

**TOWN AND VILLAGE OF CHAMPLAIN
JOINT SMART GROWTH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**
FINAL PLAN – ADOPTED JANUARY 2026



TOWN & VILLAGE OF CHAMPLAIN SMART GROWTH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2025

This project was prepared with funding provided by the New York State Department of State under Title 3 of the Environmental Protection Fund.



**Department
of State**

**The Comprehensive Plan was produced with the assistance of:
Ann Ruzow Holland, Ph.D., AICP, NYS WBE, Community Planning Advisor in association
with AES Northeast**



Town and Village of Champlain, New York

Town of Champlain

Thomas Trombley, Supervisor
Council Members:

Bryan Moore
Jason Borrie
Rick Hunter
Dorothea Southwick
Julie Castine, Town Clerk

Village of Champlain

Janet McFetridge, Mayor
Trustees:

Joel Herzog
Kim Trombley
Charles Conner
Nicci Molinski
Juanita Munoz , Village Clerk/Treasurer

Town and Village of Champlain Joint Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee

Jarrod Cone
Tracy DeCoste
Rick Hunter
Troy Kellogg
Carrie McComb
Janet McFetridge

Nicole Molinski
Julia Renda
Tom Ryan
Karin Thone
Chris Trombley

As well as our many Agency and Organizational Partners

Contents

<i>Section 1:</i>	6
<i>Executive Summary</i>	6
<i>Section 2: How the Comprehensive Plan was Developed</i>	8
Community Engagement in Development of the Comprehensive Plan.....	8
Core Activities.....	9
Conclusion	13
<i>Section 3: Community Profile</i>	14
General Location.....	14
History	15
Cultural Features.....	16
Demographics.....	17
Household Characteristics	19
Housing Characteristics.....	21
Economy: Current Conditions and Trends	24
Natural Systems and Landscape Features.....	29
Scenic & Recreational Resources.....	34
Public and Community Services and Facilities	36
Existing Land Use	41
<i>Section 4: Champlain's Focal Areas, Special Interests, and Community Concerns</i>	47
Introduction	47
Focal Areas, Special Interests and Community Concerns	47
<i>Section 5: Champlain's Vision and Smart Growth Recommendations for the Future</i>	50
Champlain's Vision Statement	50
Introduction to our Approach to Smart Growth and Champlain's Comprehensive Plan.....	51

Smart Growth in New York State.....	52
The Five Tests of Smart Growth.....	53
Smart Growth and Champlain Town and Village's Future Land Use	54
Smart Growth Crosswalk - Champlain Comprehensive Plan.....	60
<i>Section 6: Findings and Recommendations</i>	61
<i>Implementation Next Steps.....</i>	61
Plan Implementation and Governance.....	61
Set Metrics for Success:	62
Comprehensive Recommendations Aligned with Smart Growth Principles in Champlain Implementation Actions	62
<i>Glossary</i>	81
<i>List of Appendices.....</i>	83

List of Figures

<i>Figure 1 – Photo Provided by the Town of Champlain, Comprehensive Planning Session.....</i>	7
<i>Figure 2: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Comprehensive Planning Session</i>	8
<i>Figure 3: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Open House Invitation</i>	10
<i>Figure 4: Key Topic Word Cloud</i>	12
<i>Figure 5: Effort Vs. Impact Prioritization Matrix</i>	13
<i>Figure 6: General Location</i>	14
<i>Figure 7: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Aerial View.....</i>	14
<i>Figure 8: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Samuel de Champlain.....</i>	15
<i>Figure 9: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain.....</i>	15
<i>Figure 10: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Fort Montgomery.....</i>	16
<i>Figure 11: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Champlain Memorial.....</i>	16
<i>Figure 12: Household Change (2010-2020)</i>	19
<i>Figure 13: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Housing Needs - Miromar Site--A.....</i>	23
<i>Figure 14: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Canadian border</i>	24
<i>Figure 15: Photo provided by Town of Champlain, Canadian Border Crossing</i>	25
<i>Figure 16: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Champlain Border Entry</i>	26
<i>Figure 17: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Amtrak Adirondack Line</i>	27
<i>Figure 18: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Agriculture.....</i>	27

Figure 19: Photo provided by Town of Champlain, Natural Systems & Landscapes	29
Figure 20: Photo Provided by the Town of Champlain, Natural Systems & Landscape Features	29
Figure 21: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Champlain Natural Systems &Landscape Features.....	30
Figure 22: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Natural Systems & Landscape Features.....	30
Figure 23: Champlain Physical Environment: Geology, Soils & Topography	31
Figure 24: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Natural Systems & Landscape Features.....	31
Figure 25: The Last of the Wild in the Northern Appalachian/Acadian Ecoregion	32
Figure 26: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Ecological Communities & Biodiversity.....	33
Figure 27: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Scenic & Recreational Resources	34
Figure 28: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Scenic & Recreational Resources	34
Figure 29: Kings Bay Wildlife Management Area.....	35
Figure 30: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, North Country Golf Club	35
Figure 31: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Point Au Fer	35
Figure 32: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Champlain Water Tower	36
Figure 33: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Northeastern Clinton Central School District	37
Figure 34: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Emergency Services.....	38
Figure 35: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Health Care.....	38
Figure 36: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Transportation	38
Figure 37: Complete Streets, Town of Champlain.....	40
Figure 38: Land Use Map, Town of Champlain	45
Figure 39: Existing Zoning Map, Village of Champlain.....	46
Figure 40: Smart Growth in NYS (Smart Growth America 2024, n.d.).....	52
Figure 41: Developable Land Map, Village of Champlain	54
Figure 42: Developable Land Map, Town of Champlain	54
Figure 43: Courtesy of Upstate Forever, Existing & Future Land Use's Relationship to Smart Growth Principles.....	55
Figure 44: Conservation Subdivision Design Process, Conventional Subdivision Design.....	56
Figure 45: Conservation Subdivision Design Process, Conservation Subdivision Design.....	56
Figure 46: Courtesy of Websites: AARP.org and AARP.org.....	59

List of Tables

Table 1: Town/Village of Champlain & Rouses Point Population Trends	17
Table 2: Median Age Comparison (2010 vs. 2020).....	18
Table 3: Poverty Rates (2023)	20
Table 4: Median Household Income (2023).....	20
Table 5: Median Household Value (Owner-Occupied Housing, 2023)	21
Table 6: Median Household Value vs. Median Income (2023)	21

Table 7: Housing Affordability Ration (Home Value / Income, 2023).....	22
Table 8: Economic Characteristics by Municipality.....	28
Table 9: Village of Champlain Land Use Changes	41
Table 10: Existing Land Use (2024), Village of Champlain.....	41
Table 11: Town of Champlain Land Use Changes (2018-2023)	42
Table 12: Existing Land Use (2024) - Town of Champlain.....	42
Table 13: Comparison of Existing Land Use (2024).....	44
Table 14: Smart Growth Crosswalk - Champlain Comprehensive Plan	60
Table 15: Town of Champlain High Priority Implementation Actions.....	69
Table 16: Town of Champlain Medium Priority Implementation Actions	73
Table 17: Village of Champlain High Priority Implementation Actions.....	77
Table 18: Village of Champlain Medium Priority Implementation Actions	80

Please Note: All photographs, unless otherwise noted that are depicted in this Comprehensive Plan were used with permission from the Town Supervisor of Champlain (2024-2025).

Please Note: When the document refers to “Champlain,” it is referring to the Village and Town of Champlain.

Please Note: Original Citations, Footnotes, and References for this document can be found in the supporting documentation provided in the Appendices. New cited information references can be found in the footnotes in this document.

Section 1: Executive Summary

The Town and Village of Champlain are Champlain Valley communities framed by Lake Champlain, the Adirondack Mountains, and the fertile farmlands of the St. Lawrence River Valley. This landscape provides natural beauty and recreational opportunities while connecting residents to the economic, cultural, and service hubs of Montreal, Burlington, and Plattsburgh. Champlain has long drawn diverse residents while maintaining the traditions of legacy families, resulting in a strong sense of place and identity.

In 2023, the Town and Village Boards appointed a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee to develop a new 10-year Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan. This document is the product of careful research, citizen engagement, and collaboration with regional partners. It provides both a vision and a practical roadmap for guiding growth, preserving resources, and improving quality of life over the next decade.

Purpose of the Plan

The Comprehensive Plan is a “living document” that:

- Identifies Champlain’s needs, assets, and opportunities.
- Provides a shared vision for the next 10 years.
- Outlines strategies, policies, and actions to achieve that vision.
- Integrates Smart Growth principles to balance growth, conservation, and equity

Chapter Overviews

Section 1: Executive Summary

The opening section introduces the purpose of the Plan, the planning process, and the vision for Champlain’s future. It outlines the major goals and strategic priorities, setting the stage for the chapters that follow. It also emphasizes that the Plan is not a fixed set of projects but a flexible guide for addressing community-wide issues.

Section 2: How the Comprehensive Plan Was Developed

This section explains the inclusive planning process that shaped the document. A public participation plan was used to engage residents, business owners, nonprofits, and regional stakeholders. Outreach included online platforms, surveys, workshops, public meetings, and Steering Committee sessions. Special care was taken to ensure representation from a wide range of groups, including seasonal residents and younger voices. The result is a Plan that reflects the community’s values while aligning with state and regional policies.

Section 3: Community Profile

The Community Profile provides the foundation for planning decisions. It covers Champlain’s history, demographics, cultural features, and household trends. It assesses housing characteristics, local and regional economic trends, and natural systems such as water resources, farmland, wetlands, and biodiversity. Scenic and recreational resources are documented alongside public and community services, such as schools, libraries, and emergency services. Existing land use is analyzed to understand development patterns and opportunities for future growth.

Section 4: Focal Areas, Special Interests, and Community Concerns

This section identifies the key issues raised during the public engagement process. Themes include housing affordability and diversity, the need for stronger local economic opportunities, protecting farmland and water resources, and ensuring adequate infrastructure. It highlights both areas of consensus—such as the importance of preserving community character—and tensions, such as balancing industrial development with environmental stewardship. These focal areas provide the bridge between the Community Profile and the Plan's vision and strategies.

Section 5: Vision and Smart Growth Recommendations

Section 5 articulates Champlain's vision for the next 10 years: a clean, affordable, family-friendly community that grows purposefully while preserving its rural and historic character. It lays out Smart Growth principles—such as compact, walkable development; protection of open space; and investment in Complete Streets and green infrastructure—and applies them to Champlain's local context. Recommendations address land use, housing, transportation, economic development, energy efficiency, and natural resource management.

Section 6: Findings and Recommendations

The final section consolidates the Plan's conclusions into actionable strategies. Recommendations are divided into short-term (1–3 years), mid-term (4–6 years), and long-term (7–10 years) actions, each aligned with costs, resource needs, and priority levels. This section ensures compliance with **NYS Town Law §272-a and Village Law**

§7-722, making the Plan a legally sound framework for decision-making. It also emphasizes accountability through metrics for success, ongoing monitoring, and periodic updates.

Implementation and Next Steps

The Plan includes a 10-year implementation agenda that requires coordination between the Town and Village, regional partners, local businesses, and residents. Success will be measured by progress on housing affordability, economic diversification, environmental resilience, and public service improvements. The Plan will be periodically reviewed to keep it current with changing conditions and community priorities.

Looking Ahead

By 2035, Champlain envisions itself as a clean, vibrant, kid-friendly, and affordable community that grows carefully and sustainably. This 10-year Comprehensive Plan provides the roadmap to achieve that future while respecting Champlain's unique character, heritage, and natural assets.



Figure 1 – Photo Provided by the Town of Champlain, Comprehensive Planning Session

Section 2: How the Comprehensive Plan was Developed.

Section 2 describes the public engagement processes used to collect much of the subjective information included in the plan that supplements the objective data collected from public, private, and scientific sources

Community Engagement in Development of the Comprehensive Plan



Figure 2: Photo provided by the
Town of Champlain,
Comprehensive Planning Session

The Champlain Town and Village Comprehensive Plan *Public Participation Plan*¹ provided a strategic framework for engaging community members, stakeholders, and regional interests to create a robust and inclusive Comprehensive Plan. The plan emphasized transparency, inclusivity, and accessibility, using a variety of methods to ensure that all voices are heard throughout the planning process.

Champlain prioritized creating a planning process that reflects the will of the community by:

- ✓ Ensuring broad representation. A mix of residents, business owners, nonprofit organizations, government representatives, and regional agencies were engaged at various stages to ensure diverse perspectives shape the plan.
- ✓ Facilitating meaningful input from residents and stakeholders.
- ✓ Documenting and incorporating community values into actionable strategies.
- ✓ Maximizing accessibility by offering both in-person and virtual formats, ensuring broad participation across geographic and demographic groups.
- ✓ Widely disseminating meeting notices through emails, website postings, posters, and personal mailings, as needed.

By using a combination of traditional and modern outreach methods, Champlain built a community-driven Comprehensive Plan that balances local aspirations with regional and environmental considerations.

¹ Task 6 DOS Workplan Public Participation Plan

Core Activities

1. Website and Online Engagement
 - A dedicated website served as the primary hub for updates and two-way communication. It provided interactive tools and access to planning documents, ensuring community members, including seasonal residents, stay informed remotely.
2. Steering Committee Meetings
 - Regular meetings of the Steering Committee, a group representing diverse stakeholders, oversaw project administration, product reviews, public outreach, and implementation oversight. These meetings acted as a bridge between the Town and Village Boards, advisory teams, and citizens.
3. Community Meetings and Workshops
 - Two in-person events were held to provide information, solicit community input, and foster consensus:
 - Introduced the Comprehensive Plan and its objectives.
 - Sessions focused on gathering feedback about current conditions, land use, and community aspirations. Final community presentations summarized findings and built
4. 1:1 Stakeholder Interviews
 - 1:1 Stakeholder Interviews engaged specific stakeholder demographics to refine vision statements and implementation strategies.
5. Community Survey
 - The survey was designed to broaden participation and document community preferences. They informed the establishment of values, goals, and actionable policies for the Comprehensive Plan.
6. Ongoing Communication
 - Frequent updates provided through multiple channels, included:
 - Press releases, local newspaper articles, and public announcements.
 - Social media and online platforms.
 - Periodic reports from the Mayor and Supervisor at Village and Town Board meetings and other public forums.
7. Regional and Intergovernmental Coordination
 - Outreach to neighboring communities, Clinton County Planning Office, and New York State agencies ensured alignment on shared priorities, such as land use and environmental management.



Figure 3: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Open House Invitation

U.S.–Canada border.

Diverse local businesses, long-standing telecom provider, active cross-border commerce.

Opportunities

Redevelop vacant/underused sites (Miromar, Pfizer, brownfields, Fort Montgomery).
 Expand mixed-use, intergenerational, and starter housing options.
 Enhance riverfront with recreation, seasonal events, and public access.
 Develop indoor/outdoor recreation, heritage tourism, and lake-based activities.

Champlain Task 10 Visioning Workshops

The Visioning Report (see Appendices) outlines the results from two workshops held in December 2024 and May 2025.

The workshops also generated a SWOT analysis Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats) that revealed:

Strengths

Lake Champlain, Great Chazy River, farmland, and recreational trails/parks. Strong community pride, family-friendly environment, and good schools. Affordable housing stock and reliable water/sewer, emergency, and medical services. Strategic location at major highway crossroads and

Increase workforce training and small-scale business incubation.

Strengthen partnerships with regional agencies, expand transit, and utility services.

Weaknesses

Limited volunteer pool and inconsistent community communication. Outdated or inflexible zoning regulations. Deferred property maintenance; presence of derelict/vandalized structures. Shortage of affordable middle-income housing and lodging options. Lack of entertainment venues, restaurants, and community gathering spaces.

Threats

Flooding, sediment buildup, and climate change impacts. Rising crime, drug use, and absentee property neglect. Aging population, fewer young families, limited housing transitions. Missed “shovel-ready” investment opportunities. Risk of comprehensive plan adoption without implementation or review. Zoning rigidity hindering innovative development.

Champlain Task 7 Stakeholder Interviews

The Champlain Task 7 Stakeholder Report documents findings from twelve 1:1 interviews that were conducted between July 15th and August 15th, 2024. Ranging from residents to business owners and community leaders, these interviews provide qualitative insights into community perspectives, priorities, and concerns to guide the development of the Town's Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan.

Community Identity and Vision

From the interviews, the vision for Champlain is to be a clean, kid-friendly, hospitable, close-knit, and affordable border community that leverages its rich farmland, waterfronts, and strategic location near Montreal, Burlington, and Plattsburgh to offer diverse housing, robust services, vibrant recreation, and sustainable economic growth—growing purposefully while preserving its small-town character.

Stakeholder Interview SWOT Summary

Strengths

Strategic location near Montreal, Burlington, and Plattsburgh with U.S.–Canada border access.
Lake Champlain, Great Chazy River, farmland, and open space.
Strong civic pride, close-knit community, and good schools.
Reliable water/sewer, health center, emergency services, and solid infrastructure.
Diverse local businesses grant success, and recreation amenities (golf course, trails, marinas).

Weaknesses

Limited volunteer base and leadership succession planning.
Outdated/inflexible zoning and uneven property maintenance.
Shortage of affordable and middle-income housing.
Derelict/vacant buildings and absentee ownership.
Gaps in lodging, entertainment, walkability, and “main street” vibrancy.

Opportunities

Redevelop vacant/underused sites (Miromar, Pfizer, brownfields).
Expand mixed-use, intergenerational, and starter housing.
Promote green energy, AI/data centers, and targeted industrial growth.
Enhance riverfront access, tourism, recreation, and heritage attractions.
Strengthen regional partnerships, Chamber of Commerce engagement, and climate migration appeal.

Threats

Flooding, climate change, and environmental degradation.
Aging population and declining youth retention.
Crime, drug use, and property neglect.
Weak intermunicipal cooperation and policy inaction.
Economic uncertainty, border policy shifts, and missed “shovel-ready” opportunities.

Champlain Task 7 Community Survey

In Fall 2024, the Town and Village of Champlain conducted a community survey as part of the Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan process. The effort gathered 119 responses—about 3% of the adult population—through paper and online formats, with outreach via postcards, press releases, and social media. The survey included 30 questions covering demographics, housing, infrastructure, land use, economic development, transportation, recreation, safety, and community engagement, producing both quantitative results and over 1,000 open-ended comments.

Respondents were predominantly long-term, invested residents, with over 91% homeowners and 57% living in Champlain for more than 20 years.

Findings show strong support for more housing options, especially single-family, moderate-income, and senior-friendly units, along with revitalizing downtown areas and redeveloping underused sites. Infrastructure needs include expanded water/sewer service, better streetlighting, sidewalks, and natural gas access. Residents want more restaurants, grocery options, entertainment venues, and support for small businesses, while maintaining rural character. Transportation concerns focus on pedestrian safety, bike lanes, and winter walkability. Recreation priorities include increased lake access, connected trails, indoor youth facilities, and dog parks. Safety concerns—especially related to the border, crime, and lighting—were raised by half of respondents. Many residents are willing to volunteer but want clearer communication about opportunities.

Overall, the survey underscores a desire for thoughtful, inclusive growth that protects small-town charm while improving housing, infrastructure, recreation, and safety.



Figure 4: Key Topic Word Cloud

Conclusion

The Town and Village of Champlain's Comprehensive Planning efforts have involved extensive community engagement through a variety of civic outreach methods. A central theme emerging from all events and activities is community pride in its natural beauty, family-friendly atmosphere, and tight-knit community. Residents are strongly committed to preserving these characteristics while planning for purposeful growth. The activities also highlight a shared desire to maintain an affordable and hospitable community, where housing, recreation, and services are well-balanced.

