

# *Community Surveys*

# APPENDIX G



# Niagara Communities Comprehensive Plan

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## NIAGARA COMMUNITIES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMUNITY OUTREACH SURVEY

**INSTRUCTIONS.** Fill out as much or as little of this survey as you like. When you are finished, please mail it back to us at the address listed on the last page. You can also scan it and email it to us or leave it with project staff at any of the community outreach meetings. You can download an electronic copy of the survey from the project website at [www.niagaracounty.com/ComprehensivePlan.asp](http://www.niagaracounty.com/ComprehensivePlan.asp) by clicking on the "Feedback" link. The downloadable survey can be filled out electronically, saved, and submitted to us by email or printed out and submitted in hard copy. **All surveys must be received by Friday, May 15, 2009.** Your input is very important to the planning process and your responses will help shape the final Niagara Communities Comprehensive Plan. If you have any questions, please email us at [comprehensiveplan@niagaracounty.com](mailto:comprehensiveplan@niagaracounty.com). Thank you for your interest and participation!

### SURVEY COMPLETED BY:

NAME: WILLIAM L. AGRONIN

TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

MUNICIPALITY: \_\_\_\_\_

AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION: NIAGARA COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

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**FOCUS AREA: LAND USE & ENVIRONMENT**

**LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION**

Points to Consider

- Think about changes in land use patterns over the last 20 years, including any changes in the type of development that you see occurring or changes in community character. Consider different types of land uses in your community and Niagara County as a whole: Agricultural, Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Recreational, Open Space, Vacant, etc. What do you see happening in your community and Niagara County as a whole?
- How would you best characterize your community at present - urban, suburban, or rural?
- How would you best describe your community as it now exists:
  - Developed: built-out with virtually no "greenfield" development potential
  - Developing: a mix of established and emerging development
  - Redeveloping: re-use of formerly vacant properties
  - Undeveloped: agricultural areas not being developed
- Think about transportation in your community and throughout Niagara County including construction and maintenance of public roads and bridges, access to public transit such as bus service, passenger air and rail service, cargo transportation, recreational opportunities along roadways/trailways/waterways, etc. Have there been many changes in transportation services or public access to those services over the last years? Consider conditions and capacities for personal automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, bus, heavy truck, train, aviation, and maritime uses.

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to land use/transportation?*

1. VACANT BUILDINGS IN THE 3 CITIES - LEADING TO  
BLIGHT
2. POOR ROADS - MANY IN DISREPAIR AND DANGEROUS  
DETERIORATING BRIDGES POSING A DANGER
3. TOO MANY HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS BEING BUILT AND  
NOT OCCUPIED

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to land use/transportation?*

1. ABUNDANT FARMLAND
2. GOOD CLEAR WATER SOURCES

3.

What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for land use/transportation in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.

(1) REPAIR THE ROADS

(2) TEAR DOWN DILAPIDATED BUILDINGS

(3) LIMIT BUILDING NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT UNTIL VACANT BUILDINGS ARE REPAIRED OR DEMOLISHED

## ENVIRONMENT

### Points to Consider

- > Think about different natural features in your community and throughout Niagara County, including forestlands, open space areas, wildlife and wildlife habitat, waterways, floodplains, wetlands, geological formations, scenic views, etc. Have any of these features changed over the past 20 years? In what ways?
- > Does your community have access to scenic views, parks, open space, and other natural areas? How could access to these areas be improved in your community as well as in other parts of Niagara County?
- > Have any actions been taken in recent years to protect the natural features in your community? Have any actions jeopardized your community's natural features?
- > In what ways are the environmental features in your community and across Niagara County an important part of your life?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to natural features and the environment?

1. LIMITING DEVELOPMENT AROUND THE NATURAL RESOURCES

2. GET THE TOWNS, VILLAGES AND CITIES ON THE SAME PAGE CONCERNING ZONING AND LAND USAGE

3.

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to natural features and the environment?

1. THE FALLS AS A TOURIST DESTINATION

2. THE ELIZ CANAL

3. THE BEAUTIFUL PARKS AND GREEN AREAS ALONG LAKE ONTARIO

What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for natural features and the environment in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.

PROTECT THE SHORELINE OF LAKE ONTARIO

CLEAN UP THE ELIZ CANAL CORRIDOR

## FOCUS AREA: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### Points to Consider

- > Think about recent economic development related issues that have been identified in your community and across Niagara County - perhaps news about relocation of firms, changes in local employment numbers (hirings/layoffs), new construction projects, openings or closings of businesses, etc. What do you see or hear happening relative to the local economy?
- > Think about different types of infrastructure within your community and Niagara County as a whole (sewer, water, electric, telecommunications, roads, bridges, highways, rail lines, aviation and marine facilities, etc.). Are any significant changes needed to support economic development activities, such as attracting new companies or retaining existing ones?
- > Does the economic character of your community or any economic trends within your community differ from neighboring communities in terms of the amount of development occurring, job loss/job creation, changes in types of industries, etc.? In what ways?
- > Are community assets such as parks and open space areas, schools, community safety and security, affordable housing, and other quality of life considerations contributing to or being used to promote economic development opportunities in your community? How so?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to economic development?

1. EASING THE TAX BURDEN ON BUSINESSES  
BECOMING MORE "BUSINESS FRIENDLY"
2. LOWERING CONSTRUCTION COSTS WITHIN THE COUNTY
3. OBTAINING MORE STATE AND NATIONAL FUNDS TO  
AID IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
4. OBTAINING "CHEAPER" POWER FROM NYPA

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to economic development?

1. POSSIBILITY OF OBTAINING CHEAPER POWER FROM NYPA
- 2.
- 3.

What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for economic development in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.

LOWER TAXES TO GET BUSINESSES TO SETLE IN  
NIAGARA COUNTY

GET LOWER COST ELECTRICITY FOR BUSINESS USE

**FOCUS AREA: COUNTY SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Points to Consider

- Think about the types of services that are provided to your community by Niagara County (social services, public health, public works, public safety, economic development, courts, emergency services, higher education, employment and training, election services, etc.). Are there any issues in your community relative to the need for:
  - Additional services
  - Access to services currently provided
  - Changes in services provided as a result of, for example:
    - Changes in your community's population
    - Changes in your community's economic base
    - Changes in factors such as technology, national/global trends, legislation, local providers, levels of service provided at other levels of government, etc.
- Likewise, think about the types of facilities and infrastructure that are operated by the County. Are there any issues with the provision and/or maintenance of the County's facilities and infrastructure? The County is responsible for and maintains:
  - Administrative, service, and public safety buildings across the County
  - 5 County parks (Oppenheim, Krull, Bond Lake, Royalton Ravine, West Canal Marina) and the County Golf Course
  - 283 miles of roads, 89 bridges, and 800 drainage culverts
  - Sewer, water, and refuse districts

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?*

1. UPDATE OR FIX THE INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE WHOLE COUNTY - ROADS, BRIDGES, WATER LINES
2. CONTROLLING MEDICAID COSTS
3. CLEAN UP BOND LAKE PARK AND OLCOTT HARBOR

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?*

1. THE PARK SYSTEM
2. WILDOW AND OLCOTT HARBORS

3. THE ERIE CANAL

**What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for County services, facilities, and infrastructure in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.**

BALANCE OUR PARK SYSTEM

BALANCE OUR PORTION OF THE ERIE CANAL

CLEAN UP AND BALANCE COSTS AND THE HARBOR

**FOCUS AREA: EDUCATION**

Points to Consider

- How well do current educational facilities accommodate the school-aged population in terms of capacity? How well suited are they for changes in the school-aged population over the next 20 years? [Projections from Cornell University show an overall decrease in the school-aged population in Niagara County by 2035 and school enrollment surveys compiled over the past 10 years indicate significant decreases in the cities, but gains in other school districts.]
- Does the school district in your community provide any special or enhanced educational programming that may not be provided in other school districts? If so, what types of programs are offered?
- School district consolidation has been mentioned as being needed to reduce the tax burden. Is this an issue in your community? Points to consider include:
  - Consolidation may mean greater distance from school facilities for some students, if consolidation results in school closures.
  - Per student expenditures do not appear to be above statewide averages in any of the Niagara County school districts.
  - Merging districts may mean that the consolidated district is able to provide more programs/activities than either could alone.
- Are any capital improvements needed, planned, or currently being made in your community relative to educational facilities? If so, what types of improvements?
- How important is it to have job training programs, job placement services, and continuing education courses readily available to adults and young adults in your community?
- What types of industries exist within your community or in other parts of Niagara County that require special training? How important is it to connect education and training programs with local businesses to create a sustainable workforce? What types of education and training programs should be invested in to attract new companies to Niagara County?
- Does your community need better access to: resource centers (libraries, computer centers, career development/job placement services), higher education (colleges, universities or satellite facilities), workforce development programs (i.e. Orleans/Niagara BOCES, Niagara County Employment and Training, NCCC Workforce Training/Community Development)?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to education?

1. INFRASTRUCTURE REPAIR - OLD SCHOOL BUILDINGS
2. CONSOLIDATION - IF NOT A COUNTY WIDE SCHOOL SYSTEM, THEN SHARED SERVICES (THROUGH BOCES) FOR ALL THE SCHOOL DISTRICTS (DISTANCE LEARNING)
3. AFFORDABILITY - TOO MUCH BUDGET PLACED ON THE AVERAGE TAX PAYER

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to education?

1. STRONG SCHOOL SYSTEMS
2. RICH HISTORY TO DRAW UPON
3. AFFORDABLE HIGHER EDUCATION (NECC)

What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for education in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.

LOWER SCHOOL (PROPERTY) TAXES  
SHARED SERVICES  
UPDATE INFRASTRUCTURE

**FOCUS AREA: PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY**

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

Points to Consider

- > What is the overall sense of safety/security in the neighborhoods in your community?
- > How would you rate visibility of police patrols in your community or the County as a whole? Who provides police coverage in your community (local police, Sheriff, State police)?
- > Based on your experience, are response times and coverage for emergency services (police, fire, ambulance) adequate in your community? What types of events might your community or Niagara County experience that would require major emergency response? What assets does your community and/or Niagara County possess that would help during an emergency?
- > What is the level of awareness in your community of the County's efforts to coordinate disaster/emergency preparedness programs?
- > Do you feel that the safety/security of your community or Niagara County as a whole is affected by the Canadian border?
- > What do you perceive to be the biggest challenges to public safety in your community? How about within the County and/or the region?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to public safety?*

1. INCREASE IN DRUG TRAFFICKING IN THE COUNTY

2. SECURING OUR BORDER WITH CANADA

3.

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to public safety?*

1. DECENT SHERIFF DEPARTMENT

2. STRONG PRESENCE OF NYS POLICE IN THE COUNTY

3. DECENT POLICE SERVICES IN THE 3 CITIES

What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for public safety in Niagara County?  
Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.

UPGRADE ALL OUR POLICE AGENCIES

## PUBLIC HEALTH

### Points to Consider

- > Do you think that your community has adequate access to healthcare facilities, including hospitals, and adequate response times/coverage relative to ambulatory services? Do you think that Niagara County as a whole has adequate healthcare facilities and related services?
- > Do you feel that your community would have adequate access to health services in the event of an emergency, such as a natural disaster or otherwise? What about the County as a whole?
- > What are the biggest public health concerns within your community? Are these ongoing concerns? Are there any issues that might be classified as health threats? Do you perceive there to be significant health concerns or health threats in surrounding communities or in Niagara County as a whole?
- > Does your community or organizations within your community offer programs aimed at improving public health and wellness? What types of programs are offered (i.e. nutrition, vaccinations, exercise, anti-smoking, etc.)?
- > Is environmental health (i.e. water and air quality) a significant issue in your community? How so? Do you perceive there to be significant environmental health concerns in surrounding communities or in Niagara County as a whole?
- > What is the level of awareness in your community of programs and services offered by the Niagara County Health Department?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to public health?

1. AFFORDABLE HEALTHCARE - LOWER MEDICARE COSTS FOR THE COUNTY

2. CONTROL OF RAPID ANIMAL

3.

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to public health?

1. GOOD HOSPITALS

2. EXCELLENT COUNTY AID TO HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

3. GOOD CLEAN WATER

What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for public health in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.

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**PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED SURVEYS TO:**

**Niagara Communities Comprehensive Plan  
6311 Inducon Corporate Drive  
Sanborn, NY 14132**

**or**

**comprehensiveplan@niagaracounty.com**



# Niagara Communities Comprehensive Plan

## COMMUNITY SURVEY ON THE FOCUS AREAS OF THE NIAGARA COMMUNITIES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

RECEIVED  
DEC 10 2008  
NIAGARA CO. ECONOMIC DEV.

**SURVEY COMPLETED BY:**

**NAME:** Neil C. Riordan

**TITLE:** Mayor

**MUNICIPALITY:** Village of Youngstown

**AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION:** Village of Youngstown

**MAILING ADDRESS:** 240 Lockport Street, P.O. Box 168, Youngstown, NY 14174

**PHONE NUMBER:** 716 745-7721

**EMAIL ADDRESS:** cjt24@roadrunner.com

**FOCUS AREA: LAND USE & ENVIRONMENT**

**LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION**

Points to Consider

- Think about changes in land use patterns over the last 20 years, including any changes in types of development projects or community character. Consider different types of land uses in your community: Agriculture, Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Recreation, Open Space, Vacant, etc. What do you see happening in your community?
- How would you best characterize your community at present - urban, suburban, or rural?
- How would you best describe your community as it now exists:
  - Developed: built-out with virtually no “greenfield” development potential
  - Developing: a mix of established and emerging development
  - Redeveloping: e.g., re-use of formerly vacant properties
  - Undeveloped: e.g., agricultural areas are not being developed
- Think about transportation in your community (construction and maintenance of public roads and bridges, access to public transit such as bus service, recreational opportunities, freight transportation, etc.) Have there been significant changes in transportation services or in public access to those services over the last years? Consider conditions and capacities for personal automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, bus, heavy truck, train, aviation, and marine uses.

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to land use/transportation?***

1. Redevelopment and environmental clean-up of our Youngstown Cold Storage site  
an abandoned farmers cooperative on Elliott Street.
2. Preservation and enhancement of all Village owned Waterfront Parks and  
potential additional aquisition to facilitate fishing, recreational boating  
and across river ferry service.
3. Restoration of regional bus transportation to the Village and Fort Niagara to  
energize tourism business and accomodate senior population access south.

***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to land use/transportation?***

1. Waterfront Park development completion north and south for vista enjoyment,  
fishing, sailing and recreational boating and access for potential cross river  
ferry return.
2. Route 18 River Road completed reconstruction plus pedestrian and bike path,  
as one of WNY's most scenic drives and walkways along the Seaway Trail.

3. "Imagine Youngstown" Project with Niagara University Tourism Department  
to promote Village Waterfront, Fort Niagara and Business Community and  
create expanded business opportunities.

*Describe your community's goals and objectives for land use/transportation as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

Continue initiative to successfully implement cross river ferry, network  
all area Commerce Chambers to promote Youngstown; engage local residents to  
support existing businesses; expand agriculture and historical site and tour  
promotion and exhibit sites.

## ENVIRONMENT

### Points to Consider

- > Think about the different natural features of your community such as its forestlands, open space areas, wildlife and wildlife habitats, waterways, floodplains, wetlands, geological formations, scenic views, etc. Have any of these features changed over the past 20 years?
- > Does your community provide access to scenic views, parks, open space, and other natural areas? In what ways? How could access to these areas be improved in your community?
- > Have any actions been taken in recent years to protect the natural features in your community? Have any actions jeopardized your community's natural features?
- > Are the environmental features in your community an important part of your life? How so?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to natural features and the environment?*

1. Commercial Condo Development of Green Space entry to South Waterfront entry  
eliminating spectacular vista and Main Street Business Theme -- a major challenge.
2. Beyond highly successful South Waterfront Park re-development to improve  
Water Street and embankment, infrastructures approximately a \$2 million  
project.
3. All Village Parks have been successfully redeveloped for family and Village  
visitor recreational use and further resource expansion and maintenance  
cost a major issue.

***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to natural features and the environment?***

1. Spectacular Waterfront vistas, celebrated Level Sailing Regattas, Jet Boat and recreational boating resource sites in Western NY.
2. One of Western NY's most prolific fishing areas -- nearly 50% of all fishing tournament fish caught off the "bar" by Fort Niagara.
3. Three beautiful and accessible parks (i.e. 2 in Village) and Fort Niagara State Park plus the world famous Fort Niagara Historical site and visitors center.

***Describe your community's goals and objectives for natural features and the environment as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.***

Complete Water Street reconstruction and deteriorating retaining walls; Greenway and NYS grant funding; ecological restoration of Village and resident owned waterfront properties and habitats; support Niagara River Keeper Riparian Restoration Greenway Grant Project.

## **FOCUS AREA: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### Points to Consider

- Think about recent economic development related issues that have been identified in your community or discussed through local media that have or may impact your community. This could include news about relocation of firms, changes in local employment numbers (hirings and/or layoffs), openings or closings of businesses, new construction projects, etc. What do you see or hear happening in your community that relates to the local economy, jobs, etc.?
- Think about different types of infrastructure within your community (sewer, water, electric, telecommunications, roads, bridges, highways, rail lines, aviation and marine facilities, etc.). Are any significant changes needed in your community's infrastructure to support economic development activities, such as attracting new companies or retaining existing companies?
- Does the economic character of your community or any economic trends within your community differ from neighboring communities in terms of the amount of development occurring, job loss/job creation, changes in types of industries, etc.? In what ways?
- Are community assets such as parks and open space areas, schools, community safety and security, affordable housing, and other quality of life considerations being recognized as contributing to or being used to promote economic development opportunities? How so?

**What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to economic development?**

1. Re-energizing the Business Community: diversity, quality of services,  
special niches on feature products, and unifying the Business Association.
2. Attracting new and unique businesses that can succeed year round in this  
seasonal and distant north community.
3. Engaging the area residents to support their local businesses, not just enjoy  
the quality of life here but spend and buy locally.

**What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to economic development?**

1. Certainly Fort Niagara, a most significant historical site attracting  
100,000+ visitors annually; challenging these visitors into rather than around  
the village is a challenge.
2. The Waterfront: Fast River Ferry initiative, year round fishing, more efficient  
customs processing, more than one museum, marina service expansion.
3. Recreational sports tournament, concert and festival use of in village parks  
and Fort Niagara State Park.

**Describe your community's goals and objectives for economic development as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.**

Village and Niagara River Chamber promotion of Village assets, resources and  
businesses; Niagara University/Village "Imagine Youngstown" tourism project,  
TV, radio, cable and newsletter promotions and ads, meet with key business  
franchise and expanded WIFI services.

**FOCUS AREA: COUNTY SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Points to Consider

- Think about the types of services that are provided to your community by Niagara County (social services, public health, public works, public safety, economic development, courts, emergency services, higher education, employment and training, election services, etc.). Are there any issues in your community relative to the need for:
  - Additional services
  - Access to services currently provided
  - Changes in services provided as a result of, for example:
    - Changes in your community's population
    - Changes in your community's economic base
    - External factors (including changes in technology, national/global trends, legislation, local providers, level of services provided by government, etc.)
- Likewise, think about the types of facilities and infrastructure that are operated by the County. Are there any issues with the provision and/or maintenance of the County's facilities and infrastructure? The County is responsible for and maintains:
  - Administrative, service, and public safety buildings across the County
  - 5 County parks (Oppenheim, Krull, Bond Lake, Royalton Ravine, West Canal Marina) and the County Golf Course
  - 283 miles of roads, 89 bridges, and 800 drainage culverts
  - Sewer, water and refuse districts

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?*

1. \$.36 County Tax increase to Porter/Youngstown because we complied with NYS mandated full assessment is an unfair community burden, especially in this pressing economic cycle.
2. Niagara County IDA services need to be more aggressively marketed and services to smaller rural community businesses enterprise initiatives.
3. Niagara County Road Route signage needs update and replacement in many areas due to wear, weather and plowing/collision damage.

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?*

1. Niagara County Public Works Management is responsive to drainage and road and bridge issues reported.
2. Niagara County tub chipper rental facilitates our DPW brush chipping and recycling program and resident services.

3. Emergency response preparedness training is excellent as is emergency response agency coordination for storm, severe weather or environmental incidents.
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*Describe your community's goals and objectives for County services, facilities, and infrastructure as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

More open and specific communications regarding homeland security, volunteer fire company state mandate expense, community development funding (i.e. fast ferry) vital service needs.

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## **FOCUS AREA: EDUCATION**

### Points to Consider

- How well do current educational facilities accommodate the school-aged population in terms of capacity? How well suited are they for changes in the school-aged population over the next 20 years? [Projections from Cornell University show an overall decrease in the school-aged population in Niagara County by 2035 and school enrollment surveys compiled over the past 10 years indicate significant decreases in the cities, but gains in other school districts.]
- Does the school district in your community provide any special or enhanced educational programming that may not be provided in other school districts? If so, what types of programs are offered?
- School district consolidation has been mentioned as being needed to reduce the tax burden. Is this an issue in your community? Points to consider include:
  - Consolidation may mean greater distance from school facilities for some students, if consolidation results in school closures.
  - Per student expenditures do not appear to be above statewide averages in any of the Niagara County school districts.
  - Merging districts may mean that the consolidated district is able to provide more programs/activities than either could alone.
- Are any capital improvements needed, planned, or currently being made in your community relative to educational facilities? If so, what types of improvements?
- How important is it to have job training programs, job placement services, and continuing education courses readily available to adults and young adults in your community?
- What types of industries exist within your community that require special training? How important is it to connect education and training programs with local businesses to create a sustainable workforce? What types of education and training programs should be invested in to attract new companies to Niagara County?
- Does your community need better access to:
  - Resource centers (e.g. libraries, computer centers, career development centers, etc.)?
  - Higher education institutions (colleges and universities or satellite facilities)?
  - Workforce development programs (e.g., Orleans/Niagara BOCES, Niagara County Employment and Training, NCCC Workforce Training/Community Development)?
  - Other programs or facilities?

**What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative education?**

1. Requirement for additional after school education, training and supportive or supplemental activities: computer literacy, trade skills, etc.
2. Need for more corporate involvement in community to define WNY potential employee opportunities, needed skill sets, course requirements, etc.
3. Area summer and part-time student job opportunities are severely limited for students to aid college expenses and to apprentice for professions.

**What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to education?**

1. Lewiston Porter School Academic rating is high and excellent resource for advanced education.
2. Solid network of area Library facilities with strong emphasis on youth reading programs coordinated with Lewiston Porter.
3. Niagara County Community College and Niagara Boces facilities in near by communities excellent resource for special workshop training if advantages better advertised.

**Describe your community's goals and objectives for education as well as actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.**

New Community Room for computer training and skill sharpening, special education and speakers, workshops, etc. \$10,000 funding to date, construction next quarter.

**FOCUS AREA: PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY**

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

Points to Consider

- What is the overall sense of security / safety in the neighborhoods in your community?
- How would you rate the "visibility" of police patrols in your community? Who provides primary police coverage in your community (local police, Sheriff, State police)?
- Based on your experience, are response times / coverage for emergency services (police, fire, ambulance) adequate in your community?
- How is your community affected by proximity to the Canadian border?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County's efforts to coordinate emergency / disaster preparation programs?
- What types of events has or might your community experienced that would require major emergency response? What assets does your community possess that would help it during an emergency?
- What do you perceive to be the biggest challenges to public safety in your community? How about within the County and/or the region?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative public safety?*

1. Very limited Niagara County Sheriffs support due to distance, time and short staff.
2. Rarely receive incident reports from Niagara County Sheriff's Department on Village calls.
3. Due to proximity to border, limited access to vitally needed Homeland Security Funds as Police and Fire Agencies often first responders.

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public safety?*

1. Part-time, affordable and very accessible Police Department staff, continued communication, special patrol assignments, bike and foot patrols.
2. Excellant Volunteer Fire Company, fire and ambulance response, deeply involved with community as a partner.
3. Very responsvie to Village declared emergency disasters: i.e. gas leaks, storm ice and wind, snow, etc.

*Describe your community's goals and objectives for public safety as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

Part-time police force in increasing crime and vandalism era; need much tighter and more communicative relationship with Niagara County Sheriffs for response, coordinator and incident reporting.

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## **PUBLIC HEALTH**

### Points to Consider

- Does your community have adequate access to healthcare facilities, including hospitals? Does your community have adequate coverage in terms of ambulatory services, including response times?
- Do you feel your community would have adequate access to health services in the event of an emergency, such as a natural disaster or otherwise?
- What are the biggest public health concerns within your community? Are these ongoing concerns? Are there any issues that might be classified as health threats?
- Does your community or organizations within your community offer programs aimed at improving public health/wellness? What types of programs (i.e. nutrition, vaccinations, exercise, anti-smoking, etc.)?
- Is environmental health (i.e. water and air quality) a significant issue within your community? If so, why?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County Health Department's programs and services?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative public health?*

1. Proximity of Chemical Waste Management Facility and DEC in-action on low site facilitator agency to investigate site threats.
  2. Expansion of CWM facility and constant transport of hazardous chemicals adjacent to Lewiston Porter Central School.
  3. Severe winter cold weather and rising fuel costs especially for senior citizens.
- 
-

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public health?*

1. Excellant Parks system and area to facilitate walking, jogging, biking and recreational family activities.
2. Very accessible to in Village Health Club, Medical Offices and near by Clinic and Hospital facilities.
3. Police driving and Yacht Club and Coast Guard optional safety courses accessible and well thought and attended.

*Describe your community's goals and objectives for public health as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

Major issue here of course is preventing further volume inmort of hazardous chemicals to CWM and the facility expansion. More Professional Environmental Agency involvement in the site monitering and violations critical.

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SANBORN, NEW YORK 14132**



Niagara Communities  
Comprehensive Plan

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DEC 0 2008  
MAYOR'S OFFICE

**COMMUNITY SURVEY ON THE FOCUS AREAS OF THE  
NIAGARA COMMUNITIES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**SURVEY COMPLETED BY:**

**NAME:** Richard F. Soluri

**TITLE:** Mayor

**MUNICIPALITY:** Village of Lewiston

**AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION:**

**MAILING ADDRESS:** P.O. Box 325 / 145 N 4th St Lewiston, NY 14092

**PHONE NUMBER:** 716-754-9152

**EMAIL ADDRESS:** mayor@villageoflewiston.com

**FOCUS AREA: LAND USE & ENVIRONMENT**

**LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION**

VISITOR + ROUTE  
PARKING  
NEW EXIT  
PARKING  
EXIT

Points to Consider

- > Think about changes in land use patterns over the last 20 years, including any changes in types of development projects or community character. Consider different types of land uses in your community: Agriculture, Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Recreation, Open Space, Vacant, etc. What do you see happening in your community?
- > How would you best characterize your community at present - urban, suburban, or rural?
- > How would you best describe your community as it now exists:
  - Developed: built-out with virtually no "greenfield" development potential
  - Developing: a mix of established and emerging development
  - Redeveloping: e.g., re-use of formerly vacant properties
  - Undeveloped: e.g., agricultural areas are not being developed
- > Think about transportation in your community (construction and maintenance of public roads and bridges, access to public transit such as bus service, recreational opportunities, freight transportation, etc.) Have there been significant changes in transportation services or in public access to those services over the last years? Consider conditions and capacities for personal automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, bus, heavy truck, train, aviation, and marine uses.

**What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to land use/transportation?**

1. Continuation of the Robert Moses Parkway between Niagara Falls and Lewiston.
2. Introduction of a Visitors Trolley from Niagara Falls to Lewiston to Youngstown, Old Fort Niagara.
3. Recreate additional Parking and improve outgoing traffic from Artpark.

**What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to land use/transportation?**

1. We are a walkable community.
2. A visitor freindly and scenic Parkway along the gorge between Lewiston and Niagara Falls.

3. World class fishing and charter fishing destination.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Describe your community's goals and objectives for land use/transportation as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

First class maintenance of Center Street, Lewiston Landing  
and Village Parks.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**ENVIRONMENT**

Points to Consider

- Think about the different natural features of your community such as its forestlands, open space areas, wildlife and wildlife habitats, waterways, floodplains, wetlands, geological formations, scenic views, etc. Have any of these features changed over the past 20 years?
- Does your community provide access to scenic views, parks, open space, and other natural areas? In what ways? How could access to these areas be improved in your community?
- Have any actions been taken in recent years to protect the natural features in your community? Have any actions jeopardized your community's natural features?
- Are the environmental features in your community an important part of your life? How so?

*ant poole  
lowland  
Phosphor  
CWT  
H. 2002  
CROSS  
COUNTRY*

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to natural features and the environment?*

1. Plant management to prevent erosion at Lewiston Landing hill.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Advance recreation and habitat areas at Lewiston Plateau.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Close Chemical Waste Management Hazardous Landfill located  
in Town of Porter.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to natural features and the environment?

1. Lower Niagara River and Lewiston Landing

2. Lewiston Plateau

3. Parks in and around the Village of Lewiston.

Describe your community's goals and objectives for natural features and the environment as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.

Maintain the Lower Niagara River shoreline. Beautification of Center Street, Hennepin Park, Academy Park, and Seneca Park. The Lewiston Plateau Recreation and Habitat continued development.

## FOCUS AREA: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Consolidation

TOURISM  
EVENTS

### Points to Consider

- Think about recent economic development related issues that have been identified in your community or discussed through local media that have or may impact your community. This could include news about relocation of firms, changes in local employment numbers (hirings and/or layoffs), openings or closings of businesses, new construction projects, etc. What do you see or hear happening in your community that relates to the local economy, jobs, etc.?
- Think about different types of infrastructure within your community (sewer, water, electric, telecommunications, roads, bridges, highways, rail lines, aviation and marine facilities, etc.). Are any significant changes needed in your community's infrastructure to support economic development activities, such as attracting new companies or retaining existing companies?
- Does the economic character of your community or any economic trends within your community differ from neighboring communities in terms of the amount of development occurring, job loss/job creation, changes in types of industries, etc.? In what ways?
- Are community assets such as parks and open space areas, schools, community safety and security, affordable housing, and other quality of life considerations being recognized as contributing to or being used to promote economic development opportunities? How so?



**FOCUS AREA: COUNTY SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Points to Consider

- > Think about the types of services that are provided to your community by Niagara County (social services, public health, public works, public safety, economic development, courts, emergency services, higher education, employment and training, election services, etc.). Are there any issues in your community relative to the need for:
  - Additional services
  - Access to services currently provided
  - Changes in services provided as a result of, for example:
    - Changes in your community's population
    - Changes in your community's economic base
    - External factors (including changes in technology, national/global trends, legislation, local providers, level of services provided by government, etc.)
- > Likewise, think about the types of facilities and infrastructure that are operated by the County. Are there any issues with the provision and/or maintenance of the County's facilities and infrastructure? The County is responsible for and maintains:
  - Administrative, service, and public safety buildings across the County
  - 5 County parks (Oppenheim, Krull, Bond Lake, Royalton Ravine, West Canal Marina) and the County Golf Course
  - 283 miles of roads, 89 bridges, and 800 drainage culverts
  - Sewer, water and refuse districts

NU

less Gov't

one consolidated

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?***

1. Do we need County Government?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Do we need a County Legislation and, Town Supervisor.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?***

1. Better use of Bond Lake Park.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Shrinkage of County Government.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Reduction in County Taxes.

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*Describe your community's goals and objectives for County services, facilities, and infrastructure as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

Improve the Village of Lewiston's Sewer system.

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**FOCUS AREA: EDUCATION**

Points to Consider

- How well do current educational facilities accommodate the school-aged population in terms of capacity? How well suited are they for changes in the school-aged population over the next 20 years? [Projections from Cornell University show an overall decrease in the school-aged population in Niagara County by 2035 and school enrollment surveys compiled over the past 10 years indicate significant decreases in the cities, but gains in other school districts.]
- Does the school district in your community provide any special or enhanced educational programming that may not be provided in other school districts? If so, what types of programs are offered?
- School district consolidation has been mentioned as being needed to reduce the tax burden. Is this an issue in your community? Points to consider include:
  - Consolidation may mean greater distance from school facilities for some students, if consolidation results in school closures.
  - Per student expenditures do not appear to be above statewide averages in any of the Niagara County school districts. *consolidation*
  - Merging districts may mean that the consolidated district is able to provide more programs/activities than either could alone.
- Are any capital improvements needed, planned, or currently being made in your community relative to educational facilities? If so, what types of improvements?
- How important is it to have job training programs, job placement services, and continuing education courses readily available to adults and young adults in your community?
- What types of industries exist within your community that require special training? How important is it to connect education and training programs with local businesses to create a sustainable workforce? What types of education and training programs should be invested in to attract new companies to Niagara County?
- Does your community need better access to:
  - Resource centers (e.g. libraries, computer centers, career development centers, etc.)?
  - Higher education institutions (colleges and universities or satellite facilities)?
  - Workforce development programs (e.g., Orleans/Niagara BOCES, Niagara County Employment and Training, NCCC Workforce Training/Community Development)?
  - Other programs or facilities?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative education?*

1. Consolidation of School Systems.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. School Taxes  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Tie in Lewiston Porter Schools with the Niagara River Greenway  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to education?*

1. Niagara University  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Niagara County Community College  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Historic Landmarks  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Describe your community's goals and objectives for education as well as actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

- Offer Adult Education courses in the Village.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Attract Board members with common sense values and business backgrounds.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Board Harmony

**FOCUS AREA: PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY**

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

Points to Consider

- What is the overall sense of security / safety in the neighborhoods in your community?
- How would you rate the "visibility" of police patrols in your community? Who provides primary police coverage in your community (local police, Sheriff, State police)?
- Based on your experience, are response times / coverage for emergency services (police, fire, ambulance) adequate in your community?
- How is your community affected by proximity to the Canadian border?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County's efforts to coordinate emergency / disaster preparation programs? COST
- What types of events has or might your community experienced that would require major emergency response? What assets does your community possess that would help it during an emergency? Police / Fire
- What do you perceive to be the biggest challenges to public safety in your community? How about within the County and/or the region? COST

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative public safety?***

1. Eliminate Transportation of Hazardous Waste to Chemical Waste Management sites.
2. Overall cost for Public Safety.
3. Establish a walkable community.

