
Master Plan 2025 Goals and Narrative

Draft 2

Town of Clarence, New York

MASTER PLAN 2025 GOAL	Overview of master planning process for MASTER PLAN 2025
<p>1. Preserve and protect the open space character of the Town.</p>	<p>After Master Plan 2015 was officially adopted, work began on code updates which were consistent with Master Plan goals. These code updates included comprehensive Zoning Law and Map that preserved protected agricultural zoning classifications. Both the agricultural Rural Residential and Agricultural Flood Zones require larger lot sizes for residential use which preserves open space. The Agricultural Flood Zone also works to reduce residential density to minimize the risk of flood damage to property. The comprehensive Subdivision Law was also updated to protect the open spaces of the community by not allowing for unregulated growth without public sewer access and by requiring the Planning Board to review every lot split. The focus of both pieces of legislation puts a high priority on open space and natural feature preservation, including the provisions for open space design development in sewered areas. The Town continued the Greenprint Program, which is funded by the Open Space Bond Act, to acquire valuable lands for long term preservation. Actions to preserve and protect open space and natural areas should continue as the community grows. In reviewing new projects that induce growth, the Town should always have an eye to overall Master Plan 2025 goals, primarily open space preservation as well as recreation amenities and neighborhood connectivity.</p>
<p>2. Maintain and promote the historic character of the Town.</p>	<p>As an integral part of the Zoning Law and Map, the Town identified a distinct Traditional Neighborhood District (TND) Zoning Classification. This TND identifies smaller, more traditional hamlet scale lots and setbacks. A grassroots overlay was also developed to ensure that neighborhood character and designs became standard in the Clarence Hollow and Clarence Center. In addition, the Planning Board strives to ensure that neighborhood values and design characteristics become standard in the Harris Hill, Swormville and Wolcottsburg hamlet areas. In support of this goal the Town undertook an intensive historic resources survey, adopted a Local Historic Preservation Law and appointed a local Historic Preservation Commission. The Town also became a Registered Certified Local Government to aid in the protection of Historic Landmarks throughout the community. While much work has been done, the level of investment in the hamlet areas of the Town remains a long term concern and must continue to sustain both community and historic character. Overall, the initiative to maintain and promote the historic character of our hamlets should be extended to maintain and promote the</p>

	natural, visual and historic characteristics of the entire town.
<p>3. Continue to evaluate and upgrade public service infrastructure.</p>	<p>The Town has undertaken significant actions toward upgrading public infrastructure, including road and intersection upgrades, sewer extensions, regional coordination, consolidated water system and stormwater management. Maps have been generated that identify road and intersection areas of concern as well as future extensions for traffic calming. Traffic will continue to be an issue in the future development of the community and regional cooperation will be essential in managing the overall system. Involvement with the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC) and local road providers and adjoining communities must continue. The adopted Land Use Access Management Plan (LUAMP) should be further explored and developed. Concerns as outlined in MP 2015 remain and traffic analyses will be critical in future project review. Comprehensive master sewer planning should be undertaken to identify means for providing public sewer service where needed. The 2007 MP 2015 amendment to prioritize future sewer capacity will remain an important tool in future growth control.</p>
<p>4. Maintain the Town’s strong recreation program and park facilities.</p>	<p>Historically, the Town had a variety of parks and recreational facilities to serve the community. In 2005, the Town undertook development of a Parks and Recreation Master Plan. This study included an inventory of existing facilities and long range plans for sports leagues and individual parks. As the population grows and demographics change, demands for fields and infrastructure will change. Through the years, different priorities have been given to various recreation activities. Year round facilities have been envisioned and partially developed through the private sector. In undertaking the individual mini-master plan parks studies, the cost of future development becomes the overriding concern. As with infrastructure, private investment may be necessary to achieve all goals. In order to control and maintain the Town's strong recreation program and park facilities, an ongoing evaluation and update of the 2005 Parks and Recreation Master Plan should be undertaken to identify future needs and strategies for improvement.</p>

<p>5. Maintain a collaborative relationship with all school districts within the Town.</p>	<p>Continued cooperation and sharing of information and resources will become even more critical as the burden on property taxpayers increases. Utilization of Adequate Educational Facilities Local Law is a provision that should be used by the Town and School Districts to cooperatively work for the sustainability of the community. Continuing and enforcing a balanced growth plan will be critical in maintaining quality school districts. Further collaboration on the utilization of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and the Adequate Educational Facilities Local Law should enhance the lines of communication for project review.</p>
<p>6. Provide consistent enforcement of land use regulations.</p>	<p>Local legislation, including but not limited to, Signs, Zoning, Subdivision, Landscape and Tree Conservation, Floodplain Development, Stormwater Management, Satellite Towers, Clearing Filling and Grading, and Town Environmental Quality Review (TEQR) all work to ensure current regulations that are in keeping with changes to the economy and public desires/demands. In addition, the public notification policies of the Town have been upgraded to ensure that adequate notification is the norm. This includes notification within 500' of all projects up for review. Local legislation should be evaluated regularly for the health, safety and welfare of Town residents.</p>
<p>7. Adopt an orderly and balanced growth plan.</p>	<p>Balanced growth will continue to be an ongoing process in maintaining the character of the town. The Zoning Map and Law were updated in 2005, with several additional modifications since then. The annual public hearings on MP 2015 has aided in the identification of needed amendments. The practice of holding an annual review of the adopted master plan should continue. In managing growth, the protection of residential areas needs to be balanced with the need to promote commercial growth, maintain current businesses and protect agricultural and natural areas consistent with zoning regulations.</p>
<p>8. Coordinate efforts on a regional basis.</p>	<p>At the time of original adoption, Master Plan 2015 was consistent with the "Guiding Principals" as adopted by Erie County to identify regional goals. In the subsequent years, Erie County has adopted the Framework for Regional Growth. The Master Plan 2015 remains consistent with regional goals. In addition, the Town routinely coordinates project reviews with various regulatory agencies to ensure that the review is compatible with regulatory requirements and capacities. The sewer capacity prioritization study, as perfected by the Planning Board, has helped to address project prioritization in</p>

	<p>terms of sewer capacity and remains an important tool in project review. The adoption of the Town Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan is a key regional asset and will continue to play an important role as the community and region evolve. The amendments to the Zoning Law to prioritize and encourage hamlet development, consistent with their historical character, remain a significant part of the community development. Road systems are the most identified infrastructure under constant impact and the town will need to ensure that proper planning and coordination, with service providers, remain in force to address future concerns. Protection of open space and natural resources must continue for the long-term sustainability and health of the community. This protection is ensured under the direction of the Town Board in collaboration with the Planning Board. The Town will continue to participate in regional planning efforts.</p>
<p>9. Maintain and improve the trail system throughout the town to accommodate diverse recreational activities and greater connectivity by developing a comprehensive Trail Plan.</p>	<p>The popularity of east/west bike paths, created from former railroad corridors, has spurred an interest in adding more trails for recreational activities and for accessibility to various sections of the community. Future land development should focus on north/south connections to the existing trails to accommodate non-motorized activities such as biking, roller blading, walking, and jogging. These connections can be sidewalks, recreational trails, and on-road bike lanes. Appropriate design and safety standards must be considered for interaction between motorized and non-motorized traffic. The Master Bike Path Map should be updated and expanded into a Trail Plan that identifies strategies for future expansion to improve accessibility and connectivity throughout the town. The development of the Trail Plan should seek ongoing input from appropriate town departments and committees.</p>