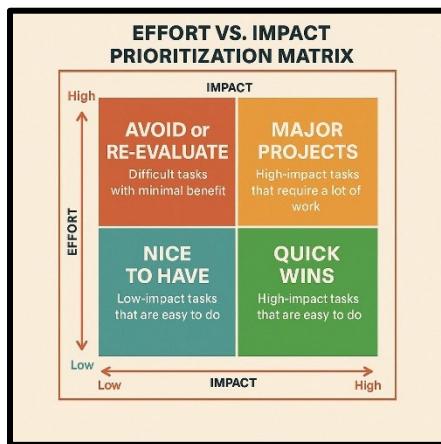


Figure 5: Effort Vs. Impact
Prioritization Matrix

A consistent set of priorities emerges for the Town and Village of Champlain. Residents, business owners, and stakeholders recognize the community's strategic location at the U.S.–Canada border as a defining asset, offering opportunities in logistics, cross-border trade, tourism, and regional partnerships with Montreal, Burlington, and Plattsburgh. There is broad consensus on the need for diverse housing options, including single-family, moderate-income, senior-accessible, and intergenerational housing, with an emphasis on downtown revitalization and mixed-use development to accommodate growth without sacrificing the small-town character. Economic development priorities focus on attracting more restaurants, grocery options, entertainment venues, and small businesses, alongside redeveloping vacant or underused sites such as Miromar, Pfizer, and brownfields. Clean energy projects, technology and data centers, and heritage tourism are also seen as promising future growth areas.

Residents also place strong importance on modernizing infrastructure by expanding water and sewer services, broadband, and natural gas access, while improving street lighting, sidewalk networks, and multi-modal transportation options for safety and year-round connectivity. Public access to Lake Champlain and the Great Chazy River, expanded trails, indoor youth recreation facilities, and community gathering spaces are desired to enhance recreation and quality of life. Preservation of farmland and open space is consistently valued, both for environmental benefits and tourism potential. Concerns about crime, border-related security, absentee property neglect, and an aging volunteer base point to the need for stronger property maintenance enforcement and improved community engagement. While residents are willing to volunteer, they want better communication about opportunities and more frequent community events—underscoring the need for a coordinated, inclusive approach to future planning.

Section 3: Community Profile

[Section 3 summarizes information provided in great detail in the Plan Appendix called Community Profile Chapters 1-4.](#)

General Location



Figure 6: General Location

Champlain, Clinton County, New York includes two Villages-Champlain Village and Rouses Point. Located in the northeastern portion of Clinton County, the Town hugs the International Border with Canada on the north, the Town of Mooers on the west, the Town of Chazy to the south, and Lake Champlain and Vermont to the east. The Great Chazy River flows through Champlain and empties into Lake Champlain. New York State Routes 11 and 9, together with Interstate 87 crisscross Champlain providing important transportation routes both east/west and north/south. It hosts the Champlain Port of Entry on Interstate 87, which is one of the four most important commercial gateways on the northern border, connecting New York City to the south with Montreal to the north, via Quebec Autoroute 15.



Figure 7: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Aerial View

History²³⁴⁵

⁶The Town of Champlain was established in 1788, and the Village of Champlain was incorporated in 1873. The Town, Village, and Lake Champlain owe its name to Samuel de Champlain, the European explorer who first surveyed the area in 1609. The town's flat, clay-like terrain was historically significant during the Colonial Period, serving as a strategic military and trade route that attracted early settlers. As the community grew, so did its strategic and economic importance.



Figure 8: Town of Champlain,
Samuel de Champlain

Two incorporated villages lie within the town of Champlain. Champlain Village, established in 1873, became a center of industrial activity with factories and mills. Rouses Point, incorporated in 1877 and named after early settler Jacques Rouse, emerged as a transportation hub due to its proximity to the Canadian border and Lake Champlain. It was a key point for regional shipping, with roads and docks

facilitating movement to and from Canada. Canadian tourism, and its position as a border gateway helped sustain the community.

Today, the Town of Champlain continues to thrive as a historical and cultural destination, with its economy supported by tourism and commerce at its three border crossings and due to its proximity to Vermont. Rouses Point, similarly, benefits from its historical charm and location near Lake Champlain, attracting visitors while maintaining its legacy as a transportation and trade hub. Together, Champlain and Rouses Point embody a rich history of resilience and adaptation, deeply rooted in their geographical and cultural landscapes.



Figure 9: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain

² The Phase I Archaeological Survey conducted for Water District 6 in the Town of Champlain, Clinton County 2019

³ Town of Champlain Website

⁴ Port of Entry Building Survey, US DHS 2007

⁵ <http://www.champlainhistory.org/champlain-celebrations-1909-1959-2009.html>

⁶ <https://www.lakechamplainregion.com/heritage/samuel-de-champlain>

Cultural Features

The Town and Villages of Champlain are home to a remarkable collection of cultural and historic features that shape the community's identity and support both heritage preservation and tourism. These resources highlight Champlain's role as a historic border community and a place where American, French, and British histories intersect.

At the heart of this cultural landscape is the Samuel de Champlain History Center, which preserves the stories of local industries, families, and military service. The Dodge Memorial Library founded in 1907, continues to stand as a civic landmark dedicated to learning and community service. Historic military sites are among Champlain's most distinctive



Figure 11: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Champlain Memorial designated program connecting New York, Vermont, and Québec in preserving shared cultural and natural heritage.

Taken together, these features create a living heritage network that makes Champlain not only a place of historical significance but also a vibrant cultural destination. By protecting and promoting its museums, forts, historic homes, monuments, trails, and partnerships, the community strengthens its identity, supports tourism, and ensures that future generations remain connected to its rich past.



Figure 10: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Fort Montgomery features. Fort Montgomery (often remembered as "Fort Blunder") and the Point au Fer Historic Site mark critical points in Revolutionary War and War of 1812 history, while Dewey's Tavern and the Pliny Moore House served as headquarters, negotiation sites, and encampments during border conflicts. Together, these landmarks remind residents and visitors of Champlain's unique position as both a frontier and a crossroads. The community also honors its past through monuments and markers. Dozens of historic markers and wayside interpretive panels, placed across the town and villages since 1938, bring these stories to life for today's residents and tourists. The community is also part of the Champlain Valley National Heritage Partnership, a federally

Demographics⁷

The Town and Village of Champlain are defined by a blend of long-time residents with deep generational roots and newer arrivals drawn by the area's quality of life, affordability, and proximity to the U.S.–Canada border. The demographic profile of Champlain shows a dynamic contrast: the Village of Champlain is younger and growing, the Town outside the village is shrinking and aging, and Rouses Point reflects both stability and affordability pressures. Income levels are moderate, with poverty affecting roughly 1 in 10 residents, and educational attainment lags behind state averages. These trends have important implications for housing, services, workforce development, and long-term planning.

Population Trends

Data from the US Census reveals that the population of the Village of Champlain is growing—and growing substantially compared to other places in Clinton County, as well as New York State. The Town of Champlain, similar to other Clinton County towns and cities is losing population at a very slow rate.

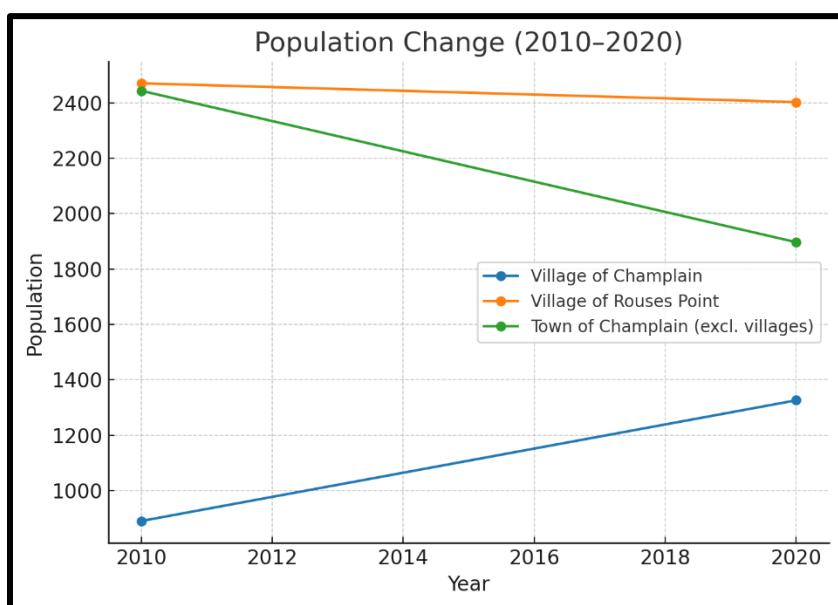


Table 1: Town/Village of Champlain & Rouses Point Population Trends

Village of Champlain: Grew from 890 (2010) → 1,326 (2020), a 49% increase over the decade.

Village of Rouses Point: Declined 2010–2015, then rebounded; 2,471 (2010) → 2,403 (2020).

Town of Champlain (excluding villages): Declined from 2,444 (2010) → 1,897 (2020), a 22% loss.

Clinton County overall: Declined slightly, from 82,115 (2010) → 80,320 (2020).

Ethnic Composition

The Town and Village of Champlain are typical of many areas in northern New York in its demographic makeup. The overall population consists of a largely white demographic. However, Champlain Town and Village are seeing an appreciable diversification of ethnic groups over time.

⁷ The data provided in this section was collected from both the U.S. Decennial Census as well as the American Community Survey. Numbers from the Decennial census and the data on the tables from the American community survey sometimes show different numbers for the same year. Generally, this profile derives data from the ACS since it had more yearly data versus the two decennial datasets that may not have all the information of interest to this planning process. There are only a few tables that have both datasets for specific topics, but the majority of the data is from the ACS since it has the correct thematic information and did a better job of tracking the demographic information.

Age Characteristics Median Age

Age distribution in the Village and Town has also changed over time. When evaluating demographic and economic trends for the Town and Village of Champlain, a ten-year window (2010–2020) offers useful recent insights but may not fully capture long-term structural change.

A broader view from 1990 to 2020 reveals a largely stable population base with modest fluctuations: the Town's population has remained between roughly 5,700 and 5,800 for two decades, while the Village experienced a slight decline after 2000 followed by a small rebound by 2020. These modest shifts suggest a community maintaining population equilibrium despite regional economic transitions. Extending the analysis over 30 years provides a clearer context for understanding gradual demographic change, housing stability, and employment shifts—factors that may not be visible within a single decade's data alone.

In the Village and Town, the number of young children has substantially increased while the numbers of school-age children declined. The increase in young children has pushed the Median Age in the Village from 46.3 years in 2010 to a “younger” average of 39.2 years in 2020. Other age groups residing in the Village have seen modest growth. The Town is witnessing losses in the middle-aged groups and gaining increases in the 65+ age groups. Apparently, the needs of the very young and very old require consideration in planning for the future.

- Village of Champlain dropped from 46.3 years (2010) → 39.2 years (2020), reflecting growth in younger children and families.
- Village of Rouses Point rose from 39 (2010) → 43.6 (2020), indicating an aging population.
- Town outside villages stable around 40 years, but with a rising share of seniors (65+ at 21% in 2020).
- Children (0–4 years): More than doubled in all three municipalities between 2010 and 2020.
- Seniors (65+): Growing in the Town and Rouses Point, modest rebound in the Village of Champlain.

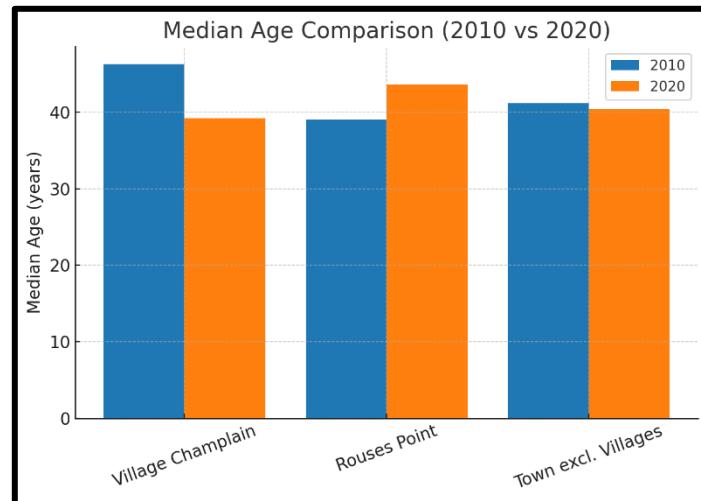


Table 2: Median Age Comparison (2010 vs. 2020)

Educational Characteristics

Town educational attainment levels were fairly constant across all categories in the period from 2015-2020.⁸ The residents of the Village of Champlain who have a bachelor's degree or higher also remained fairly stable. The number of Town, Village and County residents with a high school diploma or higher has decreased. The number of Town and Village residents with no high school diploma has increased as well while the trend in the county and state is seeing lower levels with no high school diploma. It is not clear whether the reasons for this are related to population and demographic changes, or whether those with or without high school diplomas leave the area for higher education or career opportunities elsewhere. Clinton County is well below the New York State averages for holding higher education diplomas. The 4-year graduation rate for Northeastern Clinton CSD approximates 85% and the 5-year is 89%.

Household Characteristics

Overall, the number of households in the Village of Champlain has increased by more than 100 in the ten years since the 2010 Census. Town household composition changed since 2010, with increases in female-headed households and decreases in male-headed households. Household size in the Town has also trended smaller with growth in three-person households. The increase in married-couple families and female-headed households in the Town and Village reflects demographic shifts that have implications for housing, services, and community planning. A rise in three-person households suggests growing diversity in household structures. These trends may increase demand for family-oriented and affordable housing, childcare services, and educational resources.

Understanding and responding to these changes is essential to ensure the community remains inclusive, resilient, and well-equipped to meet evolving needs.

Household Change (2010-2020)
Village of Champlain: +25% households (415 → 519).
Rouses Point: +6% households (1,055 → 1,121).
Town (outside villages): -13% households (856 → 745).

Figure 12: Household Change (2010-2020)

⁸ Comparisons of educational attainment for the Town of Champlain across multiple decades are limited by differences in data collection methods and availability. The decennial U.S. Census prior to 2010 did not include detailed educational attainment data at the town level, and early American Community Survey (ACS) samples (pre-2010) carry high margins of error for small populations. As a result, figures from 2015-2020 ACS estimates are not fully compatible with earlier datasets and should be interpreted as indicative rather than directly comparable over time.

Income and Poverty

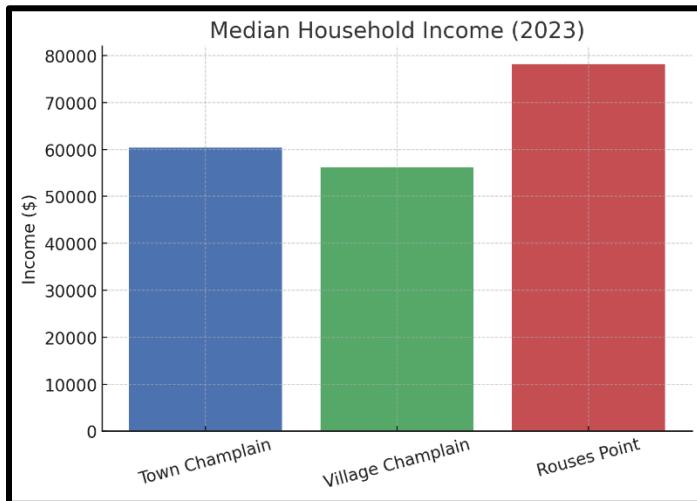


Table 4: Median Household Income (2023)

While a majority of households in the town earn more than \$35K annually, there are many households on the poverty line and who may qualify as low or moderate income under US. Department of Housing and Urban Development Section 8 standards for Clinton County. Furthermore, in Clinton County hourly wages are just beginning to approximate the lowest living wages estimated for the region.

Living Wage (MIT Calculator, 2024): A single adult requires \$21/hour; two adults with two children need \$38.96–62.60/hour.

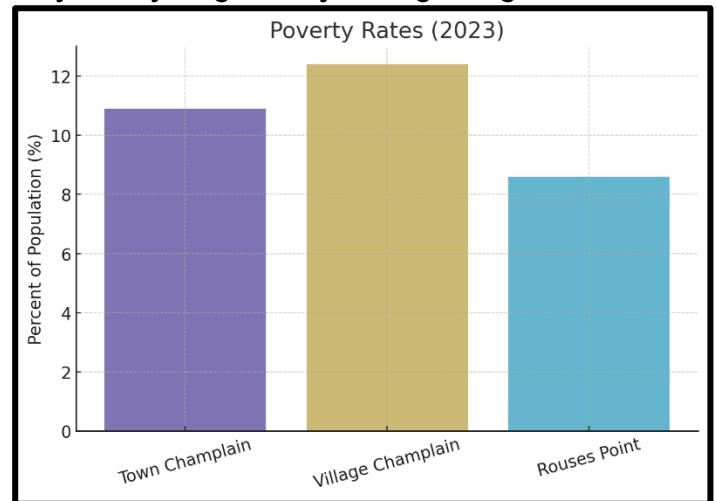


Table 3: Poverty Rates (2023)

Housing Characteristics

Generally, all three communities have similar homeownership rates around 54%, though housing affordability varies. The Village of Champlain shows early signs of revitalization, while Rouses Point may be facing affordability pressures. The Town of Champlain has experienced relative housing stability over the past several years.

Approximately 87.7% of the Township housing units are occupied, indicating a modest vacancy rate. The homeownership rate is 54.7%, suggesting a nearly even split between owner- and renter-occupied units. The median property value stands at \$168,700, and the median household income is \$60,371, reflecting a moderate-income community with modest home values. Overall, the housing profile reflects a stable, working-class community with no major surges or contractions in housing development.

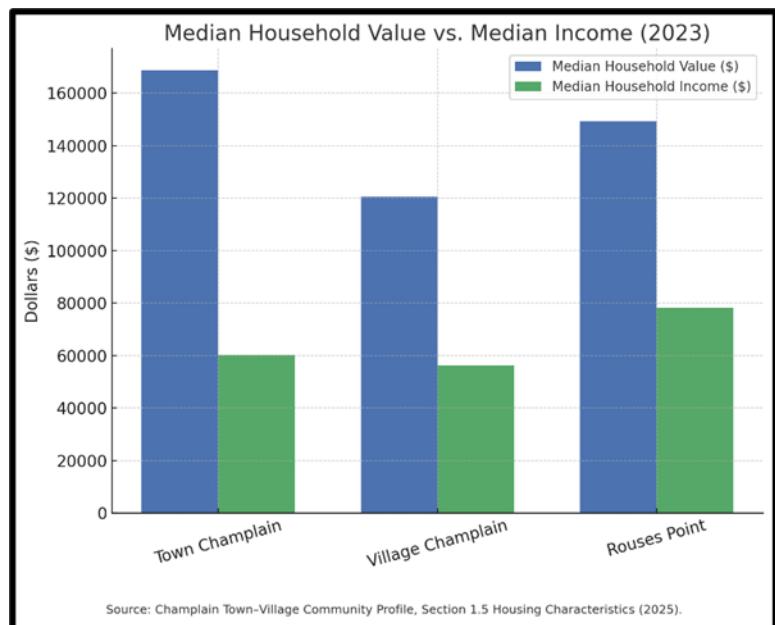


Table 6: Median Household Value vs. Median Income (2023)

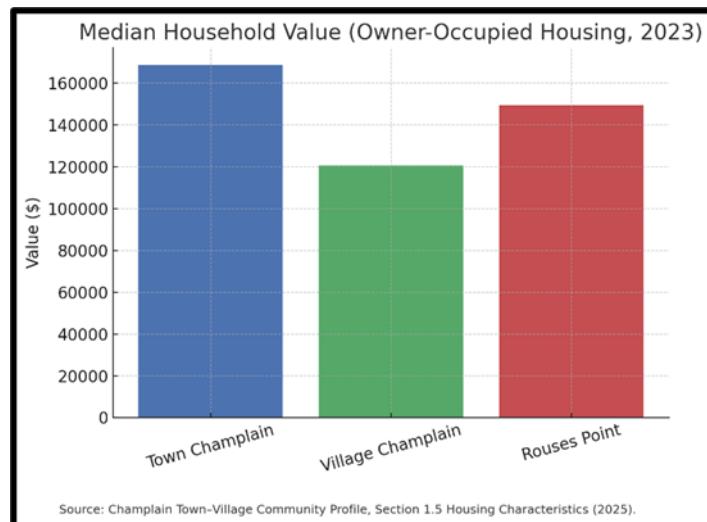


Table 5: Median Household Value (Owner-Occupied Housing, 2023)

The Village of Champlain, though small, has shown signs of renewed vitality. The median household income is \$56,250, slightly below the town average, while the median property value is lower at \$120,600, pointing to relatively more affordable housing stock.

Median values and incomes suggest affordability challenges may arise in Rouses Point, while Champlain Village remains more accessible. Younger families in Champlain Village and an aging population in Rouses Point create diverging housing needs (family housing vs. senior housing).