***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public safety?***

1. Excellent Local Police Department.
2. Excellent Volunteer Fire Company.
3. Cooperation between Local Police Department, Border Patrol State Police and County Sheriff Department.

*Describe your community's goals and objectives for public safety as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

Continue with High skilled and personable Police and Fire  
departments.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **PUBLIC HEALTH**

### Points to Consider

- Does your community have adequate access to healthcare facilities, including hospitals? Does your community have adequate coverage in terms of ambulatory services, including response times?
- Do you feel your community would have adequate access to health services in the event of an emergency, such as a natural disaster or otherwise?
- What are the biggest public health concerns within your community? Are these ongoing concerns? Are there any issues that might be classified as health threats?
- Does your community or organizations within your community offer programs aimed at improving public health/wellness? What types of programs (i.e. nutrition, vaccinations, exercise, anti-smoking, etc.)?
- Is environmental health (i.e. water and air quality) a significant issue within your community? If so, why?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County Health Department's programs and services?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative public health?*

1. We encourage good helath since we are a walkable community.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Citizens groups and elected Leaders must be determined to  
to remove Chemical Waste Management from the Town of Porter.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Too much smoking outside of Local Restaurants.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public health?*

1. Mt. St. Mary's Hospital.

2. Two Nursing Homes.

3. Removal of Chemical Waste Management which will reduce Heavy Truck traffic.

*Describe your community's goals and objectives for public health as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

Choser relationships with Mt St Mary's Hospital.

Better understanding of County Health Services.

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Niagara Communities  
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NIAGARA CO. ECONOMIC DEV.

**COMMUNITY SURVEY ON THE FOCUS AREAS OF THE  
NIAGARA COMMUNITIES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**SURVEY COMPLETED BY:**

**NAME: Kathie K Smith**

**TITLE: Clerk-Treasurer**

**MUNICIPALITY: Village of Barker**

**AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION: N/A**

**MAILING ADDRESS: PO Box 298 Barker, NY 14012**

**PHONE NUMBER: 716-795-3777**

**EMAIL ADDRESS: barkervillage@roadrunner.com**

**FOCUS AREA: LAND USE & ENVIRONMENT**

**LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION**

Points to Consider

- Think about changes in land use patterns over the last 20 years, including any changes in types of development projects or community character. Consider different types of land uses in your community: Agriculture, Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Recreation, Open Space, Vacant, etc. What do you see happening in your community?
- How would you best characterize your community at present - urban, suburban, or rural?
- How would you best describe your community as it now exists:
  - Developed: built-out with virtually no “greenfield” development potential
  - Developing: a mix of established and emerging development
  - Redeveloping: e.g., re-use of formerly vacant properties
  - Undeveloped: e.g., agricultural areas are not being developed
- Think about transportation in your community (construction and maintenance of public roads and bridges, access to public transit such as bus service, recreational opportunities, freight transportation, etc.) Have there been significant changes in transportation services or in public access to those services over the last years? Consider conditions and capacities for personal automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, bus, heavy truck, train, aviation, and marine uses.

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to land use/transportation?*

1. Redevelopment of vacant properties. Attracting business and industry to our small Village. Loss of our only industry and largest water user by 50%.
2. Road improvements to support current truck traffic and to allow increased usage from a more appropriate route.
3. Replacement of our ancient water lines and drainage system to improve our residential properties as well.

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to land use/transportation?*

1. Rural location, low traffic volume.
2. Relatively low taxes, low cost purchasing, and excellent school system

3. All utilities available; ie. water, sewer, electric,  
gas, phone, cable.

*Describe your community's goals and objectives for land use/transportation as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

The Village hopes to improve our infrastructure to attract  
business and light industry. Road improvements will facilitate  
existing truck traffic and allow increase. Working for grant funding  
and shared services.

## ENVIRONMENT

### Points to Consider

- Think about the different natural features of your community such as its forestlands, open space areas, wildlife and wildlife habitats, waterways, floodplains, wetlands, geological formations, scenic views, etc. Have any of these features changed over the past 20 years?
- Does your community provide access to scenic views, parks, open space, and other natural areas? In what ways? How could access to these areas be improved in your community?
- Have any actions been taken in recent years to protect the natural features in your community? Have any actions jeopardized your community's natural features?
- Are the environmental features in your community an important part of your life? How so?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to natural features and the environment?*

1. Erosion of shoreline at our lake park. Sink holes in this  
park also.
2. Creek that passes through village needs dredging for  
better water flow and reduce possibility of flooding.
3. Village Park on Main Street could use improvements to  
ice skating rink. Paving this facility would provide year-  
round usage for recreation.

***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to natural features and the environment?***

1. We continue to offer lake Ontario access at our BiCentennial Park. Park has gazebo, picnic tables, grills, and beautiful sunsets.
2. Our large Village park, located in the center of the Village on Main Street provides an excellent location for our Farmer's Market and other community gatherings.
3. Our rural setting provides a lovely backdrop for biking and walking. The school has a nature trail in the Village also for walking and cross country skiing.

***Describe your community's goals and objectives for natural features and the environment as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.***

The Village is always looking for more uses of our parks. We hope to construct shoreline erosion protection and provide beach access that is not available now. Revamping the ice rink and adding basketball and skateboard usage is another goal. More picnic tables and benches are also necessary.

## **FOCUS AREA: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### Points to Consider

- Think about recent economic development related issues that have been identified in your community or discussed through local media that have or may impact your community. This could include news about relocation of firms, changes in local employment numbers (hirings and/or layoffs), openings or closings of businesses, new construction projects, etc. What do you see or hear happening in your community that relates to the local economy, jobs, etc.?
- Think about different types of infrastructure within your community (sewer, water, electric, telecommunications, roads, bridges, highways, rail lines, aviation and marine facilities, etc.). Are any significant changes needed in your community's infrastructure to support economic development activities, such as attracting new companies or retaining existing companies?
- Does the economic character of your community or any economic trends within your community differ from neighboring communities in terms of the amount of development occurring, job loss/job creation, changes in types of industries, etc.? In what ways?
- Are community assets such as parks and open space areas, schools, community safety and security, affordable housing, and other quality of life considerations being recognized as contributing to or being used to promote economic development opportunities? How so?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to economic development?*

1. Attracting business and industry to our Village.
2. Vacant businesses.
3. Support of local businesses and encouraging residents to  
buy locally.

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to economic development?*

1. All utilities available - water, sewer, electric,  
natural gas, cable, phone.
2. Attractive "downtown" Main Street area. Farmer's Market  
has brought in visitors from other areas.
3. Affordable pricing on available properties.

*Describe your community's goals and objectives for economic development as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

Our Planning Board is becoming more active in encouraging  
economic growth. We hope to tap into County resources to help  
attract business to our Village. The Village owns a 7 acre parcel  
in an Industrial Zone that we hope to market to our advantage.

**FOCUS AREA: COUNTY SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Points to Consider

- Think about the types of services that are provided to your community by Niagara County (social services, public health, public works, public safety, economic development, courts, emergency services, higher education, employment and training, election services, etc.). Are there any issues in your community relative to the need for:
  - Additional services
  - Access to services currently provided
  - Changes in services provided as a result of, for example:
    - Changes in your community's population
    - Changes in your community's economic base
    - External factors (including changes in technology, national/global trends, legislation, local providers, level of services provided by government, etc.)
- Likewise, think about the types of facilities and infrastructure that are operated by the County. Are there any issues with the provision and/or maintenance of the County's facilities and infrastructure? The County is responsible for and maintains:
  - Administrative, service, and public safety buildings across the County
  - 5 County parks (Oppenheim, Krull, Bond Lake, Royalton Ravine, West Canal Marina) and the County Golf Course
  - 283 miles of roads, 89 bridges, and 800 drainage culverts
  - Sewer, water and refuse districts

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?*

1. Our greatest issue is our decrepit water system.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Widening and refurbishing of West Somerset Road to  
handle truck traffic entering the Village.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Uncertainty as to what County services are available to us.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?*

1. Niagara County Public Works have been very helpful to us.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Niagara County Water District is always ready to come out  
to help with a problem  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Niagara County Health Department, as well as Treasurer.s

Office, Real Property, Clerk's Office, Data Processing,

Civil Service, Economic Development, Emergency Services, Print Shop, Risk Mgmt., Sheriff's Dept. have all been helpful.

***Describe your community's goals and objectives for County services, facilities, and infrastructure as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.***

Continue to communicate and work together to improve  
services for our residents and businesses. Increase  
communication.

### **FOCUS AREA: EDUCATION**

#### Points to Consider

- How well do current educational facilities accommodate the school-aged population in terms of capacity? How well suited are they for changes in the school-aged population over the next 20 years? [Projections from Cornell University show an overall decrease in the school-aged population in Niagara County by 2035 and school enrollment surveys compiled over the past 10 years indicate significant decreases in the cities, but gains in other school districts.]
- Does the school district in your community provide any special or enhanced educational programming that may not be provided in other school districts? If so, what types of programs are offered?
- School district consolidation has been mentioned as being needed to reduce the tax burden. Is this an issue in your community? Points to consider include:
  - Consolidation may mean greater distance from school facilities for some students, if consolidation results in school closures.
  - Per student expenditures do not appear to be above statewide averages in any of the Niagara County school districts.
  - Merging districts may mean that the consolidated district is able to provide more programs/activities than either could alone.
- Are any capital improvements needed, planned, or currently being made in your community relative to educational facilities? If so, what types of improvements?
- How important is it to have job training programs, job placement services, and continuing education courses readily available to adults and young adults in your community?
- What types of industries exist within your community that require special training? How important is it to connect education and training programs with local businesses to create a sustainable workforce? What types of education and training programs should be invested in to attract new companies to Niagara County?
- Does your community need better access to:
  - Resource centers (e.g. libraries, computer centers, career development centers, etc.)?
  - Higher education institutions (colleges and universities or satellite facilities)?
  - Workforce development programs (e.g., Orleans/Niagara BOCES, Niagara County Employment and Training, NCCC Workforce Training/Community Development)?
  - Other programs or facilities?

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to education?***

1. Barker has an excellent school district. We have experienced an increased tax burden due to the PILOT granted to AES.  
This has resulted in loss of jobs.
2. As far as consolidation is concerned, it is a great distance to the next district
3. Our local NIOGA Free Library struggles financially.

***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to education?***

1. Barker Central has had a pre-K program for many years.  
We also have Community Education and Summer Recreation.
2. We have an excellent campus which is continually being restored and improved.
3. \_\_\_\_\_

I feel the school administrators would be better to answer these.

***Describe your community's goals and objectives for education as well as actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.***

Continue to communicate with the district residents.  
Continue to strive for excellence.

Again, this section should be completed by Barker Central personnel.

**FOCUS AREA: PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY**

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

Points to Consider

- What is the overall sense of security / safety in the neighborhoods in your community?
- How would you rate the "visibility" of police patrols in your community? Who provides primary police coverage in your community (local police, Sheriff, State police)?
- Based on your experience, are response times / coverage for emergency services (police, fire, ambulance) adequate in your community?
- How is your community affected by proximity to the Canadian border?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County's efforts to coordinate emergency / disaster preparation programs?
- What types of events has or might your community experienced that would require major emergency response? What assets does your community possess that would help it during an emergency?
- What do you perceive to be the biggest challenges to public safety in your community? How about within the County and/or the region?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to public safety?*

1. We are fortunate to have our local Police. We don't seem to have much coverage from the Sheriff's Department. Our Department is part-time. If no one is on duty, we may have a long wait.
2. We are always in need of more volunteer firemen. Especially that are available during daytime hours.
3. Lack of funding to increase police hours, purchase better equipment. especially with the proximity of the AES plant.

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public safety?*

1. Local Barker Police Department provides coverage and "small town" service.
2. Volunteer Fire and Ambulance service with several EMT's.
3. Working with entire county on Emergency Response and Disaster Mitigation.

*Describe your community's goals and objectives for public safety as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

Continue to work together with all county agencies and municipalities to share resources to provide the safest environment for our residents. To encourage better participation in these endeavors.

**PUBLIC HEALTH**

Points to Consider

- Does your community have adequate access to healthcare facilities, including hospitals? Does your community have adequate coverage in terms of ambulatory services, including response times?
- Do you feel your community would have adequate access to health services in the event of an emergency, such as a natural disaster or otherwise?
- What are the biggest public health concerns within your community? Are these ongoing concerns? Are there any issues that might be classified as health threats?
- Does your community or organizations within your community offer programs aimed at improving public health/wellness? What types of programs (i.e. nutrition, vaccinations, exercise, anti-smoking, etc.)?
- Is environmental health (i.e. water and air quality) a significant issue within your community? If so, why?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County Health Department's programs and services?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to public health?*

1. Concern that our aging water system may contain lead.
2. Ten miles to ICMH. No doctor in the Village.
3. Need for more volunteers.

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public health?*

1. Several volunteer EMT's in our Fire Department.  
Access to Mercy Flight.  
Village considering a tax exemption for Volunteer Firemen.
2. Barker Police Department has a defibrillator and all  
officers have been trained to use it.
3. We have a Senior Nutrition Site at our firehall.

*Describe your community's goals and objectives for public health as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

There has been discussion on bringing a doctor and  
dentist into the community. Continually looking for the  
best method, most cost effective, of replacing water lines.

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Niagara Communities  
Comprehensive Plan

RECEIVED

JAN 15 2009

NIAGARA CO. ECONOMIC DEV.

COMMUNITY SURVEY ON THE FOCUS AREAS OF THE  
NIAGARA COMMUNITIES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

SURVEY COMPLETED BY:

NAME: JOINT MEETING OF ZONING BOARD + PLANNING BOARD

TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

MUNICIPALITY: TOWN OF WILSON

AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION: \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS: 375 LAKE ST, PO BOX 537, WILSON NY 14172

PHONE NUMBER: 716 751 6704

EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

FOCUS AREA: LAND USE & ENVIRONMENT

LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION

Points to Consider

- > Think about changes in land use patterns over the last 20 years, including any changes in types of development projects or community character. Consider different types of land uses in your community: Agriculture, Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Recreation, Open Space, Vacant, etc. What do you see happening in your community?
- > How would you best characterize your community at present - urban, suburban, or rural?
- > How would you best describe your community as it now exists:
  - Developed: built-out with virtually no "greenfield" development potential
  - Developing: a mix of established and emerging development
  - Reddeveloping: e.g., re-use of formerly vacant properties
  - Undeveloped: e.g., agricultural areas are not being developed
- > Think about transportation in your community (construction and maintenance of public roads and bridges, access to public transit such as bus service, recreational opportunities, freight transportation, etc.) Have there been significant changes in transportation services or in public access to those services over the last years? Consider conditions and capacities for personal automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, bus, heavy truck, train, aviation, and marine uses.

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to land use/transportation?

1. ROAD & BRIDGE MAINTENANCE NEEDS TO BE A PRIORITY
2. WE ALSO NEED TO MAINTAIN OUR IMAGE AS AN AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY
3. IT WILL ALSO BE IMPORTANT TO DEVELOPE A LINK THROUGH PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION WITH THE REGIONAL CITIES (ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT FOR SENIORS)

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to land use/transportation?

1. OUR BIGGEST ASSET IS OUR WATERFRONT AND THE OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOPE TOURISM. WE HAVE A LARGE STATE PARK WITH THE SEAWAY + NIAGARA WINE TRAILS
2. WE ALSO HAVE SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF LAND STILL AVAILABLE FOR DEVELOPEMENT

3. WE ALSO HAVE AN INDUSTRIAL CORRIDOR SOUTH OF THE VILLAGE ON ROUTE 425, THIS AREA LEADS ITSELF TO SMALLER INDUSTRY WITH ACCESS TO ASTATE RIVER

Describe your community's goals and objectives for land use/transportation as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.

- 1) THE DEVELOPMENT OF A WORKABLE MASTER PLAN
- 2) REVISIONS & UPDATING OF ZONING LAWS
- 3) DEVELOPMENT OF SUFFICIENT SEWER & WATER SYSTEMS

## ENVIRONMENT

### Points to Consider

- Think about the different natural features of your community such as its forestlands, open space areas, wildlife and wildlife habitats, waterways, floodplains, wetlands, geological formations, scenic views, etc. Have any of these features changed over the past 20 years?
- Does your community provide access to scenic views, parks, open space, and other natural areas? In what ways? How could access to these areas be improved in your community?
- Have any actions been taken in recent years to protect the natural features in your community? Have any actions jeopardized your community's natural features?
- Are the environmental features in your community an important part of your life? How so?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to natural features and the environment?

1. WATERFRONT SHORE EROSION WITH HIGH WATER LEVELS AS WELL AS WATER QUALITY
2. DEVELOPMENT OF REGULATIONS WITH REGARD TO THE USE OF WINDPOWER
3. DEVELOPMENT OF A COUNTYWIDE DRAINAGE PROGRAM

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to natural features and the environment?

1. OUR COMMUNITY IS BLESSED BY HAVING THE WATER FRONT ACCESS PROVIDED BY A STATE PARK ADJACENT TO A PICTURESQUE HARBOR
2. BECAUSE OF THE SIGNIFICANT AMOUNTS OF UNDEVELOPED LAND, WE CAN PROPERLY PLAN FOR DEVELOPMENT THAT CAN PRESERVE THE PEACEFUL COMMUNITY WE NOW ENJOY.

Describe your community's goals and objectives for natural features and the environment as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.

DEVELOPMENT OF A ZONING PLAN AND ZONING LAWS TO PRESERVE THESE NATURAL FEATURES

## FOCUS AREA: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### Points to Consider

- > Think about recent economic development related issues that have been identified in your community or discussed through local media that have or may impact your community. This could include news about relocation of firms, changes in local employment numbers (hirings and/or layoffs), openings or closings of businesses, new construction projects, etc. What do you see or hear happening in your community that relates to the local economy, jobs, etc.?
- > Think about different types of infrastructure within your community (sewer, water, electric, telecommunications, roads, bridges, highways, rail lines, aviation and marine facilities, etc.). Are any significant changes needed in your community's infrastructure to support economic development activities, such as attracting new companies or retaining existing companies?
- > Does the economic character of your community or any economic trends within your community differ from neighboring communities in terms of the amount of development occurring, job loss/job creation, changes in types of industries, etc.? In what ways?
- > Are community assets such as parks and open space areas, schools, community safety and security, affordable housing, and other quality of life considerations being recognized as contributing to or being used to promote economic development opportunities? How so?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to economic development?

1. OUR PROXIMITY TO CITIES CAN BE A CHALLENGE ESPECIALLY FOR SENIORS
2. THE DISTANCE CAN MAKE IT DIFFICULT TO DRAW INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT
3. ANOTHER ISSUE IS THE LACK OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to economic development?

1. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SEAWAY AND NIAGARA WINE TRAINS CAN SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECT TOURISM
2. THE NEW YORK STATE TUSCARORA PARK PROPERTY ALONG BOTH THE EAST + WEST BRANCH OF TWELVE MILE CREEK
3. MAINTAINING OF THE AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT

Describe your community's goals and objectives for economic development as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.

- 1) MAINTENANCE OF ROAD, BRIDGES, SEWER AND WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS
- 2) DEVELOPMENT OF MORE SERVICES AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION FOR AN AGING POPULATION
- 3) WE FEEL IT WOULD BE BENEFICIAL TO EVERYONE IF THE COUNTRY WOULD GET RID OF PROPERTIES + BUSINESS THAT WOULD BE BETTER IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

**FOCUS AREA: COUNTY SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Points to Consider

- > Think about the types of services that are provided to your community by Niagara County (social services, public health, public works, public safety, economic development, courts, emergency services, higher education, employment and training, election services, etc.). Are there any issues in your community relative to the need for:
  - Additional services
  - Access to services currently provided
  - Changes in services provided as a result of, for example:
    - Changes in your community's population
    - Changes in your community's economic base
    - External factors (including changes in technology, national/global trends, legislation, local providers, level of services provided by government, etc.)
- > Likewise, think about the types of facilities and infrastructure that are operated by the County. Are there any issues with the provision and/or maintenance of the County's facilities and infrastructure? The County is responsible for and maintains:
  - Administrative, service, and public safety buildings across the County
  - 5 County parks (Oppenheim, Krull, Bond Lake, Royalton Ravine, West Canal Marina) and the County Golf Course
  - 283 miles of roads, 89 bridges, and 800 drainage culverts
  - Sewer, water and refuse districts

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?***

1. WE GET EXCELLENT COVERAGE FROM THE SHERIFFS DEPT & OTHER LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES
2. WE HAVE TWO WELL TRAINED & EQUIPPED VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANIES
- 3.

***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?***

1. These items should be listed as assets
- 2.

3.

*Describe your community's goals and objectives for County services, facilities, and infrastructure as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

*SMALLER AND MORE EFFICIENT GOVT. SERVICES*

### **FOCUS AREA: EDUCATION**

#### Points to Consider

- How well do current educational facilities accommodate the school-aged population in terms of capacity? How well suited are they for changes in the school-aged population over the next 20 years? [Projections from Cornell University show an overall decrease in the school-aged population in Niagara County by 2035 and school enrollment surveys compiled over the past 10 years indicate significant decreases in the cities, but gains in other school districts.]
- Does the school district in your community provide any special or enhanced educational programming that may not be provided in other school districts? If so, what types of programs are offered?
- School district consolidation has been mentioned as being needed to reduce the tax burden. Is this an issue in your community? Points to consider include:
  - Consolidation may mean greater distance from school facilities for some students, if consolidation results in school closures.
  - Per student expenditures do not appear to be above statewide averages in any of the Niagara County school districts.
  - Merging districts may mean that the consolidated district is able to provide more programs/activities than either could alone.
- Are any capital improvements needed, planned, or currently being made in your community relative to educational facilities? If so, what types of improvements?
- How important is it to have job training programs, job placement services, and continuing education courses readily available to adults and young adults in your community?
- What types of industries exist within your community that require special training? How important is it to connect education and training programs with local businesses to create a sustainable workforce? What types of education and training programs should be invested in to attract new companies to Niagara County?
- Does your community need better access to:
  - Resource centers (e.g. libraries, computer centers, career development centers, etc.)?
  - Higher education institutions (colleges and universities or satellite facilities)?
  - Workforce development programs (e.g., Orleans/Niagara BOCES, Niagara County Employment and Training, NCCC Workforce Training/Community Development)?
  - Other programs or facilities?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to education?

1. FINANCIAL ISSUES ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES WITH REGARDS TO EDUCATION SCHOOLS RELY HEAVILY ON STATE AID
2. STATE MANDATES, DECLINING FUNDAMENT MAKE COSTS DIFFICULT ON SCHOOL DISTRICTS
3. COST OF HIGHER EDUCATION (COLLEGE) & THE LACK OF LOCAL EMPLOYMENT IS CREATING CHALLENGES FOR OUR YOUTH

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to education?

1. A STRONG ACADEMIC PROGRAM RANKED HIGHLY ON A REGULAR BASIS AT A GOOD COST PER STUDENT
2. PLENTY OF ACTIVITIES FOR OUR YOUTH TO PARTICIPATE IN
3. OUR BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS ARE IN VERY GOOD CONDITION

Describe your community's goals and objectives for education as well as actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.

MAINTAIN OUR HIGH STANDARDS AND EXPAND TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

**FOCUS AREA: PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY**

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

Points to Consider

- > What is the overall sense of security / safety in the neighborhoods in your community?
- > How would you rate the "visibility" of police patrols in your community? Who provides primary police coverage in your community (local police, Sheriff, State police)?
- > Based on your experience, are response times / coverage for emergency services (police, fire, ambulance) adequate in your community?
- > How is your community affected by proximity to the Canadian border?
- > What is the level of awareness in your community of the County's efforts to coordinate emergency / disaster preparation programs?
- > What types of events has or might your community experienced that would require major emergency response? What assets does your community possess that would help it during an emergency?
- > What do you perceive to be the biggest challenges to public safety in your community? How about within the County and/or the region?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative public safety?

1. THE LACK OF PROGRAMS AND CARE  
FOR AN ELDERLY POPULATION
2. LACK OF A COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT  
PLAN
3. WITH THE INCREASED TIME OBLIGATIONS AND  
TRAINING REQUIRED IT BECOMES DIFFICULT  
TO MAINTAIN A VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public safety?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Describe your community's goals and objectives for public safety as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.

COMPLETE A COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN

## PUBLIC HEALTH

### Points to Consider

- Does your community have adequate access to healthcare facilities, including hospitals? Does your community have adequate coverage in terms of ambulatory services, including response times?
- Do you feel your community would have adequate access to health services in the event of an emergency, such as a natural disaster or otherwise?
- What are the biggest public health concerns within your community? Are these ongoing concerns? Are there any issues that might be classified as health threats?
- Does your community or organizations within your community offer programs aimed at improving public health/wellness? What types of programs (i.e. nutrition, vaccinations, exercise, anti-smoking, etc.)?
- Is environmental health (i.e. water and air quality) a significant issue within your community? If so, why?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County Health Department's programs and services?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative public health?

1. THE TRANSPORTATION OF HAZARDOUS WASTE THROUGH THE AREA
2. WATER QUALITY INCLUDING RUNOFF AND OUR STORAGE
- 3.

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public health?

1. Our CLEAN RURAL ENVIRONMENT IS A HUGE ASSET
2. ACTIVE FIRE COMPANY PROGRAMS IN DEVELOPING COMMUNITY TRAINING AND HEALTH SERVICES (BLOOD PRESSURE TESTING)
3. FITNESS EQUIPMENT IN SCHOOL BUILDINGS IS OPEN AND ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
- 4) PROXIMITY TO LOCAL HOSPITALS

Describe your community's goals and objectives for public health as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.

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SANBORN, NEW YORK 14132**



# Niagara Communities Comprehensive Plan

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## COMMUNITY SURVEY ON THE FOCUS AREAS OF THE NIAGARA COMMUNITIES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**SURVEY COMPLETED BY:**

**NAME:** Melissa Germann

**TITLE:** Planning Board Member and Secretary

**MUNICIPALITY:** Town of Wheatfield

**AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION:** Planning Board

**MAILING ADDRESS:** 2800 Church Road, North Tonawanda, NY 14120

**PHONE NUMBER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**EMAIL ADDRESS:** Germann@buffalo.edu

**FOCUS AREA: LAND USE & ENVIRONMENT**

**LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION**

Points to Consider

- Think about changes in land use patterns over the last 20 years, including any changes in types of development projects or community character. Consider different types of land uses in your community: Agriculture, Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Recreation, Open Space, Vacant, etc. What do you see happening in your community?
- How would you best characterize your community at present - urban, suburban, or rural?
- How would you best describe your community as it now exists:
  - Developed: built-out with virtually no “greenfield” development potential
  - Developing: a mix of established and emerging development
  - Redeveloping: e.g., re-use of formerly vacant properties
  - Undeveloped: e.g., agricultural areas are not being developed
- Think about transportation in your community (construction and maintenance of public roads and bridges, access to public transit such as bus service, recreational opportunities, freight transportation, etc.) Have there been significant changes in transportation services or in public access to those services over the last years? Consider conditions and capacities for personal automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, bus, heavy truck, train, aviation, and marine uses.

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to land use/transportation?***

1. We have a shortage of East/West roads. There is also a possible issue facing North/South roads => waiting time at intersections.

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2. Major economic impact (Oz project) may have significant impact on local roads. Setbacks should be increased to plan for future expansion of Niagara Falls Blvd.

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3. Increasing commercial uses along commercial corridor.

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***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to land use/transportation?***

1. If Oz project comes to fruition, the project will alter the Town of Wheatfield forever.

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2. Commercial Development contiguous to the Airport.

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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_

***Describe your community's goals and objectives for land use/transportation as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.***

Preserving farmland => Comprehensive Plan Task Force is working toward, possibly, PDRs and TDRs.

Oz => the Task force is beginning to plan for the possibility of a large scale theme park.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

### Points to Consider

- Think about the different natural features of your community such as its forestlands, open space areas, wildlife and wildlife habitats, waterways, floodplains, wetlands, geological formations, scenic views, etc. Have any of these features changed over the past 20 years?
- Does your community provide access to scenic views, parks, open space, and other natural areas? In what ways? How could access to these areas be improved in your community?
- Have any actions been taken in recent years to protect the natural features in your community? Have any actions jeopardized your community's natural features?
- Are the environmental features in your community an important part of your life? How so?

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to natural features and the environment?***

1. Preservation of NYS and Federal wetlands.

Revisiting berm requirements.

2. Preventing government entities expansion of floodplains.

3. Improving Town drainage, the town is flat.

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to natural features and the environment?*

1. Niagara River  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Bull Creek, Cayuga Creek  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Bergholz Creek, Sawyer Creek  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Describe your community's goals and objectives for natural features and the environment as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

Preserving greenspace and recreation space  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**FOCUS AREA: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Points to Consider

- Think about recent economic development related issues that have been identified in your community or discussed through local media that have or may impact your community. This could include news about relocation of firms, changes in local employment numbers (hirings and/or layoffs), openings or closings of businesses, new construction projects, etc. What do you see or hear happening in your community that relates to the local economy, jobs, etc.?
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- Are community assets such as parks and open space areas, schools, community safety and security, affordable housing, and other quality of life considerations being recognized as contributing to or being used to promote economic development opportunities? How so?

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to economic development?***

1. Commercial development to revisit zoning along major routes coming into the Town, especially along Niagara Falls Blvd.  
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\_\_\_\_\_
2. Attracting commercial and industrial parks => need regional economic development coordinated effort.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_

***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to economic development?***

1. Airport, waterfront, railroads  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Industrial parks  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Proximity to thruways  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

***Describe your community's goals and objectives for economic development as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.***

Get organized.

Have some goals and objectives.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**FOCUS AREA: COUNTY SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Points to Consider

- Think about the types of services that are provided to your community by Niagara County (social services, public health, public works, public safety, economic development, courts, emergency services, higher education, employment and training, election services, etc.). Are there any issues in your community relative to the need for:
  - Additional services
  - Access to services currently provided
  - Changes in services provided as a result of, for example:
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    - Changes in your community’s economic base
    - External factors (including changes in technology, national/global trends, legislation, local providers, level of services provided by government, etc.)
- Likewise, think about the types of facilities and infrastructure that are operated by the County. Are there any issues with the provision and/or maintenance of the County’s facilities and infrastructure? The County is responsible for and maintains:
  - Administrative, service, and public safety buildings across the County
  - 5 County parks (Oppenheim, Krull, Bond Lake, Royalton Ravine, West Canal Marina) and the County Golf Course
  - 283 miles of roads, 89 bridges, and 800 drainage culverts
  - Sewer, water and refuse districts

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?***

1. Oppenheim park should be better maintained. The park could also be upgraded.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Emergency communication system.  
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3.  
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***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?***

1. If Oppenheim were maintained, the park could be a major asset.  
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2.  
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3.

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*Describe your community's goals and objectives for County services, facilities, and infrastructure as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

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**FOCUS AREA: EDUCATION**

Points to Consider

- How well do current educational facilities accommodate the school-aged population in terms of capacity? How well suited are they for changes in the school-aged population over the next 20 years? [Projections from Cornell University show an overall decrease in the school-aged population in Niagara County by 2035 and school enrollment surveys compiled over the past 10 years indicate significant decreases in the cities, but gains in other school districts.]
- Does the school district in your community provide any special or enhanced educational programming that may not be provided in other school districts? If so, what types of programs are offered?
- School district consolidation has been mentioned as being needed to reduce the tax burden. Is this an issue in your community? Points to consider include:
  - Consolidation may mean greater distance from school facilities for some students, if consolidation results in school closures.
  - Per student expenditures do not appear to be above statewide averages in any of the Niagara County school districts.
  - Merging districts may mean that the consolidated district is able to provide more programs/activities than either could alone.
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- What types of industries exist within your community that require special training? How important is it to connect education and training programs with local businesses to create a sustainable workforce? What types of education and training programs should be invested in to attract new companies to Niagara County?
- Does your community need better access to:
  - Resource centers (e.g. libraries, computer centers, career development centers, etc.)?
  - Higher education institutions (colleges and universities or satellite facilities)?
  - Workforce development programs (e.g., Orleans/Niagara BOCES, Niagara County Employment and Training, NCCC Workforce Training/Community Development)?
  - Other programs or facilities?

