has several Hamlets, the most evident being Saranac, Standish and Redford. The Town is comprised of 116.4 square miles, 115.7 square miles of which is land, and 0.6 square miles of water largely represented by the Saranac River which flows northeast through Town toward Lake Champlain.



#### Population

According to the 2010 Census, the Town has a population of 4,007, a decrease of 158 residents or 3.8% since 2000. In comparison, Clinton County experienced a slight population increase of 2.8% during the same period. The Town of Saranac accounts for only 4.9% of the County's overall population base.

Table 1: Population Change, Town of Saranac					
Municipality	1990	2000	2010	% Change, 1990-2000	% Change, 2000-2010
Town of Saranac	3,710	4,165	4,007	12.3%	-3.8%
Clinton County	85,969	79,894	82,128	-7.1%	2.8%

Source: US Census Bureau (1990, 2000 and 2010)

<sup>2</sup> Claritas develops population estimates based on the most recent estimates produced by the Census Bureau at the national, state, and county levels. Population growth is then projected using forecasts provided by WEFA, an econometric forecasting firm. At smaller geographic levels, a variety of other sources, such as estimates from local agencies, household and consumer marketing databases, and other proprietary sources may also be used. While the estimates are useful for projections, it should be noted that the margin for error for small areas like small cities and census tracts is larger than for a state or region.



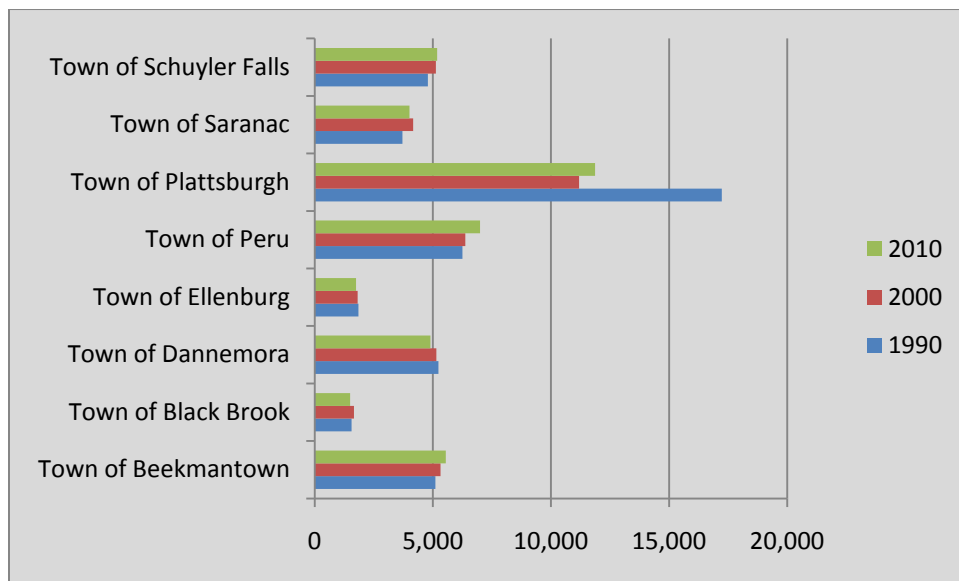
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### Comparative Population Change

Since 1990, the Town of Saranac's population has increased 8.0%. Among the surrounding communities, The Town of Peru has experienced the greatest population increase since 1990 at 11.9%, followed by Beekmantown (8.6%) and Schuyler Falls (8.2%). The Town of Plattsburgh has experienced the greatest population decline at 31.1% since 1990, primarily resulting from the Air Force Base closure in 1995.

Table 2: Regional Comparative Population Change, 1990-2010					
Municipality	1990	2000	2010	Change, 2000-2010	Change, 1990-2010
Town of Beekmantown	5,108	5,326	5,545	4.1%	8.6%
Town of Black Brook	1,556	1,660	1,497	-9.8%	-3.8%
Town of Dannemora	5,232	5,149	4,898	-4.9%	-6.4%
Town of Ellenburg	1,847	1,812	1,743	-3.8%	-5.6%
Town of Peru	6,254	6,370	6,998	9.9%	11.9%
Town of Plattsburgh	17,231	11,190	11,870	6.1%	-31.1%
Town of Saranac	3,710	4,165	4,007	-3.8%	8.0%
Town of Schuyler Falls	4,787	5,128	5,181	1.0%	8.2%

Source: US Census Bureau (1990, 2000 and 2010)



### Households

Change in the number of households can impact the overall demand for housing in a community. As defined by the Census Bureau, a household includes all persons who occupy a housing unit. The occupants may be a single family, one person living alone, two or more persons living together, or any other group of related or unrelated individuals who share living



arrangements outside an institution. The number of households in Saranac is increasing. The 2010 Census reported that there are 1,582 households in Saranac, an increase of 4.1% since 2000. New York State as a whole experienced an increase of 3.7% for the decade. In comparison, Clinton County had an increase of 7.3% in households from 2000 to 2010.

<b>Table 3: Household Change, 1990 - 2010</b>					
<b>Municipality</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>% Change, 1990-2000</b>	<b>% Change, 2000-2010</b>
Town of Saranac	1,311	1,519	1,582	15.9%	4.1%
Clinton County	29,123	29,423	31,582	1.0%	7.3%
New York State	6,639,332	7,056,860	7,317,755	6.3%	3.7%

Source: US Census Bureau (1990, 2000 and 2010)

In 2010, approximately 56.3% of the households in the Town of Saranac were considered traditional nuclear families with a husband, wife and related children under the age of 18. This represents a 4.1% decrease in traditional nuclear families since 2000. Non-family households including single-person households and households of unrelated persons (such as roommates or domestic partners) accounted for 29.9% of the households, a 22.9% increase between 2000 and 2010. There was also a significant increase (approximately 40%) from 2000 to 2010 in the number of male headed households. In contrast, female headed households declined by 8.4%.

<b>Table 4: Households by Type, Town of Saranac</b>					
<b>Type</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>Change 1990-</b>	<b>Change 2000-</b>
Married couple families	872 (66.5%)	928 (61.1%)	890 (56.3%)	6.4%	-4.1%
Male headed household, no wife	49 (3.7%)	63 (4.1%)	88 (5.6%)	28.6%	39.7%
Female headed no husband	111 (8.5%)	143 (9.4%)	131 (8.3%)	28.8%	-8.4%
Non-family households	279(21.3%)	385 (25.3%)	473 (29.9%)	38.0%	22.9%

Source: US Census Bureau (1990, 2000 and 2010).

## **Race**

In 2000 the Census changed the way people were asked to report their race. Each respondent was asked to select whether they are Spanish, Hispanic or Latino in addition to the other classic census categories. Because of this change, the 2000 data on race are not directly comparable with data from the 1990 or earlier censuses. Caution must be used when interpreting changes in the racial composition of the US population over time.

According to the 2000 Census data, there were 80 minority people in the Town, comprising just 1.9% of the population. However, this is a 77.8% increase since 1990. Minorities now comprise 3.4% of Saranac's 2010 population, an increase of 71.3% since 2000.



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**Table 5: Race and Hispanic Origin, Town of Saranac**

	1990	2000	2010	% Change 1990-2000	% Change 2000-2010
White	3,665	4,085	3,870	11.5%	-5.3%
Black	4 (0.1%)	5 (0.1%)	10 (0.2%)	25.0%	100.0%
American Indian	9 (0.2%)	10 (0.2%)	13 (0.3%)	11.1%	30.0%
Asian/Pacific Islander	0 (0.0%)	10 (0.2%)	13 (0.3%)	-	30.0%
Two or More races	n/a	10 (0.2%)	56 (1.4%)	n/a	460.0%
Other Race	0 (0.0%)	2 (0.05%)	0 (0.0%)	-	-100.0%
Hispanic Origin	32 (0.9%)	43 (1.0%)	45 (1.1%)	34.4%	4.7%

Source: US Census Bureau (1990, 2000 and 2010).

### Age

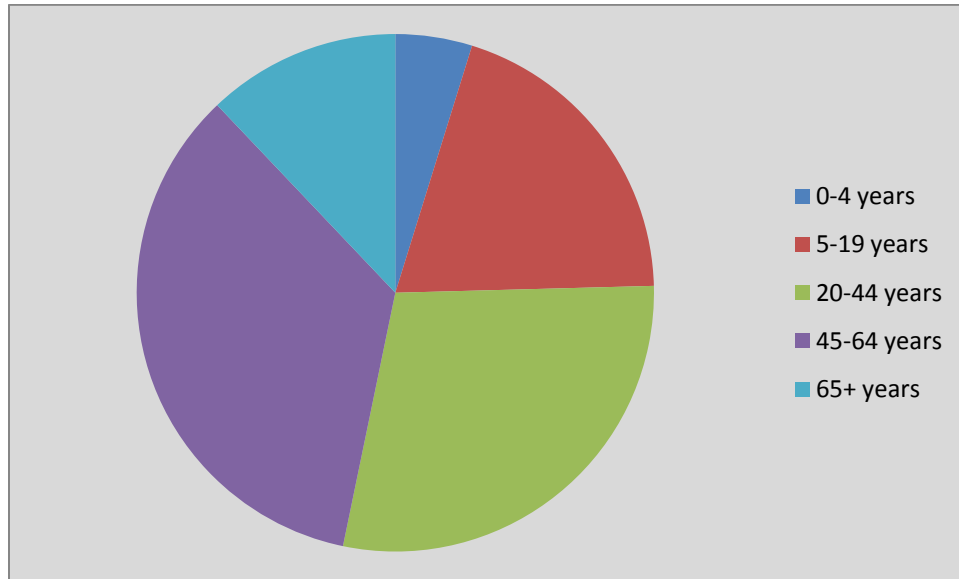
Median age in Saranac has been rising steadily since 1990. According to the Census Bureau, in 1990 the median age was 32.5 years and the median age in 2010 was 43.1. Saranac's median age in 2000 was slightly higher (36.5) than the median age for the County and State in 2000 at 35.7 and 35.9 respectively. Between 2000 and 2010, the pre-school (0-4), school age (5-19) and young adult age groups (20-44) experienced significant decline in population. Adults between the ages of 45 and 64 experienced a 45.8% growth and the senior population (65+) increased by 5.2%. The significant increase in the 45-64 age group and the 65+ age group will affect the demand for services for seniors in the future, while the sharp decrease in school age population will affect the need for services and personnel within the school system.

**Table 6: Age Characteristics, Town of Saranac**

	1990	%	2000	%	2010	%	% Change 1990-2000	% Change 2000 - 2010
0-4 years	304	8.2%	221	5.3%	191	4.8%	-37.6%	-13.6%
5-19 years	862	23.2%	1,084	26.0%	793	19.8%	20.4%	-26.8%
20-44 years	1,463	39.4%	1,448	34.8%	1151	28.7%	-1.6%	-20.5%
45-64 years	739	20.0%	953	22.9%	1389	34.7%	22.5%	45.8%
65+ years	342	9.2%	459	11.0%	483	12.1%	25.5%	5.2%
Median Age	32.5		36.5		43.1		12.3%	18.1%

Source: US Census Bureau (1990, 2000 and 2010).

2010 Age Characteristics - Town of Saranac



### Educational Attainment

Data from the 2000 census on educational attainment levels in Saranac reveal that 86.0% of residents 25 years and older have a high school diploma. New York State has a lower percentage of high school graduates (79.1%), and Clinton County has a percentage lower still at 76.4%. When it comes to having a bachelor's degree or higher, 17.0% of the Town residents, 17.8% of the County and 27.4% New York State residents have a bachelor's degree or higher.

Table 7: Educational Attainment Levels, Persons 25+

	No High School Diploma		High School Diploma or higher		Bachelor's Degree or higher	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Town of Saranac	25.3%	14%	74.7%	86.0%	11.7%	17.0%
Clinton County	23.8%	23.2%	76.2%	76.4%	14.2%	17.8%
New York State	25.2%	20.9%	74.8%	79.1%	23.1%	27.4%

Source: US Census Bureau (1990 and 2000)

According to 2010 Claritas data, educational attainment levels for the Town have increased since 2000 with approximately 90.9% of residents 25 years or older having a high school diploma or higher and approximately 20.4% have a bachelor's degree or higher in 2010.

Educational services for the Town of Saranac are provided by the Saranac Central School District with Saranac and Morrisonville Elementary Schools and Saranac Middle and High School. The district serves six towns including Saranac.

### Key Observations:



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- The Town of Saranac is a large rural area (116 sq miles) and relatively sparsely populated (36 persons per square mile) compared to the Clinton County average of 59 persons per square mile and the New York State average of 411).
- The Town has been gaining population and households since 1990 and at a greater pace than some of surrounding communities in Clinton County. Households have increased at a greater percentage than population.
- Saranac's residents are older than the residents of Clinton County (median age of 39.1) and New York State (38.0).
- The Town is becoming more educated and outpaces the County and State averages in terms of educational attainment (high school diploma or higher) in 2000.

## D. HOUSING

### General Housing Characteristics

According to 2010 Census data, the Town of Saranac has 1,777 housing units. Of the total housing units counted, 1,582 were occupied. Owners make up 86.2% of the occupied housing in the Town and renters 13.8%. Approximately 11.0% of all housing units are vacant. Seasonal units comprise 51.3% of all vacant housing units.



The predominant housing type in Saranac is the single family structure, which makes up 79.9% of the market. Multi-family buildings (2 units or more) comprise 7.9% of the entire housing stock in the Town. Mobile homes and trailers account for 12.2%.

**Table 8: General Housing Characteristics, Town of Saranac**

	2000		2010		% Change
	#	%	#	%	
Total Housing Units	1,642	100.0%	1,777	100.0%	8.2%
Total occupied Units	1,519	92.5%	1,582	89.0%	4.1%
Owner occupied housing units	1,302	79.2%	1364	86.2%	4.8%
Renter occupied housing units	217	13.2%	218	13.8%	0.5%
Vacant units	123	7.5%	195	11.0%	58.5%
Number and Type of unit:			N/A	N/A	N/A
Vacant for Sale	18	1.4%	18	1.3%	0.0%
Vacant for Rent	11	4.8%	12	5.2%	9.1%
Vacant - Seasonal, recreational	49	n/a	100		104.1%

Source: US Census Bureau (2000 and 2010).

### Characteristics of Rental Housing

Rental housing accounts for 13.2% of occupied housing in the Town of Saranac according to the 2000 Census figures. Roughly 61.6% of the Town's rental units are two- and three-bedroom and 25.8% are one-bedroom.

The median gross rent in Saranac was \$328 in 1990. Adjusting the 1990 median rent for inflation (28.96%) to 2000 dollars, results in a median rent of \$423. The 2000 Census reports that the Town had a median gross rent of \$440. Rental costs have only increased by 4.0% in comparison to 1990 figures when adjusted for inflation.





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One factor in assessing general housing needs within a community is the availability of housing choice. A healthy housing market should provide sufficient opportunities to its residents to secure good quality units that address their particular needs in terms of number of bedrooms, location, price and other considerations. The generally accepted standards for

**Table 9: Cost Burdened Rental Households**

	Number of Households by Income Range				
	Total	Under \$10,000	\$10,000 - \$19,999	\$20,000 - \$34,999	Over \$35,000
Selected Renter-Occupied Units	202	37	52	51	62
% of renter households	100.0%	18.3%	25.7%	25.2%	30.7%
Renters paying over 30% of income for	56	23	33	0	0
% cost burdened	27.7%	62.2%	63.5%	0%	0%
Income range as a % of cost burdened	100.0%	41.1%	58.9%	0%	0%

*Source: 2000 Census - Note: Data is based on a sample as provided by the Census Bureau.*

measuring availability in a healthy housing market are vacancy rates in the area of 5% for rental units and 1% for purchase housing. The Town's vacancy rate for rental housing (2000) was slightly below the norm at 4.8% and the vacancy rate for for-sale housing was slightly above the norm at 1.4%. Low vacancy rates indicate potential problems in the availability of housing choice. This is compounded by the fact that many low and moderate income households are often limited in their choice of housing.

According to a local realtor, demand for rental properties, other than for seniors, is currently low even with a small supply of properties. One reason for the anemic supply is that properties will not generate sufficient rent to make it financially attractive to develop this type of property. Documented rents average \$400 per month. The only population experiencing an increased need for rentals in Saranac is seniors. The development of 55+ type rental (and owner-occupied units) will be needed in the near future throughout Clinton County, however, the current proximity of Saranac to medical services limits the likelihood of this occurring heavily in the Town.

The needs of lower income households can best be understood by examining the number of cost burdened households in the Town of Saranac by income range and tenure. Cost burden is defined as the extent to which gross housing costs exceeds 30% of gross income, based on data published by the Census Bureau.

According to 2000 Census information, 56 households in Saranac reported rental housing costs in excess of 30% of income. This represented 27.7% of all renter households. Not surprisingly, the extent of cost burden was significantly greater on lower income households. Households with annual incomes under \$20,000 accounted for all 56 of the reported cost burdened households. Over 60% of the renters in these income groups are cost burdened.

***Assisted Housing***

A small portion of the rental housing within Saranac is provided through subsidized funding sources such as the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal (NYSDHCR). There are approximately 61 subsidized units located in Saranac (3.7% of total units based on 2000 Census). General characteristics of these units are presented in the table below.

<b>Table 10: Subsidized Housing Facility Inventory</b>			
<b>Facility</b>	<b>Total Units</b>	<b>Subtotal Elderly</b>	<b>Subtotal Non-Elderly</b>
Saranac Valley Housing	11	11	0
Section 8	50	*	*
Total Units in Saranac	61	*	*

*Source: U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development and NYS Division of Housing and Community Renewal*

*\*The Clinton County Housing Assistance Program does not have a breakdown of housing units assisted by elderly versus non-elderly.*

The Clinton County Housing Assistance Program manages the Section 8 Rental Assistance Program. Within the Town of Saranac, approximately 50 families are assisted through the program. There are currently 461 families on the waiting list for assistance. There is also a small waiting list (3) for Saranac Valley Housing. According to the Clinton County Housing Assistance Program which maintains the waiting list for this facility, most people who inquire about units at Saranac Valley are in need of immediate occupancy and refuse the option of being placed on the waiting list.

***Characteristics of Owner Occupied Housing***

There were 1,302 owner-occupied units in the Town of Saranac, comprising 79.2% of occupied housing in the Town in 2000. Over one-half of the Town's owner-occupied units are three-bedroom and 38% are two-bedroom and four-bedroom. The majority of owner-occupied units are in single-family detached structures. According to 2000 Census figures, the vacancy rate of for-sale housing is 1.4%, indicating that there is potentially a tight housing market.

According to Town records, approximately 125 single family homes were built in Saranac from 2003 to 2010. Of the 125 housing units, 4 replaced existing homes on site.



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**Table 11: Housing Permits**

Year	Number	Notes
2003	11	Data for this year may not be complete
2004	19	
2005	21	
2006	26	
2007	8	Data for this year may not be complete
2008	12	
2009	14	3 homes were replaced on site
2010	14	At least 1 home was replaced on site

Source: Town of Saranac

The median value of owner-occupied homes in Saranac as reported in the 1990 Census was \$51,000. Adjusting the 1990 median value for inflation (28.96%) to 2000 dollars results in a median value of \$65,770 for owner-occupied units. According to the 2000 Census, median value of owner-occupied units is \$76,600, an increase of 16.5% from 1990 after adjusting for inflation. The 2000 median value adjusted for inflation (28.37%) to 2010 dollars results in a median value of \$98,331 for owner-occupied units in Saranac. The actual median value of owner-occupied units in the Town in 2010 was \$101,974 (as estimated by Claritas). Median value of owner-occupied homes has increased 3.7% since 2000 after adjusting for inflation.

Like renter households, homeowners in Saranac are also cost burdened but to a lesser extent. The 2000 Census reports that 116 or 14.5% of all homeowners are cost burden. Households with annual incomes under \$20,000 accounted for 84, or 41.4%, of the households determined to be cost burdened, while households with incomes over \$35,000 accounted for 35.3% of all

**Table 12: Cost Burdened Owner Households**

	Number of Households by Income Range				
	Total	Under \$10,000	\$10,000 - \$19,999	\$20,000 - \$34,999	Over \$35,000
Selected Owner-Occupied Units	800	19	65	125	591
% of owner households	100.0%	2.4%	8.1%	15.6%	73.9%
Owners paying over 30% of income for	116	17	31	27	41
% cost burdened	14.5%	89.5%	47.7%	21.6%	6.9%
Income range as a % of cost burdened	100.0%	14.7%	26.7%	23.3%	35.3%

Source: 2000 Census - Note: Data is based on a sample as provided by the Census Bureau.

cost burdened households.

## Housing Affordability

### *Housing Rental Index*

Rental housing is generally defined as affordable for a household if it does not cost more than 30 percent of the occupant's annual income on housing costs (housing costs include basic utilities). One measure of affordability is a rental index which calculates the maximum gross rent a household can afford. With a median household income of \$45,761 in 2000, the average household could afford \$1,144 per month in rent. With a median gross rent of \$440, the average household in Saranac would find rentals to be affordable.

Table 13: Housing Rental Index, Town of Saranac			
Year	Median Gross Rent (2000)/FMR (2010)	Median Household Income (2000)	Affordable Rent (30% of Average Monthly Income)
2000	\$440	\$45,761	\$1,144
2010	\$797 - 2BR	\$60,575	\$1,514

Source: US Census Bureau (2000), Claritas (2009), US Dept. of Housing & Urban Development.

According to estimates from Claritas, the estimated median household income for Town residents was \$60,575 in 2010. This translates to a monthly income of \$5,048 for the average Town household. Therefore, Town households are estimated to be able to reasonably afford \$1,514 for monthly rent. According to the U.S Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD), the Fair Market Rent (FMR) for a two-bedroom apartment in Clinton County in FY2010 is \$797. The FMR for three-bedroom units is \$1,012 while for a four-bedroom unit is \$1,316. Fair Market Rent is an amount determined by HUD to be the cost of modest, non-luxury rental units in a specific market area. At the 2BR FMR rent of \$797 per month (in 2010), a minimum annual income of \$31,880 would be required by a household to afford a typical 2BR unit at 30% of income. Based on the fair market rents for the 2BR unit, the average household in Saranac would find rentals to be affordable. Similarly, the fair market rents for the 3BR and 4BR would also be affordable to the average Town resident. Likewise, the current documented average rent of \$400 per month would also be affordable to the average Town resident.

### *Ownership Units Affordability Ratio*

In order to determine the affordability of homeowner units, a comparison is made between the median value of homeowner units and median household income. Nationally, a ratio of 2.0 or less is considered "affordable." For instance, for a home costing \$200,000 to be affordable the household should earn an income of \$100,000 to achieve a ratio of 2.0. The affordability ratio for the Town of Saranac equals \$76,600 (median value of homes) divided by \$45,761 (median household income). In 2000 the affordability ratio was 1.7 for the Town. Therefore in 2000, homes in Saranac were within affordability standards, but not by that much. Further, according to 2010 estimates from Claritas, housing prices and median



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incomes in Saranac have all increased, leaving the affordability ratio to remain the same. So in general, homeownership in Saranac has been affordable to the average household in the Town.

**Table 14: Housing Affordability, Town of Saranac**

Year	Median House Value	Median Household Income	Affordability Ratio
2000	\$76,600	\$45,761	1.7
2010	\$101,974	\$60,575	1.7

Source: US Census Bureau (1990 and 2000). Claritas Pop-Facts: Demographic Snapshot 2010 Comparison Report.

### **Saranac Housing Market**

According to a local realtor, the housing market in Saranac is currently stable with a below average number of single family home listings<sup>2</sup> available at 19 within the township. Prices range from \$49,900 (a foreclosure) to \$499,000, with a current median list price of \$140,000. Foreclosures are minimal (although a large percentage due to the limited number of listings and sales) with one currently in the Multiple Listing Service (MLS), and one in the process of being foreclosed. Time on the market has been longer during the last few years, which is consistent with National trends. Total number of sales processed through real property in the Town of Saranac according to “real-info” is 112 transactions with the vast majority being family transactions or estate planning. There is currently only one multi-family listed at \$89,000.

There were 16 single-family homes sold between March 19, 2010 and March 19, 2011 with total sales of \$2,014,200 and a median sale price of \$142,000. The average sale price was \$125,888. There were two foreclosures and one multifamily property sold at \$171,000 in the last year.

Higher priced properties are somewhat scattered throughout the township with the Hardscrabble/Burnt Hill area having the highest concentration of higher valued homes. Many roads including Chazy Lake Road, Nashville Road, True Brook Road, as well as the Silver Lake Road contain a mix of properties. The Standish area has the lowest valued concentration followed by the hamlet of Redford.

In comparison to the rest of Clinton County, the Saranac School District is considered desirable despite the high tax rate. Much of the School District is located outside the Town of Saranac itself in the Town of Plattsburgh. Town of Plattsburgh locations within the school district are considered more desirable due to its closer proximity to the City of Plattsburgh, jobs and services. However, individuals who are more concerned about rural character, scenic views, and a great sense of community while maintaining whatever level of privacy they desire will gravitate to areas such as Saranac.



### ***Housing Organizations Serving Saranac***

#### ***Rural Preservation Company of Clinton County (RPC)***

The Rural Preservation Company of Clinton County operates, through various towns and villages, a program which provides direct grants and low interest loans to low and moderate income home owners and renters to upgrade existing structures, bringing them up to HUD housing quality standards. Assistance is also provided to municipalities in applying for grants for housing rehabilitation and community revitalization projects. The RPC also assists other not-for-profit organizations to obtain funds to construct senior citizen/handicapped housing projects. Participants must show proof of ownership, be current on mortgage and property and school taxes, meet income guidelines and have insurance on the home. There is currently an 18-24 month waiting period for assistance. The RPC is also working on securing grant funding to provide assistance to residents who reside in mobile homes.



#### ***Clinton County Housing Assistance Program***

As mentioned previously, the Clinton County Housing Assistance Program (HAP) manages the Section 8 Rental Assistance Program, as well as the Clinton County Home Buyer Assistance Program. According to the HAP, there is a need countywide for affordable and decent housing for seniors, working families and low-income families.

#### **Key Observations:**

- Approximately 80% of the housing in the Town is single homes and 79% of the occupied housing is owner-occupied (2000 Census).
- Saranac is considered to have a healthy housing market in terms of the housing that is available and affordable for both owners and renters.
- There are approximately 61 subsidized units located in Saranac (3.7% of total units based on 2000 Census).
- Since 2003, 125 new housing units have been built in the Town.
- According to the RPC of Clinton County, housing rehabilitation needs countywide, including Saranac are great, particularly for residents living in mobile homes.



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- The Clinton County Housing Assistance Program and the RPC of Clinton County maintain long waiting lists for program assistance.
- According to a local realtor, senior rental housing is needed.

## **E. LOCAL ECONOMY**

While once a Town of forestry and agriculture, today the Town of Saranac is what many would call a “bedroom” community. Town residents generally work outside of the Town in one of the many industries in the City and Town of Plattsburgh or at the Dannemora Correctional Facility. Within the Town, the largest employer is the Saranac Central School District. The reliance on the State correctional facility and a few other large State employers such as the State



University of New York-Plattsburgh, for employment is of some concern to residents. A more diversified economy, including industry in Saranac, would not only create local jobs for the existing labor force, it would provide opportunities for the next generation so that they would choose to stay in Saranac and increase the local tax base.

Businesses within the Town are small retail and service establishments, many of which are located along the Route 3 corridor serving local residents and pass through travelers. Along Route 3, the businesses include restaurants and bars, convenience stores and service stations, a hardware store, driving range and campground. Residents conduct most of their shopping beyond conveniences like milk and bread in Plattsburgh. Despite the fact that Route 3 is a major travel corridor through the Adirondacks, there are only a few tourism-related or supported businesses along the corridor or within the Town as a whole.

Saranac also has an abundance of home based businesses which operate out of residences serving customers and clients in person or over the internet if internet access is adequate. Unfortunately, as the infrastructure section of this profile discusses, high speed internet is not adequate in the Town of Saranac, potentially hampering business development of all kinds within the Town.

The Town of Saranac is actively pursuing the development of more industry on a 43 acre parcel that was a former industrial site located in both the Town of Saranac and Town of Plattsburgh on Trudeau Road and Route 374. The portion of the parcel in the Town of Saranac is within the Adirondack Park and is classified as “industrial” by the Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan.

## ***Agriculture***



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Although agriculture, particularly potato and dairy farming, is no longer a dominant industry in the Town of Saranac, the fields, meadows and pastures still exist and the agricultural districts remain, presenting future opportunities for the reintroduction of land into productive agricultural use. According to the Clinton County Soil Survey, much of the decline of farmland in the County has been toward idle or brush land existence. Farmland conversion to residential development has been significant in some areas of the County.



Lands in agricultural districts, as defined by the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, are located in the Saranac River corridor and in the eastern half the Town. As the Agriculture Map indicates, primary agricultural soils are scattered throughout the eastern portion of the Town and the north and southwestern corners.

According to a representative from Clinton County Soil & Water Conservation, dairy farming is still viable but it is increasingly difficult for farmers to make a profit unless there was a slightly different “business model.” The soils in Saranac are fairly sandy and the climate is relatively warm, therefore it is a good vegetable producing area. Horticulture farming (i.e. Christmas trees) has also been somewhat successful. In order to lengthen the growing season, some local farmers, with the assistance of Clinton County Soil and Water, are installing tile drainage systems allowing farmers to plant earlier and harvest later.

An emerging opportunity for both the agriculture and forestry industries (see below) in northern New York State is biofuel production from grass and woody biomass. Energy from biomass can be used for heat, hot water, steam and electricity. Grass biomass is grass and other vegetation such as hay, weeds and goldenrod while woody biomass is ideally logging bi-product from local timber harvesters. Biomass is a fairly new renewable energy source that is still being studied however it could be sustainable if efficiency is maximized. It is already known that biofuel loses efficiency quickly from transportation and conversion into liquid, therefore, local production and usage as wood chips, grass pellets or wood pellets in residences and large facilities such as industry and institutions has the best potential for biofuel as a renewable and sustainable source of energy.