Housing Affordability: What the Chart Shows

The chart compares how many **years of median household income** it would take to purchase a **median-priced home** in each of the three municipalities.

Affordability Ratio
Formula = Median Home Value \div Median Household Income

A **benchmark of 3.0** is often used by HUD and housing economists: ≤ 3.0 = Affordable; > 3.0 = Housing cost burdened.

Results for Champlain & Rouses Point (2023)

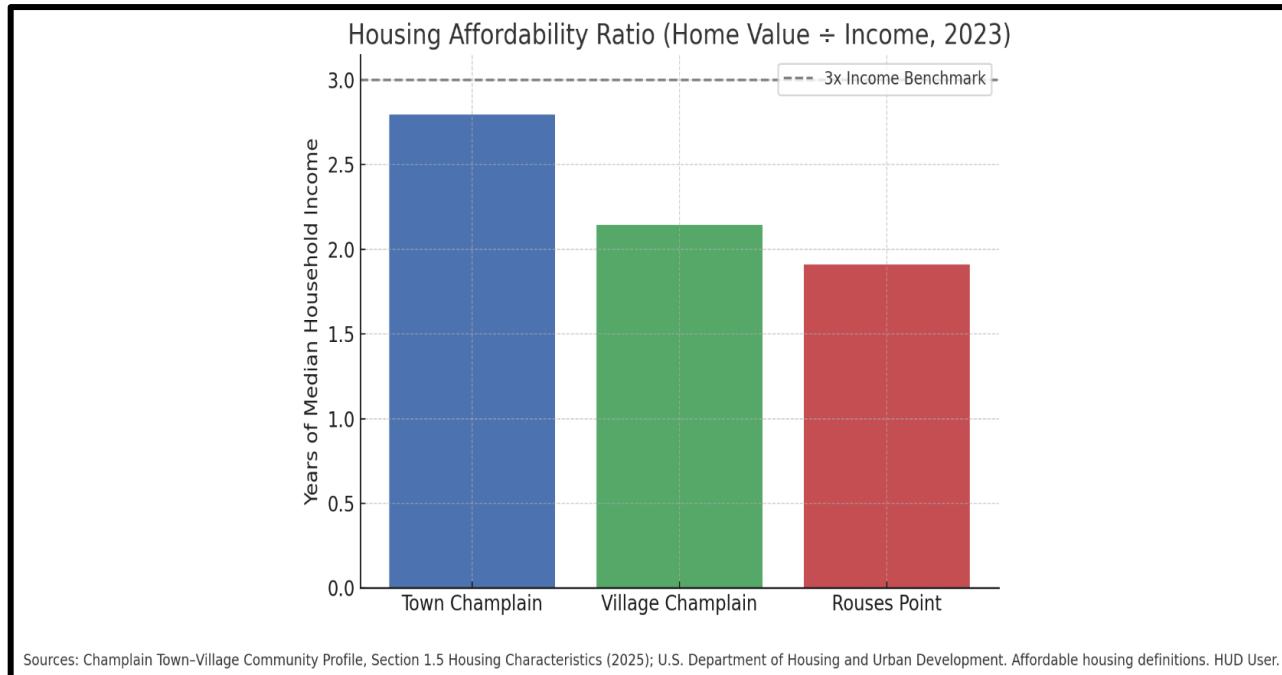


Table 7: Housing Affordability Ratio (Home Value / Income, 2023)

- ❖ **Town of Champlain:** 2.79 years. The highest ratio of the three communities. Still below the 3x affordability threshold, but households here are relatively closer to being cost-burdened than in the other two communities.
- ❖ **Village of Champlain:** 2.14 years. More affordable than the Town, due to **lower home values** (\$120,600) paired with moderate incomes. Suggests that entry-level or first-time homebuyers may find this market more accessible.
- ❖ **Village of Rouses Point:** 1.91 years. The **most affordable** of the three. Stronger household incomes (\$78,166) compared to home values (\$149,400) reduce the income-to-home-price burden.
- ❖ **All three municipalities fall below the 3.0 threshold**, meaning housing is generally affordable compared to incomes. **Rouses Point households** are in the strongest financial position relative to home values, while **Town of Champlain households** face the most pressure. The **Village of Champlain** combines **low home values with moderate incomes**, making it a relatively balanced and accessible housing market.

Clinton County Housing Study (2024-2025) Selected Conditions and Trends

The Clinton County Housing Needs Assessment (2024) presents a comprehensive analysis of the demographic, economic, and housing conditions countywide, with selected municipal-level data. The Town of Champlain is identified as one of the municipalities experiencing employment levels still below its 2013 peak, suggesting lingering economic challenges post-pandemic. No distinct or separate reference was made specifically to the Village of Champlain as differentiated from the Town of Champlain. The two were grouped together under "Champlain" without clear disaggregation. No mention or analysis of the Village of Rouses Point was identified within the provided content of the Housing Needs Assessment.

The Clinton County Housing Sites and Financial Feasibility Final Report builds on the prior Housing Needs Assessment and conducts a site-specific financial feasibility analysis for five selected development opportunity sites across Clinton County. It assesses development concepts, costs, financing structures, and the need for gap funding to realize potential housing projects. Specific References to the Town of Champlain and Village of Champlain include the Miromar Site--A 19-acre former shopping center site along I-87 analyzed as a major redevelopment opportunity .



The site is proposed for a mixed market-rate and attainable multifamily rental development comprising 120 apartments across four three-story buildings . Units include a mix of 1-, 2-, and 3-bedroom apartments sized between 700 to 1,300 square feet. 60% of the units are proposed to be affordable to households earning 60% of the Area Median Income (AMI). Total Development Cost (TDC): \$24.3 million. Required Gap Funding to be financially viable: \$13.5 million. The Miromar site leverages the availability of municipal water and sewer infrastructure and proximity to transportation routes (I-87 and Route 11).

Figure 13: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Housing Needs - Miromar Site--A

Economy: Current Conditions and Trends

The Town and Village of Champlain and Clinton County, NY, are experiencing several economic trends and issues that are shaping their current and future landscape as this plan is written. The federally supported Champlain Port of Excellence initiative has reinforced the Town's role as a critical point for international commerce. Continued investment in border infrastructure supports long-term regional economic growth and strengthens Champlain's status as a key player in cross-border trade and logistics.

The Town of Champlain also offers numerous commercial and non-commercial properties available for development, along with affordable housing opportunities. Significant investments have been made to upgrade water and wastewater services in Champlain, enhancing its appeal to manufacturers and businesses. These improvements are crucial for supporting economic development and accommodating future growth. This positions the town as an attractive location for individuals and businesses seeking a pastoral setting near the Canadian border.

Plattsburgh (City and Town) to the south, Montreal, Canada, to the north, and Chittenden County (Burlington) Vermont to the east, are close automobile commutes and serve as important employment centers helping to drive the regional and local economies. In recent years, employment in these locations, remote work opportunities, and proximity to Lake Champlain has driven growth and change in the housing and services market. A significant portion of residents commute to employment centers outside their municipality, particularly to Plattsburgh and across the border into Quebec--which underscores Champlain's role in the broader cross-border regional economy.

The local economy is also closely tied to water resources, such as Lake Champlain. Concerns about fish populations, environmental impacts of boating and farming, and water quality are important factors that can affect economic activities related to tourism and recreation.

Overall, the Town and Village of Champlain and Clinton County are navigating a dynamic and rapidly changing economic environment, characterized by growth opportunities in development and infrastructure, alongside challenges related to US-Canada Relations, employment fluctuations, and environmental sustainability.

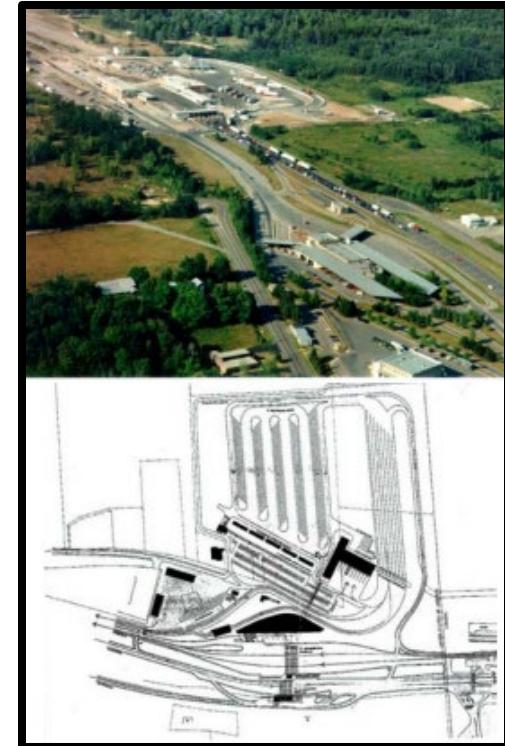


Figure 14: Provided by Town of Champlain,
Canadian border

Clinton County Regional Economy

The broader regional economy of Clinton County shows positive trends, contributing to the overall economic health of Champlain. Clinton County has experienced economic growth in recent years. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for all industries in the county increased from approximately \$3.8 billion in 2019 to about \$4.7 billion in 2023, indicating a positive economic trajectory. This upward trend reflects a resilient and expanding economy in the region. As of December 2024, the unemployment rate in Clinton County stood at 3.7%, suggesting a relatively healthy labor market. However, from 2021 to 2022, employment declined slightly by 0.308%, from 36,000 to 35,900 employees. The most common job sectors include education, health care, and manufacturing.

Major Economic Sectors and Employers

The economy of Champlain supports a variety of skilled-based workforces. Beyond retail and healthcare, other sectors contribute to local employment, including manufacturing, education, and services. The presence of diverse industries offers a range of job opportunities for residents. Champlain hosts several notable employers contributing to its local economy. While specific employment figures for each company are not publicly disclosed, the following economic sectors and organizations are recognized as significant employers in the area.

Champlain Port of Excellence Initiative

The Champlain Port of Entry on Interstate 87 is one of the busiest and most economically significant commercial gateways on the U.S.–Canada border. It has undergone major improvements under the federally supported “Port of Excellence” initiative, which enhanced infrastructure and streamlined border operations to accommodate increasing volumes of trade and passenger traffic. Upgrades include expanded commercial inspection lanes, modernized facilities, and enhanced cargo processing systems. This investment supports the Town's position as a vital hub for international commerce, linking Montreal to New York City. The Port's modernization directly contributes to local employment and has regional economic impacts, further reinforcing Champlain's strategic importance in North Country's logistics and trade ecosystem.

Retail Trade

Retail is a significant sector in Champlain and includes various businesses ranging from small local shops to larger retail establishments. Examples include Ace Hardware, Kinney Drugs, McDonalds, and Dollar General.

Health Care, Education, and Social Assistance

This sector employs and provides essential services to the community. It encompasses medical facilities, clinics, and social service organizations that cater to the health and well-being of residents. Hudson Headwaters Health Network – Champlain Family Health center offers comprehensive primary care services to residents of Champlain and the surrounding areas.



Figure 15 – Photo provided by Town of Champlain, Canadian Border Crossing

Northeastern Clinton Central School District employs approximately 138 full-time staff in four school facilities.

Public and Government Sector

In addition to the various municipal offices and facilities, the US Government has a strong presence in Champlain due to the international border. The U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) operates at three border crossings. CBP manages customs and immigration enforcement, facilitating trade and travel between the U.S. and Canada. The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) also has a presence in Champlain, overseeing enforcement of immigration laws and investigation of illegal activities. In addition, the General Services Administration (GSA) operates in Champlain, providing centralized procurement and property management services for federal agencies.

Logistics and Transportation Sectors

The logistics and transportation sector are a key part of the Champlain economy that focuses on the movement of goods, people, and services both east to New England, west to western New York State, north to Canada and the Montreal Metro Area, and south to New York City. This sector involves various industries that manage freight and cargo, warehousing and distribution, supply chain management, customs and border services, and courier and delivery services. They play crucial roles in global trade.

The logistics and transportation sector are essential to Champlain's economy, supporting trade, manufacturing, and retail industries by ensuring goods move smoothly across the border. Examples include: A.N. Deringer (Customs brokerage and freight services), UPS (Parcel and freight shipping), FedEx (Express shipping and logistics), and DHL (International logistics and delivery). Several truck rest stops and supportive services to the trucking industry also are located in Champlain and serve the extensive tractor trailer trucking industry that passes through Champlain via Interstate 87 and Route 11.



Figure 16: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Champlain Border Entry



Figure 17: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Amtrak Adirondack Line

Villages continues to rise, the proportion of farmland in active use fluctuated between 2013 and 2023. In that same period the Town farmland acreage decreased by 203 acres and Village of Champlain farmland acreage by 6.

Rail Infrastructure and Amtrak Service

Champlain benefits from active freight and passenger rail infrastructure. The Amtrak Adirondack line, running from New York City to Montreal, includes service through the Town of Champlain, providing residents and visitors with convenient and scenic travel. Future development includes a new rail customs facility on the St. John's Highway, which will enhance rail-based inspection and increase Champlain's importance in multimodal trade and tourism.

Agriculture

While the value of active and inactive agricultural lands in the Town and



Figure 18: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Agriculture

Labor Force and Employment

Labor force participation in the Town and both Villages is consistent with Clinton County and New York State averages. Employment rates remain relatively high, although workforce growth is limited by population stagnation and outmigration of younger residents. Income distribution is uneven, with a higher proportion of lower-income households in the Village of Champlain compared to the Town and Rouses Point.

Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) shows how engaged the population is in the job market, regardless of whether they currently have a job. The rate measures the share of the working-age population (usually ages 16–64) that is either employed (currently working for pay), or Unemployed but actively seeking work.

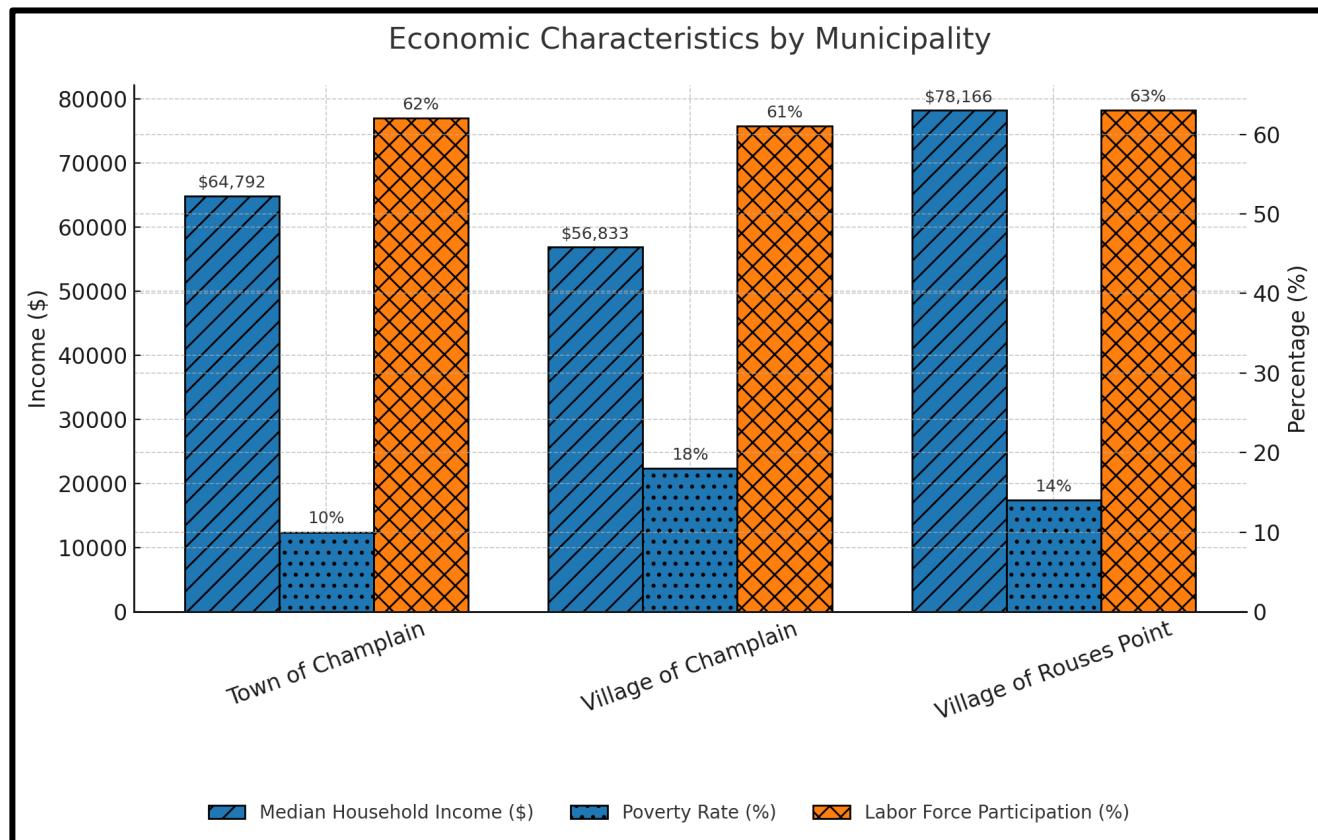


Table 8: Economic Characteristics by Municipality

Natural Systems and Landscape Features

Geography and Environmental Characteristics

In the northeastern corner of New York, along the Canadian border and within the Lake Champlain watershed, Champlain's landscape is defined by the Great Chazy River, rolling farmland, wetlands, and proximity to Lake Champlain, all of which shape

its ecological systems, agricultural base, and recreational opportunities. This strategic location supports cross-border trade and transportation while also presenting environmental management challenges, such as flood risks, water quality concerns, and habitat conservation. The area's natural features are both assets for economic development and priorities for long-term stewardship.

Geography



Figure 19: Photo provided by Town of Champlain, Natural Systems & Landscapes

The Town of Champlain covers 58.8 square miles, of which 51.2 square miles is land and 7.6 square miles (12.9%) is water. The eastern edge is defined by Lake Champlain and the Richelieu River, while the northern boundary is the international border with Saint-Bernard-de-Lacolle, Quebec.



Figure 20: Photo Provided by the Town of Champlain, Natural Systems & Landscape Features



Figure 21: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Champlain Natural Systems & Landscape Features

Geology, Topography, and Soils

Champlain's physical setting has been fundamentally shaped by glacial activity, which left behind a mix of clay, silt, loam, sand, and gravel deposits. These soils provide some of the most fertile farmland in New York State, supporting a long tradition of dairy and crop agriculture. However, their variability also introduces challenges: poorly drained clay soils and areas with high water tables complicate construction, infrastructure, and stormwater management, while well-drained soils represent valuable agricultural resources that warrant preservation. The underlying bedrock of limestone and shale further influences groundwater quality and the suitability of land for certain types of development.

Champlain lies within the "Lake Plain" section of the St. Lawrence-Champlain Lowland. This landscape includes till plains, drumlins, and ridges, formed by glacial and marine processes of the Champlain Sea.

Land elevations range from 150–260 feet, with predominant slopes of 0–8%, offering gently rolling terrain conducive to both settlement and agriculture.

Numerous tributaries and micro-watersheds drain primarily eastward into the Great Chazy River, a deeply cut watercourse originating in the northern Adirondacks and flowing into Lake Champlain.