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to education?***

1. Niagara Wheatfield Central School is almost at capacity.  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to education?***

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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***Describe your community's goals and objectives for education as well as actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.***

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**FOCUS AREA: PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY**

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

Points to Consider

- What is the overall sense of security / safety in the neighborhoods in your community?
- How would you rate the “visibility” of police patrols in your community? Who provides primary police coverage in your community (local police, Sheriff, State police)?
- Based on your experience, are response times / coverage for emergency services (police, fire, ambulance) adequate in your community?
- How is your community affected by proximity to the Canadian border?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County’s efforts to coordinate emergency / disaster preparation programs?
- What types of events has or might your community experienced that would require major emergency response? What assets does your community possess that would help it during an emergency?
- What do you perceive to be the biggest challenges to public safety in your community? How about within the County and/or the region?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to public safety?*

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public safety?*

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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*Describe your community's goals and objectives for public safety as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

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## **PUBLIC HEALTH**

### Points to Consider

- Does your community have adequate access to healthcare facilities, including hospitals? Does your community have adequate coverage in terms of ambulatory services, including response times?
- Do you feel your community would have adequate access to health services in the event of an emergency, such as a natural disaster or otherwise?
- What are the biggest public health concerns within your community? Are these ongoing concerns? Are there any issues that might be classified as health threats?
- Does your community or organizations within your community offer programs aimed at improving public health/wellness? What types of programs (i.e. nutrition, vaccinations, exercise, anti-smoking, etc.)?
- Is environmental health (i.e. water and air quality) a significant issue within your community? If so, why?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County Health Department's programs and services?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to public health?*

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*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public health?*

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*Describe your community's goals and objectives for public health as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

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Niagara Communities  
Comprehensive Plan

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**COMMUNITY SURVEY ON THE FOCUS AREAS OF THE  
NIAGARA COMMUNITIES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**SURVEY COMPLETED BY:**

**NAME:** Richard J. Meyers

**TITLE:** Supervisor, Town of Somerset

**MUNICIPALITY:** Town of Somerset

**AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION:**

**MAILING ADDRESS:** 8700 Haight Road, Barker, New York 14012

**PHONE NUMBER:** 716-795-3575

**EMAIL ADDRESS:** richardmeyers@roadrunner.com

**FOCUS AREA: LAND USE & ENVIRONMENT**

**LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION**

Points to Consider

- Think about changes in land use patterns over the last 20 years, including any changes in types of development projects or community character. Consider different types of land uses in your community: Agriculture, Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Recreation, Open Space, Vacant, etc. What do you see happening in your community?
- How would you best characterize your community at present - urban, suburban, or rural?
- How would you best describe your community as it now exists:
  - Developed: built-out with virtually no “greenfield” development potential
  - Developing: a mix of established and emerging development
  - Redeveloping: e.g., re-use of formerly vacant properties
  - Undeveloped: e.g., agricultural areas are not being developed
- Think about transportation in your community (construction and maintenance of public roads and bridges, access to public transit such as bus service, recreational opportunities, freight transportation, etc.) Have there been significant changes in transportation services or in public access to those services over the last years? Consider conditions and capacities for personal automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, bus, heavy truck, train, aviation, and marine uses.

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to land use/transportation?*

1. Preservation of rural character and associated agricultural areas while developing our base with clean commercial and industrial development.

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2. Highlight the need for county transportation amenities that our residents pay for that currently do not service this part of the county. The associated cost of fuel when no other transportation resource is offered is a heavy burden on the residents of Somerset.

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3. County bridge and road repair seem to be lagging the need.

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*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to land use/transportation?*

1. Large availability of open land and wind resource for wind plant development.

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2. Waterfront access for both residential and industrial uses with the additional possibility of a port facility associated with AES Somerset.

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3. Access to the Somerset Railroad rail system.

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***Describe your community's goals and objectives for land use/transportation as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.***

Development while in keeping with our rural character. This can be accomplished by pursuing the types of businesses that are in keeping with our community characteristics. Companies such as microchip assembly or other clean businesses can coexist with the rural farming land use that we currently have here in Somerset.

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## **ENVIRONMENT**

### Points to Consider

- Think about the different natural features of your community such as its forestlands, open space areas, wildlife and wildlife habitats, waterways, floodplains, wetlands, geological formations, scenic views, etc. Have any of these features changed over the past 20 years?
- Does your community provide access to scenic views, parks, open space, and other natural areas? In what ways? How could access to these areas be improved in your community?
- Have any actions been taken in recent years to protect the natural features in your community? Have any actions jeopardized your community's natural features?
- Are the environmental features in your community an important part of your life? How so?

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to natural features and the environment?***

1. Development of a waterfront public recreational park for our residents.

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2. Drainage that crosses municipal boundaries must be coordinated to meet the needs of each community. State and County drainage ditches must be kept clean to insure proper drainage of properties and roadways.

3. Shoreline erosion promises to increase if the International Joint Commission chooses to raise the lake levels in opposition to the wishes of the coastal residents.

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***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to natural features and the environment?***

1. The Lake Ontario shoreline and all of the benefits that come along with it..  

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2. Large amounts of green space.  

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3. The close proximity to the waterfront creates steady winds that are beneficial for harvesting the power of that wind.  

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***Describe your community's goals and objectives for natural features and the environment as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.***

Insure that we pursue the proper size wind plant for our area that can both utilize our wind assets as well as not obstructing our natural beauty.

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Create a community park on the waterfront property that has been agreed upon to be turned over to the Town from AES Somerset.

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## **FOCUS AREA: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### Points to Consider

- Think about recent economic development related issues that have been identified in your community or discussed through local media that have or may impact your community. This could include news about relocation of firms, changes in local employment numbers (hirings and/or layoffs), openings or closings of businesses, new construction projects, etc. What do you see or hear happening in your community that relates to the local economy, jobs, etc.?
- Think about different types of infrastructure within your community (sewer, water, electric, telecommunications, roads, bridges, highways, rail lines, aviation and marine facilities, etc.). Are any significant changes needed in your community's infrastructure to support economic development activities, such as attracting new companies or retaining existing companies?
- Does the economic character of your community or any economic trends within your community differ from neighboring communities in terms of the amount of development occurring, job loss/job creation, changes in types of industries, etc.? In what ways?
- Are community assets such as parks and open space areas, schools, community safety and security, affordable housing, and other quality of life considerations being recognized as contributing to or being used to promote economic development opportunities? How so?

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to economic development?***

1. Declining stable tax base from commerce and industry. Too much dependence on one taxing entity (AES Somerset).

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2. Not enough of the necessary promotion from outside of the Town of Somerset, eg. IDA, NCCED, Empire State Development Corporation.

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3. The need to bring the small portion of the residents who are strongly against any development in our town into the mindset that it is necessary to survive.

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***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to economic development?***

1. Available large acreage property on the Lake Ontario shoreline for companies that need waterfront access or cool clean water for their processes.

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2. The Possibility of low cost power and steam access through an industrial partnership with AES for potential industrial applications.

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3. Low taxes, good schools, and cheap housing and property.

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***Describe your community's goals and objectives for economic development as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.***

Pursue business that can locate in our town and utilize the many assets we have. We need to meet with the different economic development groups in NYS to insure we are being properly represented to those companies who are looking to locate in our state.

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**FOCUS AREA: COUNTY SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Points to Consider

- Think about the types of services that are provided to your community by Niagara County (social services, public health, public works, public safety, economic development, courts, emergency services, higher education, employment and training, election services, etc.). Are there any issues in your community relative to the need for:
  - Additional services
  - Access to services currently provided
  - Changes in services provided as a result of, for example:
    - Changes in your community’s population
    - Changes in your community’s economic base
    - External factors (including changes in technology, national/global trends, legislation, local providers, level of services provided by government, etc.)
- Likewise, think about the types of facilities and infrastructure that are operated by the County. Are there any issues with the provision and/or maintenance of the County’s facilities and infrastructure? The County is responsible for and maintains:
  - Administrative, service, and public safety buildings across the County
  - 5 County parks (Oppenheim, Krull, Bond Lake, Royalton Ravine, West Canal Marina) and the County Golf Course
  - 283 miles of roads, 89 bridges, and 800 drainage culverts
  - Sewer, water and refuse districts

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?***

1. The Water district is the only county services available in the Town of Somerset.  
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2. The county does not recognize the need in Somerset as being significant enough to be worth the additional cost associated with a community far from the county services centers.  
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3. We do not have accessible public transportation to get to the county services.  
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***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?***

1. There are none.  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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*Describe your community's goals and objectives for County services, facilities, and infrastructure as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

Encourage the County to establish a mobile services unit to bring county services out to the Town of Somerset, as well as other towns, so the residents would not have to travel the 60 – 100 mile round trip to access most community services.

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### **FOCUS AREA: EDUCATION**

#### Points to Consider

- How well do current educational facilities accommodate the school-aged population in terms of capacity? How well suited are they for changes in the school-aged population over the next 20 years? [Projections from Cornell University show an overall decrease in the school-aged population in Niagara County by 2035 and school enrollment surveys compiled over the past 10 years indicate significant decreases in the cities, but gains in other school districts.]
- Does the school district in your community provide any special or enhanced educational programming that may not be provided in other school districts? If so, what types of programs are offered?
- School district consolidation has been mentioned as being needed to reduce the tax burden. Is this an issue in your community? Points to consider include:
  - Consolidation may mean greater distance from school facilities for some students, if consolidation results in school closures.
  - Per student expenditures do not appear to be above statewide averages in any of the Niagara County school districts.
  - Merging districts may mean that the consolidated district is able to provide more programs/activities than either could alone.
- Are any capital improvements needed, planned, or currently being made in your community relative to educational facilities? If so, what types of improvements?
- How important is it to have job training programs, job placement services, and continuing education courses readily available to adults and young adults in your community?
- What types of industries exist within your community that require special training? How important is it to connect education and training programs with local businesses to create a sustainable workforce? What types of education and training programs should be invested in to attract new companies to Niagara County?
- Does your community need better access to:
  - Resource centers (e.g. libraries, computer centers, career development centers, etc.)?
  - Higher education institutions (colleges and universities or satellite facilities)?
  - Workforce development programs (e.g., Orleans/Niagara BOCES, Niagara County Employment and Training, NCCC Workforce Training/Community Development)?
  - Other programs or facilities?

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to education?***

1. Excessive educational taxation.  
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2. Opening the school grounds to the community when available.  
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3. AES Pilot and State tax losses and the additional cuts needed at the school.  
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***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to education?***

1. Good school system at Barker Central School.  
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2. Many good colleges within driving distance.  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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***Describe your community's goals and objectives for education as well as actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.***

Reduce cost at Barker Central School. Bring in additional and diverse revenue for the district.  
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Consolidate duplicate services of the Town, Village and District.  
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**FOCUS AREA: PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY**

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

Points to Consider

- What is the overall sense of security / safety in the neighborhoods in your community?
- How would you rate the “visibility” of police patrols in your community? Who provides primary police coverage in your community (local police, Sheriff, State police)?
- Based on your experience, are response times / coverage for emergency services (police, fire, ambulance) adequate in your community?
- How is your community affected by proximity to the Canadian border?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County’s efforts to coordinate emergency / disaster preparation programs?
- What types of events has or might your community experienced that would require major emergency response? What assets does your community possess that would help it during an emergency?
- What do you perceive to be the biggest challenges to public safety in your community? How about within the County and/or the region?

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to public safety?***

1. Evening police coverage.  
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***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public safety?***

1. Local police force.  
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2. Large, well equipped fire and rescue department.  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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*Describe your community's goals and objectives for public safety as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

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## **PUBLIC HEALTH**

### Points to Consider

- Does your community have adequate access to healthcare facilities, including hospitals? Does your community have adequate coverage in terms of ambulatory services, including response times?
- Do you feel your community would have adequate access to health services in the event of an emergency, such as a natural disaster or otherwise?
- What are the biggest public health concerns within your community? Are these ongoing concerns? Are there any issues that might be classified as health threats?
- Does your community or organizations within your community offer programs aimed at improving public health/wellness? What types of programs (i.e. nutrition, vaccinations, exercise, anti-smoking, etc.)?
- Is environmental health (i.e. water and air quality) a significant issue within your community? If so, why?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County Health Department's programs and services?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to public health?*

1. Too far away from major medical centers.

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2. No local fitness centers.

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3. No local major grocery shopping center

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*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public health?*

1. Farming community with fresh fruits and vegetables during the harvest months.  
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2. Clean air and water  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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*Describe your community's goals and objectives for public health as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

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NIAGARA CO. ECONOMIC DEV.

COMMUNITY SURVEY ON THE FOCUS AREAS OF THE  
NIAGARA COMMUNITIES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**SURVEY COMPLETED BY:**

NAME: Spira, George

TITLE: Chairperson of the Town of Porter Planning Board

MUNICIPALITY: Town of Porter

AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION: \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS: 327 Riverview Drive, Youngstown, NY 14174

PHONE NUMBER: 745-9924

EMAIL ADDRESS: JSASPIRA@aol.com

## FOCUS AREA: LAND USE & ENVIRONMENT

### LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION

#### Points to Consider

- Think about changes in land use patterns over the last 20 years, including any changes in types of development projects or community character. Consider different types of land uses in your community: Agriculture, Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Recreation, Open Space, Vacant, etc. What do you see happening in your community?
- How would you best characterize your community at present - urban, suburban, or rural?
- How would you best describe your community as it now exists:
  - Developed: built-out with virtually no "greenfield" development potential
  - Developing: a mix of established and emerging development
  - Redeveloping: e.g., re-use of formerly vacant properties
  - Undeveloped: e.g., agricultural areas are not being developed
- Think about transportation in your community (construction and maintenance of public roads and bridges, access to public transit such as bus service, recreational opportunities, freight transportation, etc.) Have there been significant changes in transportation services or in public access to those services over the last years? Consider conditions and capacities for personal automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, bus, heavy truck, train, aviation, and marine uses.

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to land use/transportation?*

1. A need for senior citizen housing with a potential for transportation needs to be met.
2. We should plan for the commercial development of lands associated with the Lake Ontario Ordinance Works (LOOW) which is about 1500 acres after it is made available.
3. Land use should be about 70% agriculture, 20% residential and 10% commercial/industrial.

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to land use/transportation?*

1. We need to revitalize agriculture by increasing the demand for local agricultural products.
2. Growth in single family housing will slow down over the next 10 years.

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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*Describe your community's goals and objectives for land use/transportation as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

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## **ENVIRONMENT**

### Points to Consider

- Think about the different natural features of your community such as its forestlands, open space areas, wildlife and wildlife habitats, waterways, floodplains, wetlands, geological formations, scenic views, etc. Have any of these features changed over the past 20 years?
- Does your community provide access to scenic views, parks, open space, and other natural areas? In what ways? How could access to these areas be improved in your community?
- Have any actions been taken in recent years to protect the natural features in your community? Have any actions jeopardized your community's natural features?
- Are the environmental features in your community an important part of your life? How so?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to natural features and the environment?*

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to natural features and the environment?

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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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Describe your community's goals and objectives for natural features and the environment as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.

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**FOCUS AREA: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Points to Consider

- Think about recent economic development related issues that have been identified in your community or discussed through local media that have or may impact your community. This could include news about relocation of firms, changes in local employment numbers (hirings and/or layoffs), openings or closings of businesses, new construction projects, etc. What do you see or hear happening in your community that relates to the local economy, jobs, etc.?
- Think about different types of infrastructure within your community (sewer, water, electric, telecommunications, roads, bridges, highways, rail lines, aviation and marine facilities, etc.). Are any significant changes needed in your community's infrastructure to support economic development activities, such as attracting new companies or retaining existing companies?
- Does the economic character of your community or any economic trends within your community differ from neighboring communities in terms of the amount of development occurring, job loss/job creation, changes in types of industries, etc.? In what ways?
- Are community assets such as parks and open space areas, schools, community safety and security, affordable housing, and other quality of life considerations being recognized as contributing to or being used to promote economic development opportunities? How so?

**What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to economic development?**

1. The cost of electricity is disproportionate for the fact that it is generated in our area. Locally generated energy should assist our business development.
2. We are not centrally located.

3.

**What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to economic development?**

1. We need to entice people to this area for the months of April - October. Our housing is very reasonable, but the taxes are a detriment.

2.

3.

**Describe your community's goals and objectives for economic development as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.**

**FOCUS AREA: COUNTY SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Points to Consider

- > Think about the types of services that are provided to your community by Niagara County (social services, public health, public works, public safety, economic development, courts, emergency services, higher education, employment and training, election services, etc.). Are there any issues in your community relative to the need for:
  - Additional services
  - Access to services currently provided
  - Changes in services provided as a result of, for example:
    - Changes in your community's population
    - Changes in your community's economic base
    - External factors (including changes in technology, national/global trends, legislation, local providers, level of services provided by government, etc.)
- > Likewise, think about the types of facilities and infrastructure that are operated by the County. Are there any issues with the provision and/or maintenance of the County's facilities and infrastructure? The County is responsible for and maintains:
  - Administrative, service, and public safety buildings across the County
  - 5 County parks (Oppenheim, Krull, Bond Lake, Royalton Ravine, West Canal Marina) and the County Golf Course
  - 283 miles of roads, 89 bridges, and 800 drainage culverts
  - Sewer, water and refuse districts

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?*

1. Serious consolidation of all aspects of gov't. services to reduce the cost of government, hence taxes.
2. Reduce the size of the legislature, merge towns and villages, school districts.
3. Put welfare and social services recipients on infrastructure improvement. Use BOCES as a training ground for the people using the system.

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?*

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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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*Describe your community's goals and objectives for County services, facilities, and infrastructure as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

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**FOCUS AREA: EDUCATION**

Points to Consider

- How well do current educational facilities accommodate the school-aged population in terms of capacity? How well suited are they for changes in the school-aged population over the next 20 years? [Projections from Cornell University show an overall decrease in the school-aged population in Niagara County by 2035 and school enrollment surveys compiled over the past 10 years indicate significant decreases in the cities, but gains in other school districts.]
- Does the school district in your community provide any special or enhanced educational programming that may not be provided in other school districts? If so, what types of programs are offered?
- School district consolidation has been mentioned as being needed to reduce the tax burden. Is this an issue in your community? Points to consider include:
  - Consolidation may mean greater distance from school facilities for some students, if consolidation results in school closures.
  - Per student expenditures do not appear to be above statewide averages in any of the Niagara County school districts.
  - Merging districts may mean that the consolidated district is able to provide more programs/activities than either could alone.
- Are any capital improvements needed, planned, or currently being made in your community relative to educational facilities? If so, what types of improvements?
- How important is it to have job training programs, job placement services, and continuing education courses readily available to adults and young adults in your community?
- What types of industries exist within your community that require special training? How important is it to connect education and training programs with local businesses to create a sustainable workforce? What types of education and training programs should be invested in to attract new companies to Niagara County?
- Does your community need better access to:
  - Resource centers (e.g. libraries, computer centers, career development centers, etc.)?
  - Higher education institutions (colleges and universities or satellite facilities)?
  - Workforce development programs (e.g., Orleans/Niagara BOCES, Niagara County Employment and Training, NCCC Workforce Training/Community Development)?
  - Other programs or facilities?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to education?*

1. We should look at a consolidated Lewiston-Porter-Wilson school district with state of the art educational opportunities.
2. Expand the libraries to serve multiple purposes, such as a latchkey service, and to service the younger generation.
- 3.

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to education?*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

*Describe your community's goals and objectives for education as well as actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

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**FOCUS AREA: PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY**

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

Points to Consider

- What is the overall sense of security / safety in the neighborhoods in your community?
- How would you rate the “visibility” of police patrols in your community? Who provides primary police coverage in your community (local police, Sheriff, State police)?
- Based on your experience, are response times / coverage for emergency services (police, fire, ambulance) adequate in your community?
- How is your community affected by proximity to the Canadian border?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County’s efforts to coordinate emergency / disaster preparation programs?
- What types of events has or might your community experienced that would require major emergency response? What assets does your community possess that would help it during an emergency?
- What do you perceive to be the biggest challenges to public safety in your community? How about within the County and/or the region?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative public safety?*

*This comment should be under public health!*

1. The sewer and water infrastructure must allow for future development. (a) adequately repair the existing system and (b) ensure expansion potential, this would include the hamlet of Ransomville.
2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public safety?*

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

*Describe your community's goals and objectives for public safety as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

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**PUBLIC HEALTH**

Points to Consider

- Does your community have adequate access to healthcare facilities, including hospitals? Does your community have adequate coverage in terms of ambulatory services, including response times?
- Do you feel your community would have adequate access to health services in the event of an emergency, such as a natural disaster or otherwise?
- What are the biggest public health concerns within your community? Are these ongoing concerns? Are there any issues that might be classified as health threats?
- Does your community or organizations within your community offer programs aimed at improving public health/wellness? What types of programs (i.e. nutrition, vaccinations, exercise, anti-smoking, etc.)?
- Is environmental health (i.e. water and air quality) a significant issue within your community? If so, why?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County Health Department's programs and services?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative public health?*

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What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public health?

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Describe your community's goals and objectives for public health as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.

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**PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED SURVEYS TO:  
NIAGARA COMMUNITIES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
VANTAGE CENTRE – SUITE ONE  
6311 INDUCON CORPORATE DRIVE  
SANBORN, NEW YORK 14132**



Niagara Communities  
Comprehensive Plan

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**COMMUNITY SURVEY ON THE FOCUS AREAS OF THE  
NIAGARA COMMUNITIES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**SURVEY COMPLETED BY:**

NAME: BARBARA HATHAWAY

TITLE: PLANNING BOARD CHAIRMAN

MUNICIPALITY: TOWN OF NIAGARA

AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION: \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS: 7105 LOCKPORT ROAD

PHONE NUMBER: 716-297-2150 X 136

EMAIL ADDRESS: SRICHARDS@TOWNOFNIAGARA.COM

**FOCUS AREA: LAND USE & ENVIRONMENT**

**LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION**

Points to Consider

- > Think about changes in land use patterns over the last 20 years, including any changes in types of development projects or community character. Consider different types of land uses in your community: Agriculture, Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Recreation, Open Space, Vacant, etc. What do you see happening in your community?
- > How would you best characterize your community at present - urban, suburban, or rural?
- > How would you best describe your community as it now exists:
  - Developed: built-out with virtually no "greenfield" development potential
  - Developing: a mix of established and emerging development
  - Redeveloping: e.g., re-use of formerly vacant properties
  - Undeveloped: e.g., agricultural areas are not being developed
- > Think about transportation in your community (construction and maintenance of public roads and bridges, access to public transit such as bus service, recreational opportunities, freight transportation, etc.) Have there been significant changes in transportation services or in public access to those services over the last years? Consider conditions and capacities for personal automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, bus, heavy truck, train, aviation, and marine uses.

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to land use/transportation?

- residential* 1. Less residential area available for new construction. Try to determine best use of current vacant land that would benefit community.
- business* 2. Seek different developers for business area. Excellent access to interstate & rail transportation.
- industry* 3. Transportation feature can be developed to expand local industry.

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to land use/transportation?

- resident* 1. Highly regarded school district is an asset to the town. Community Center Park current and future development is opportunities.
- business* 2. Ease of public transportation; NFTA location, being shipped to Outlet. Easy access for shippers and (conditions). Two businesses will benefit -

industry 3. Easy access for transporting goods to area industrial parks, etc.

Describe your community's goals and objectives for land use/transportation as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.

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## ENVIRONMENT

### Points to Consider

- Think about the different natural features of your community such as its forestlands, open space areas, wildlife and wildlife habitats, waterways, floodplains, wetlands, geological formations, scenic views, etc. Have any of these features changed over the past 20 years?
- Does your community provide access to scenic views, parks, open space, and other natural areas? In what ways? How could access to these areas be improved in your community?
- Have any actions been taken in recent years to protect the natural features in your community? Have any actions jeopardized your community's natural features?
- Are the environmental features in your community an important part of your life? How so?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to natural features and the environment?

- resid. 1. Continue to preserve natural environment as much as possible i.e. Iowa Park.
- business 2. Encourage developers to maintain green spaces and bring into the area businesses that will not harm our environment.
- industry 3. Develop more industrial area/parks for better concentration and encourage maintaining as much green space as possible.

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to natural features and the environment?

- res. 1. Jew of Neigra Community Park - protecting & enhancing a large green space for use by community. Plans to provide all year round (12 mo) recreation for residents.
- busin. 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- ind. 3. \_\_\_\_\_

Describe your community's goals and objectives for natural features and the environment as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.

- resident - Complete plans for Jew Park & maintain.
- Maintain BF landfill and stone quarry when all operations has been completed and both are closed.

**FOCUS AREA: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Points to Consider

- > Think about recent economic development related issues that have been identified in your community or discussed through local media that have or may impact your community. This could include news about relocation of firms, changes in local employment numbers (hirings and/or layoffs), openings or closings of businesses, new construction projects, etc. What do you see or hear happening in your community that relates to the local economy, jobs, etc.?
- > Think about different types of infrastructure within your community (sewer, water, electric, telecommunications, roads, bridges, highways, rail lines, aviation and marine facilities, etc.). Are any significant changes needed in your community's infrastructure to support economic development activities, such as attracting new companies or retaining existing companies?
- > Does the economic character of your community or any economic trends within your community differ from neighboring communities in terms of the amount of development occurring, job loss/job creation, changes in types of industries, etc.? In what ways?
- > Are community assets such as parks and open space areas, schools, community safety and security, affordable housing, and other quality of life considerations being recognized as contributing to or being used to promote economic development opportunities? How so?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to economic development?

1. Town is limited to development of open space. Military Road development has been the emphasis.
2. Military Road has been the main development emphasis. Shopping areas as well as medical offices and business/agencies.
3. Important to find proper tenants for Reserve base when military leaves.

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to economic development?

1. Military Road business district and access to I-90.
2. "Medical Corridor" developing on northern part of Military Road.
3. Tenants for US Reserve Base can bring employment to area.

Describe your community's goals and objectives for economic development as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.

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**FOCUS AREA: COUNTY SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Points to Consider

- > Think about the types of services that are provided to your community by Niagara County (social services, public health, public works, public safety, economic development, courts, emergency services, higher education, employment and training, election services, etc.). Are there any issues in your community relative to the need for:
  - Additional services
  - Access to services currently provided
  - Changes in services provided as a result of, for example:
    - Changes in your community's population
    - Changes in your community's economic base
    - External factors (including changes in technology, national/global trends, legislation, local providers, level of services provided by government, etc.)
- > Likewise, think about the types of facilities and infrastructure that are operated by the County. Are there any issues with the provision and/or maintenance of the County's facilities and infrastructure? The County is responsible for and maintains:
  - Administrative, service, and public safety buildings across the County
  - 5 County parks (Oppenheim, Krull, Bond Lake, Royalton Ravine, West Canal Marina) and the County Golf Course
  - 283 miles of roads, 89 bridges, and 800 drainage culverts
  - Sewer, water and refuse districts

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?

1. *improvement and/or repair of any county roads and bridges*

2. *making county services more available to Iroquois residents (young and old residents)*

3.

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?

1. *Close proximity to opportunities offered at County parks.*

2. *Availability of County water & sewer systems*

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*Describe your community's goals and objectives for County services, facilities, and infrastructure as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

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**FOCUS AREA: EDUCATION**

Points to Consider

- How well do current educational facilities accommodate the school-aged population in terms of capacity? How well suited are they for changes in the school-aged population over the next 20 years? [Projections from Cornell University show an overall decrease in the school-aged population in Niagara County by 2035 and school enrollment surveys compiled over the past 10 years indicate significant decreases in the cities, but gains in other school districts.]
- Does the school district in your community provide any special or enhanced educational programming that may not be provided in other school districts? If so, what types of programs are offered?
- School district consolidation has been mentioned as being needed to reduce the tax burden. Is this an issue in your community? Points to consider include:
  - Consolidation may mean greater distance from school facilities for some students, if consolidation results in school closures.
  - Per student expenditures do not appear to be above statewide averages in any of the Niagara County school districts.
  - Merging districts may mean that the consolidated district is able to provide more programs/activities than either could alone.
- Are any capital improvements needed, planned, or currently being made in your community relative to educational facilities? If so, what types of improvements?
- How important is it to have job training programs, job placement services, and continuing education courses readily available to adults and young adults in your community?
- What types of industries exist within your community that require special training? How important is it to connect education and training programs with local businesses to create a sustainable workforce? What types of education and training programs should be invested in to attract new companies to Niagara County?
- Does your community need better access to:
  - Resource centers (e.g. libraries, computer centers, career development centers, etc.)?
  - Higher education institutions (colleges and universities or satellite facilities)?
  - Workforce development programs (e.g., Orleans/Niagara BOCES, Niagara County Employment and Training, NCCC Workforce Training/Community Development)?
  - Other programs or facilities?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to education?

1. Maintaining the quality of education in the N-W School District without a substantial increase of taxes.
2. Lack of a satellite educational opportunity that could be established in one of the vacant storefronts in the town.
3. Provide better access to workplace development programs for residents. Schedule outreach services on a weekly basis in town area.

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to education?

1. A highly regarded school district that is a draw for residential development.
2. Potential for satellite educational opportunity.
- 3.

Describe your community's goals and objectives for education as well as actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.

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**FOCUS AREA: PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY**

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

Points to Consider

- What is the overall sense of security / safety in the neighborhoods in your community?
- How would you rate the “visibility” of police patrols in your community? Who provides primary police coverage in your community (local police, Sheriff, State police)?
- Based on your experience, are response times / coverage for emergency services (police, fire, ambulance) adequate in your community?
- How is your community affected by proximity to the Canadian border?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County’s efforts to coordinate emergency / disaster preparation programs?
- What types of events has or might your community experienced that would require major emergency response? What assets does your community possess that would help it during an emergency?
- What do you perceive to be the biggest challenges to public safety in your community? How about within the County and/or the region?

**What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative public safety?**

1. *The potential of a hazardous incident that requires a hazard response procedure.*
2. *The potential of an air port related incident.*
- 3.

**What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public safety?**

1. *Cooperation of local industries that manufacture hazardous material, transported through the town, works with town to establish a hazardous response procedure.*
2. *Cooperation with the air base that allows their special response equipment to be used during an appropriate emergency.*
3. *Cooperation of neighboring fire districts to share equipment during an emergency.*

Describe your community's goals and objectives for public safety as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.

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## PUBLIC HEALTH

### Points to Consider

- Does your community have adequate access to healthcare facilities, including hospitals? Does your community have adequate coverage in terms of ambulatory services, including response times?
- Do you feel your community would have adequate access to health services in the event of an emergency, such as a natural disaster or otherwise?
- What are the biggest public health concerns within your community? Are these ongoing concerns? Are there any issues that might be classified as health threats?
- Does your community or organizations within your community offer programs aimed at improving public health/wellness? What types of programs (i.e. nutrition, vaccinations, exercise, anti-smoking, etc.)?
- Is environmental health (i.e. water and air quality) a significant issue within your community? If so, why?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County Health Department's programs and services?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative public health?

1. A program for seniors of the Town to become better informed of available County and not for profit services.
2. A better system to provide ambulatory services for all areas of the Town.
3. Ability to expand nutrition program provided currently at the Town Community Center. Transportation for seniors is an ongoing issue. Seniors need good nutrition and socialization on a regular basis.

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public health?

1. A Town Park Activity building capable of hosting county presentations for available services to residents.
2. A good road network to access healthcare facilities.
- 3.

Describe your community's goals and objectives for public health as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.

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Niagara Communities  
Comprehensive Plan

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**COMMUNITY SURVEY ON THE FOCUS AREAS OF THE  
NIAGARA COMMUNITIES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**SURVEY COMPLETED BY:**

**NAME:** Robert Pettit and Laura Rutland

**TITLE:** Town Council

**MUNICIPALITY:** Town of Newfane

**AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION:**

**MAILING ADDRESS:** 2896 Transit Rd., Newfane, NY 14108

**PHONE NUMBER:** 716 778-8531

**EMAIL ADDRESS:** tonsupervisor@roadrunner.com

**FOCUS AREA: LAND USE & ENVIRONMENT**

**LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION**

Points to Consider

- Think about changes in land use patterns over the last 20 years, including any changes in types of development projects or community character. Consider different types of land uses in your community: Agriculture, Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Recreation, Open Space, Vacant, etc. What do you see happening in your community?
- How would you best characterize your community at present - urban, suburban, or rural?
- How would you best describe your community as it now exists:
  - Developed: built-out with virtually no “greenfield” development potential
  - Developing: a mix of established and emerging development
  - Redeveloping: e.g., re-use of formerly vacant properties
  - Undeveloped: e.g., agricultural areas are not being developed
- Think about transportation in your community (construction and maintenance of public roads and bridges, access to public transit such as bus service, recreational opportunities, freight transportation, etc.) Have there been significant changes in transportation services or in public access to those services over the last years? Consider conditions and capacities for personal automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, bus, heavy truck, train, aviation, and marine uses.

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to land use/transportation?***

1. Lack of sufficient public transportation!! Our population is aging.

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2. No major highway – north to south- Route. NYS Route 78 for all intense purposes ends in Lockport, NY

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- 3.

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***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to land use/transportation?***

1. The Harbor at Olcott beach at the mouth of 18 Mile Creek. Our lakefront has enormous potential for recreational, industrial & agricultural development.

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2. The fishery in 18 Mile Creek, the fish stocking program attracts sportsmen from all states, Canada – from the Lake to the Burt Dam is a world class attraction.

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3. We host the best fruit growing lands in North America – Strong agricultural base.
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*Describe your community's goals and objectives for land use/transportation as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

Maximize our natural resources by revitalizing historic Olcott Beach attractions, town village shops, carousel project, Krull Park and swimming enhancement.

