

CITY OF OLEAN COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

PUBLIC MEETING #1

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2023 5:00-7:00PM

JOHN J. ASH COMMUNITY CENTER 112 N BARRY ST, OLEAN, NY 14760 AND VIA ZOOM WEBINAR

The City of Olean held its first public meeting regarding the Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) on Wednesday November 1, 2023 at the John J. Ash Community Center and online via a Zoom webinar. The objective of the meeting was to introduce the Comprehensive Development Plan, discuss the scope and schedule of the CDP process, and solicit feedback from stakeholders about opportunities for change and their vision they for the future of Olean.

Exercise #1: Strengths & Opportunities

Upon arrival to the in-person meeting, the consultant team invited participants to participate in an activity. Attendees were presented with a pen, sticky notes and a sequence of four questions on boards. They were asked to place their response on each board and review what others had stated. A summary of the Exercise #1 questions and responses is below.

What do you love about the City of Olean?

- I love how walkable the city is
- All the parks are wonderful and there's so much to do with family here
- Many organizations working together to get projects done
- People are friendly
- Walkability
- Walkable
- Small businesses downtown
- Collaborative nature
- Everything and everyone is accessible!
- Local small businesses
- Library is such an asset
- Friendly people
- Farmer's Market
- Concerts in the park
- Farmer's market
- Walkability
- Low traffic
- Affordability
- People
- Affordable Housing
- Family-owned restaurant
- Walkable
- Mt. Herman: So beautiful!

What is the biggest opportunity for the City?

- Turf the Stadium
- Decent Housing
- Turf the Stadium
- Outdoor recreation to keep youth engaged
- We are in virgin territory as far as business; there's so much that can be done
- Utilize retirees who have moved back from careers elsewhere but have always called Olean home!
- Retirees
- Low housing costs
- Walkable
- Many outdoor recreation opportunities

What are the main aspects or areas of the City that need improvement?

- Sustainable jobs
- Housing
- Decent housing
- Decent jobs
- Activity for young adults
- Hiking trail, ropes course, outdoor activities
- Celebrate our diversity
- Go after slum landlords and people who don't take care of their property
- Address the homeless problem and clean up the drugs
- Bigger library
- Code Enforcement needs help or power
- Need to get on top of this drug issue and homeless problem
- Improved ways to get to airport (train, bus?)
- More housing for retired people - one level, no yard work, close to stores
- Employment opportunities
- Improving dilapidated houses
- East State entrance to City
- Clean up properties; no trash heaps in front lawns
- Taxes - issue for the whole state

What are the most important characteristics of the City to enhance and celebrate?

- The city looks better every year!
- JCC and St. Bonaventure are great draws for the community
- History. Beautiful outdoors for activities and sports
- Beautiful downtown
- Relatively safe
- Great library
- Historical Society/Bartlett House
- Historic houses and trees
- Historic Buildings at Union/State

Presentation

Emma Phillips, Deputy Project Manager (C&S), welcomed participants and thanked them for attending. The presentation began with a brief series of introductions from the consultant project team and an overview of project objectives, demographic data contextualized within the surrounding county, and how the opinions gathered during the meeting fit into the larger goals of the project. The presentation slides are included as Appendix A.

The Comprehensive Development Plan will guide investment for the next 10-20 years. Emma discussed how the process is designed to be a community driven process and that the Plan will include a community vision for a better Olean and describe how to get there.

The plan will present historic and current data and develop goals and objectives related to:

- Land Use and zoning
- Housing
- Economic development
- Transportation
- Natural resources
- Resiliency and sustainability
- Other items that come up during outreach and community input sessions

Emma discussed how smart growth principles will be incorporated into the Plan. The core principles of smart growth were defined, as well as how they will contribute to the development pattern. These principles are:

- Efficient land use and infrastructure
- Enhancement of economic value
- Mixed-use neighborhoods and housing choices
- Multi-modal transportation systems
- Conservation / enhancement of environmental and cultural resources
- Creation of sense of place
- Increased citizen participation
- Regional view of the economy

Tanya Zwahlen (Highland Planning) gave a brief overview of the public feedback activity scheduled for immediately after the presentation.