Figure 22: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Natural Systems & Landscape Features

Topographically, the Town and Village of Champlain are characterized by a relatively flat landscape, which has historically facilitated farming, transportation corridors, and settlement patterns. While this flatness supports accessibility and infrastructure expansion, it also limits natural drainage, creating localized flooding and erosion risks. Together, the area's

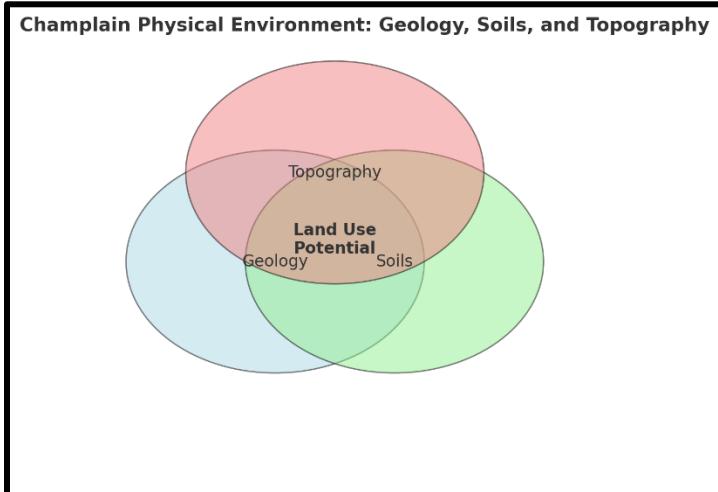


Figure 23: Champlain Physical Environment: Geology, Soils & Topography

Weather and Climate

Champlain's climate is one of seasonal contrasts, with warm and pleasant summers, cold snowy winters, and moderate humidity. July is the hottest month, averaging 79.8°F, while January is the snowiest, averaging 15.6 inches of snowfall. Overall, four months of the year provide comfortable temperatures in the 70–85°F range, making them ideal for outdoor activities. The community experiences about six months with significant snow, which shapes local infrastructure, transportation, and energy needs. Climate change is noted as a growing concern, with shifts in temperature and precipitation patterns affecting agriculture, natural resources, and long-term community resilience.

Water Resources and Flooding

Champlain's water resources are among its most valuable natural assets, shaping both the community's ecological identity and its development opportunities. Lake Champlain, the Great Chazy River, and numerous tributaries and wetlands provide essential ecological services, including drinking water supply, wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities that support quality of life and tourism. These resources also sustain agriculture and contribute to the scenic character of the Town and Village. However, maintaining water quality is an ongoing challenge, with agricultural runoff, erosion, and stormwater impacts representing key concerns for long-term sustainability. Careful watershed management is necessary to protect these assets for both economic and environmental purposes.

geology, soils, and topography shape both opportunities and constraints for future land use. Protecting prime farmland, managing drainage and soil limitations, and acknowledging the structural implications of the bedrock are essential for sustainable planning and development.



Figure 24: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Natural Systems & Landscape Features

Flooding is a related and persistent issue, influenced by Champlain's flat topography, poorly drained soils, and proximity to major water bodies. Areas along the Great Chazy River and low-lying parts of the Town and Village are particularly vulnerable to seasonal flooding and storm events. Flood-prone zones constrain land use, increase risks to infrastructure, and complicate development patterns. Climate change projections suggest heightened risks in the future, with more frequent and severe precipitation events likely to exacerbate existing challenges. Effective planning, including updated floodplain management, resilient infrastructure design, and coordinated watershed protection, will be critical to reducing risks while protecting the community's natural water assets.

Land and Forest Cover

The Town of Champlain, located in the Champlain Valley of New York, features a diverse landscape comprising forests, agricultural lands, wetlands, and developed areas. Champlain Town and Village and the Adirondacks are also part of the Northern Forest Region, a four-state area comprised of 30 million acres of forest lands traditionally known as the "Great North Woods."

The region is also part of the Northern Appalachian Acadian Ecoregion. As part of the Adirondacks, the Northern Forest, and the Ecoregion, Champlain Town and Village's natural landscapes play an integral role in the quality of the environment, habitats for natural communities, nature tourism, scenic vistas, outdoor education, agribusiness, protection of shorelines and more. And in today's world of climate insecurity, the natural countryside provides an important carbon "sink" that helps mitigate the effects of climate change.

Planning and land regulations should conserve undeveloped lands, reflect the expressed values of the citizens for the landscape, attract visitors, and assist the economy.

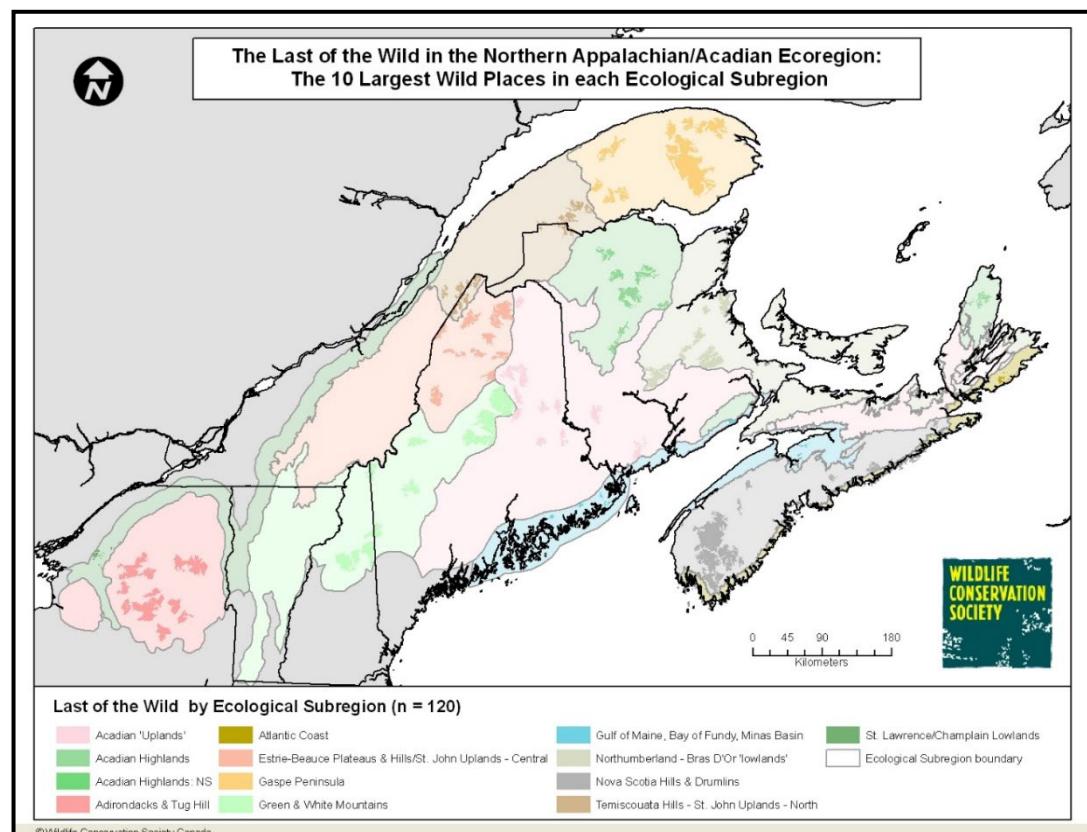


Figure 25: The Last of the Wild in the Northern Appalachian/Acadian Ecoregion



Figure 26: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain,
Ecological Communities & Biodiversity

such as Kings Bay and Point Au Fer enhance regional habitat connectivity between the lake and the Adirondack Mountains.

All kinds of land can provide habitat and may host ecological communities. In general, development and buildings should be directed away from known significant ecological communities and wildlife corridors. Parcel characteristics that promote wildlife success are increasing the distance from and between buildings, less bare ground, and including protected riparian areas within the parcel. Since we do not know with certainty the ecological and human consequences of species loss (medicines to fight disease, vector control, pollination, climate change etc.), it is essential to protect critical habitats upon which plants and animals depend. It is especially important to preserve sufficient habitat to ensure listed plants and animals are protected. We know through an extensive body of research that insufficient habitat due to poorly planned development is a primary cause of low or decreasing biodiversity.

Ecological Communities and Biodiversity

The Town of Champlain sits within the rich ecological landscape of the Lake Champlain Basin and the Champlain–Adirondack Biosphere Network, a UNESCO-designated region featuring extensive forests, freshwater wetlands, lakes, and rivers. This area supports high biodiversity, including rare and regionally significant plant communities and serves as a critical northward habitat for southern tree species such as shagbark hickory and various oaks. The region also provides corridors for wildlife migration featuring bobcats, black bears, coyotes, Over 150 bird species nest locally, including waterfowl like common loons, mergansers, ring-necked ducks, and snow geese. Aquatic and riparian habitats within the Lake Champlain basin and Great Chazy Watershed further reinforce the area's ecological richness. The Lake Champlain watershed supports diverse aquatic and terrestrial species, including plankton, fish, amphibians, and riparian invertebrates, offering nursery and spawning grounds as well as essential ecosystem services such as nutrient filtration and flood buffering. Nearby protected areas

Nearby protected areas

Scenic & Recreational Resources



Figure 27: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Scenic & Recreational Resources

Champlain and Rouses Point maintain public parks, playgrounds, athletic fields, and waterfront access points. These facilities provide recreation, tourism appeal, and community identity.

Challenges include ongoing maintenance costs, accessibility improvements, and capital investment for aging or underutilized facilities. Opportunities lie in pursuing grant funding, regional partnerships for trail and waterfront expansion, and leveraging recreation assets for economic development and tourism promotion.

The Town and Village host several parks and trails that are suitable for four-season use, including snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, and ice fishing during the winter months. The Harry J. McManus Northern Tier Recreation Trail is approximately five miles and ends at Rouses Point Elementary School. This Trail is for non-motorized use only. It allows residents and visitors to walk, run, bike, or roll safely from one village to the other. Partially paved and lined with benches, parking is available, and the trail is both wheelchair accessible and stroller accessible.

Champlain Town and Village have a beautiful landscape, and this landscape attracts people to reside in and visit the town. Some defining characteristics of Champlain Town and Village include its waterfronts along the Great Chazy River and Lake Champlain, its countryside and expansive open spaces and its bustling villages and historic resources --all of which are conducive to tourism and add to the popularity of its cultural and outdoor recreational amenities within the town.

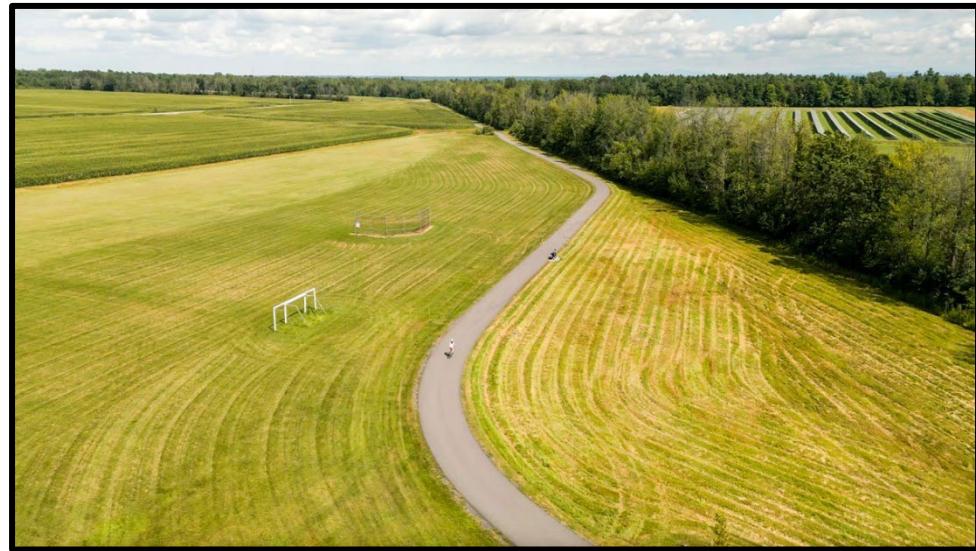


Figure 28: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Scenic & Recreational Resources

In warmer seasons, Lake Champlain and the Great Chazy River are popular for all forms of boating, including kayaking, canoeing, and sailing.



Figure 30: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, North Country Golf Club

The Town has a lovely golf course, North Country Golf Club Inc. is an 18 Hole Semi-Private Course with Restaurant (North Country Grille) and Bar which is open to the Public.

NYSDEC owns an important recreational resource along Lake Champlain. The Kings Bay Wildlife Management Area (WMA) provides for wildlife management, wildlife habitat management, and wildlife-dependent recreation. This WMA is 683 acres in size.



Figure 29: Kings Bay Wildlife Management Area

Point au Fer was once an important strategic military post during the French and Indian War (1754-1763) and later during the Revolutionary War and War of 1812. Benjamin Franklin landed here on his way to Montreal at one time. Benedict Arnold, Charles Carroll, and Ethan Allen also stopped here. The land within the White House's stockade is probably the most historic site in all of Clinton County. The fields and forests around this site have remained largely untouched.



Figure 31: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Point Au Fer

It is also important to remember that nearby the Adirondacks provide unlimited recreational opportunities.

Public and Community Services and Facilities

Please note: A summary of public and community services and facilities is provided in this section with a “deeper dive” provided in the appended Community Profile.



Figure 32: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Champlain Water Tower

Public facilities and services are central to community well-being, encompassing water, wastewater, stormwater management, hazard mitigation, public buildings, parks, recreation, cemeteries, libraries, schools, healthcare, street lighting, and transportation. Utilities such as telephone, electricity, and gas are also critical. These systems require continuous maintenance and capital reinvestment because deferred maintenance is costly. The Town and Village of Champlain actively review their capital improvement programs to balance upkeep with loan obligations, recognizing that strong public facilities underpin resident quality of life and community growth.

Champlain public facilities and services are diverse and essential to community health, safety, and economic vitality. Key challenges include aging infrastructure, limited fiscal

capacity, volunteer shortages in emergency services, and shifting demographics affecting schools and healthcare demand. Strengths include a strong tradition of local governance, community volunteerism, and significant regional assets (transportation, utilities, border location). Opportunities center on leveraging regional partnerships, pursuing grant funding, modernizing utilities and transportation systems, and enhancing recreational and educational resources to position Champlain for sustainable growth.

Fiscal Condition

The fiscal health of the Town and Villages is shaped by tax revenues, state aid, and expenditures on infrastructure, services, and debt. Challenges include constrained revenue growth, rising costs of utilities and public services, and balancing capital investments with operating budgets. Opportunities involve pursuing shared service agreements, leveraging intermunicipal cooperation, and aggressive pursuit of external funding (state and federal grants) to offset local taxpayer burdens.

Town Government

The Town of Champlain government oversees local public services and infrastructure. The Town Board manages operations, planning, and fiscal priorities, supported by professional staff and commissions. Key services include zoning, building permits, road maintenance, and support for community facilities. Challenges include limited fiscal resources to maintain aging infrastructure and balance service demands with budget constraints. Opportunities lie in strategic capital planning, grant

acquisition, and partnerships with regional and state agencies to enhance service delivery.

Village of Champlain Government

The Village government provides a more localized scale of services within the Village boundaries, focusing on water distribution, wastewater treatment, street maintenance, and parks. The Village Board oversees daily governance and capital priorities. Financial constraints, especially in maintaining and upgrading utility systems, are a persistent issue. Collaboration with the Town and regional partners, as well as coordinated infrastructure investment, present opportunities to improve efficiency and reduce redundancy.

Education



Figure 33: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain,
Northeastern Clinton Central School District

Education is provided primarily through the Northeastern Clinton Central School District (NCCS), serving Champlain and neighboring communities. The district provides K-12 education, extracurricular programs, and specialized services. Enrollment trends reflect demographic shifts, with challenges tied to declining or fluctuating student populations and the fiscal strain of maintaining facilities. Strengths include a strong sense of community support, while opportunities include expanding partnerships with local businesses for workforce readiness, enhancing technology integration, and aligning programs with regional economic needs.

Libraries

The Dodge Memorial Library (Village of Rouses Point) and Champlain Memorial Library (Village of Champlain) provide essential educational, cultural, and community services. They serve as hubs for digital access, literacy programs, and community events. Challenges include constrained budgets and adapting services to technological change. Opportunities exist to expand programming, strengthen partnerships with schools, and leverage state library system resources to improve service capacity and outreach.

Utilities

Publicly regulated utilities include water, sewer, electricity, gas, and telecommunications. The Town and Villages manage water and wastewater systems, while private/regional companies manage electric and gas service. Challenges include aging infrastructure, regulatory compliance, and limited redundancy in service networks. Opportunities include investments in renewable energy, broadband expansion, regional utility collaboration, and long-term capital improvement planning to modernize systems and reduce environmental impact.

Emergency Services

Emergency services include volunteer fire departments, EMS, and mutual aid arrangements with regional responders. While these services are vital, challenges include recruitment and retention of volunteers, rising training costs, and equipment needs. Strengths include strong community commitment and collaboration across jurisdictions. Opportunities include regional consolidation of specialized equipment, expanded mutual aid agreements, and state/federal grant funding for modernization.



Figure 35: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Health Care

Transportation

The transportation system includes state highways, county and local roads, rail infrastructure, and proximity to the Champlain Port of Entry at the U.S.–Canada border. Roadway maintenance, traffic management, and rail service coordination are critical issues. Challenges include funding limitations for roadway upkeep, managing heavy truck traffic, and improving pedestrian and bicycle access. Opportunities lie in leveraging the community's strategic border location for logistics and economic growth, pursuing state/federal transportation grants, and advancing multimodal transport planning.



Figure 34: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Emergency Services

Health Care

Health care facilities are available locally, with residents also relying on regional hospitals and clinics for advanced care. Local services include physicians' offices, dental clinics, pharmacies, and visiting nurse associations. Challenges involve limited access to specialized care, transportation barriers, and an aging population with growing health needs. Opportunities include expanding telehealth, developing senior care resources, and integrating health services with community wellness programs.



Figure 36: Photo provided by the Town of Champlain, Transportation

Complete Streets Status

“Complete Streets”⁹ are roadways designed and operated to be safe, comfortable, and accessible for all users—whether they are walking, bicycling, taking public transit, driving, or using mobility devices—regardless of age or ability.

In consultation with the Clinton County Health Department Champlain Town and Village engaged in an analysis and assessment of Complete Street opportunities and constraints. The following is a brief assessment of transportation-related Complete Streets considerations and projects.

- ❖ Town adopted a resolution in 2021 to guide future road design. The Town has since advanced trail connectivity, pedestrian signage, traffic bollards, benches, trees, and lighting along the NTRT.
- ❖ Village adopted a resolution in 2020. The Village has advanced NTRT trailhead improvements, crosswalks, signage, benches, shade trees, and lighting with Routes to Better Health funding.
- ❖ 2021 & 2023 walk audits identified Prospect Street, Church & South Street, and Perry Mills Park as priority focus areas for pedestrian safety and access improvements.
- ❖ 2021 walk audits (by Chazen Companies and CCHD) and a 2023 audit with the Mayor identified key downtown corridors: Main Street, Church Street, Elm Street, and South Street.
- ❖ Village survey responses highlighted unsafe intersections (South & Main, Oak/Elm/River, Rapids & Route 11), sidewalk deficiencies, and demand for dog parks, improved lighting, and more accessible recreation spaces.
- ❖ Town surveys revealed concerns with unsafe intersections (e.g., Route 11 bridges, Route 9/McCray, Prospect Street at Mason by NCCS) and community interest in new sidewalks, slower traffic, and expanded trail access.

Priority projects identified:

- Crosswalks, ADA pads, and painted bump-outs at Dollar General (Church & South St.).
- Solar lighting along the NTRT and Prospect St. trailhead.
- Traffic control measures (school zone signage, pedestrian crossing warnings).
- Removal and relocation of unsafe shared-road markings, with bike lanes incorporated into trail corridors.
- Park enhancements at Perry Mills Park (trees, benches, bike racks, signage).
- Expanded wayfinding, placemaking elements, and community benches.
- Sidewalk repair on Main Street (~1,900'), Church Street (~3,100'), and Oak Street.
- Crosswalks and pedestrian safety features at Pine St./Rte. 9, Church & South St., and Price Chopper Plaza entrances.

⁹ Smart Growth American and NYS DOT

- Traffic calming with radar speed signs on Church St., crosswalk striping at Oak St., and bike/ped warning signs on Elm St.
- Trail enhancements with solar lighting (40+ fixtures along the NTRT), trailhead maps, and wayfinding signage.
- Placemaking projects: benches, interpretive signage, light pole banners, murals, and unique gathering spaces.

Strategic Considerations

- The Town should adopt “lighter, quicker, cheaper” pilot projects annually alongside larger-scale investments (sidewalk networks, ADA-compliant crossings).
- Sustainable funding should be pursued through the NYS Consolidated Funding Application (CFA), DOT Transportation Alternatives Program, and local budget lines dedicated to Complete Streets.
- As with the Town, securing funds via CFA, NYSDOT TAP, and OPRHP Recreational Trails grants will be critical for long-term project delivery.
- Coordination with the Town and Rouses Point is essential for consistent design along the NTRT and shared corridors.