### ***Forestry***

Timber harvesting has been a prominent industry in the Town for well over 100 years. Much of the logging was associated with the area’s mining history as large amounts of timber were harvested in order to make charcoal. Today it is a much smaller portion of the local economy. One larger working forest still exists on the Barnes Pond Conservation easement

lands. Once timber is harvested locally the logs are transported out of the region for processing. An opportunity may exist to establish a local processing facility in Saranac that would serve local and regional companies. Another opportunity already mentioned under agriculture that could work in conjunction with the processing facility, is the possible use of logging bi-product, such as woodchips, as biomass for biofuel. Combining a timber processing facility with a biomass production facility at one location would increase the efficiency of biomass as a biofuel. An additional industry that could be an opportunity for Saranac would be the development and manufacturing of modern, controlled air furnaces and boilers that can properly accommodate grass biomass which has high ash and chlorine content the requires a unique furnace.

### ***Income Levels***

Personal income is one of the most important indicators of the economy and one of the most important variables in creating a vibrant community for the future. Understanding the income characteristics of the community is also important in determining the community's wealth as well as the ability of residents to maintain housing, contribute to the local tax base and participate in the economy.

According to the 2010 Claritas estimates, the median household income for the Town of Saranac was \$60,575 and per capita income was \$24,850. In addition, 66 or 5.3% of Town families were living below poverty level in 2010.

To gain a better understanding of changes in income between the surveys taken in 1990, 2000 and 2010, Census income data from 1990 and 2000 is converted to 2010 dollars adjusted for inflation using the consumer price indices calculated by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Median incomes in the Town increased when adjusted for inflation between 1990 and 2010. As Table 15 indicates, when year 1990 incomes in the Town of Saranac were adjusted for inflation, median household income increased 15.5% from 1990 to 2010. Per capita income also increased, but at a greater rate (28.1% from 1990 to 2010). For purposes of comparison, 1990 and 2000 dollars have been adjusted for inflation to 2010 dollars.

<b>Table 15: Household Income and Poverty Comparison</b>					
	<b>1990</b>	<b>Adjusted</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>Adjusted</b>	<b>2010</b>
Median Household	\$31,400	\$52,448	\$45,761	\$58,015	\$60,575
Median Family	\$35,625	\$59,505	\$51,542	\$65,344	n/a
Per Capital Income	\$11,616	\$19,403	\$18,242	\$23,127	\$24,850
Individuals Below	12.0%	n/a	9.8%	n/a	n/a
Families Below	11.7%	n/a	6.4%	n/a	5.3%

*Source: Bureau of the Census (1990 and 2000) and The Nielsen Company (2010)*

The Town of Saranac contains a moderate proportion of low and moderate income households (in 2010). Claritas figures for 2010 indicate that approximately 31.9% of households in the



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Town were considered low and moderate income households (i.e., households with income less than 80 percent of the Clinton County median) as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Further, 18.5% of households in the Town were very low income, earning 50% or less of the Clinton County median family income.

### Labor Force Characteristics

The civilian labor force in Saranac consists of residents aged 16 and older who are employed or actively seeking employment, excluding those enrolled in the armed forces. According to the 2010 estimates, 2,299 Town residents, or 63.6% of its working age population, participated in the civilian labor force in 2010. The labor force participation rate increased slightly in the Town between 2000 and 2010, when the Town had a resident civilian labor force of 1,939, accounting for 62.9% of the population aged 16 and over. Unemployment in the Town of Saranac was estimated at 4.0% in 2010, slightly higher than in 2000, when 3.1% of residents were unemployed.

Table 16: Labor Force Data						
	Total civilian labor force		Civilian labor force participation rate		Total Unemployed	
	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010
Town of Saranac	1,939	2,299	62.9%	63.6%	3.1%	4.0%

Source: Bureau of the Census and The Nielsen Company

### Occupation

According to the 2000 Census figures regarding employment, the most common occupations in Saranac were service occupations at 33.1%, management, professional and related occupations at 28.4% and sales and office occupations at 21.1%. These same three occupations were the most common in 1990 as well.

Table 17: Resident Employment by Occupation, 1990-2010						
Occupation	1990		2000		2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Management, professional &	306	18.4%	523	28.4%	733	34.2%
Service occupations	504	30.2%	610	33.1%	643	30.0%
Sales and office occupations	357	21.4%	389	21.1%	430	20.0%
Farming, fishing and forestry	34	2.0%	20	1.1%	40	1.9%
Construction, extraction and	232	14.0%	119	6.5%	162	7.6%
Productions, transportation and,	232	14.0%	181	9.8%	133	6.2%
Total	1665	100.0%	1842	100.0%	2141	100.0%

Source: US Census Bureau (1990 and 2000) Claritas Pop-Facts: Demographic Snapshot 2010 Comparison Report

Estimates provided by Claritas for 2010 suggest that composition of employment by occupation has not changed since 2000, with percentages changing slightly, but the same three categories are the leading occupations today. One area that decreased considerably between 1990 and 2000 is the construction, extraction and maintenance occupation decreasing from 14.0% in 1990 to 6.5% in 2000.

### ***Journey to Work***

Approximately 81.6% of Saranac residents drove alone to work, while another 10.2% carpooled according to 2010 Claritas Inc. estimates. Another 5.0% worked at home. Approximately 60.2% of Town residents travel between 15 and 44 minutes to work, with an average travel time to work of 27.4 minutes. These travel times correspond with traveling distances to the State Correctional Facilities in Dannemora, Plattsburgh and perhaps Rouses Point, Saranac Lake and Ray Brook.

### **Key Observations**

- The Town of Saranac's economy is largely comprised of small retail and service establishments serving the local population and some visitors typically passing through on Route 3.
- There are a significant number of home-based businesses.
- Most Saranac residents work outside of Saranac in Plattsburgh or at the Correctional Facility in Dannemora.
- The largest employer in the Town is the Saranac Central School District.
- Additional economic development in Saranac is hampered, to some degree by a lack of connectivity including high speed internet and wireless communication.
- Opportunity exists to attract industry to Saranac at the industrial park owned by the Town of Saranac but partially located within the Town of Plattsburgh.
- Although agriculture is no longer a dominant industry, large areas of prime agricultural soils with fields, pastures and meadows still exist and are generally still located within Agricultural Districts.
- Soils in Saranac are suitable for vegetable crops and horticulture.
- New opportunities for the agriculture and timber industry may exist for biofuel production from woody and/or grass biomass.





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### **F. LAND MANAGEMENT**

There are no local land use controls within the Town of Saranac such as zoning, site plan review or subdivision regulations to regulate use of land, nonresidential site and building design or the subdivision of land. As such, there are no official planning or zoning boards in the Town for reviewing projects. The Code Enforcement Officer administers New York's *Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code* and *State Energy Conservation Construction Code*.



There is State land management in the Town due to the Town's location almost entirely within the Adirondack Park. Therefore, the Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan (APLUDP) applies to most of the Town. An overview of the APLUDP land management associated with it is described in Section B. Local and Regional Planning Initiatives. It is largely related to density, building and the clearing of land in relation to critical environmental areas, Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers and other sensitive areas. While the density of development is certainly managed in the APLUDP, the use of land, for the most part, is only restricted by the Adirondack Park Agency on lands classified as "Resource Management." However, the APA does exert some additional land use controls on projects through the application of "Conditions" it sets forth in the permits it issues.

As the APA Land Use Classification Map and the table below illustrates, more than half of Saranac's *non-state* lands (54,166 acres) within the "Blue Line" are classified as "Rural Use." The other two dominant land classifications are "Resource Management" (19.5%) and "Low Intensity" (18.4%). The lands classified as "Resource Management" which are not intended for development, are significantly constrained for development due to 42.7 acre average lot size requirement and restrictions on land use by the APLUDP. The lands classified as "Low Intensity" are somewhat restricted by the required average lot size of 3.2 acres per principal dwelling, however, the types of land use are not restricted.

**Table 18: APLUDP Land Classification, Town of Saranac**

<b>Classification</b>	<b>Intensity Guidelines</b>	<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Total Town Area</b>	<b>Percent of Non-State Lands</b>
<b>Hamlet</b>	No Limit	521	0.7%	1.0%
<b>Moderate Intensity</b>	1.3 acre average lot size	947	1.3%	1.7%
<b>Low Intensity</b>	3.2 acre average lot size	9,957	13.9%	18.4%
<b>Rural Use</b>	8.5 acre average lot size	32,157	45.0%	59.4%
<b>Resource</b>	42.7 acre average lot	10,537	14.7%	19.5%
<b>Industrial</b>	No Limit	47	0.06%	0.09%
<b>Wild Forest</b>	No development	16,869	23.6%	0%
<b>Open Water</b>	No development	445	0.6%	n/a
<b>Total Acreage within APA</b>		71,480	100.0%	

The Town's three locations of the lands classified as "Hamlet" include the Town's portion of the Village of Dannemora, and the hamlets of Redford and Picketts Corners/Saranac (Ganong Drive). In addition, the Town's portion of the industrial park is classified as "Industrial." Neither of these classifications restricts land use or requires a minimum lot size. Most of the "Hamlet" lands have been developed although not built-out with a mixture of residential, commercial and community service uses while the industrial park is underutilized. The remainder of the Route 3 corridor is a mixture of land classifications however the "Rural" and "Low Intensity" classifications dominate leaving very little vacant or unimproved land left for hamlet or moderate intensity development along the Route 3 corridor.

#### *Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers System Act*

The Saranac River is designated as a "Recreational River" under the State's Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers System Act, and is subject to special protection through regulation by the State. Inside the Adirondack Park, the law is administered by the Adirondack Park Agency (APA). As such, the APA has the authority to regulate motorized use of "wild, scenic and recreational rivers" and their river corridors on private lands. The one exception relates to State owned lands whereby the DEC regulates the waters when they run through State land. In the case of the Town's Saranac River corridor, all lands are privately owned adjacent to the River except a small portion of the Department of Corrections (DOC) land -- a portion of is within the River's corridor area. These DOC lands were formerly used for agricultural purposes to support the DOC farm at Dannemora Correctional Facility until the farm was discontinued recently due to State budget cuts.

The APA regulations for state designated "Recreational Rivers" include the following:



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- Requires an Agency permit and establishes standards for subdivisions, single-family dwellings and most new uses and structures in river areas. Installation of docks do not require permits, however, they cannot be wider than 8 feet without first obtaining an Agency variance. “River areas” for the Saranac River in the Town fluctuate from being defined as the entire area within 1/8 mile to 1/4 mile of the north bank of the River depending on location;
- Regulates the cutting of trees in the entire river area, including a prohibition on cutting within 100’ of the River;
- Restricts motor boating and other motorized activities;
- Regulates bridge and road building;
- Regulates structures (such as dams) and activities (such as dredging or filling) that alter a river’s natural flow;
- Allows continuation of lawfully existing, non-conforming uses, but require permits or variances for expansion or change in use; and
- Prohibits certain “non-compatible” uses.

In addition, there are shoreline setback and lot width restrictions along the Saranac River as part of this designation, some of which are the same under the APLUDP for all waterbodies. Others are more restrictive when adjacent to a designated Wild, Scenic or Recreational River. Table 19 below provides the setbacks and lot widths for Recreational Rivers.

Table 19: Minimum Saranac River Shoreline Lot Widths and Setbacks		
Land Use Classification	Minimum Lot Width (ft)	Minimum Structure Setback (ft)
Hamlet	50	50
Moderate Intensity	100	50
Low Intensity	150	150
Rural	200	150
Resource Management	300	150
Industrial	No minimum	150

### **Key Observations**

- The Town of Saranac has no local land management or mechanism for reviewing proposed new development or land subdivision beyond building construction as required by the Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code and State Energy Conservation Construction Code. As such, the Town has no control over the use of land, site development/location or the appearance of new development.

## *Section 2: Community Profile*

- The Adirondack Park Agency reviews a majority of development projects and manages some aspects of Saranac's land development within the "Blue-line" including but not limited to the density at which land may be developed and the location and siting of development with sensitive and critical environmental features.
- Within the Town's lands classified as "Hamlet" by the APLUDP, there are very few restrictions on land development except when directly adjacent to the Saranac River.
- Along the Saranac River there are increased setback requirements related to the River's designation as a "Wild, Scenic and Recreational River."



## Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy

### G. LAND USE



The Town of Saranac is a rural community dominated by open space and forested lands many of which were historically used for agriculture and forestry. Most development is located within the Town's portion of the Village of Dannemora, along the Route 3/Saranac River corridor, particularly in the hamlets of Redford and Pickets Corners; and in Standish in the northwest corner of the Town which was a former mining community. There is a significant amount of State-owned lands

and DEC conservation easement lands that are expected to be left undeveloped with public access for recreational purposes. Most recently the State acquired the 14,056 acre Lyon Mt. tract which will be available to the public for certain recreational purposes. Outside of State-owned lands, the private lands are a mix of large and small parcels of vacant, residential, agricultural and occasional commercial land uses. The Table below and the Land Use Map provide an illustration of location and an approximate breakdown of acreage by general land use categories as classified by the assessor for the Town of Saranac. Other than "wild, forested and conservation" lands, residential land use is dominate - particularly rural residential uses which are residential properties with 10 or more acres.

Source: Clinton County Real Property Office Assessment Role (2010); US Census Bureau

Table 20: Land Use, Town of Saranac (2011)		
Land Use Category	Approx. Acreage	Percent of Total
Agriculture	896	1.2%
Vacant, former Agriculture	6,088	8.2%
Residential	25,728	34.6%
Commercial	339	0.5%
Recreation and Entertainment	143	0.2%
Community Services	236	0.3%
Industrial	0	0%
Public Services	518	0.7%
Wild, Forested and Conservation (includes public & private lands)	27,740	37.5%
Vacant	8,775	11.9%
Right of Ways etc.*	3,583	4.8%
Total Land (inc. Village)	74,048	100.0%
Total Water	384	
Total Area of Town of Saranac (inc.	74,432	

## Section 2: Community Profile

\* Includes right-of-ways for roads, utilities, rail etc not included in any parcel boundary. This number is an approximation as there are a few small parcels with missing data so exact acreage cannot be determined.

The hamlets of Saranac and Picketts Corners have a mix of uses including various residential types, the Saranac Central School, a town pool and boat launch, town garage, cemetery, senior housing, hardware store, two restaurants, auto service and gas station, woodworking business, convenience store, private campground and a driving range. This area represents the most activity in the Town outside of the Village of Dannemora and perhaps represents the best location for some additional community and commercial uses. As discussed below, this opportunity may be somewhat hampered by the current APLUDP land classifications for the area as most of the lands classified as “Hamlet” and “Moderate Intensity” while not built-out, have been developed.

The hamlet of Redford, located west of Picketts Corners on Route 3 was the location of the former Redford Crown Glass Works and includes a dense, residential neighborhood, a post office, churches and the former Church of the Assumption School. There is a water district serving the neighborhood.

The hamlet of Standish, today a small residential hamlet, settled as a mining community as the mining of iron ore on Lyon Mt. and elsewhere was prevalent in Saranac. Miners’ housing is still prevalent today in the hamlet. Also located in the hamlet is a town playground.

Between Redford and Picketts Corners some commercial uses, homes, vacant land, the Town Hall and Court and a bar and restaurant are scattered along Route 3. New York State Electric and Gas, a significant land holder on the Saranac River, has a hydro-electric dam just southwest of Pup Hill Road.

Table 21: Publicly Owned and Conservation Easement Lands		
	Acres	% of Total Acreage of Town
New York State		
Forested and Reforested Lands (931, 932, 941, 961)	17,473	23.5%
Other New York State Lands (NYS DOCS)	189	0.3%
Total State Owned Lands	17,662	23.8%
NYS DEC Conservation Easements	5,524	
Town Owned	119.12	
Village Owned	59.0	
Saranac Central School	40.6	

As Table 21 above indicates, publicly-owned and conservation easement land comprises 31.4% of all land in the Town of Saranac. Most of the land is the newly acquired Lyon Mt. tract by the State of New York.





## *Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy*

### **Key Observations**

- Eight percent (8%) of Town land is inactive farmland (fields, meadows and pastures) with an additional 11% classified as vacant.
- Residential land use comprises 35.8% of all land and a significant amount of these lands are considered “rural residential” with at least 10 acres.
- The hamlet of Redford is a densely settled residential neighborhood that is largely built-out. The former school facility presents an opportunity for reuse.
- Picketts Corners is a mixed-use hamlet in which many of the commercial, community and institutional uses are located. The area classified as hamlet by the APLUDP has few remaining vacant land opportunities for new higher density (and intensity) development as most “Hamlet” lands have been developed.
- Nearly 24 percent (24%) of the land in the Town is owned by the State which may present an opportunity for public recreational access however, hardly any of this land is located in Saranac River/Route 3 corridor.



## **H. NATURAL RESOURCES**

### ***The Saranac River***

The Saranac River is the main body of water in the Town of Saranac. The River is approximately 60 miles long and flows in a northeasterly direction from the Adirondack Mountains emptying into Lake Champlain, flowing through the Towns of Santa Clara, Harrietstown, St. Armand, Franklin, Black Brook, Saranac, Schuyler Falls, Town of Plattsburgh and ending in the City of Plattsburgh. The River encompasses Upper, Middle and Lower Saranac Lakes, as well as



Oseetah Lake, Lake Flower, Franklin Falls Pond and Union Falls Pond. There are two sets of locks along the River, one between Middle and Lower Saranac Lakes and another between Lower Saranac and Oseetah Lakes. The River is classified as a “recreational river” by New York State Department of Environmental Conservation under the Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers Act (see more information about this under Land Use). The River is stocked with rainbow and brown trout, including two-year-old browns and is thought to be one of the best tributaries for landlocked salmon fishing.

Nearly all of the land adjacent to the Saranac River is privately owned. The only publicly owned lands are Picketts Corners Park and vacant lands owned by the NYS Department of Corrections.

The Saranac River is utilized for a hydro-electric generation. A dam is owned and operated by New York State Electric and Gas (NYSEG). There is a significant amount of land adjacent to the River at the dam site owned by NYSEG, including an area with public access at the dam. This access area currently has no public facilities.

With regard to flooding and erosion of the Saranac River, the National Flood Insurance Program Flood Insurance Rate Maps, provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, indicate that the Saranac River channel and floodway is a special flood hazard (Zone A and AE) with some additional lands in Zone X. See the Wetlands and Floodplain Map in this document for floodplain delineation.

Zone A and AE is defined as areas that will be inundated by the one percent annual chance flood (the one hundred year floodplain). Zone A indicates that no base flood elevation have been determined (the water surface is the base flood elevation). Zone AE indicates that there is a measurable base flood elevation. Zones A and AE require mandatory flood insurance. The Zone X areas are outside the one hundred year floodplain and therefore, flood insurance is not required.



## *Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy*

According to the NYS DEC, there is some evidence of natural erosion on the banks of the Saranac River but they have not identified any areas of particular concern.

### ***Tributaries***

The Saranac River and its tributaries, covering 662 miles, are part of a major watershed to Lake Champlain. There are several tributaries within the Town of Saranac including Cold Brook, Fall Brook, Smithkill Brook, Behan Brook, Corners Brook, White Brook, Maggy Brook and True Brook. The NYS DEC classifies the quality of New York State streams using a New York State Stream Classification and Usage System. Most of these tributaries are classified as C(T), with the exception of Behan Brook at Picketts Corners north toward the Village of Dannemora which is in Class AA. The symbol “T” indicates that these are trout waters.



Class AA waters can be a supply for drinking water, culinary or food processing purposes; primary and secondary contact recreation and fishing. The waters are suitable for fish, shellfish, and wildlife propagation and survival. This classification may be given to those waters that, if subjected to approve disinfection treatment, with additional treatment if necessary to remove naturally present impurities, meet or will meet New York State Department of Health drinking water standards and are or will be considered safe and satisfactory for drinking water purposes.

Class C waters are best used for fishing. These waters are suitable for fish, shellfish and wildlife propagation and survival. The water quality is suitable for primary and secondary contact recreation.

True Brook tributary has experienced low pH as the result of acid rain over the past two decades, yet these conditions still fully support aquatic life.

### ***Wetlands***

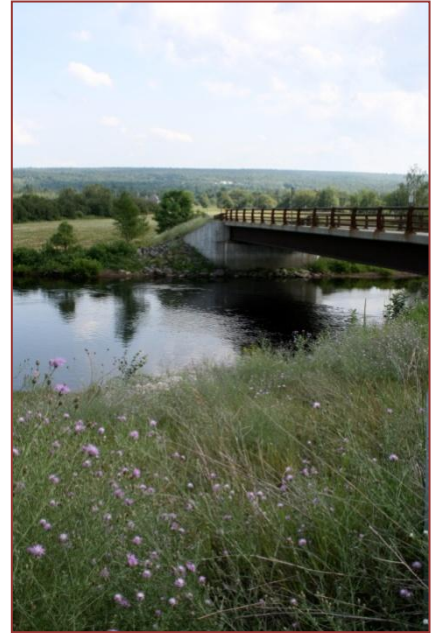
Wetlands are areas saturated by surface or ground water sufficient to support distinctive vegetation adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands serve as natural habitat for many species of plants and animals and absorb the forces of flood and erosion to prevent loss of upland soil.

Wetlands are transition areas between uplands and aquatic habitats. They are known by many names, such as marshes, swamps, bogs and wet meadows. Standing water is only one clue that a wetland may be present. The Freshwater Wetlands Act identifies wetlands on the

basis of vegetation because certain types of plants out-compete others when they are in wet soils, and so are good indicators of wet conditions over time. These characteristic plants include wetland trees and shrubs, such as willows and alders; emergent plants such as cattails and sedges; aquatic plants, such as water-lily; and bog mat vegetation, such as sphagnum moss.

Freshwater Wetlands are protected under Article 24 of the Environmental Conservation Law of the State of New York. The Department of Environmental Conservation requires permits for certain activities in, and within 100 feet of, the boundary of wetlands 12.4 acres or larger that are shown on freshwater wetlands regulatory maps. Smaller wetlands are regulated under federal law (Section 404 of the Clean Waters Act) by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Wetlands are also protected in the Adirondack Park under the APA Act and the NYS Freshwater Wetlands Act. APA wetlands are either (a) one acre in size, or (b) adjacent to a body of water, with which there is a free interchange of water, in which case there is no size limitation. Property that is flooded every spring by surface water backup or standing water may also be a wetland, as well as forested areas with high ground water.



Within the Saranac River Corridor there are both Adirondack Park Agency (APA) wetlands and DEC wetlands. As the Wetlands and FEMA Floodplains Map illustrates, the APA wetlands are located not just along the Saranac River, but all around Town. The only area to have a DEC wetland is along the eastern boundary of both the Town and revitalization area, but outside the Adirondack Park boundary. The DEC wetlands are those located outside the park boundary in the south eastern corner. Since the majority of the Town of Saranac is located within the Adirondack Park, the majority of the wetlands are considered APA wetlands.

### ***Fish and Wildlife***

Fish species in the Town's portion of Saranac have not been surveyed by the NYS DEC so an accurate description of species is not available. However, the River is stocked with Brown Trout by NYS DEC each spring. Locals report catching bass, pike and walleye in the River.

The Town of Saranac is rich with plant and wildlife. With regard to rare plant or animal species, the NY Natural Heritage Program of DEC reports that species may exist in the northwestern portion of the Town and on the Lyon Mt. State lands, however, specific types of species are not provided in the database for their protection.



## *Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy*

### **Soils**

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (formerly known as the “Soil Conservation Service”) prepares maps through the National Cooperative Soil Survey showing general soil types broken down into mapping units. The Town of Saranac contains approximately 120 different soil mapping units. The soil mapping units for the Town of Saranac are shown on the USDA Soils Types map included in this report.

The USDA provides a wide variety of soils reports for each mapping unit on the following website: <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/WebSoilSurvey.aspx>. Those reports include information on the suitabilities and limitations ratings of each mapping unit relative to the impact on specified uses such as corrosion of concrete, corrosion of steel, dwellings with basements, dwellings without basements, lawns, landscaping, roads, small commercial buildings, gravel and sand sources, farmland classification, hydric rating, irrigated capability class, sanitary facilities, and so on. An *example* of a Map Unit Description (brief) is as follows:

***Map Unit: AbB - Adams loamy sand, 3 to 8 percent slopes***

***This very deep, somewhat excessively drained sandy soil has formed in low lime material on gently sloping deltas, terraces and outwash plains. The available water capacity is very low or low. Permeability is rapid or very rapid. Capability Unit is 3s. This unit of Adams soil on 3 to 8 percent slopes is recognized on the listing for Farmland of Statewide Importance.***

As a further example, investigation of this website will reveal that the suitability rating for the above soil (AbB) for septic tank absorption fields is “very limited” (on a scale of “not limited”, “somewhat limited”, and “very limited”). This information is available on this website for each of the 120+ soil Map Units in the Town.

### **Soil Limitations**

Soil limitations occur throughout the Town of Saranac as illustrated by the “Soils Limitation Map” of this Plan. For uses such as “dwellings with basements,” “local roads and streets,” “small commercial buildings,” “septic tank absorption fields,” and “building site development,” the USDA NRCS rates soils on a scale of “not limited,” “somewhat limited,” and “very limited.” According to the USDA NRCS, “*not limited*” indicates that the soil has features that are very favorable for a specified use. “*Somewhat limited*” indicates that the soil has features that are moderately favorable for a specified use. The limitations can be overcome or minimized by special planning, design or installation. Fair performance and moderate maintenance can be expected. “*Very limited*” indicates that the soil has one or more features that are unfavorable for the specified use. The limitations generally cannot be overcome without major soil reclamation, special design, or expensive installation procedures. Poor performance and high maintenance can be expected. Also, according to



the USDA NRCS, “This information is not site specific and does not eliminate the need for onsite investigation of the soils.”

Soils analysis should be project specific and should be conducted by a qualified soils expert or land use professional.

### Topography

Areas of steep slopes are scattered around the Town as illustrated on the Steep Slopes Map. The only area that has a slope of 10-15% is the area near Pup Hill Road. There are smaller areas scattered throughout the boundary of 5-10%, with one larger area near the Saranac Black Brook town line south on Standish Road. Lyon Mountain has numerous sharp-ridged ravines with slopes well in excess of 15%, with some small areas at 20-25%. A map of Steep Slopes included in the Plan best locates the steep slopes in the Boundary area and the Town as a whole.



### Key Observations

- The Saranac River continues to be a central focus of the Town both physically, historically and emotionally.
- Existing direct public access to the River is limited to Picketts Corners Park and the DEC Fishing Rights access points. There are no land trails or passive parks along the River.
- Many of the River’s tributaries are important natural resources within the Town.
- Most of the waterfront lands are privately owned. The only public land that is presently underutilized, and may present an opportunity, is the NYS DOCS land.
- There are soil limitations for development within some areas of the Town.
- Steep slopes are not a constraint within the Saranac River/Route 3 revitalization corridor. In the vicinity of Lyon Mt. there are steep slope conditions, however, these lands are State-owned and therefore will not be developed under the State’s ownership.



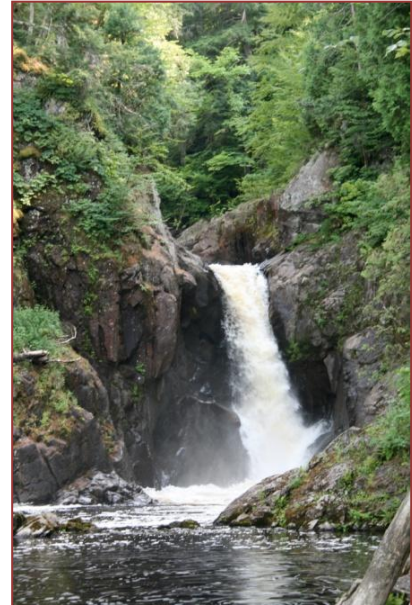


## *Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy*

### **I. HISTORIC RESOURCES**

Facilitated by strategies such as the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street program, communities are integrating and relying on historic preservation as part of their community and economic development programs. In doing so, these communities have taken steps to identify, protect, enhance and promote their historic and cultural resources. These strategies help maintain and enhance property values, enhance community pride, establish a unique sense of place, stabilize neighborhoods, facilitate tourism and attract additional investment.

Historic resources including residential, agricultural, institutional and industrial buildings, transportation structures, etc. are important, but often undervalued, community resources and can be the cornerstone of a heritage tourism destination. They define the authentic character and sense of place that sets one community apart from another, help instill a sense of pride in residents, and attract the curiosity of visitors. Formal identification and interpretation of these sites help to educate and entertain visitors.



Within the Town of Saranac there are several historic resources, however, none of these are listed on the State or National Registers of Historic Places. Some of them are local landmarks as described below. Several of the local landmarks are located within the Picketts Corners hamlet as illustrated on the Recreation and Historical Resources Map.

There are many churches in Town including the Redford Church built from Potsdam sandstone and designed by the same architect that designed the Notre Dame Church in Montreal, Canada. The Town also celebrates the Redford picnic on August 15<sup>th</sup> of each year when the Town merry-go-round, the oldest operating merry-go-round in North America, is run once a year. The merry-go-round operates without electricity and is instead run by a belt on a tractor.

Table 22: Town of Saranac Local Landmarks	
Site/Address	Description
Saranac Independence Cemetery, Ganong Drive	Currently an active cemetery. Site contains a Civil War Monument
Methodist Church, 8 UMC Rd	Wood construction church with a stone foundation, built in the 1860s.
High Falls, Moffittsville	Boasts one of the highest cascades on the Saranac River due to a dam that was built in 1947. There are trails and fishing access at this location.
Redford Glass Works	Operated as a glass making facility for 20 years from 1831-1851.
Lyon Mountain Trail and Fire Tower	17,190 acre area (some of which is in Dannemora) owned by State of New York
Clinton Correctional Facility	Opened in 1845 in the Village of Dannemora, it is the largest maximum security and third oldest prison in New York.
Burnt Hills School House	Information unavailable

### Key Observations

- Despite several local landmarks, there are no State or Nationally Registered Historic Places. Such designations offer some protection, financial assistance and promotion for tourism purposes.
- Several of the Town's landmarks are located within in the Picketts Corners hamlet area in close proximity to each other. This creates an easy opportunity to develop a historical walking or driving tour with interpretive information within the written material and at each site.