Exercise #2: World Café

After the presentation, stakeholders participated in an exercise called World Café. The group was split into three groups and discussed their vision for six topics: (1) Parks and Recreation, (2) Environment and Sustainability, (3) Economic Development, (4) Transportation, (5) Housing, and (6) Neighborhoods. Each group spent time discussing all six topics, after which the moderators reported back. Images from each topic area are included as Appendix D. A summary of the group's vision follows.

Vision for Parks and Recreation

- Include multiple age groups
- Parks are underutilized - make it walkable and rideable for kids to get to parks and increase opportunities for kids
- People are afraid to go to Franchot park - needs supervision
- Bigger library
- Better advertising of what amenities each park has
- Better lighting in parks and in downtown
- Gargoyle Park not utilized well - need to update existing facilities, make it accessible for people with mobility challenges and add more walkways.
- More amenities along river dikes (picnic tables, benches)
- Consistent character for public improvements
- Waterfront access
- Extend Trails to Portville - could follow dike, but that has challenges
- Better supervision in parks - current issue with alcohol and drug use
- Olean is walkable but need to help people feel safer at night - supervision, police presence, lighting - not just cameras
- Better public access to school facilities and fields
- Market Olean's Parks & Recreation, add programming and events to attract visitors and new residents
- Better utilize existing parks and revive former parks
- Not enough light on ARV trail behind JCC to E. State Street
- Summer evening programs in parks for kids and teens

Vision for Environment and Sustainability

- More street trees
- Address out aging utilities and infrastructure

- Help residents deal with hardwater deposits
- Handle stormwater in a better way
- PR program for charging stations
- Plan for wind and solar to manage property
- Create Park-N-Rides
- New plan for car charging stations

Vision for Transportation

- Improved sidewalks and safety
- Advertise transit system better - increase marketing and partnerships
- Uber - promote, attract to region
- Education and outreach
- Timing for public transit options
- Municipal transport services including a medical answering service
- Creation of safe bike lanes - complement foot and vehicular traffic loss
- Business partnerships
- Angel outreach volunteers
- Carpooling and transportation sharing
- Coordinated and improved street lighting in parks
- Improve timing of traffic lights
- Additional rectangular rapid-flashing beacons (RRFBs)

Vision for Economic Development

- Resources to support small businesses
- Continued St. Bonas and JCC for economic development
 - Add Alfred to outreach
 - Consider architectural program outreach at Alfred State
- No empty storefronts
 - Incentives to support development and decrease number of empty storefront
- Social media outreach for available support and resources, not just websites
- Maintain industrial properties
- Promotion of small business support
- Outreach to developers and specific companies
- Support for existing businesses that may be struggling
- Recruiting companies that can utilize local skillsets
- Attract businesses with both local and regional draw
- Understand supply chain needs for businesses in order to help other small businesses launch
- Indoor sports facility

Vision for Neighborhoods

- Reserve neighborhoods as residential
- Clean up zombie homes
- Slumlord blacklist and accountability

- Increase inspection and code requirement
 - Increase code enforcement capacity
- Crime enforcement - specifically drug use
- An Airbnb policy
 - Could be positive for community but need to avoid negative consequences
- Landlords should take responsibility for the illegal behavior of tenants
- City-wide broadband
- Sidewalk maintenance and repair, including plowing
- Address food deserts
- Capital maintenance funds for neighborhood infrastructure
- Support neighborhood watch
 - Police collaboration
 - Liaison in the City
 - If neighborhood watch is not listened to, it dissolves
- Reassure the police for more neighborhood presence
- Increase police on bikes, they should patrol and be more accessible
- Plant more trees on the tree lawn
- Market Olean as a choice for remote workers

Vision for Housing

- Independent and assisted living options in Olean
- Houses are old and need reinvestment
- Lack of high quality housing options is an impediment to growth
- We should provide resources for the homeless
- Homeless and addiction committee to specify actions
- Housing First!
- Need more good housing that's affordable and accessible
- Senior and Lower Maintenance Housing
- Higher-end housing to attract wealthier employees to live locally
- Invest in existing housing and neighborhoods to resist abandonment

Conclusion

After the exercise, Emma Phillips thanks participants for attending, asked participants to promote the survey with people who could not attend the public meeting, and encouraged them to stay involved with the CDP process as it progresses in 2024. The meeting concluded just before 7:00PM.