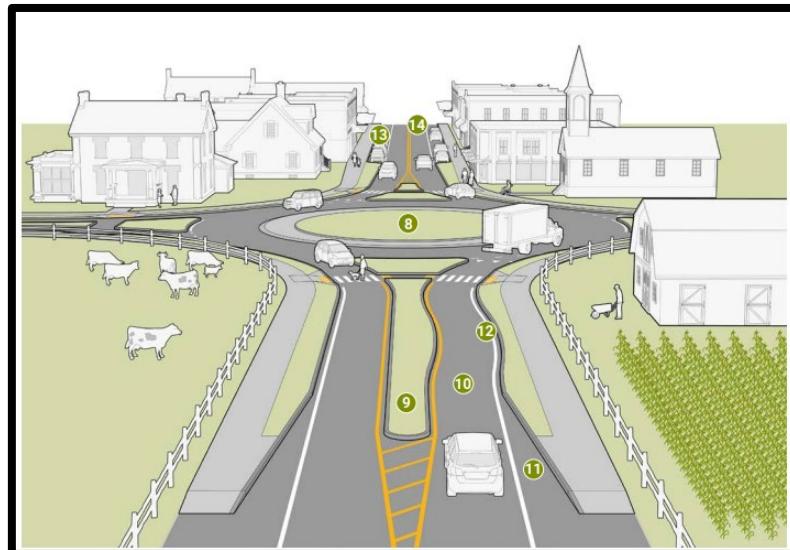


Figure 37: Complete Streets, Town of Champlain

Existing Land Use

Existing Land Use and Land Use Change

Land use in the Town of Champlain and its Villages is dominated by agriculture, residential, and vacant lands. Town-wide 37% is agricultural, 26% residential, and 20% vacant. The Village of Champlain has an equal proportion of residential (16%) and commercial (19%). Trends from 2018–2023 show stable residential and commercial uses. Parcel subdivision activity has been limited, suggesting relatively stable land development patterns.

Net and percentage change in parcel counts (2018–2023)

Town of Champlain: -5 parcels (-0.15%)

Village of Champlain: No change (0.00%)

Village of Rouses Point: +9 parcels (+0.96%)

Parcel numbers have been remarkably stable, with only very minor adjustments across all jurisdictions.

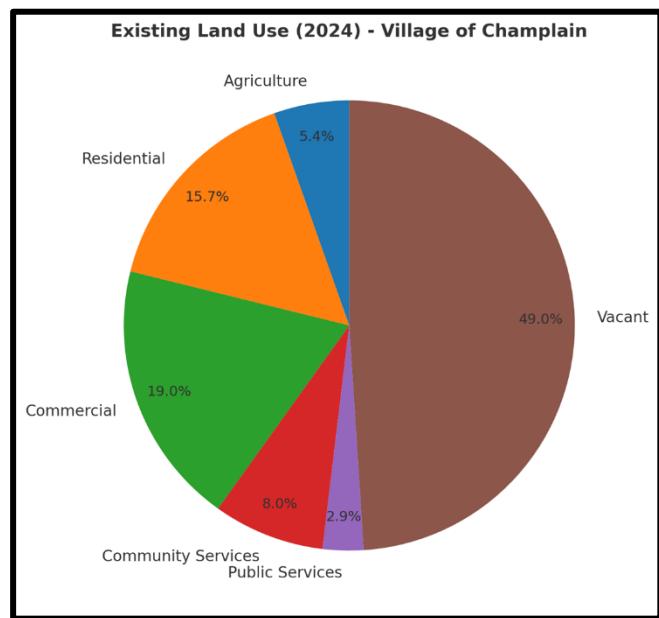


Table 10: Existing Land Use (2024), Village of Champlain

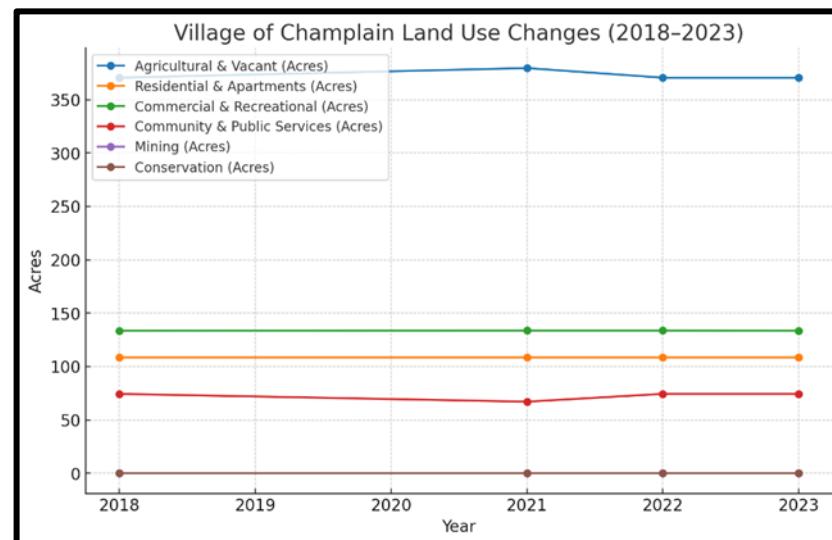


Table 9: Village of Champlain Land Use Changes

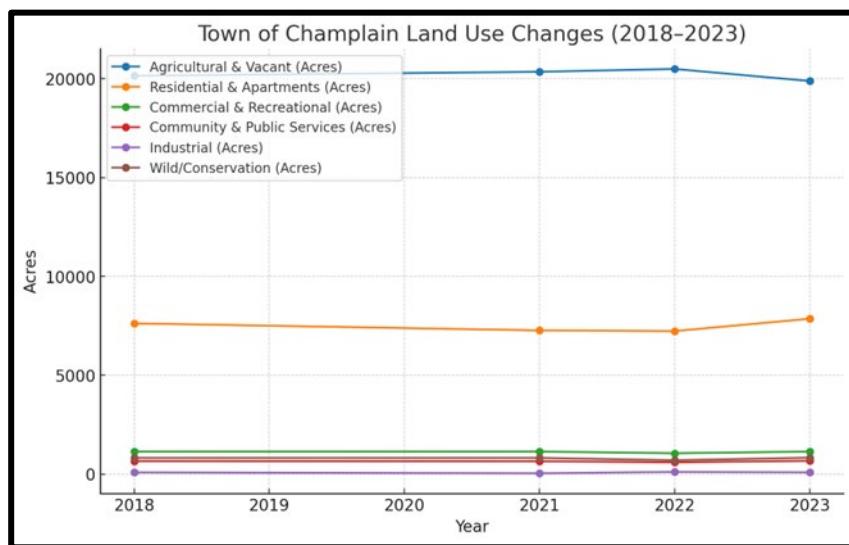


Table 11: Town of Champlain Land Use Changes (2018-2023)

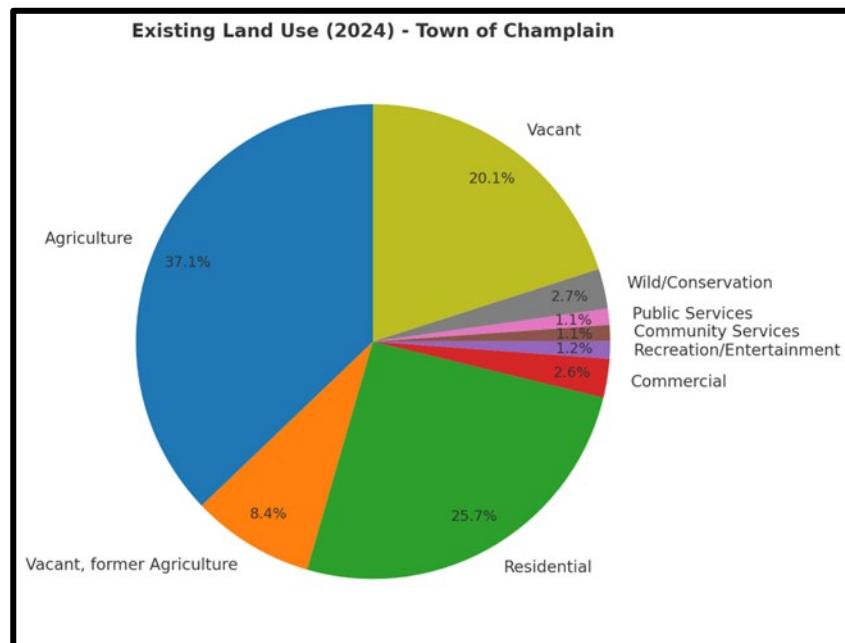


Table 12: Existing Land Use (2024) - Town of Champlain

Agricultural Land

Private ownership represents over 96% of land area ($\approx 34,000$ acres). Of this, 22,000+ acres are active or vacant agricultural lands. Farming includes dairy, crops, and livestock. The area benefits from prime farmland soils and inclusion in Agricultural District 07C, which protects farming operations from restrictive laws and provides tax benefits. Despite protections, landowners retain development rights under zoning rules. Champlain's agricultural resources are considered strategically valuable under climate change pressures.

Residential Private Land

Residential properties account for nearly 28% of taxable land area but represent 73% of assessed property value. Single-family homes dominate (61% of value). Two- and three-family units are small in share. Mobile homes and seasonal residences exist but contribute minimally to the tax base. This underscores the importance of residential land in fiscal sustainability while also reflecting limited diversity in housing stock.

Public and Conserved Lands

Only 3.5% of Champlain's land is conserved or publicly owned. Major holdings include the Kings Bay Wildlife Management Area (683 acres). Only one significant state land unit, Kings Bay WMA, falls within Champlain. No formal Unit Management

Plan is in place. The WMA supports wildlife conservation and recreation. Local advocacy is needed for improved access and stewardship.

About 700 acres fall under state conservation easements, though parcel-level details are not public. Municipal ownership (parks, schools, facilities) represents a very small share. The scarcity of conserved land highlights the dominance of private ownership and reliance on agricultural/open land for environmental value.

Environmental Risk

EPA/DEC site inventories show hazardous materials and brownfield risks in the Town and Village. A \$1.15M state grant is funding site assessments, reuse, and cleanup plans, including the Miromar property.¹⁰

¹⁰ The \$1.15 million funding reference corresponds to a U.S. EPA Brownfields Assessment Coalition Grant awarded to the Lake Champlain–Lake George Regional Planning Board, which includes the Town and Village of Champlain as partner communities and lists the Miromar property among priority sites for assessment, reuse, and cleanup planning. Associated local partners include the Clinton County IDA and other North Country municipalities participating in the regional brownfields initiative.

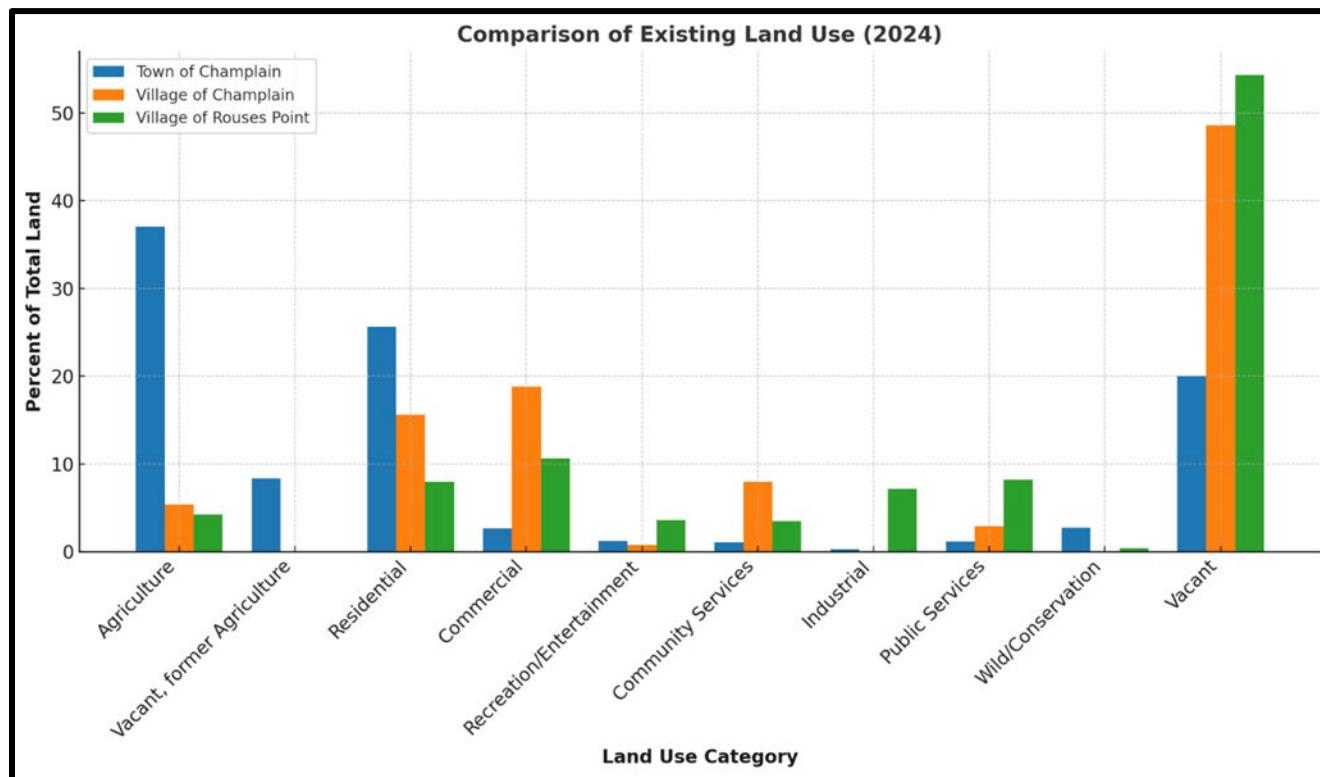


Table 13: Comparison of Existing Land Use (2024)

Environmental Issues

Champlain is vulnerable to flooding, climate change, nutrient runoff, and invasive species. The 2011 Lake Champlain floods exposed risks to homes and infrastructure. Lake Champlain also suffers from phosphorus/nitrogen loading (from agriculture, stormwater, and erosion) fueling harmful algal blooms (HABs). Invasive species (zebra mussels, lampreys) threaten ecosystems. Wastewater infrastructure upgrades (e.g., Route 11 Sewer Project) are critical to protecting water quality.

Existing Land Use Related Regulations

(Please Note: "Thumbnail" versions of the Town and Village Zoning Maps appear in this document, and full-sized ones can be found in the Community Profile Appendices)

Current Town Regulations

Town Zoning Law (Chapter 130) governs land use via districting, dimensional standards, and special permits.

Recent amendments address:

- Solar energy systems (setbacks/overlay districts).
- Cannabis retail sales (regulated districts).
- Adult entertainment, bio-sludge disposal, and battery storage facilities.

Emerging issues under review: short-term rentals (STRs), ADUs, downtown mixed use zoning, multi-family dwellings, fence regulations, mobile home standards, travel trailers, lakefront subdivisions, and Amish shed conversions. From 2006-2023 there were ten (10) Use Variances. From 2005-2025, there were seventy-seven (77) Area Variances. Accordingly, an evaluation of setbacks and other area variance specifications should be conducted. These highlight the tension between preserving character and accommodating growth.

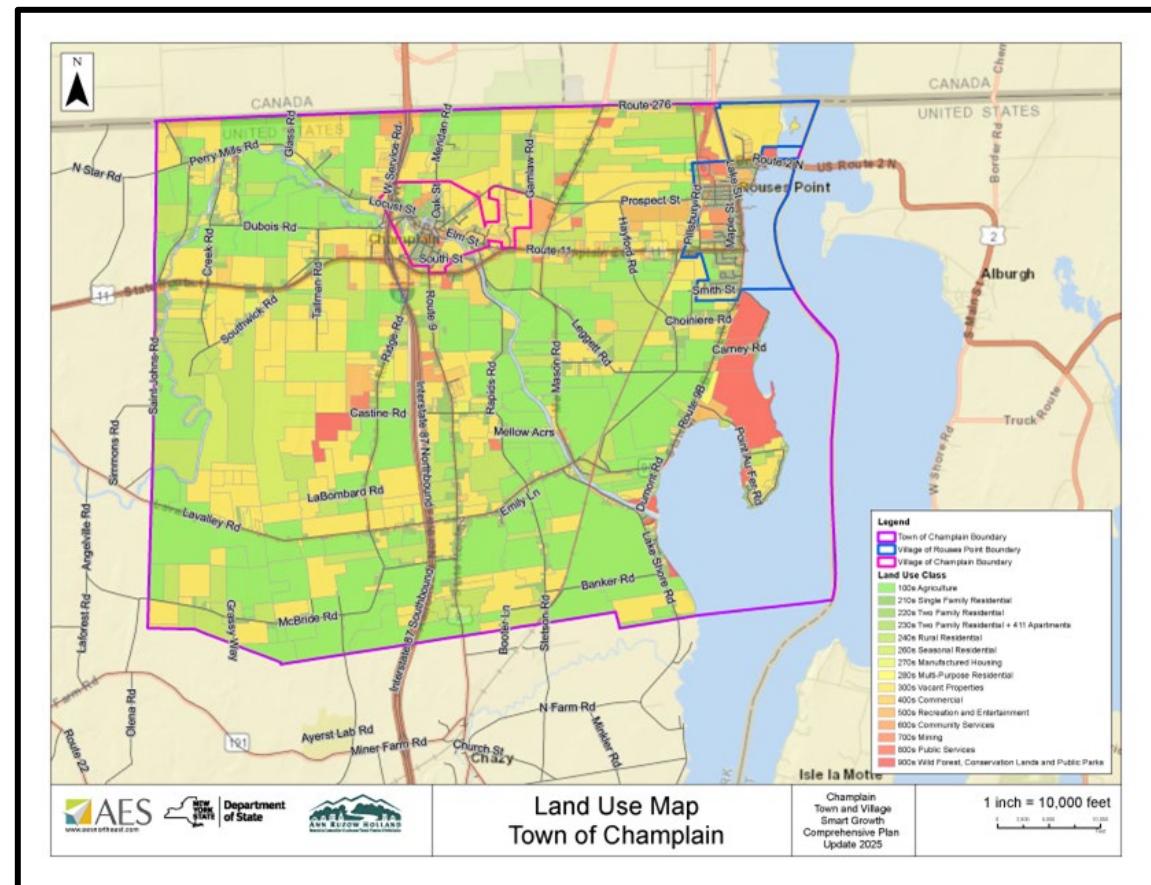


Figure 38: Land Use Map, Town of Champlain

Current Village of Champlain Regulations

The Village has its own zoning code aligned with Town standards. Regulations govern permitted uses, dimensional standards, and enforcement but are more urban-focused.

Emerging issues under review: short-term rentals, ADUs, downtown mixed use zoning, multi-family dwellings, fence regulations, mobile home standards, travel trailers, lakefront subdivisions, and Amish shed conversions. In the past three years, there were three (3) Use Variances and two (2) Area Variances indicating limited use of Variances in the Village to accommodate growth. These highlight the changing tension between preserving character and accommodating growth.

Clinton County Regulations

County-level policies supplement local zoning, particularly for agricultural protections and environmental management. The County Board of Health regulates septic system development.

NYS Freshwater Wetlands Act

Wetlands are regulated under Article 24 of the Environmental Conservation Law. Reforms (2022) expand protections. These changes will expand regulatory oversight in Champlain, particularly along Lake Champlain and Great Chazy River shorelines.

