

3.0 Community Survey

The participation of residents in the Comprehensive Plan is important, as decisions made upon the completion of the Plan will have a direct effect on the lives of residents. A community survey was completed in the Town of New Hartford in March of 2006. The survey was intended to measure the public opinion with respect to various issues and conditions that exist in the community. In addition, the survey was intended to provide residents with the opportunity to state their visions and goals for the future of the community.

The survey questions were divided into the following sections: Community Identity and Design, Culture and History, Community and Government Services, Land Use, Environment, Recreation, Circulation and Economy and Business Services. The survey also for some demographic data and other information about respondents including their ages, how long they have lived in New Hartford, etc.

The survey was distributed randomly to a total of 2,840 households, or one-third of New Hartford's Census 2000 population. Of these, 106 surveys could not be delivered. A total of 1,025 surveys were returned completed, representing a response rate of 37.5%. An effort was made to distribute the surveys proportionally between renters and homeowners. However, the response rate was much lower for renting households.

A response rate of 37.5% is generally considered excellent for a survey of this type. Due to the size of the community, the sample size created by the number of people who responded to survey exhibits a margin of error of $\pm 2.9\%$ with a confidence interval of 95%. The margin of error is based on a random sample.

While the survey was randomly distributed, the sample collected by those that responded is not a random representation of the Town. With all mail-back surveys, there is a certain degree of sample bias, in that a segment of the population chooses not to respond. People who respond to this type of survey are generally believed to be better educated and/or politically motivated. It should also be considered that those that responded to the survey have demonstrated a greater interest in the future of the Town.

3.1 Sample Profile

At the end of the survey, respondents were asked some demographic questions in order to get a general idea of the character of the sample. Where possible, figures from the 2000 census are shown in blue to present a comparison of the actual population. The census figures for age represent age of householders, not the population as whole.

Table 3-1 Survey Results: Sample Profile

Personal Information		1	2	3-5	6 plus	
How many people are in your household, including yourself?		18.1%	40.8%	39.2%	1.9%	
	Census	30.3%	34.7%	33.4%	1.7%	
What is your age?		20-34	35-49	50-64	65 plus	
		5.9%	27.8%	35.0%	31.3%	
	Census	11.2%	29.4%	26.1%	33.3%	
Do you own your home or rent?		Own	Rent			
		96.5%	3.5%			
	Census	74.7%	25.3%			
How long have you lived in the Town of New Hartford?		0-2 years	3-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	Over 15 years
		5.6%	8.4%	10.2%	9.8%	66.1%
What is the highest level of education you have completed		Below HS	HS	AS	BS	Post Graduate
		1.4%	21.9%	21.6%	26.6%	28.5%
	Census	13.5%	43.4%	10.1%	18.2%	14.8%

Source: peter j. smith & company, inc.

3.2 Community Identity and Design

Almost 95% of respondents believe that the Town of New Hartford has a residential/rural character that should be preserved. Most respondents (86%) believe that the aesthetics of residential buildings are high but landscaping in commercial areas needs improvement (63%). More respondents believe there should be additional office development (68%) than industrial (56%) or retail (50%) development.

Table 3-2 Survey Results: Community Identity and Design

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The Town of New Hartford has a "suburban/rural residential character" that should be preserved as development occurs	56.5%	37.6%	3.1%	2.2%	0.7%
The Town of New Hartford should encourage future residential growth	23.9%	51.2%	11.5%	11.0%	2.5%
The Town of New Hartford should encourage more retail development in appropriate areas throughout the Town	13.8%	36.1%	9.9%	27.5%	12.7%
The Town of New Hartford should encourage more professional office development in appropriate areas throughout the Town	17.6%	50.1%	15.4%	12.4%	4.6%
The Town of New Hartford should encourage more industrial development in appropriate areas throughout the Town	20.2%	36.1%	11.8%	22.3%	9.5%
Generally, the residential character/aesthetics of the Town of New Hartford is high	20.8%	65.1%	7.6%	5.8%	0.7%

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Generally, the character/aesthetics of commercial buildings in the Town of New Hartford are high	8.8%	56.6%	18.6%	14.3%	1.7%
Better landscaping in commercial areas is needed to improve the appearance of the Town of New Hartford	19.3%	44.1%	21.7%	13.6%	1.4%
New standards for commercial signs are needed to improve the appearance of the Town of New Hartford's commercial areas	16.9%	36.5%	29.6%	15.3%	1.7%

Source: peter j. smith & company, inc.

