

## Town of Montague - Community Vision for the Future

The purpose of comprehensive planning is to identify a clear and compelling vision for the future and to develop strategies to reach that vision. The Town of Montague Comp Plan identifies this vision along with a set of goals that will help lead the town towards a bright future. The plan sets the path for helping the town to continue to be a beautiful, comfortable, peaceful, and desirable place to live.

### 20-Year Vision for 4-Towns

Working together as a community, we envision the Town of Montague area twenty years from now as a place where:

-  Environmentally sensitive land and “special areas” in the town are protected for future generations. The need to protect important natural areas and resources continues to be a high priority for town residents. With careful planning, they preserve the town’s rural character, unique natural areas, and high quality of water, air and land.
-  Farming continues to be a viable way of life. Some family farms have developed specialty items and others have found unique niches. The preservation of the best farmland has attracted a stable farming community, encouraged by the dependable sources of water and good soil within the towns. Preservation of quality woodland has contributed to sustainable and responsible forestry practices within the towns as well.
-  Historically aware and informed citizens take pride in passing along important historic resources to future generations. By careful planning, they preserve and promote the towns’ historical heritage, historic sites and structures, and cemeteries.
-  Residents enjoy a well-planned and maintained highway system with town, county and state highways functioning properly.
-  Outdoor recreational activities of all kinds are enjoyed by town residents as well as recreation enthusiasts from around the northeast.
-  Open space is plentiful, enabling sustainable agriculture and forest production, providing outdoor recreational opportunities, and preserving important natural resources from development.
-  The local economy flourishes with locally-owned small businesses. Scattered throughout the four towns, businesses complement the peaceful rural nature of the towns.

#### Town Law § 272-a. Town comprehensive plan.

1. Legislative findings and intent. The legislature hereby finds and determines that:

(a) Significant decisions and actions affecting the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development of the state and its communities are made by local governments.

(b) Among the most important powers and duties granted by the legislature to a town government is the authority and responsibility to undertake town comprehensive planning and to regulate land use for the purpose of protecting the public health, safety and general welfare of its citizens.

(c) The development and enactment by the town government of a town comprehensive plan which can be readily identified, and is available for use by the public, is in the best interest of the people of each town.

(d) The great diversity of resources and conditions that exist within and among the towns of the state compels the consideration of such diversity in the development of each town comprehensive plan.

(e) The participation of citizens in an open, responsible and flexible planning process is essential to the designing of the optimum town comprehensive plan.

(f) The town comprehensive plan is a means to promote the health, safety and general welfare of the people of the town and to give due consideration to the needs of the people of the region of which the town is a part.

(g) The comprehensive plan fosters cooperation among governmental agencies planning and implementing capital projects and municipalities that may be directly affected thereby.

(h) It is the intent of the legislature to encourage, but not to require, the preparation and adoption of a comprehensive plan pursuant to this section. Nothing herein shall be deemed to affect the status or validity of existing master plans, comprehensive plans, or land use plans.

# **Town of Montague, Lewis County, NY**

## **Community Goals**

Through community wide surveys, meetings of the town board planning committee, and from various county and regional plans and studies, the following community goals have been raised as being of importance to the future of the town of Montague's community process:

### **Natural Resources and Environment**

GOAL 1 – To protect important, sensitive and special natural resources in the town such as important habitat areas, large contiguous forest areas, core forest, major river and stream corridors, important headwater wetland areas, and watersheds which are an essential part of the rural character and quality of life.

Objective A: Complete an inventory and mapping of special areas using the Special Area Guidelines Workbook and designate special areas consistent with other Cooperative Tug Hill Council towns. Adopt appropriate land use regulations to protect and preserve these special areas.

Objective B: Reduce the impact of development on natural resources by use of cluster development as the preferred pattern for major subdivisions, adopt conservation subdivision practices and create a system of incentives to achieve desired land use patterns.

Objective C: Maintain the rural character of the landscape by preserving significant large parcels of undeveloped land and agricultural land.

### **Agriculture**

GOAL 2 – To encourage the growth and economic viability of traditional and new forms of agriculture as both a source of economic activity and as a means of preserving the important components of the town's rural character.

Objective A: Support the vision statement, goals, and recommendations for viable agricultural activities as outlined in the Lewis County Agricultural Enhancement Plan adopted in May 2006.

Objective B: Ensure that development is compatible with the rural environment, active agriculture and productive forest activities.

Objective C: Promote sound forestry practices for all commercial harvesting through the establishment of minimum forest management standards.

Objective D: Encourage development and marketing of specialty products such as organic agriculture and niche markets.

## **Historic Preservation**

GOAL 3 – To promote the cultural and historic character of the town.

Objective A: Protect and foster the town heritage through the identification and preservation of historic areas, structures and landmarks.

Objective B: Establish local incentives for historic preservation. Seek funding and volunteers to promote historic preservation.

## **Transportation**

GOAL 4 – To control the cost to maintain the town highway system. At the same time, support the safety and functional well being of the town residents by developing, maintaining or improving the transportation system.

Objective A: Avoid new public roads into or across remote areas not now served by public roads, especially in the core forest of the town, in areas that would lead to the breakup of lands important to forest management, wildlife, farming, hunting, fishing and recreation.

Objective B: Identify on town-wide basis portions of roads that might be appropriate for some form of abandonment or seasonal use designation.

Objective C: Maintain low volume and minimum maintenance road system and work towards the adoption of an official map for the town.

Objective D: Support state legislation that would limit town responsibilities for maintenance on low volume and minimum maintenance roads.

Objective E: Limit development on low volume and minimum maintenance roads to seasonal uses and camps.

Objective F: Promote inter-municipal cooperation with adjacent towns as it relates to shared highway work and shared purchase, maintenance and operation of highway equipment.

## **Open Space**

GOAL 5 – To preserve the natural open space resources, environmentally sensitive areas and unique plant and animal life in the town.

Objective A: Support private land trusts and similar organizations in their efforts to protect significant open space and environmental resources.

Objective B: Protect river and stream corridors, wetlands and groundwater from inappropriate levels and types of development.

## **Recreation**

GOAL 6 – To encourage the safe enjoyment of recreational activities of all kind for the residents and property owners of the town as well as visitors and tourists from outside the region.

Objective A: Encourage the development of a legal, environmental friendly and safe Lewis County ATV and Snowmobile Recreational Trail Plan.

Objective B: Work with the Lewis County Trail Coordinator to identify all trail opportunities, such as nature trails, bike trails, horse trails and motorized recreational trails.

Objective C: Support private land trusts and similar organizations in their efforts to identify appropriate recreation uses on open space lands, which encourage hiking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, fishing and hunting.

Objective D: Support the Sears Pond habitat restoration project to restore brook trout habitat to a 4000 foot reach of the Deer River. Develop a hiking trail access and recreation area to this project.

## **Economic Development**

GOAL 7 – To support and promote the town’s current economic base to retain existing employment opportunities and increase availability of good quality employment opportunities by promoting Lewis County as a great place to live, work and visit.

Objective A: Support the vision statement, goals and objectives for economic development as outlined in the Lewis County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy adopted by the county in 2006.

Objective B: Encourage development of high-speed internet service to all residents and seasonal residents of the town.

Objective C: Encourage satellite education opportunities for college level classes in the region in order to cut down on travel outside the region.

Objective D: Encourage the development of Renewable Energy Development and Natural Gas Exploration that will preserve the natural open space resources, environmentally sensitive areas and unique plant and animal life in the town.