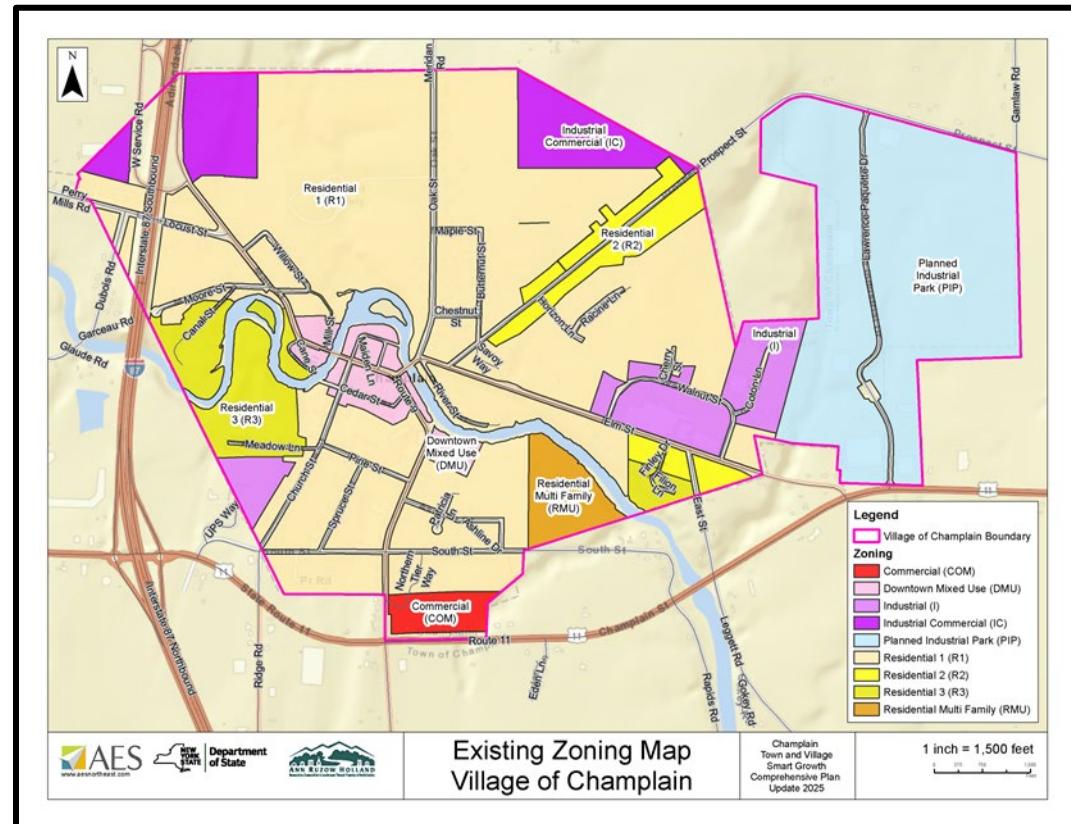


Figure 39: Existing Zoning Map, Village of Champlain

Section 4: Champlain's Focal Areas, Special Interests, and Community Concerns

Section 4 identifies and discusses the focal areas of special interest and concern, lays the groundwork, and contributes to the findings and recommendations outlined in Section 5 and 6.

Introduction

Future trends in Champlain's land use will depend upon local government decisions and actions. Existential action (or inaction) of the U.S. Government, State of New York, the condition of the regional and national economies, the availability of State and Federal funding to support capital projects, and the land use decisions of private property owners with interests in the Town and Village also will influence Champlain's future growth. Champlain's interests and concerns converge on seven cross-cutting themes: land use, housing, economy, infrastructure, transportation, natural resources, and governance. Across all, the community seeks to balance growth with preservation, revitalize existing assets, and strengthen resilience and cooperation.

Focal Areas, Special Interests and Community Concerns

1. Land Use, Growth, and Community Character

Champlain's identity is rooted in its traditional village centers and surrounding farmland. Residents consistently express concern that sprawl, absentee property neglect, and vacant parcels undermine community vitality. There is a strong desire to focus growth into compact, walkable areas while revitalizing existing properties.

Interests & Concerns:

- ✓ Preserve small-town, rural, and historic character.
- ✓ Concentrate growth in village cores; discourage scattered subdivisions.
- ✓ Rehabilitate zombie properties and upper-story vacancies.
- ✓ Adaptive reuse of Miromar, Pfizer, brownfields, and other underused parcels.
- ✓ Scenic gateway design standards along Routes 9, 11, and I-87.

2. Housing and Neighborhood Vitality

Housing is both a pressing social need and an economic development factor. Residents identify shortages across the spectrum: affordable rentals, workforce housing, senior-friendly units, and starter homes. The lack of diverse housing weakens retention of youth, burdens seniors, and limits workforce availability.

Interests & Concerns:

- ✓ Shortage of affordable, workforce, and moderate-income housing.
- ✓ Insufficient senior-accessible and intergenerational living options.
- ✓ Overreliance on single-family development at the expense of mixed-use housing.
- ✓ Desire for accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and other flexible solutions.
- ✓ Need to modernize zoning to allow compact, mixed-

use, and adaptive housing.

3. Economic Development and Regional Positioning

Champlain's border location, farmland, and logistics infrastructure provide major economic opportunities, but growth must be carefully directed. Stakeholders highlight the need to balance industrial expansion with farmland conservation while revitalizing village economies.

Interests & Concerns:

- ✓ Growth pressures from logistics/industrial corridor near I-87 and three border crossings.
- ✓ Redevelopment of legacy industrial and commercial sites (Pfizer, Miromar, Fort Montgomery).
- ✓ Expand restaurants, grocery, entertainment, and small business incubation.
- ✓ Leverage agritourism, heritage tourism, and lake/river recreation.
- ✓ Attract clean energy, AI/data centers, and climate migration investment.
- ✓ Strengthen regional partnerships (Chamber, IDA, REDC, DOS).

4. Infrastructure, Facilities, and Public Services

Aging infrastructure, service delivery gaps, and fiscal stress are key concerns. Residents want modern water, sewer, broadband, and recreation facilities, but recognize the limits of local resources. Shared services and strategic capital planning are seen as solutions.

Interests & Concerns:

- ✓ Broadband and natural gas expansion.
- ✓ Joint Capital Improvement Plan for water, sewer, stormwater.
- ✓ Shared DPW facilities and intermunicipal services.
- ✓ Modernize parks, trails, and recreation (esp. within village).

- ✓ Declining school enrollment and volunteer shortages (EMS, fire).
- ✓ Improved lighting, sidewalks, and winter walkability.

5. Transportation, Mobility, and Complete Streets

Safe, accessible transportation networks are a top priority. Walk audits and engagement confirm the need for sidewalk repair, safer intersections, and better bike/pedestrian connections. Complete Streets projects in both Town and Village demonstrate momentum and opportunities for further funding.

Interests & Concerns:

- ✓ Sidewalk deficiencies on Main, Church, Oak, Elm, and Prospect Streets.
- ✓ Unsafe intersections: Route 9/McCrory, Route 11 bridges, South & Main, Oak/Elm/River.
- ✓ ADA-compliant crosswalks and bump-outs at Church & South Street.
- ✓ Solar lighting along NTRT and trailheads.
- ✓ Radar speed signs, traffic calming in school zones.
- ✓ Expanded wayfinding, placemaking, benches, banners, and murals.
- ✓ Integration of bike lanes and safe trail connections.

6. Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Climate Resilience

Champlain's farmland, rivers, and lake are both ecological and economic assets. Climate change, flooding, and invasive species pose serious risks, making conservation and resilience central themes.

Interests & Concerns:

- ✓ Protect farmland from sprawl and industrial expansion.
- ✓ Maintain water quality in Lake Champlain and Great Chazy River.

- ✓ Address flooding and shoreline erosion risks.
- ✓ Expand green infrastructure (bioswales, rain gardens, permeable surfaces).
- ✓ Adopt farmland and open space protection plans.
- ✓ Promote ecotourism and agritourism linked to conservation.
- ✓ Integrate climate adaptation into Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP).

7. Governance, Engagement, and Community Capacity

Limited volunteer capacity, communication gaps, and fragmented planning reduce effectiveness. Residents express willingness to volunteer but want clearer pathways to engage. Stronger intermunicipal cooperation and transparency are needed.

Interests & Concerns:

- ✓ Form a Joint Planning & Implementation Committee.
- ✓ Expand shared services for enforcement, planning, and public works.
- ✓ Publish Annual Implementation Progress Reports.
- ✓ Improve communication about volunteer opportunities.
- ✓ Address crime, drug abuse, and absentee property neglect.
- ✓ Build inclusive community events and engagement platforms.

Section 5: Champlain's Vision and Smart Growth Recommendations for the Future

Section 5 captures Champlain's future vision and summarizes Smart Growth approaches detailed in Chapter 5 of the Community Profile. In addition, this Section 5 will help readers, and the Town consider how best to apply Smart Growth Principles to any findings, recommendations, or actions that grow out of this Comprehensive Plan.

Champlain's Vision Statement

canada
community
other border
services
affordable
kid beautiful
knit rich
drive proud
less bustling
close hour
plenty
montreal like
champlain
access hospitable
lake clean than
friendly being

We are proud to be a clean, kid-friendly, hospitable, close-knit, affordable, and bustling border community on beautiful Lake Champlain.

We like being less than one hour's drive to Burlington, Vermont, Plattsburgh, and Montreal, Canada for work, shopping, and other services.

Our abundant and rich farmland gives us plenty of open space that complements our Lake Champlain and Great Chazy River shorelines.

We are well placed with plenty of affordable housing, varied recreational opportunities, services, and businesses giving easy access and convenience to our diverse residents.

We love our Town and intentionally strive to grow purposefully and carefully.

Introduction to our Approach to Smart Growth and Champlain's Comprehensive Plan

Richard Moe, President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, distinguished public servant, and leader in the planning field once commented, “Communities can be shaped by choice, or they can be shaped by chance. We can keep on accepting the kind of communities we get, or we can start creating the kind of communities we want.”¹¹

David Goldberg, a longtime executive at *Smart Growth America*, (the leading advocate for the national Smart Growth movement) made the following recommendation regarding the marriage of local comprehensive planning and consideration of Smart Growth Principles:

“The surest way to create towns worthy of passing on to our children is to engage the full, informed participation of the people who live in them making planning and development more collaborative and less adversarial. That is perhaps more important today than ever before. Over the last decade, people all across the country have grown increasingly worried about the consequences of rapid growth and poorly planned development. In search of a better way, many of those concerned citizens have been working with forward-looking professionals in planning, design, real estate, and related fields to figure out how to be smarter about growth.”¹²

The Town and Village of Champlain Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan (Our Plan) uses an approach to land planning that continues to promote growth and infrastructure improvements. This location of development and investment will support the build-out of compact, healthy, and walkable neighborhoods. Furthermore, it will encourage complete use of roads for cycling, pedestrians, and autos. Finally, it will incentivize mixed-use development with a range of housing choices. Champlain intends to preserve and protect its unique sense of community and place that overlays its abundant natural and cultural resources. Our Plan is consistent with Smart Growth core values that emphasize long-range, regional considerations of sustainability and cumulative effects.

We chose NOT to parse out various Smart Growth Principles and try to “shoehorn” them into the previous four subject-based chapters. Instead, we have devoted this chapter within the Town and Village of Champlain Community Profile to a synthesized and relevant discussion of how Smart Growth considerations can be practiced by the Town and Village of Champlain. Not all the principles of Smart Growth apply and therefore some principles are described and explained in greater detail than others. Some will certainly be more important and useful to inform the findings and recommendations to be developed within the formal Comprehensive Plan document.

¹¹ <https://www.cityofhuntington.com/residents/americas-best-communities>

¹² <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/resources/smart-growth-implementation-toolkit/>

Our Plan will put into practice many Smart Growth principles that closely tie to the goals of the community. We will use careful consideration and caution in land use decisions to maintain Champlain's charm, beauty, and character. Wherever possible, we will encourage adaptive reuse and recycling of existing buildings while conserving countryside and protection of natural resources for this and the next generation to enjoy. Champlain will also support affordable housing and the use of fair and representative community participation activities to encourage residents, businesses, and visitors to enjoy life here.

Smart Growth in New York State

Smart Growth looks different from place to place. It is an overall approach to development that encourages a mix of building types and uses, diverse housing and transportation options, development within existing neighborhoods, and robust community engagement. The 10 principles are considered the foundation of a Smart Growth approach.

1. Mix land uses
2. Take advantage of compact design
3. Create a range of housing opportunities and choices
4. Create walkable neighborhoods
5. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place
6. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas
7. Direct development towards existing communities
8. Provide a variety of transportation choices
9. Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective
10. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions

Figure 40: Smart Growth in NYS (Smart Growth America 2024, n.d.)

The Five Tests of Smart Growth¹³

This plan and its supporting documentation takes a very comprehensive look at all the conditions that influence land use and community planning in the Town and Village of Champlain. In developing Champlain's future forward recommendations, the research and engagement activities serve as the foundation for action. The Five Tests of Smart Growth can also serve to help shape new development, redevelopment, and infrastructure priorities, helping to envision where we are headed over the next few years.

1. Popsicle Test:

Can you walk home from the store before your popsicle melts?

Can walking or biking meet most daily needs?

2. Smooch Test:

Is the place comfortable, safe, attractive, and intimate, suitable for a date-night stroll?

Are people—and their ears—shielded from high-speed car traffic?

Would you feel good about taking a visitor there?

3. Kid Test:

Can children safely explore a world beyond their own backyards?

Can older kids get around on their own, safely developing a sense of self-reliance and autonomy?

4. Seniors Test:

Are elder citizens a welcome part of the mix of residents?

Are they engaged and active?

Can they get out and about and get their needs met when driving is no longer an option?

5. Commons Test:

Does the development contribute to the overall community something greater than what it takes in terms of natural and community resources?

Will it age gracefully and adapt to future uses, or is it designed to be disposable?

What does it leave for future generations?

¹³ <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/choosing-our-communitys-future.pdf>

Smart Growth and Champlain Town and Village's Future Land Use

(Please Note: "Thumbnail" versions of the Land Suitability Analysis Maps appear in this document, and full-sized ones can be found in the Community Profile Appendices)

Future land use and physical constraints on development of private land are best understood by conducting a land suitability analysis. The Champlain Town and Village **Land Suitability Analysis** represents one-way scientific data about where land could be developed is analyzed and presented. The scientific data collected was layered together in groups to create one for the Town of Champlain and one for the Village of Champlain. These classifications are based upon scientific information about the risks to nature and the environment (including water quality, water bodies, plants, animals, and soils) from building on the land. Decisions about where and how to build should factor in the risks.

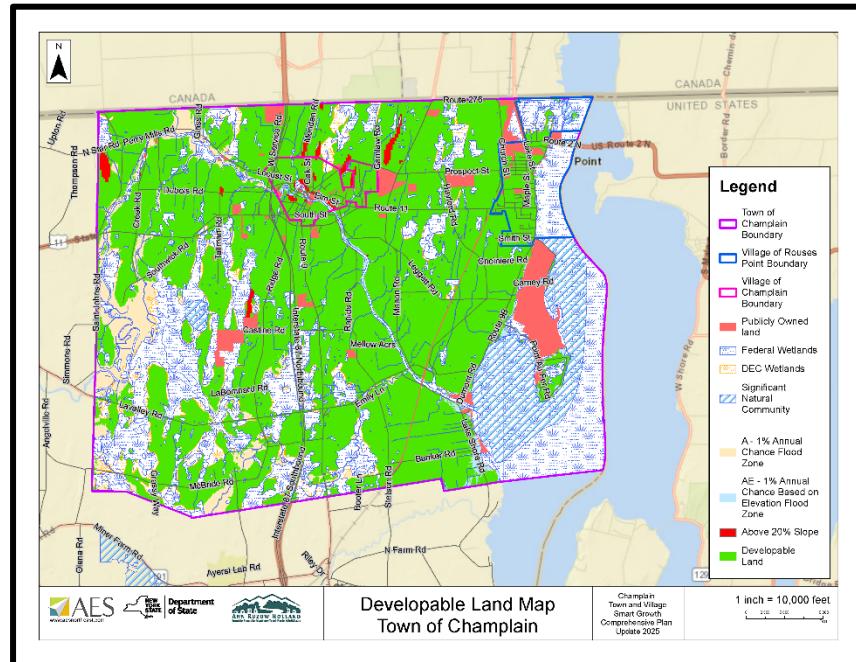
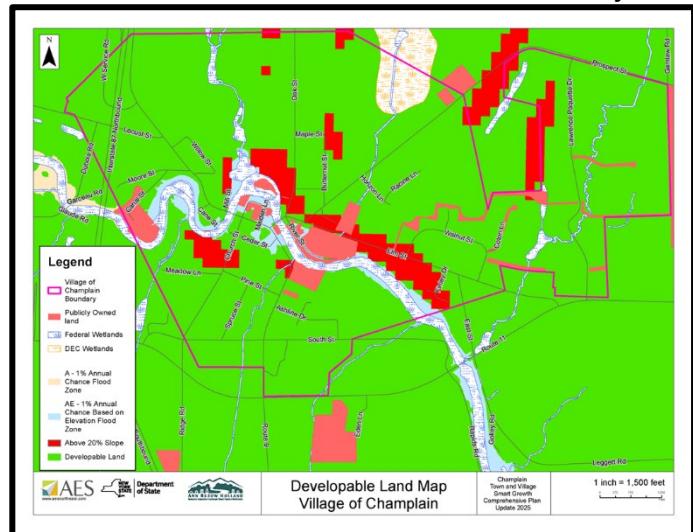


Figure 42: Developable Land Map, Town of Champlain

lands, especially near transportation corridors. Solar overlay districts and Lake Champlain's sensitive shoreline create both opportunities and constraints.



The analysis is essential for making informed and optimized decisions about land use planning and management and can also help ensure that land is used in a way that minimizes environmental degradation, soil erosion, and deforestation. It pinpoints unsuitable areas (e.g., floodplains, high hazard risks, steep slopes, protected habitats) to avoid and thus reduce negative effects. From a planning standpoint, the analysis helps identify the best locations for roads, housing, and public services based on accessibility and sustainability. From a developer or investor perspective the analysis can help reduce expenditure by selecting land that requires minimal modifications.

This preliminary analysis presented provides data-driven insights to support government policies regarding zoning amendments and land-use planning strategies. Both Town and Village maps show limited but strategic developable

Existing and Future Land Use's Relationship to Smart Growth Principles

The Town and Village of Champlain's joint comprehensive plan and its accompanying appendices present a data-rich and policy-grounded examination of land use that reflects a strong alignment with the ten principles of Smart Growth. From safeguarding farmland and promoting environmental sustainability to coordinating future development and infrastructure upgrades, this chapter lays the foundation for resilient and strategic community growth. While a future land use map has yet to be blueprinted, the suitability maps presented in the previous section address where future land use can happen without environmental constraints, and where mitigation or avoidance are recommended.

Strong alignment with Smart Growth Principles, especially in areas of agricultural preservation, environmental resilience, village-centered development, and housing diversity exists within this plan. With continued attention to transportation integration, compact design standards, and walkability, the Town and Village of Champlain are well-positioned to implement a future-oriented land use strategy that is both sustainable and community-driven. This plan also identifies a robust foundation for guiding future land use and zoning decisions, ensuring the values of smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth are embedded in every planning action.

Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty, and Critical Environmental Areas



Figure 43: Courtesy of Upstate Forever, Existing & Future Land Use's Relationship to Smart Growth Principles

This plan underscores Champlain's agricultural identity—over 22,000 acres of farmland make up the majority of private land, and the area lies within Agricultural District 07C. The community is taking proactive steps to preserve farmland through land use regulation and enrollment in the NYS Agricultural Districts Program. This reflects the Smart Growth commitment to preserving natural and working lands.

Champlain also demonstrates a strong emphasis on wetland protection, watercourse buffers, and climate-responsive planning. The text's detailed treatment of environmental issues—including water quality, harmful algal blooms (HABs), and climate-related flooding—demonstrates integration of ecosystem preservation into land use policy.

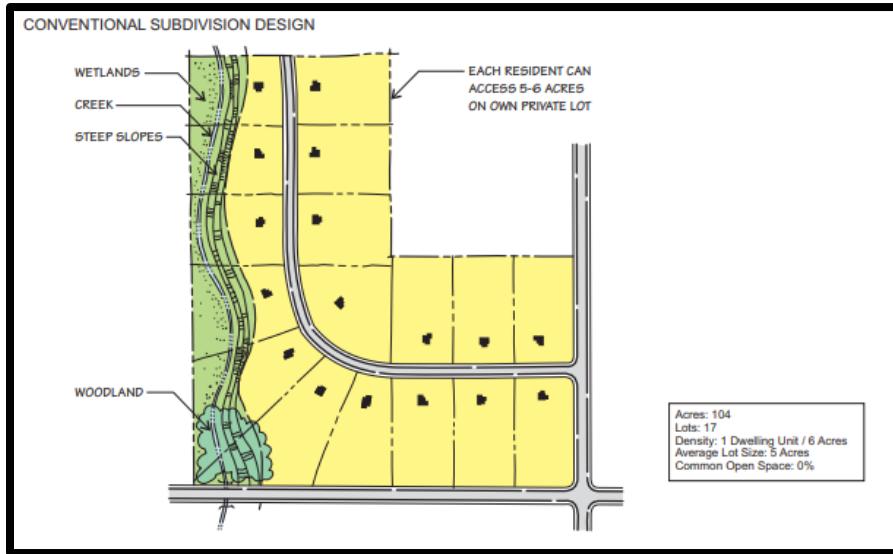


Figure 44: Conservation Subdivision Design Process, Conventional Subdivision Design

Protect and Enhance Environmental Quality

The plan and its appendices thoroughly outline environmental vulnerabilities—including nutrient loading, aging infrastructure, and hazardous waste sites—while presenting proactive plans such as:

- Water quality and phosphorus management in the Lake Champlain watershed
- Flood mitigation and infrastructure improvement projects (e.g., Sewer District No. 7)
- Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) priority interventions, including livestock exclusion fencing, riparian buffer restoration, and improved manure management

These efforts align with Smart Growth's emphasis on protecting air and water quality and reducing environmental hazards.