## *Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy*

### **J. SCENIC RESOURCES**

Scenic resources are abundant throughout the Town and represent one of its greatest assets. Important viewsheds of the River, rural landscapes and mountains are prevalent from many locations.

#### ***Regional Vistas***

Regional vistas within the Town of Saranac are those identified in the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan. They offer broad, spectacular views with a deep field of vision, and contain a great deal of variety in terms of land forms, contrasts of color and texture, and often provide wide, extensive views of distant mountain ranges. The development nestled in the valley diversifies the view, as does the development which patterns the hillsides rising on either side of the valley.



The first vista is located on Standish Road, two miles northwest of Clayburg, just north of the Saranac River corridor. It is a broad, spectacular view to the south, where many of the high peaks rise steeply in the background and form the focal point of this panoramic view.

The second vista is 3½ miles east of Picketts Corners near Hardscrabble Road at the intersection of Duquette and Porky Ryan Roads. The rolling fields in the foreground are patterned with stone walls and rural buildings which blend naturally with the landscape and add variety to the view; mountains in the background form the focal point of the view. There is a great deal of variety of vegetation and also in contrasts of color and landforms.

There are two more regional vistas within the Town of Saranac that are “mirror” views across the Saranac River. One is located on Hardscrabble Road, the other is at the intersection of Chazy Lake Road and the Chateaugay branch of the Delaware Hudson Railroad.

#### ***Primary Local Vistas***

These vistas provide long-range views of the broad “basin” formed by the Saranac River and are viewable from public highways. These vistas contain long views across sloping, agricultural fields with alternating patterns of vegetation, open space, and rural development; ridges and mountains often serve as backdrops for these views.

The first local vista is located on Burnt Hill Road near the intersection with East Road and provides a beautiful rural panorama of the “basin” in the eastern section of Saranac. Beyond the fields, river and settlements in the valley, the Village of Dannemora is visible in the distance; mountains rising beyond the valley provide the focal point for the view.

Another vista that is located within the Revitalization boundary is located on Bowen Road, about one-half mile south of Picketts Corners. The vantage point is from the river valley, and provides views of the river and hillsides rising from it. There is a great deal of variety of color, texture and land forms; in addition, the numerous visual elements which can be seen from this point make this one of the most interesting views in the Town.



There are three vistas located near each other: on Chazy Lake Road, about one mile northwest of Picketts Corners; where Hugh Hearn and Nashville Road intersect Barnum Brook Road; and on Picketts Corners Road near the former Lavarney Farm. From these points, there are excellent views across the Saranac River. The Hills, dotted with rural development, slope down toward the River and the rural communities sprawled along it. There is a good deal of vegetation mix and color contrasts to diversify the view.

The final local vista is located on Hugh Herron Road, approximately three-quarters of a mile from its intersection of Route 374. At this point the roadside vegetation opens to a wide, spectacular view across rolling fields to Lake Champlain. The Green Mountains of Vermont, including Mt. Mansfield are visible in the distance.

### ***Roadside Views***

Within the Town of Saranac there are many short-range views of specific features which provide contrast to the general visual character of a travel corridor, and are visible only briefly and from scenic vantage points. They are often areas where roadside vegetation opens to reveal a view of a mountain, lake, or some other feature, or where an abrupt change in topography diversifies the scenic character of the highway. These can be captured looking south and west from Hardscrabble Road, looking west from Chazy Lake Road toward Lyon Mountain.

### ***Scenic Roadways***

These are sections of public roads which afford intermittent views on one or either side of the road. Within the Town of Saranac they can be found on a brief stretch of Standish Road on the southwest section of the Town, Porky Ryan Road, and on Hardscrabble Road to Bowen Road.

### **Key Observations**

- The Town of Saranac's abundant scenic vistas and viewsheds are one of its greatest assets.



## *Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy*

- Saranac's scenic vistas and viewsheds are not protected by any local land management tools such as zoning and conservation subdivision or by voluntary conservation easement programs.

## **K. INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITIES**

### ***Water Systems***

The Town of Saranac is served by three water districts: Redford Water District, Standish Water District and the Saranac Water District.



- Redford Water District - According to the Annual Drinking Water Quality Report for 2009, this water system serves approximately 500 people through 163 service connections. Water comes from two drilled deep wells located off of Spruce Street and is chlorinated prior to distribution. The system has an adequate amount of water to meet present and future demands.
- Saranac Water District - This water system serves about 90 people through 48 service connections. The source of water is an infiltration gallery, which is located on Lavarney Lane and is chlorinated prior to distribution. The system has an adequate amount of water to meet present and future demands.
- Standish Water District - The Standish Water System serves approximately 110 people through 54 service connections. The water source in Standish is a 280 foot deep well located off Standish Road. This water source is not adequate and the Town is actively seeking a second water source for the District. The water is pumped by a 10hp submersible pump to a 3,000-gallon storage tank. Prior to distribution the water is treated with liquid sodium hypochlorite. Most main lines are ductile iron; others are 2" PVC. The operating pressure ranges from 26psi to 45psi.

### ***Sewer/Septic Systems***

The Town of Saranac is served mostly by private septic systems. Soils in the Town are generally suitable for on-site septic systems (see soil analysis for in-depth information). The Village of Dannemora is served by a public sewer system.

### ***Utilities and Telecommunications***

New York State Gas and Electric serves the Town of Saranac providing gas and electric service. National Grid also serves the Town providing limited electric service. Residents complain about regular brown out and full power outages in portions of the Town due to aging infrastructure.





## *Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy*

While telephone service is available throughout the Town, wireless service is not. Like many rural communities in the Adirondack Park, cellular service in the Town of Saranac is unreliable and in some areas nonexistent. Wireless coverage can be found along the Route 3 corridor, but elsewhere coverage is spotty and unavailable in the northwestern portion of the Town. This is becoming a quality of life issue for residents and a barrier to economic development as businesses are requiring cell service to communicate with staff and clients. The problem is complex in that there are not enough customers to support the investment of the potentially more expensive infrastructure required to maintain the natural aesthetic appearance of the Adirondack Park.

The same problem exists for cable service and high speed internet although the problem is more acute as these services are only available along the Route 3 corridor. It is a quality of life issue for residents and, again, without high speed or wireless internet access, a service that many businesses require, economic development becomes hampered, as business owners will look to establish themselves in communities that have these services.

### ***Transportation***

#### ***Streets and Highways***

The Town of Saranac has approximately 82.4 miles of roadway. There are two key thoroughfares linking the Town of Saranac to the larger region. State Route 3 runs southwest to northeast between the town line with Black Brook and the town line with Schuyler Falls and Plattsburgh. State Route 374 is located in the north east corner of the Town and connects the Village of Dannemora with the Town of Plattsburgh. The Town is also served by county routes, including Routes 1, 29, 30 and 31.



Traffic count information for state highways is collected by the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT). Because the counts vary in the number of days calculated and the number of highways counted each year, NYSDOT uses a unit of measurement known as the Average Annual Daily Traffic, or AADT, to show the number of vehicles traveling over a designated section of highway.

Route 3 is the most traveled roadway in Saranac. In 2006, NYSDOT reported that Route 3, (between County Route 30 Picketts Corner and Route 374 Cadyville) had an Annual Average of Daily Traffic (AADT) count of 5,728. Table 23 shows the most recent AADT counts for routes in the Town of Saranac.

## *Section 2: Community Profile*

New York Route 3 parallel's the Saranac River throughout most of the Waterfront Revitalization boundary and is adjacent to the hamlets of Redford and Saranac/Picketts Corners. There are no pedestrian crossing points on Route 3 within the Town, no traffic signals, no cycling lanes or accommodations to "share the road." The lack of safe pedestrian crossing point at the Saranac Central School or sidewalks/multi-use path connecting the School with Picketts Corners were specifically raised at the public workshop as a concern.

**Table 23: AADTs for the Town of Saranac**

Route	Section Length	Start Description	End Description	AADT	Year
Bowen Road	0.99	CR 31	SR 3	743	2007
Chazy Lake	0.58	SR 3	Nashville Rd	917	2007
CR 1 Silver Lake	0.29	Soucy Rd	NY 3	606	2009
CR 1 Standish Rd	2.03	Hanlon Rd	True Brook Rd	259	2008
Duquette	1.92	CR 31	SR 3	629	2007
Hardscrabble	0.70	SR 3	Soper Rd	645	2007
NY-3	6.55	CR 30 Pickett Cor	Rt 374 Cadyville	5728	2006
NY-3	7.48	CR 1 Clayburg Standish Rd	CR 30 Pickett Corners	3770	2005
NY-374	4.72	Emmonds Rd	Church Rd	5079	2009
Ore Bed Rd	0.80	Saranac TL	SR 3	653	2008
Picketts Corners	3.60	SR 3	Dannemora S V/	1641	2009
Pup Hill Rd	4.88	SR 3	SR 3	206	2001
True Brook	1.12	Priest Rd	Lamora Rd	154	2009
True Brook	1.10	Lamora Rd	SR 3	212	2009
True Brook	6.80	CR 1	Priest Rd	140	2005

*Source: NYS DOT Local Highway Traffic Count Information*

### ***Off-Street Parking***

Most of the businesses and services provide their own off-street parking, however, residents have expressed interest in creating a municipal pocket parking lot in Picketts Corners for residents who wish to park and then walk or cycle elsewhere.

There is no designated car-pooling lot in Town for residents driving to Plattsburgh or Burlington. However, there is evidence that a DEC fishing access parking lot on Route 3 is currently being used as a car-pooling lot according to residents.

### ***Public Transportation***

Clinton County Public Transit (CCPT) serves Clinton County and the City of Plattsburgh. C.C.P.T. offers transportation to and from the City of Plattsburgh by way of the Towns of Ausable, Peru, Churubusco, Mooers, Champlain, Standish (Town of Saranac), Riverview, and Rouses Point. The Standish Route operates Monday through Friday from 6:20 AM to 3:53 PM.



## *Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy*

### **Key Observations**

- Residents are concerned for the lack of pedestrian crossing and other traffic safety measures at the Saranac Central School.
- Route 3 lacks pedestrian and bicycle amenities.
- Development of a municipal pocket parking lot in a central location would remove cars from the shoulder and provide a safe place to leave a car while walking or biking.
- Car-pooling is actively pursued in Town but there is no commuter parking lot.
- There is a need for Town-wide high speed internet and better cellular phone service.

## **L. COMMUNITY SERVICES**

Community services are an important part of the make-up of any town. Having a solid foundation of quality community services is important to attracting new families and maintaining those who already call Saranac home. Quality schools, safe streets, an efficiently running local government and adequate facilities for recreation and meetings all help to enhance the quality of life for residents. Community services also affect tax rates, therefore efficiently run services such as fire, highway department, etc. help to ease the tax burden on residents. As a result, the Town would like to look into sharing services with neighboring villages and/or towns.



### ***Local Government***

Like other towns in New York State, the Town of Saranac is governed by a Town Supervisor and a five-member Town Board. The Board fills vacancies in town offices, elective or appointive positions and may select a town attorney and town engineer. The Board also provides for the hiring of such other employees as necessary for the conduct of the Town's business. The Town provides many of the municipal services typical of rural towns including general government support services such as tax assessment and collection, administrative services of the Town Clerk, and a highway department. Additional information on Government can be found in Section M. Government Budget and Fiscal Trends.

### ***Public Safety***

#### ***Law Enforcement***

The Town of Saranac is protected by the Clinton County Sheriff's department and the New York State Police. Crime data is only available on a county wide basis for the Clinton County Sheriff Department and State Police in Clinton County.

#### ***Fire Protection Services***

The Town has a paid ambulance service during the day time hours. Residents stated there is always a shortage of Fire and EMS volunteers.

The Town has a 43 member volunteer fire department that is part of the mutual aid system that encompasses all of Clinton County and parts of Franklin and Essex Counties. Along with the traditional rescue squad, the Town also has a technical rescue team that has Rope rescue, Jaws-of-life and Swift water rescue that assist in special rescue situations.



## *Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy*

### **Educational Facilities**

#### *Public Schools*

The majority of the Town of Saranac is served by the Saranac Central School District. Those residents living in the Standish area attend the Northern Adirondack Central School District located in the Town Ellenburg. The Saranac CSD provides educational services to over 1,600 students within the Towns of Saranac, Plattsburgh, Dannemora, Schuyler Falls, Beekmantown and Black Brook. According to the Saranac Central School District, the mission of the district is to promote the fullest growth of all students. In doing this, District stakeholders will enable all students to recognize their potential, set realistic goals and apply their knowledge of life situations.



According to the New York State Department of Education, the Saranac Central School District had a high school dropout rate of 2% (with 13 drop outs) during the 2009-10 academic year. In comparison, the New York State dropout rate for the 2009-10 academic years was 2.7%. Across the state increasing emphasis is being placed on graduation rates for high school students. In the Saranac Central School District 85% of students who started ninth grade in 2005 graduated on time in 2009. Statewide 76% of all students graduated on time.

Approximately 84% of all students at Saranac Central School received a Regents Diploma in 2010 compared with 78% in 2009 and 79% in 2008. Of all the 2010 Saranac High School graduates, 37% received a Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation. To earn a regents diploma with advanced designation, the students must pass eight Regents exams. Among the graduating class of 2010, 32% were planning to attend a 4-year college, 49% were planning to attend a 2-year college and 19% had other plans, including other post secondary education, entering the military or workforce or other plans.

The New York State Department of Education requires that school districts report their expenditure ratios for general education and special education students. The table below compares the Saranac Central School District with similar school district groups (based on a Need-to-Resource Capacity index) and all public schools in New York State. For the 2007-08 school year, the District spent \$7,384 per pupil<sup>3</sup>, compared to the statewide average of

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<sup>3</sup> **Total Expenditures Per Pupil** is the simple arithmetic ratio of Total Expenditures to Pupils. Total Expenditures include district expenditures for classroom instruction, as well as expenditures for transportation, debt service, community service and district-wide administration that are not included in the Instructional Expenditure values for General Education and Special Education. As such, the sum of General Education and Special Education Instructional Expenditures does not equal the Total Expenditures.



\$10,257. In comparison to similar school districts and to all public schools in New York State, the Saranac Central School District spends less per pupil on both general education and special education.

Table 24: Expenditure Ratios, 2007-2008 School Year		
	General Education	Special Education
<b>Saranac Central School District</b>		
Instructional Expenditures	\$13,838,049	\$8,486,228
Pupils	1,874	386
<b>Expenditures per Pupil</b>	<b>\$7,384</b>	<b>\$21,985</b>
<b>Similar District Group</b>		
Instructional Expenditures	\$7,656,623,209	\$2,793,952,009
Pupils	841,057	115,687
<b>Expenditures per Pupil</b>	<b>\$9,104</b>	<b>\$24,153</b>
<b>All Public Schools in New York State</b>		
Instructional Expenditures	\$27,938,976,618	\$10,038,982,860
Pupils	2,723,955	410,099
<b>Expenditures per Pupil</b>	<b>\$10,257</b>	<b>\$24,479</b>

## ***Recreation Resources***

### ***Waterfront Access***

The Town of Saranac has one main town park, Picketts Corners Park, located off of Route 3 on the Saranac River. This park is home to a boat launch with car top access and the town pool including a bath house. The DEC public fishing rights (permanent easements on privately owned land) provide several public access points along the River including access in Redford, just west of Moffitsville, Clayburg and two others further west along the River. The Saranac River is stocked yearly by the Department of



Environmental Conservation with brown trout, creating an abundance of brown trout, some measuring over 20 inches. The Saranac River offers many recreational activities including tubing, kayaking and canoeing, yet there is limited public access to the River for residents and visitors to partake in these activities. In Saranac the best paddling is between the Bowen Road Bridge and the Cadyville dam. Paddling upstream from the Bowen Road Bridge is very limited.





## *Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy*

The Flatwater Challenge, held annually for the past 16 years in Saranac, is a kayak/canoe race designed to accommodate a variety of canoe and kayak skills levels. There are four race events for all different types of boats: 1 mile Child/Adult canoe sprint, 5 mile recreational canoe/kayak race, 9 mile stock class canoe/kayak race and a 15 mile marathon canoe/kayak race.

The Saranac River is also part of the Northern Forest Canoe Trail, which is a 740 mile paddling trail from Old Forge, New York to the St. John River in Canada.

### *Trails*

In addition to the trails described below, a popular walking loop along roadways exists on Bowen Road.

*Lyon Mountain Trail* - This is a 17,190 acre area (some of which is in Dannemora) that was acquired by the State of New York from The Nature Conservancy in 2008. It is bounded on the north by private lands, on the east by private lands and Chazy Lake Road, on the south by True Brook Road and on the west partly by Standish Road. New York State holds conservation easements on four neighboring private parcels. This area includes the Lyon Mountain Fire Tower with a trail leading to it, several other structures, lifts from the former Lowenburg Ski Area and remnants of commercial forestry operations.

*Old Railroad Bed* - This is the site of the former D&H rail beds that is currently privately owned and used for snowmobile trails.

*Barnes Pond Trail* - Part of the Sable Highlands Conservation Easement, offers hiking trails.

*The New Land Trust* - A non-profit organization that exists for community use and is supported by the community. There are over 20 trails on 287 acres, with year round hiking, walking and bird watching. In the winter months cross country skiing and snowshoeing are options as well. The land trust is accessible from Plumadore Road.

### *Cycling*

Cycling and mountain biking is an increasingly popular form of affordable family recreation, an elite endeavor and everything in between. According to a recent study<sup>4</sup>, bicyclists are an important part of the tourism economy - particularly in the Adirondacks. Biking enthusiasts, generally have higher than average disposable income and spend money on everything from food and accommodations to equipment and site seeing. Those that tour are interested in learning about the communities they tour by visiting museums, historic sites, shops and art

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<sup>4</sup>*Bicyclists Bring Business: A Guide for Attracting Bicyclists to New York's Canal Communities* (2010) a collaborative developed by Parks & Trails New York, The New York State Canal Corporation and the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor, Pages 6-7.

galleries and taking side rides or hikes. The Adirondacks is a popular destination for cyclists because of the scenery, rural areas for touring, historic sites and parks.<sup>5</sup>

Saranac is also experiencing the growing popularity of cycling. The Town's scenic beauty on local roads and the use of New York Route 3 as a regional touring route provide for great cycling. Currently Route 3 does not have a wider shoulder, bike lane or share the road signs to improve awareness and safety and, thereby, increasing the chance of road conflicts between cyclists and motorized traffic. Improving the cycling experience through and around Saranac for residents and visitors by increasing safety on key routes and providing cycling amenities such as bike racks at local retailers on Route 3 will increase cycling popularity and tourism in the Town.



There is no bicycling infrastructure or amenities within the Town such as bike lanes or shoulders on larger roads, particularly Route 3.

### ***Other Community Services***

#### *Library*

Residents living in Saranac can utilize any one of the 34 reading centers and libraries within the Clinton Essex Franklin Library System. The closest library is the Dannemora Free Library located on Cook Street in the Village of Dannemora. Saranac residents also frequently utilize the Bookmobile which is available every third Tuesday of the month at Town Hall. The Bookmobile is a free service of over 2,500 books, audio books and magazines available to all residents within the 3 counties (Clinton, Essex and Franklin) with 61 locations throughout, rotating on a 4 week schedule.

#### *Youth and Senior Services*

The Town participates in County-run youth soccer, baseball, basketball and swimming programs. There are an adequate number of soccer, baseball and softball fields located at Town Hall, Picketts Corners Park, Saranac High School, Redford Fire Station, and behind the Town Highway Garage. There are gymnasiums for basketball at Saranac Elementary and the former Church of the Assumption School. The number of youth participating from year to year varies greatly in these programs. While facilities are adequate for the participating number of youth, as of late, it has been difficult to get an adequate number of parent volunteers to coach the different teams.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid. Page 8.



## *Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy*

The various senior groups in Town including Nutrition Program for the Elderly and Happy Seniors utilize Town Hall for regular monthly meetings. Residents have stated that information on volunteering to help the seniors (e.g. driving seniors to medical appointments) is difficult to find and thus an adequate number of volunteers is hard to achieve.

### *Places of Worship*

Throughout the Town there are many places of worship including the Saranac United Methodist Church (Church in the Hollow) located on Route 3 in Saranac, Church of the Assumption (Church on the Hill) located on Church Street in Redford and High Banks Seventh Day Adventist Church located on Standish Road in Saranac.

### *Medical*

Medical services are provided by Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital (CVPH) Medical Center in Plattsburgh. This is a voluntary not-for-profit 341 bed acute care and 54 bed skilled nursing care facility with services in, but not limited to, oncology, orthopedics and cardiovascular. Residents have stated that the community is lacking in primary care physicians with only one with a practice in Town.



### **Key Observations**

- Saranac School District spends on average less per pupil than other similar school districts and districts in New York State on a whole.
- Picketts Corners Park has significant potential to be a more active, aesthetically pleasing waterfront park with additional parking and infrastructure.
- There is no public playground, skate-park or other youth outdoor recreational amenities except for the Town Pool and a pocket park in the hamlet of Standish.
- There is no local land trail network along the Saranac River.
- Opportunities for additional multi-use trails may exist using power line right-of-ways.
- Significant opportunity exists to create multi-use trails on the State-owned Lyon Mt. tract and the DEC Conservation Easements of Barnes Pond and Bradley Pond.
- Lack of parking and other access issues in making use of railroad bed by ATV and snowmobiles in Standish unsafe for the nearby playground.

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- The Town is lacking in medical facilities, as residents must travel to Plattsburgh for most medical services.
- Town residents have observed that there is a lack of volunteers not only in youth sports leagues but also with helping with the elderly.



## *Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy*

### **M. LOCAL REAL ESTATE TAX BASE, GOVERNMENT BUDGET AND FISCAL TRENDS**

#### **REAL ESTATE TAX BASE ANALYSIS**

From the perspective of municipal administration, a community's tax base drives its ability to invest in amenities and provide quality professional services that residents expect. From the citizen's perspective, tax burden influences where people buy homes, whether they reinvest in property and where they develop businesses. The municipality's ability to raise revenue to provide infrastructure and services is affected by its tax base. The existing and future real estate of the municipality provides opportunities and constraints for maintaining and attracting homeowners, businesses and jobs.



In many communities the key to economic stability or growth is to optimize the tax base by making every acre of land as productive as it can be without compromising community vitality or natural resources. Today there are many tools available to communities to enhance, diversify and optimize their tax base. This analysis provides the basis for identifying those actions.

Understanding existing land use patterns, property ownership, number of parcels, amount of land and configuration of potential redevelopment areas are key to understanding future development potential and enhancement strategies. Existing data sources and field study document the existing development patterns and concentrations, zoning designations, design requirements and other land use regulations.

This element includes an analysis of the tax base based on computerized assessment records. Assessment data on agricultural, residential, institutional and community services, commercial, industrial and public properties are analyzed in order to quantify the contribution these uses make to the community's tax base.

#### **Saranac Real Estate Tax Base**

The following section presents a preliminary analysis of the general characteristics of Saranac's tax base by major use categories as classified for assessment purposes. These include residential, vacant or undeveloped land, commercial, industrial, recreation and entertainment, community services, public services and conservation uses based on the property type classification codes established by the New York State Board of Equalization and Assessment and displayed in the Assessor's database. The system of classification consists of numeric codes in nine general categories. Each category is further defined by

divisions and subdivisions to delineate specific uses. This initial analysis relies only on the general category codes.<sup>6</sup>

### **Land Use Characteristics**

According to census sources, the Town of Saranac contains 117.5 square miles of land area, which is equivalent to 75,200 acres. The Town maintains an assessment database of approximately 2,398 parcels that contain about 78,578 acres (*which is greater than the acreage identified in census and other sources*).

Agricultural uses (100 series) utilize approximately 716 acres and account for 0.91% of the assessed land area in the Town of Saranac. These uses generate only 0.3% of the taxable assessed value of all land uses in the Town. In addition, there is 5,942 acres of inactive or “abandoned” farmlands accounting for 7.6% of total land area and 1.6% of total taxable value.

Residential activities (200 series) utilize approximately 25,387 acres and account for about 32.3% of the assessed land area in the Town of Saranac. These uses also generate over 73% of the taxable assessed value of all land uses in the Town. Multi-family residential apartments are listed as a commercial use (411) and comprise only 3.3 acres, a negligible amount of the total acreage and the taxable assessed value in the Town.

Vacant lands (300 series excluding abandoned farmlands) comprise 8,076 acres, or 10.28%, of the land area in the Town and make up about 3.7% of the taxable assessed value.

Commercial uses (400 series excluding multi-family apartments) utilize approximately 340 acres (0.4% of the land area) and account for 1.9% of the taxable assessed value in the Town.

Recreation & Entertainment uses (500 series) utilize approximately 142 acres (0.2% of the land area) and account for 0.1% of the taxable assessed value in the Town.

Community Service uses (600 series) utilize approximately 236 acres (0.3% of the land area) and account for a negligible amount (0.001%) of the taxable assessed value in the Town.

Public Service uses (800 series) utilize approximately 488 acres (0.6% of the land area) and

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<sup>6</sup> **Agricultural** (100 series) – Property used for production of crops or livestock; **Residential** (200 series) - includes single family; two family; Three-family and mobile homes but not multi-family; mobile home parks or other residential/mixed use, which are classified in the commercial category. **Vacant land** (300) - includes property not in use or in temporary use or lacks permanent improvement; **Commercial** (400) - includes property used for sale of goods and services and residential uses noted above; **Recreation & Entertainment** (500) - includes property used by groups for recreation, amusement or entertainment; **Community services** (600) - Property used for the well being of the community; **Industrial** (700) - includes property used for the production of durable and non-durable goods; **Public services** (800) - Property used to provide services to the general public; **Conservation** (900) - Wild, Forested, Conservation lands and public parks.

Note: no Industrial codes (700) were indicated in the database.





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account for 15.5% of the taxable assessed value in the Town.

Conservation lands (900 series) comprise over 47% of the land area in the Town, approximately 37,246 total acres but account for only 3.5% of the taxable assessed value.

### Real Estate Tax Revenue Distribution

The Town of Saranac has a total taxable assessment base of \$225 million, as indicated in the Assessor's database. 73% of this taxable assessment is generated from residential properties. In other words, residential properties contribute \$0.73 on the dollar in tax revenues to support town services. In comparison, commercial properties only account for 1.9% of the taxable assessment base (\$0.02 on the dollar). Public Services make up 15.5% of the tax base and vacant land (which includes both vacant land and inactive farm land) 5.3%. The remaining 4.3% of real estate tax revenue is generated from agriculture, community services, recreation and entertainment and Wild, forested and conservation lands.

**Table 25: Taxable Assessed Value by Land Use**

Prop. Class	Land Use	Total Acres	% of Total Acres	Taxable Assessed Value	# of taxable Parcels	Taxable Assessed Value Per Parcel	Taxable Assessed Value Per Acre	% of Total Assessed Value
100	Agricultural	895.8	1.27%	\$775,606	7	\$110,801	\$1,083	0.3%
321	Inactive Farmlands	6,088.0	8.64%	\$3,687,686	127	\$29,037	\$621	1.6%
200	Residential	25,720.6	36.50%	\$163,897,609	1,646	\$99,573	\$6,463	72.8%
411	Apartments	7.33	0.01%	\$357,500	3	\$108,750	\$6,611	0.2%
300	Vacant land	8,775.5	12.45%	\$8,276,064	459	\$18,031	\$1,025	3.7%
400	Commercial	339.4	0.48%	\$4,114,000	33	\$124,667	\$12,112	1.8%
500	Recreation & entertainment	143.2	0.20%	\$327,700	2	\$163,850	\$2,995	0.1%
600	Community services	236.4	0.34%	\$17,000	1	\$17,000	\$18,478	0.0%
800	Public services	518.2	0.74%	\$34,806,408	29	\$1,200,221	\$83,181	15.5%
900	Wild, forested, conservation	27,740.2	39.37%	\$8,777,508	64	\$137,149	\$288	3.9%
		70,464.54	100.00%	\$225,037,081	2371	\$94,912	\$3,150	100.0%

The chart above compares the distribution of taxable property by use to the distribution of land area in the Town of Saranac. A significant imbalance exists in terms of the percentage of land that is used for residential (36.5%) in comparison to the percentage of tax revenues generated (73.2%). A lesser imbalance exists for commercial use as shown, where commercial property constitutes 0.48% of Saranac's assessed land area while it generates 1.8% of the Town's property tax revenue. In contrast, vacant land (including abandoned farmland) utilizes nearly 21% of the land in Saranac and contributes only 5.3% to the tax base.

This disparity is due in part to the high percentage of certain property categories that receive tax exemptions. The greatest differential is in “wild, forested, conservation” uses which comprise over 39% of the land but generates less than 4% of the property tax revenues. Somewhat surprisingly, “public service” uses, while comprising less than 1% of the Town land area, generate 15.5% of its property tax revenues. Most of the tax revenues in this category are derived from privately-owned electric and gas facilities including a hydro-electric plant assessed at over \$26 million.

### **Expanding the Tax Base**

Economic development is generally regarded as the primary ingredient to enhance or increase a municipal tax base, but other alternatives also exist. The following examples provide a better understanding of how real estate, economic development and tax base enhancement can interact to grow municipal revenues and help to position the Town to take best advantage of its assets.

As a hypothetical example, how could Saranac’s municipal revenues increase by \$100,000 a year, given its current tax base? Real estate taxes (approximately \$6.60 per \$1,000 in 2010) account for nearly 73% of annual revenues. Utility fees are the next biggest revenue generator, making up 22.1% of annual revenues to the Town. The Town’s share of County retail sales taxes accounts for another 3.1% of annual revenues.