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## ENVIRONMENT

### Points to Consider

- Think about the different natural features of your community such as its forestlands, open space areas, wildlife and wildlife habitats, waterways, floodplains, wetlands, geological formations, scenic views, etc. Have any of these features changed over the past 20 years?
- Does your community provide access to scenic views, parks, open space, and other natural areas? In what ways? How could access to these areas be improved in your community?
- Have any actions been taken in recent years to protect the natural features in your community? Have any actions jeopardized your community's natural features?
- Are the environmental features in your community an important part of your life? How so?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to natural features and the environment?*

1. Harbor Breakwall at Olcott Harbor – this has long history of study & NO ACTION.
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2. The beach at Krull Park has remained a problem for years – County of Niagara only recently has made public swimming possible.
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3. Assisting towns to remediate Brownfields ie: old gas stations with contaminated areas.
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***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to natural features and the environment?***

1. The harbor at Olcott and all lakeshore areas.  
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2. The Fishery – Lake Ontario – 18 Mile Creek – Fisherman’s Park at Burt Dam – World class.  
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3. Agricultural acreage – The Ontario plain presents finest acreage in North America – finest fruit orchards period!  
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***Describe your community’s goals and objectives for natural features and the environment as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.***

Town of Newfane has enacted a Wind Ordinance to protect agricultural areas and also promote wind energy plans.  
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\_\_\_\_\_

Applying for all grants to enhance agriculture, fishery and recreation opportunities.  
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**FOCUS AREA: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Points to Consider

- Think about recent economic development related issues that have been identified in your community or discussed through local media that have or may impact your community. This could include news about relocation of firms, changes in local employment numbers (hirings and/or layoffs), openings or closings of businesses, new construction projects, etc. What do you see or hear happening in your community that relates to the local economy, jobs, etc.?
- Think about different types of infrastructure within your community (sewer, water, electric, telecommunications, roads, bridges, highways, rail lines, aviation and marine facilities, etc.). Are any significant changes needed in your community’s infrastructure to support economic development activities, such as attracting new companies or retaining existing companies?
- Does the economic character of your community or any economic trends within your community differ from neighboring communities in terms of the amount of development occurring, job loss/job creation, changes in types of industries, etc.? In what ways?
- Are community assets such as parks and open space areas, schools, community safety and security, affordable housing, and other quality of life considerations being recognized as contributing to or being used to promote economic development opportunities? How so?

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to economic development?***

1. Eliminating & Redevelopment of aging structures & properties ie: Brownfields (old gas stations)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
Lack of light industry – Very few jobs  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
Constant struggle to maintain successful small businesses.  
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***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to economic development?***

1. Excellent community hospital & local school system. Great environment for families and light industry  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Harbor – Fishery – Waterfront  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Excellent geography & lake effect that supports the best fruit farms in the world  
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***Describe your community's goals and objectives for economic development as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.***

Town of Newfane has a master plan & zoning and planning mechanisms to assist progress.  
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**FOCUS AREA: COUNTY SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Points to Consider

- Think about the types of services that are provided to your community by Niagara County (social services, public health, public works, public safety, economic development, courts, emergency services, higher education, employment and training, election services, etc.). Are there any issues in your community relative to the need for:
  - Additional services
  - Access to services currently provided
  - Changes in services provided as a result of, for example:
    - Changes in your community’s population
    - Changes in your community’s economic base
    - External factors (including changes in technology, national/global trends, legislation, local providers, level of services provided by government, etc.)
- Likewise, think about the types of facilities and infrastructure that are operated by the County. Are there any issues with the provision and/or maintenance of the County’s facilities and infrastructure? The County is responsible for and maintains:
  - Administrative, service, and public safety buildings across the County
  - 5 County parks (Oppenheim, Krull, Bond Lake, Royalton Ravine, West Canal Marina) and the County Golf Course
  - 283 miles of roads, 89 bridges, and 800 drainage culverts
  - Sewer, water and refuse districts

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?***

1. No major North/South highway  
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2. Struggle to maintain present water, sewer, etc. Expensive and constant.  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?***

1. Krull Park is the only County presence in our town – Any enhancement would be appreciated.  
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2. No County offices in our town – Town Hall project on Main St. will make information more available.  
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*Describe your community's goals and objectives for County services, facilities, and infrastructure as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

Improve Krull Park!!!

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**FOCUS AREA: EDUCATION**

Points to Consider

- How well do current educational facilities accommodate the school-aged population in terms of capacity? How well suited are they for changes in the school-aged population over the next 20 years? [Projections from Cornell University show an overall decrease in the school-aged population in Niagara County by 2035 and school enrollment surveys compiled over the past 10 years indicate significant decreases in the cities, but gains in other school districts.]
- Does the school district in your community provide any special or enhanced educational programming that may not be provided in other school districts? If so, what types of programs are offered?
- School district consolidation has been mentioned as being needed to reduce the tax burden. Is this an issue in your community? Points to consider include:
  - Consolidation may mean greater distance from school facilities for some students, if consolidation results in school closures.
  - Per student expenditures do not appear to be above statewide averages in any of the Niagara County school districts.
  - Merging districts may mean that the consolidated district is able to provide more programs/activities than either could alone.
- Are any capital improvements needed, planned, or currently being made in your community relative to educational facilities? If so, what types of improvements?
- How important is it to have job training programs, job placement services, and continuing education courses readily available to adults and young adults in your community?
- What types of industries exist within your community that require special training? How important is it to connect education and training programs with local businesses to create a sustainable workforce? What types of education and training programs should be invested in to attract new companies to Niagara County?
- Does your community need better access to:
  - Resource centers (e.g. libraries, computer centers, career development centers, etc.)?
  - Higher education institutions (colleges and universities or satellite facilities)?
  - Workforce development programs (e.g., Orleans/Niagara BOCES, Niagara County Employment and Training, NCCC Workforce Training/Community Development)?
  - Other programs or facilities?

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to education?***

1. The school system is the largest taxing entity in the town. School tax levies are higher than the county's.  
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\_\_\_\_\_
2. More transportation to get citizens to NCCC or any other higher educational venues.  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to education?***

1. The local school system is excellent. Our local community hospital is profitable and extremely efficient.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. NCCC provides opportunities for all ages. Inexpensive first step for higher education pursuits.  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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***Describe your community's goals and objectives for education as well as actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.***

Cooperate with school organizations and groups. Local churches are quite active and need support. Also volunteer fire companies to give educational instruction.  
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\_\_\_\_\_

**FOCUS AREA: PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY**

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

Points to Consider

- What is the overall sense of security / safety in the neighborhoods in your community?
- How would you rate the “visibility” of police patrols in your community? Who provides primary police coverage in your community (local police, Sheriff, State police)?
- Based on your experience, are response times / coverage for emergency services (police, fire, ambulance) adequate in your community?
- How is your community affected by proximity to the Canadian border?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County’s efforts to coordinate emergency / disaster preparation programs?
- What types of events has or might your community experienced that would require major emergency response? What assets does your community possess that would help it during an emergency?
- What do you perceive to be the biggest challenges to public safety in your community? How about within the County and/or the region?

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to public safety?***

1. More road patrols – either county or state

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2. Curfew enforcement

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3. Waterfront – International Harbor – Need video camera in Olcott Marina

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***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public safety?***

1. Response time for 1<sup>st</sup> responders, especially fire and EMS is unparalleled. Miller Hose, has only paramedics in Western Niagara County.

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2. Neighbor watch groups with Niagara County support are now effective in our town.

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3. Town drafting an emergency plan document

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***Describe your community's goals and objectives for public safety as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.***

State Police negotiating for office space (satellite) in old town hall on Transit Rd. We encourage any increase in Police patrols in Town of Newfane.

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## **PUBLIC HEALTH**

### Points to Consider

- Does your community have adequate access to healthcare facilities, including hospitals? Does your community have adequate coverage in terms of ambulatory services, including response times?
- Do you feel your community would have adequate access to health services in the event of an emergency, such as a natural disaster or otherwise?
- What are the biggest public health concerns within your community? Are these ongoing concerns? Are there any issues that might be classified as health threats?
- Does your community or organizations within your community offer programs aimed at improving public health/wellness? What types of programs (i.e. nutrition, vaccinations, exercise, anti-smoking, etc.)?
- Is environmental health (i.e. water and air quality) a significant issue within your community? If so, why?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County Health Department's programs and services?

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to public health?***

1. Pollution in area streams. Reducing mercury levels etc.
- 
- 
- 

2. Residue from agricultural spraying.
- 
- 
- 

3. Eliminate contaminated properties in the community especially old gas stations.
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- 
-

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public health?*

1. Local hospital very active in local events and media.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Response of first responders – fire, ambulance etc. Volunteer fire companies more effective than paid city units.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Public education from fire units & County Health Dept is very good.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Describe your community's goals and objectives for public health as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

Support all efforts of our hospitals and volunteer fire companies to continue their excellent efforts.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED SURVEYS TO:**

**[comprehensiveplan@niagaracounty.com](mailto:comprehensiveplan@niagaracounty.com)**

**OR**

**Niagara Communities Comprehensive Plan  
6311 Inducon Corporate Drive  
Sanborn, NY 14132**



# Niagara Communities Comprehensive Plan

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## COMMUNITY SURVEY ON THE FOCUS AREAS OF THE NIAGARA COMMUNITIES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**SURVEY COMPLETED BY:**

NAME: MARC R. SMITH

TITLE: SUPERVISOR

MUNICIPALITY: TOWN OF LOCKPORT

AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION: \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS: 6560 DYSINGER RD. LOCKPORT, NY 14094

PHONE NUMBER: 716-478-0601

EMAIL ADDRESS: MARCE@LOCKPORT.COM

**FOCUS AREA: LAND USE & ENVIRONMENT**

**LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION**

Points to Consider

- Think about changes in land use patterns over the last 20 years, including any changes in types of development projects or community character. Consider different types of land uses in your community: Agriculture, Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Recreation, Open Space, Vacant, etc. What do you see happening in your community?
- How would you best characterize your community at present - urban, suburban, or rural?
- How would you best describe your community as it now exists:
  - Developed: built-out with virtually no “greenfield” development potential
  - Developing: a mix of established and emerging development
  - Redeveloping: e.g., re-use of formerly vacant properties
  - Undeveloped: e.g., agricultural areas are not being developed
- Think about transportation in your community (construction and maintenance of public roads and bridges, access to public transit such as bus service, recreational opportunities, freight transportation, etc.) Have there been significant changes in transportation services or in public access to those services over the last years? Consider conditions and capacities for personal automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, bus, heavy truck, train, aviation, and marine uses.

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to land use/transportation?*

1. MAINTAINING INFRASTRUCTURE, FIX AGING INFRASTRUCTURE AND EXPAND INFRASTRUCTURE AS COMMUNITY GROWS. WATER/SOWER
2. BRIDGE MAINTENANCE & REPAIR
3. \_\_\_\_\_

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to land use/transportation?*

1. INEXPENSIVE LAND FOR DEVELOPMENT
2. INFRASTRUCTURE GROWTH CAPACITY

3. GOVERNMENT WILLING TO WORK WITH DEVELOPERS  
TO ENCOURAGE QUALITY GROWTH.

Describe your community's goals and objectives for land use/transportation as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.

- ① TRANSIT NORTH - THEMED HISTORIC RETAIL SHOPPING DIST.
- ② NEW IDA DIRECTOR WITH SUPERVISOR LEADING DEVELOPMENT

## ENVIRONMENT

### Points to Consider

- Think about the different natural features of your community such as its forestlands, open space areas, wildlife and wildlife habitats, waterways, floodplains, wetlands, geological formations, scenic views, etc. Have any of these features changed over the past 20 years?
- Does your community provide access to scenic views, parks, open space, and other natural areas? In what ways? How could access to these areas be improved in your community?
- Have any actions been taken in recent years to protect the natural features in your community? Have any actions jeopardized your community's natural features?
- Are the environmental features in your community an important part of your life? How so?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to natural features and the environment?

1. UNFUNDED STATE / FEDERAL MANDATES

2.

3.

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to natural features and the environment?

1. CANAL
2. NIAGARA ESCAPEMENT
3. AGRICULTURE / Farming → MORE AGRI-TOURISM

Describe your community's goals and objectives for natural features and the environment as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.

- EXPANDING PARKS
- BUILDING BIKEPATHS / WALKWAYS

**FOCUS AREA: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Points to Consider

- > Think about recent economic development related issues that have been identified in your community or discussed through local media that have or may impact your community. This could include news about relocation of firms, changes in local employment numbers (hirings and/or layoffs), openings or closings of businesses, new construction projects, etc. What do you see or hear happening in your community that relates to the local economy, jobs, etc.?
- > Think about different types of infrastructure within your community (sewer, water, electric, telecommunications, roads, bridges, highways, rail lines, aviation and marine facilities, etc.). Are any significant changes needed in your community's infrastructure to support economic development activities, such as attracting new companies or retaining existing companies?
- > Does the economic character of your community or any economic trends within your community differ from neighboring communities in terms of the amount of development occurring, job loss/job creation, changes in types of industries, etc.? In what ways?
- > Are community assets such as parks and open space areas, schools, community safety and security, affordable housing, and other quality of life considerations being recognized as contributing to or being used to promote economic development opportunities? How so?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to economic development?

1. NATIONAL ECONOMY
- 2.
- 3.

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to economic development?

1. WNY STIGMATISM AS RUST BELT - POOL - SNOW BOUND.
- 2.
- 3.

Describe your community's goals and objectives for economic development as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.

SECURING MONEY FOR COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR INFRASTRUCTURE  
25 MILLION NEEDED.

**FOCUS AREA: COUNTY SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Points to Consider

- Think about the types of services that are provided to your community by Niagara County (social services, public health, public works, public safety, economic development, courts, emergency services, higher education, employment and training, election services, etc.). Are there any issues in your community relative to the need for:
  - Additional services
  - Access to services currently provided
  - Changes in services provided as a result of, for example:
    - Changes in your community's population
    - Changes in your community's economic base
    - External factors (including changes in technology, national/global trends, legislation, local providers, level of services provided by government, etc.)
- Likewise, think about the types of facilities and infrastructure that are operated by the County. Are there any issues with the provision and/or maintenance of the County's facilities and infrastructure? The County is responsible for and maintains:
  - Administrative, service, and public safety buildings across the County
  - 5 County parks (Oppenheim, Krull, Bond Lake, Royalton Ravine, West Canal Marina) and the County Golf Course
  - 283 miles of roads, 89 bridges, and 800 drainage culverts
  - Sewer, water and refuse districts

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?*

1. THE PERCEPTION THAT CONSOLIDATION WILL MAKE GOVERNMENT MORE EFFICIENT.
2. POOR COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN LEGISLATORS + SUPERVISORS
- 3.

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?*

- 1.
- 2.

3.

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*Describe your community's goals and objectives for County services, facilities, and infrastructure as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

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**FOCUS AREA: EDUCATION**

Points to Consider

- How well do current educational facilities accommodate the school-aged population in terms of capacity? How well suited are they for changes in the school-aged population over the next 20 years? [Projections from Cornell University show an overall decrease in the school-aged population in Niagara County by 2035 and school enrollment surveys compiled over the past 10 years indicate significant decreases in the cities, but gains in other school districts.]
- Does the school district in your community provide any special or enhanced educational programming that may not be provided in other school districts? If so, what types of programs are offered?
- School district consolidation has been mentioned as being needed to reduce the tax burden. Is this an issue in your community? Points to consider include:
  - Consolidation may mean greater distance from school facilities for some students, if consolidation results in school closures.
  - Per student expenditures do not appear to be above statewide averages in any of the Niagara County school districts.
  - Merging districts may mean that the consolidated district is able to provide more programs/activities than either could alone.
- Are any capital improvements needed, planned, or currently being made in your community relative to educational facilities? If so, what types of improvements?
- How important is it to have job training programs, job placement services, and continuing education courses readily available to adults and young adults in your community?
- What types of industries exist within your community that require special training? How important is it to connect education and training programs with local businesses to create a sustainable workforce? What types of education and training programs should be invested in to attract new companies to Niagara County?
- Does your community need better access to:
  - Resource centers (e.g. libraries, computer centers, career development centers, etc.)?
  - Higher education institutions (colleges and universities or satellite facilities)?
  - Workforce development programs (e.g., Orleans/Niagara BOCES, Niagara County Employment and Training, NCCC Workforce Training/Community Development)?
  - Other programs or facilities?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to education?

1. THIS SURVEY IS WAY TOO LONG.  
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\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to education?

1. CUT SCHOOL PROPERTY TAXES IN 1/2.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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Describe your community's goals and objectives for education as well as actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.

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**FOCUS AREA: PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY**

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

Points to Consider

- What is the overall sense of security / safety in the neighborhoods in your community?
- How would you rate the "visibility" of police patrols in your community? Who provides primary police coverage in your community (local police, Sheriff, State police)?
- Based on your experience, are response times / coverage for emergency services (police, fire, ambulance) adequate in your community?
- How is your community affected by proximity to the Canadian border?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County's efforts to coordinate emergency / disaster preparation programs?
- What types of events has or might your community experienced that would require major emergency response? What assets does your community possess that would help it during an emergency?
- What do you perceive to be the biggest challenges to public safety in your community? How about within the County and/or the region?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative public safety?*

1. COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES ARE NOT READY FOR AN EMERGENCY.
2. WE NEED TO HOLD A LIFE DRILL AT LEAST 1 TIME PER YEAR. TURN OFF THE POWER & SEE WHAT WORKS.
- 3.

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public safety?*

1. NYS POLICE
- 2.
- 3.

*Describe your community's goals and objectives for public safety as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

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**PUBLIC HEALTH**

Points to Consider

- Does your community have adequate access to healthcare facilities, including hospitals? Does your community have adequate coverage in terms of ambulatory services, including response times?
- Do you feel your community would have adequate access to health services in the event of an emergency, such as a natural disaster or otherwise?
- What are the biggest public health concerns within your community? Are these ongoing concerns? Are there any issues that might be classified as health threats?
- Does your community or organizations within your community offer programs aimed at improving public health/wellness? What types of programs (i.e. nutrition, vaccinations, exercise, anti-smoking, etc.)?
- Is environmental health (i.e. water and air quality) a significant issue within your community? If so, why?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County Health Department's programs and services?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative public health?*

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public health?*

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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*Describe your community's goals and objectives for public health as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

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**PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED SURVEYS TO:  
NIAGARA COMMUNITIES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
VANTAGE CENTRE – SUITE ONE  
6311 INDUCON CORPORATE DRIVE  
SANBORN, NEW YORK 14132**



Niagara Communities  
Comprehensive Plan

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COMMUNITY SURVEY ON THE FOCUS AREAS OF THE  
NIAGARA COMMUNITIES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

SURVEY COMPLETED BY:

NAME: \*See Below.

TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

MUNICIPALITY: Town of Lewiston

AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION: Town of Lewiston

MAILING ADDRESS: 1375 Ridge Road Lewiston, New York 14092

PHONE NUMBER: (716)754-8213

EMAIL ADDRESS: cbrandon@townoflewiston.us

- \* Timothy Masters-Building & Zoning Officer
- \*Robert Martinez- Chairman of the Town of Lewiston Planning Board
- \* Carol J. Brandon-Town Clerk
- \* Police Chief Christopher Salada
- \*John Sharpe, Ass't. Engineer/GIS Specialist

**FOCUS AREA: LAND USE & ENVIRONMENT**

**LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION**

Points to Consider

- › Think about changes in land use patterns over the last 20 years, including any changes in types of development projects or community character. Consider different types of land uses in your community: Agriculture, Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Recreation, Open Space, Vacant, etc. What do you see happening in your community?
- › How would you best characterize your community at present - urban, suburban, or rural?
- › How would you best describe your community as it now exists:
  - Developed: built-out with virtually no "greenfield" development potential
  - Developing: a mix of established and emerging development
  - Redeveloping: e.g., re-use of formerly vacant properties
  - Undeveloped: e.g., agricultural areas are not being developed
- › Think about transportation in your community (construction and maintenance of public roads and bridges, access to public transit such as bus service, recreational opportunities, freight transportation, etc.) Have there been significant changes in transportation services or in public access to those services over the last years? Consider conditions and capacities for personal automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, bus, heavy truck, train, aviation, and marine uses.

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to land use/transportation?*

1. Current Master Plan consistent with Town Code,  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Attract & encourage commercial tax base within existing  
business zones.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Continue to encourage use of designated bike paths and walking  
trails.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to land use/transportation?*

1. Escarpment, river access & park land i.e. Picturesque views.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Promotion of country like setting.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Senior Citizen Center and transportation availability.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Describe your community's goals and objectives for land use/transportation as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

Promote continued stability in established neighborhoods.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## ENVIRONMENT

### Points to Consider

- Think about the different natural features of your community such as its forestlands, open space areas, wildlife and wildlife habitats, waterways, floodplains, wetlands, geological formations, scenic views, etc. Have any of these features changed over the past 20 years?
- Does your community provide access to scenic views, parks, open space, and other natural areas? In what ways? How could access to these areas be improved in your community?
- Have any actions been taken in recent years to protect the natural features in your community? Have any actions jeopardized your community's natural features?
- Are the environmental features in your community an important part of your life? How so?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to natural features and the environment?*

1. Protect open areas, woodland, wild life habitats & water  
courses from encroachment of development.  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Controlled development river front & gorge & escarpment areas.  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Insure that mining within the Town is controlled for the safety  
of the Town and aesthetics of our community.  
\_\_\_\_\_

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to natural features and the environment?*

1. Park land/waterfront & ways.

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2. Escarpment

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3. Bike paths/waling trails.

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*Describe your community's goals and objectives for natural features and the environment as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

Preserve the Niagara Escarpment and the Niagara Gorge.

Town Environmental Commission established to protect our environmental concerns.

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## **FOCUS AREA: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### Points to Consider

- Think about recent economic development related issues that have been identified in your community or discussed through local media that have or may impact your community. This could include news about relocation of firms, changes in local employment numbers (hirings and/or layoffs), openings or closings of businesses, new construction projects, etc. What do you see or hear happening in your community that relates to the local economy, jobs, etc.?
- Think about different types of infrastructure within your community (sewer, water, electric, telecommunications, roads, bridges, highways, rail lines, aviation and marine facilities, etc.). Are any significant changes needed in your community's infrastructure to support economic development activities, such as attracting new companies or retaining existing companies?
- Does the economic character of your community or any economic trends within your community differ from neighboring communities in terms of the amount of development occurring, job loss/job creation, changes in types of industries, etc.? In what ways?
- Are community assets such as parks and open space areas, schools, community safety and security, affordable housing, and other quality of life considerations being recognized as contributing to or being used to promote economic development opportunities? How so?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to economic development?

1. Distance from an airport maybe a challenge to economic development.
2. Existing transportation costs, fees, taxes.
3. Limited economic prosperity during seasonal conditions.

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to economic development?

1. Closeness to the NYS Thruway & International Bridge; the Falls/tourists.
2. Hospital facilities & nursing home availability.
3. Fresh water fishing facilities and an agricultural area i.e NYS Wine Trail.

Describe your community's goals and objectives for economic development as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.

Continue to encourage economic vitality of the Town & Village of Lewiston including the Hamlet of Sanborn.

**FOCUS AREA: COUNTY SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Points to Consider

- Think about the types of services that are provided to your community by Niagara County (social services, public health, public works, public safety, economic development, courts, emergency services, higher education, employment and training, election services, etc.). Are there any issues in your community relative to the need for:
  - Additional services
  - Access to services currently provided
  - Changes in services provided as a result of, for example:
    - Changes in your community's population
    - Changes in your community's economic base
    - External factors (including changes in technology, national/global trends, legislation, local providers, level of services provided by government, etc.)
- Likewise, think about the types of facilities and infrastructure that are operated by the County. Are there any issues with the provision and/or maintenance of the County's facilities and infrastructure? The County is responsible for and maintains:
  - Administrative, service, and public safety buildings across the County
  - 5 County parks (Oppenheim, Krull, Bond Lake, Royalton Ravine, West Canal Marina) and the County Golf Course
  - 283 miles of roads, 89 bridges, and 800 drainage culverts
  - Sewer, water and refuse districts

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?*

1. Underdevelopment of the County & State Parks.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Areas of Lewiston that are part of the Niagara County Sewer Dist.  
are not sewered but continue to pay fees for the plant.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Ongoing problems in the Town with drainage issues  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?*

1. Current parks maintained by the County could be better utilized  
if maintained aggressively.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3.

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*Describe your community's goals and objectives for County services, facilities, and infrastructure as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

County parks should be maintained to meet standards of county residents. Near term goals for upgrades and repairs on sanitary sewer infrastructure.

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### **FOCUS AREA: EDUCATION**

#### Points to Consider

- How well do current educational facilities accommodate the school-aged population in terms of capacity? How well suited are they for changes in the school-aged population over the next 20 years? [Projections from Cornell University show an overall decrease in the school-aged population in Niagara County by 2035 and school enrollment surveys compiled over the past 10 years indicate significant decreases in the cities, but gains in other school districts.]
- Does the school district in your community provide any special or enhanced educational programming that may not be provided in other school districts? If so, what types of programs are offered?
- School district consolidation has been mentioned as being needed to reduce the tax burden. Is this an issue in your community? Points to consider include:
  - Consolidation may mean greater distance from school facilities for some students, if consolidation results in school closures.
  - Per student expenditures do not appear to be above statewide averages in any of the Niagara County school districts.
  - Merging districts may mean that the consolidated district is able to provide more programs/activities than either could alone.
- Are any capital improvements needed, planned, or currently being made in your community relative to educational facilities? If so, what types of improvements?
- How important is it to have job training programs, job placement services, and continuing education courses readily available to adults and young adults in your community?
- What types of industries exist within your community that require special training? How important is it to connect education and training programs with local businesses to create a sustainable workforce? What types of education and training programs should be invested in to attract new companies to Niagara County?
- Does your community need better access to:
  - Resource centers (e.g. libraries, computer centers, career development centers, etc.)?
  - Higher education institutions (colleges and universities or satellite facilities)?
  - Workforce development programs (e.g., Orleans/Niagara BOCES, Niagara County Employment and Training, NCCC Workforce Training/Community Development)?
  - Other programs or facilities?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative education?*

1. Population growth would enable school districts to improve and better utilize their current facilities.
2. STAR programs which alleviate burden for all residents would be continued.
3. \_\_\_\_\_

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to education?*

1. Our current school districts can accomodate growth.
2. Recent capital improvements to our school systems are an asset to the entire community.
3. Greenway Commission's allocated funds will enhance our entire educational facilities without placing a burden on the taxpayers and residents.

*Describe your community's goals and objectives for education as well as actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

- To utilize any and all available funding sources.
- Safe and reliable transportation.
- Maintain the high standard of quality education.

**FOCUS AREA: PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY**

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

Points to Consider

- What is the overall sense of security / safety in the neighborhoods in your community?
- How would you rate the “visibility” of police patrols in your community? Who provides primary police coverage in your community (local police, Sheriff, State police)?
- Based on your experience, are response times / coverage for emergency services (police, fire, ambulance) adequate in your community?
- How is your community affected by proximity to the Canadian border?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County’s efforts to coordinate emergency / disaster preparation programs?
- What types of events has or might your community experienced that would require major emergency response? What assets does your community possess that would help it during an emergency?
- What do you perceive to be the biggest challenges to public safety in your community? How about within the County and/or the region?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative public safety?*

1. Challenges to illegal activities along Niagara River and the international bridge. (Lewiston Queenston Bridge)
2. Increase in crime and having to deal with less personnel. i.e. illegal drug use and sales.
3. Current traffic to CWM(hazardous waste facility) by chemical trucks poses a potential danger to the Town. Large volumes of trucks carrying refuse to Modern Disposal site has major concerns for the Town on the highways.

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public safety?*

1. Lewiston has its' own Police Dept. that works in conjunction with the Niagara County Sheriffs Ept. and the NYS Police.
2. Active U.S. Border Patrol Agency presence at the Niagara River access and bridge areas.
3. Trained volunteer firemen and HAZMAT teams provide protection and safety when an incident occurs.

*Describe your community's goals and objectives for public safety as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

Having the New York Power Authority located in the Town of Lewiston brings potential terrorism threats to our community and a need to encourage an open communication & preparedness with all agencies involved. To keep our community safe with the budget afforded to us and the current laws that we have.

## PUBLIC HEALTH

### Points to Consider

- Does your community have adequate access to healthcare facilities, including hospitals? Does your community have adequate coverage in terms of ambulatory services, including response times?
- Do you feel your community would have adequate access to health services in the event of an emergency, such as a natural disaster or otherwise?
- What are the biggest public health concerns within your community? Are these ongoing concerns? Are there any issues that might be classified as health threats?
- Does your community or organizations within your community offer programs aimed at improving public health/wellness? What types of programs (i.e. nutrition, vaccinations, exercise, anti-smoking, etc.)?
- Is environmental health (i.e. water and air quality) a significant issue within your community? If so, why?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County Health Department's programs and services?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative public health?*

1. LOOW Site,
2. Out of town hazardous waste being trucked thru the Town of Lewiston.
3. Agricultural spraying poses a threat to our water and air quality.

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public health?

1. Hospital and nursing facilities are available.
2. Provide transportation for our senior citizens to get to our medical corridor.
3. Provide a facility for seniors to partake in "Meals on Wheels" availability and other seniors activities in the Town of Lewiston.

Describe your community's goals and objectives for public health as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.

Insure that our drinking water is free of pharmaceutical contaminants.

Continue efforts to cease having hazardous wastes being trucked into our community.

**PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED SURVEYS TO:  
NIAGARA COMMUNITIES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
VANTAGE CENTRE – SUITE ONE  
6311 INDUCON CORPORATE DRIVE  
SANBORN, NEW YORK 14132**



Niagara Communities  
Comprehensive Plan

RECEIVED  
JAN 30 2009  
NIAGARA CO. ECONOMIC DEV.

COMMUNITY SURVEY ON THE FOCUS AREAS OF THE  
NIAGARA COMMUNITIES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

SURVEY COMPLETED BY:

NAME: Michael Hartman

TITLE: Zoning officer

MUNICIPALITY: Town of Hartland

AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION: \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS: 8942 Ridge Rd Coxsport, N.Y. 14067

PHONE NUMBER: 716-735-7778

EMAIL ADDRESS: mchlhartmann@yahoo.com

**FOCUS AREA: LAND USE & ENVIRONMENT**

**LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION**

Points to Consider

- Think about changes in land use patterns over the last 20 years, including any changes in types of development projects or community character. Consider different types of land uses in your community: Agriculture, Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Recreation, Open Space, Vacant, etc. What do you see happening in your community?
- How would you best characterize your community at present - urban, suburban, or rural?
- How would you best describe your community as it now exists:
  - Developed: built-out with virtually no "greenfield" development potential
  - Developing: a mix of established and emerging development
  - Redeveloping: e.g., re-use of formerly vacant properties
  - Undeveloped: e.g., agricultural areas are not being developed
- Think about transportation in your community (construction and maintenance of public roads and bridges, access to public transit such as bus service, recreational opportunities, freight transportation, etc.) Have there been significant changes in transportation services or in public access to those services over the last years? Consider conditions and capacities for personal automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, bus, heavy truck, train, aviation, and marine uses.

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to land use/transportation?*

1. Desperation of development
2. Keeping Ag characteristics
3. Re Opening Bridge (wreck rd) for corridors to Erie Canal and alternate Rts

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to land use/transportation?*

1. Location of Emergency services
2. Agri-tourism

### 3. People

*Describe your community's goals and objectives for land use/transportation as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

Re-development of The Township - New Face For Buildings -- expansion of recreation park for more tourism. We are on the wine trail - would like to see these people passing through to stop and smell our roses

### ENVIRONMENT

#### Points to Consider

- Think about the different natural features of your community such as its forestlands, open space areas, wildlife and wildlife habitats, waterways, floodplains, wetlands, geological formations, scenic views, etc. Have any of these features changed over the past 20 years?
- Does your community provide access to scenic views, parks, open space, and other natural areas? In what ways? How could access to these areas be improved in your community?
- Have any actions been taken in recent years to protect the natural features in your community? Have any actions jeopardized your community's natural features?
- Are the environmental features in your community an important part of your life? How so?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to natural features and the environment?*

1. Old buildings in need of repair

2. Constant battle to clean up

3. Making room for more people to enjoy the park

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to natural features and the environment?

1. Opportunity For Park Expansion - This could be one of the nicest parks in Niagara County - excluding State Parks
2. 104 Corridor - Wine Trail brings people right through Hartard
3. Agricultural land.

Describe your community's goals and objectives for natural features and the environment as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.

Currently investigating types of grants to help with park expansion

## **FOCUS AREA: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### Points to Consider

- > Think about recent economic development related issues that have been identified in your community or discussed through local media that have or may impact your community. This could include news about relocation of firms, changes in local employment numbers (hirings and/or layoffs), openings or closings of businesses, new construction projects, etc. What do you see or hear happening in your community that relates to the local economy, jobs, etc.?
- > Think about different types of infrastructure within your community (sewer, water, electric, telecommunications, roads, bridges, highways, rail lines, aviation and marine facilities, etc.). Are any significant changes needed in your community's infrastructure to support economic development activities, such as attracting new companies or retaining existing companies?
- > Does the economic character of your community or any economic trends within your community differ from neighboring communities in terms of the amount of development occurring, job loss/job creation, changes in types of industries, etc.? In what ways?
- > Are community assets such as parks and open space areas, schools, community safety and security, affordable housing, and other quality of life considerations being recognized as contributing to or being used to promote economic development opportunities? How so?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to economic development?

1. Lack of Building

2. Jobs

3. Taxes

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to economic development?

1. Land to build.

2.

3. Increase in total town value to bring tax rates down

Describe your community's goals and objectives for economic development as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.