Appendix A - Meeting Participants

Consultant Team

Daniel Riker, C&S Companies

Emma Phillips, C&S Companies

Molly Vendura, Molly Vendura Landscape Architecture

Tanya Mooza Zwahlen, Highland Planning

Meeting Attendees

Mayor William Aiello, City of Olean

Keri Kerper, City of Olean

Kathy Monroe, City of Olean

Arnim "Jubs" Alexander, Roy Al Cuts/Zoning Board

Frank Argento

Susan Bly, Olean Beautification Committee

Jeffrey Bauman, WNYP Railroad

David Carucci, OLDC

Sue Groves

Peter Hellier, Allegany Planning Board

Kathleen Martel, JCC

Kathy Marzec

Sonya McCall, City of Olean Common Council

Anthony Nagel, Village of Cattaraugus

Diane Smith

Tim Smith

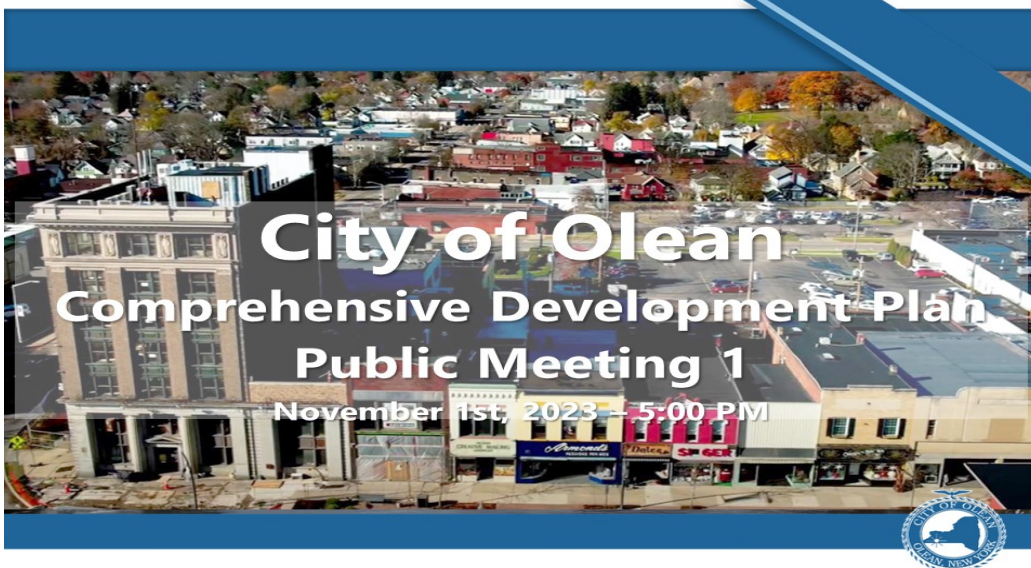
Lanna Waterman, Citizen/Public Library

Appendix B: Presentation

Welcome and thank you for joining us! We will begin the presentation promptly at 5:30 PM.

Have you taken the online survey? You can do so here:

Or visit: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CityofOlean>



Agenda

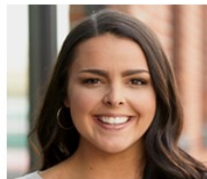
- ♦ Welcome
- ♦ Project Team
- ♦ Comprehensive Plan Overview & Schedule
- ♦ Outreach and Community Participation Plan
- ♦ Deliverables
- ♦ Next Steps
- ♦ Activity



The Team



Daniel Riker, P.G.
Project Manager



Emma Phillips
Deputy Project Planner



Tanya Zwahlen
Outreach Lead



Molly Vendura
Visualization /
Landscape
Architecture



**Department
of State**



C&S Companies

- ♦ Founded in 1968
- ♦ Over 500 professionals and tradespeople
- ♦ 20 offices in 12 states
- ♦ Headquartered in Syracuse with NY offices in Buffalo, Rochester, Binghamton, Plattsburgh, and Albany
- ♦ Full-service, project delivery specialists
 - ♦ Planning
 - ♦ Market Analysis
 - ♦ Transportation
 - ♦ Environmental
 - ♦ Civil
 - ♦ Buildings
 - ♦ Energy
 - ♦ Sustainability
 - ♦ Construction



Highland Planning, LLC

- ♦ Founded in 2007, with over 20 years experience
- ♦ Six professionals, IAP2 trained
- ♦ Headquartered in Rochester, NY
- ♦ Experience includes
 - ♦ Public Engagement and Outreach for:
 - ♦ Transportation projects
 - ♦ Downtown Revitalization Initiatives
 - ♦ Housing Studies
 - ♦ Commercial District Revitalization
 - ♦ Brownfield Revitalization Strategies



Molly Vendura Landscape Architect, PLLC

- ♦ 25+ years of experience in landscape architecture, planning, engineering and urban design
- ♦ background in engineering and environmental science
 - ♦ approaches projects from a unique perspective: blending best practices with creative design to produce innovative, attractive & functional projects





What is a Comprehensive Plan?