Each of the following scenarios would hypothetically generate \$100,000 in additional municipal revenue. This would represent a revenue increase of approximately 7% per year.

**Increase the tax rate by 6%:** Based on current assessed values in the Town, a property tax increase of \$0.44 per thousand would generate an additional \$100,000 in annual revenues.

**Residential assessment increases by 9%:** If a strategy was specifically focused on enhancing residential development in the Town and over the long term values increased 9%, this would equate to \$15.2 million in increased assessment, generating \$100,000 in increased revenue, assuming current tax rates.

**Commercial assessment increases by 416%:** As indicated above, an increase in \$15.2 million in assessment is equivalent to an increase in current commercial assessment from \$4.2 million to \$19.4 million.

Realistically, some combination of the examples identified above may be attainable over the long term. The Town clearly has an abundance of vacant land and could foster appropriate development to improve its tax base.

### **Residential Tax Base**

There are 1,646 residential tax parcels comprised of 25,721 acres of land, making the average parcel about 15.6 acres. Of these residential parcels, 65% are single-family homes (1,074 parcels) comprising 2,813 acres (11% of residential acreage); 1% of the residential parcels are two-family homes (23 parcels) comprising 252 acres (less than 1%); 19% are rural residential



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properties with 10+ acres (320 parcels) comprising 17,886 acres (70%); 4% are seasonal residences (80 parcels) comprising 2,474 acres (10%); and 8% are mobile homes (139 parcels) comprising 1,802 acres (7%).

As previously noted, in comparing the distribution of taxable property by use to the distribution of land area in the Town of Saranac, there is a significant imbalance in terms of the percentage of land that is used for residential (36.5%) in comparison to the percentage of tax revenues generated (72.8%).

Among the residential uses, single family homes account for only 3.9% of total acreage in the Town but contribute nearly 48% of the property tax revenues. Rural residential properties of 10 acres or more comprise 25% of the total acreage in Saranac and contribute about 20% of the tax revenues. Performance of the other residential uses for purposes of tax yield are presented in the table below.

<b>Table 26: Taxable Residential Property by Density</b>					
<b>Use</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Taxable</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Assessed Value per Acre</b>
Single family	2,813.1	3.9%	\$107,121,697	47.8%	\$38,080
Two family	252.2	0.4%	\$2,352,650	1.0%	\$9,329
Three family	2.2	0.0%	\$395,500	0.2%	\$182,258
Rural res w/ 10+ acres	17,885.6	25.0%	\$44,031,957	19.6%	\$2,462
Seasonal residences	2,474.2	3.5%	\$3,014,795	1.3%	\$1,218
Mobile homes	1,364.4	1.9%	\$5,181,662	2.3%	\$3,798
Multiple mobile homes	438.0	0.6%	\$871,828	0.4%	\$1,990
Res Multi-purpose	128.6	0.2%	\$927,520	0.4%	\$7,211
Total residential	25,358.3	35.5%	\$163,897,609	73.1%	\$6,463
Total All Uses	70,464.5	100.00%	\$225,037,081	100.00%	\$3,150

In terms of taxable value per acre, three family properties have the highest value at \$182,258 per acre, but there are only 4 three family homes in the Town. Single family properties have an average per acre taxable value of \$38,080. However, the average per acre taxable values for all residential uses is considerably higher than the Town-wide average for all land uses.

### **BUDGET AND FISCAL TRENDS**

To provide an overall framework for assessing local economic conditions, we compared Saranac to all other towns in Clinton County. The following analyses of Clinton County towns include:

- general population, location and land area statistics
- an analysis of property valuation, equalization rates and tax rates

## Section 2: Community Profile

- an assessment of revenues contributing to the tax base of the communities
- an analysis of municipal expenditures by various budget categories

The first comparison table (below) shows population, land area, density and full value figures for the various towns. Statistics for the communities' analysis were derived from the NYS Comptroller's Report on Municipal Affairs for 2009 (the latest version available).

Table 27 : General Statistics for Clinton County Towns					
Municipal Town	Population	Land Area	Density	Full Value	Full value/person
Town of Altona	3,160	101.1	31.26	\$91,364,258	\$28,881
Town of Ausable	3,015	39.1	77.11	\$122,811,207	\$40,733
Town of Beekmantown	5,326	60.5	88.03	\$312,602,641	\$58,694
Town of Black Brook	1,660	130.2	12.75	\$139,394,758	\$83,973
Town of Champlain	5,791	51.2	113.11	\$365,020,128	\$63,032
Town of Chazy	4,181	54.2	77.14	\$252,409,051	\$60,370
Town of Clinton	727	67.1	10.83	\$35,052,534	\$48,215
Town of Dannemora	5,149	59.2	86.98	\$141,622,604	\$27,505
Town of Ellenburg	1,812	106.4	17.03	\$109,092,153	\$60,205
Town of Mooers	3,404	87.7	38.81	\$139,357,419	\$40,939
Town of Peru	6,370	79.4	80.23	\$398,769,032	\$62,601
Town of Plattsburgh	11,190	45.7	244.86	\$966,068,758	\$86,333
Town of Saranac	4,165	115.7	36.00	\$220,541,174	\$52,951
Town of Schuyler Falls	5,128	36.5	140.49	\$250,945,874	\$48,936
<b>Totals</b>	<b>61,078</b>	<b>1,034</b>	<b>59.07</b>	<b>\$3,544,951,591</b>	<b>\$62,287</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>4,363</b>			<b>\$253,210,828</b>	

The table above delineates the general characteristics for the Town of Saranac and the other 13 towns in Clinton County. In terms of land area, Saranac is the second largest town in Clinton County. With a land area of 115.9 square miles, the Town of Saranac's population density is 36 persons per square mile. This is significantly less than the average for all towns (59 persons per square mile). In fact only four towns in the county have a population density less than Saranac. Saranac's population is slightly lower than the average of all the towns in Clinton County.

### Fiscal Analysis

Municipalities in New York State are responsible for assessing or assigning a value to every parcel within their jurisdiction for the purpose of determining and collecting property taxes. Initially these values are based on the full market value of the property ("full valuation") as determined by an independent re-evaluation of all property within the jurisdiction. Due to the significant cost involved, many communities do not re-evaluate property on a regular basis, causing a discrepancy between the assessed value of property and its actual market value which tends to increase over time. The State's equalization rates are an attempt to



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adjust for this imbalance between assessed value and full value. Full valuation of property takes into account the effect of different equalization rates among the communities and provides a more fair and equitable way to compare their tax bases.

In terms of tax base analysis, a number of contrasts were noted between Saranac and the other comparison towns. Based on information provided in the Financial Data for Local Governments - Local Fiscal Years Ended in 2009 (the latest report available), the following analysis compares the fiscal outlook for the Town of Saranac compared to the other towns in Clinton County.

Table 28: Fiscal Analysis - Clinton County Towns				
Municipal Town	Full Value	Tax Levy	Tax Rate	Full Value per Acre
Altona	\$91,364,258	\$331,030	\$3.63	\$1,410
Ausable	\$122,811,207	\$656,471	\$5.79	\$4,908
Beekmantown	\$312,602,641	\$462,867	\$1.48	\$8,073
Black Brook	\$139,394,758	\$1,000,449	\$7.18	\$1,673
Champlain	\$365,020,128	\$593,716	\$2.22	\$11,140
Chazy	\$252,409,051	\$802,121	\$3.18	\$7,277
Clinton	\$35,052,534	*	*	\$816
Dannemora	\$141,622,604	\$1,083,664	\$8.46	\$3,738
Ellenburg	\$109,092,153	\$380,458	\$3.49	\$1,602
Mooers	\$139,357,419	\$803,300	\$5.76	\$2,483
Peru	\$398,769,032	\$1,861,642	\$4.67	\$7,847
Plattsburgh	\$966,068,758	*	*	\$33,030
Saranac	\$220,541,174	\$1,366,620	\$6.57	\$2,978
Schuyler Falls	\$250,945,874	\$918,540	\$3.66	\$10,743

\*Date not provided

Source: NYS Office of Real Property Services Municipal Tax Rate and Levy Data [www.orps.state.ny.us](http://www.orps.state.ny.us).

With respect to taxable valuation of real property, the total assessed value<sup>7</sup> of the Town of Saranac's tax base was 86% of the average assessed valuation of the 13 other Clinton County towns. On a *per acre basis*, full valuation in the Town of Saranac is about 41% of the average of the other comparison towns and 46% of Clinton County's figure. Full value per acre in Saranac was \$2,978 in 2009 as compared to the average for the comparison towns of \$7,288 per acre. Clinton County's full value per acre was \$6,545. Saranac's tax rate was also among the highest for all towns in the county.

Towns rely on a number of sources to generate revenues to support municipal operations. These include real estate taxes, non property taxes, State, Federal or other governmental

<sup>7</sup> For the purposes of this analysis "assessed value" is the same as "full value" since the equalization rate for all towns in Clinton County in 2007 was 100%.

aid, interest earnings and fees for services such as water and sewer. The two revenue sources directly related to land use characteristics and development are the real property tax and the sales tax. Real property taxes are dependent on factors such as the value of assessed property, the percent of tax-exempt parcels and the tax rate. Sales tax revenues primarily depend upon the quantity and quality of retail development impacting the community. The table below analyzes the performance of real property and sales taxes in Saranac and the 13 comparison towns.

<b>Table 29: Fiscal Analysis - Clinton County Towns</b>							
<b>Municipal Town</b>	<b>Property taxes</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Sales tax</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Other revenues</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Total revenues</b>
Altona	\$348,984	30.8%	\$26,597	2.3%	\$757,714	66.9%	\$1,133,295
Ausable	\$664,500	62.4%	\$37,668	3.5%	\$363,252	34.1%	\$1,065,420
Beekmantown	\$630,627	23.8%	\$968,617	36.5%	\$1,052,170	39.7%	\$2,651,414
Black Brook	\$1,081,785	74.5%	\$53,835	3.7%	\$316,417	21.8%	\$1,452,037
Champlain	\$704,020	37.2%	\$293,469	15.5%	\$893,778	47.3%	\$1,891,267
Chazy	\$1,031,781	58.3%	\$72,572	4.1%	\$665,788	37.6%	\$1,770,141
Clinton	\$75,000	8.5%	\$10,454	1.2%	\$793,776	90.3%	\$879,230
Dannemora	\$1,194,290	65.9%	\$38,653	2.1%	\$579,324	32.0%	\$1,812,267
Ellenburg	\$578,306	42.3%	\$16,169	1.2%	\$772,646	56.5%	\$1,367,121
Mooers	\$995,043	52.5%	\$0	0.0%	\$901,988	47.5%	\$1,897,031
Peru	\$2,122,686	56.7%	\$100,253	2.7%	\$1,523,143	40.7%	\$3,746,082
Plattsburgh	\$2,251,874	19.5%	\$3,192,296	27.6%	\$6,129,806	53.0%	\$11,573,976
Saranac	\$1,397,320	72.9%	\$56,749	3.0%	\$461,999	24.1%	\$1,916,068
Schuyler Falls	\$1,152,137	59.9%	\$289,782	15.1%	\$481,561	25.0%	\$1,923,480

In FY 2009, real property taxes in the Town of Saranac accounted for 72.9% of total revenues, the second highest percentage among the towns in the study group. The comparison towns averaged 38.7% of total revenues derived from property taxes and ranged from 8.5% (Clinton) to 74.5% (Black Brook). Only one of the towns did not receive support from sales tax revenues. Saranac's share amounted to 3.0% of total revenues which was similar to the majority of the other towns studied. Plattsburgh, Beekmantown, Champlain and Schuyler Falls receive the lion's share of sales tax distribution in Clinton County.

Other revenues, which include Federal and State aid, interest on earnings, income and fees for services, etc., generated 24.1% of total revenues in Saranac. For the comparison towns, this figure averaged 45.9% of total revenues.

In terms of overall revenue generated, Saranac had total revenues of \$1,916,068 from all sources. The comparison towns generated on average 1.3 times the revenue from all sources than the Town of Saranac but this is skewed by the significant revenues generated by the Town of Plattsburgh. Taking Plattsburgh out of the mix, the average total revenues generated by the other 12 towns is \$1,799,065 or about 7% less than Saranac. In terms of per





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capita revenues, Saranac generated total revenues of \$460.04 per capita versus \$582.69 for the comparison towns (78%). In general, the comparison towns relied less on property tax revenues than Saranac. A number of the other towns secured fairly significant sales tax revenues which helped lessen the burden of property taxes.

### Budget Expenditures Comparison

The Financial Data for Local Governments - Local Fiscal Years Ended in 2009 also provides detailed information regarding budget expenditures by function. Function describes the expenditures by the category of services provided, for example general government, highway (transportation), public safety, utilities (water and sewer), recreation, economic development, etc. The financial data also provides figures for employee benefits and debt service payments.

**Table 30: Comparative Budget Expenditures**

Municipal Town	General Gov't	%	Highway	%	Water / Sanitation	%	Employee Benefits	%	Other Expenditures	%
Altona	\$181,928	20.3%	\$496,892	55.3%	\$1,800	0.2%	\$118,792	13.2%	\$98,719	11.0%
Ausable	\$268,562	22.4%	\$490,938	40.9%	\$8,270	0.7%	\$272,252	22.7%	\$161,454	13.4%
Beekmantown	\$439,696	16.1%	\$1,076,645	39.5%	\$95,058	3.5%	\$287,880	10.6%	\$824,328	30.3%
Black Brook	\$228,584	15.0%	\$693,872	45.4%	\$112,556	7.4%	\$306,960	20.1%	\$186,184	12.2%
Champlain	\$465,318	26.2%	\$804,535	45.4%	\$72,682	4.1%	\$203,855	11.5%	\$227,063	12.8%
Chazy	\$280,046	15.7%	\$719,331	40.4%	\$114,517	6.4%	\$256,783	14.4%	\$407,838	22.9%
Clinton	\$103,464	12.3%	\$421,104	50.1%	\$0	0.0%	\$148,211	17.6%	\$168,423	20.0%
Dannemora	\$416,772	24.5%	\$519,850	30.6%	\$125,008	7.4%	\$155,328	9.1%	\$482,113	28.4%
Ellenburg	\$327,882	25.7%	\$438,683	34.3%	\$20,515	1.6%	\$143,283	11.2%	\$346,908	27.2%
Mooers	\$243,667	15.6%	\$899,780	57.5%	\$0	0.0%	\$164,231	10.5%	\$258,031	16.5%
Peru	\$531,880	15.5%	\$1,030,299	30.0%	\$862,898	25.1%	\$351,615	10.2%	\$657,490	19.1%
Plattsburgh	\$2,745,756	21.6%	\$1,757,886	13.9%	\$3,369,900	26.6%	\$1,223,553	9.6%	\$3,586,216	28.3%
Saranac	\$321,174	17.6%	\$1,145,543	62.9%	\$39,766	2.2%	\$214,523	11.8%	\$100,459	5.5%
Schuyler Falls	\$297,344	20.9%	\$547,405	38.4%	\$105,605	7.4%	\$181,319	12.7%	\$293,897	20.6%

The distribution of expenditures for the Town of Saranac and the 13 other Clinton County towns is shown in the table above. For the comparison towns, three functional categories accounted for approximately 65% of annual expenditures on average. For Saranac, the annual expenditures for these categories were nearly 83% of total expenditures. General government expenditures (made up of operations, administration, zoning and planning) accounted for an average of 19.9% of annual expenditures in FY 2009 for the comparison towns and 17.6% for Saranac. Highway/transportation costs averaged 30.1% of budget for the comparison towns but a significant 62.9% for Saranac. Saranac has significantly more miles of Town roads than most of the Clinton County towns which may account for the higher

expenditure and share of total expenditures. Water/Sanitation expenditures averaged 14.9% of budget for the other towns and only 2.2% for Saranac. Employee benefits accounted for 11.8% of Saranac's budget and averaged 11.6% of budget for the other towns. All other expenditures (recreation, social services, economic development, public safety, etc.) made up an average of 23.5% of budget expenditures in the towns but only 5.5% of Saranac's annual expenditures.

### **Special Districts Expenditures**

In addition to the municipal tax levy derived from municipal budget expenditures, local special district such as fire protection, ambulance, lighting, water and sewer expenditures are incorporated in the local tax levy. The Town of Saranac is within two fire districts (Saranac and Lyon Mountain) with a third fire district covering the Town's portion of the Village of Dannemora. The Saranac Fire District consistently has one of the highest tax rates in Clinton County contributing another 27.5% to the local tax levy each year. In FY 2009 the Saranac Fire District tax rate was \$1.81 which is a slightly below the five year average of \$1.90. No tax rates were reported for the Lyon Mountain Fire District.

### **Key Observations**

- 36.5% of the Town's land area is dedicated to residential uses including single and multi-family homes. Wild, forested and conservations lands comprise the highest percentage of land use at 39.37%, while "vacant land" (12.45%) and inactive or "abandoned farmland" (8.64%) make up other major land uses. All other categories of land use combined make up the balance of 3.04%.
- An imbalance exists between the percentage of land in residential use (36.5%) and the taxable value that this land contributes (72.8%) in Saranac. Residents use less than 1/3 of the land area, but contribute 73 cents of every dollar raised through property taxes.
- Public service uses also contribute positively to the tax base compared to their acreage, although they comprise only a small portion of Town-wide land uses.
- Owners of single family homes occupy only 3.9% of the Town's acreage but pay 48 cents of every dollar raised through property taxes. In contrast, residential homes on 10 acres or more comprise 25% of the acreage in the Town but owners of these properties pay 20 cents of every dollar raised through property taxes.
- Approximately 12% of the Town's property value is tax exempt.
- In terms of land area, Saranac is the second largest town in Clinton County. Its population density is 36 persons per square mile which is significantly less than the average for all towns (59 persons per square mile). Saranac's population is slightly lower than the average of all the towns in Clinton County.



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- The total assessed value of the Town of Saranac's tax base is 86% of the average assessed valuation of the 13 other Clinton County towns. On a per acre basis, full valuation in the Town of Saranac is about 41% of the average of the other comparison towns and 46% of Clinton County's figure.
- Real property taxes in the Town of Saranac accounted for 72.9% of total revenues, the highest percentage among the County's towns which averaged only 38.7% of total revenues derived from property taxes.
- Three functional categories (government, highway, water/sanitation) accounted for over 65% of annual expenditures on average in the other towns. For Saranac, the annual expenditures for these categories were nearly 83% of total expenditures. The biggest difference was in Highway/transportation costs which averaged 30.1% of budget for the comparison towns but a significant 63% for Saranac.
- Fire District expenditures consistently add an additional 27.5% to the local tax levy.





## *Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy*

# *Action Plan*



## *Vision Statement*

Our lands and waters are our heritage and foundation. In 2030 the view from the surrounding hills remains much the same, overlooking a quiet, safe and welcoming rural Town of uncommon beauty. As community stewards, we protect irreplaceable resources: historic places, open spaces, scenic views and habitats for wildlife. These are the riches of our Town; these are the things that must be cherished.

We enjoy our growing and varied recreational opportunities. The Saranac River corridor remains a richly diverse and healthy ecosystem. There is improved access to recreational opportunities through well marked trails, parks and parking areas.

Controlled, responsible growth has taken place while protecting private property rights. Our economy thrives. Good jobs are available both locally and regionally and new shops and services prosper in our hamlets. Our agriculture and woodland resources are used productively and responsibly. Partnerships with others promote the Town while safeguarding our assets. We appreciate the importance of tourism and there is broad awareness of our year-round recreation resources. Small businesses, inns and restaurants meet the needs of local residents, visitors and outdoor enthusiasts. Long-term residents, newcomers, seasonal homeowners and visitors share commitment to Saranac, and this is what unites us.

## *Goals*

- Goal 1: Revitalize and strengthen the local economy by encouraging vibrant hamlets, safe commercial corridors, and maximum use of the Town's natural resources, all consistent with the community's character.
- Goal 2: Develop a reliable 21st century infrastructure, including telecommunications that support a high quality of life, serve the needs of local residents, and encourage compatible economic growth.
- Goal 3: Protect and promote irreplaceable assets such as open space, rural character and historic resources through strong stewardship, education and advocacy.
- Goal 4: Work with NYS DOT, APA, DOS and DEC to enhance all aspects of the Route 3 corridor including safety, multi-modal capacity and aesthetic appearance.
- Goal 5: Provide a variety of high-quality housing options for residents of all ages and incomes.





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- Goal 6: Encourage enhanced use of the Saranac River through improved physical access and support for uses that depend on water access or are enhanced by proximity of the River.
- Goal 7: Support traditional recreational uses and provide new recreation choices, both water and land based, that meet the needs of residents and tourists alike without compromising the Town's healthy environment.
- Goal 8: The Town will provide well-maintained municipal infrastructure and community and government services.

## *Priority Actions and Projects*

The priority actions and projects within this section of the Action Plan are included in an “Implementation Matrix” following this descriptive narrative. The Implementation Matrix provides steps for implementation, potential partners and potential funding sources for each action or project.

Note: Within this Action Plan the term “hamlet” is used often. As previously discussed, the APA uses the term “Hamlet” as a land use classification in its Land Use and Development Plan (APLUDP). However, the term “hamlet” also refers to the named settlements throughout the Town such as Picketts Corners, Redford, Standish, Moffittsville, High Banks, Clayburg, Bucks Corners, etc. Throughout this Action Plan the term “APA Hamlet” refers to those lands classified as “Hamlet” in the APLUDP. All other references to “hamlets” refer to the historically settled areas.

### **GOAL 1: REVITALIZE AND STRENGTHEN THE LOCAL ECONOMY BY ENCOURAGING VIBRANT HAMLETS, SAFE COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS, AND MAXIMUM USE OF THE TOWN’S NATURAL RESOURCES, ALL CONSISTENT WITH THE COMMUNITY’S CHARACTER.**

**Action 1.1: Work with the APA and DOS to identify lands in the area of Picketts Corners that could be reclassified as “Hamlet” in the Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan (APLUDP) to expand opportunities for higher density, mixed-use development.**

The total amount of land in Saranac classified by the APA as “Hamlet” is 521 acres or less than one percent of all land in the Town and nearly all of it is in the Village of Dannemora in the northeast corner of Town. Land classified as “Moderate Intensity,” (the next highest density of 1.3 acres) comprises only 1.3% of all land area in the Town. Additional lands reclassified from “Low Intensity” to either “Hamlet” or “Moderate Intensity” in the Picketts Corners hamlet area could expand business and housing opportunities. Increased commercial growth will not only potentially provide more goods and services to residents and create jobs but will also grow the commercial tax base which is greatly needed. Allowing for increased density will also open up housing opportunities for seniors, singles and young families who may need more modest housing options typically not practical in areas classified with very low densities by the APA.

**Action 1.2: Focus new retail and service commercial development in hamlet areas to develop new uses consistent with traditional hamlet character.**

Carefully evaluate the location of future commercial uses to encourage growth while protecting community character. Focus new development in appropriate locations including infill development and adaptive reuse of existing structures. Encourage high value redevelopment on underutilized or underperforming property. By targeting certain retail and service commercial development to areas in and around the hamlets or other developing



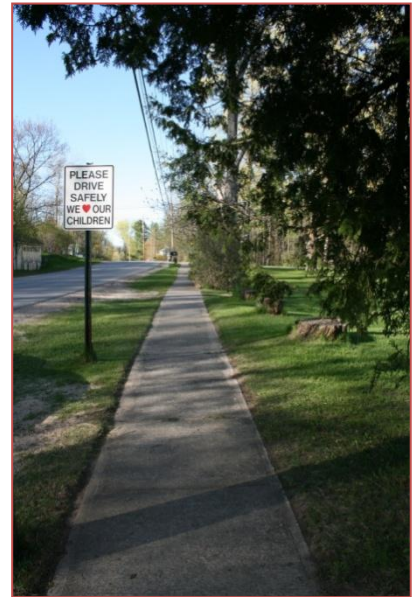
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commercial nodes, the goal is to create a critical mass of businesses in these areas which generally increases opportunities for consumer spending and encourages pedestrian access to goods and services that might otherwise be lost if businesses were scattered or isolated throughout the Town.

### **Action 1.3: Attract commerce and services meeting retail needs of residents and supporting outdoor enthusiasts.**

Residents conduct most of their shopping beyond conveniences like milk and bread in Plattsburgh. Despite the fact that Route 3 is a major travel corridor through the Adirondacks, there are only a few tourism-related or supported businesses or destination businesses along the corridor or within the Town as a whole.

Recreational tourism represents a growing segment of the tourism industry. Outdoor enthusiasts visit Saranac each year for recreational activities including hiking, kayaking, canoeing, fishing and biking. As recreational opportunities increase with new public access to the River and more trail development, there is a growing market for destination retailers and renters of biking gear, cross-country skiing equipment, outerwear, fishing poles, canoes, kayaks and other sporting goods. Additional hospitality businesses could include bed and breakfasts or small inns and restaurants.



### **Action 1.4: Create vibrant hamlets through physical improvements and connectivity.**

The Town will develop a phased plan for physical infrastructure improvements in the hamlets that may include pedestrian amenities such as expansion of the sidewalk network, existing sidewalk improvements, other streetscape improvements such as more attractive lighting, and possibly creating a focal location for a small pocket park or monument with a seating bench or two.

### **Action 1.5: Support small business development.**

The Town of Saranac will support a small business retention/attraction initiative and retail recruitment strategy by working with the County and/or providing incentives and/or small business loan programs, such as a micro-enterprise program. In recruiting specific niche businesses, the Town of Saranac should work closely with existing businesses and potential entrepreneurs. Merchants, residents, and home-based businesses should be made aware of the types of businesses needed in Saranac. Information about the businesses being targeted can be publicized in local newsletters and press releases.

**Action 1.6: Establish a facade loan/grant program for businesses and residents.**

For existing businesses and homes, the Town should delineate a facade improvement district to concentrate the impact of improvements on aesthetic and community visibility issues. The Town should also develop a facade improvement program that pools voluntary tax or private donations from individuals and businesses in a local low-interest lending program. These funds could be used for small-scale improvements. At the same time, the Town should attempt to secure funding which can be loaned or granted to property owners for larger scale improvements. The Town should research and consider the development of tax incentives for those who want to make improvements to structures located outside of the target area.

**Action 1.7: Evaluate options for the Town-owned industrial park property.**

The industrial park is a 43-acre, former industrial property owned by the Town of Saranac and located in both the Towns of Saranac and Plattsburgh. The site is largely vacant and represents the Town of Saranac's best opportunity for industrial development at this time as it is the only land in the Town classified "Industrial" by the APA Land Use and Development Plan.



A recent feasibility study of the industrial park facilitated by the Development Corporation included preliminary assessment of site conditions to identify appropriate future land uses for the property. The feasibility study identified "industrial-business" and housing as appropriate land uses for the site. Given the current economic down-turn, the Town will evaluate all options and select a course of action. Some options may include annexing the Town of Plattsburgh's portion of the industrial park, using the property for some public benefit use such as a park or trails, a municipal photovoltaic solar array etc.; selling the property as is to the highest bidder; marketing and selling the property to specific end users that will best meet the goals of the community such as growing the tax base with efficient, high value land uses and/or attracting industry that creates jobs; or the Town could improve the site to make it shovel ready and pursue pre-approval from the Adirondack Park Agency for a pre-approved end use.

**Action 1.8: Pursue the feasibility of producing additional renewable and sustainable energy sources such as biomass, solar photovoltaic and wind.**

The Town supports pursuing the feasibility of developing renewable and sustainable energy industries in the Town of Saranac that would have a net positive impact on the community by



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assisting the local agriculture and forestry industries, make more efficient use of logging industry bi-product, create jobs and increase the tax base.

Forestry continues to be an active industry in Saranac and many large tracts of inactive farmland fields remain available for grass production. As such, woody and/or grass biomass may be alternative fuels that could be produced in Saranac from crop production, to processing and fuel generation. While study of biomass as a source of renewable and sustainable energy and its impact is ongoing and the development of furnaces and boilers suitable for efficient use of grass biomass is



still in its infancy, it is already known that energy losses created by transporting biofuels reduces its energy efficiency. Therefore, local consumption is important for efficiency. The State Correctional facilities, local school district and other local or regional institutional uses and industry may be the best opportunities for use of biofuel.

Wind power and solar photovoltaic are also potential industries that would require further study for their effective location in Saranac based on climate conditions and other potential barriers such as height restrictions in the Adirondack Park.

The Town will work with biomass organizations and others to analyze the feasibility of creating renewable and sustainable energy and will seek funding from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority. NYSERDA makes a large array of funding programs available to provide technical assistance, evaluate alternative energy potential, increase energy efficiency in existing properties, and many more. While investigation of alternate energy sources and efficiencies will be a priority, it will also be important for the Town to balance this opportunity with potential community impacts including visual impacts, environmental issues, habitat destruction and wildlife affects, noise and other issues.

### **Action 1.9 Identify a use for the Town owned-land known as the “Christiana Property.”**

The Town of Saranac owns a vacant 1.9 acre parcel of land across from the Picketts Corners Park on Route 3. Its location on Route 3 across from Picketts Corners Park makes it a highly visible and important site. The Town will evaluate the opportunities and constraints of the parcel and identify preferred uses for the land.

**GOAL 2: DEVELOP A RELIABLE 21ST CENTURY INFRASTRUCTURE, INCLUDING TELECOMMUNICATIONS THAT SUPPORT A HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE, SERVE THE NEEDS OF LOCAL RESIDENTS AND ENCOURAGE COMPATIBLE ECONOMIC GROWTH.**

**Action 2.1 Develop a strategy to expand the availability of high speed internet service throughout the Town.**

One of the greater economic development challenges facing rural areas is a lack of broad band communication. Businesses are requiring faster and faster internet connections as the internet and web site development become as much a part of business establishment and operation as office and storefront space. Residents are considering such amenities to be quality of life necessities. Other uses of high speed internet such as distance learning and telemedicine, among other advanced services, are becoming increasingly relied upon in rural areas. As opportunities for technology infrastructure improvements present themselves, such as road reconstruction, cell tower installations, and funding opportunities from State and Federal agencies to provide infrastructure, the Town of Saranac should be proactive about improving connectivity in a manner that does not impede the rural landscape.