Building lots have been made larger to promote green space - also smaller lots grandfathered for building  
Town feels that more tourism from wine trail will help economic status - Resulting in more development

**FOCUS AREA: COUNTY SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Points to Consider

- Think about the types of services that are provided to your community by Niagara County (social services, public health, public works, public safety, economic development, courts, emergency services, higher education, employment and training, election services, etc.). Are there any issues in your community relative to the need for:
  - Additional services
  - Access to services currently provided
  - Changes in services provided as a result of, for example:
    - Changes in your community's population
    - Changes in your community's economic base
    - External factors (including changes in technology, national/global trends, legislation, local providers, level of services provided by government, etc.)
- Likewise, think about the types of facilities and infrastructure that are operated by the County. Are there any issues with the provision and/or maintenance of the County's facilities and infrastructure? The County is responsible for and maintains:
  - Administrative, service, and public safety buildings across the County
  - 5 County parks (Oppenheim, Krull, Bond Lake, Royalton Ravine, West Canal Marina) and the County Golf Course
  - 283 miles of roads, 89 bridges, and 800 drainage culverts
  - Sewer, water and refuse districts

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?*

1. *Lack of Police Protection*  
*Contact with another municipality for protection*
2. *Distance to health providers*
3. *Road Maintenance*

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?*

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

3.

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*Describe your community's goals and objectives for County services, facilities, and infrastructure as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

*None*

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**FOCUS AREA: EDUCATION**

Points to Consider

- How well do current educational facilities accommodate the school-aged population in terms of capacity? How well suited are they for changes in the school-aged population over the next 20 years? [Projections from Cornell University show an overall decrease in the school-aged population in Niagara County by 2035 and school enrollment surveys compiled over the past 10 years indicate significant decreases in the cities, but gains in other school districts.]
- Does the school district in your community provide any special or enhanced educational programming that may not be provided in other school districts? If so, what types of programs are offered?
- School district consolidation has been mentioned as being needed to reduce the tax burden. Is this an issue in your community? Points to consider include:
  - Consolidation may mean greater distance from school facilities for some students, if consolidation results in school closures.
  - Per student expenditures do not appear to be above statewide averages in any of the Niagara County school districts.
  - Merging districts may mean that the consolidated district is able to provide more programs/activities than either could alone.
- Are any capital improvements needed, planned, or currently being made in your community relative to educational facilities? If so, what types of improvements?
- How important is it to have job training programs, job placement services, and continuing education courses readily available to adults and young adults in your community?
- What types of industries exist within your community that require special training? How important is it to connect education and training programs with local businesses to create a sustainable workforce? What types of education and training programs should be invested in to attract new companies to Niagara County?
- Does your community need better access to:
  - Resource centers (e.g. libraries, computer centers, career development centers, etc.)?
  - Higher education institutions (colleges and universities or satellite facilities)?
  - Workforce development programs (e.g., Orleans/Niagara BOCES, Niagara County Employment and Training, NCCC Workforce Training/Community Development)?
  - Other programs or facilities?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to education?

1. — Three school districts — one district is for another County

2. —

3. —

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to education?

1. — Two school districts — Change all residents to Niagara County

2.

3.

Describe your community's goals and objectives for education as well as actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.

None — suggestions

**FOCUS AREA: PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY**

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

Points to Consider

- > What is the overall sense of security / safety in the neighborhoods in your community?
- > How would you rate the “visibility” of police patrols in your community? Who provides primary police coverage in your community (local police, Sheriff, State police)?
- > Based on your experience, are response times / coverage for emergency services (police, fire, ambulance) adequate in your community?
- > How is your community affected by proximity to the Canadian border?
- > What is the level of awareness in your community of the County’s efforts to coordinate emergency / disaster preparation programs?
- > What types of events has or might your community experienced that would require major emergency response? What assets does your community possess that would help it during an emergency?
- > What do you perceive to be the biggest challenges to public safety in your community? How about within the County and/or the region?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to public safety?*

1. lack of police enforcement  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public safety?*

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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Describe your community's goals and objectives for public safety as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.

Contract with other municipalities for protection

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**PUBLIC HEALTH**

Points to Consider

- > Does your community have adequate access to healthcare facilities, including hospitals? Does your community have adequate coverage in terms of ambulatory services, including response times?
- > Do you feel your community would have adequate access to health services in the event of an emergency, such as a natural disaster or otherwise?
- > What are the biggest public health concerns within your community? Are these ongoing concerns? Are there any issues that might be classified as health threats?
- > Does your community or organizations within your community offer programs aimed at improving public health/wellness? What types of programs (i.e. nutrition, vaccinations, exercise, anti-smoking, etc.)?
- > Is environmental health (i.e. water and air quality) a significant issue within your community? If so, why?
- > What is the level of awareness in your community of the County Health Department's programs and services?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to public health?

1. Distance to Health Providers
  2. —
  3. —
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What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public health?

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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Describe your community's goals and objectives for public health as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.

None Suggesting  
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**PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED SURVEYS TO:**

**comprehensiveplan@niagaracounty.com**

**OR**

**Niagara Communities Comprehensive Plan**

**6311 Inducon Corporate Drive**

**Sanborn, NY 14132**



# Niagara Communities Comprehensive Plan

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## NIAGARA COMMUNITIES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMUNITY OUTREACH SURVEY

**INSTRUCTIONS.** Please feel free to fill out as much or as little of this survey as you like. The survey can be filled out electronically and submitted to us by email at the address below or it can be printed out and mailed to us in hard copy using the address listed on the last page. **The deadline for submitting surveys is Friday, May 15, 2009.** Your input is very important to the planning process and your responses will help shape the Final Draft Niagara Communities Comprehensive Plan. If you have any questions, please email us at [comprehensiveplan@niagaracounty.com](mailto:comprehensiveplan@niagaracounty.com). Thank you for your interest and participation!

**SURVEY COMPLETED BY:**

**NAME:** Robert J. O'Toole

**TITLE:** Town Attorney

**MUNICIPALITY:** Town of Wheatfield

**AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION:** \_\_\_\_\_

**MAILING ADDRESS:** 2800 Church Road, North Tonawanda, NY 14120

**PHONE NUMBER:** 504-0494

**EMAIL ADDRESS:** Bobo@wheatfield.ny.us

**FOCUS AREA: LAND USE & ENVIRONMENT**

**LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION**

Points to Consider

- Think about changes in land use patterns over the last 20 years, including any changes in the type of development that you see occurring or changes in community character. Consider different types of land uses in your community and Niagara County as a whole: Agricultural, Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Recreational, Open Space, Vacant, etc. What do you see happening in your community and Niagara County as a whole?
- How would you best characterize your community at present - urban, suburban, or rural?
- How would you best describe your community as it now exists:
  - Developed: built-out with virtually no “greenfield” development potential
  - Developing: a mix of established and emerging development
  - Redeveloping: re-use of formerly vacant properties
  - Undeveloped: agricultural areas not being developed
- Think about transportation in your community and throughout Niagara County including construction and maintenance of public roads and bridges, access to public transit such as bus service, passenger air and rail service, cargo transportation, recreational opportunities along roadways/trailways/waterways, etc. Have there been many changes in transportation services or public access to those services over the last years? Consider conditions and capacities for personal automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, bus, heavy truck, train, aviation, and maritime uses.

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to land use/transportation?***

1. Availability of convenient mass transit.

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2. Traffic in some areas, particularly on north/south roads in the Western part of the county (Wheatfield, in particular). Condition of roads in several of the cities in the county.

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3. Inadequacy of Niagara Falls Airport

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***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to land use/transportation?***

1. Niagara Falls Airport

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2. Confluence of air, rail, and road transportation systems (Niagara County could be a regional transportation hub with roads and rail service available at the airport).

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3. General lack of traffic congestion`

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***What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for land use/transportation in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.***

Improve the condition of the roads, particularly in the cities. Widen north south roads, particularly in Wheatfield.. Accelerate reconstruction of Niagara Falls Boulevard. Develop the airport into a transportation hub, combining rail, road and air traffic.

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**ENVIRONMENT**

Points to Consider

- Think about different natural features in your community and throughout Niagara County, including forestlands, open space areas, wildlife and wildlife habitat, waterways, floodplains, wetlands, geological formations, scenic views, etc. Have any of these features changed over the past 20 years? In what ways?
- Does your community have access to scenic views, parks, open space, and other natural areas? How could access to these areas be improved in your community as well as in other parts of Niagara County?
- Have any actions been taken in recent years to protect the natural features in your community? Have any actions jeopardized your community's natural features?
- In what ways are the environmental features in your community and across Niagara County an important part of your life?

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to natural features and the environment?***

1. Improve public access to the upper Niagara River.
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2. Preserve green space and open land, including agricultural protection.
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- 
- 

3. Redevelop brownsfields in urban areas.
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*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to natural features and the environment?*

1. Availability of water resources.

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2. Relatively abundant open spaces.

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3. Natural resources, such as fishing, can be used to promote economic development.

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*What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for natural features and the environment in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.*

Promote preservation of green space, including agricultural lands. I do not favor removal of the parkway and I do not think that eco-tourism has realistic economic potential. I do, however, see the benefit to continuing to develop the sport fishing industry.

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## **FOCUS AREA: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### Points to Consider

- Think about recent economic development related issues that have been identified in your community and across Niagara County - perhaps news about relocation of firms, changes in local employment numbers (hirings/layoffs), new construction projects, openings or closings of businesses, etc. What do you see or hear happening relative to the local economy?
- Think about different types of infrastructure within your community and Niagara County as a whole (sewer, water, electric, telecommunications, roads, bridges, highways, rail lines, aviation and marine facilities, etc.). Are any significant changes needed to support economic development activities, such as attracting new companies or retaining existing ones?
- Does the economic character of your community or any economic trends within your community differ from neighboring communities in terms of the amount of development occurring, job loss/job creation, changes in types of industries, etc.? In what ways?
- Are community assets such as parks and open space areas, schools, community safety and security, affordable housing, and other quality of life considerations contributing to or being used to promote economic development opportunities in your community? How so?

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to economic development?***

1. High taxes, both New York State and local.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. The approval process for economic development projects in some jurisdictions. Some, such as Wheatfield, are significantly better than others.  
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3. Multi-layered approval and funding process.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to economic development?***

1. Location  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Availability of water  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Work force  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

***What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for economic development in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.***

Niagara County needs to recognize that it can no longer have primarily an industrial economy. We need to promote tourism and transportation opportunities. Our proximity to Canada, as well the major population centers of both the US and Canada, is a significant asset. The Niagara Falls Airport and availability of power at a reasonable cost could be assets, but are not at the present time.  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**FOCUS AREA: COUNTY SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Points to Consider

- Think about the types of services that are provided to your community by Niagara County (social services, public health, public works, public safety, economic development, courts, emergency services, higher education, employment and training, election services, etc.). Are there any issues in your community relative to the need for:
  - Additional services
  - Access to services currently provided
  - Changes in services provided as a result of, for example:
    - Changes in your community's population
    - Changes in your community's economic base
    - Changes in factors such as technology, national/global trends, legislation, local providers, levels of service provided at other levels of government, etc.
- Likewise, think about the types of facilities and infrastructure that are operated by the County. Are there any issues with the provision and/or maintenance of the County's facilities and infrastructure? The County is responsible for and maintains:
  - Administrative, service, and public safety buildings across the County
  - 5 County parks (Oppenheim, Krull, Bond Lake, Royaltan Ravine, West Canal Marina) and the County Golf Course
  - 283 miles of roads, 89 bridges, and 800 drainage culverts
  - Sewer, water, and refuse districts

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?*

1. Deteriorating roads and infrastructure, particularly in the cities.

2. Population that is too dependent on governmental assistance.

3. Recreational opportunities, especially, parks, could be better.

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?*

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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***What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for County services, facilities, and infrastructure in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.***

Improve road conditions. The County could use additional park land and improve the existing park system. Water and sewer service outside of the cities are more than adequate.

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**FOCUS AREA: EDUCATION**

**Points to Consider**

- How well do current educational facilities accommodate the school-aged population in terms of capacity? How well suited are they for changes in the school-aged population over the next 20 years? [Projections from Cornell University show an overall decrease in the school-aged population in Niagara County by 2035 and school enrollment surveys compiled over the past 10 years indicate significant decreases in the cities, but gains in other school districts.]
- Does the school district in your community provide any special or enhanced educational programming that may not be provided in other school districts? If so, what types of programs are offered?
- School district consolidation has been mentioned as being needed to reduce the tax burden. Is this an issue in your community? Points to consider include:
  - Consolidation may mean greater distance from school facilities for some students, if consolidation results in school closures.
  - Per student expenditures do not appear to be above statewide averages in any of the Niagara County school districts.
  - Merging districts may mean that the consolidated district is able to provide more programs/activities than either could alone.
- Are any capital improvements needed, planned, or currently being made in your community relative to educational facilities? If so, what types of improvements?
- How important is it to have job training programs, job placement services, and continuing education courses readily available to adults and young adults in your community?
- What types of industries exist within your community or in other parts of Niagara County that require special training? How important is it to connect education and training programs with local businesses to create a sustainable workforce? What types of education and training programs should be invested in to attract new companies to Niagara County?
- Does your community need better access to: resource centers (libraries, computer centers, career development/job placement services), higher education (colleges, universities or satellite facilities), workforce development programs (i.e. Orleans/Niagara BOCES, Niagara County Employment and Training, NCCC Workforce Training/Community Development)?

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to education?***

1. In general, the quality of education in Niagara County is good.  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to education?***

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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***What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for education in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.***

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**FOCUS AREA: PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY**

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

Points to Consider

- What is the overall sense of safety/security in the neighborhoods in your community?
- How would you rate visibility of police patrols in your community or the County as a whole? Who provides police coverage in your community (local police, Sheriff, State police)?
- Based on your experience, are response times and coverage for emergency services (police, fire, ambulance) adequate in your community? What types of events might your community or Niagara County experience that would require major emergency response? What assets does your community and/or Niagara County possess that would help during an emergency?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County's efforts to coordinate disaster/emergency preparedness programs?
- Do you feel that the safety/security of your community or Niagara County as a whole is affected by the Canadian border?
- What do you perceive to be the biggest challenges to public safety in your community? How about within the County and/or the region?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to public safety?*

1. Crime in urban areas.

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2.

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3.

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*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to public safety?*

1.

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2.

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3.

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*What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for public safety in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.*

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**PUBLIC HEALTH**

Points to Consider

- Do you think that your community has adequate access to healthcare facilities, including hospitals, and adequate response times/coverage relative to ambulatory services? Do you think that Niagara County as a whole has adequate healthcare facilities and related services?
- Do you feel that your community would have adequate access to health services in the event of an emergency, such as a natural disaster or otherwise? What about the County as a whole?
- What are the biggest public health concerns within your community? Are these ongoing concerns? Are there any issues that might be classified as health threats? Do you perceive there to be significant health concerns or health threats in surrounding communities or in Niagara County as a whole?
- Does your community or organizations within your community offer programs aimed at improving public health and wellness? What types of programs are offered (i.e. nutrition, vaccinations, exercise, anti-smoking, etc.)?
- Is environmental health (i.e. water and air quality) a significant issue in your community? How so? Do you perceive there to be significant environmental health concerns in surrounding communities or in Niagara County as a whole?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of programs and services offered by the Niagara County Health Department?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to public health?*

1. Inability to attract top notch health care providers.

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- 2.

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- 3.

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*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to public health?*

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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*What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for public health in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.*

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**PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED SURVEYS TO:**

**Niagara Communities Comprehensive Plan**

**6311 Inducon Corporate Drive**

**Sanborn, NY 14132**

**or**

**comprehensiveplan@niagaracounty.com**



## Niagara Communities Comprehensive Plan

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NIAGARA CO. ECONOMIC DEV.

### NIAGARA COMMUNITIES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMUNITY OUTREACH SURVEY

**INSTRUCTIONS.** Fill out as much or as little of this survey as you like. When you are finished, please mail it back to us at the address listed on the last page. You can also scan it and email it to us or leave it with project staff at any of the community outreach meetings. You can download an electronic copy of the survey from the project website at [www.niagaracounty.com/ComprehensivePlan.asp](http://www.niagaracounty.com/ComprehensivePlan.asp) by clicking on the "Feedback" link. The downloadable survey can be filled out electronically, saved, and submitted to us by email or printed out and submitted in hard copy. **All surveys must be received by Friday, May 15, 2009.** Your input is very important to the planning process and your responses will help shape the final Niagara Communities Comprehensive Plan. If you have any questions, please email us at [comprehensiveplan@niagaracounty.com](mailto:comprehensiveplan@niagaracounty.com). Thank you for your interest and participation!

#### SURVEY COMPLETED BY:

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TITLE: CCE, Niagara County Extension Educator

MUNICIPALITY: Niagara County

AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION: CCE, Niagara County

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## FOCUS AREA: LAND USE & ENVIRONMENT

### LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION

#### Points to Consider

- > Think about changes in land use patterns over the last 20 years, including any changes in the type of development that you see occurring or changes in community character. Consider different types of land uses in your community and Niagara County as a whole: Agricultural, Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Recreational, Open Space, Vacant, etc. What do you see happening in your community and Niagara County as a whole?
- > How would you best characterize your community at present - urban, suburban, or rural?
- > How would you best describe your community as it now exists:
  - Developed: built-out with virtually no "greenfield" development potential) *\* what do you mean by this?*
  - Developing: a mix of established and emerging development
  - Redeveloping: re-use of formerly vacant properties
  - Undeveloped: agricultural areas not being developed
- > Think about transportation in your community and throughout Niagara County including construction and maintenance of public roads and bridges, access to public transit such as bus service, passenger air and rail service, cargo transportation, recreational opportunities along roadways/trailways/waterways, etc. Have there been many changes in transportation services or public access to those services over the last years? Consider conditions and capacities for personal automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, bus, heavy truck, train, aviation, and maritime uses.

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to land use/transportation?

1. Need for directed growth

2. Need for countryside farming - in light of conservative values and attitudes it does not see this happening until the "horse is out of the barn" or success of other models is observed

3. NFTA needs to think smarter in designing public transportation, incentives locally for car-pooling

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to land use/transportation?

1. Urban sprawl is not yet out of control to the point of making agriculture an artifact of history. However, transportation needs to be responsive to growth patterns & safety. Incentives implemented

2. growth can encourage in-filling and savings on transportation costs

2. People are starting to appreciate localism in food supply & the stimulation of economy from agri-tourism / markets of farmer-direct purchases & food security. Need municipal leadership in accessing Purchase of Development Rights funding

3. Area ~~of~~ water supply adds insurance to infrastructure relative to climate change.

What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for land use/transportation in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.

1. Offer strong incentives to infill & even return to the cities.  
Redevelopment of Brownfields (underway)
2. Discontinue <sup>new</sup> residential access to existing sewer laterals except in multiple unit sub-divisions & cluster development
3. ~~Offer~~ Create tax incentives for carpooling / public transportation to reduce demand for highway expansion

## ENVIRONMENT

### Points to Consider

- Think about different natural features in your community and throughout Niagara County, including forestlands, open space areas, wildlife and wildlife habitat, waterways, floodplains, wetlands, geological formations, scenic views, etc. Have any of these features changed over the past 20 years? In what ways?
- Does your community have access to scenic views, parks, open space, and other natural areas? How could access to these areas be improved in your community as well as in other parts of Niagara County?
- Have any actions been taken in recent years to protect the natural features in your community? Have any actions jeopardized your community's natural features?
- In what ways are the environmental features in your community and across Niagara County an important part of your life?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to natural features and the environment?

1. Lack of woodlots large enough to satisfy certain song birds
2. Natural areas for healthy honey bee populations are lacking
3. Degradation / building timber harvest of escapement

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to natural features and the environment?

1. Proper use of relicensing funds to create something even minimally as classy as the Canadian/Boston Niagara Parkway Natural Area
2. Linear parks along the escarpment including equine trails
3. Better oversight of wetlands recognizing their role in flood control

What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for natural features and the environment in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.

1. Financial Support of Environmental Management Council with enough staffing to access State Environmental Protection Fund
2. Use relicensing money to cover the ~~into~~ transaction costs of donations of development rights on natural areas
3. Limit ATV traffic in parks

## FOCUS AREA: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### Points to Consider

- > Think about recent economic development related issues that have been identified in your community and across Niagara County - perhaps news about relocation of firms, changes in local employment numbers (hirings/layoffs), new construction projects, openings or closings of businesses, etc. What do you see or hear happening relative to the local economy?
- > Think about different types of infrastructure within your community and Niagara County as a whole (sewer, water, electric, telecommunications, roads, bridges, highways, rail lines, aviation and marine facilities, etc.). Are any significant changes needed to support economic development activities, such as attracting new companies or retaining existing ones?
- > Does the economic character of your community or any economic trends within your community differ from neighboring communities in terms of the amount of development occurring, job loss/job creation, changes in types of industries, etc.? In what ways?
- > Are community assets such as parks and open space areas, schools, community safety and security, affordable housing, and other quality of life considerations contributing to or being used to promote economic development opportunities in your community? How so?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to economic development?

1. Constant feedback on high cost of doing business in New York State / Niagara County.
2. Constant parade of business proposals that never come to fruition
3. Revolving fund / competitive grants for local small business / lacking
4. Retail shopping opportunities obligate one to go to Erie County

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to economic development?

1. Entrepreneurial spirit of post-heavy industry - job for life generation
2. Canadian investment
3. Training of community

What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for economic development in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.

1. Need a systematic point-by-point comparison of criteria business use for selecting an area to locate in & invest. Measure systematically wage rates, business taxes, labor force, etc. Design local efforts to balance other areas' comparative advantage

**FOCUS AREA: COUNTY SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Points to Consider

- Think about the types of services that are provided to your community by Niagara County (social services, public health, public works, public safety, economic development, courts, emergency services, higher education, employment and training, election services, etc.). Are there any issues in your community relative to the need for:
  - Additional services
  - Access to services currently provided
  - Changes in services provided as a result of, for example:
    - Changes in your community's population
    - Changes in your community's economic base
    - Changes in factors such as technology, national/global trends, legislation, local providers, levels of service provided at other levels of government, etc.
- Likewise, think about the types of facilities and infrastructure that are operated by the County. Are there any issues with the provision and/or maintenance of the County's facilities and infrastructure? The County is responsible for and maintains:
  - Administrative, service, and public safety buildings across the County
  - 5 County parks (Oppenheim, Krull, Bond Lake, Royalton Ravine, West Canal Marina) and the County Golf Course
  - 283 miles of roads, 89 bridges, and 800 drainage culverts
  - Sewer, water, and refuse districts *districts plural?*

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?*

1. *High cost of public safety. Spending on policing among the highest per capita in the state (all levels aggregate)*
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?*

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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**What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for County services, facilities, and infrastructure in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.**

*Health Department needs to complete animal emergency health response plan - Started + never completed*

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**FOCUS AREA: EDUCATION**

Points to Consider

- How well do current educational facilities accommodate the school-aged population in terms of capacity? How well suited are they for changes in the school-aged population over the next 20 years? [Projections from Cornell University show an overall decrease in the school-aged population in Niagara County by 2035 and school enrollment surveys compiled over the past 10 years indicate significant decreases in the cities, but gains in other school districts.]
- Does the school district in your community provide any special or enhanced educational programming that may not be provided in other school districts? If so, what types of programs are offered?
- School district consolidation has been mentioned as being needed to reduce the tax burden. Is this an issue in your community? Points to consider include:
  - Consolidation may mean greater distance from school facilities for some students, if consolidation results in school closures.
  - Per student expenditures do not appear to be above statewide averages in any of the Niagara County school districts.
  - Merging districts may mean that the consolidated district is able to provide more programs/activities than either could alone.
- Are any capital improvements needed, planned, or currently being made in your community relative to educational facilities? If so, what types of improvements?
- How important is it to have job training programs, job placement services, and continuing education courses readily available to adults and young adults in your community?
- What types of industries exist within your community or in other parts of Niagara County that require special training? How important is it to connect education and training programs with local businesses to create a sustainable workforce? What types of education and training programs should be invested in to attract new companies to Niagara County?
- Does your community need better access to: resource centers (libraries, computer centers, career development/job placement services), higher education (colleges, universities or satellite facilities), workforce development programs (i.e. Orleans/Niagara BOCES, Niagara County Employment and Training, NCCC Workforce Training/Community Development)?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to education?

1. If per capita student spending is not above the rest of the state but total tax load per \$1000 assessed value is (the) (among the) highest in the country, does this simply reflect low home values relative to the tax load?

3.

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to education?

1.

2.

3.

What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for education in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.

It is not clear why you ignore Cornell Cooperative Extension as the most significant non-formal educational resource you have (see previous page)

**FOCUS AREA: PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY**

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

Points to Consider

- > What is the overall sense of safety/security in the neighborhoods in your community?
- > How would you rate visibility of police patrols in your community or the County as a whole? Who provides police coverage in your community (local police, Sheriff, State police)?
- > Based on your experience, are response times and coverage for emergency services (police, fire, ambulance) adequate in your community? What types of events might your community or Niagara County experience that would require major emergency response? What assets does your community and/or Niagara County possess that would help during an emergency?
- > What is the level of awareness in your community of the County's efforts to coordinate disaster/emergency preparedness programs?
- > Do you feel that the safety/security of your community or Niagara County as a whole is affected by the Canadian border?
- > What do you perceive to be the biggest challenges to public safety in your community? How about within the County and/or the region?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to public safety?*

1. *Have never directly needed these services except in conjunction with has had accidents & medical services, Service was timely*
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to public safety?*

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for public safety in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.

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## PUBLIC HEALTH

### Points to Consider

- > Do you think that your community has adequate access to healthcare facilities, including hospitals, and adequate response times/coverage relative to ambulatory services? Do you think that Niagara County as a whole has adequate healthcare facilities and related services?
- > Do you feel that your community would have adequate access to health services in the event of an emergency, such as a natural disaster or otherwise? What about the County as a whole?
- > What are the biggest public health concerns within your community? Are these ongoing concerns? Are there any issues that might be classified as health threats? Do you perceive there to be significant health concerns or health threats in surrounding communities or in Niagara County as a whole?
- > Does your community or organizations within your community offer programs aimed at improving public health and wellness? What types of programs are offered (i.e. nutrition, vaccinations, exercise, anti-smoking, etc.)?
- > Is environmental health (i.e. water and air quality) a significant issue in your community? How so? Do you perceive there to be significant environmental health concerns in surrounding communities or in Niagara County as a whole?
- > What is the level of awareness in your community of programs and services offered by the Niagara County Health Department?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to public health?

1. See item under county services

2. We are told air quality is worsening

3. Overflows & co-mingled discharges to the Niagara River unsatisfactory

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to public health?*

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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*What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for public health in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.*

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NIAGARA CO. ECONOMIC DEVL.

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**SURVEY COMPLETED BY:**

NAME: Nancy J. Orsi

TITLE: Town of Porter Councilperson

MUNICIPALITY: Town of Porter

AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION: —

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## FOCUS AREA: LAND USE & ENVIRONMENT

### LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION

#### Points to Consider

- Think about changes in land use patterns over the last 20 years, including any changes in the type of development that you see occurring or changes in community character. Consider different types of land uses in your community and Niagara County as a whole: Agricultural, Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Recreational, Open Space, Vacant, etc. What do you see happening in your community and Niagara County as a whole?
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*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to land use/transportation?*

1. Maintaining a rural character concentrating development around the villages & hamlets (services) Many farmers who are ready to retire oppose this.
2. We need public transportation to bring pple. to & from the cities to state parks & countryside markets, etc.
3. We need to create more walkability in our communities and encourage small farms. Agribusiness won't fit in our county.

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to land use/transportation?*

1. We tend to have a somewhat mild winter climate.
2. Beautiful vistas and many opportunities for fishing and recreational water activities.

3.

**What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for land use/transportation in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.**

We need a transportation system to bring tourists/visitors from Niagara Falls & Canada (if cross-border ferry begins) to and from the Fort Niagara area & places in between.

We need to capitalize on the airport in Niagara Falls. → fabulous runway and it doesn't sit in a snowbelt.

## ENVIRONMENT

### Points to Consider

- Think about different natural features in your community and throughout Niagara County, including forestlands, open space areas, wildlife and wildlife habitat, waterways, floodplains, wetlands, geological formations, scenic views, etc. Have any of these features changed over the past 20 years? In what ways?
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- Have any actions been taken in recent years to protect the natural features in your community? Have any actions jeopardized your community's natural features?
- In what ways are the environmental features in your community and across Niagara County an important part of your life?

**What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to natural features and the environment?**

1. We need to preserve the northern sections (from Findlay Drive northward) of the Robert Moses Parkway & allow visitors to stop at edge of escarpment to enjoy the ~~panoramic~~ spectacular view of river, lake, Toronto, etc.
2. Cultivate more commercial <sup>(restaurants)</sup> / tourist attractions along Lake Ontario shoreline.
3. Get the Army ~~Corp~~<sup>Corp</sup> of Engineers to deal with the LOOW site in an environmentally sound manner.

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to natural features and the environment?*

1. Niagara Falls / Niagara River

2. Escarpment & Erie Canal

3. Lake Ontario skyline & shoreline

*What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for natural features and the environment in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.*

**FOCUS AREA: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Points to Consider

- > Think about recent economic development related issues that have been identified in your community and across Niagara County - perhaps news about relocation of firms, changes in local employment numbers (hirings/layoffs), new construction projects, openings or closings of businesses, etc. What do you see or hear happening relative to the local economy?
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- > Are community assets such as parks and open space areas, schools, community safety and security, affordable housing, and other quality of life considerations contributing to or being used to promote economic development opportunities in your community? How so?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to economic development?

1. I have/we major concerns about PILOTS from the IDA. Municipalities are hard pressed to provide services when a major business with "big" earning potential is given a tax break.
2. As a county, you should work to provide the infrastructure, as well as help maintain it, so companies can put their money into their structures, employees & business development
3. and still pay their fair share of the tax burden.

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to economic development?

1. Water
2. Water power that should be cheap for all the Western New York region — businesses & homes
3. Strategic location ~~to~~ between Toronto, Hamilton, Buffalo & Rochester (even Cleveland)

What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for economic development in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.

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**FOCUS AREA: COUNTY SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Points to Consider

- Think about the types of services that are provided to your community by Niagara County (social services, public health, public works, public safety, economic development, courts, emergency services, higher education, employment and training, election services, etc.). Are there any issues in your community relative to the need for:
  - Additional services
  - Access to services currently provided
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    - Changes in factors such as technology, national/global trends, legislation, local providers, levels of service provided at other levels of government, etc.
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  - Administrative, service, and public safety buildings across the County
  - 5 County parks (Oppenheim, Krull, Bond Lake, Royalton Ravine, West Canal Marina) and the County Golf Course
  - 283 miles of roads, 89 bridges, and 800 drainage culverts
  - Sewer, water, and refuse districts

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?*

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?*

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
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*What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for County services, facilities, and infrastructure in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.*

1. Sewers to provide clean waters for drinking, etc.
2. Reasonable power costs, since it is generated here, at quite a profit
3. Good roads

### FOCUS AREA: EDUCATION

#### Points to Consider

- How well do current educational facilities accommodate the school-aged population in terms of capacity? How well suited are they for changes in the school-aged population over the next 20 years? [Projections from Cornell University show an overall decrease in the school-aged population in Niagara County by 2035 and school enrollment surveys compiled over the past 10 years indicate significant decreases in the cities, but gains in other school districts.]
- Does the school district in your community provide any special or enhanced educational programming that may not be provided in other school districts? If so, what types of programs are offered?
- School district consolidation has been mentioned as being needed to reduce the tax burden. Is this an issue in your community? Points to consider include:
  - Consolidation may mean greater distance from school facilities for some students, if consolidation results in school closures.
  - Per student expenditures do not appear to be above statewide averages in any of the Niagara County school districts.
  - Merging districts may mean that the consolidated district is able to provide more programs/activities than either could alone.
- Are any capital improvements needed, planned, or currently being made in your community relative to educational facilities? If so, what types of improvements?
- How important is it to have job training programs, job placement services, and continuing education courses readily available to adults and young adults in your community?
- What types of industries exist within your community or in other parts of Niagara County that require special training? How important is it to connect education and training programs with local businesses to create a sustainable workforce? What types of education and training programs should be invested in to attract new companies to Niagara County?
- Does your community need better access to: resource centers (libraries, computer centers, career development/job placement services), higher education (colleges, universities or satellite facilities), workforce development programs (i.e. Orleans/Niagara BOCES, Niagara County Employment and Training, NCCC Workforce Training/Community Development)?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to education?

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to education?

1. BOCES & NCCC provide trade (building, mechanical, nursing, electrical) skills education which are needed (jobs) in the community
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for education in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.

We needed to provide diverse educational opportunities for Niagara County students that provide training for future jobs thru many avenues of learning.

We to invite "drop outs" back into educational systems, instead of just getting a GED.

We need to ~~fed~~ further develop communication and linkages from public education and higher education.