3.3 Culture and History

While respondents generally agree that library facilities are of a high quality (86%) and appreciate the Town's historic resources (64%), most (77%) also believed that efforts should be made to attract additional cultural offerings.

Table 3-3 Survey Results: Culture and History

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Library facilities in the Town of New Hartford are of a high quality	36.7%	49.3%	9.8%	4.0%	0.2%
I appreciate the Town of New Hartford's historic resources	19.8%	44.4%	32.3%	2.8%	0.7%
The Town should promote the attraction of additional cultural interests (theater, music, art) to enhance existing offerings	29.7%	46.8%	15.8%	6.3%	1.4%

Source: peter j. smith & company, inc.

3.4 Community and Government Services

Respondents were generally in agreement that the provision of emergency services and schools in the Town are high caliber. There is also a general consensus (95%) that new development projects should pay a fair share of infrastructure and improvement costs and that the community was safe (94%). Most (86%) respondents also believed that local governments should cooperate to reduce costs through the shared delivery of services.

Table 3-4 Survey Results: Community and Government Services

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
High quality fire services are available in the Town of New Hartford	46.8%	44.6%	6.8%	1.5%	0.3%
High quality police services are available in the Town of New Hartford	43.3%	45.7%	5.6%	3.7%	1.7%
High quality rescue services are available in the Town of New Hartford	43.8%	43.4%	11.4%	1.1%	0.4%
The schools in the Town of New Hartford are excellent and add to our quality of life	50.5%	39.6%	7.1%	2.4%	0.4%
There is good communication between school and Town officials	10.3%	31.3%	49.2%	7.8%	1.4%

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
New development projects should pay their fair share of cost for infrastructure and other improvements	60.7%	34.7%	3.2%	1.3%	0.2%
There are problems with the sewer systems in the Town of New Hartford	8.7%	18.0%	57.5%	14.1%	1.7%
Storm water systems are a problem in the Town of New Hartford	14.1%	27.7%	45.1%	11.7%	1.5%
The Town does an adequate job of notifying me of pending Town actions (hearings, Town Board votes, development approvals)	7.4%	50.3%	16.9%	21.0%	4.4%
I am knowledgeable about Town services and offices.	8.4%	58.2%	15.5%	16.0%	1.9%
I feel safe and secure in the Town of New Hartford	31.4%	62.3%	4.0%	2.0%	0.4%
The Town of New Hartford should encourage cooperation among area local governments to reduce government costs through shared delivery of service	47.6%	38.7%	8.3%	4.5%	0.9%
Town services should be consolidated in one location	26.5%	32.8%	28.0%	10.7%	1.9%

Source: peter j. smith & company, inc.

3.5 Land Use

The majority of respondents believe that protecting agricultural from development (69%) should be a priority in the Town. A smaller proportion (49%) want additional open space provided. Most residents (54%) say that a variety of housing types are available in the Town.

Table 3-5 Survey Results: Land Use

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The existing zoning code is effective and addresses issues related to our population	4.4%	39.2%	41.9%	12.1%	2.4%
The location and density of new residential development is appropriate for our neighborhoods	4.4%	56.4%	26.1%	11.6%	1.5%
A broad spectrum of housing types that meet a variety of needs, including housing that is affordable for individuals of all income levels, is available in the Town of New Hartford	5.7%	47.8%	17.8%	23.9%	4.8%
Protecting agricultural lands from future development should be a priority for the Town of New Hartford	27.2%	41.5%	18.5%	10.8%	2.0%
Additional open spaces are needed in the Town of New Hartford	15.3%	33.4%	34.2%	15.2%	1.8%

Source: peter j. smith & company, inc.