One emerging future land use issue that Champlain has addressed through land use regulation development is the placement of solar farms in the community. A local law has been adopted and the map provided below describes allowable solar farm locations in the Town.

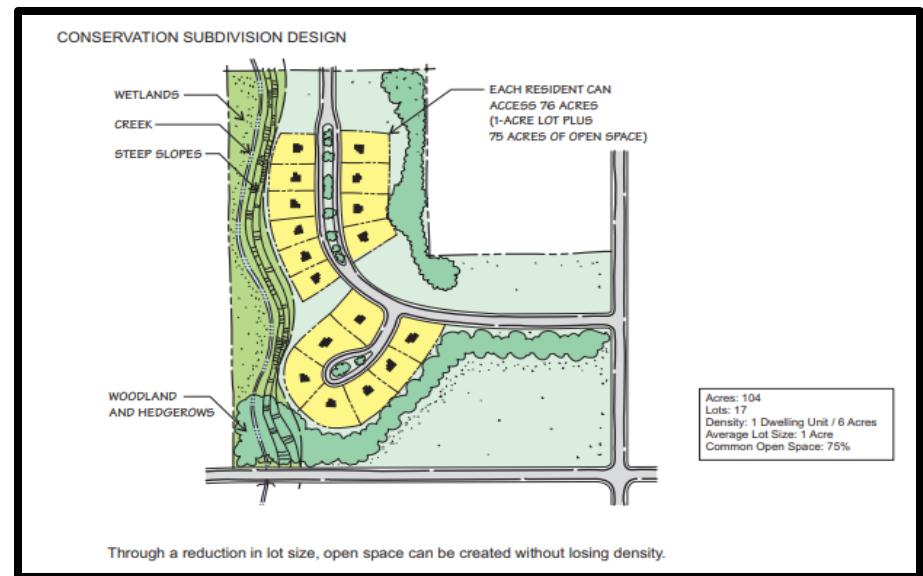


Figure 45: Conservation Subdivision Design Process, Conservation Subdivision Design

Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration in Development Decisions

The plan reflects ongoing collaboration across levels of government and stakeholders, including:

- NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
- Clinton County Planning Department
- Lake Champlain-Lake George Regional Planning Board
- Soil and Water Conservation Districts
- Local agricultural landowners

The integration of publicly funded land suitability analyses and watershed management initiatives into the planning process showcases meaningful multi-sector engagement in guiding land use decisions.

Strengthen and Direct Development Towards Existing Communities

Champlain's town and village land use regulations and zoning strategies emphasize infill and redevelopment. The Route 11, 9, and Village "downtowns" are recognized as centers of commerce and services, with infrastructure capacity already in place. The land suitability analysis provides a framework for concentrating growth in areas with lower environmental risk and higher development readiness. Additionally, future planning includes provisions for:

- Accessory dwelling units (ADUs)
- Short-term rentals
- Mixed-use development in and near village centers

These priorities support compact, walkable, and accessible development—a cornerstone of Smart Growth

Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair, and Cost-Effective

The comprehensive plan and its appendices provide a clear and well-structured overview of zoning laws, dimensional standards, and land use classifications, making development pathways more transparent. The analysis includes recent zoning amendments (e.g., solar system setbacks, cannabis retail sales, and adult entertainment uses), and discusses emerging concerns (e.g., battery storage, ADUs, STRs), which indicates a proactive and adaptive regulatory environment. Moreover, public access to digital zoning laws and application processes contributes to predictability and fairness in land use decisions.

At present, the Town and Village of Champlain do not share a formal joint land use map. While not essential to the current planning framework, such a map could be developed in the future to coordinate growth, infrastructure, and zoning across municipal boundaries. Establishing a joint land use map would provide a shared visual framework for guiding future development, identifying compatible land uses, and supporting intermunicipal collaboration on housing, transportation, and economic development initiatives. For now, both municipalities may continue to rely on their respective zoning maps and comprehensive plan goals to guide land use decisions while exploring opportunities for greater alignment over time.

Mix Land Uses

The plan reflects interest in diversifying residential and commercial land uses, especially within village cores. Mixed-use development is supported through existing zoning and proposed amendments to increase flexibility, especially for multi-family housing and small business accommodations. This supports vibrant, diverse neighborhoods with access to services and housing.

Create Walkable Neighborhoods/Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place

Walkability, with an emphasis on village-centered growth, protection of scenic lakefronts, and thoughtful regulation of residential aesthetics (e.g., fencing materials, accessory structures) contributes to creating distinctive, attractive communities. Potential development of a special lakefront zoning district further illustrates the commitment to design-sensitive planning and preservation of place-based identity.

Provide a Variety of Transportation Choices

While transportation planning is not the core focus of the plan, infrastructure discussions related to U.S. Route 11 and railroad corridors, as well as flood vulnerability mitigation, imply a recognition of transportation and land use interdependence.

Create a Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices

Housing diversity and affordability are significant priorities reflected in zoning regulations and historical plans dating back to 1974. This plan advocates:

- Multi-family development in village areas
- ADUs to expand affordable rental options
- Mobile home regulation and integration
- Housing on small or undersized lots
- Senior and seasonal housing in appropriate locations

These strategies align with the Smart Growth objective of ensuring housing choices for all income levels and life stages.

Take Advantage of Compact Building Design



Figure 46: Courtesy of Websites: AARP.org and AARP.org

Champlain's policies encourage efficient land use through zoning density, infill development, and compact form in areas with infrastructure. The suitability analysis reinforces this by identifying development constraints and optimal areas, minimizing sprawl, and maximizing infrastructure investment.

Smart Growth principles emphasize:

- Compact, mixed-use development in village centers.
- Farmland and open space preservation.
- Environmental sustainability and resilience through water quality protection and climate adaptation.
- Transportation efficiency, leveraging proximity to I-87 and the Canadian border.
- Housing diversity and affordability, including ADUs and multi-family units.

The framework suggests Champlain Town and Village can balance economic growth with environmental stewardship, ensuring long-term community resilience.



Smart Growth Crosswalk – Champlain Comprehensive Plan

This table demonstrates how Champlain's thematic community priorities align with the Smart Growth principles outlined in New York State's Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act and the EPA's 10 Smart Growth Principles. It provides a clear justification for state and federal funding alignment.

Smart Growth Principle	Champlain Themes Advanced
Compact, Mixed-Use Development	Land Use & Community Character; Housing & Neighborhood Vitality; Economic Development; Transportation
Diverse Housing Choices	Housing & Neighborhood Vitality
Walkable, Connected Communities	Housing & Neighborhood Vitality; Transportation & Complete Streets
Preserve Open Space & Farmland	Land Use & Community Character; Natural Resources & Climate Resilience; Economic Development (agritourism)
Efficient Public Infrastructure Investment	Infrastructure & Public Services; Governance & Capacity
Variety of Transportation Choices	Transportation & Complete Streets
Environmental Protection & Climate Resilience	Natural Resources & Climate Resilience
Strengthen & Redevelop Existing Communities	Land Use & Community Character; Economic Development; Housing
Community & Stakeholder Collaboration	Governance & Capacity
Predictable, Fair & Cost-Effective Development Decisions	Land Use & Community Character; Governance & Capacity

Table 14: Smart Growth Crosswalk - Champlain Comprehensive Plan

Champlain's plan strongly supports Smart Growth by concentrating growth in existing centers, expanding housing choices, protecting farmland and natural systems, investing in multimodal transportation, and strengthening intermunicipal cooperation. These alignments position Champlain to secure state and federal funding.

Section 6: Findings and Recommendations

Implementation Next Steps

Section 6 summarizes many of the findings and actions recommended to implement the plan that are presented throughout the document and in the appendices. It may seem that this section is repetitive, but the purpose of Section 6 is to consolidate in one place and present an implementation plan that 1) legally complies with NYS Town Law for Comprehensive Plan Reports, and 2) complies with NYS Department of State for Smart Growth Comprehensive Plans receiving grant funds.

Plan Implementation and Governance

Not one individual, board, or committee, can take sole responsibility for implementing this plan. Instead, a network of existing and newly appointed town committees and self-selecting, grassroots think-tanks sharing responsibility with the various Town and Village boards, existing organizations, and agencies is envisioned. In this way, civic-minded citizens can participate on local committees and follow through on the plan. Citizen involvement and continued volunteer momentum are the necessary actions that make the next steps happen.

The Comprehensive Plan provides a general recipe for keeping what is best about Champlain in place. The Plan also recommends actions to showcase Champlain's setting; scenic vistas and striking shorelines, four seasons (plus mud season), a bustling community with great people. A plan—this plan -- proposes recommendations for Champlain to create a place that is memorable to children, so when they grow up and consider where they wish to live, they will want to come home – and they can. The recommendations included throughout the Plan require citizen action for follow-through for the community vision to be realized.

Champlain will continue to grow its social and human capital networks (people and organizations). The networks are composed of newcomers, natives, long-timers, and full and part-time residents that call Champlain home. Interest in community affairs, as evidenced by the level of participation when meetings were held, was encouraging. Residents dialogued, demonstrated commitment and enthusiasm towards the topics and issues discussed. Maintaining the momentum of citizens will make the next steps happen. While the Comprehensive Land Use Plan Steering Committee acted as the Comprehensive Plan steward, every member of the community must ask themselves:

- Who steps up to act as the Plan Implementers?
- Who steps up to act as the cheerleaders?
- Who steps up to act as the monitors and periodically reviews progress and alignment with goals?

Set Metrics for Success:

- Define measurable goals for housing production, economic growth, and environmental conservation.
- Leverage Diverse Funding Sources:
- Apply for grants through New York State, Federal, and local programs to fund projects.
- Collaborate Regionally and partner with neighboring towns and regional agencies to align strategies and pool resources.
- Evaluate Progress Regularly:
- Establish a task force to track implementation, make data-driven decisions, and adjust policies as needed.
- Re-evaluate progress on the Comprehensive Plan on an annual basis and update the plan every 5 (five) years.

Comprehensive Recommendations Aligned with Smart Growth Principles in Champlain Implementation Actions

To implement these goals the various recommendations are categorized and community leaders considered cost, feasibility, resource allocation, and prioritization to ensure effective execution.

Actionable takeaways and strategic direction based upon evaluation of current land use patterns, regulatory frameworks, and future development potential within the town show opportunities as well as constraints. The Town and Village of Champlain have considered the unique geographical, environmental, and regulatory context of Champlain. By leveraging its strategic location, abundance of fertile land, and strong community identity, the Town and Village can accommodate incremental growth while preserving its unique character. Thoughtful land use planning, guided by environmental stewardship and smart growth principles, is essential to achieving this vision. By prioritizing these detailed and site-specific actions under the Smart Growth framework, Champlain can achieve sustainable development that balances community needs, environmental conservation, and economic growth.

Chapter 6's Implementation Plan presents recommended actions for the Town and Village of Champlain in two tables—one for each local government. Chapter 6 integrates statutory requirements under NYS Town Law §272-a and Village Law §7-722,

Smart Growth principles, and community-driven priorities identified through surveys, interviews, and workshops. The recommendations address land use, housing, economic development, infrastructure, transportation, natural and cultural resources, climate resilience, and governance. Each action item has been aligned with potential partners and funding sources to ensure feasibility and accountability.

Key priorities include expanding housing options through various catalytic investment strategies, leveraging Champlain's strategic cross-border location for logistics growth, and improving multimodal transportation and safe pedestrian connections. Infrastructure investments in wastewater, drinking water, and stormwater management are paired with green infrastructure, flood resilience, and renewable energy initiatives. The plan also emphasizes farmland protection, heritage tourism, climate adaptation, and continued intermunicipal cooperation through a Joint Planning & Implementation Committee. Together, these strategies position Champlain to grow purposefully and sustainably—enhancing quality of life, strengthening the economy, and preserving the unique character of the Town and Village.

Town of Champlain Implementation Actions

This section presents the recommended implementation actions for the Town of Champlain. Actions are organized by priority: High, Medium, and Low. High Priority actions represent near-term implementation items (typically 0–3 years) that address the most critical community needs, regulatory updates, and infrastructure or housing investments. These items should be pursued proactively as resources become available. Medium Priority actions represent mid-range initiatives (typically 3–5 years) that build upon early successes, strengthen partnerships, and enhance community resilience through targeted planning, economic, and infrastructure improvements. Low Priority actions represent long-term or opportunistic projects (5+ years) that may depend on future funding, policy shifts, or regional collaboration. No items were explicitly identified as Low Priority at this time. All recommendations will support coordinated progress toward land use, housing, economic, infrastructure, and community goals.

As noted in prior sections, implementation of this plan should be monitored annually by the Town Board, in collaboration with the Village Board, Joint Planning Committee, and local partners. A brief progress report should be prepared each year to document completed actions, evaluate emerging priorities, and adjust timelines based on funding opportunities or community needs. The report should be shared publicly to ensure transparency and ongoing engagement.

Potential Funding & Partner Programs is rapidly changing in the current government environment. Accordingly, references to potential funding sources is likely to change from those noted in this plan. Monitoring these sources as projects evolve is strongly recommended. A partial list of potential funders is noted below that should continue to be monitored as time progresses and projects move forward.

- NYS Consolidated Funding Application (CFA)
- NYS Department of State (DOS)
- NYS Empire State Development (ESD)
- NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC)
- NYSERDA
- USDA Rural Development
- Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC)
- NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation (OPRHP)
- Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP)
- Adirondack North Country Association (ANCA)
- Clinton County Industrial Development Agency (CCIDA)
- North Country Regional Economic Development Council (NCREDC)

<u>Town of Champlain High Priority Implementation Actions</u>			
<u>ID No.</u> <u>(Not in order of priority)</u>	<u>Topic Area</u>	<u>Recommended Actions</u>	<u>Potential Partners / Funding Sources</u>
HP1	Land Use & Community Character	– Revise Town Zoning to reflect current conditions and community goals. For example, Short Term Rentals (STR's).	Town & Village Boards, Joint Planning Committee, NYSDOS, Consultants
HP2	Land Use & Community Character	– Encourage compact (close together), mixed-use development along Routes 9, 11 and 276.	Town & Village Boards, Joint Planning Committee, NYSDOS, Consultants
HP3	Land Use & Community Character	– Re-evaluate waterfront zoning and consider overlay districts for Point au Fer, Route 9B, Chazy Landing and the Lake Champlain shoreline.	Town & Village Boards, Joint Planning Committee, NYSDOS, Consultants
HP4	Land Use & Community Character	– Include workforce housing (mixed income) land use zoning codes and general policies.	Town & Village Boards, Joint Planning Committee, NYSDOS, Consultants
HP5	Land Use & Community Character	– Promote adaptive reuse of vacant buildings along Route 11 through streamlined permitting and funding incentives.	Town & Village Boards, NYSDOS, CCIDA
HP6	Housing	– Incentivize new mixed-use housing developments near key sites (North Country Golf Course, Miromar). – Sponsor infill or scattered-site housing to expand senior and	Town and Village Boards, Clinton Co. Housing Coalition, CCIDA, NYS HCR, AHC

<u>Town of Champlain High Priority Implementation Actions</u>			
<u>ID No.</u> <u>(Not in order of priority)</u>	<u>Topic Area</u>	<u>Recommended Actions</u>	<u>Potential Partners / Funding Sources</u>
		supportive options. -Utilize LIHTC and AHC programs to support affordable housing.	
HP7	Housing	– Promote and facilitate design of new mixed-income neighborhoods with green spaces and sustainable wastewater treatment.	Town Board, Clinton Co. Housing Coalition, CCIDA, NYS HCR, AHC
HP8	Economic Development	– Redevelop vacant properties, including Miromar and Tobin sites, to attract new investment and create jobs.	Town Board, CCIDA, NCREDC, AEDC, ANCA, NYS ESD
HP9	Housing	– Engage larger employers in workforce housing solutions and partnerships. Through property/building/program investment, benefit development, and other perks.	Town Board, CCIDA, Employers
HP10	Transportation & Mobility	– Implement Complete Streets principles throughout the Town and Village. – Expand wayfinding, traffic calming, and pedestrian/bike networks. – Ensure ADA accessibility and multi-modal connectivity.	Village and Town Boards, Town Recreation Dept., School District, NYSDOT, CCDOT, CFA, TAP, local budget

<u>Town of Champlain High Priority Implementation Actions</u>			
<u>ID No.</u> <u>(Not in order of priority)</u>	<u>Topic Area</u>	<u>Recommended Actions</u>	<u>Potential Partners / Funding Sources</u>
		-Jointly develop with the Town, a connected, paved, trail/path available for various modalities (Walk/Bike/Wheelchair/Roll) between the shopping and health centers and Village Street(s).	
HP11	Transportation & Mobility	– Implement Clinton County Health Department mobility and safety recommendations including crosswalks, ADA pads, and lighting.	Village Board, CCDOT, CCHD, NYSDOT
HP12	Transportation & Mobility	– Improve public transit and regional connectivity via partnerships with Clinton County Transportation and private carriers.	Village Board, Town Recreation Dept., School District, CCDOT, NYSDOT
HP13	Public Facilities & Infrastructure	– Continue developing and expanding public water and wastewater systems. – Pursue new Route 11 corridor sewer district and IMA (Intermunicipal Agreement) with Rouses Point.	Town & Village Boards, NYS EFC, USDA, NYSERDA
HP14	Natural, Recreational, Cultural & Historic Resources	– Continue phased improvements at Bob Venne Community Park including parking, lighting, pavilion, and memorials.	Town & Village Boards, County SWCD, LCBP, LCC, OPRHP, Tourism Council, NBRC, NYSOPRHP EPF

<u>Town of Champlain High Priority Implementation Actions</u>			
<u>ID No.</u> <u>(Not in order of priority)</u>	<u>Topic Area</u>	<u>Recommended Actions</u>	<u>Potential Partners / Funding Sources</u>
HP15	Resilience & Climate Adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Integrate green infrastructure, flood mitigation, and hazard reduction projects per Great and Little Chazy River Flood Reports. 	Town & Village Boards, NYS DEC, FEMA, USACE, Clinton County Emergency Services
HP16	Resilience & Climate Adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Implement Clinton County Hazard Mitigation Plan Recommendations (2021) for the Town of Champlain including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Continued floodplain management and debris removal along the Great Chazy River and Corbeau Creek. -Maintenance of critical culverts and stormwater infrastructure to reduce roadway and property flooding. -Enhancement of drainage systems and identification of structures within the Special Flood Hazard Area for targeted mitigation. -Ongoing updates to the Town's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) and zoning maps to reflect current hazard data. 	Town & Village Boards, NYS DEC, FEMA, USACE, Clinton County Emergency Services

<u>Town of Champlain High Priority Implementation Actions</u>			
<u>ID No.</u> <u>(Not in order of priority)</u>	<u>Topic Area</u>	<u>Recommended Actions</u>	<u>Potential Partners / Funding Sources</u>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Coordination with the Clinton County Office of Emergency Services and Soil & Water Conservation District to improve disaster response and recovery capacity. -Identification of vulnerable utilities, including water and wastewater systems, for structural upgrades. -Planning for long-term capital investments to maintain town facilities in compliance with FEMA hazard standards 	
HP17	Resilience & Climate Adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Expand and adopt energy efficiency and renewable energy initiatives including EV charging stations and community solar. 	Town & Village Boards, NYSERDA, NYS DEC, DOS
HP18	Resilience & Climate Adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Conduct engineering study for Great Chazy River dredging to restore navigability and reduce flooding. 	Town & Village Boards, NYS DOS, NYS DEC, FEMA, USACE