**Action 2.2: Work with the APA and service providers to improve wireless communication service in Saranac.**

Like many rural communities in the Adirondack Park, cellular service in the Town of Saranac is unreliable to nonexistent in most of the Town. Cellular service is becoming a quality of life amenity for residents and businesses are requiring cell service to communicate with staff and clients. The problem is complex in that there are not enough clients to support the potentially more expensive infrastructure required to maintain the natural aesthetic appearance of the Adirondack Park. As telecommunications infrastructure becomes less and less conspicuous with new technological advances, many of the concerns regarding aesthetic appearance will be mitigated. The Town will be proactive in working with the APA and surrounding communities to secure additional service in the region.

As the Town considers land management options in the future, the location of telecommunications infrastructure should be addressed. Federal law allows municipalities to regulate the location of such facilities, including cellular towers, but such regulations cannot be discriminatory, have the effect of prohibiting service or be based on the health effects of radio frequency emissions.





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### **GOAL 3: PROTECT AND PROMOTE IRREPLACEABLE ASSETS SUCH AS OPEN SPACE, RURAL CHARACTER AND HISTORIC RESOURCES THROUGH STRONG STEWARDSHIP, EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY.**

**Action 3.1:** In order to protect the Town from undesirable, incompatible or poorly located land uses in the future the Town should appoint a committee to develop basic land management tools, including simple zoning, Town-wide.

The Town is expected to face continuing population growth as people move past the suburban Town of Plattsburgh which has a variety of land use controls. As more people move and the Town's population density gradually increases, other commercial uses will follow. Some uses may be undesirable to the Town. Without basic land use tools, there is concern that the Town of Saranac may become a "dumping ground" for undesirable uses.



Although some people may initially be resistant to land management, basic simplified zoning will go a long way to protect the Town's future and meet the vision outlined by residents in the Visioning Workshop.

**Action 3.2:** Review the Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy every five years and update as necessary.

This Comprehensive Plan is a twenty year strategy with a long range vision for the Town. Over the next twenty years priorities and ideas for implementation may shift, and new opportunities and challenges may arise. Therefore, the Plan should be reviewed every five years and updated as needed to maintain its relevancy.

**Action 3.3:** Protect important Town viewsheds and their vantage points.

The rural landscapes and riverfront beauty of Saranac are one of the Town's greatest assets. The viewsheds and their vantage points identified in the Community Profile continue to be enjoyed for a variety of reasons including lack of development or tree growth to mar or block views. Viewsheds can be maintained through a variety of methods including the following:

- Encourage the clustering of lots in a residential subdivision to conserve land use.
- As development projects are considered by the Town and APA, it is important that viewshed impacts be considered and avoided when possible by siting structures downslope within the natural contour of the land or near existing stands of trees.
- Support farming and agriculture which will maintain open space.

- Partner with or support the work of local land trusts to conserve land through conservation easements and ownership.

**Action 3.4: Protect and promote historic resources by creating a walking history “trail” in the hamlet of Picketts Corners in conjunction with the Saranac Hollow walking trail loop.**

The Town has important historic resources that are generally underappreciated or unrecognized locally and on the State and National level. To both recognize and preserve some of these historic treasures, consideration will be given to creating a walking route in the vicinity of Picketts Corners that interprets historical sites and reuses local historically contributing structures. The walking trail could be accompanied by a pamphlet available on the Town website and at local retailers. Examples of possible projects include:



- Identify a possible use for the Town-owned “Christiana Property.” (see Action 1.9)
- Include the Civil War Monument in the Cemetery as a stopping point on the walking trail.
- Identify as adaptive reuse of the old town stone garage on Route 3 opposite the UMC Road intersection.
- Develop and install interpretive signage at the iron truss bridge, located at the end of Soper Road, regarding the bridge and/or iron bridges in general.

**Action 3.5: Explore options for encouraging quality site development in the hamlets and along the Route 3 Corridor to protect and enhance community character.**

The aesthetic appearance of the Route 3 corridor, particularly in the vicinity of the hamlets of Saranac Hollow/Picketts Corners and Redford, impact the character and beauty of the Town. The Town will explore options for ensuring quality site development to protect community character.

**Action 3.6: Increase community awareness of planning efforts and resulting benefits for the Town of Saranac.**

Saranac will develop and implement a community outreach effort to help residents understand the issues and learn about specific proposals and projects that will protect and conserve the Town’s assets. These efforts could include monthly newspaper columns on planning issues, periodic workshops, publicity for Town Board meetings and information distribution at community events.



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### **Action 3.7: Inventory and promote the Town's historic resources and other unique features.**

The Town of Saranac has a significant number of structures and other unique features that contribute to the history and present day character of Saranac - some of which are protected and promoted while others have gone largely unrecognized. The Town will inventory its historically significant buildings, sites and structures such as residences, churches, schoolhouses and the iron truss bridge as well as unique features that are part of the Town's identity such as the barns and stone walls that dot the countryside. The inventory will be used to identify resources that may need protection or reuse to prevent decay and to develop educational and promotional materials for residents and visitors.

**GOAL 4: WORK WITH NYS DOT, APA, DOS AND OTHER AGENCIES TO ENHANCE ALL ASPECTS OF THE ROUTE 3 CORRIDOR INCLUDING SAFETY, MULTI-MODAL CAPACITY AND AESTHETIC APPEARANCE.**

**Action 4.1 Partner with Saranac CSD to improve pedestrian safety on Route 3 at the Saranac Central School.**



The Saranac Central School is located on NY Route 3 in the Picketts Corners Hamlet area. Several concerns have been raised by residents regarding Route 3 at this location pertaining to pedestrian safety. Some of the safety concerns relate to the current speed limit of (55 mph) hour

and lack of traffic signal or a pedestrian crossing point. The Town will work with DOT and the School District to understand the options available including:

- Seek a reduction in speed limit in the vicinity of the Saranac Central School on Route 3. The Town supports a speed limit reduction in front of the school, particularly during normal school operating hours.
- Partner with the Saranac Central School District to enhance safety on Route 3 by improving access management at the school.
- Establish a pedestrian connection between the Saranac School and the hamlet of Picketts Corners. The creation of a safe pedestrian connection between the School and the hamlet of Picketts Corners via a widened shoulder or multi-use path running parallel to Route 3. The DOT Safe Routes to Schools program may provide an opportunity for the Town and School District to partner on the creation of a multi-modal pathway.

**Action 4.2: Work with New York State DOT, APA and DOS on the development of the DOT Route 3 Corridor Management Plan.**

The Town of Saranac will seek an integral role in developing the Town of Saranac portion of the Route 3 Corridor Management Plan.

**Action 4.3: Improve safety of Route 3 for cycling and other non-motorized transportation.**

To avoid or reduce road conflicts between motorists and cyclists (and pedestrians) work with NYS DOT to improve cycling safety by ideally creating a widened shoulder or bike lane on Route 3. At the very least, “share the road” signs should be installed in addition to signage encouraging cyclists to ride single file.



## *Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy*

### **Action 4.4: Improve commuter parking opportunities.**

Car-pooling is actively pursued in Saranac; however there is no designated commuter parking lot in Town for residents. However, anecdotally, two NYS DOT parking lots on Route 3 are being used for car-pooling. In the short-term, the Town will work with NYS DOT to improve these existing lots through, for example, better snow removal. In the long term, the Town will consider other locations for a commuter lot.

### **Action 4.5: Enhance Town gateways on major roadways and install wayfinding signage.**

The Town of Saranac will work with the New York State Department of Transportation to develop distinctive and welcoming gateways into the Town on the most travelled road routes such as Routes 3 and 374. Improvement and development of these areas will promote the Town, strengthen community identity and improve the image of Saranac for commercial and economic development in Saranac. Improvements shall include, at a minimum, an attractive Town sign and may include landscaping or other features such as a local artists sculpture. An interesting alternative to a sign on Route 3 heading west would be to paint artwork or a welcoming message on the rock cut “the notch” on Route 3 between the Ganong Drive intersection and the Town Hall.

Wayfinding signage can be an important tourism tool as it not only assists visitors intending to visit a community with finding their destination, it can also capture through-traffic or impulse tourists who see a sign for something interesting and decide to stop. Signs can also provide directional information related to public parking lots, fishing lots, restaurants and other services. For example, a sign on Route 3 for the Civil War Monument or a sign on Chazy Lake Road could invite motorists and cyclists to stop in Picketts Corners on their way through.

Other identification signage and/or wayfinding signage might include identification of Route 3 as a Scenic Byway, the Saranac River as part of the Northern Forest Canoe Trail, access to the New Land Trust from Route 3 and possibly the Saranac River Trail if it is extended from Plattsburgh to Saranac.

(See also Action 7.1)

**GOAL 5: PROVIDE A VARIETY OF HIGH-QUALITY HOUSING OPTIONS FOR RESIDENTS OF ALL AGES AND INCOMES.**

**Action 5.1: Identify target areas for housing rehabilitation improvements and secure funding to implement housing rehabilitation projects.**



As a part of an overall rehabilitation strategy, the Town should identify concentrated areas of substandard housing. Once target areas have been identified, the Town should prioritize those areas with the greatest needs in terms of housing conditions and income. Applications to funding agencies for financial assistance should then be pursued. In Saranac, current rehabilitation needs appear to be concentrated in the hamlet areas. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) grants from the Office of Community Renewal are a likely source of funding for housing rehabilitation.

**Action 5.2: Consider utilizing New York State incentives for home reinvestment.**

One of the most critical housing issues identified is the need to rehabilitate homes. The Town should develop tax incentives which encourage homeowners to rehabilitate properties, and offer information on types of improvements that increase tax assessments. To encourage enhancement of Saranac's residential areas, the Town should consider adoption of the New York State 421(f) tax relief program. The 421(f) tax incentive program can be implemented by municipal resolution. The tax relief program can be used for buildings at least five years old for capital improvements that cost \$3,000 or more and increase the property's value by at least \$5,000. The exemption is limited to the first \$80,000 increase in value. Upon application to the assessor, the property owner may receive a 100% exemption on the increased assessed value of the property resulting from the improvement for the first year. The exemption decreases by 12.5% every year until it reaches the full assessed value. The program should be complemented by a public outreach effort to make property owners aware of what types of improvements may result in an increase in assessed valuation.

**Action 5.3: Work in partnership with local organizations to pursue funding opportunities for affordable homeownership and rental development projects through State and Federal Housing Programs.**

The Town of Saranac is in need of rental housing as well as housing for homeownership targeting various incomes, including persons and households who are low and moderate income. There are a variety of funding sources available for affordable rental and homeownership projects, including the Adirondack Community Housing Trust (ACHT) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Affordable Housing Corporation (AHC), HOME,





## *Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy*

New York Main Street Program. Additionally, the Town should also approach private housing developers to provide market rate rental housing for moderate and upper income households, including seniors.

### **Action 5.4: Perform an assessment of senior housing and pursue identified needs in Saranac.**

The Town should perform an assessment of senior housing needs in Saranac. Such an assessment should include not only a market assessment of a new housing complex, but strategies, programs and services that could be offered that would enable local seniors to continue to live in their current homes. A formal market evaluation for new senior housing units should be conducted to determine the probable existing and future demand for such a project. Such market assessments typically analyze information for a defined market area including population, household income, rent levels, existing housing options and the availability of services for the target population, resulting in an estimate of the need for additional housing. If a sufficient market for senior housing is found to exist, the Town of Saranac would then work with an appropriate organization that would eventually operate the project to identify potential development sites in the Town and seek funding.

**GOAL 6: ENCOURAGE ENHANCED USE OF THE SARANAC RIVER AND ITS TRIBUTARIES THROUGH IMPROVED PHYSICAL ACCESS AND SUPPORT FOR USES THAT DEPEND ON WATER ACCESS OR ARE ENHANCED BY PROXIMITY OF THE RIVER.**

**Action 6.1: Implement the Master Plan for Picketts Corners Park.**

Picketts Corners Park is a 16-acre site with over 1,000 feet of Saranac River frontage. The park hosts the annual Saranac River Flatwater Challenge, an important component of the Town's Waterfront Revitalization Strategy and a key promotional event. The Town received an EPF Grant through the NYS Department of State Local Waterfront Revitalization Program to develop a master plan for park improvements and to complete the first phase of improvements. The whole project will include creating a picnic area along the river; constructing a walkway from the parking lot to the picnic area; installing a floating dock for small non-motorized boats; upgrading the pool; and aesthetic exterior upgrades to existing park buildings.



**Action 6.2: Provide pedestrian amenities and improvements to the Saranac Hollow walking loop.**

The Saranac Hollow walking loop is a popular three mile loop that includes Bowen Road, a scenic road that hugs the river, Hardscrabble Road and Ganong Drive. Improvements to Bowen Road, as well as the other roads, would enhance pedestrian safety and create a more enjoyable pedestrian experience. Improvements and amenities could include simple upgrades such as maintenance of the road's shoulder to creating a pedestrian trail alongside the road, providing a parking pull-off area within the right-of-way, occasional seating area and other improvements.

**Action 6.3: Assess feasibility of restoring the iron truss bridge crossing the Saranac River into a multi-modal recreational crossing.**

Presently closed to all use, the County-owned iron bridge connecting to Soper Road could provide a safe river crossing and a scenic access point on the River for pedestrians, cyclists and motorized recreational vehicles such as snowmobiles. The bridge also connects to the Soper Road NYSEG public access riverfront property (see Action 6.4 below). The Town supports conducting a feasibility study for the restoration of the bridge to various stages of non-motorized and motorized vehicular use.

**Action 6.4: Partner with the New York State Electric and Gas to increase access to the River.**



## *Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy*

New York State Electric and Gas (NYSEG), owner and operator of the hydro-electric dam on the Saranac River, allows public access to the River on their properties. These scenic sites could be enhanced with improved parking areas, trails and seating areas for both picnicking and fishing, and educational information about hydro-electricity and the dam.

### **Action 6.5: Improve fishing access along the Saranac River and True Brook.**

A significant portion of the Saranac River is accessible to the public for fishing in the form of Department of Environmental Conservation easements on the Saranac River and True Brook and some off-street parking areas. However, signage for the lots and good trail connections from the parking areas to the Rivers are scarce which may be limiting usage. The Town will work with State agencies, residents and other angling partners to prioritize fishing access locations and improve access points with the highest priority. Improvements may include signage, better trail connections and parking area improvements or creation. In addition, the Town will provide information about fishing access on the Town's website.

### **Action 6.6: Improve fishery resources in the Town's rivers and streams.**

Fishery resources in the Town are abundant, but are currently diminished compared to historical records. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation stocks the Saranac River and True Brook with rainbow and brown trout, and this fishery is enjoyed by a variety of resident and visiting anglers. The low flows and warmer waters of summer limit survival of these stocked fish, so the population remains low, with little natural reproduction occurring. The Town supports working with DEC and other groups to continue the current stocking program and to improve the fishery resources of the Town's rivers and streams.

### **Action 6.7: Partner with the Northern Forest Canoe Trail to develop campsites and other necessary amenities at Picketts Corners Park.**

The Northern Forest Canoe Trail (NFCT) organization has identified a gap in camp sites between Union Falls Pond and Lake Champlain for through paddlers travelling the Northern Forest Canoe Trail, a 740 mile long paddle trail that connects Old Forge to Fort Kent, Maine. NFCT believes that a location in the Town of Saranac would be ideal. As such, a site has been identified at Picketts Corners Park where 5 campsites could be located along with the preferred infrastructure including picnic table, sign-in box, a level cleared area accommodating 5 tents within a 30 foot radius, and signage.

A steady influx of campers requiring provisions will help support local businesses. NFCT will provide information to paddlers via their website and written material about community resources in the vicinity which will help promote local businesses.

**Action 6.8: Support the expansion of the Saranac River Trail initiative into a regional trail.**

The Saranac River Trail (SRT) initiative originated as a non-motorized facility for transportation and recreation from the shoreline of Lake C hamplain along the river through the City and Town of Plattsburgh. Connecting the City to the Saranac River is an important opportunity for Plattsburgh's economic redevelopment, tourism, and quality of life initiatives. The Saranac River Trail Advisory Committee (SRTAC) would like to enhance the trail by creating a regional Saranac River trail that extends through the



Town of Saranac, which would support Clinton County's revitalization goals, as expressed in the Clinton County Destination Plan. The Town of Saranac supports the identification of local roads and trails as part of the Saranac River Trail. In the near future, use of the SRT identification and wayfinding signage along, for example, Hardscrabble Road to Soper Road as well as "share the road" signage will assist in this endeavor.



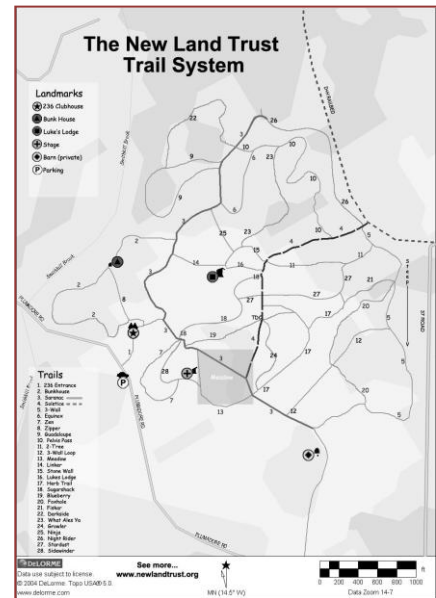
## *Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy*

### **GOAL 7: SUPPORT TRADITIONAL RECREATIONAL USES AND PROVIDE NEW RECREATION CHOICES, BOTH WATER AND LAND BASED, THAT MEET THE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS AND TOURISTS ALIKE WITHOUT COMPROMISING THE TOWN'S HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT.**

#### **Action 7.1: Promote local recreational resources for visitors and residents through wayfinding signage and development of informational materials for websites and in print.**

The merit of developing and installing wayfinding signage is discussed in Action 4.6.

Additionally, the Town should develop informational brochures with maps that provide information about all public recreational facilities, local trail networks, create cycling routes or walking routes and other points of interest such as historical sites and a scenic vista driving tour. These brochures and maps should be made available on the Town website for download and provided to the County and regional tourism websites and offices. For tourism promotion, effective internet presence is essential. Not only do individual community and organization websites create instant promotion for themselves, but they provide for free and easy cross promotion through links on other websites such as recreation organizations, chambers of commerce, county and regional and state tourism offices. Through the promotion of key tourism “draws” such as kayaking/canoeing and fishing on the Saranac River and other tourism opportunities and amenities in Saranac could be discovered through the Town website.



#### **Action 7.2: Enhance the cycling experience in Saranac by improving safety on popular routes and providing amenities.**

The Town's scenic beauty on local roads and the use of New York Route 3 as a regional touring route provide for great cycling. Currently Route 3 does not have a wider shoulder, bike lane or share the road signs to improve awareness and safety and, thereby, increasing the chance of road conflicts between cyclists and motorized traffic. Road improvements, particularly on NY Route 3 could include widening the shoulder, adding “share the road” signs and signs cautioning cyclists to ride in single file for safety.

Amenities might include bike racks at local retail and service establishments, providing public bathrooms and selling minor bike repair supplies in a local store.

**Action 7.3: Work with NYS Department of Environmental Conservation to establish public recreation use areas on the Sable Highland easement properties located in the Town.**

The interim Recreational Management Plan addresses the conservation easement agreement dubbed the Sable Highlands Easement by DEC, which opens 28,105 acres of land and water located in designated Public Recreation Use Areas to the public for hiking, fishing, hunting, canoeing and a variety of other recreational uses. Some of the Sable Highlands Easement properties, the western portion of the Bradley Pond Conservation Easement and the Barnes Pond Conservation Easement, are located in the Town of Saranac. Public access to these easements as recreational resources for residents and visitors will enhance the Town's efforts to increase recreation and tourism.

**Action 7.4: Work with the NYS DEC and the Town of Dannemora to include improvements to existing public access trails and development of new trails on the State-owned Lyon Mountain Tract.**

The Town supports the establishment of public access on the "Lyon Mountain Tract" acquired by New York State to supplement the growing number of cross-country ski trails and hiking trails on the Barnes Pond Easement and the New Land Trust properties in the Town. The Lyon Mountain tract is a 17,190 acre area located in Saranac and Dannemora. It includes the Lyon Mountain Fire Tower with a trail leading to it (accessed in Dannemora), several other structures, lifts from the former Lowenburg Ski Area and remnants of commercial forestry operations. As the DEC develops the Unit Management Plan (UMP) for the Lyon Mountain Tract, the Town wishes to partner with DEC and Dannemora in that effort to expand recreational opportunities and improve those that exist on the Lyon Mountain Tract. Specifically, the Town supports the following:

- development of additional trails and parking areas for hiking and cross-country skiing including access to the Lyon Mountain Fire Tower from the Town of Saranac;
- development of a mountain biking trail network; and
- improvement and maintenance of the existing snowmobile connecting trail.

**Action 7.5: Support the development of a mountain biking trail network on the Lyon Mountain Tract.**

The Town supports the development of a trail network for mountain biking on the Lyon Mt. easement in Saranac. Like cycling, mountain biking continues to grow in popularity and provides a new recreational opportunity for residents and visitors. Unlike cycling, trail development and appropriate terrain are required for optimal mountain biking and therefore quality trail systems attract significant visitation. The Lyon Mountain Tract would provide interesting terrain with public access.

**Action 7.6: Capitalize on the recreational opportunities in Saranac such as paddling, fishing, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling and hiking by attracting more retailers and businesses that cater to outdoor enthusiasts.**





## *Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy*

As already stated in Action 1.3, recreational tourism represents a growing segment of the tourism industry across the Country. Outdoor enthusiasts visit Saranac each year for recreational activities including hiking, kayaking, canoeing, fishing and biking. As recreational opportunities increase with new potential public access to the NYS DEC Conservation Easement lands and to the Lyon Mt. state lands, there will likely be a growing market for retailers and renters of biking gear, cross-country skiing and snowmobiling equipment, outerwear, fishing poles, canoes, kayaks and other sporting goods. This strategy is also supported by Clinton County's Destination Planning efforts.



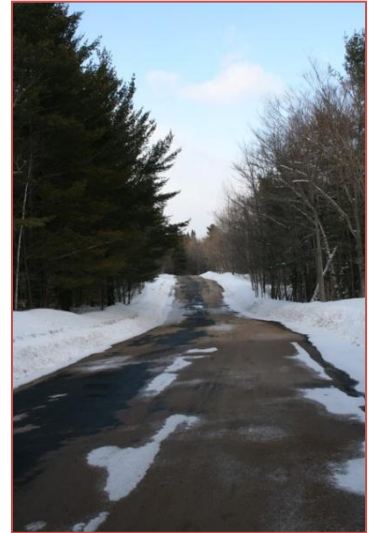
### **Action 7.7 Identify possible recreational opportunities on the Town industrial park land.**

The town-owned industrial park land (see Action 1.7) includes an existing trail that leads to the picturesque Canfield Brook. The Town will consider opportunities for enhancing this trail network and/or developing other recreational opportunities as it evaluates its options for the future use of this land.

**GOAL 8: THE TOWN WILL PROVIDE WELL-MAINTAINED MUNICIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES.**

**Action 8.1: Reduce the Town tax levy by examining all taxing entity spending and improving efficiency.**

Saranac consistently has one of the highest municipal tax levies and tax rates in Clinton County. This has been compounded in recent years by significantly higher than County average fire district tax levies. It is recognized that high taxes can drive people from their homes and be a barrier to new development. The Town will evaluate all annual expenditures with the goal of identifying cost saving opportunities and possibilities for sharing services with other municipal entities including the fire districts, school district, adjacent communities and County.



**Action 8.2: The Town Board will initiate the development of a Comprehensive Road Maintenance Plan with the goal of reducing costs and improving the provision of services.**

The Town of Saranac's annual expenditure on the highway department represents more than 60% of the total budget yet the Town is currently on a 40-50 year paving cycle. The Town recognizes the need to reduce spending and shorten that time frame and prioritize road maintenance. The Town will develop a Comprehensive Road Maintenance Plan that prioritizes road maintenance and shortens the repaving cycle but also explores the possibilities of maintaining roadways in a more rural nature, by using different reconstruction and maintenance materials. In addition the Plan will carefully evaluate expenditures and look for ways save money. The Town will work closely with the County and New York State Department of Transportation to plan for road maintenance and reconstruction and share services to increase efficiency.

**Action 8.3: Explore opportunities for shared services with neighboring municipalities and school district to help reduce costs of services.**

The rising costs of municipal services, especially highway and emergency services costs, is an issue facing Saranac. The Town will explore the concept of sharing more services with the surrounding municipalities and school district to reduce the growing costs of delivering needed services to residents. Additionally, if the tax base in the Town is to become more sustainable, the commercial sector needs to be expanded and made more productive. This can be accomplished by supporting existing companies, buying local products, encouraging small business development and creating space for new development on currently underutilized sites or along corridors (see also Goal 1).

**Action 8.4: Continue to seek funding to establish renewable and sustainable energy systems for municipal use.**



## *Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy*

The Town has previously sought funding for solar arrays and will continue that effort in the future. In addition, the Town will continue to explore such possibilities, including the use of biomass and wind power. (See also Action 1.8)

### **Action 8.5: Pursue funding for improvements to the existing water districts.**

The Town has three water districts located in Picketts Corners, Redford and Standish. The Town will continue to address water district improvements as needed and continue to work with property owners within the districts to secure funding to mitigate the cost of necessary improvements.

### **Action 8.6: Investigate possible alternatives and feasibility for mitigating seasonal flooding on Bowen Road.**

Bowen Road is seasonally flooded by the waters of the Saranac River requiring road closure and causing erosion. The Town will investigate the alternatives for mitigating the flooding.

### **Action 8.7: Improve the Town website to better provide community information for residents and promote Saranac's tourism opportunities.**

Community websites have become a vital source of information for residents and visitors and an important mechanism for tourism promotion. Critical to their effectiveness is to provide a site that is easy to navigate, regularly updated with Town meeting agendas and minutes, important news, events and programs, and provides detailed information for visitors regarding tourism resources and tourism infrastructure such as places to stay, eat and shop. Saranac's website will be updated to include the following features:

- The website will be configured to be easily updated by a Town staff person or volunteer with town business, news and events. The site will provide more information about services and programs such as youth recreation programs and senior services, programs and schedules, and where and how residents can volunteer.
- The website will contain a separate webpage devoted to the promotion of Saranac tourism. The "visitor" webpage could provide detailed information regarding recreational opportunities such as paddling, fishing, camping, hiking, biking and cross-country skiing; scenic driving tours; historic driving tours; tourism amenities such as places to stay, eat and shop. (see also Action 7.1)

**Action 8.8: Increase the number of volunteers for Saranac youth teams for County organized youth recreation programs.**

The Town will encourage volunteers for organized youth recreation programs available throughout the County. The Town will begin to recognize the substantial positive impact that volunteers provide to the community. The Town will initiate a regular agenda item in its Town Board Meeting Agenda to recognize at least one volunteer at each meeting. Not only does this recognize individual contributions, but it also creates “good news” about the Town that will be reported in the local news media. As the Town’s website is improved, residents will be asked to nominate volunteers for recognition.



**Action 8.9: Support the continued development and circulation of the *Town Crier* newsletter.**

The *Town Crier* is a Town newsletter with community information and input. It is produced approximately four times a year and is widely enjoyed by the community and can be an important source of information for upcoming events. The continued efforts of the editor and volunteers to develop the *Town Crier* will be supported by the Town by working with the editor and volunteers on opportunities to improve the development and circulation of the newsletter.



## *Implementation Matrix*

The Implementation Matrix includes all of the goals and actions described in Section III. The purpose of the matrix is to provide the Town of Saranac with steps for implementing projects and identification of partners and sources of funding. The “priority action” highlights projects under each goal that are top priorities for the community. The “funding source” column refers to channels through which the Town can seek funding. These funding sources and programs existed during the development of the Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy, but are obviously subject to change. A full description of these funding sources can be found in the Appendix. A key to the abbreviations used for these funding sources is included at the end of the matrix. Municipal budgets have not been included as a funding source in the matrix as it is assumed that they are always a potential source of funding. Likewise, a good potential source of funding for any project is through a State or Federal Legislative representative. These “member items” have not been listed as a source of funding as they would be included under most of these projects.