**FOCUS AREA: PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY**

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

Points to Consider

- > What is the overall sense of safety/security in the neighborhoods in your community?
- > How would you rate visibility of police patrols in your community or the County as a whole? Who provides police coverage in your community (local police, Sheriff, State police)?
- > Based on your experience, are response times and coverage for emergency services (police, fire, ambulance) adequate in your community? What types of events might your community or Niagara County experience that would require major emergency response? What assets does your community and/or Niagara County possess that would help during an emergency?
- > What is the level of awareness in your community of the County's efforts to coordinate disaster/emergency preparedness programs?
- > Do you feel that the safety/security of your community or Niagara County as a whole is affected by the Canadian border?
- > What do you perceive to be the biggest challenges to public safety in your community? How about within the County and/or the region?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to public safety?*

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*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to public safety?*

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*What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for public safety in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.*

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## **PUBLIC HEALTH**

### Points to Consider

- Do you think that your community has adequate access to healthcare facilities, including hospitals, and adequate response times/coverage relative to ambulatory services? Do you think that Niagara County as a whole has adequate healthcare facilities and related services?
- Do you feel that your community would have adequate access to health services in the event of an emergency, such as a natural disaster or otherwise? What about the County as a whole?
- What are the biggest public health concerns within your community? Are these ongoing concerns? Are there any issues that might be classified as health threats? Do you perceive there to be significant health concerns or health threats in surrounding communities or in Niagara County as a whole?
- Does your community or organizations within your community offer programs aimed at improving public health and wellness? What types of programs are offered (i.e. nutrition, vaccinations, exercise, anti-smoking, etc.)?
- Is environmental health (i.e. water and air quality) a significant issue in your community? How so? Do you perceive there to be significant environmental health concerns in surrounding communities or in Niagara County as a whole?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of programs and services offered by the Niagara County Health Department?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to public health?*

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*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to public health?*

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*What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for public health in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.*

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**or**

**[comprehensiveplan@niagaracounty.com](mailto:comprehensiveplan@niagaracounty.com)**



# Niagara Communities Comprehensive Plan

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## NIAGARA COMMUNITIES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMUNITY OUTREACH SURVEY

**INSTRUCTIONS.** Fill out as much or as little of this survey as you like. When you are finished, please mail it back to us at the address listed on the last page. You can also scan it and email it to us or leave it with project staff at any of the community outreach meetings. You can download an electronic copy of the survey from the project website at [www.niagaracounty.com/ComprehensivePlan.asp](http://www.niagaracounty.com/ComprehensivePlan.asp) by clicking on the "Feedback" link. The downloadable survey can be filled out electronically, saved, and submitted to us by email or printed out and submitted in hard copy. **All surveys must be received by Friday, May 15, 2009.** Your input is very important to the planning process and your responses will help shape the final Niagara Communities Comprehensive Plan. If you have any questions, please email us at [comprehensiveplan@niagaracounty.com](mailto:comprehensiveplan@niagaracounty.com). Thank you for your interest and participation!

### SURVEY COMPLETED BY:

NAME: Morris Wingard

TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

MUNICIPALITY: Town of Lockport

AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION: ~~the~~ Town Planning Board

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**FOCUS AREA: LAND USE & ENVIRONMENT**

**LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION**

Points to Consider

- Think about changes in land use patterns over the last 20 years, including any changes in the type of development that you see occurring or changes in community character. Consider different types of land uses in your community and Niagara County as a whole: Agricultural, Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Recreational, Open Space, Vacant, etc. What do you see happening in your community and Niagara County as a whole?
- How would you best characterize your community at present - urban, suburban, or rural?
- How would you best describe your community as it now exists:
  - Developed: built-out with virtually no "greenfield" development potential
  - Developing: a mix of established and emerging development
  - Redeveloping: re-use of formerly vacant properties
  - Undeveloped: agricultural areas not being developed
- Think about transportation in your community and throughout Niagara County including construction and maintenance of public roads and bridges, access to public transit such as bus service, passenger air and rail service, cargo transportation, recreational opportunities along roadways/trailways/waterways, etc. Have there been many changes in transportation services or public access to those services over the last years? Consider conditions and capacities for personal automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, bus, heavy truck, train, aviation, and maritime uses.

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to land use/transportation?*

1. Limit suburban sprawl to reduce demands on infrastructure
2. Preserve the most productive farmland
3. Reclaim inner city land to make it habitable.

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to land use/transportation?*

1. Low cost of land available for development.
2. Close to Canada

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for land use/transportation in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.

1. Zoning to limit sprawl
2. Preserve the most productive farmland

## ENVIRONMENT

### Points to Consider

- > Think about different natural features in your community and throughout Niagara County, including forestlands, open space areas, wildlife and wildlife habitat, waterways, floodplains, wetlands, geological formations, scenic views, etc. Have any of these features changed over the past 20 years? In what ways?
- > Does your community have access to scenic views, parks, open space, and other natural areas? How could access to these areas be improved in your community as well as in other parts of Niagara County?
- > Have any actions been taken in recent years to protect the natural features in your community? Have any actions jeopardized your community's natural features?
- > In what ways are the environmental features in your community and across Niagara County an important part of your life?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to natural features and the environment?

1. Reclaim brownfield sites so they can be developed.

2. Improve Niagara River shoreline and make it more accessible.

3. Improve area around the Falls

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to natural features and the environment?

1. The Falls and Niagara River shoreline - improvements.
2. The canal and its history
- 3.

What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for natural features and the environment in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.

1. Improve the area around the Falls
2. More direct access via roads to the Falls to avoid most of the Niagara Falls City stumps.

**FOCUS AREA: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Points to Consider

- > Think about recent economic development related issues that have been identified in your community and across Niagara County - perhaps news about relocation of firms, changes in local employment numbers (hirings/layoffs), new construction projects, openings or closings of businesses, etc. What do you see or hear happening relative to the local economy?
- > Think about different types of infrastructure within your community and Niagara County as a whole (sewer, water, electric, telecommunications, roads, bridges, highways, rail lines, aviation and marine facilities, etc.). Are any significant changes needed to support economic development activities, such as attracting new companies or retaining existing ones?
- > Does the economic character of your community or any economic trends within your community differ from neighboring communities in terms of the amount of development occurring, job loss/job creation, changes in types of industries, etc.? In what ways?
- > Are community assets such as parks and open space areas, schools, community safety and security, affordable housing, and other quality of life considerations contributing to or being used to promote economic development opportunities in your community? How so?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to economic development?

1. Excessive cost of local government - we do not need all the town and village governments nor do we need 19 county legislators
2. Unfunded State mandates and high taxes. We must be competitive with other counties throughout the country - not just within N.Y. state
3. Too much unionization

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to economic development?

1. Adequate water and electric power (if at low rates)
2. Adequate land for development
3. Good transportation

What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for economic development in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.

1. Attract Canadian companies
2. Reduce taxes and regulations at the state and county level to enable businesses to be successful.
3. We cannot be successful without help from the state, so we can compete with other areas throughout the country.

**FOCUS AREA: COUNTY SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Points to Consider

- Think about the types of services that are provided to your community by Niagara County (social services, public health, public works, public safety, economic development, courts, emergency services, higher education, employment and training, election services, etc.). Are there any issues in your community relative to the need for:
  - Additional services
  - Access to services currently provided
  - Changes in services provided as a result of, for example:
    - Changes in your community's population
    - Changes in your community's economic base
    - Changes in factors such as technology, national/global trends, legislation, local providers, levels of service provided at other levels of government, etc.
- Likewise, think about the types of facilities and infrastructure that are operated by the County. Are there any issues with the provision and/or maintenance of the County's facilities and infrastructure? The County is responsible for and maintains:
  - Administrative, service, and public safety buildings across the County
  - 5 County parks (Oppenheim, Krull, Bond Lake, Royalton Ravine, West Canal Marina) and the County Golf Course
  - 283 miles of roads, 89 bridges, and 800 drainage culverts
  - Sewer, water, and refuse districts

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?*

1. *Maintaining existing roads, water and sewer.*
2. *Cost of county services are too high compared to other parts of the country.*
3. *Provide existing services efficiently and at low cost.*

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?*

1. *Towns and villages to share services*
2. *Towns to make joint purchases*

3.

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***What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for County services, facilities, and infrastructure in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.***

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**FOCUS AREA: EDUCATION**

Points to Consider

- How well do current educational facilities accommodate the school-aged population in terms of capacity? How well suited are they for changes in the school-aged population over the next 20 years? [Projections from Cornell University show an overall decrease in the school-aged population in Niagara County by 2035 and school enrollment surveys compiled over the past 10 years indicate significant decreases in the cities, but gains in other school districts.]
- Does the school district in your community provide any special or enhanced educational programming that may not be provided in other school districts? If so, what types of programs are offered?
- School district consolidation has been mentioned as being needed to reduce the tax burden. Is this an issue in your community? Points to consider include:
  - Consolidation may mean greater distance from school facilities for some students, if consolidation results in school closures.
  - Per student expenditures do not appear to be above statewide averages in any of the Niagara County school districts.
  - Merging districts may mean that the consolidated district is able to provide more programs/activities than either could alone.
- Are any capital improvements needed, planned, or currently being made in your community relative to educational facilities? If so, what types of improvements?
- How important is it to have job training programs, job placement services, and continuing education courses readily available to adults and young adults in your community?
- What types of industries exist within your community or in other parts of Niagara County that require special training? How important is it to connect education and training programs with local businesses to create a sustainable workforce? What types of education and training programs should be invested in to attract new companies to Niagara County?
- Does your community need better access to: resource centers (libraries, computer centers, career development/job placement services), higher education (colleges, universities or satellite facilities), workforce development programs (i.e. Orleans/Niagara BOCES, Niagara County Employment and Training, NCCC Workforce Training/Community Development)?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to education?

1. Education costs/~~per~~ student are too high compared to other states

2. Need better vocational education

3.

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to education?

1. Good suburban schools

2. Good community college

3. Close to major State University

What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for education in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.

1. Do Not compare per student expenditures with other counties of the State - compare them with other States (Wake Up! we are in competition with every county in the US)

2. Eliminate the State Board of Regents

**FOCUS AREA: PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY**

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

Points to Consider

- > What is the overall sense of safety/security in the neighborhoods in your community?
- > How would you rate visibility of police patrols in your community or the County as a whole? Who provides police coverage in your community (local police, Sheriff, State police)?
- > Based on your experience, are response times and coverage for emergency services (police, fire, ambulance) adequate in your community? What types of events might your community or Niagara County experience that would require major emergency response? What assets does your community and/or Niagara County possess that would help during an emergency?
- > What is the level of awareness in your community of the County's efforts to coordinate disaster/emergency preparedness programs?
- > Do you feel that the safety/security of your community or Niagara County as a whole is affected by the Canadian border?
- > What do you perceive to be the biggest challenges to public safety in your community? How about within the County and/or the region?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to public safety?*

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*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to public safety?*

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**What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for public safety in Niagara County?  
Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.**

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**PUBLIC HEALTH**

Points to Consider

- > Do you think that your community has adequate access to healthcare facilities, including hospitals, and adequate response times/coverage relative to ambulatory services? Do you think that Niagara County as a whole has adequate healthcare facilities and related services?
- > Do you feel that your community would have adequate access to health services in the event of an emergency, such as a natural disaster or otherwise? What about the County as a whole?
- > What are the biggest public health concerns within your community? Are these ongoing concerns? Are there any issues that might be classified as health threats? Do you perceive there to be significant health concerns or health threats in surrounding communities or in Niagara County as a whole?
- > Does your community or organizations within your community offer programs aimed at improving public health and wellness? What types of programs are offered (i.e. nutrition, vaccinations, exercise, anti-smoking, etc.)?
- > Is environmental health (i.e. water and air quality) a significant issue in your community? How so? Do you perceive there to be significant environmental health concerns in surrounding communities or in Niagara County as a whole?
- > What is the level of awareness in your community of programs and services offered by the Niagara County Health Department?

**What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in Niagara County today relative to public health?**

1. Aging population
2. A medicaid program that provides too many benefits and is too costly thereby contributing to high taxes which impede economic development.
- 3.

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in Niagara County today relative to public health?

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What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for public health in Niagara County?  
Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.

Reduce the cost of Medicaid and the burden  
it places on county government.

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## Niagara Communities Comprehensive Plan

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MAY 14 2009

NIAGARA CO. ECONOMIC DEV.

### NIAGARA COMMUNITIES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMUNITY OUTREACH SURVEY

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**SURVEY COMPLETED BY:**

NAME: JOHN D. CANNON

TITLE: CHAIRMAN OF THE PLANNING BOARD

MUNICIPALITY: YOUNGSTOWN, NY

AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION: \_\_\_\_\_

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PHONE NUMBER: 745 9745

EMAIL ADDRESS: J.CANNON@CANNONDESIGN.COM

**FOCUS AREA: LAND USE & ENVIRONMENT**

**LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION**

Points to Consider

- > Think about changes in land use patterns over the last 20 years, including any changes in the type of development that you see occurring or changes in community character. Consider different types of land uses in your community and Niagara County as a whole: Agricultural, Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Recreational, Open Space, Vacant, etc. What do you see happening in your community and Niagara County as a whole?
- > How would you best characterize your community at present - urban, suburban, or rural?
- > How would you best describe your community as it now exists:
  - Developed: built-out with virtually no "greenfield" development potential
  - Developing: a mix of established and emerging development
  - Redeveloping: re-use of formerly vacant properties
  - Undeveloped: agricultural areas not being developed
- > Think about transportation in your community and throughout Niagara County including construction and maintenance of public roads and bridges, access to public transit such as bus service, passenger air and rail service, cargo transportation, recreational opportunities along roadways/trailways/waterways, etc. Have there been many changes in transportation services or public access to those services over the last years? Consider conditions and capacities for personal automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, bus, heavy truck, train, aviation, and maritime uses.

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in <sup>Youngstown</sup> ~~Niagara County~~ today relative to land use/transportation?

1. BASICALLY DEVELOPED: BUILT OUT WITH MINIMAL OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP ADDITIONAL TAXABLE USES.
2. ADVOCATES OF CLOSING ROBTMOSES PARKWAY WOULD SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE TRAFFIC TO FORT NIAGARA AND YOUNGSTOWN
3. \_\_\_\_\_

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in <sup>YOUNGSTOWN</sup> ~~Niagara County~~ today relative to land use/transportation?

1. POSSIBILITY OF DEVELOPING MAIN ST / NORTH WATER ST INTO HIGH END HOUSING, INCREASING TAX BASE & MORE LOCAL BUSINESS SUPPORT.
2. POSSIBILITY OF DEVELOPING COLD STORAGE SITE INTO 12-15 UNITS OF HOUSING, INCREASING TAX BASE & LOCAL BUSINESS SUPPORT.

3.

What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for land use/transportation in <sup>YOUNGSTOWN</sup> ~~Niagara~~ County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.

- FOR LAND USE, DEVELOP REMAINDER OF LAND FOR ADDITIONAL HOUSING AND OTHER TAX REVENUE GENERATORS.
- CREATE GREENSPACE BOTH SIDES LOCKPORT TO THIRD ST
- MOVE GAS STATION AWAY FROM THE RIVER.
- SELL STREET END PARKS TO ADD TAX BASE.
- CONTINUE IMPROVEMENTS TO VILLAGE CENTER IE: POWER LINES, FACADES, LIGHTING TO FALICNER PARK

### ENVIRONMENT

#### Points to Consider

- Think about different natural features in your community and throughout Niagara County, including forestlands, open space areas, wildlife and wildlife habitat, waterways, floodplains, wetlands, geological formations, scenic views, etc. Have any of these features changed over the past 20 years? In what ways?
- Does your community have access to scenic views, parks, open space, and other natural areas? How could access to these areas be improved in your community as well as in other parts of Niagara County?
- Have any actions been taken in recent years to protect the natural features in your community? Have any actions jeopardized your community's natural features?
- In what ways are the environmental features in your community and across Niagara County an important part of your life?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in <sup>YOUNGSTOWN</sup> ~~Niagara County~~ today relative to natural features and the environment?

1. WE ARE BLESSED, WE DONT HAVE ANY SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

2.

3.

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in <sup>YOUNGSTOWN</sup> ~~Niagara County~~ today relative to natural features and the environment?

1. THE HISTORIC HARBOR, LAUNCH RAMP, MARINAS AND YACHT CLUB TO ATTRACT FISHERMAN, SAIL AND POWER BOAT ACTIVITY AND VISITORS
2. FORT NIAGARA CONSTITUTION AND SOUTH PARK, ALL WITH WATERFRONT ACCESS. MORE THAN LEWISTON AND NIAGARA ON THE LAKE.

3.

What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for natural features and the environment in <sup>Ytown</sup> ~~Niagara County~~? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.

THE UNIQUENESS OF YOUNGSTOWN IS ITS NATURAL FEATURES. WE ARE FORTUNATE COMPARED TO OTHER SMALL COMMUNITIES

## FOCUS AREA: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### Points to Consider

- > Think about recent economic development related issues that have been identified in your community and across Niagara County - perhaps news about relocation of firms, changes in local employment numbers (hirings/layoffs), new construction projects, openings or closings of businesses, etc. What do you see or hear happening relative to the local economy?
- > Think about different types of infrastructure within your community and Niagara County as a whole (sewer, water, electric, telecommunications, roads, bridges, highways, rail lines, aviation and marine facilities, etc.). Are any significant changes needed to support economic development activities, such as attracting new companies or retaining existing ones?
- > Does the economic character of your community or any economic trends within your community differ from neighboring communities in terms of the amount of development occurring, job loss/job creation, changes in types of industries, etc.? In what ways?
- > Are community assets such as parks and open space areas, schools, community safety and security, affordable housing, and other quality of life considerations contributing to or being used to promote economic development opportunities in your community? How so?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in <sup>YOUNGSTOWN</sup>~~Niagara County~~ today relative to economic development?

1. NEGATIVE DEMOGRAPHICS, POPULATION DECLINE,  
AGING RESIDENTS, RETIRED, DISCRETIONARY INCOME.
2. LONGER COMMUTE TO EMPLOYMENT SOURCES THAN OTHER  
COMMUNITIES, COST INCREASE OF COMMUTE.
3. PEOPLE WHO DONT UNDERSTAND NO. 1 ABOVE OPPOSE DEVELOPMENT  
OF HOUSING AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPAND TAX BASE.  
TAXES HAVE NO CHOICE EXCEPT GO UP, REDUCING  
ATTRACTION OF LIVING WITHIN THE VILLAGE.

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in <sup>YOUNGSTOWN</sup>~~Niagara County~~ today relative to economic development?

1. DEVELOPER WILLING TO BUILD HIGH END HOUSING  
AT MAIN ST/N. WATER ST
2. DEVELOPERS INTERESTED IN BUILDING HOUSING ON  
COLD STORAGE SITE, IF DEMOLISHED. GRANTS IN PLACE  
TO DEMOLISH BLDG
3. CONTRARY TO VIEWS OF SOME, CROSS RIVER FERRY COULD  
BE A NEGATIVE DEVELOPMENT. TRAFFIC MOSTLY ONEWAY  
TO CANADA. HOMELAND SECURITY WILL DISCOURAGE  
VISITORS TO HARBOR.

What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for economic development in <sup>YOUNGSTOWN</sup>~~Niagara~~  
~~County~~? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.

- PROACTIVELY SEEK DEVELOPMENT OF LAND/SITES AVAILABLE,  
CREATE MORE "ROOFTOPS," EXPAND THE TAX BASE.
- REDUCE COST OF GOVT SERVICE THROUGH SHARED  
RESPONSIBILITIES WITH ADJACENT GOVT UNITS.

**FOCUS AREA: COUNTY SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Points to Consider

- Think about the types of services that are provided to your community by Niagara County (social services, public health, public works, public safety, economic development, courts, emergency services, higher education, employment and training, election services, etc.). Are there any issues in your community relative to the need for:
  - Additional services
  - Access to services currently provided
  - Changes in services provided as a result of, for example:
    - Changes in your community's population
    - Changes in your community's economic base
    - Changes in factors such as technology, national/global trends, legislation, local providers, levels of service provided at other levels of government, etc.
- Likewise, think about the types of facilities and infrastructure that are operated by the County. Are there any issues with the provision and/or maintenance of the County's facilities and infrastructure? The County is responsible for and maintains:
  - Administrative, service, and public safety buildings across the County
  - 5 County parks (Oppenheim, Krull, Bond Lake, Royalton Ravine, West Canal Marina) and the County Golf Course
  - 283 miles of roads, 89 bridges, and 800 drainage culverts
  - Sewer, water, and refuse districts

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in ~~Niagara County~~ <sup>Niagara County</sup> today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?

1. No opinion  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in ~~Niagara County~~ <sup>Niagara County</sup> today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?

1. No opinion  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3.

*What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for County services, facilities, and infrastructure in Niagara County? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.*

*NO OPINION*

**FOCUS AREA: EDUCATION**

Points to Consider

- How well do current educational facilities accommodate the school-aged population in terms of capacity? How well suited are they for changes in the school-aged population over the next 20 years? [Projections from Cornell University show an overall decrease in the school-aged population in Niagara County by 2035 and school enrollment surveys compiled over the past 10 years indicate significant decreases in the cities, but gains in other school districts.]
- Does the school district in your community provide any special or enhanced educational programming that may not be provided in other school districts? If so, what types of programs are offered?
- School district consolidation has been mentioned as being needed to reduce the tax burden. Is this an issue in your community? Points to consider include:
  - Consolidation may mean greater distance from school facilities for some students, if consolidation results in school closures.
  - Per student expenditures do not appear to be above statewide averages in any of the Niagara County school districts.
  - Merging districts may mean that the consolidated district is able to provide more programs/activities than either could alone.
- Are any capital improvements needed, planned, or currently being made in your community relative to educational facilities? If so, what types of improvements?
- How important is it to have job training programs, job placement services, and continuing education courses readily available to adults and young adults in your community?
- What types of industries exist within your community or in other parts of Niagara County that require special training? How important is it to connect education and training programs with local businesses to create a sustainable workforce? What types of education and training programs should be invested in to attract new companies to Niagara County?
- Does your community need better access to: resource centers (libraries, computer centers, career development/job placement services), higher education (colleges, universities or satellite facilities), workforce development programs (i.e. Orleans/Niagara BOCES, Niagara County Employment and Training, NCCC Workforce Training/Community Development)?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in <sup>YOUNGSTOWN</sup>~~Niagara County~~ today relative to education?

1. SCHOOL TAXES DISINCENTIVE TO LIVING IN AREA  
STUDENT POPULATION DECLINES, COST PER CAPITA  
INCREASING.
2. QUALITY K-12 ALTERNATIVES 30 MILES<sup>+</sup> FROM  
YOUNGSTOWN. DETERRANT TO FAMILIES WITH  
OTHER PLANS FOR EDUCATION.
- 3.

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in <sup>YOUNGSTOWN</sup>~~Niagara County~~ today relative to education?

1. NO ASSET NOT FOUND IN OTHER COMMUNITIES.
- 2.
- 3.

What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for education in <sup>YOUNGSTOWN</sup>~~Niagara County~~? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.

NO OPINION

**FOCUS AREA: PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY**

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

Points to Consider

- What is the overall sense of safety/security in the neighborhoods in your community?
- How would you rate visibility of police patrols in your community or the County as a whole? Who provides police coverage in your community (local police, Sheriff, State police)?
- Based on your experience, are response times and coverage for emergency services (police, fire, ambulance) adequate in your community? What types of events might your community or Niagara County experience that would require major emergency response? What assets does your community and/or Niagara County possess that would help during an emergency?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County's efforts to coordinate disaster/emergency preparedness programs?
- Do you feel that the safety/security of your community or Niagara County as a whole is affected by the Canadian border?
- What do you perceive to be the biggest challenges to public safety in your community? How about within the County and/or the region?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in <sup>YOUNGSTOWN</sup>~~Niagara County~~ today relative to public safety?

1. SECURITY IS OUR ASSET IN THE VILLAGE, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF VANDOLISM BY LOCAL YOUTH. SHOULD BE CONTROLLABLE
2. ADVOCATES OF SUBSIDIZED HOUSING, IF SUCCESSFUL, WILL CREATE A SAFETY PROBLEM THAT DOES NOT NOW EXIST
- 3.

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in <sup>YOUNGSTOWN</sup>~~Niagara County~~ today relative to public safety?

1. NO OPINION
- 2.
- 3.

What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for public safety in <sup>YOUNGSTOWN</sup> ~~Niagara County~~? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.

NO OPINION

**PUBLIC HEALTH**

Points to Consider

- > Do you think that your community has adequate access to healthcare facilities, including hospitals, and adequate response times/coverage relative to ambulatory services? Do you think that Niagara County as a whole has adequate healthcare facilities and related services?
- > Do you feel that your community would have adequate access to health services in the event of an emergency, such as a natural disaster or otherwise? What about the County as a whole?
- > What are the biggest public health concerns within your community? Are these ongoing concerns? Are there any issues that might be classified as health threats? Do you perceive there to be significant health concerns or health threats in surrounding communities or in Niagara County as a whole?
- > Does your community or organizations within your community offer programs aimed at improving public health and wellness? What types of programs are offered (i.e. nutrition, vaccinations, exercise, anti-smoking, etc.)?
- > Is environmental health (i.e. water and air quality) a significant issue in your community? How so? Do you perceive there to be significant environmental health concerns in surrounding communities or in Niagara County as a whole?
- > What is the level of awareness in your community of programs and services offered by the Niagara County Health Department?

What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges in <sup>YOUNGSTOWN</sup> ~~Niagara County~~ today relative to public health?

1. ONLY HAZARDOUS WASTE SITE IN NORTHEAST CAN ONLY MEAN MORE THREAT IN THE FUTURE, IF NOT NOW. NOT JUSTIFIED BY ANY STANDARD
2. AND REFLECTS "POLITICAL COWARDICE" IN NOT FINDING OTHER SITES
- 3.

What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in <sup>Youngstown</sup>~~Niagara County~~ today relative to public health?

1. CLEAN AIR, IMPROVED WATER CONDITION UNDER NORMAL CONDITIONS. SPILLS AND STORM OVERLOAD RENDERS RIVER UNSAFE!
- 2.
- 3.

What do you think the top goals and objectives should be for public health in <sup>Youngstown</sup>~~Niagara County~~? Describe any strategies or recommendations that can be used to accomplish these goals.

- IMPROVE WATER/TREATMENT PLANTS UP RIVER OR YOUNGSTOWN.
- DEMAND ALTERNATE SITES FOR HAZARDOUS WASTE.

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**Niagara Communities Comprehensive Plan  
6311 Inducon Corporate Drive  
Sanborn, NY 14132**

**or**

**[comprehensiveplan@niagaracounty.com](mailto:comprehensiveplan@niagaracounty.com)**



## Niagara Communities Comprehensive Plan

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### COMMUNITY SURVEY ON THE FOCUS AREAS OF THE NIAGARA COMMUNITIES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**SURVEY COMPLETED BY:**

**NAME:** Chuck Bell

**TITLE:** Economic Development Coordinator

**MUNICIPALITY:** City of North Tonawanda

**AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION:** \_\_\_\_\_

**MAILING ADDRESS:** 216 Payne Avenue, North Tonawanda, NY 14120

**PHONE NUMBER:** 695-8580, ext 515

**EMAIL ADDRESS:** NTecodev@yahoo.com

**FOCUS AREA: LAND USE & ENVIRONMENT**

**LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION**

Points to Consider

- Think about changes in land use patterns over the last 20 years, including any changes in types of development projects or community character. Consider different types of land uses in your community: Agriculture, Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Recreation, Open Space, Vacant, etc. What do you see happening in your community?
- How would you best characterize your community at present - urban, suburban, or rural?
- How would you best describe your community as it now exists:
  - Developed: built-out with virtually no “greenfield” development potential
  - Developing: a mix of established and emerging development
  - Redeveloping: e.g., re-use of formerly vacant properties
  - Undeveloped: e.g., agricultural areas are not being developed
- Think about transportation in your community (construction and maintenance of public roads and bridges, access to public transit such as bus service, recreational opportunities, freight transportation, etc.) Have there been significant changes in transportation services or in public access to those services over the last years? Consider conditions and capacities for personal automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, bus, heavy truck, train, aviation, and marine uses.

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to land use/transportation?*

1. The reuse and remediation of brownfields.

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2. Greater involvement in regional transportation systems, from trails to public transportation corridors

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3. Best and highest use for our waterfront, that is compatible with the uses of neighboring communities.

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*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to land use/transportation?*

1. Regional location

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2. Downtown revitalization

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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

***Describe your community's goals and objectives for land use/transportation as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.***

Encourage (re)development in former industrial areas:

Remediation

Re-zoning (where appropriate)

Local and regional incentives

## **ENVIRONMENT**

### Points to Consider

- Think about the different natural features of your community such as its forestlands, open space areas, wildlife and wildlife habitats, waterways, floodplains, wetlands, geological formations, scenic views, etc. Have any of these features changed over the past 20 years?
- Does your community provide access to scenic views, parks, open space, and other natural areas? In what ways? How could access to these areas be improved in your community?
- Have any actions been taken in recent years to protect the natural features in your community? Have any actions jeopardized your community's natural features?
- Are the environmental features in your community an important part of your life? How so?

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to natural features and the environment?***

1. Making the waterfront more accessible and friendly to all ages

2. Improving the trail systems and connectivity for pedestrians and other recreational travelers

3. Cleanup of former industrial sites

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to natural features and the environment?*

1. Waterfront  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_

*Describe your community's goals and objectives for natural features and the environment as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

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**FOCUS AREA: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Points to Consider

- Think about recent economic development related issues that have been identified in your community or discussed through local media that have or may impact your community. This could include news about relocation of firms, changes in local employment numbers (hirings and/or layoffs), openings or closings of businesses, new construction projects, etc. What do you see or hear happening in your community that relates to the local economy, jobs, etc.?
- Think about different types of infrastructure within your community (sewer, water, electric, telecommunications, roads, bridges, highways, rail lines, aviation and marine facilities, etc.). Are any significant changes needed in your community's infrastructure to support economic development activities, such as attracting new companies or retaining existing companies?
- Does the economic character of your community or any economic trends within your community differ from neighboring communities in terms of the amount of development occurring, job loss/job creation, changes in types of industries, etc.? In what ways?
- Are community assets such as parks and open space areas, schools, community safety and security, affordable housing, and other quality of life considerations being recognized as contributing to or being used to promote economic development opportunities? How so?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to economic development?*

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to economic development?*

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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*Describe your community's goals and objectives for economic development as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

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\_\_\_\_\_

**FOCUS AREA: COUNTY SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Points to Consider

- Think about the types of services that are provided to your community by Niagara County (social services, public health, public works, public safety, economic development, courts, emergency services, higher education, employment and training, election services, etc.). Are there any issues in your community relative to the need for:
  - Additional services
  - Access to services currently provided
  - Changes in services provided as a result of, for example:
    - Changes in your community’s population
    - Changes in your community’s economic base
    - External factors (including changes in technology, national/global trends, legislation, local providers, level of services provided by government, etc.)
- Likewise, think about the types of facilities and infrastructure that are operated by the County. Are there any issues with the provision and/or maintenance of the County’s facilities and infrastructure? The County is responsible for and maintains:
  - Administrative, service, and public safety buildings across the County
  - 5 County parks (Oppenheim, Krull, Bond Lake, Royalton Ravine, West Canal Marina) and the County Golf Course
  - 283 miles of roads, 89 bridges, and 800 drainage culverts
  - Sewer, water and refuse districts

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?***

1. Aging infrastructure (roads)

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2.

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3.

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***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?***

1. County economic development is a great coordinator for local and regional efforts

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2.

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3.

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*Describe your community's goals and objectives for County services, facilities, and infrastructure as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

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**FOCUS AREA: EDUCATION**

Points to Consider

- How well do current educational facilities accommodate the school-aged population in terms of capacity? How well suited are they for changes in the school-aged population over the next 20 years? [Projections from Cornell University show an overall decrease in the school-aged population in Niagara County by 2035 and school enrollment surveys compiled over the past 10 years indicate significant decreases in the cities, but gains in other school districts.]
- Does the school district in your community provide any special or enhanced educational programming that may not be provided in other school districts? If so, what types of programs are offered?
- School district consolidation has been mentioned as being needed to reduce the tax burden. Is this an issue in your community? Points to consider include:
  - Consolidation may mean greater distance from school facilities for some students, if consolidation results in school closures.
  - Per student expenditures do not appear to be above statewide averages in any of the Niagara County school districts.
  - Merging districts may mean that the consolidated district is able to provide more programs/activities than either could alone.
- Are any capital improvements needed, planned, or currently being made in your community relative to educational facilities? If so, what types of improvements?
- How important is it to have job training programs, job placement services, and continuing education courses readily available to adults and young adults in your community?
- What types of industries exist within your community that require special training? How important is it to connect education and training programs with local businesses to create a sustainable workforce? What types of education and training programs should be invested in to attract new companies to Niagara County?
- Does your community need better access to:
  - Resource centers (e.g. libraries, computer centers, career development centers, etc.)?
  - Higher education institutions (colleges and universities or satellite facilities)?
  - Workforce development programs (e.g., Orleans/Niagara BOCES, Niagara County Employment and Training, NCCC Workforce Training/Community Development)?
  - Other programs or facilities?

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to education?***

1. Maximizing the use of job training resources available  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Increasing partnerships between the City and the School District  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Planning for the highest and best use of school district lands and properties.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to education?***

1. Working with the County to bring in job training opportunities and continuing education to an aging and evolving population.  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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***Describe your community's goals and objectives for education as well as actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.***

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**FOCUS AREA: PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY**

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

Points to Consider

- What is the overall sense of security / safety in the neighborhoods in your community?
- How would you rate the “visibility” of police patrols in your community? Who provides primary police coverage in your community (local police, Sheriff, State police)?
- Based on your experience, are response times / coverage for emergency services (police, fire, ambulance) adequate in your community?
- How is your community affected by proximity to the Canadian border?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County’s efforts to coordinate emergency / disaster preparation programs?
- What types of events has or might your community experienced that would require major emergency response? What assets does your community possess that would help it during an emergency?
- What do you perceive to be the biggest challenges to public safety in your community? How about within the County and/or the region?

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to public safety?***

1. Public safety is currently confidence inspiring and efficient.

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- 2.

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- 3.

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***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public safety?***

- 1.

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- 2.

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- 3.