Table 15: Town of Champlain High Priority Implementation Actions

<u>Town of Champlain Medium Priority Implementation Actions</u>			
No.	Topic Area	Recommended Actions	Potential Partners / Funding Sources
MP1	Public Facilities / Shared Services	– Consider Shared DPW Facility Study for operational efficiency and cost savings.	Village Board, Town Board, NYS EFC, USDA, NYSERDA
MP2	Land Use & Community Character	– Develop a Scenic Gateway Overlay and adopt design standards for entrances into the Town to encourage community recognition.	Town & Village Boards, Joint Planning Committee, NYSDOS, Consultants
MP3	Housing	– Develop an ADU (Accessory Dwelling Unit) Pilot Program with streamlined permitting and incentives.	Town Board, Clinton Co. Housing Coalition, NYS HCR
MP4	Housing	– Sponsor clustered senior and supportive housing near health and shopping centers and other amenities. Evaluate land options available to the Village and Town suitable for development.	Town Board, Clinton Co. Housing Coalition, NYS HCR
MP5	Housing	– Support workforce training in construction trades to address housing labor shortages. Encourage NCCS to host trade training in conjunction with CCC, BOCES, WDI, and the Trade Unions.	Town Board, Clinton Co. Housing Coalition, BOCES, Workforce Development Board
MP6	Housing	– Promote local employment and residency initiatives to reduce commuting and strengthen workforce housing through marketing and promotion activities. Develop joint projects with Chamber of	Town Board, CCIDA, Employers

<u>Town of Champlain Medium Priority Implementation Actions</u>			
No.	Topic Area	Recommended Actions	Potential Partners / Funding Sources
		Commerce and local real estate agents promoting Champlain as a “best kept secret” for affordable housing and quality of life.	
MP7	Housing	– Rehabilitate and modernize existing housing stock using CDBG and energy efficiency grants. Work with Friends of the North Country to access CDBG funding for the Town.	Town Board, Clinton Co. Housing Coalition, NYS HCR, AHC
MP9	Economic Development	– Support Adirondack Coast Agri/Eco-tourism & Culinary Trail expansion with Town destinations.	Town Board, Chamber, ROOST, ANCA, Tourism Council
MP10	Economic Development	– Advance small business development that supports year-round residency and recreation-based entrepreneurship.	Town Board, Chamber, AEDC, ANCA, NCREDC
MP11	Natural, Recreational, Cultural & Historic Resources	– Develop Great Chazy River/Lake Champlain Corridor Plan including wayfinding and conservation initiatives.	Town & Village Boards, LCBP, LCC, OPRHP, NBRC
MP12	Natural, Recreational, Cultural &	– Develop Open Space/Farmland Protection Plan to preserve agricultural lands. Consult with Clinton County Farmland Protection Planners to coordinate Town actions with County ones.	Town Board, County SWCD, NYS Ag & Markets

<u>Town of Champlain Medium Priority Implementation Actions</u>			
No.	Topic Area	Recommended Actions	Potential Partners / Funding Sources
	Historic Resources		
MP13	Natural, Recreational, Cultural & Historic Resources	– Restore culturally significant structures.	Town & Village Boards, OPRHP, NYS EPF
MP14	Governance & Intermunicipal Cooperation	– Improve cost efficiency through shared services and consolidated facilities for planning, zoning, and public works.	Town & Village Boards, County Planning, DOS
MP15	Governance & Intermunicipal Cooperation	– Ensure bylaws (ordinances, local laws) for all governance bodies are current and publicly accessible.	Town & Village Boards
MP16	Governance & Intermunicipal Cooperation	– Form Joint Planning & Implementation Committee for coordinated plan execution, reporting, and community engagement.	Town & Village Boards, County Planning, DOS
MP17	Resilience & Climate Adaptation	– Develop Town-wide Stormwater Management Plan focusing on flood-prone areas and natural solutions.	Town & Village Boards, NYS DEC, DOS

<u>Town of Champlain Medium Priority Implementation Actions</u>			
No.	Topic Area	Recommended Actions	Potential Partners / Funding Sources
MP 18	Land Use & Community Character	-Evaluate land use compatibility where municipal borders between the Town and the Villages meet in order to plan for future land use projects. Determine compatibility and consistency so that growth/development transitions in land use can be planned for when projects are proposed in the town/village boundary areas.	Town and Village Boards, Joint Committee.

Table 16: Town of Champlain Medium Priority Implementation Actions

Village of Champlain Implementation Actions

This section presents the recommended implementation actions for the Village of Champlain. Actions are organized by priority: High, Medium, and Low. High Priority actions represent near-term implementation items (typically 0–3 years) that address the most critical community needs, regulatory updates, and infrastructure or housing investments. These items should be pursued proactively as resources become available. Medium Priority actions represent mid-range initiatives (typically 3–5 years) that build upon early successes, strengthen partnerships, and enhance community resilience through targeted planning, economic, and infrastructure improvements. Low Priority actions represent long-term or opportunistic projects (5+ years) that may depend on future funding, policy shifts, or regional collaboration. No items were explicitly identified as Low Priority at this time. All recommendations will support coordinated progress toward land use, housing, economic, infrastructure, and community goals.

As noted in prior sections, implementation of this plan should be monitored annually by the Village Board, in collaboration with the Town Board, Joint Planning Committee, and local partners. A brief progress report should be prepared each year to document completed actions, evaluate emerging priorities, and adjust timelines based on funding opportunities or community needs. The report should be shared publicly to ensure transparency and ongoing engagement.

Potential Funding & Partner Programs is rapidly changing in the current government environment. Accordingly, references to potential funding sources is likely to change from those noted in this plan. Monitoring these sources as projects evolve is strongly recommended. A partial list of potential funders is noted below that should continue to be monitored as time progresses and projects move forward.

- NYS Consolidated Funding Application (CFA)
- NYS Department of State (DOS)
- NYS Empire State Development (ESD)
- NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC)
- NYSERDA
- USDA Rural Development
- Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC)
- NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation (OPRHP)
- Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP)
- Adirondack North Country Association (ANCA)
- Clinton County Industrial Development Agency (CCIDA)
- North Country Regional Economic Development Council (NCREDC)

<u>Village of Champlain High Priority Implementation Actions</u>			
<u>ID No. (Not in order of priority)</u>	<u>Topic Area</u>	<u>Recommended Actions</u>	<u>Potential Partners / Funding Sources</u>
HP1	Land Use & Community Character	– Promote adaptive reuse of vacant and “zombie” buildings through streamlined permitting and incentives .	Town & Village Boards, NYSDOS, CCIDA
HP2	Land Use & Community Character	– Revise Village Zoning to reflect current conditions, encourage mixed-use development, adaptive reuse, and workforce housing. – Include ADUs, tiny homes, and manufactured housing provisions.	Town & Village Boards, Joint Planning Committee, NYSDOS, Consultants
HP3	Land Use & Community Character	– Develop Scenic Gateway Overlay with design standards for Village entrances to enhance identity and pride.	Town & Village Boards, Joint Planning Committee, NYSDOS, Consultants
HP4	Housing	– Study development opportunities for four vacant parcels for mixed-use housing. – Partner with housing agencies to underwrite development costs using LIHTC and AHC programs.	Village Board, Clinton Co. Housing Coalition, CCIDA, NYS HCR, AHC
HP5	Housing	– Comprehensively rehabilitate Cedar Street with trees, sidewalks, and code upgrades using CDBG/Small Cities funding.	Village Board, Clinton Co. Housing Coalition, CCIDA, NYS HCR, AHC
HP6	Housing	– Continue to promote the Village as a designated Pro-Housing Community.	Village Board, NYS HCR

<h3 style="text-align: center;"><u>Village of Champlain High Priority Implementation Actions</u></h3>			
<u>ID No. (Not in order of priority)</u>	<u>Topic Area</u>	<u>Recommended Actions</u>	<u>Potential Partners / Funding Sources</u>
HP7	Housing	– Promote and facilitate design of new mixed-income neighborhoods with green spaces and on-site wastewater BMPs.	Village Board, Clinton Co. Housing Coalition, CCIDA, NYS HCR, AHC
HP8	Economic Development	– Strengthen the Creative Economy through public art, murals, and cross-border cultural exchange.	Village Board, Champlain Arts Coalition, Chamber, CCIDA, NCREDC, NYS ESD, AEDC, ANCA
HP9	Economic Development	– Apply for NY Forward/DRI funding to revitalize the Village Center through façade improvements, adaptive reuse, and business recruitment.	Village Board, Chamber of Commerce, CCIDA, NCREDC, NYS ESD, NYS DEC, AEDC
HP10	Transportation & Mobility	– Implement Complete Streets throughout the Village; improve sidewalks, crosswalks, bike/ped safety, lighting, and signage; coordinate with Town and Rouses Point. -Jointly develop with the Town, a connected, paved, trail/path available for various modalities (Walk/Bike/Wheelchair/Roll) between the shopping and health centers and Village Street(s).	Village Board, School District, CCDOT, NYSDOT, CFA, TAP, OPRHP Town/Village/NYS DOT
HP11	Transportation & Mobility	– Improve public transit and regional connectivity through collaboration with Clinton County Transportation and private carriers.	Village Board, CCDOT, NYSDOT
HP12	Public Facilities & Infrastructure	– Continue maintain and improve public water and wastewater systems as appropriate and needed.	Village Board, Town Board, NYS EFC, USDA, NYSERDA
HP13	Public Facilities & Infrastructure	– Replace or redevelop Village municipal buildings and DPW garage to address accessibility and safety issues.	Village Board, Town Board, NYS EFC, USDA, NYSERDA

<u>Village of Champlain High Priority Implementation Actions</u>			
<u>ID No. (Not in order of priority)</u>	<u>Topic Area</u>	<u>Recommended Actions</u>	<u>Potential Partners / Funding Sources</u>
HP14	Public Facilities & Infrastructure	– Address infiltration and inflow (I/I) due to combined stormwater/wastewater systems.	Village Board, Town Board, NYS EFC, USDA
HP15	Natural, Recreational, Cultural & Historic Resources	– Continue improvements at Bill Earl Park, including a bandshell, kayak launch, and lighting.	Town & Village Boards, SWCD, LCBP, LCC, OPRHP, LCLGRPB, Tourism Council, NBRC, EPF
HP16	Natural, Recreational, Cultural & Historic Resources	– Restore culturally significant structures and institute a Main Street Historic District.	Town & Village Boards, OPRHP, NBRC, EPF
HP17	Resilience & Climate Adaptation	– Integrate green infrastructure and hazard mitigation projects using Chazy River flood studies. – Implement drainage improvements in the Village as needed.	Town & Village Boards, NYS DEC, FEMA, USACE, Clinton County Emergency Services
HP18	Resilience & Climate Adaptation	– Conduct engineering study for Great Chazy River dredging to restore navigability and reduce flooding.	Town & Village Boards, NYS DOS, DEC, FEMA, USACE
HP19	Governance & Intermunicipal Cooperation	– Promote cross-border cooperation and develop a Sister City partnership with Quebec or France.	Town & Village Boards, DOS, County Planning

Table 17: Village of Champlain High Priority Implementation Actions

<u>Village of Champlain Medium Priority Implementation Actions</u>			
<u>No. (Not in order of priority)</u>	<u>Topic Area</u>	<u>Recommended Actions</u>	<u>Potential Partners / Funding Sources</u>
MP1	Housing	– Develop an ADU Pilot Program with streamlined permitting and incentives.	Village Board, Clinton Co. Housing Coalition, NYS HCR
MP2	Housing	– Sponsor infill or scattered-site housing to expand senior and supportive options. Sponsor clustered senior and supportive housing near health and shopping centers and other amenities. Evaluate land options available to the Village and Town suitable for development.	Village Board, Clinton Co. Housing Coalition, NYS HCR, Town Board, Joint Committees.
MP3	Housing	– Support local workforce training in construction trades to address labor shortages.	Village Board, Clinton Co. Housing Coalition, BOCES, Workforce Development Board
MP4	Housing	– Promote local employment and residency to reduce commuting and strengthen community ties.	Village Board, CCIDA, Local Employers
MP5	Housing	– Engage employers in workforce housing initiatives.	Village Board, CCIDA, Local Employers
MP6	Housing	– Rehabilitate and modernize existing housing stock using CDBG/Small Cities grants.	Village Board, Clinton Co. Housing Coalition, NYS HCR, AHC
MP7	Economic Development	– Support Adirondack Coast Agri/Eco-tourism & Culinary Trail expansion with Village destinations.	Village Board, Chamber, ROOST, ANCA, Tourism Council
MP8	Economic Development	– Promote small business development and marketing for year-round residents and visitors.	Village Board, Chamber, AEDC, ANCA, NCREDC
MP9	Natural, Recreational, Cultural & Historic Resources	– Develop indoor/outdoor community gathering spaces (repurpose old Village Hall).	Village Board, NYSDOS, OPRHP

<h3 style="text-align: center;"><u>Village of Champlain Medium Priority Implementation Actions</u></h3>			
<u>No. (Not in order of priority)</u>	<u>Topic Area</u>	<u>Recommended Actions</u>	<u>Potential Partners / Funding Sources</u>
MP10	Natural, Recreational, Cultural & Historic Resources	– Participate in Great Chazy River/Lake Champlain Corridor Plan to enhance access and tourism linkages.	Town & Village Boards, LCBP, OPRHP, NBRC
MP11	Resilience & Climate Adaptation	-Continue to work towards Certification and Implementation of the NYS Climate Smart Community Framework	Climate Smart Community Task Force, NYS DEC, Village Board,
MP12	Resilience & Climate Adaptation	-Consult with Clinton County Emergency Management Department regarding status of, and necessity for future Village and Town Stormwater Planning.	Town & Village Boards, NYS DEC, DOS
MP13	Resilience & Climate Adaptation	– Expand energy efficiency and renewable initiatives, including EV stations and green infrastructure.	Village Board, NYSERDA, DEC, DOS
MP14	Governance & Intermunicipal Cooperation	– Improve cost and service efficiency via shared services and functional consolidation.	Town & Village Boards, County Planning, DOS
MP15	Governance & Intermunicipal Cooperation	– Ensure bylaws for all boards are current and publicly available.	Town & Village Boards
MP16	Governance & Intermunicipal Cooperation	– Form a Joint Planning & Implementation Committee; host workshops and publish progress reports.	Town & Village Boards, County Planning, DOS

<u>Village of Champlain Medium Priority Implementation Actions</u>			
<u>No. (Not in order of priority)</u>	<u>Topic Area</u>	<u>Recommended Actions</u>	<u>Potential Partners / Funding Sources</u>
MP 17	Land Use & Community Character	-Evaluate land use compatibility where municipal borders between the Town and the Villages meet in order to plan for future land use projects. Determine compatibility and consistency so that growth/development transitions in land use can be planned for when projects are proposed in the town/village boundary areas.	Town and Village Boards, Joint Committee.

Table 18: Village of Champlain Medium Priority Implementation Actions

Glossary

Introduction to the Glossary

This glossary has been prepared to make the Comprehensive Plan more accessible to all readers. It defines planning, legal, and environmental terms that may be unfamiliar to residents without a technical background. By providing clear, plain-language explanations, the glossary helps ensure that community members—including students, families, and lifelong residents—can fully understand the concepts, laws, and practices that guide the Town and Village of Champlain's future growth and development.

Glossary of Planning & Environmental Terms

Term	Definition
Accessibility	How easy it is for people to reach important places (jobs, schools, stores, parks, etc.) and services, including for people of all ages and with different mobility or economic means. ¹
Area Median Income (AMI)	The midpoint of household incomes in a region: half of households earn more, half earn less. It is a benchmark often used to decide whether housing is “affordable.” ²
Biodiversity	The variety of life in a particular place, including all plants, animals, fungi, and microorganisms, as well as the ecosystems they form. High biodiversity means a healthier, more resilient environment. ³
Brownfield	A property or land that was used in the past (often industrial or commercial) and is now underutilized or abandoned, sometimes because it may be contaminated; with cleanup, it can be reused. ⁴
Carbon Sink	A natural system (like a forest, soil, or ocean) that absorbs more carbon dioxide from the atmosphere than it releases, helping reduce climate change. ⁵
Champlain–Adirondack Biosphere Reserve	A region recognized by UNESCO as part of its “Man and the Biosphere” program, combining conservation of biodiversity with sustainable development and community involvement. ⁶
Complete Streets	Roadways designed so everyone can use them safely and comfortably — including people walking, biking, riding transit, and driving, regardless of age or ability. ⁷
Infrastructure	The physical systems and services that support a community — like roads, sidewalks, water pipes, power lines, transit, and communications networks. ⁸
Land Suitability Analysis	A process using maps and data to figure out which areas of land are good for building (factors like slope, soil, flood risk, etc.), and which areas are less suitable or risky. ⁹
Mixed-Use Development	Buildings or neighborhoods that combine multiple kinds of uses — for example, housing, shops, offices, and civic space — so people can live, work, shop, or socialize without always having to drive far. ¹⁰
Public Facilities / Services	The services and buildings provided for everyone by government or community organizations — such as schools, libraries, police/fire stations, parks, water, and sewer systems. ¹¹

Term	Definition
Smart Growth	A planning approach that directs growth in efficient, environmentally friendly ways that enhance quality of life. It emphasizes compact, walkable neighborhoods, preserving open space, and sustainable infrastructure. ¹²
Traffic Calming	Physical and design measures intended to slow down vehicle speeds, reduce traffic volume, and make streets safer for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users. Examples include speed bumps, curb extensions, or narrower lanes. ¹³
Walkability	How easy, safe, and pleasant it is to walk in a place — whether destinations are close enough, sidewalks are good, crossings safe, traffic reasonable, etc. A walkable area makes walking a realistic choice for daily needs. ¹⁴
Watershed	An area of land where all the rain and snow drains downhill into the same water body, such as a river, lake, or bay. ¹⁵
NYS Town Law §272-a (Comprehensive Plans)	New York law that gives towns the authority to prepare and adopt a “comprehensive plan” as a guide for future growth, development, and land use. It sets requirements for public hearings, filing with the town clerk and county, and ensuring zoning and other local laws are consistent with the plan. ¹⁶
NYS Village Law §7-722 (Comprehensive Plans)	New York law authorizes villages to create a comprehensive plan using maps, studies, goals, and policies to guide growth. It requires public input, environmental review under SEQRA, county referral, and adoption by resolution, after which the plan must be considered in local land-use decisions. ¹⁷

Glossary Footnotes

1. Oxford Review. *Accessibility in Urban Planning*.
2. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). *Area Median Income (AMI)*. huduser.gov.
3. National Geographic. *Biodiversity*. nationalgeographic.org.
4. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. *Brownfields Overview and Definition*.
5. NASA Earth Observatory. *Carbon Sink*. earthobservatory.nasa.gov.
6. UNESCO. *Champlain-Adirondack Biosphere Reserve*. en.unesco.org.
7. Smart Growth America. *What Are Complete Streets?*
8. Investopedia. *Infrastructure Definition*.
9. Smart Growth America. *Choosing Our Community's Future*.
10. Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis. *What Does Mixed-Use Development Mean?*
11. U.S. Legal. *Public Facility Law and Legal Definition*. uslegal.com.
12. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. *Smart Growth*.
13. Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE). *Traffic Calming*.
14. Wikipedia. *Walkability*.
15. NOAA. *What Is a Watershed?*
16. New York State Legislature. *Town Law §272-a: Town Comprehensive Plan*. nysenate.gov.
17. New York State Legislature. *Village Law §7-722: Village Comprehensive Plan*. nysenate.gov.

List of Appendices

The following supporting documents are available for review at the Town and Village websites and are listed by the chapters in which they are discussed in the Plan.

Community Profile. (Detailed information in the form of tables, charts, maps, and explanations.)

Chapter 1 - People, History, Economics and Culture

Chapter 2 - Natural Systems and Landscape Features

Chapter 3 - Existing and Future Land Use

Chapter 4 - Public Services and Facilities

Chapter 5 – Smart Growth Considerations

Appendix A Community Survey Final Report

Appendix B Plans and Initiatives Final Inventory

Appendix C Stakeholder Interview Report

Appendix D Community Visioning Report