3.6 Environment

A majority (79%) of respondents believe that identifying and protecting environmentally sensitive lands should be a priority in the Town. The majority of respondents did not register strong feelings about noise and light pollution or erosion.

Table 3-6 Survey Results: Environment

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Reduction in noise from areas adjacent to residential areas is needed	13.7%	32.1%	36.8%	16.2%	1.2%
Reduction in light from areas adjacent to residential areas is needed	9.5%	24.7%	42.1%	21.2%	2.5%
Identification and protection of environmentally sensitive lands (wetlands, wooded areas, etc.) from future development should be a priority for the Town of New Hartford	35.9%	43.2%	11.2%	8.0%	1.8%
Appropriate steps are being taken to address erosion, storm water runoff and other sources that pollute surface and ground water resources	7.7%	26.4%	46.0%	15.2%	4.7%

Source: peter j. smith & company, inc.

3.7 Recreation

Most respondents believe a wide variety of activities/programs are available to residents (69%). However, they are not willing to pay more for additional recreation services (60%).

Table 3-7 Survey Results: Recreation

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
More passive recreational opportunities (bird watching, nature watching) are needed in the Town of New Hartford	8.3%	28.7%	38.6%	20.8%	3.7%
There is a need for additional parks/playground equipment	9.0%	26.6%	29.4%	30.7%	4.4%
There are a wide variety of activities/programs available to residents	9.1%	59.6%	18.9%	10.9%	1.5%
I would be willing to pay more for additional recreational services provided by the Town	3.8%	18.5%	18.0%	37.0%	22.8%

Source: peter j. smith & company, inc.

3.8 Circulation

Most respondents believe that road conditions in the Town were good (78%) and new roads were not needed (61%). A majority of respondents also believed that traffic volume along major roads was a problem (56%) and additional sidewalks were needed (54%).

Respondents were asked to identify roads in New Hartford that they believe have a volume issue or problem. Among 510 respondents who chose to answer this question, the majority (130) named Commercial Drive either singly or first in a list of roads they identify as traffic-volume-issue roads. Other roads respondents believe have volume issues include Seneca Turnpike, Chapman Road, Routes 5 and 5A, Kellogg Road, Route 12B, Higby Road, Kellogg Road and Oxford Road. The Jay-K intersection was singled out by 12 respondents as a volume issue.

Seneca Turnpike was first-named as a pedestrian safety issue among the 357 respondents who specified roads they believe present a pedestrian hazard. Genesee Street was the second-most specified. Higby Road, Commercial Drive, Oxford Road,

Route 5 and Kellogg Road were also named either singly or first in a list of pedestrian issue roads.

While 61% of respondents do not believe new roads are needed in New Hartford, 103 respondents specified needed roads with connections off Judd Road/Route 840 the most-named either singly or in a list of new roads needed. Commercial Drive and Route 5 were also named as centers for bypasses, better access or other connections.

Table 3-8 Survey Results: Circulation

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The Town of New Hartford should develop a network of trails (both pedestrian and cycling) that link existing parks and open spaces,	20.7%	39.8%	21.8%	13.2%	4.6%
More sidewalks are needed in the Town of New Hartford to link neighborhoods	21.1%	32.4%	20.7%	20.3%	5.4%
The condition of the roads in the Town of New Hartford is good	10.4%	67.8%	5.2%	13.9%	2.7%
The Town of New Hartford is adequately served by public transportation	4.6%	34.7%	40.7%	16.4%	3.6%
The volume of truck traffic is a problem in the Town of New Hartford	12.6%	24.7%	32.5%	28.0%	2.2%
Traffic volume along major roads is an problem in the Town of New Hartford	22.1%	33.9%	15.5%	26.8%	1.7%
Pedestrian safety is an issue/problem in some areas	13.1%	36.7%	31.4%	17.3%	1.6%
New roads are needed in the Town of New Hartford	Yes	No	N/A		
	16.2%	61.1%	22.7%		
I work within the Town of New Hartford	Yes	No	N/A		
	23.7%	60.5%	15.8%		

Source: peter j. smith & company, inc.