- ♦ **Highest-level of expression for a community's future**
 - 1. **Blueprint** for the next 10-20 years
 - 2. **Compass** that guides decision making
 - 3. **Playbook** for capital investments and further planning initiatives
 - 4. **Messaging tool** to articulate community vision and reference point for grants or policy updates



What is a Comprehensive Plan?

- ♦ **Community-driven process and document**
 - 1. **Where are we now?** *Analysis of existing conditions*
 - ♦ *Regional setting, population trends, land use, zoning, natural and historic resources, socioeconomic analyses, housing*
 - 2. **Where are we going?** *Identification of trends*
 - 3. **Where do we want to be?** *Community vision & goals*
 - 4. **How do we get there?** *Policies, Strategies, Implementation actions*



What will the Plan cover?

- ◆ Land use and Zoning
- ◆ Housing
- ◆ Economic Development
- ◆ Transportation
- ◆ Natural Resources
- ◆ Resiliency & Sustainability
- ◆ + other items that we hear about during outreach!

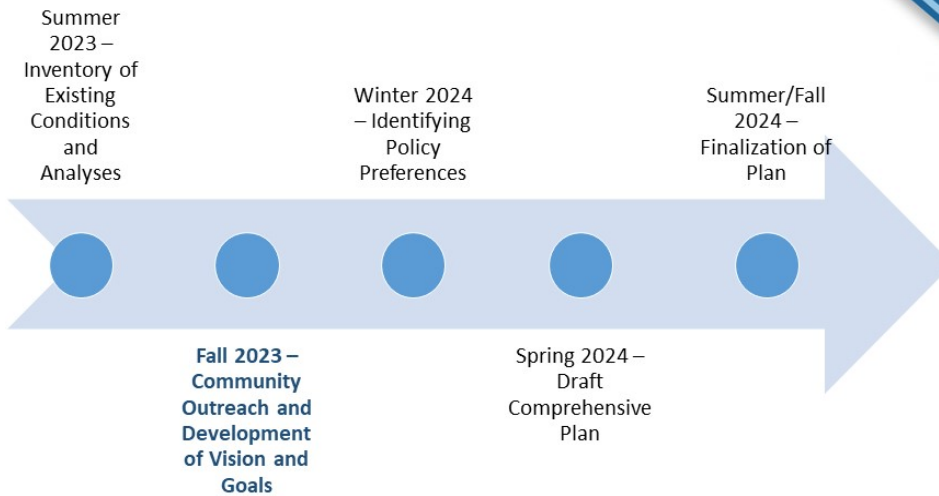


Incorporation of Smart Growth

- ◆ Smart Growth is a set of principles incorporated together to achieve a better development pattern
- ◆ Core principles include:
 - ◆ Efficient land use and infrastructure
 - ◆ Enhancement of economic value
 - ◆ Mixed-use neighborhoods and housing choices
 - ◆ Multi-modal transportation systems
 - ◆ Conservation / enhancement of environmental and cultural resources
 - ◆ Creation of sense of place
 - ◆ Increased citizen participation
 - ◆ Regional view of the economy



How Long Will This Take?



Outreach Elements

- ◆ Stakeholder Interviews
- ◆ Public Meetings (2)
- ◆ Community Participation Plan
- ◆ Survey
- ◆ Pop-up Event(s)



Engagement Objectives



**IDENTIFY KEY ISSUES
AND OPPORTUNITIES**



**IDENTIFY COMMUNITY
VALUES AND PRIORITIES**



DEVELOP COMMUNITY VISION



BUILD CAPACITY



Deliverables

A Comprehensive Development Plan with...

- ♦ Fleshed Out Priority Projects
- ♦ Prioritization Of Those Projects
- ♦ Identified Sources of Funding
- ♦ Step By Step Guide for Implementation
- ♦ **Community Support!**



Questions

Questions or Comments?



Appendix C: Photos from Event