Town of Saranac Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX ♦ = Priority Action				
Action		Implementation Steps	Partners	Potential Funding Source
<b>Goal 1: Revitalize and strengthen the local economy by encouraging vibrant hamlets, safe commercial corridors, and maximum use of the Town's natural resources, all consistent with the community's character.</b>				
♦	1.1: Work with the APA and DOS to identify lands in the area of Picketts Corners that could be reclassified as "hamlet" in the Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan (APLUDP) to expand opportunities for higher density, mixed-use development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyze existing lands classified APA Hamlet with regard to current usage and land available for development.</li> <li>Analyze classification of lands surrounding APA Hamlets with regard to current parcel size, vacancy or improvement, land development constraints and existing infrastructure.</li> <li>Meet with the Adirondack Park Agency regarding potential land reclassification.</li> <li>Town Board adopts resolution requesting the land classification amendment to the APLUDP and submits other required documents to the APA.</li> </ul>	APA, NYS DOS, NYS OCR	NYS DOS EPF, CDBG Small Cities Community Planning Grant
	1.2: Focus new retail and service commercial development in hamlet areas to develop new uses consistent with traditional hamlet character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a Committee to consider development of a local land management law.</li> <li>Identify areas appropriate for retail and service commercial development and target those areas for such uses in the local law.</li> </ul>	APA, Local property owners	N/A
	1.3: Attract commerce and services meeting retail needs of residents and supporting outdoor enthusiasts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek funding to develop a local microenterprise program that will provide low interest loans to existing and prospective businesses that are located in Saranac. Another consideration would be to partner with adjacent communities or Clinton County.</li> <li>Identify and analyze gaps in regional goods and service providers pertaining to recreation and tourism.</li> <li>Encourage existing retailers to supplement their offerings with goods and services catering to outdoor recreation and tourism.</li> <li>Contact existing business operators in other parts of the North Country regarding satellite store opportunities.</li> </ul>	NYS OCR, Clinton Co., North Country Chamber of Commerce, Adirondack Regional Tourism Council	NYS DOS, CDBG Small Cities





## Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy

### Town of Saranac Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX ❖ = Priority Action

Action	Implementation Steps	Partners	Potential Funding Source
1.4: Create vibrant hamlets through physical improvements and connectivity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify streetscape improvements for each hamlet which may include sidewalk repair or installation and other pedestrian amenities, bicycle lanes (or wide paved shoulders) and bike racks, wayfinding signage, traffic calming and pocket parking lots.</li> <li>Prioritize improvements and include projects in the Comprehensive Road Maintenance Plan. (See 8.1)</li> <li>Identify funding sources for improvements.</li> <li>Coordinate with NYS and County DOT regarding road maintenance projects to incorporate Town improvements.</li> </ul>	NYS DOS, NYS DHCR, NYS DOT, APA, Local businesses/ property owners, Clinton County	NYS DOS EPF, NYS DHCR New York Main Street Program
1.5: Support small business development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake an in-depth Business Assistance Survey to determine more accurately the specific needs of local small businesses, identify whether existing programs can meet that need (and link that business to the appropriate program) and, if not, what type of business assistance is lacking.</li> <li>Based on this analysis, develop a customized Business Assistance Program whose target is to assist existing or start-up businesses located in the Town.</li> <li>A lead entity should be selected or created to manage the program. Possible components of such a program could include the provision of technical assistance and access to low interest loans and/or grants.</li> <li>The Town should then identify appropriate sources of funding and prepare funding applications for assistance.</li> </ul>	NYS DOS, NYS OCR, APA, Clinton Co., North Country Chamber of Commerce	NYS DOS EPF, CDBG Small Cities Microenterprise Program or Economic Development
1.6: Establish a façade loan/grant program for businesses and residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delineate a façade improvement district to concentrate impact of improvements on aesthetic and community visibility issues. In conjunction, develop a façade program that pools voluntary tax or private donations from individuals and businesses in a low-interest lending program (to be used for small scale improvements).</li> <li>Secure funding (to be loaned or granted) to property owners for larger scale improvements.</li> <li>Research the development of tax incentives for improvements.</li> </ul>	NYS DOS, NYS DHCR, Local businesses & property owners	NYS DHCR New York Main Street Program, NYS DOS EPF, CDBG Small Cities

Town of Saranac Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX ♦ = Priority Action			
Action	Implementation Steps	Partners	Potential Funding Source
♦ 1.7: Evaluate options for the Town-owned industrial park property.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Create a small working group or taskforce to evaluate the alternatives for the Town with regard to the property including evaluating the costs and benefits to each alternative, review the existing feasibility analysis and identify a preferred approach.</li> <li>▪ Present preferred approach to the Town Board for support.</li> <li>▪ Pursue identified approach and secure funding.</li> </ul>	Saranac LDC, APA, The Development Corporation (TDC) of Clinton County	NYS DOS EPF, NYS CDBG Small Cities Community Planning Grant
♦ 1.8: Pursue the feasibility of producing additional renewable and sustainable energy sources such as biomass, solar and wind.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue to gain knowledge in renewable energy sources through research, working with renewable energy organizations and New York State to identify an energy source(s) that is best suited for the Town and will provide the greatest positive impact.</li> <li>▪ Pursue projects by contacting industry representatives and coordinating with possible sources of financial assistance such as NYSERDA.</li> </ul>	NYS DOS, NYSERDA, APA, DEC, Cornell Cooperative Extension, ADKCAP, ASCI, renewable energy industry	NYS DOS EPF, DEC Adirondack Park Community Smart Growth Grant Program (EPF), NYSERDA
1.9 Identify a use for the Town owned-land known as the “Christiana Property.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Evaluate the existing conditions of the site for possible reuse by the Town.</li> <li>▪ Based on that analysis identify possible uses.</li> <li>▪ Identify a preferred use based on Town facility needs, availability of funding to assist the Town in site development and future maintenance costs of the site.</li> <li>▪ Pursue funding for site development.</li> </ul>	NYS DOS, APA	NYS DOS EPF



## Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy

### Town of Saranac Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX ❖ = Priority Action

Action	Implementation Steps	Partners	Potential Funding Source
<b>Goal 2: Develop a reliable 21st century infrastructure, including telecommunications that support a high quality of life, serve the needs of local residents and encourage compatible economic growth.</b>			
❖ 2.1 Develop a strategy to expand the availability of high speed internet service throughout the Town.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to work with regional organizations, government agencies, Congressional and Legislative representatives and others to access Federal or State funding for the installation of high speed internet infrastructure in the region.</li> </ul>	APA, Adirondack Association of Towns & Villages, Community Broadband Network, private providers	While no reoccurring public funding sources are currently identified, State or Federal funding in the future is likely
❖ 2.2: Work with the APA and service providers to improve wireless communication service in Saranac.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with APA to improve wireless communication service in Saranac.</li> <li>Determine whether there are locations in the Town for siting telecommunications infrastructure that would fill the gap for Town-wide service and consider these locations in developing future land management tools.</li> </ul>	APA, private providers	N/A
<b>Goal 3: Protect and promote irreplaceable assets such as open space, rural character and historic resources through strong stewardship, education and advocacy.</b>			
❖ 3.1: In order to protect the Town from undesirable, incompatible or poorly located land uses in the future, the Town should appoint a committee to develop basic land management tools, including simple zoning, town-wide.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appoint a Committee to oversee the development of basic land management tools in the Town.</li> <li>Secure financial assistance for hiring a professional consultant to assist the Committee and Town.</li> <li>Develop a Request for Proposals (RFP) or Request for Expressions of Interest (REI) for planning consultants.</li> <li>Issue RFP or REI and hire consultant.</li> <li>Develop land management tools.</li> </ul>	NYS DOS, APA, NYS DEC, Town Board	<p>NYS DOS LWRP (EPF)</p> <p>NYS Adirondack Park Community Smart Growth Program (EPF)</p>

Town of Saranac Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX ♦ = Priority Action			
Action	Implementation Steps	Partners	Potential Funding Source
3.2: Review the Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy every five years and update as necessary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appoint a Committee to review the Comprehensive Plan and determine if an update is necessary and report to the Town Board their findings. Elements to consider are significant changes to existing conditions (the community profile), new opportunities and challenges not addressed in the current Plan, a shift in focus or priorities within the community unrepresented or misrepresented in the Plan.</li> <li>If an update is warranted, seek a small grant for consulting services if needed or the Committee could update the Plan “in-house.”</li> <li>Select a consultant and update the Plan.</li> </ul>	NYS DOS, NYS OCR, NYS DEC, APA, Clinton County Planning	NYS DOS LWRP EPF, DEC Adirondack Park Community Smart Growth Grant Program (EPF), CDBG Small Cities Community Planning Grant
3.3: Protect important Town viewsheds and their vantage points.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider incorporating viewshed protection tools in local land management.</li> <li>Work with local property owners and land trusts to secure conservation easements on lands within viewsheds or providing important public vantage points.</li> <li>Support local farmers to keep fields in active use which will maintain open space.</li> </ul>	APA, NYS DOS, NYS Agriculture and Markets, NYS Open Space Committee, local land trusts, property owners, Adirondack Architectural Heritage AARCH	NYS DOS, NYS Agriculture and Markets Farmland Protection programs
3.4: Protect and promote historic resources by creating a walking history “trail” in the hamlet of Picketts Corners in conjunction with the Saranac Hollow walking trail loop.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify historic resources for interpretation and promotion.</li> <li>Develop ideas for promotion and interpretation such as installation of informational plaques or signage, development of a walking tour pamphlet, and maintenance or rehabilitation of historic structures.</li> <li>Secure funding for projects.</li> </ul>	Clinton County Historical Society, NYS DOS, NYS OPRHP	NYS DOS EPF, NYS OPRHP
3.5: Explore options for encouraging quality site development in the hamlets and along the Route 3 Corridor to protect and enhance community character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As part of future local land management considerations, identify important qualities for preferred site development to protect or enhance community character.</li> <li>Develop appropriate local land management tools that would achieve these qualities.</li> </ul>	NYS DOS, APA	NYS DOS EPF



## Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy

### Town of Saranac Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX ❖ = Priority Action

Action		Implementation Steps	Partners	Potential Funding Source
	3.6: Increase community awareness of planning efforts and resulting benefits for the Town of Saranac.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide information on the Town website.</li> <li>Encourage reports from committees and other active groups at Town Board meetings.</li> <li>Provide information in the Town Crier.</li> </ul>	N/A	N/A
	3.7: Inventory and promote the Town's historic resources and other unique features.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify categories of features to inventory (ex: older structures, historic structures and sites, barns, stone walls, viewsheds).</li> <li>Develop inventory.</li> <li>Identify methods for promoting resources which may include summary pamphlets of resources, maps of "tours" by different modes of transportation (walking, cycling, paddling, car) and providing links to materials on regional and state websites.</li> <li>As necessary seek funding or other assistance.</li> </ul>	NYS DOS, Clinton County Historical Society, NYS OPRHP, AARCH	NYS DOS EPF, NYS OPRHP Preservation Office
<b>Goal 4: Work with NYS DOT, APA, DOS and other agencies to enhance all aspects of the Route 3 corridor including safety, multi-modal capacity and aesthetic appearance.</b>				
❖	4.1 Partner with Saranac CSD to improve pedestrian safety on Route 3 at the Saranac Central School.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet with stakeholders (School District, DOT, APA) to determine ways to improve pedestrian safety on Route 3.</li> <li>Identify needs for new pedestrian facilities, amenities, and safety features, which could include signage, crosswalks, curb extensions, signals, special pavement treatments at crossings and traffic signal improvements.</li> <li>Pursue funding for locally controlled improvements.</li> </ul>	Saranac Central School District, NYS DOS, NYS DOT	NYS DOS EPF, NYS DOT Safe Routes to Schools Program
❖	4.2: Work with New York State DOT, APA and DOS on the development of the DOT Route 3 Corridor Management Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide elements of the Town's Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy related to the Route 3 Corridor to DOT.</li> <li>Meet with DOT, APA and DOS regarding the Corridor Management Plan and regularly follow-up on progress.</li> <li>Provide input on the draft Plan when comment is solicited.</li> </ul>	NYS DOT, DOS, DEC	NYS DOS EPF, NYS DOT

Town of Saranac Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX ♦ = Priority Action				
Action		Implementation Steps	Partners	Potential Funding Source
	4.3: Improve safety of Route 3 for cycling and other non-motorized transportation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with DOT on the Corridor Management Plan and future resurfacing projects to add shoulders, guardrails and shared road signage as well as signage warning drivers of cyclists on road.</li> </ul>	NYS DOT, APA and NYS DOS, local cycling groups	NYS DOT
	4.4: Improve commuter parking opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet with NYS DOT to discuss improved maintenance of the existing parking lots on Route 3 to better utilize these lots in the winter.</li> <li>Identify possible locations for a future commuter lot or possibilities for shared parking if demand exceeds existing supply.</li> <li>Work with CCPT to include commuter parking lots as regularly schedule stops, and encourage CCPT to adjust schedules to better accommodate commuter needs.</li> </ul>	NYS DOT, Clinton County Public Transit, NYS DOS, NYS DHCR	NYS DOT, NYS DHCR Main Street
	4.5: Enhance Town gateways on major roadways and install wayfinding signage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify key gateways for signage.</li> <li>Identify features, if any, to be included with gateway signage such as plantings or a feature such as a monument, sculpture, clock etc. The ability to include features may be hindered by the availability of land or easements.</li> <li>For wayfinding signage, identify key points of interest such as downtown business districts, historical and cultural sites, river access points, public parking lots etc.</li> <li>Create a map of signs and their ideal location and meet with NYS and County DOT (depending on the routes) regarding sign installations and possible methods to reduce sign clutter -- centralizing signs whenever possible.</li> <li>Seek grant funding for gateway and wayfinding signage design and purchase.</li> </ul>	NYS DOT, APA, NYS DOS	NYS DOS EPF, NYS DOT, DHCR NY Main Street





## Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy

### Town of Saranac Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX ❖ = Priority Action

Action		Implementation Steps	Partners	Potential Funding Source
<b>Goal 5: Provide a variety of high-quality housing options for residents of all ages and incomes.</b>				
5.1: Identify target areas for housing rehabilitation improvements and secure funding to implement housing rehabilitation projects.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a windshield survey of all housing units in the Town. Based on results, prioritize areas where the housing need appears to be greatest.</li> <li>Conduct a more formal housing condition and income survey of the priority areas.</li> <li>Prioritize those areas with greatest needs in terms of housing conditions and income.</li> <li>Submit applications to funding agencies for financial assistance.</li> <li>Develop outreach, education and promotion materials to help market rehab program to appropriate audiences and encourage participation.</li> </ul>	Property Owners, Town of Saranac, Rural Preservation Company of Clinton County (RPC)	NYS DHCR HOME & Housing Trust Fund Program, CDBG Small Cities, NYS DOS EPF
5.2: Consider utilizing NYS incentives for home reinvestment.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet with stakeholders to discuss financial incentives available under NYS law to encourage home reinvestment.</li> <li>Consider pros and cons of incentives such as the NYS 421 (f) Tax Relief Program.</li> <li>If programs are adopted, conduct public outreach to make property owners aware of what types of improvements may result in an increase in assessed valuation.</li> </ul>	Town Board, Town Attorney, Town Assessor	NYS DHCR HOME & Housing Trust Fund Program, CDBG Small Cities, NYS DOS EPF

Town of Saranac Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX ❖ = Priority Action				
Action		Implementation Steps	Partners	Potential Funding Source
	5.3: Work in partnership with local organizations to pursue funding opportunities for affordable homeownership and rental development projects through State and Federal Housing Programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Meet with local stakeholder organizations.</li> <li>▪ Identify potential projects.</li> <li>▪ Determine/select appropriate grant applicant and grant writer.</li> <li>▪ Approach private housing developers about developing housing in Town.</li> </ul>	Rural Preservation Company of Clinton Co. (RPC), Clinton County Housing Assistance Program, Clinton County Planning Dept	NYS DHCR HOME & Housing Trust Fund Program, CDBG Small Cities, NYS DOS EPF, Adirondack Community Housing Trust (AHT)
❖	5.4: Perform an assessment of senior housing and pursue identified needs in Saranac.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Work with local organizations to secure funding for a housing market analysis.</li> <li>▪ Hire an independent firm to conduct a housing market analysis that examines housing needs for elderly households, subsidized and market-rate housing, special needs housing including assisted living.</li> <li>▪ Based on the results of the Market Analysis, if there is a housing type or tenure that is needed in Saranac consider possible housing locations and work to ensure that the Adirondack Park Agency regulations and Town's local land management or zoning enables such development.</li> <li>▪ Pursue development of this housing type by contacting appropriate stakeholders such housing organizations, private housing developers and real estate developers.</li> </ul>	RPC, Clinton County Housing Assistance Program, Clinton County Office for the Aging, Senior Citizens Council of Clinton County, Inc. (SCCCC)	NYS DHCR HOME & Housing Trust Fund Program, CDBG Small Cities, NYS DOS EPF
<b>Goal 6: Encourage enhanced use of the Saranac River through improved physical access and support for uses that depend on water access or are enhanced by proximity of the river.</b>				



## Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy

### Town of Saranac Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX ❖ = Priority Action

Action	Implementation Steps	Partners	Potential Funding Source
❖ 6.1: Implement the Master Plan for Picketts Corners Park.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify costs associated with all Master Plan elements and phases for development.</li> <li>Identify all potential sources of funding for Plan implementation and match requirements. Funding may also include fund raisers through local community groups.</li> <li>Identify possible sources of match to be utilized including other sources of funding, in-kind labor, easements etc.</li> <li>Identify organizations or groups who utilize or would use Picketts Corners Park to partner with.</li> <li>Secure funding and design/construct/install improvements.</li> </ul>	NYS DOS, APA, NYS DEC, NYS OPRHP, Flatwater Canoe Challenge, Northern Forest Canoe Trail	NYS DOS EPF, NYS OPRHP EPF
6.2: Provide pedestrian amenities and improvements to the Saranac Hollow walking loop.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inventory possible improvements such as road shoulder repair or widening, possible locations for pull-offs or a small pocket parking lot and occasional seating.</li> <li>Incorporate road improvements associated with the walking loop in the Comprehensive Road Maintenance Plan.</li> <li>Work with NYS DOT regarding safe pedestrian crossing of Route 3.</li> <li>Incorporate the development of the walking history "trail" as part of the walking loop (Action 3.4).</li> </ul>	NYS DOS, NYS OPRHP, Saranac River Trail Initiative	NYS DOS EPF, NYS OPRHP EPF
6.3: Assess feasibility of restoring the iron truss bridge crossing the Saranac River into a multi-modal recreational crossing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure funding for feasibility study.</li> <li>Complete a feasibility study and based on conclusions identify next steps, if any.</li> </ul>	NYS DOS, Clinton County, Adirondack Architectural Heritage (AARCH)	NYS DOS EPF, US DOT Transportation Enhancement Program (TEP)
6.4: Partner with the New York State Electric and Gas (NYSEG) to increase access to the River.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify list of desired improvements on NYSEG properties.</li> <li>Meet with NYSEG representatives regarding improvements.</li> <li>Partner with NYSEG regarding possible funding for improvements.</li> </ul>	NYSEG, NYS DOS, APA, DEC	NYS DOS EPF, NYS OPRHP EPF

Town of Saranac Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX ♦ = Priority Action				
Action		Implementation Steps	Partners	Potential Funding Source
	6.5: Improve fishing access along the Saranac River and True Brook.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with local anglers and DEC to evaluate existing fishing access including availability of fish, parking, trails to water from parking or roads, access from embankment and safety.</li> <li>Identify possible enhancements to improve access and increase usage.</li> <li>Prioritize locations for improvements based on available fish, ease of access and existing infrastructure and work with DEC to implement improvements.</li> </ul>	NYS DOS, NYS DEC, APA, local anglers, Local Chapter of Trout Unlimited & other organizations	NYS DOS EPF, NYS OPRHP
	6.6: Improve fishery resources in the Town's rivers and streams.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with DEC to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>evaluate existing fish stocking, habitat conditions and other factors affecting fishery resources in Town;</li> <li>identify possible methods for improving resources; and</li> <li>determine whether any such methods are within the purview of the Town.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	NYS DEC, NYS DOS, APA, local anglers, Trout Unlimited	NYS DOS EPF, NYS OPRHP
	6.7: Partner with the Northern Forest Canoe Trail (NFCT) to develop campsites and other necessary amenities at Picketts Corners Park.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with NFCT regarding the possible siting of a limited number of campsites and other amenities in Picketts Corners Park for paddler use.</li> </ul>	NYS DEC, NYS DOS, Northern Forest Canoe Trail	NYS DOS EPF, NYS OPRHP
	6.8. Support the expansion of the Saranac River Trail initiative into a regional trail.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to attend meetings on the Saranac River Trail Initiative.</li> <li>Continue local trail development initiatives that could connect into the regional Saranac River Trail system.</li> </ul>	Saranac River Trail Initiative, Clinton County, NYS DOS	NYS DOS EPF, NYS ORPHP
<b>Goal 7: Support traditional recreational uses and provide new recreation choices, both water and land based, that meet the needs of residents and tourists alike without compromising the Town's healthy environment.</b>				



## Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy

### Town of Saranac Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX ❖ = Priority Action

Action	Implementation Steps	Partners	Potential Funding Source
❖ 7.1 Promote local recreational resources for visitors and residents through wayfinding signage and development of informational materials for websites and in print.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For wayfinding signage, identify key points of interest such as downtown business districts, historical and cultural sites, river access points, public parking lots etc.</li> <li>Create a map of signs and their ideal location and meet with NYS and County DOT (depending on the routes) regarding sign installations and possible methods to reduce sign clutter -- centralizing signs whenever possible.</li> <li>Seek grant funding for wayfinding signage design and purchase.</li> <li>Develop a page on the Town website devoted to the Town's recreational resources that could then be linked to more regional websites. It is intended to be used (and found online) by potential outdoor recreation enthusiasts.</li> </ul>	NYS DOS, NYS DOT, APA, Clinton County, Adirondack Regional Tourism Council, North Forest Canoe Trail	NYS DOS EPF, NYS OPRHP
7.2: Enhance the cycling experience in Saranac by improving safety on popular routes and providing amenities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet with local cycling groups and regional bike shops to discuss local and regional cycling including popular routes, routes that could be popular with improvements, amenities that could improve the local experience, and needed goods and services that local businesses could supply.</li> <li>Work with cycling groups and surrounding communities to develop a cycling routes map that recommends local and regional routes.</li> </ul>	Local cycling groups and bike shops, NYS DOS, NYS DOT, County DOT	NYS DOS EPF, NYS DOT, DOT TEP, County DOT
7.3: Work with NYS Department of Environmental Conservation to establish public recreation use areas on the Sable Highland easement properties located in the Town.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with DEC to implement the Recreational Management Plan and develop additional public use areas such as new trails, trail connections to existing trail networks and parking on the Conservation Easements in the Town.</li> </ul>	NYS DEC, New Land Trust, Adirondack Mountain Club	NYS DEC

Town of Saranac Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX ❖ = Priority Action				
Action		Implementation Steps	Partners	Potential Funding Source
❖	7.4: Work with the NYS DEC and the Town of Dannemora to include improvements to existing public access trails and development of new trails on the State-owned Lyon Mountain Tract.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet with DEC regarding the development of the Unit Management Plan that includes the Lyon Mountain Tract and seek active input in the development of public access trails, parking etc.</li> <li>Work with DEC to maintain the existence of the snowmobile connecting trail.</li> </ul>	NYS DEC, Town of Dannemora, NYS DOS, local snowmobile clubs, mountain biking organizations	NYS DEC
	7.5: Support the development of a mountain biking trail network on the Lyon Mountain Tract.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research successful Adirondack mountain biking trail networks.</li> <li>Identify regional mountain biking organizations to contact regarding the development of a trail system on the Lyon Mountain Tract.</li> <li>Meet with DEC to discuss possible mountain biking trails.</li> </ul>	NYS DEC, NYS DOS, mountain biking organizations	NYS DOS EPF, NYS OPRHP
	7.6: Capitalize on the recreational opportunities in Saranac such as paddling, fishing, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, and hiking by attracting more retailers and businesses that cater to outdoor enthusiasts.	See Action 1.3.	NYS DOS, NYS OCR, Clinton County, North Country Chamber of Commerce, Adirondack Regional Tourism Council	NYS DOS EPF, NYS OPRHP
	7.7: Identify possible recreational opportunities on the Town industrial park land.	See Action 1.7	NYS DOS, NYS OPRHP, APA	NYS DOS EPF, NYS OPRHP EPF





## Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy

### Town of Saranac Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX ❖ = Priority Action

Action	Implementation Steps	Partners	Potential Funding Source
<b>Goal 8: The Town will provide well-maintained municipal infrastructure and community and government services.</b>			
8.1: Reduce the Town tax levy by examining all spending and improving efficiency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review all existing town budget categories and identify areas of concern that are within local control and possible areas for sharing services.</li> <li>Discuss future budgets with the fire districts with the goal of reducing the local tax levy.</li> <li>Discuss the possibilities for sharing services with identified parties such as County DOT, the school district and adjacent municipalities.</li> <li>Consider setting goals and benchmarks for reducing municipal spending and service improvements.</li> </ul>	NYS DOS, Fire Districts, County DOT, Saranac Central School, adjacent municipalities	NYS DOS EPS, NYS DOS LGEP
❖ 8.2: The Town Board will initiate the development of a Comprehensive Road Maintenance Plan with the goal of reducing costs and improving the provision of services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If professional services for project facilitation are desired, secure funding for services.</li> <li>Establish a Committee or working group of Town stakeholders including Highway Dept. staff, Town Board members, County DOT and residents.</li> <li>Evaluate the current conditions of all road segments and prioritize their need for maintenance or repair.</li> <li>Establish a set of criteria for prioritizing maintenance of each road segment.</li> <li>Establish a preventative maintenance strategy that may include shared services with County and State DOT to improve efficiencies, shorten repaving cycles and improve overall provision of services Town-wide.</li> <li>Establish standard construction specifications for use by private developers who develop subdivision streets and infrastructure with the intent to dedicate those improvements to the Town.</li> </ul>	NYS DOS, County DOT, NYS DOT	NYS DOS EPF, NYS DOT, NYS DOS LGEP

Town of Saranac Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX ♦ = Priority Action			
Action	Implementation Steps	Partners	Potential Funding Source
♦ 8.3: Explore opportunities for shared services with neighboring municipalities and school district to help reduce costs of services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet with neighboring municipalities to discuss this potential strategy.</li> <li>Draft shared development strategy.</li> <li>Consider grant funding for development and implementation of shared development strategies.</li> <li>The Town should establish a review process for all planning and developments in communities that surround it to ensure that any proposed activities will not have detrimental impacts on the Town, its infrastructure or its residents.</li> <li>Meet with the neighboring municipalities to discuss potential for shared approval processes.</li> <li>Create a policy that establishes point of contact and process for proper administration of shared approval processes.</li> </ul>	Surrounding municipalities, Clinton County, NYS DOS	NYS DOS LGEP
8.4: Continue to seek funding to establish renewable and sustainable energy systems for municipal use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As grant opportunities arise, continue to seek grants for the installation of solar arrays, biomass, wind or other renewable and sustainable energy systems for Town facilities.</li> <li>Explore potential efficiencies in shared use of renewable energy systems (e.g. Town and School District).</li> </ul>	NYSDERDA, NYS DOS, APA, ADKCAP, Adirondack Energy \$mart Park Coalition, ASCI	NYS DOS EPF, NYSDERDA
8.5: Pursue funding for improvements to the existing water districts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss any inadequacies to the current public water systems as identified by the Dept. of Health with residents and businesses in the water district.</li> <li>Secure funding for required improvements and implement improvements.</li> <li>Develop Request For Proposals (RFP's) to solicit proposals from engineering firms to develop Engineering Map, Plan, and Reports for each water district.</li> </ul>	NYS OCR, NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC)	CDBG Small Cities, NYS EFC
8.6: Investigate possible alternatives and feasibility for mitigating seasonal flooding on Bowen Road.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with DEC and County DOT to evaluate alternatives for flooding mitigation.</li> <li>Evaluate alternatives to determine if mitigation is desired.</li> </ul>	NYS DOS, NYS DOT, FEMA. SEMO	NYS DOS EPF, FEMA, SEMO



## Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy

### Town of Saranac Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX ❖ = Priority Action

Action		Implementation Steps	Partners	Potential Funding Source
	8.7: Improve the Town website to better provide community information for residents and promote Saranac's tourism opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Train an existing Town staff member to enable Town website updates on a regular basis.</li> <li>Update the Town website to include more information about community services, programs and volunteering.</li> <li>Use the Town announcement board on Route 3 to remind people of the Town website, include the Town link in water bills and other materials distributed to residents, include reminders of the website in church bulletins etc.</li> </ul>	N/A	N/A
	8.8: Increase the number of volunteers for Saranac youth teams for County organized youth recreation programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include information about the County youth recreation program on the Town website including the importance of volunteers.</li> </ul>	Clinton County Youth	N/A
	8.9 Support the continued development and circulation of the <i>Town Crier</i> newsletter.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with current resident volunteer(s) responsible for the Town Crier to identify any opportunities for improving the process for development (needs, concerns) and maintaining the quality and circulation of the publication.</li> <li>Discuss concepts of succession planning with the existing editor/volunteer staff.</li> </ul>	Community residents	N/A

**KEY TO ABBREVIATED NAMES**

ADKCAP - Adirondack Climate and Energy Action Plan

AARCH - Adirondack Architectural Heritage

ANCA - Adirondack North Country Association

APA - New York State Adirondack Park Agency

ASCI - Adirondack Sustainable Communities, Inc.