3.9 Economy and Business Services

More than 90% of respondents say they do the majority of their retail shopping in Town and more than 80% believe that the Town is a high profile business location in Oneida County; while more than 70% do not believe more large scale retail centers are needed in the Town. Among respondents, 63% say that agriculture-related activities should be promoted in the Town, but fewer than 50% believe that farming should be promoted.

Among 395 respondents who named a store they would like to see locate in New Hartford, more named the supermarket chain Wegmans either singly or first in a list of stores. Marshall’s was second-most named – although at the time of the survey, a Marshall’s was opening in nearby Rome and this event may have skewed the result. Other retailers either named singly or as part of a list were Dick’s Sporting Goods and Macy’s. Grocery and food stores, though not specific ones were named and other said upscale or high end stores without naming specific retailers are needed.

Table 3-9 Survey Results: Economy and Business

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The Town of New Hartford enjoys a reputation as a high profile business location in Oneida County	26.5%	55.6%	12.4%	5.3%	0.3%
Agriculture related activities should be promoted in the Town of New Hartford (festivals etc.)	17.6%	45.7%	26.2%	8.8%	1.7%
More large scale retail centers are needed in the Town of New Hartford	4.6%	12.4%	12.8%	40.9%	29.4%
Farming opportunities should be promoted in the Town of New Hartford	12.0%	36.3%	34.1%	14.8%	2.9%
I do the majority of my retail shopping in the Town of New Hartford	33.0%	57.3%	3.2%	5.2%	1.2%

Source: peter j. smith & company, inc.

3.10 Growth and Development

When asked about the level of annual population growth they would prefer in the Town 42% of respondents indicated 2-5%, meaning an annual population growth of 421 to 1,058 people per year, 37% of respondents indicated 1-2% and 15% indicated 0-1%. Few respondents say they want to Town to grow quickly.

Table 3-10 Survey Results: Growth and Development

The 2000 Census population of the Town was 21,172. What type of annual population growth would you prefer to see in the next 10 years: (Circle One)	
a.Minimal Growth - 0-1% growth (0-210 people/per year)	15.2%
b.Slow Growth - 1-2% growth (211- 420 people/per year)	36.8%
c.Moderate Growth - 2-5% growth (421-1058 people/per year)	41.6%
d.Moderately Fast Growth - 5-9% (1059-1905 people/per year)	5.1%
e.Rapid Growth - 10% plus growth (over 1905 people/per year)	1.4%

Source: peter j. smith & company, inc.

3.11 Personal Information

About two-thirds of survey respondents have lived in the Town of New Hartford for more than 15 years and the Town enjoys a high degree of loyalty from these residents with more than 70% indicating they have no plans to leave. Among respondents who say they will or may move away, reasons most frequently cited for this decision include taxes. Age, retirement and downsizing were also mentioned. Among respondents not planning to leave, reasons cited include family, "grew up here" and it's my home.

Respondents think of themselves as well informed about local government issues by only a slim margin; 54% say they are well informed. Most, 78%, say they are unfamiliar with the Town Comprehensive Plan.

Table 3-11 Personal Information

	0-2 years	3-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	Over 15 years
How long have you lived in the Town of New Hartford?	5.6%	8.4%	10.2%	9.8%	66.1%
Do you have plans to move from the Town of New Hartford	Yes	No	Maybe		
	5.1%	71.6%	23.4%		
I am familiar with the Town of New Hartford’s current Comprehensive Plan	Yes	No			
	22.3%	77.7%			
Generally, I consider myself well informed about local government issues and operation in the Town of New Hartford	53.9%	46.1%			

Source: peter j. smith & company, inc.