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*Describe your community's goals and objectives for public safety as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

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## **PUBLIC HEALTH**

### Points to Consider

- Does your community have adequate access to healthcare facilities, including hospitals? Does your community have adequate coverage in terms of ambulatory services, including response times?
- Do you feel your community would have adequate access to health services in the event of an emergency, such as a natural disaster or otherwise?
- What are the biggest public health concerns within your community? Are these ongoing concerns? Are there any issues that might be classified as health threats?
- Does your community or organizations within your community offer programs aimed at improving public health/wellness? What types of programs (i.e. nutrition, vaccinations, exercise, anti-smoking, etc.)?
- Is environmental health (i.e. water and air quality) a significant issue within your community? If so, why?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County Health Department's programs and services?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to public health?*

1. DeGraff's future!

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2. Keeping DeGraff as a full service health care facility.

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3.

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*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public health?*

1. DeGraff  

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2.  

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3.  

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*Describe your community's goals and objectives for public health as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

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**[comprehensiveplan@niagaracounty.com](mailto:comprehensiveplan@niagaracounty.com)**

**OR**

**Niagara Communities Comprehensive Plan  
6311 Inducon Corporate Drive  
Sanborn, NY 14132**



Niagara Communities  
Comprehensive Plan

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**COMMUNITY SURVEY ON THE FOCUS AREAS OF THE  
NIAGARA COMMUNITIES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**SURVEY COMPLETED BY:**

**NAME:** Thomas J. DeSantis, AICP \_\_\_\_\_

**TITLE:** Senior Planner \_\_\_\_\_

**MUNICIPALITY:** City of Niagara Falls \_\_\_\_\_

**AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION:** Office of Planning \_\_\_\_\_

**MAILING ADDRESS:** City Hall, 745 Main Street, Niagara Falls, NY 14302-0069 \_\_\_\_\_

**PHONE NUMBER:** 716.286.4470 \_\_\_\_\_

**EMAIL ADDRESS:** desantis@nfez.org \_\_\_\_\_

**FOCUS AREA: LAND USE & ENVIRONMENT**

**LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION**

Points to Consider

- Think about changes in land use patterns over the last 20 years, including any changes in types of development projects or community character. Consider different types of land uses in your community: Agriculture, Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Recreation, Open Space, Vacant, etc. What do you see happening in your community?
- How would you best characterize your community at present - urban, suburban, or rural?
- How would you best describe your community as it now exists:
  - Developed: built-out with virtually no “greenfield” development potential
  - Developing: a mix of established and emerging development
  - Redeveloping: e.g., re-use of formerly vacant properties
  - Undeveloped: e.g., agricultural areas are not being developed
- Think about transportation in your community (construction and maintenance of public roads and bridges, access to public transit such as bus service, recreational opportunities, freight transportation, etc.) Have there been significant changes in transportation services or in public access to those services over the last years? Consider conditions and capacities for personal automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, bus, heavy truck, train, aviation, and marine uses.

**FOCUS AREA: LAND USE / TRANSPORTATION**

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to land use/transportation?*

**Introduction**

The City of Niagara Falls is essentially a fully built-out urban settlement, with a mix of residential, commercial and industrial land uses. There is also a high percentage of institutional uses within the jurisdiction compared to other places in the county. However, many of these land uses were established over 60 years ago and the older structures have lost extrinsic value due to the city’s primary challenges: Declining population, including deteriorating obsolete building stock; Declining employment in the industrial sector and an inability to compete in other growth sectors, and; Underutilized “brownfields,” including the counter-productive Robert Moses Parkway. This means that the City is focused on re-development and land management strategies.

**Issues or Challenges:**

Over the past four decades, the City of Niagara Falls has suffered from economic and industrial decline, and serious employment and population loss. As well, a number of misguided renewal initiatives that removed residential and commercial stock in the heart of the city have fragmented the downtown core and the communities that traditionally supported it. Today, many urban neighborhoods are in decay, large areas of the city’s industrial corridors are abandoned, and many residents, community and business leaders have lost their sense of pride in their city. In fact, many former residents have chosen to move out of Niagara Falls. Many visitors are disappointed and clearly unimpressed by the quality of the urban environment and the tourism offering that is not what they would expect adjacent to a world-class natural heritage destination such as the Falls. Tourists prefer to visit Niagara Falls, Ontario than remain in Niagara Falls, New York for more than a couple of hours.

Niagara Falls did not fare well in the post-industrial era, but the 21<sup>st</sup> century will see different global economic and social forces that may serve to fundamentally change the prospects of the City looking out over the next twenty years. Niagara Falls for all its current cosmetic faults still has great bones. Niagara Falls still possesses a number of existing assets and key opportunities that can be positioned and leveraged to improve the overall social and economic circumstance of the city; support and strengthen new and emerging economic, employment and cultural sectors; and achieve, over time, the renewal of the city as an attractive and desirable place to live, work, invest, visit and play. The City's current planning strategies place a strong emphasis on the quality of the urban experience for both visitors and residents. By supporting improvements to the whole community – main streets, parks, heritage neighborhoods and local business establishments – the intent is to enhance the quality of life for Niagara Falls residents living here today, residents that will come to live here in the future, as well as, enticing tourists to come, stay longer, and visit again and again.

### **The Decline of Industry and Manufacturing**

Over the past 40 years, both the region and the city have experienced significant changes, resulting from the steady decline of the city's industrial and manufacturing base. In the 20 years between 1970 and 1990 alone, total employment in the region's<sup>1</sup> manufacturing sector fell from 170,000 to 90,000, a decline of 53%<sup>2</sup>.

The loss of industrial jobs has had numerous widespread impacts that are outlined below. As in many industry-based cities in North America, expansion of this sector in the future is not likely due to global shifts in the manufacturing economy. However, there is a huge built-in locational value here which can revive new production, but additional manufacturing production without high-tech, value adding employment, and without more competitive residential markets can never produce the same level of economic impact it did in the 1950's.

*Public and private sector initiatives aimed at generating and strengthening new employment 'growth sectors' must be supported and encouraged by all levels of government in order to stabilize and ultimately expand the economic and residential bases of Niagara Falls. Key growth sectors include tourism and hospitality generally, and heritage and nature-based tourism, specifically; professional services, including emerging "green" technology research and manufacturing; regional health services; arts, culture and entertainment; and regional and bi-national transport of goods and services.*

### **High Unemployment**

For decades, Niagara Falls has relied almost solely on one employment sector – heavy industry – with very little in the way of economic or employment diversification. The transformation of local, regional and national economies has resulted in reductions and consolidations that have minimized the presence of corporate head offices in the city. In addition, major government offices have not located in the city, and tourism has only very recently been considered an important sector for future economic growth. As a result, the eggs have been in one basket and Niagara Falls has become a single resource town<sup>3</sup>. Personnel reductions and the out-right closure of large-scale industrial operations by major employers have consequently had a debilitating effect on the city. High unemployment, averaging almost twice the state and national averages<sup>3</sup> – continues.

The capital-intensive nature of chemical and other heavy industries in Niagara Falls has made it next to impossible for former employees to start their own companies. Consequently, closures have not led to new businesses or related spin-off activity. Furthermore, Niagara Falls' industrial base has not

<sup>1</sup> Defined as the Buffalo-Niagara MSA

<sup>2</sup> Strategic Projections Inc. (2001) *Economic Trends in Niagara Falls and the State of New York, Draft Report*

<sup>3</sup> United States Census Bureau

traditionally been engaged in research and development – an important component for continued economic growth and business development. The rare introduction of new industrial operations has not been of sufficient scale to replace lost jobs. Manufacturing closures have instead resulted in a large number of workers competing for the few remaining jobs or leaving the region altogether for new opportunities elsewhere.

*Programs, institutions and activities aimed at the promotion and development of retraining programs, facilities and satellite facilities within key growth sectors should be actively supported cooperatively by all levels of government to:*

- **Stabilize and retain the city's workforce and population base**
- **Support economic diversification**
- **Reduce unemployment**
- **Better equip potential employees to participate and contribute in the service and knowledge-based economy as well as in "green manufacturing" companies**

#### **A Declining and Aging Population**

Diminishing economic opportunities, high unemployment associated with steady industrial decline and new employment opportunities occurring within the region have caused many residents to relocate elsewhere. The city, built to support a population of just over 100,000 at its post-war peak, accommodates a current population of close to 50,000. Not surprisingly, the majority of those who have left Niagara Falls have been young adults and families with young children. The number of family households in the city fell by 13% in the 1990s<sup>4</sup>. This decline in population has impacted neighborhoods, diminished the strong sense of community once found here and resulted in inner city school closures and reduced community support services and facilities. The ultimate result is inner city neighborhoods that are less desirable to existing and potential new residents.

The decline of the young adult population is not only detrimental to stabilizing the population, but in particular to the emergence of an entrepreneurial culture in Niagara Falls. A young adult demographic typically promotes and supports a willingness to venture in new directions, exhibits a willingness to take informed risks, and supports cultural development and renewal. In the absence of strong representation by these younger age cohorts, the city's cultural and entrepreneurial potential will not be fully realized and its available workforce will continue to be reduced, leaving employers with fewer options for new employees. The presence of an educated and available workforce is a significant factor, which cannot be over-emphasized in attracting new employers to locate their operations in the city.

While the population of Niagara Falls is declining, it is also aging. A growing elderly population will place increased demands on health care services and already stretched social agencies over time. The burden of these demands will intensify if the city's tax base continues to fall due to a declining population, high unemployment, an absence of new development, and a lack of growth in key industry sectors.

*To retain and attract a broader population to Niagara Falls, including young families and young adults, the municipality must pursue a range of activities and programs aimed at improving the overall quality of life experienced in the city. These initiatives should:*

- **Improve the condition of residential housing stock and neighborhoods, and the range of housing types**
- **Support high-quality, specialized inner city educational opportunities**
- **Improve the physical and visual quality of the urban environment and experience**

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

- *Support specialized retail/commercial development and business opportunities*
- *Provide for arts, cultural and entertainment development*
- *Promote employment opportunities within key industry growth sectors*
- *Improve community, health care and recreational amenities and services*

#### **Competitive Suburban Growth and the Decline of the Core City**

While the suburban communities surrounding Niagara Falls have experienced the impacts of decline in the region as a whole, they have fared somewhat better than the city itself. Seen by many as attractive, safe and affordable alternatives to living in Niagara Falls, many surrounding municipalities have experienced both population and employment growth, albeit fueled by “internal migration” of upper income households from the City to the towns. New housing developments and commercial activities have concentrated in these surrounding towns due to readily available raw land. A prime example is the array of new format retail developments found along Military Road. These developments, along with new regional shopping centers, are marketed on convenience and the presence of national retailers. With their selection of shops and easy access from major regional transportation routes, commercial offerings in nearby suburban areas have pulled consumers away from the city’s traditional shopping streets, namely Main Street and Pine Avenue, and refocused much of the retail activity outside of the core.

*Governments should address the imbalance between suburban growth and the decline of the Core City through targeted policies and actions focused on making the Core City a unique, high value and attractive place to developers, residents and visitors. Initiatives should focus on enhancing quality of life, as well as:*

- *Providing tax or incentive programs to kick start positive change in the city*
- *Making land available for new development through clearance of blighted or obsolete structures*
- *Re-configuring suburban style offerings and amenities currently found in the Core City to urban development typologies that support a high-quality urban identity*
- *Offering and marketing unique elements and amenities not available in suburban locations, such as:*
  - *Walkable arts, entertainment, cultural and shopping precincts; niche boutique and specialty retail areas;*
  - *Heritage district preservation and interpretation;*
  - *High-quality education and resources;*
  - *Regional services;*
  - *Convention and healthcare services;*
  - *A high-quality of design excellence in the built and natural environments; and*
  - *Greater employment and economic opportunities.*
- *Creating and marketing a distinct and high-quality urban identity and shopping experience*

#### **The Residential Market, Neighborhoods and Housing**

The growth of Niagara Falls and its neighborhoods occurred largely in response to the city’s pre-war economic and industrial expansion. As a result, many working class neighborhoods developed quickly and were located immediately adjacent to existing or former industrial areas and the infrastructure serving them, such as train tracks. While this provided quick access to employment areas, many neighborhoods were not sufficiently buffered from heavy industry or became surrounded by industrial uses over time and isolated from neighboring residential areas or as the older, closer-in housing became obsolete and surplus in the marketplace, it simply deteriorated. This situation continues today; few of these neighborhoods enjoy connections to the river, as industry and/or transportation routes occupy the waterfront without serving an economic function. These existing conditions and land uses in the city

together with the destructive impact of Urban Renewal initiatives of the 1960s and 70s served to further fragment neighborhoods.

These difficult physical relationships, combined with de-industrialization, loss of population, suburban flight, and the decline in the overall economic circumstance of Niagara Falls have resulted in systemic deterioration of many neighborhoods, making the city unattractive to many home-builders and homebuyers. As a result of these conditions, Niagara Falls has a tremendous oversupply of (lower-density) pre-World War II multifamily dwellings of two, three or four units; houses built two to a lot; and stately single-family homes converted into multiple units.

Oversupply of this older residential stock and a continuing decrease in family size, together with population out-migration have meant that the overall housing market is low. Resale values in the Core City are extremely weak, where one would typically expect to find the most desirable and upscale housing, given proximity to the core and the extent of original or heritage housing stock.

The city's vacancy rate has increased in recent years to 13%, while the rates for the county and state have fallen to 8%.<sup>5</sup> Within the current oversupplied market, there is no incentive for the repair and upgrading of rental units and many homes are abandoned and in significant need of repair, updating or replacement. Due to the oversupply of this obsolete older housing, and the built-out nature of most parts of the city, construction of new market-rate housing units has been non-existent.

Today, the healthiest neighborhoods are those located furthest to the east, north of the Core City, and away from major industrial areas. The areas in greatest state of decline are generally found in the Core City or immediately adjacent to the city's primary industrial areas. School closures and reduced community support facilities resulting from population decline and the lack of medium and high-density housing alternatives offer very limited choice for those wishing to live in the city. The widespread dilapidation of under-occupied neighborhoods is clearly noticeable and speaks of a city in dire need of renewal and change.

***The municipality will need to pursue a residential renewal and reinvestment strategy comprised of a number of ongoing programs to:***

- ***Stop and reverse the decline in the residential housing market***
- ***Reduce the oversupply of derelict housing units to stabilize the market at more normative and regionally competitive values***
- ***Address the education and community needs within stable neighborhoods to begin to attract residents back to the city and provide a support base for business and economic development***
- ***Position new housing alternatives to support and reinforce existing and anticipated commercial and tourism developments***

#### **Weak Market Conditions**

The market in Niagara Falls is weak, due to a cascading series of problems following industrial decline that have affected the employment base and by extension real estate value and property-tax rates. Erosion in the quality of life; loss of population; physical deterioration of neighborhoods and community support facilities; infrastructure in obvious need of repair; and unattractive built form and vacant parcels in the tourism precinct make the city unattractive to residential, and business development interests, and unattractive to financial and lending institutions necessary to support these interests. It is this fundamental economic shift and the lack of a consistent economic strategy or investment in tourism that have created the current weak market conditions.

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<sup>5</sup> City of Niagara Falls

In addition, while tourism is increasingly seen as an important new economic driver for the city, the current visitation numbers indicate a profound inability to capture a significant portion of an otherwise strong market. The dearth of new or upgraded lodging or attractions also presents a weak market case. These factors, coupled with the existing poor quality, appearance, and physical condition of tourist areas in Niagara Falls, must be addressed to advance the tourism industry and provide the necessary growth, which then supports growth in other commercial and residential sectors.

Yet, the unrealized opportunity is for additional and upscale lodging development and for expanding the existing 'tourism program' and recreational offerings. It is the city's latent ability to expand its offerings with new attractions, quality lodgings, restaurants, boutique shopping, entertainment, family and educational destinations and other amenities, and, at the same time, improve the visual or physical quality of the urban environment, which has the greatest potential to yield positive economic growth for Niagara Falls and encourage new growth in other sectors.

*The municipality must establish a clear vision for the Core City tourism sector. Its programs and activities must reflect a demonstrated commitment to positive change, whereby the City of Niagara Falls leads critical catalyst initiatives that can induce private sector investment and renewal of the city.*

#### **Excess Infrastructure**

Niagara Falls is a city built to accommodate a population of approximately 100,000 people, and its land base includes a significant amount of employment/commercial land intended for large industrial operations. With the continuing decline of both its residential and industrial bases, the city is now 'oversized', with an excess of infrastructure and developed land in relation to actual use and municipal tax return.

*A number of difficult decisions are necessary to determine where infrastructure investment, maintenance and improvements will have the greatest positive impact, in order to pursue programs and strategies necessary to begin the city's renewal and support critical economic sectors.*

#### **Brownfields**

The City and its industry were founded on the locational advantage offered by the Falls and the Niagara River. With the decline of industrial activity, the city is left with a large collection of contaminated sites that cannot be remediated easily or quickly. The majority of these sites sit vacant and/or abandoned with neglected buildings dotting the landscape. These conditions further depress real estate values, prevent public access, and often preclude reuse. Many residential neighborhoods adjacent to these areas have been negatively affected by their proximity to abandoned sites, which has contributed to neighborhood disinvestment and decline. Clean-up costs, perceived regulatory inflexibility, and issues of liability and responsibility hinder remediation efforts.

Across North America, many cities are actively engaged in remediating and redeveloping brownfield sites, to re-establish connections to previously industrialized waterfronts and initiate a new era of economic development and growth focused on transforming these areas into vibrant, mixed use waterfront communities. In Niagara Falls, many industrial uses will continue to be located within existing industrial corridors; however, over the long term, the City should pursue existing brownfield remediation programs to begin to prepare priority sites for future use, particularly those adjacent to the city's waterfront. These areas represent the next era of city building in Niagara Falls and municipal resources, which should be directed toward the identification of priority remediation areas along the riverfront and entrances to the city, for priority redevelopment. In the short term, improvements aimed at reducing the visual impact of prominent brownfield sites, consolidation of industrial uses, re-use were appropriate, as well as, developing industrial heritage sites should be the initial thrust for brownfield sites.

*The municipality should anticipate brownfield redevelopment over the long-term and identify sites located within or adjacent to the Core City and/or the waterfront for preliminary scoping and feasibility analysis.*

***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to land use/transportation?***

#### **Land Use**

The challenges described above are great, and will require a shift in thinking, actions and priorities to effectively deal with many difficult aspects of long-term urban decline. At the same time, there are a number of key drivers and opportunities that have tremendous potential to contribute positively to the future of the city. These need to be carefully nurtured and leveraged to bring economic, social and cultural benefit to Niagara Falls.

It is time to redefine the city as a more complex and diverse “regional center”, and to explore opportunities and actions that can encourage diversification of the economic base. A diverse economy that capitalizes on local assets will better position Niagara Falls to realize new growth and development, and make it a better place to live, open a business or engage in cultural and recreational activities.

The existing Core City contains the Downtown, Casino Precinct, primary institutions, shopping areas and commercial corridors, framed by Core City neighborhoods. The Robert Moses Parkway is clearly a barrier to the city’s waterfront. The removal of this barrier will enable the city to capitalize on the economic and social benefits of waterfront redevelopment. The many gaps in the existing urban fabric present new development opportunities which can better connect neighborhoods to each other, while permitting new public realm, housing and open space opportunities. The core neighborhoods, the city’s commercial nodes and corridors, primary institutions, key educational and cultural resources, Casino Precinct, and East Falls Street Redevelopment Area each have particular opportunities and drivers which must be carefully timed and leveraged to bring about the renewal of the city.

While any of the following listed “opportunities and economic drivers” have significant potential to improve the quality of life within Niagara Falls, it is the creation of employment and training opportunities that will have the most immediate impact on the lives of residents now and in the future.

- Green-Economy Commerce;
- Tourism;
- Arts and Culture;
- Regional Health Care;
- Education / Employment Training;
- Primary Commercial Nodes and Corridors;
- Heritage Resource Protection;

#### **Transportation**

Generally, the City has a very complete roadway infrastructure capable of handling far more traffic than is present on the network. However, due to age and cost, there are severe maintenance issues that need to be addressed. There are also points within the network where transportation improvements are warranted due to changing land uses.

More specifically, transportation assets/opportunities include the continued improvements in the configuration and function of downtown streets and the connecting arterials, as well as, the

establishment of “multi-modal” transportation connections. These include: » The development of the Old Customhouse as the Niagara Falls International Railway Station/Intermodal Transportation Center (IRS-ITC) at the Whirlpool Rapids International Bridge into an important arrival node and major point of North Main Street activity. » The development of Niagara Falls International Airport as both a hub for cargo trans-shipment and simultaneously for overseas and low-cost commercial airlines. » And, the one significant “Big-Move” —the reconfiguration of the Robert Moses Parkway, which is the strategy for connecting the city to its waterfront and creating a more pedestrian friendly alternative. This is an alternative appropriately scaled to existing and emerging transportation needs, and represents a return to the traditional, urban, inter-connected, street network for the efficient movement of traffic within a rational hierarchy of arterials and collectors away from the riverfront. The reconfigured Parkway is essential since it can re-define the interface between the city and its riverfront; it can support accessibility by people and cars, and it can also support non-transportation goals, including recreation and ecological enhancement; an expanded “world-class park” and; it can create a new setting to stimulate economic development and re-investment across the entire riverfront corridor.

***Describe your community’s goals and objectives for land use/transportation as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.***

**LAND USE General Policy Statement:**

*It is the City’s policy to ensure that the City’s vision for development is supported by appropriate land use policies and regulations, and that the City pursue a fine-grained, mixed use approach to land use that respects the existing character of healthy, stable neighborhoods, while allowing the City to grow and revitalize. In order to achieve this, the City has established the following policies:*

- ❖ Conserve and strengthen existing residential neighborhoods.
  - *Action Promote development that rehabilitates existing housing stock within city neighborhoods.*
- ❖ Encourage a pattern for new development that incorporates a mix of uses at a variety of densities.
- ❖ Pursue a “fine grained” approach to land use that allows uses to mix and benefit from one another.
- ❖ Strengthen the Core City by encouraging higher density development that encompasses a mix of uses that supplies services to residents, especially to adjacent neighborhoods, as well as to tourists.
- ❖ Encourage development that supports an accessible waterfront from waterfront adjacent districts which offer a mix of uses and connections to other land use districts – such as nearby neighborhoods, parks, greenways or trails, etc.
- ❖ Maintain and enhance natural areas and open space while also providing connections and which may promote alternative forms of transportation.
- ❖ Encourage commercial and light industrial uses only where most appropriate.
- ❖ Encourage and support alternative or interim land uses and creative site planning solutions in vacant and/or underutilized industrial areas that support the City’s overall renewal vision and strategy.
- ❖ Retain public sector functions, uses, and institutions in centralized locations.
  - *Action Coordinate with the operators of public uses (i.e., school board, United States Postal Service, library system, municipal government) to rethink relocation and decentralization plans.*

- ❖ Coordinate the City's land use vision with its transportation policies and projects to encourage and support the connection between development and transportation for both resident and tourist populations.
- ❖ Employ land use policy to solve and prevent transportation related issues, such as traffic congestion and land use related issues, such as parking.
- ❖ Undertake and adopt future area- and/or issue-specific plans, as needed.

**TRANSPORTATION General Policy Statement:**

*It is the City's policy to encourage and provide a citywide transportation system that facilitates connections between multiple modes of transportation; is safe, efficient, affordable, user friendly and accessible to residents, tourists, and others; and that provides a viable alternative to the use of the private automobile, and encourages walking and bicycling which in turn decreases the need for large parking facilities. In order to achieve this, the City sets the following policies:*

- ❖ Offer choices between multiple modes of transportation so that residents and tourists can choose to travel and move about and through the City in many different ways.
- ❖ Coordinate land use and transportation policies.
  - **Action 1** *Ensure that transportation considerations are built into the site plan review process.*
  - **Action 2** *Focus higher density and mixed-use development in transit accessible locations.*
- ❖ Favor and nurture pedestrian environments over automobile environments, if required at all, and utilize design standards to camouflage parking through design and landscaping.
  - **Action 1** *Emphasize a pedestrian and bicyclist friendly and oriented urban built form over parking.*
  - **Action 2** *Emphasize the destination (i.e., Core City, shopping and entertainment districts, heritage areas) over the parking facilities that serve the destination.*
  - **Action 3** *Place parking to the rear or sides of buildings within the Core City and historic areas.*
- ❖ Encourage walking and bicycling as viable alternate modes of transportation.
  - **Action** *Utilize traffic calming measures to create a safe pedestrian and bicyclist environment.*
- ❖ Promote transit supportive development.
  - **Action** *Encourage a development pattern that incorporates a mix of uses at a variety of densities, which in turn limits the need and demand for parking and unnecessary automobile trips, while supporting the use of public transportation.*
- ❖ Ensure that the public transit system is designed to be a system of "choice" rather than a system of "last resort."
  - **Action** *Make the transit system easy to use for both discretionary riders and those that depend upon it.*
- ❖ Reduce opportunities for transportation conflicts, both within and between modes.
- ❖ Employ alternative approaches to traffic and congestion management than traditional limited access, highway approaches.
  - **Action** *Encourage new road development that completes the street grid and connects the City's neighborhoods together and also reduces traffic congestion by dispersing automobile traffic over a large, integrated network.*
- ❖ Balance the needs of multiple modes of transportation to move both "through" the City and "within" the City.
  - **Action** *Evaluate where transportation corridors and infrastructure creates barriers to human interaction, and find ways to remove or mitigate such barriers.*

- ❖ Mitigate the Negative Impacts of Past Transportation Choices
  - **Action 1** Undertake an Integrated land use and transportation improvement project to redesign and reconfigure the Robert Moses Parkway.
  - **Action 2** Undertake an Integrated land use and transportation improvement project to redesign and reconfigure the LaSalle Expressway.
  - **Action 3** Undertake an Integrated land use and transportation study of the Grand Island Bridge interchange.

**FOCUS AREA: ENVIRONMENT**

Points to Consider

- Think about the different natural features of your community such as its forestlands, open space areas, wildlife and wildlife habitats, waterways, floodplains, wetlands, geological formations, scenic views, etc. Have any of these features changed over the past 20 years?
- Does your community provide access to scenic views, parks, open space, and other natural areas? In what ways? How could access to these areas be improved in your community?
- Have any actions been taken in recent years to protect the natural features in your community? Have any actions jeopardized your community's natural features?
- Are the environmental features in your community an important part of your life? How so?

**FOCUS AREA: ENVIRONMENT**

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to natural features and the environment?***

As was mentioned above, the City of Niagara Falls is a fully developed city. It was nearly so over fifty years ago. Most of the physical environmental changes to the natural environment were well established by the first quarter of the last century. Notwithstanding the major natural features of the City are the Niagara River and its tributaries, Niagara Falls, and the Niagara Gorge, including as defined by the State Parkland and lands in immediate proximity thereto. There is accessibility to these resources but these are very limited. There is no doubt that these resources are important to the life of the City—these are important icons of nature to the nation and to the world. Very little open space or natural areas exist outside of parkland. As for improving the availability of and access to open space resources there would need to be a broader and more general commitment to establishing green infrastructure by all levels of government, particularly in the area of maintenance. Likewise, a collaboration of governments in the development of the greenway plan would be a useful beginning. Many plans and studies have brought recommendations to the public for consideration, which may yet produce an evolving implementation of an environmental (open-space and natural resource) conservation agenda. However, while the threats of over-development and inappropriate encroachment into environmentally and aesthetically sensitive locations will continue toward calamity unless the biggest threats to this eventuality are addressed — ignorance and poverty.

***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to natural features and the environment?***

With the assets mentioned above, the most significant opportunities would be the transformation of the Niagara River waterfront into the Niagara River Greenway and National Heritage Corridor and its

physical connections to existing park assets as well as its programmatic integration into the fabric of the community. See the Niagara River Greenway Vision.

***Describe your community's goals and objectives for natural features and the environment as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.***

The community's goals and objectives in this regard can, again, be found in the Niagara River Greenway Vision as well as the City draft Comprehensive Plan <  
[http://www.egovlink.com/public\\_documents300/niagarafalls/published\\_documents/PDFs/Proposed%20Comprehensive%20Plan%20Text%2010%202008.pdf](http://www.egovlink.com/public_documents300/niagarafalls/published_documents/PDFs/Proposed%20Comprehensive%20Plan%20Text%2010%202008.pdf)>

**ENVIRONMENTAL AND OPEN SPACE RESOURCES: General Policy Statement**

*It is the City's policy to preserve, conserve, and recognize the environmental and natural resources of the City in a manner that contributes to the City's overall quality of life, enhances public health, and fosters appropriate development. In order to achieve this, the City will:*

- ❖ Limit the potential for cumulative and secondary impact of development and other activities on water, air, and land quality and quantity.
  - **Action** *Ensure that proposed development or redevelopment is subject to development review that seeks to protect important environmental areas or resources.*
- ❖ Provide connections and public access, where appropriate, between development and natural areas, parks, and recreation areas within the City, as well as to regional connections of these resources outside of the City.
  - **Action 1** *Devise an open space and recreation plan that outlines the City's goals for specific open spaces and recreational areas and looks to provide connections between these resources.*
  - **Action 2** *Improve Gill Creek as a ecological connection*
- ❖ Ensure that there is an adequate supply of permanently protected natural areas, open space, and recreation resources.
  - **Action** *Evaluate and consider the adoption of a development impact fee that is dedicated to the acquisition of open space and recreational resources.*
- ❖ Protect and enhance the city's waterfront from degradation and damage associated with new development.
- ❖ Guide development into the Core City to protect the city's natural resources and to provide an efficient level and cost of services to residents.
- ❖ Preserve important viewsheds and corridors with scenic views.
  - **Action** *Create scenic overlay districts within the city's zoning to address the protection of scenic views and corridors.*
- ❖ Protect, maintain, and enhance the city's open space resources, parks, and natural environment.
  - **Action 1** *Implement the strategies for open space connections as outlined in the Greenway Plan and the City's draft Comprehensive Plan.*
  - **Action 2** *Develop a Citywide Parks Plan*
- ❖ Support the National Heritage Area Designation
- ❖ Establish agreements with State Parks and a management entity to implement the City Waterfront Programs and develop a Natural Heritage Area Master Plan and Programming Strategy

**FOCUS AREA: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Points to Consider

- Think about recent economic development related issues that have been identified in your community or discussed through local media that have or may impact your community. This could include news about relocation of firms, changes in local employment numbers (hirings and/or layoffs), openings or closings of businesses, new construction projects, etc. What do you see or hear happening in your community that relates to the local economy, jobs, etc.?
- Think about different types of infrastructure within your community (sewer, water, electric, telecommunications, roads, bridges, highways, rail lines, aviation and marine facilities, etc.). Are any significant changes needed in your community's infrastructure to support economic development activities, such as attracting new companies or retaining existing companies?
- Does the economic character of your community or any economic trends within your community differ from neighboring communities in terms of the amount of development occurring, job loss/job creation, changes in types of industries, etc.? In what ways?
- Are community assets such as parks and open space areas, schools, community safety and security, affordable housing, and other quality of life considerations being recognized as contributing to or being used to promote economic development opportunities? How so?

**FOCUS AREA: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to economic development?*

See above.

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to economic development?*

See above.

*Describe your community's goals and objectives for economic development as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: General Policy Statement:**

*It is the City's policy to ensure that the City's economy is comprised of and supported by a diverse mixture of businesses and that the City's land use, zoning and development policies are supportive of economic growth, including the development and expansion of the tourism industry, cultural resources and the health care sector. In order to achieve this, the City sets the following policies:*

- ❖ Work actively to retain existing businesses and jobs and to promote and strengthen a mixed economy.
  - **Action 1**     *Redefine the City as a more complex and diverse regional center.*
  - **Action 2**     *Diversify the economy and move beyond historical reliance on heavy industry.*
- ❖ Promote and support locally owned and controlled small businesses.
- ❖ Coordinate the City's land use and zoning policies with the City's economic development vision.
- ❖ Pursue and support programs, institutions and activities aimed at the promotion and development of retraining programs, facilities and satellite facilities within key growth sectors.
- ❖ Retain and attract a broader population to Niagara Falls, including young families and young adults.

- **Action 1** *Develop and market the Core City and special neighborhood districts, such as Little Italy, as unique, high value and attractive places to developers, residents and visitors.*
- **Action 2** *Provide tax or incentive programs to jumpstart positive change in the City.*
- **Action 3** *Re-configuring suburban style offerings and amenities currently found in the Core City to support a high-quality urban identity.*
- **Action 4** *Focus expenditures on projects that will encourage the desired and necessary private sector reinvestment and enhance the quality of life and quality of experience offered to residents and visitors.*
- ❖ Encourage incremental, holistic and broad based approaches to improving the City's quality of life that pay off in the long term, rather than focusing on large scale, "silver bullet" projects.
- ❖ Acknowledge the importance and uniqueness of the City's traditional commercial and retail corridors and activity areas, such as Main Street, Pine Avenue, Niagara Street and Third Street, and support these corridors. Coordinate activities and development ventures with the Seneca Nation to maximize mutual economic benefit and ensure every project fully contributes to positive change within the city without precluding future opportunities.
- ❖ Coordinate activities and development ventures with the Seneca Nation to maximize mutual economic benefit and ensure every project fully contributes to positive change within the city without precluding future opportunities.
  - **Action** *Provide visitor information centers and enhances tourist amenities and other services.*
- ❖ Use historic preservation as an economic development tool.
  - **Action** *Encourage the restoration and reuse of valuable heritage resources throughout Niagara Falls, including buildings, parks and squares to preserve these important cultural and character features and the value they add to the City and adjacent properties.*
- ❖ Support the development of high quality education at all levels.
  - **Action** *Address the education and community needs within the City to begin to attract residents back to the City and provide a support base for business and economic development.*

## **FOCUS AREA: COUNTY SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

### Points to Consider

- Think about the types of services that are provided to your community by Niagara County (social services, public health, public works, public safety, economic development, courts, emergency services, higher education, employment and training, election services, etc.). Are there any issues in your community relative to the need for:
  - Additional services
  - Access to services currently provided
  - Changes in services provided as a result of, for example:
    - Changes in your community's population
    - Changes in your community's economic base
    - External factors (including changes in technology, national/global trends, legislation, local providers, level of services provided by government, etc.)
- Likewise, think about the types of facilities and infrastructure that are operated by the County. Are there any issues with the provision and/or maintenance of the County's facilities and infrastructure? The County is responsible for and maintains:

- Administrative, service, and public safety buildings across the County
- 5 County parks (Oppenheim, Krull, Bond Lake, Royalton Ravine, West Canal Marina) and the County Golf Course
- 283 miles of roads, 89 bridges, and 800 drainage culverts
- Sewer, water and refuse districts

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?***

County cuts in social services and programs effecting the largest number and concentration of low-income residents, particularly in the areas of housing and job training.