CCPT - Clinton County Public Transportation

CDBG - Community Development Block Grant

FEMA - Federal Emergency Management Agency

NYS AG and Markets - New York State Department of Agricultural and Markets - Municipal Agriculture and Farmland Protection Grants

NYS DEC - New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

NYS DHCR - New York State Department of Housing and Community Renewal

NYS DOS EPF - New York State Department of State Local Waterfront Revitalization Program funded by the Environmental Protection Fund

NYS DOS LGEP - New York State Department of State Local Government Efficiency Program

NYS DOT TEP - New York State Department of Transportation, Transportation Enhancement Program

NYSDERDA - New York State Energy Research and Development Authority

NYS EFC - New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation

NYS OCR - New York State Office of Community Renewal

NYS OPRHP - New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Environmental Protection Fund and other sources

SEMO - State Emergency Management Office

SWCD - Soil and Water Conservation District



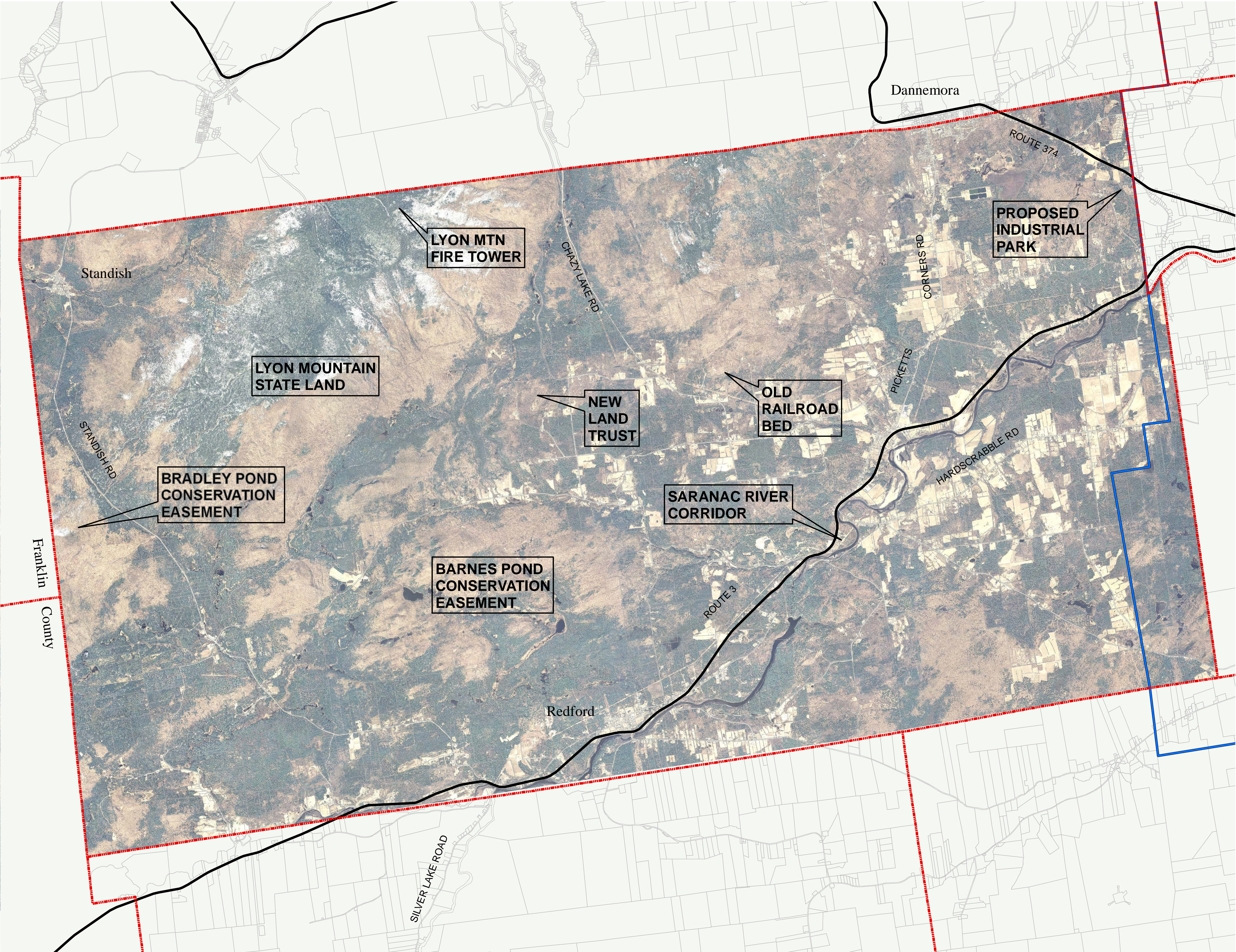
## *Comprehensive Plan and Revitalization Strategy*

# *MAPS*

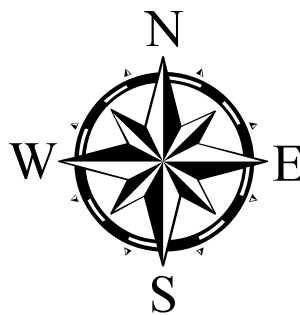


TOWN OF SARANAC  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND REVITALIZATION  
STRATEGY

AERIAL IMAGERY



- Legend**
- Town Boundary
  - Adirondack Park Boundary
  - State Highway
  - Tax Map Parcels



0 3,000 6,000 9,000 Feet

RIVER STREET  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

AES  
NORTHEAST

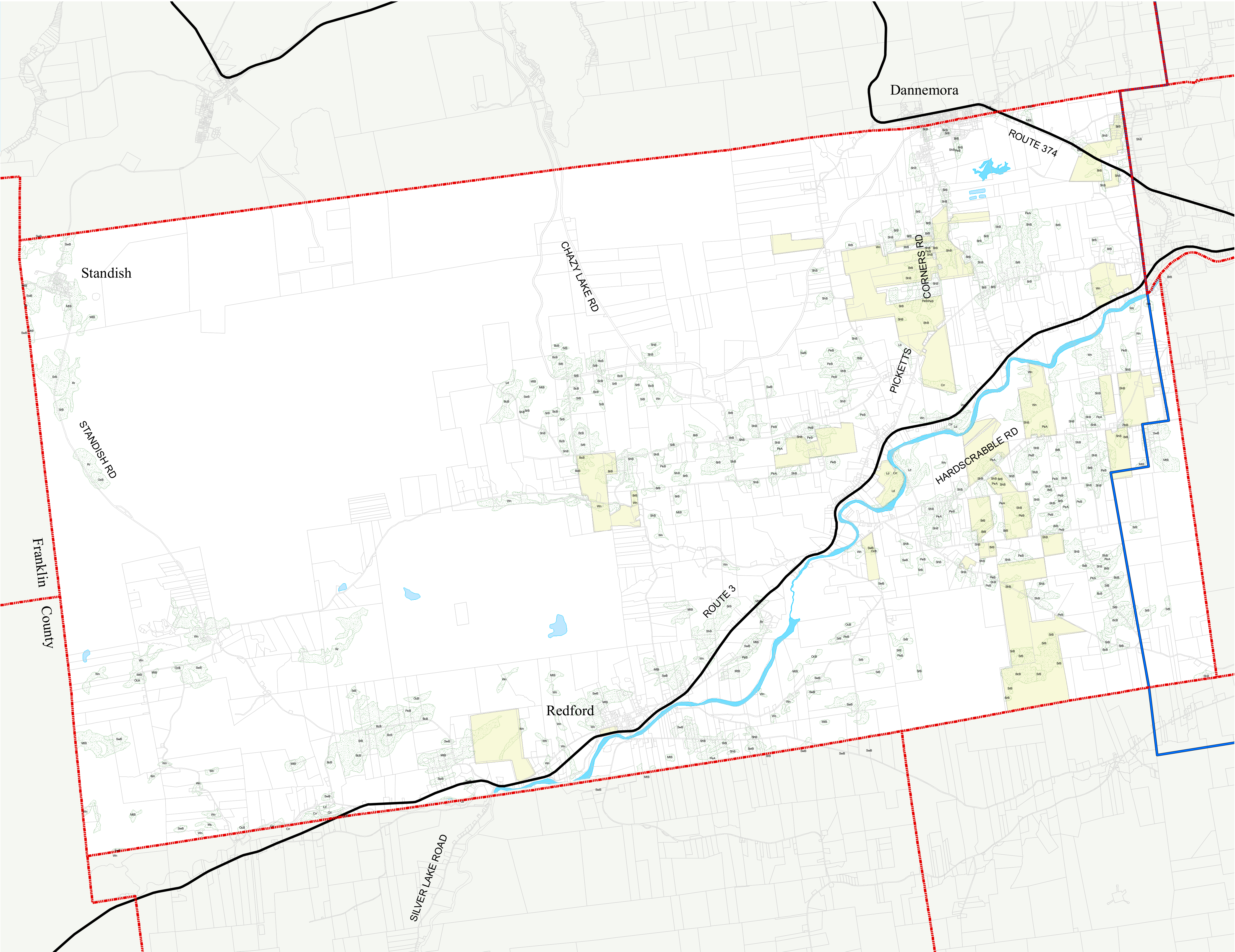


This map was prepared for the  
Town of Saranac, NY and  
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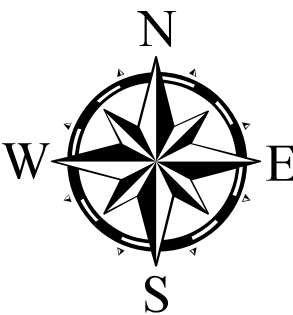


TOWN OF SARANAC  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND REVITALIZATION  
STRATEGY

AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS AND  
PRIME AGRICULTURAL SOILS



- Legend**
- Town Boundary
  - Adirondack Park Boundary
  - State Highway
  - Tax Map Parcels
  - Agricultural Districts
  - Prime Agricultural Soils



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RIVER STREET  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

AES  
NORTHEAST

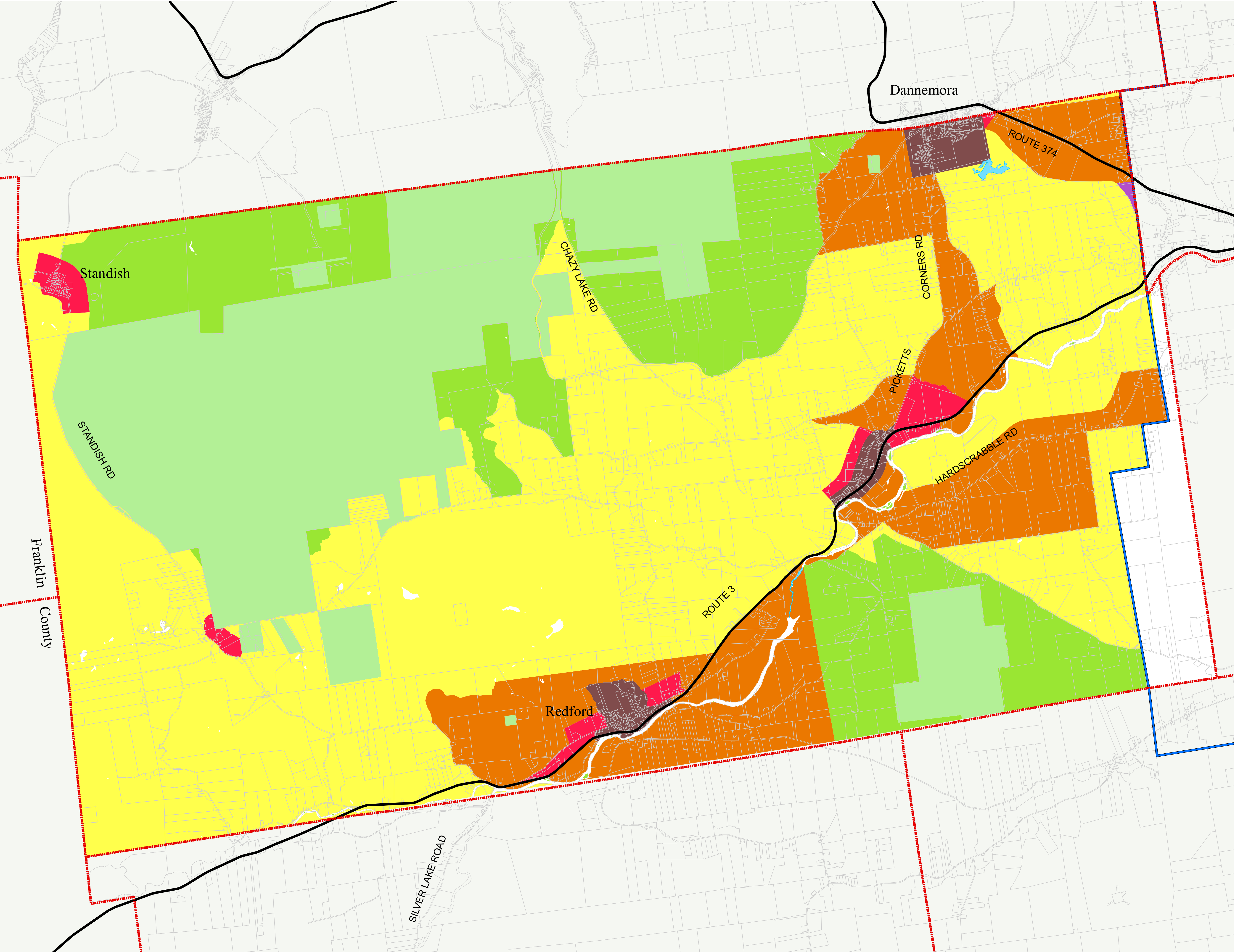


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TOWN OF SARANAC  
COMPRESHENSIVE PLAN AND REVITALIZATION  
STRATEGY

APA LAND USE  
CLASSIFICATION



Legend

- Town Boundary
- Adirondack Park Boundary
- State Highway

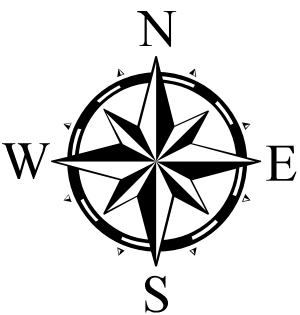
APA Land Classification

State Lands

- Wild Forest
- Wilderness
- Primitive

Private Lands

- Rural Use
- Resource Management
- Low Intensity
- Moderate Intensity
- Industrial Use
- Hamlet



0 3,000 6,000 9,000 Feet

RIVER STREET  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

AES  
NORTHEAST

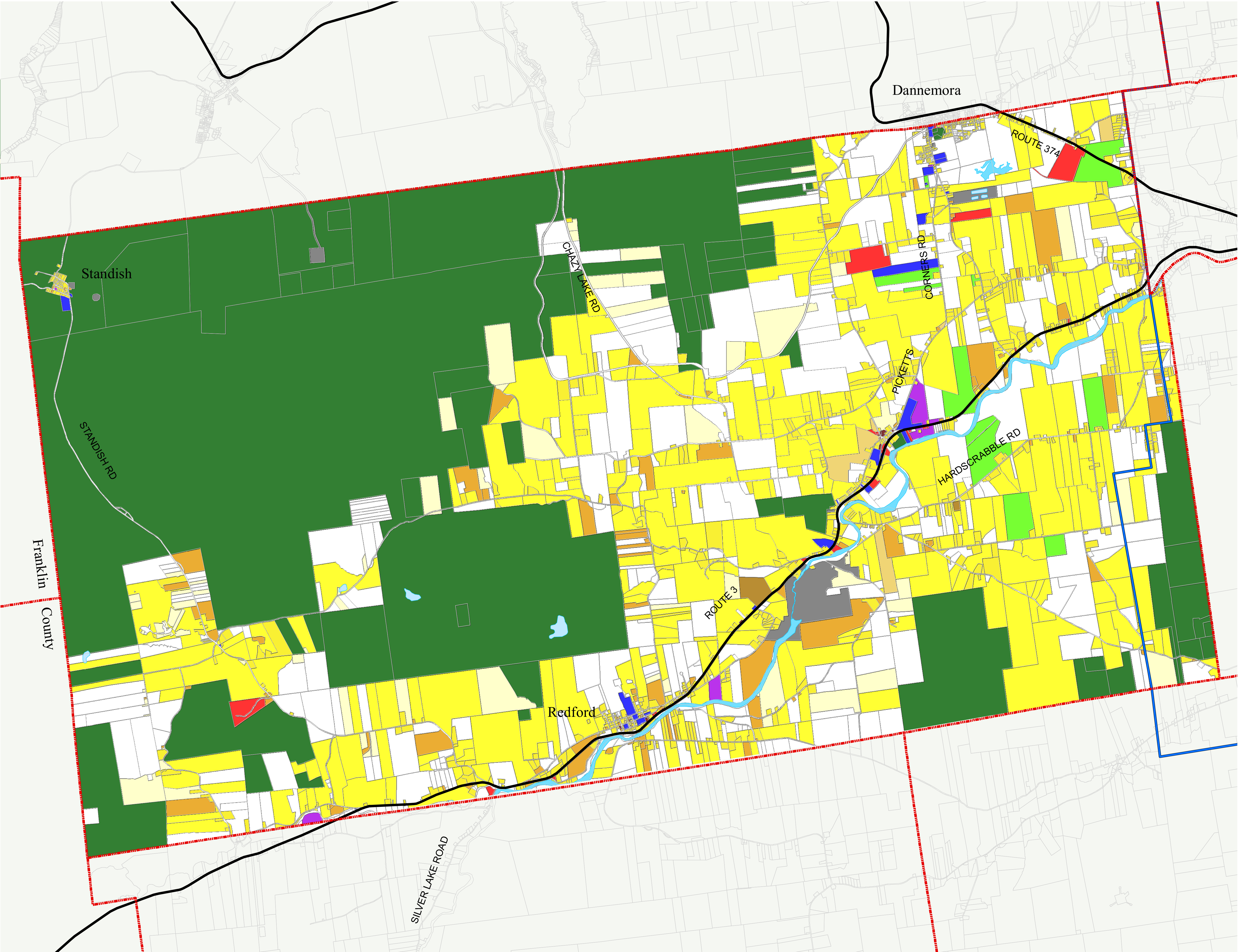


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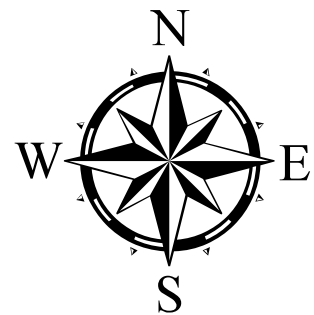
TOWN OF SARANAC  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND REVITALIZATION  
STRATEGY

LAND USE CLASSES  
(FROM ASSESSMENT ROLLS)



- Legend**
- Town Boundary
  - Adirondack Park Boundary
  - State Highway
  - Tax Map Parcels
  - 100s Agriculture (100's)
  - 300s Vacant (300's)
  - 400s minus 411 Commercial (400's-411's)
  - 500s Recreation and Entertainment (500's)
  - 600s Community Services (600's)
  - 800s Public Services (800's)
  - 900s Wild Forested, Conservation Lands and Public Parks (900's)

- Residential**
- Road Classification
- State Highway
  - 210s Single Family Residential (210's)
  - 220s Two Family Residential (220's)
  - 230+411 Three Family Residential plus Apartments (230's+411's)
  - 240s Rural Residential (240's)
  - 260s Seasonal Residential (260's)
  - 270s Manufactured Housing (270's)
  - 280s Multi Purpose Residential (280's)



0 3,000 6,000 9,000 Feet

RIVER STREET  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

AES  
NORTHEAST

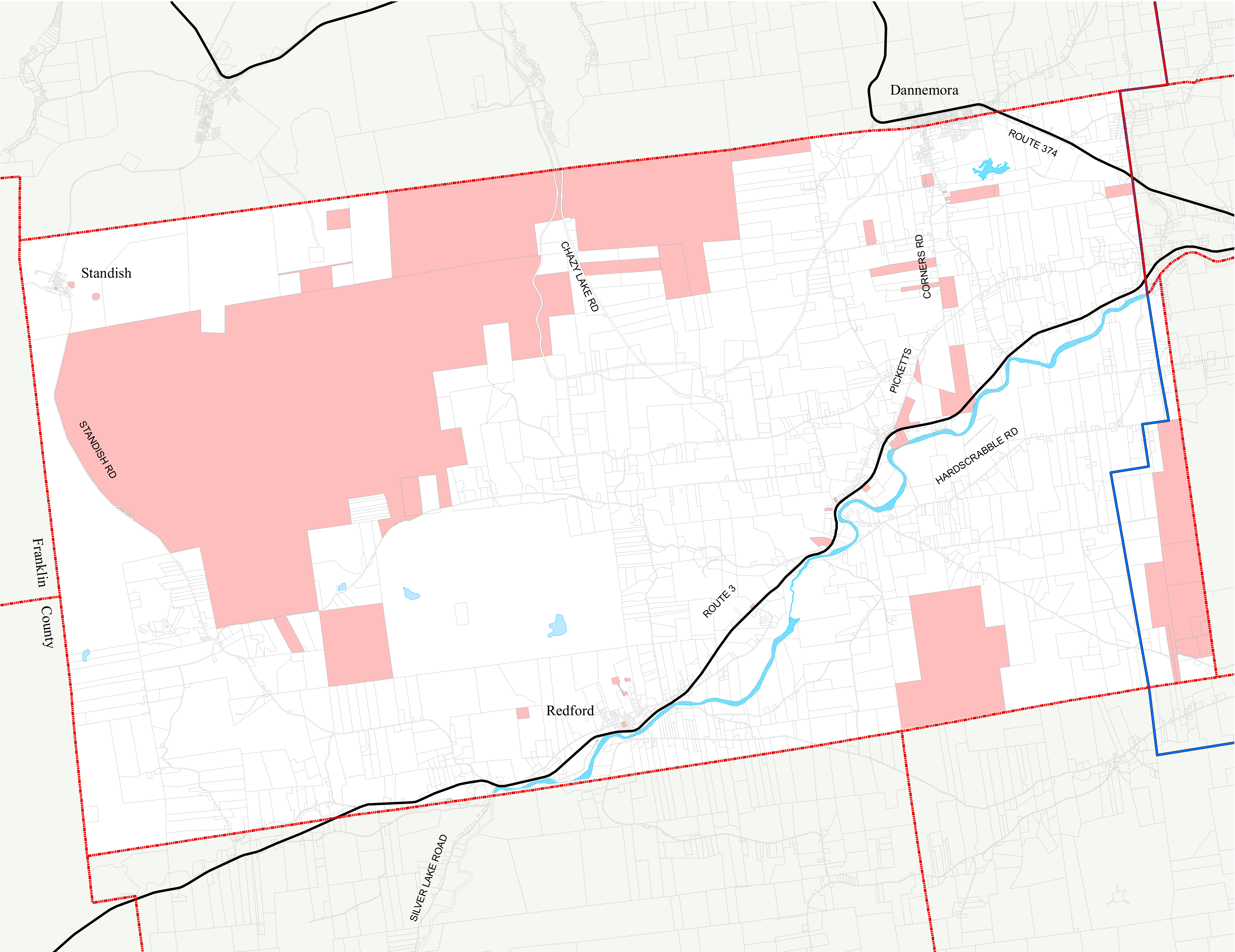


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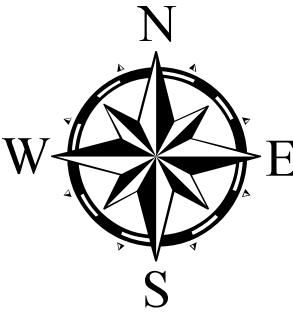


TOWN OF SARANAC  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND REVITALIZATION  
STRATEGY

PUBLICLY OWNED LANDS



- Legend**
- Town Boundary
  - Adirondack Park Boundary
  - State Highway
  - Tax Map Parcels
  - Publicly Owned Lands



0 3,000 6,000 9,000 Feet

RIVER STREET  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

AES  
NORTHEAST

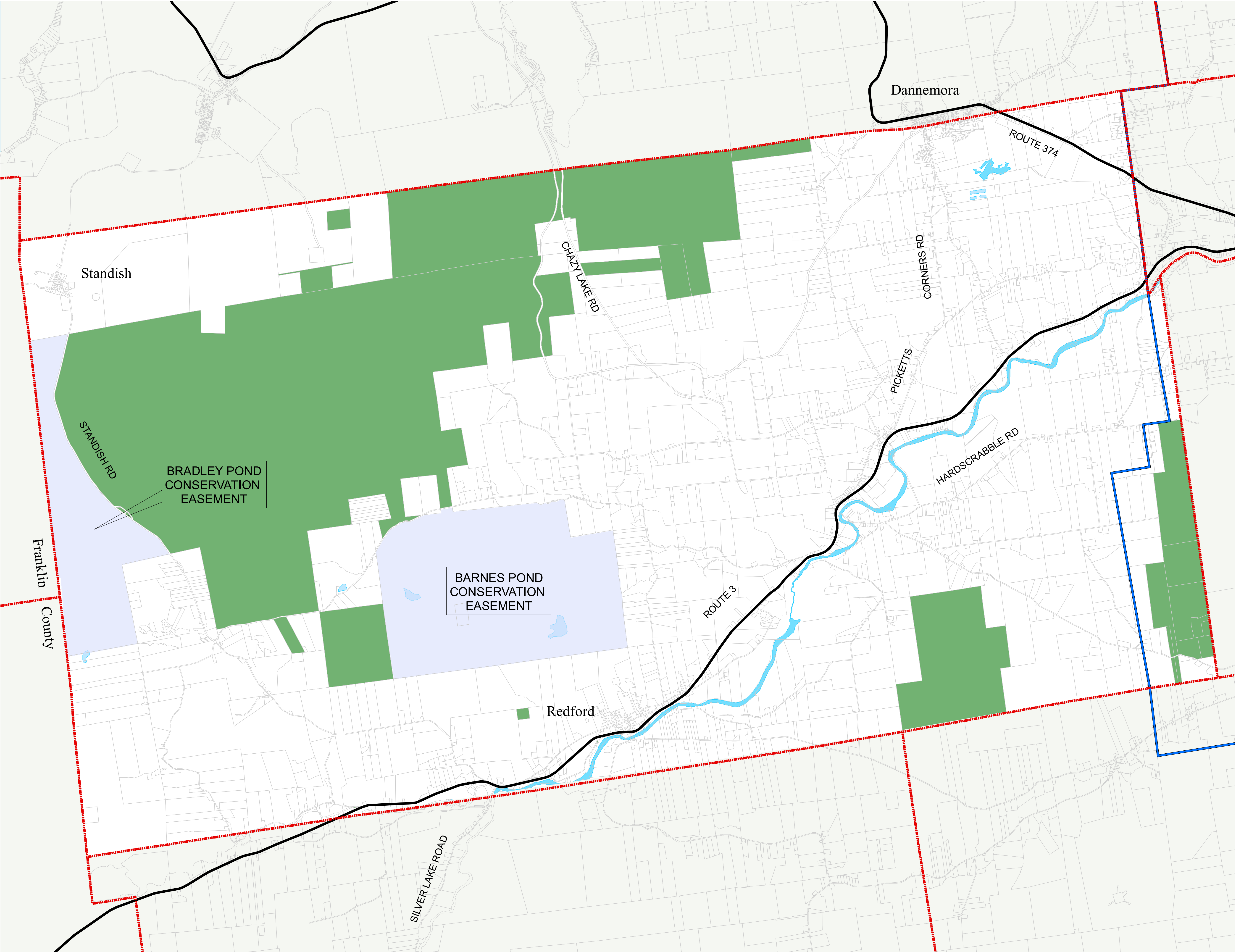


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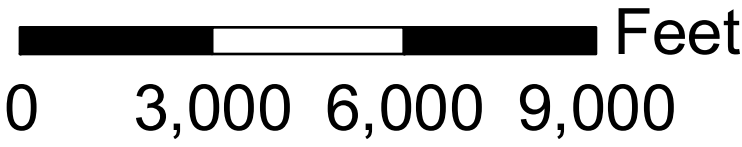
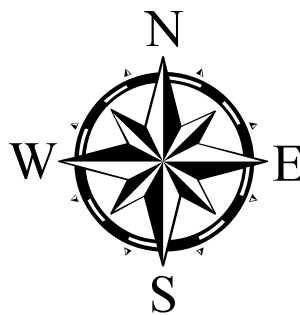
TOWN OF SARANAC  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND REVITALIZATION  
STRATEGY

STATE DEC LANDS  
AND CONSERVATION EASEMENTS



**Legend**

- Town Boundary
- Adirondack Park Boundary
- State Highway
- Tax Map Parcels (Town of Saranac Acreage: 72,602)
- State DEC Lands (Acreage: 17,549)
- Conservation Easements (Acreage: 5,524)



RIVER STREET  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

AES  
NORTHEAST

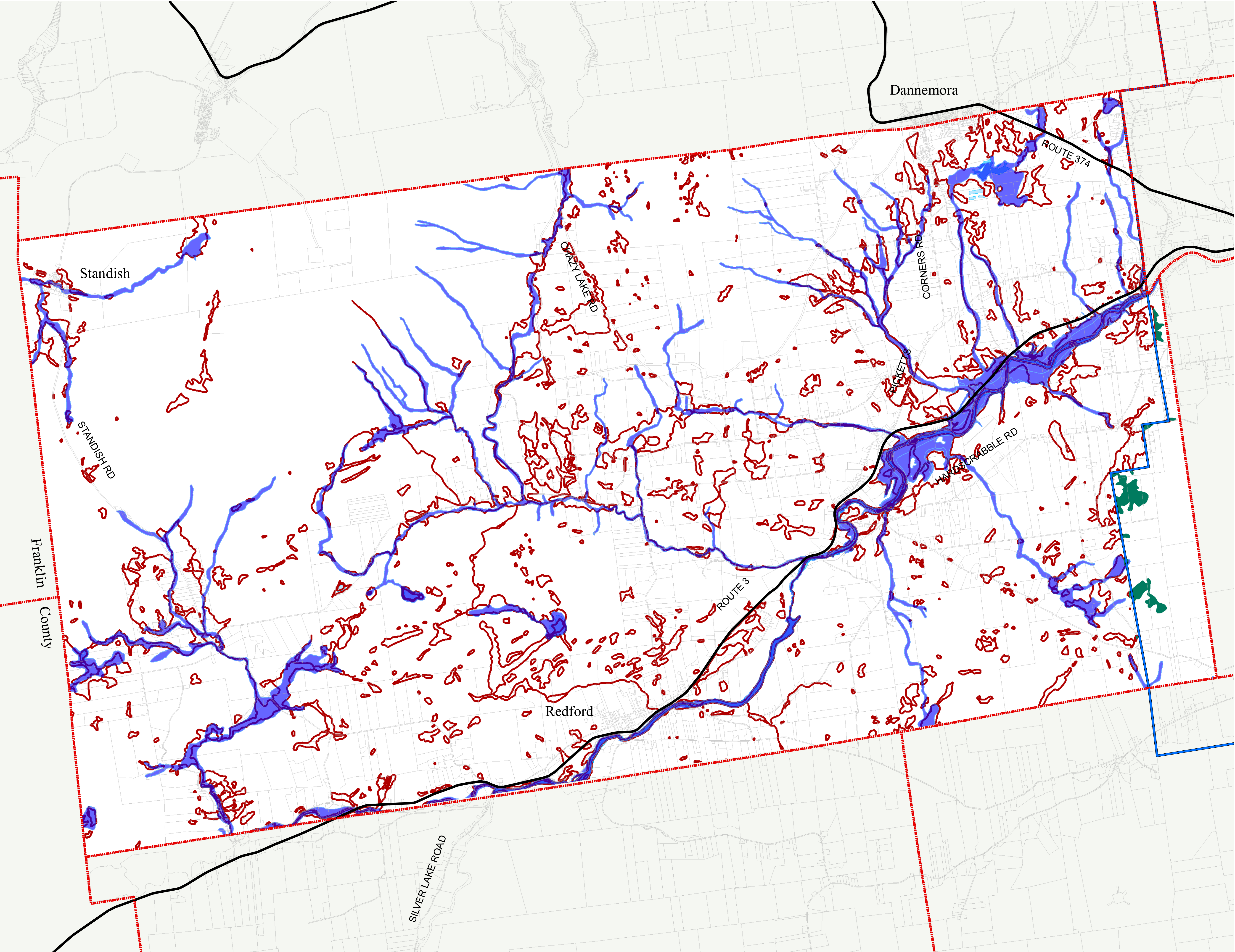
NEW YORK STATE  
DEPARTMENT  
OF STATE

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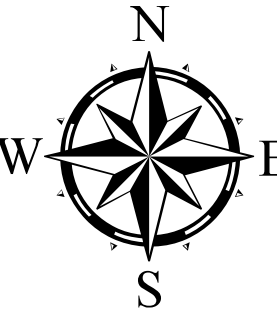


TOWN OF SARANAC  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND REVITALIZATION  
STRATEGY

WETLANDS AND  
FEMA FLOODPLAIN



- Legend**
- Town Boundary
  - Adirondack Park Boundary
  - State Highway
  - Tax Map Parcels
  - APA Wetlands
  - DEC Wetlands
  - FEMA Floodplain



0 3,000 6,000 9,000 Feet

RIVER STREET  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

AES  
NORTHEAST

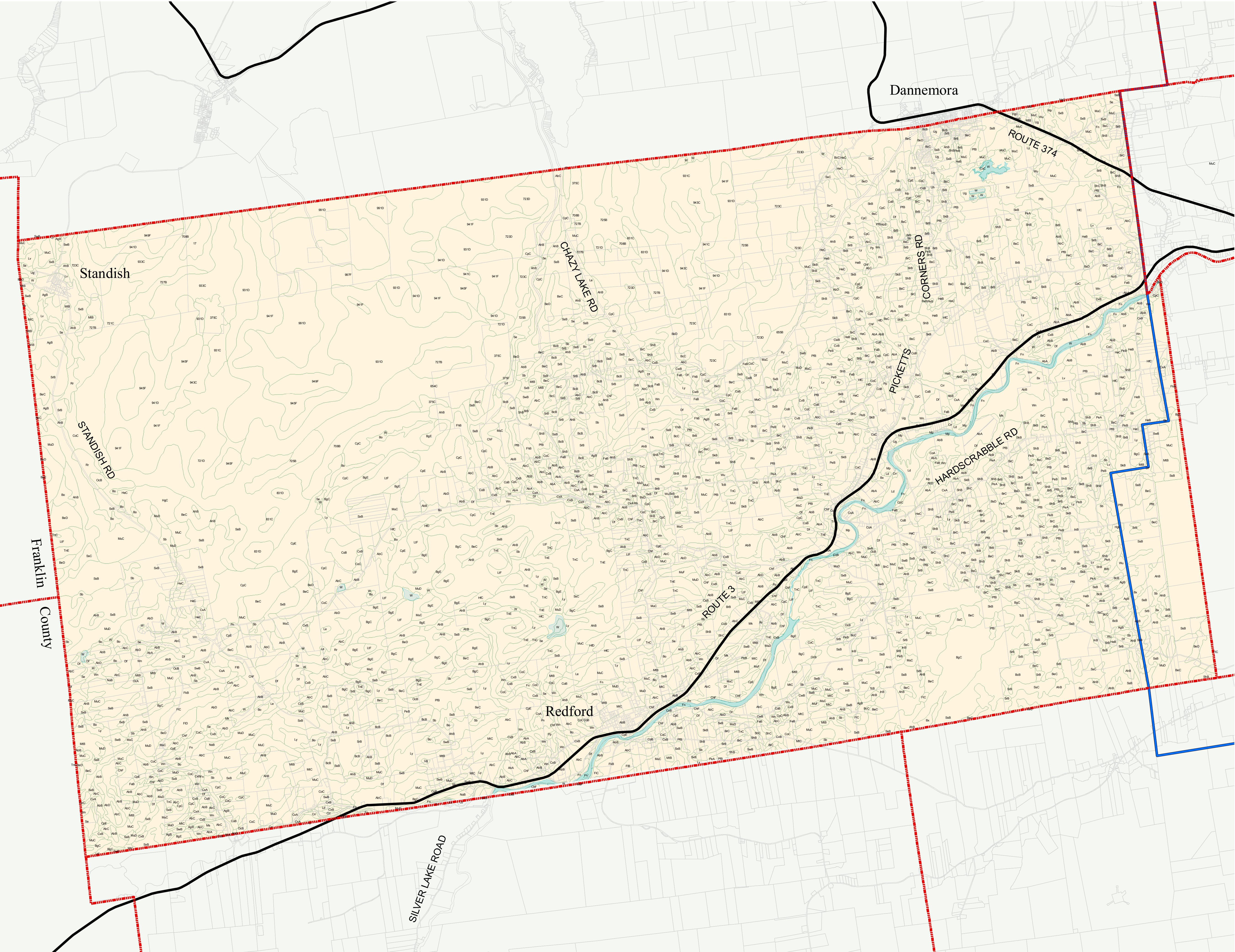


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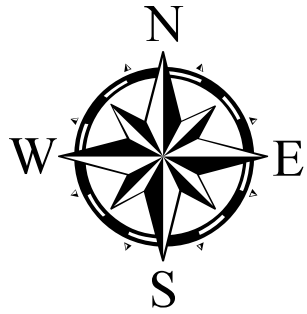
TOWN OF SARANAC  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND REVITALIZATION  
STRATEGY

USDA SOIL TYPES



Legend

- Town Boundary
- Adirondack Park Boundary
- State Highway
- Tax Map Parcels
- USDA Soil Types



0 3,000 6,000 9,000 Feet

RIVER STREET  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

AES  
NORTHEAST

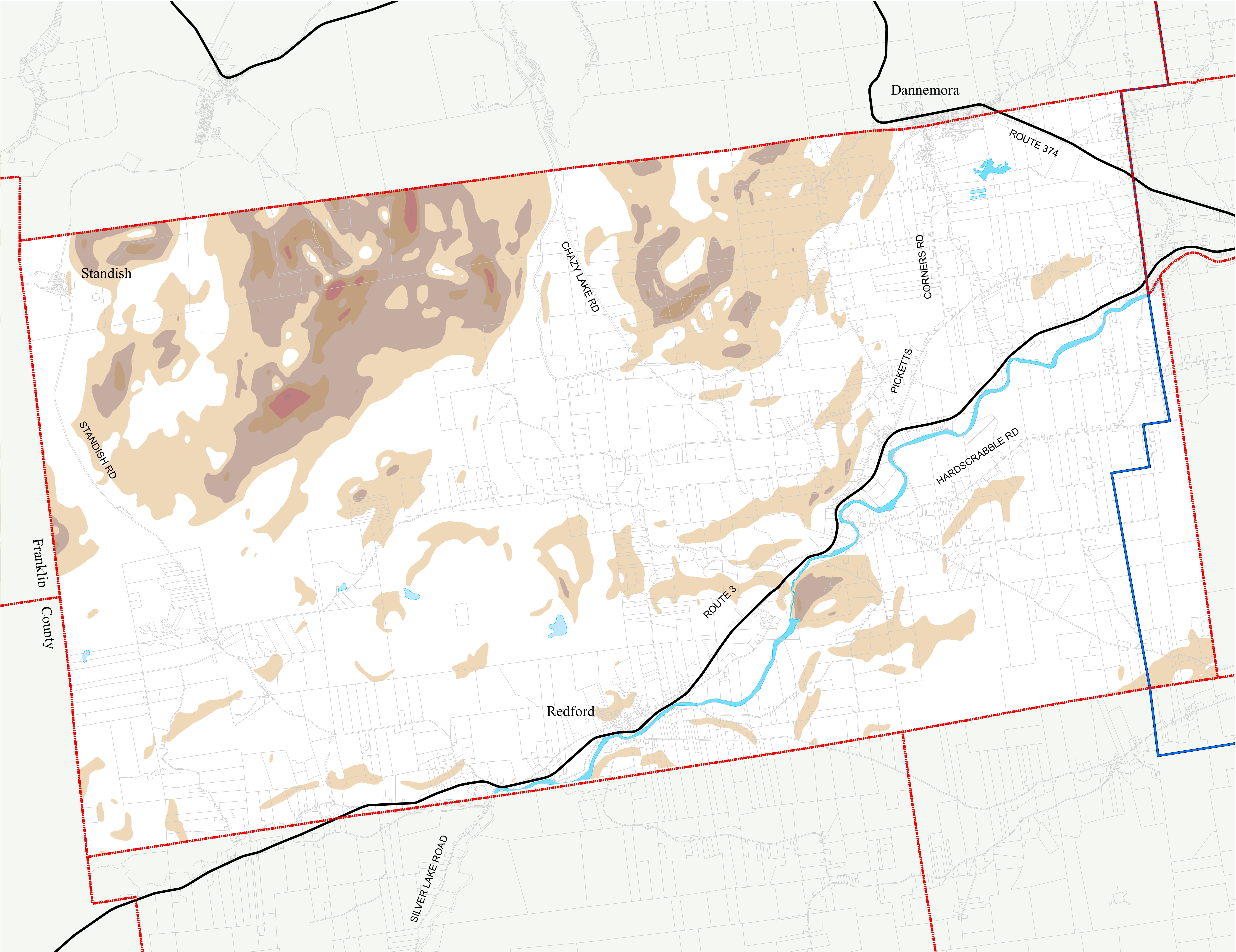
NEW YORK STATE  
DEPARTMENT  
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TOWN OF SARANAC  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND REVITALIZATION  
STRATEGY

PERCENT SLOPES

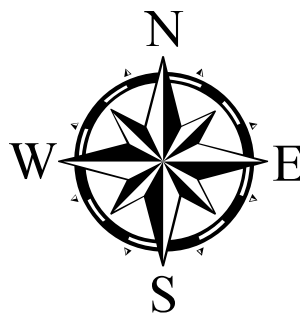


Legend

- Town Boundary
- Adirondack Park Boundary
- State Highway
- Tax Map Parcels

SLOPES

- 0 - 5
- 5 - 10
- 10 - 15
- 15 - 20
- 20 - 25
- 25 - 60



0 3,000 6,000 9,000 Feet

RIVER STREET  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

AES  
NORTHEAST

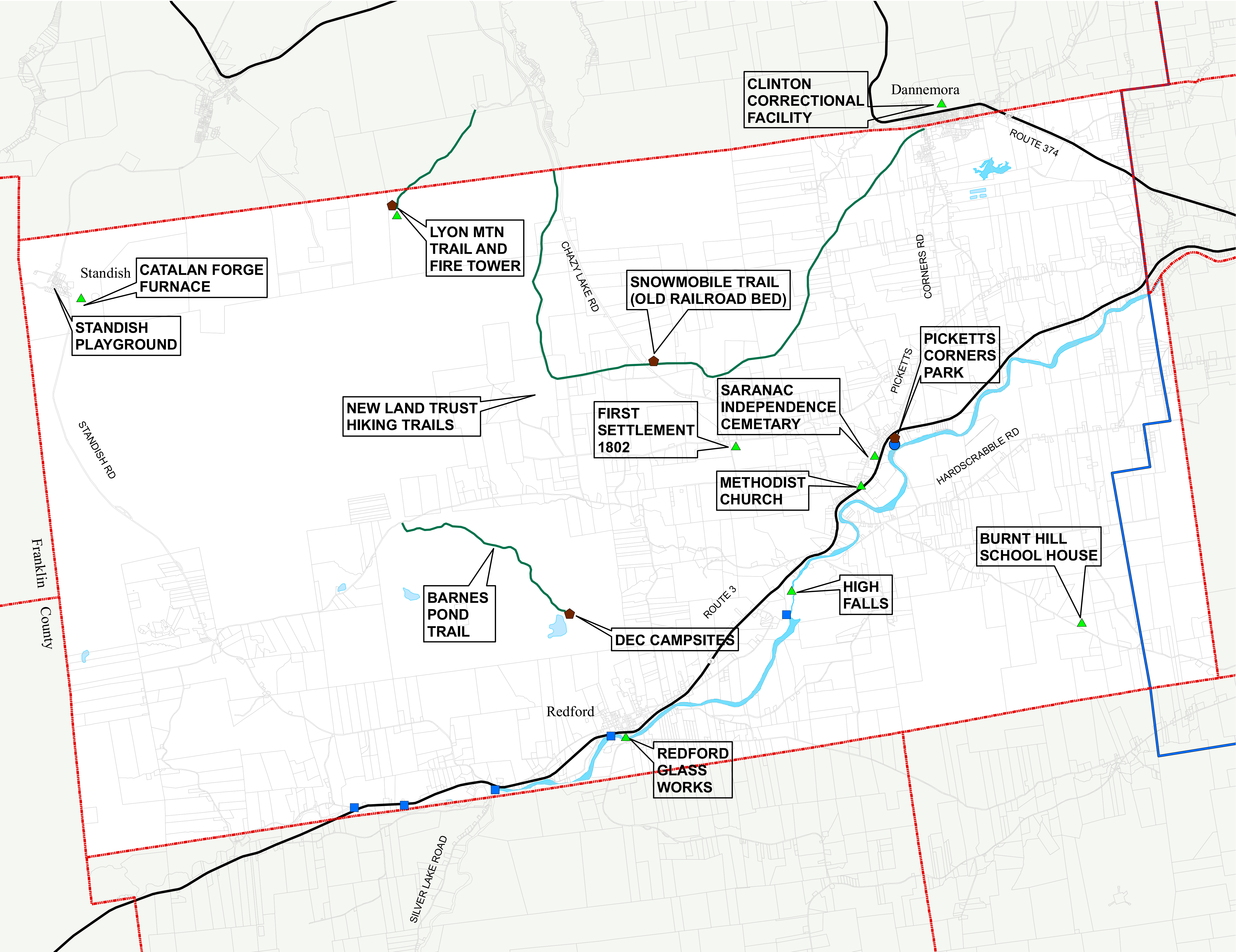


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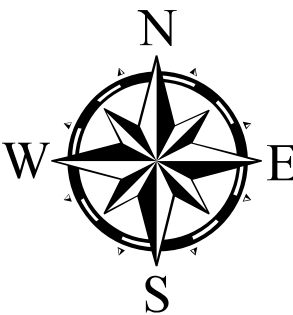


TOWN OF SARANAC  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND REVITALIZATION  
STRATEGY

RECREATION AND  
HISTORICAL SITES



- Legend**
- Town Boundary
  - Adirondack Park Boundary
  - State Highway
  - Tax Map Parcels
  - Trail
  - Historic Sites
  - Recreation Sites
  - Fishing Access
  - Cartop Boat Access



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RIVER STREET  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

AES  
NORTHEAST

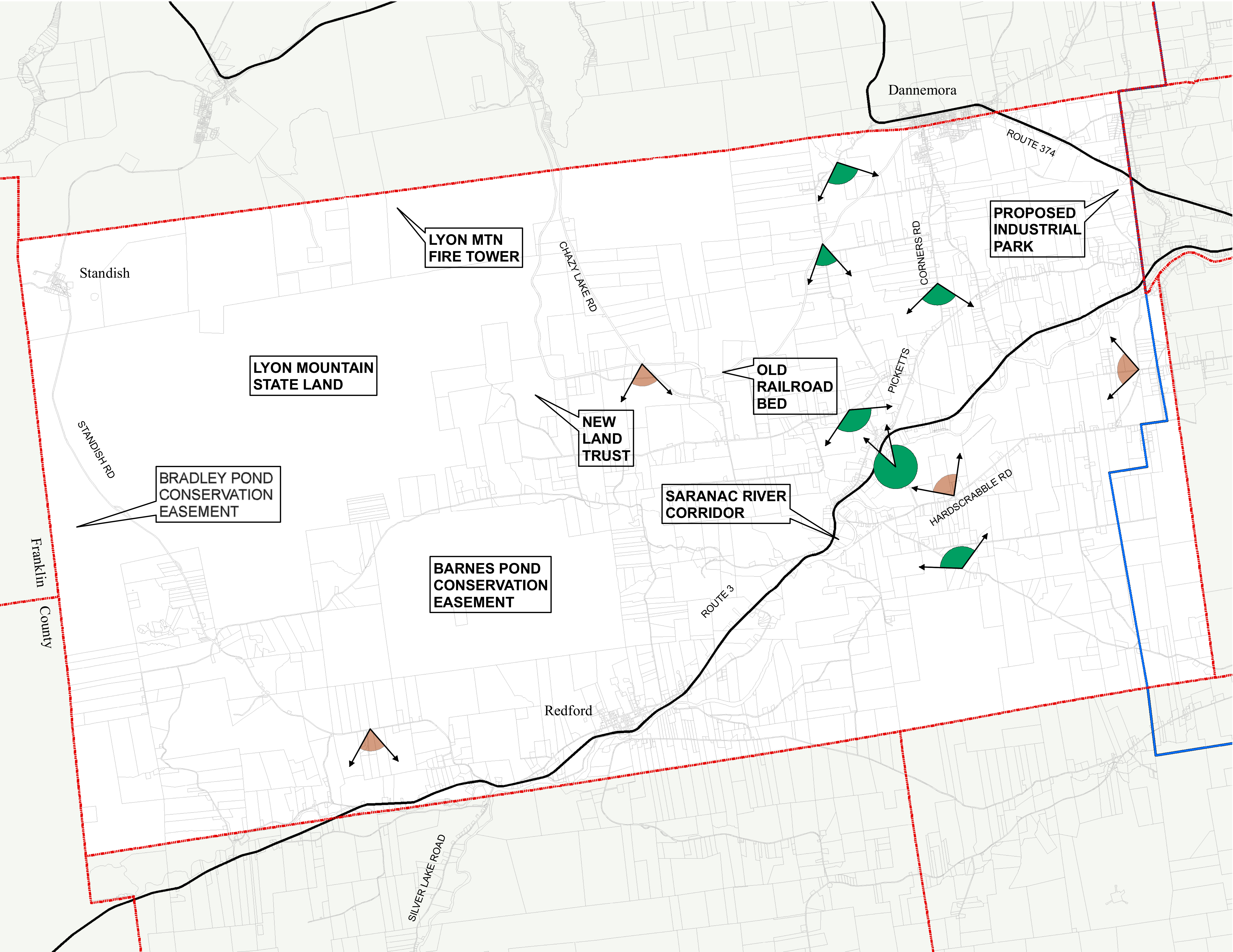


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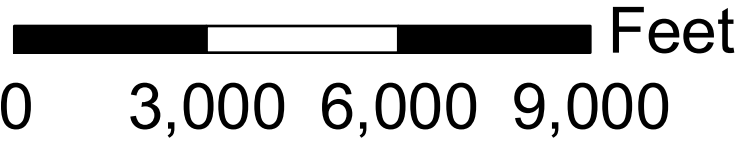
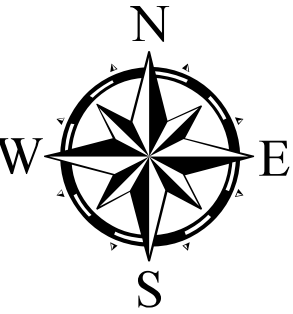


TOWN OF SARANAC  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND REVITALIZATION  
STRATEGY

SCENIC RESOURCES



- Legend**
- Town Boundary
  - Adirondack Park Boundary
  - Tax Map Parcels
  - Primary Local Vistas
  - Regional Vistas - APA Map



RIVERSTREET  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

AES  
NORTHEAST

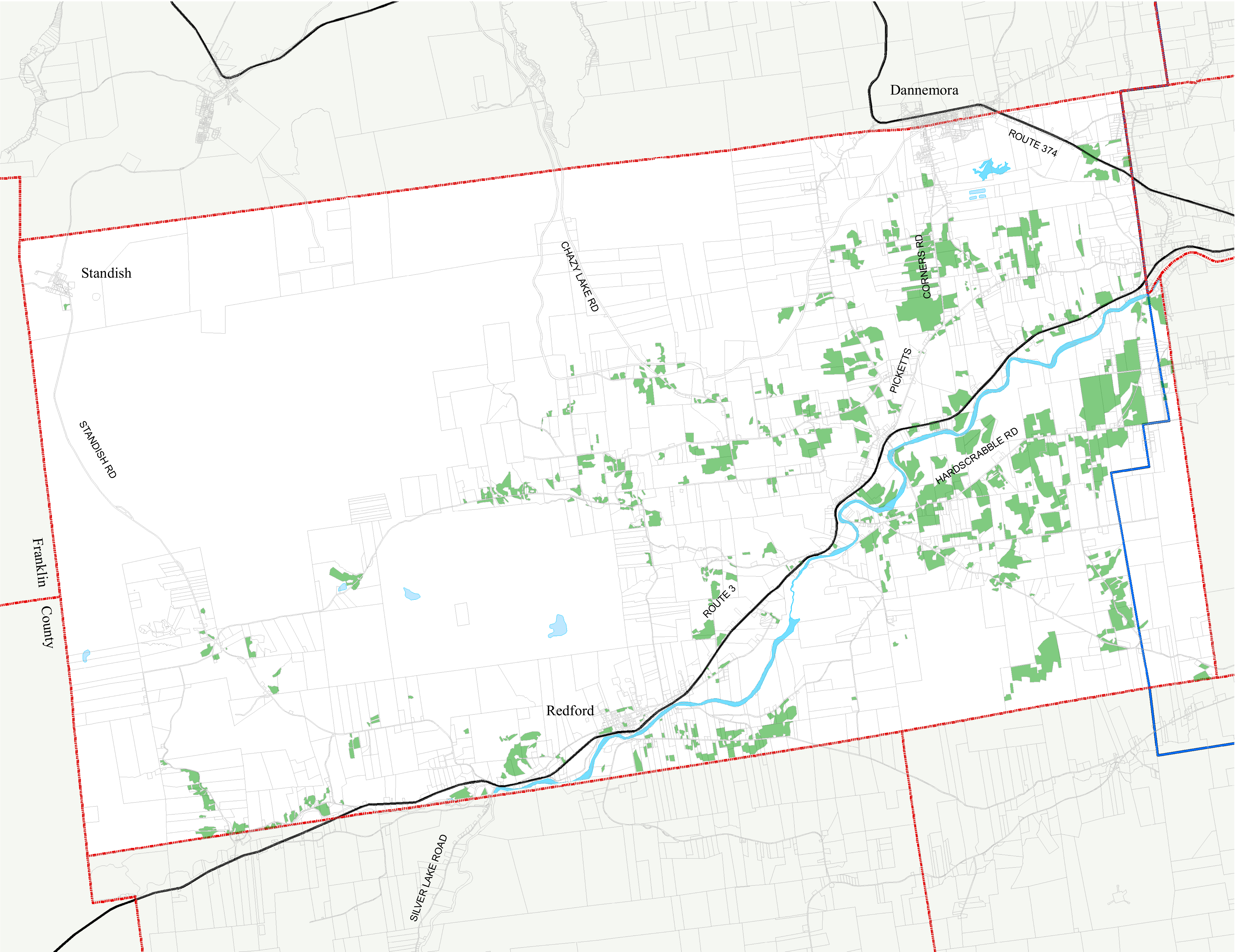


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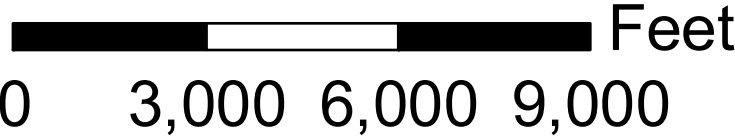
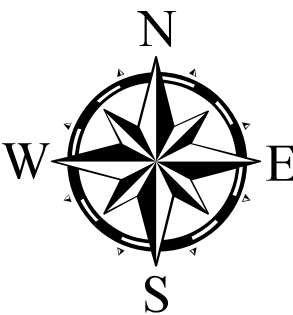
TOWN OF SARANAC  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND REVITALIZATION  
STRATEGY

FIELDS, MEADOWS & PASTURES



**Legend**

- Fields, Meadows & Pastures (Total Acreage: 4,100)
- Tax Map Parcels
- Town Boundary
- Adirondack Park Boundary
- State Highway



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# *APPENDIX A*

**Town of Saranac**  
**Community Vision and Revitalization Strategy**  
**Community Workshop**  
**August 11, 2010**

**Visioning Exercise Community Responses:**

*(Residents were asked to discuss the following three topics – the bulleted items represent responses. Responses with an asterisk (\*) indicate a comment made several times.)*

What I love about Saranac and its Waterfront

- Standish Community Center (Former Firehouse)
- The Iron Bridge (Route 3 to Soper Road)
- The wilderness
- River remains natural with open space and trees – not development
- The cemeteries and walking through the cemeteries (without traffic )
- The Civil War Monument in the Saranac Independence Cemetery
- Farmland and agriculture land
- The River's history as a highway and a source of power for manufacturing
- Outdoor recreation including: \*
  - Trails for snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, hiking
  - Paddling on the Saranac
  - Fishing opportunities
- Scenic views Town-wide and specifically from:
  - Porky Ryan Road
  - Bowen Road
  - Burnt Hill
  - Chazy Lake Road
- Scenic Views of:

- Ox Bow
- Standish Church
- The Town from the River
- Mountains in general
- The quietness\*
- The ruralness
- Dark skies – ability to see stars
- Warmth of people and the community/ very welcoming
- Excellent school system
- Safety of town
- No traffic light
- The wildlife
- Fishing opportunities
- All of the churches
- Enough local businesses to get basic necessities without driving to Plattsburgh; not isolated
- The culture – including the Hill and Hollow classical music Concerts at the Methodist Church and School auditorium, and the Fiddlers nights at the Town Hall
- Environmental quality
- Influx of professional people and businesses
- Access to high quality medical care (Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital)
- Easy access to Plattsburgh as needed

#### What I Would Like to Change about the Town and River

- Logging industry practices on conservation easements, impacts on views
- True Brook Road Camp Site Development – potential impacts of



- Lack of signage in Town: gateway/welcoming signage on main roads entering Saranac and possibly the hamlets; “wayfinding” signage to recreational and community resources
- Need for an information center – perhaps a kiosk at the Park or elsewhere with Town and regional information
- Need for Town-wide high speed internet and better cellular phone service
- Concerned that all hamlets and neighborhoods aren’t receiving the same attention (Standish, Redford etc.)
- Lack of electricity on upper end of True Brook Road
- Need a more dog-friendly attitude on town properties and the town park. Consider creating a “Dog Park” as an area destination.
- Develop access for crossing the Saranac by snowmobile – perhaps using the Iron Bridge (which is currently closed to ALL traffic)
- Road improvements needed – particularly paving (90 miles of town roads!)
- More activities for youth – including more waterfront activities (paddle boats)
- More hiking and biking trails\*
- Need sidewalk repair in Hamlets (ex: Ganong Drive)
- Develop a municipal pocket parking lot in the hamlet (near Ganong Drive) so people can park and walk/cycle
- This could be a dual use lot for a park and ride and resident access
- Safety issues on the Route 3 Corridor\*
  - No safe pedestrian crossing point on Route 3 – particularly needed at the Picketts Corners Park, and in connection with pedestrian traffic from the school and Park to local convenience store and local restaurant
  - Speed limit too high near the School – should be reduced to 45 mph at a minimum
  - No pedestrian access (sidewalks, trail) for walking on any portion of Route 3
- Lack of parking and other access issues is making use of railroad bed by ATV and snowmobiles in Standish unsafe for nearby playground.

- Lack of biking infrastructure in Town. Should be supported as a mode of transportation and recreation by creating bike lanes or shoulders on roads such as Route 3, trails, existing power line ROWs could perhaps be used for new trail development
- High Town tax rate in Saranac with lower rates in adjacent communities (Saranac has one of the highest number of miles of Town Roads in the county – 90+/- to maintain)
- Not enough development to grow tax base
- No local land management in Saranac, such as zoning, like other surrounding communities so Town could become the “dumping ground” for uses not permitted elsewhere
- Need a more diversified economy – more living wage jobs without compromising quality of life
- No place to rent skis, canoes and other recreational equipment that could be used by residents and visitors
- Need lodging for visitors, but not on river
- Industrial Park not utilized
- Need more marketing of existing recreational resources (cross country skiing, fishing, snowmobiling, leaf peeping, hiking, paddling), map of recreational areas
- Concern about priorities and paying for projects – taxes, maintenance of projects
- No zoning – concern about the future of the town. What could happen without it?
- Don’t want lots of new development on existing open space
- Need to rehabilitate and reuse existing buildings instead of just building new but, there are no incentives to encourage rehabilitation (such as tax breaks or financial assistance)
- Concern for the downsides to becoming a recreational destination: garbage, traffic, more people, potentially higher assessed values of properties if the town has more assets and resulting loss of affordability
- Focus of River access should not just be recreation but all other important uses
- There is a lack of part time/seasonal jobs for area youth
- To maintain current quality of life and community character – the Town needs to find ways to draw people here and consider how much growth and what kind of growth is wanted or needed.
- Lack of local jobs to keep grown children from moving elsewhere\*

- Keep NYS DOCS land on river out of Forest Preserve

When things have changed for the better, what will Saranac and the River look, sound, feel and be like?

- Quiet
- Peaceful
- Rural
- Dark Skies
- Scenic
- Still smelling of burning garbage
- Affordable
- Farm friendly
- Beautiful
- Fun
- Same as it is now
- Unpolluted
- Won't be known as Saranac Lake, have own identity
- Low profile maintained, not over-populated
- A place to make a living and a good place to live
- Route 3 will still be a highway
- A good place to raise a family
- Smell of fresh cut grass
- All will have high speed internet
- Black flies
- All will have cell phone service
- Easy conversation in local establishments



- Kids playing outside
- Kids laughing
- No squealing tires
- Still hear tractors and birds
- Jerry's chainsaw
- Hear snow falling in winter
- Smell like laundry drying