Lack of cooperation in consolidating service infrastructure and facilities, including utilities, as well as, the lack of restraint in allowing the expansion of water and sewer utilities, and service areas.

***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?***

Social services and programs being provided at the neighborhood level effecting the largest number and concentration of low-income residents.

***Describe your community's goals and objectives for County services, facilities, and infrastructure as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.***

Provide resources in the area of housing assistance, and job training for residents.

**FOCUS AREA: EDUCATION**

Points to Consider

- How well do current educational facilities accommodate the school-aged population in terms of capacity? How well suited are they for changes in the school-aged population over the next 20 years? [Projections from Cornell University show an overall decrease in the school-aged population in Niagara County by 2035 and school enrollment surveys compiled over the past 10 years indicate significant decreases in the cities, but gains in other school districts.]
- Does the school district in your community provide any special or enhanced educational programming that may not be provided in other school districts? If so, what types of programs are offered?
- School district consolidation has been mentioned as being needed to reduce the tax burden. Is this an issue in your community? Points to consider include:
  - Consolidation may mean greater distance from school facilities for some students, if consolidation results in school closures.
  - Per student expenditures do not appear to be above statewide averages in any of the Niagara County school districts.
  - Merging districts may mean that the consolidated district is able to provide more programs/activities than either could alone.
- Are any capital improvements needed, planned, or currently being made in your community relative to educational facilities? If so, what types of improvements?
- How important is it to have job training programs, job placement services, and continuing educations courses readily available to adults and young adults in your community?

Comment [TJD1]:

- What types of industries exist within your community that require special training? How important is it to connect education and training programs with local businesses to create a sustainable workforce? What types of education and training programs should be invested in to attract new companies to Niagara County?
- Does your community need better access to:
  - Resource centers (e.g. libraries, computer centers, career development centers, etc.)?
  - Higher education institutions (colleges and universities or satellite facilities)?
  - Workforce development programs (e.g., Orleans/Niagara BOCES, Niagara County Employment and Training, NCCC Workforce Training/Community Development)?
  - Other programs or facilities?

**FOCUS AREA: EDUCATION**

Provide additional resources to NCCC generally and for job training programs specifically

**FOCUS AREA: PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY**

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

Points to Consider

- What is the overall sense of security / safety in the neighborhoods in your community?
- How would you rate the “visibility” of police patrols in your community? Who provides primary police coverage in your community (local police, Sheriff, State police)?
- Based on your experience, are response times / coverage for emergency services (police, fire, ambulance) adequate in your community?
- How is your community affected by proximity to the Canadian border?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County’s efforts to coordinate emergency / disaster preparation programs?
- What types of events has or might your community experienced that would require major emergency response? What assets does your community possess that would help it during an emergency?
- What do you perceive to be the biggest challenges to public safety in your community? How about within the County and/or the region?
- 

**FOCUS AREA: PUBLIC SAFETY**

**PUBLIC HEALTH**

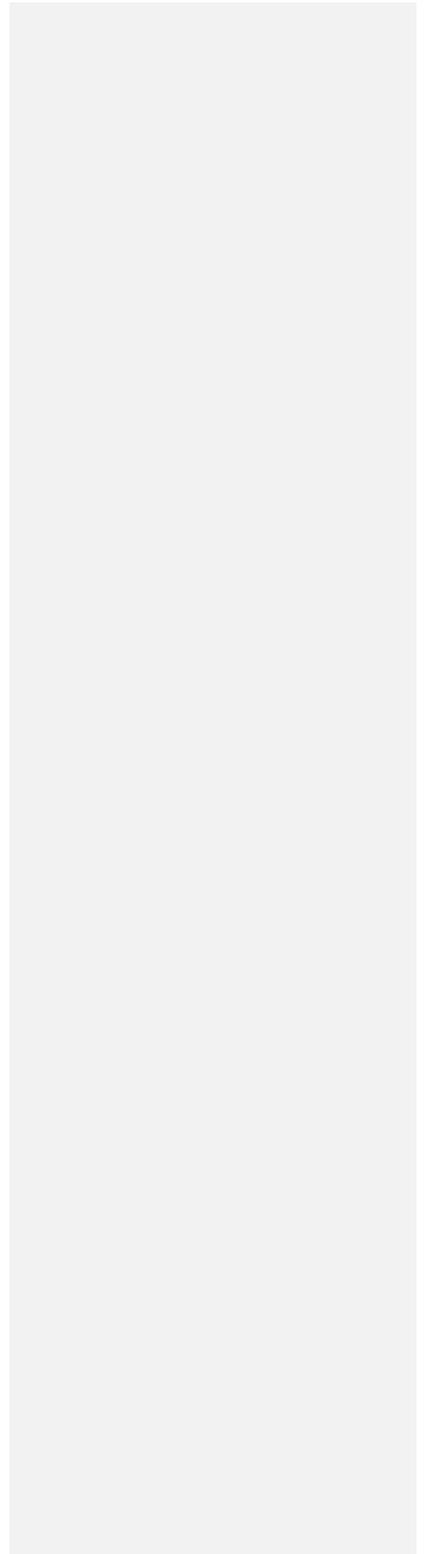
Points to Consider

- Does your community have adequate access to healthcare facilities, including hospitals? Does your community have adequate coverage in terms of ambulatory services, including response times?
- Do you feel your community would have adequate access to health services in the event of an emergency, such as a natural disaster or otherwise?
- What are the biggest public health concerns within your community? Are these ongoing concerns? Are there any issues that might be classified as health threats?

- Does your community or organizations within your community offer programs aimed at improving public health/wellness? What types of programs (i.e. nutrition, vaccinations, exercise, anti-smoking, etc.)?
- Is environmental health (i.e. water and air quality) a significant issue within your community? If so, why?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County Health Department's programs and services?

**FOCUS AREA: PUBLIC HEALTH**

Juvenile drop-out and drug avoidance programs focusing on at-risk populations, and/or a Youth Conservation Program, for low-income youth



**PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED SURVEYS TO:**

**[comprehensiveplan@niagaracounty.com](mailto:comprehensiveplan@niagaracounty.com)**

**OR**

**Niagara Communities Comprehensive Plan**

**6311 Inducon Corporate Drive**

**Sanborn, NY 14132**

## I.

*How well do current educational facilities accommodate the school-aged population in terms of capacity? How well suited are they for changes in the school-aged population over the next 20 years? [Projections from Cornell University show an overall decrease in the school-aged population in Niagara County by 2035 and school enrollment surveys compiled over the past 10 years indicate significant decreases in the cities, but gains in other school districts.]*

The Niagara Falls City School District facilities are well suited and flexible enough to meet the changing demographic trends. Extensive demographic studies **formed the basis of "Facing the Future V," a planning document the District has** used to guide decision making regarding facilities. Recent capital improvements to all buildings provide cutting edge technology and flexible learning and teaching settings.

Niagara Falls High School is a community center that can handle up to 3,400 students. The school currently houses seven community agencies and has capacity to add many more. The Performing Arts Center, Amphitheatre and recreational facilities are the cultural and social hub of the community. Niagara Street School was strategically located to provide access to a very populated area of the city.

All facilities and properties are well-maintained and are accessible for community use. The Niagara Falls Board of Education is well positioned to consolidate the facility or provide for an increase in student population.

## II.

*Does the school district in your community provide any special or enhanced educational programming that may not be provided in other school districts? If so, what types of programs are offered?*

The Niagara Falls City School District operates a Magnet school with a futures and communications theme at the Henry J. Kalfas School. In May 1994, Kalfas Magnet School was awarded the Blue Ribbon Award by the U.S. Education Department. In May 2000, Kalfas was one of only 14 schools nationally to receive the prestigious Magnet Schools of Merit Award from Magnet Schools of America. Kalfas School was recognized for its clear educational goals, evidence of parent participation in the development of goals, a curriculum addressing individual needs and high standards, its innovative approaches to change, and effective use of programs for at-risk students. Admission to the Magnet school is voluntary and students are chosen by lottery, which is held every spring.

For students who demonstrated the need for a more challenging academic experience, the Niagara Falls City School District offers an Enrichment program for students in grades 2 through 6, and a Comprehensive Acceleration Program for students in grades 7-8. The Enrichment program is located at Harry F. Abate, and the Comprehensive Acceleration Program is housed at Gaskill and LaSalle Preparatory Schools. Each of our Prep schools also offers accelerated courses in Math and Science for students who demonstrate high ability in these academic areas.

The Enrichment and Accelerated curriculum taught are designed to lead students to Advanced Placement courses at Niagara Falls High School. The program was designed and is monitored by a District Acceleration Committee consisting of administrators, teachers, counselors, parents, and students.

The District also offers the Mary C. Dyster Center for Young Parents (CYP) at the Niagara Falls High School, which offers pregnant teens and school-age mothers the opportunity to continue their education while receiving parenting training.

The District takes seriously its obligation to provide a comprehensive education for all children. However, some children cannot function in a regular school setting. For them, alternative programs provide the best opportunity to obtain an education. For secondary students who have seriously disrupted their ability to learn, or the ability of others to learn because of behavioral problems, the Niagara Falls School District, through Orleans-Niagara BOCES, offers an alternative school at the Niagara Falls Housing Authority Family Resource Center. This program allows severely troubled youth a last chance to receive an education.

The Niagara Falls School District also offers Media Studies at some elementary and Prep schools where students operate intra-school television stations for morning programming. Students operate cameras, prepare scripts and host these morning broadcasts. The program culminates at the high school level where Media Production students run a fully operational educational access television station that serves the western half of Niagara County. Students work with community agencies and learn production, post-production, floor management, script writing, and on-air media skills.

### **III.**

*School district consolidation has been mentioned as being needed to reduce the tax burden. Is this an issue in your community? Points to consider:*

*Consolidation may mean greater distance from school facilities for some students, if consolidation results in school closures.*

If the district were to merge with another district it would definitely mean that some students would be on busses longer if buildings were closed. For example if Niagara Falls were to merge with Lewiston-Porter and use Niagara Falls High School as the "combined" high school there would be students from northern Niagara County who would definitely be on a bus longer than they are now. The converse would be true if city students were attending in buildings in the suburbs.

While districts could combine without the closure of buildings the financial savings would be limited to some administrative costs. The substantial savings would come from the closure of buildings and the reduction of redundant staffs and the costs associated with running those buildings.

*Per student expenditures do not appear to be above statewide averages in any of the Niagara County school districts.*

This is true but the sources of that funding vary widely. City school districts in general and Niagara Falls in particular receive the majority of their funding in the form of state aid, while the suburban districts raise more of their funding through direct taxation. Consolidation would require the equalization of those tax rates which would possibly mean an increase for the city taxpayer and reduction for the suburban.

*Merging districts may mean that the consolidated district is able to provide more programs/activities than either could alone.*

This would be a distinct possibility. A larger pool of students may increase interest in programs that districts are currently hesitant to fund because of limited student involvement. Savings from the consolidation could be put to use to fund these programs.

#### **IV.**

*Are any capital improvements needed, planned, or currently being made in your community relative to educational facilities? If so, what types of improvements?*

The Niagara Falls City School District in the last nine years has replaced two aging high schools with one modern facility, built a new elementary school, completed smaller projects in other district facilities that related to health, safety and environmental conservation and is currently implementing a project to infuse technology in all classrooms as well as make improvements in infrastructure outside many of its buildings. The District has spent in aggregate over \$137

million during this period on capital improvements and projects that the proposed project for 2009 will add another \$17 million to that total.

The Niagara Falls City School District has completed the design phase and will begin the bidding process of a \$13 million capital project undertaking. The project will include technology, mechanical and safety upgrades throughout the District, as well as a total cafeteria reconstruction at Gaskill Preparatory School.

**V.**

*How important is it to have job training programs, job placement services and continuing education courses readily available to adults and young adults in your community?*

*What types of industries exist within your community that require special training? How important is it to connect education and training programs with local businesses to create a sustainable workforce? What types of education and training programs should be invested in to attract new companies to Niagara County?*

*Does your community need better access to:*

*Resource centers (e.g. libraries, computer centers, career development centers, etc.)?*

*Higher education institutions (colleges and universities or satellite facilities)?*

*Workforce development programs (e.g., Orleans/Niagara BOCES, Niagara County Employment and Training, NCCC Workforce Training/Community Development)?*

*Other programs or facilities?*

The Niagara Falls City School District takes very seriously the mission of transitioning students to higher education or the world of work. In 2008, 68% of the graduates entered a two or four year college, 9% entered the military and 23% entered the workforce. That same year, 160 of the 470 graduates received a certification from a BOCES program along with their high school diploma. Additionally, Microsoft Office Certification was attained by 73 graduates.

Students have excellent access to higher education and workforce development programs. A Business Advisory Council meets to inform and guide curricular and entrepreneurial opportunities for high school students. This council is made up of business and educational professionals from our community.

The major industries that our students express interest in include: Culinary Arts, Human and Social Services, Education, Tourism, Electrical, Plumbing, Carpentry and Building Trades, Television, Music Editing and

Production, and Home Care and Nursing. The District offers opportunities for instruction in all of these areas.

## **VI.**

### Issues/Challenges:

1. Increased student achievement beginning in Universal PreKindergarten and sustained through Senior year is the single most important issue for the District.
2. Many families in Niagara Falls are unable to provide a quality of life for their children such that they are well-fed, adequately clothed, suitably sheltered, and cared for medically. Students living in poverty sometimes bring greater needs to the classroom and struggle academically as a result.
3. Financial stability is a key concern. The tax base in Niagara Falls continues to diminish while students' needs increase. Remaining residents have no ability to pay greater taxes.

### Assets/Opportunities:

1. The Niagara Falls City School District is committed to excellence and equity for all students, regardless of socioeconomic strata or any other consideration. Also, we work to provide access to 21<sup>st</sup> Century technology.
2. In our community, students are safest when they are in school, and many receive their best or only meal at school. Also, adult supervision in a caring environment.
3. The Niagara Falls City School District is committed to providing access to school as much as possible, and to keep the doors open after school and through summer programming.

### Goals/Objectives:

The Niagara Falls City School District works to maintain current and foster new, meaningful partnerships with other agencies committed to advocacy for children.

We work to increase student achievement and opportunities for applied learning (internships, career exploration) to all students. Our community partnerships are also helpful in this regard. We are also striving for financial precision and providing the very most we can to all students through increased financial diligence.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY**

### **(Niagara Falls Police Department)**

#### Points to Consider

- What is the overall sense of security / safety in the neighborhoods in your community?
- How would you rate the “visibility” of police patrols in your community? Who provides primary police coverage in your community (local police, Sheriff, State police)?
- Based on your experience, are response times / coverage for emergency services (police, fire, ambulance) adequate in your community?
- How is your community affected by proximity to the Canadian border?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County’s efforts to coordinate emergency / disaster preparation programs?
- What types of events has or might your community experienced that would require major emergency response? What assets does your community possess that would help it during an emergency?
- What do you perceive to be the biggest challenges to public safety in your community? How about within the County and/or the region?

#### **What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to public safety?**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Again, dealing with a lack of proper funding, having the latest technology and crime fighting/crime solving equipment available for our personnel is always a problem. I am always striving to obtain the tools and equipment necessary for a positive resolution to an investigation. Unfortunately, those items are sometimes prohibitively expensive.

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3. With a higher than normal number of either vacant or dilapidated housing units. The lack of sufficient locks, doors, motion detectors and burglar alarms tend to increase our number of burglaries and larcenies. In 2008, we experienced an unusual number of burglaries involving the theft of cooper and other metals from vacant homes that may not have occurred if they were occupied.

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#### **What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public safety?**

1. Niagara Falls seems to be making more progress in its economic development plan. With more businesses and factories opening, this will give Niagara Falls an opportunity to not only increase its tax base but possibly increase the number of residents moving into the City. This in turn helps turn stagnant street into vibrant neighborhoods.

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2. With the financial assistance from New York State, Division of Criminal Justice Services, the N.F.P.D. has dramatically improved its intelligence gathering and analytical study of crime. We are

communicating better with the P.D. to attain our ultimate goal, crime reduction.

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3. Since the inception of the Seneca Niagara Casino and the disbursement of the City's share of those funds, the N.F.P.D. has been able to improve our equipment and infrastructure. That would not be possible without the use of those funds. Examples are the new Municipal Court Building being constructed on Main Street, the ability to upgrade our vehicular fleet every year, and buying different items from our longtime idled capital improvement plan. Unfortunately, our needs are greater than our budget. I would like to see a county-wide inventory system of crime fighting tools possessed by each Niagara County Police agency be circulated so that those agencies would not only know what is available, but work out a process where the items could be shared no matter who owned them.

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**Describe your community's goals and objectives for public safety as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.**

There are 7 strategic goals for the N.F.P.D. in 2009. They are too lengthy to repeat here but cover everything from crime reduction and prevention, arrests and investigations, traffic management, working with the community, and finally homeland security and emergency disaster plans. As far as measurable objectives and/or actionable steps, we are an Operation Impact site. By that, I mean we are eligible as a Niagara Partnership, with the Niagara County Sheriff's Department, The Niagara County District Attorney, and the Niagara County Probation included, eligible to apply for funding to accomplish our goals, which are stipulated in the Impact application each year. The N.F.P.D. has to report quarterly to New York State, who gauges our progress in crime reduction.

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**COUNTY SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

**(Niagara Falls Police Department)**

Points to Consider

- Think about the types of services that are provided to your community by Niagara County (social services, public health, public works, public safety, economic development, courts, emergency services, higher education, employment and training, election services, etc.). Are there any issues in your community relative to the need for:
  - Additional services
  - Access to services currently provided
  - Changes in services provided as a result of, for example:
    - Changes in your community's population
    - Changes in your community's economic base
    - External factors (including changes in technology, national/global trends, legislation, local providers, level of services provided by government, etc.)
- Likewise, think about the types of facilities and infrastructure that are operated by the County. Are there any issues with the provision and/or maintenance of the County's facilities and infrastructure? The County is responsible for and maintains:
  - Administrative, service, and public safety buildings across the County

- 5 County parks (Oppenheim, Krull, Bond Lake, Royalton Ravine, West Canal Marina) and the County Golf Course
- 283 miles of roads, 89 bridges, and 800 drainage culverts
- Sewer, water and refuse districts

**What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?**

First, let me highlight that, unlike jurisdictions such as Cambria and Newfane, the Niagara Falls Police Department handles its own law enforcement issues, ranging from patrol, narcotics, juveniles, traffic, communications, and crime scene and criminal investigations.

Probably the biggest issue with County facilities is the security involved with the Trott Access Center at 11<sup>th</sup> St. and Ashland Ave. The area has posed some problems for not only the building, but the employees and their vehicles. There have been several incidents that have alarmed the county workers. I and the N.F.P.D. have tried to resolve these issues as they arise. I have conversed with Jennifer Pitarresi, the County Risk Manager, about a more proactive approach and have assured her the N.F.P.D. will assist in any way possible.

I cannot think of any other specific issues, but can only say that as they arise with any County property or service, the N.F.P.D. will approach a potential resolution with a team concept, involving any County agency tasked with that duty. I do anticipate working closely with Sheriff James Voutour on most issues.

**What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?**

1. First and foremost, the greatest asset we have regarding County services, facilities, and infrastructure is the close relationship with Sheriff Voutour and the Niagara County Sheriff's Department. As the term regionalism becomes more popular, the two Agencies will explore combined efforts, such as training, purchases, and crime reduction projects.
2. Because the N.F.P.D. is a full-service police department, we are in a better position to help the County with its involvement in Niagara Falls.
3. Because Niagara Falls generates the most criminal activity, the N.F.P.D. and the N.C.S.D are involved daily with communicating and sharing information regarding criminals that may be active in both jurisdictions.

**Describe your community's goals and objectives for County services, facilities, and infrastructure as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.**

As stated earlier, because both Niagara Falls Police and the Niagara County Sheriff's Department receive Impact funding, the two Agencies are working united in reducing crime in Niagara Falls and also working to reach our stated objectives in the Impact application. We both have intelligence officers and analysts who are working hand in hand to discuss strategies towards our Impact goal. We share

personnel in various projects designed for crime reduction. They have members participating in our Warrant Task Force, Saturation Patrols, and other undercover/plainclothes assignments directed toward street interdiction of criminals.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY**

### **(Niagara Falls Fire Department)**

#### Points to Consider

- What is the overall sense of security / safety in the neighborhoods in your community?

There is an overall lack of fire safety awareness within the community. The large amounts of unkempt property create numerous hazards for those residents who are trying to maintain their homes. The income level of many residents does not allow them to make necessary repairs and keep up with maintenance related items. The majority of residents I come into contact with are satisfied with the level of services (fire) that they receive from the city.

- How would you rate the “visibility” of police patrols in your community? Who provides primary police coverage in your community (local police, Sheriff, State police)?
- Based on your experience, are response times / coverage for emergency services (police, fire, ambulance) adequate in your community?

Despite being cut more than 50 members and the closing of 4 fire stations, the Niagara Falls Fire Department responds to more incidents today than it did in any time in its history. Response time for ambulance transport (provided by Rural Metro) is rising and with the number of total incidents on the rise and the fact that units are committed for longer duration, it is causing units to have to respond from greater distance. Often the primary response company is already committed to an incident when a 2<sup>nd</sup> event occurs in their territory. If call volume continues to escalate and the situation with pre-hospital care and transport is not addressed residents will see delays in response to their emergencies.

- How is your community affected by proximity to the Canadian border?

The border presents some unique challenges to our department. Mutual Aid can only come from either the North or East. The border and Niagara River limit access to Mutual Aid companies in a timely manner. In addition the different radio frequencies as well as the use of the metric system make the compatibility of our equipment with our counterparts in Canada an issue.

- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County’s efforts to coordinate emergency / disaster preparation programs?

The community is familiar with the CERT program but does not see much in the development of a coordinated response by traditional agencies from different jurisdictions to potential emergencies.

- What types of events has or might your community experienced that would require major emergency response? What assets does your community possess that would help it during an emergency?

The City of Niagara Falls is vulnerable to many man-made and natural emergencies. The city has a large concentration of chemical plants as well as a large rail yard. The facilities produce, store, and use a large amount of exotic hazardous materials. In addition we are directly over the flight path for a combination general, commercial, and military airport. Weather related emergencies are very prevalent and range from significant ice/snow events in the winter to the occasional tornado activity in the summer.

The assets within the community are not staffed or equipped to respond to a significant event that generates large amounts of casualties or involves hazardous materials. The on-duty staffing of the fire department is 26 firefighters and the department is unable to commit adequate resources to more than one significant fire event at any one time. Any multi-casualty event such as a tour bus crash would also significantly challenge the department.

- What do you perceive to be the biggest challenges to public safety in your community? How about within the County and/or the region?

Lack of adequate staffing and being properly equipped to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to public safety?**

1. Staffing
2. Equipment age and reliability
3. Interoperable communications

**What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public safety?**

1. Cooperation between LE and the FD
2. Community support
3. Lack of significant events (could also be a detriment as the odds will catch up with us)

**Describe your community's goals and objectives for public safety as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.**

I am unable to answer this question. I do suggest the administration convene a Strategic Planning workshop to address this issue.



Niagara Communities  
Comprehensive Plan

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**COMMUNITY SURVEY ON THE FOCUS AREAS OF THE  
NIAGARA COMMUNITIES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**SURVEY COMPLETED BY:**

**NAME: Michael W. Tucker**

**TITLE: Mayor**

**MUNICIPALITY: City of Lockport**

**AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION:**

**MAILING ADDRESS: One Locks Plaza, Lockport, NY 14094**

**PHONE NUMBER: (716) 439-6665**

**EMAIL ADDRESS: mayor @elockport.com**

**FOCUS AREA: LAND USE & ENVIRONMENT**

**LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION**

Points to Consider

- Think about changes in land use patterns over the last 20 years, including any changes in types of development projects or community character. Consider different types of land uses in your community: Agriculture, Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Recreation, Open Space, Vacant, etc. What do you see happening in your community?
- How would you best characterize your community at present - urban, suburban, or rural?
- How would you best describe your community as it now exists:
  - Developed: built-out with virtually no “greenfield” development potential
  - Developing: a mix of established and emerging development
  - Redeveloping: e.g., re-use of formerly vacant properties
  - Undeveloped: e.g., agricultural areas are not being developed
- Think about transportation in your community (construction and maintenance of public roads and bridges, access to public transit such as bus service, recreational opportunities, freight transportation, etc.) Have there been significant changes in transportation services or in public access to those services over the last years? Consider conditions and capacities for personal automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, bus, heavy truck, train, aviation, and marine uses.

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to land use/transportation?*

1. Loss of Industrial Tax Base and industrial jobs
2. Aging Infrastructure
3. Lack of developable land

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to land use/transportation?*

1. Location (proximity to Buffalo, Niagara Falls & Toronto)
2. Affordable Housing
3. Established Industrial Facilities

*Describe your community’s goals and objectives for land use/transportation as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

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## ENVIRONMENT

### Points to Consider

- Think about the different natural features of your community such as its forestlands, open space areas, wildlife and wildlife habitats, waterways, floodplains, wetlands, geological formations, scenic views, etc. Have any of these features changed over the past 20 years?
- Does your community provide access to scenic views, parks, open space, and other natural areas? In what ways? How could access to these areas be improved in your community?
- Have any actions been taken in recent years to protect the natural features in your community? Have any actions jeopardized your community's natural features?
- Are the environmental features in your community an important part of your life? How so?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to natural features and the environment?*

1. Contaminated property
2. Potential upgrade of 18 Mile Creek from Class D, which will require upgrade of

Wastewater Treatment facilities

3. Tightening of Federal & State regulations of the elimination of combined sewer outfalls

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to natural features and the environment?*

1. Niagara Escarpment
2. Waterways – 18 Mile Creek and the Erie Barge Canal
3. Network of Municipal Parkland

*Describe your community's goals and objectives for natural features and the environment as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

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## **FOCUS AREA: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### Points to Consider

- Think about recent economic development related issues that have been identified in your community or discussed through local media that have or may impact your community. This could include news about relocation of firms, changes in local employment numbers (hirings

and/or layoffs), openings or closings of businesses, new construction projects, etc. What do you see or hear happening in your community that relates to the local economy, jobs, etc.?

- Think about different types of infrastructure within your community (sewer, water, electric, telecommunications, roads, bridges, highways, rail lines, aviation and marine facilities, etc.). Are any significant changes needed in your community's infrastructure to support economic development activities, such as attracting new companies or retaining existing companies?
- Does the economic character of your community or any economic trends within your community differ from neighboring communities in terms of the amount of development occurring, job loss/job creation, changes in types of industries, etc.? In what ways?
- Are community assets such as parks and open space areas, schools, community safety and security, affordable housing, and other quality of life considerations being recognized as contributing to or being used to promote economic development opportunities? How so?

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to economic development?***

- 1. State of Economy**
- 2.**
- 3.**

***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to economic development?***

- 1. Affordable Housing**
- 2. Greater Lockport Development Corporation**
- 3. Community Development Programs -- 1<sup>st</sup> time homebuyers -- Home Improvement program**

***Describe your community's goals and objectives for economic development as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.***

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**FOCUS AREA: COUNTY SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Points to Consider

- Think about the types of services that are provided to your community by Niagara County (social services, public health, public works, public safety, economic development, courts, emergency services, higher education, employment and training, election services, etc.). Are there any issues in your community relative to the need for:
  - Additional services
  - Access to services currently provided
  - Changes in services provided as a result of, for example:
    - Changes in your community’s population
    - Changes in your community’s economic base
    - External factors (including changes in technology, national/global trends, legislation, local providers, level of services provided by government, etc.)
- Likewise, think about the types of facilities and infrastructure that are operated by the County. Are there any issues with the provision and/or maintenance of the County’s facilities and infrastructure? The County is responsible for and maintains:
  - Administrative, service, and public safety buildings across the County
  - 5 County parks (Oppenheim, Krull, Bond Lake, Royalton Ravine, West Canal Marina) and the County Golf Course
  - 283 miles of roads, 89 bridges, and 800 drainage culverts
  - Sewer, water and refuse districts

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?*

1. County does very little in the way of providing services to City versus towns
- 2.
- 3.

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to County services, facilities, and infrastructure?*

- 1 . Niagara County Community College – Corporate Training Center
- 2.
- 3.

*Describe your community’s goals and objectives for County services, facilities, and infrastructure as well as any actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

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## **FOCUS AREA: EDUCATION**

### **Points to Consider**

- How well do current educational facilities accommodate the school-aged population in terms of capacity? How well suited are they for changes in the school-aged population over the next 20 years? [Projections from Cornell University show an overall decrease in the school-aged population in Niagara County by 2035 and school enrollment surveys compiled over the past 10 years indicate significant decreases in the cities, but gains in other school districts.]
- Does the school district in your community provide any special or enhanced educational programming that may not be provided in other school districts? If so, what types of programs are offered?
- School district consolidation has been mentioned as being needed to reduce the tax burden. Is this an issue in your community? Points to consider include:
  - Consolidation may mean greater distance from school facilities for some students, if consolidation results in school closures.
  - Per student expenditures do not appear to be above statewide averages in any of the Niagara County school districts.
  - Merging districts may mean that the consolidated district is able to provide more programs/activities than either could alone.
- Are any capital improvements needed, planned, or currently being made in your community relative to educational facilities? If so, what types of improvements?
- How important is it to have job training programs, job placement services, and continuing education courses readily available to adults and young adults in your community?
- What types of industries exist within your community that require special training? How important is it to connect education and training programs with local businesses to create a sustainable workforce? What types of education and training programs should be invested in to attract new companies to Niagara County?
- Does your community need better access to:
  - Resource centers (e.g. libraries, computer centers, career development centers, etc.)?
  - Higher education institutions (colleges and universities or satellite facilities)?
  - Workforce development programs (e.g., Orleans/Niagara BOCES, Niagara County Employment and Training, NCCC Workforce Training/Community Development)?
  - Other programs or facilities?

***What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to education?***

1. Rising cost of college tuition
2. School Taxes
- 3.

***What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to education?***

1. Niagara County Community College – Corporate Training Center
- 2.
- 3.

*Describe your community's goals and objectives for education as well as actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

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**FOCUS AREA: PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY**

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

Points to Consider

- What is the overall sense of security / safety in the neighborhoods in your community?
- How would you rate the “visibility” of police patrols in your community? Who provides primary police coverage in your community (local police, Sheriff, State police)?
- Based on your experience, are response times / coverage for emergency services (police, fire, ambulance) adequate in your community?
- How is your community affected by proximity to the Canadian border?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County’s efforts to coordinate emergency / disaster preparation programs?
- What types of events has or might your community experienced that would require major emergency response? What assets does your community possess that would help it during an emergency?
- What do you perceive to be the biggest challenges to public safety in your community? How about within the County and/or the region?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to public safety?*

1. Cost of Providing Public Safety services
2. Cost of NOT providing Public safety Services
3. declining Tax Base

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public safety?*

1. Police Departments
2. Paid Fire Department with EMS
3. Increased Staff in Building Inspection Department

*Describe your community's goals and objectives for public safety as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

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## **PUBLIC HEALTH**

### Points to Consider

- Does your community have adequate access to healthcare facilities, including hospitals? Does your community have adequate coverage in terms of ambulatory services, including response times?
- Do you feel your community would have adequate access to health services in the event of an emergency, such as a natural disaster or otherwise?
- What are the biggest public health concerns within your community? Are these ongoing concerns? Are there any issues that might be classified as health threats?
- Does your community or organizations within your community offer programs aimed at improving public health/wellness? What types of programs (i.e. nutrition, vaccinations, exercise, anti-smoking, etc.)?
- Is environmental health (i.e. water and air quality) a significant issue within your community? If so, why?
- What is the level of awareness in your community of the County Health Department's programs and services?

*What do you consider to be the three most pressing issues or challenges facing your community today relative to public health?*

- 1. Rising Costs of providing medical care to employees**
- 2. Lack of medical insurance for working poor**
- 3. Aging Population**

*What do you consider to be the three most significant assets or opportunities in your community today relative to public health?*

- 1. City owned and operated Water and Wastewater Treatment Facilities and Compost Facility**
- 2. Lockport Memorial Hospital**
- 3. Lockport Fire Department - EMS**

*Describe your community's goals and objectives for public health as well as any measurable objectives and/or actionable steps that can be taken towards accomplishing those goals.*

**Maintain a cooperative relationship with the County for emergency water service versus the county installing more water lines**

**PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED SURVEYS TO:**

**[comprehensiveplan@niagaracounty.com](mailto:comprehensiveplan@niagaracounty.com)**

**OR**

**Niagara Communities Comprehensive Plan**

**6311 Inducon Corporate Drive**

**Sanborn, NY 14132**