



### MEETING SUMMARY

PURPOSE: Public Open House & Visioning Workshop

DATE/TIME: March 20, 2023, 7:00-9:00 PM

LOCATION: Guilderland Town Hall, 5209 Western Turnpike, Guilderland, NY

Agenda Item	Discussion
<p><b>Overview</b></p>	<p>The Town of Guilderland has initiated an update to its existing Comprehensive Plan, which was adopted in 2001. The Comprehensive Plan will provide a blueprint for long-range planning in the community.</p> <p>On Monday, March 20, 2023, the first public open house and visioning workshop for the Guilderland Comprehensive Plan Update was held. The event took place at Guilderland Town Hall from 7:00-9:00 PM. Over 100 residents, property owners, business owners, and other stakeholders participated in the event.</p> <p>The open house format allowed participants to informally walk through eleven (11) activity stations to learn about the project at their own pace and provide their input and ideas. A Participant Guide was provided to attendees to guide them through the various stations.</p> <p>The activity stations included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Station 1 – Project Overview</li> <li>• Station 2 – Community Profile</li> <li>• Station 3 – Community Vision</li> <li>• Station 4 – Challenges &amp; Opportunities</li> <li>• Station 5 – Places We Gather</li> <li>• Station 6 – Serving the Generations</li> <li>• Station 7 – Getting Around Town</li> <li>• Station 8 – Idea Station</li> <li>• Station 9 – Kids Corner</li> <li>• Station 10 – Take the Survey</li> <li>• Station 11 – Other Thoughts and Ideas</li> </ul>

<p><b>Overview (Cont'd)</b></p>	<p>Additionally, participants had the opportunity to speak with Town staff, CPUC members and the Project Team and also, share written ideas and/or comments on comment cards.</p> <p>Workshop materials are provided as attachments to this summary. Attachments include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant Guide for Activity Stations</li> <li>• Open House Stations</li> </ul> <p><b>Common themes arising from all input received include: (in no particular order)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desire for a more walkable and bikeable community</li> <li>• Value of open space and agriculture to the community</li> <li>• Concerns about housing type and affordability</li> <li>• Safety and aesthetic concerns on Route 20</li> <li>• Concerns about water supply and water quality</li> </ul>
<p><b>Activity Station 1: What is a Comprehensive Plan?</b></p>	<p>This station provided information about the Comprehensive Plan Update. This station provided context about the purpose of a Comprehensive Plan and the roles of the consultant team, Town staff, and the Comprehensive Plan Update Committee (CPUC). CPUC members were identified by name:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jim Abbruzzese</li> <li>• Cody Betton</li> <li>• Richard Brustman</li> <li>• Tara Cristalli</li> <li>• Caitlin Ferrante</li> <li>• Lisa Hart</li> <li>• Elizabeth Lott</li> <li>• Dominic Rigosu</li> <li>• Stephen O. Wilson</li> </ul>
<p><b>Activity Station 2: Guilderland Town Demographics and Mapping</b></p>	<p>This station provided an overview of Town demographics and growth trends. Town population, population growth, and age group percentages were displayed in tables, accompanied by a brief narrative highlighting notable data from the tables.</p> <p>Four (4) maps were displayed at this station:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Area</li> <li>• Zoning</li> <li>• Parks &amp; Open Space</li> <li>• Environmental Constraints</li> </ul> <p>The Project Area map depicted the boundary of the Town of Guilderland, showing neighboring municipalities, indicating the overall amount of</p>



<p><b>Activity Station 2: Guilderland Town Demographics and Mapping (Cont'd)</b></p>	<p>acreage in the Town, and noting that the Village of Altamont was not included within the Project Area.</p> <p>The Zoning map depicted the current zoning of all parcels within the Town, using different colors to indicate different zoning districts. Agricultural districts were also included on this map, denoted by diagonal crosshatching.</p> <p>The Parks and Open Space map depicted local and State parks located within the Town, as well as outdoor recreation areas such as golf courses. Conserved lands such as the Pine Bush were also depicted on this map.</p> <p>The Environmental Constraints map depicted areas of steep slopes, wetlands, and flood zones within the Town, and included acreage figures for each. An explanatory note was included beneath the map, stating that the mapped environmental constraints play a role in determining appropriate land uses.</p>
<p><b>Activity Station 3: What's your Vision?</b></p>	<p>The Vision station provided an opportunity for participants to share their Vision for the Town of Guilderland over the next 5, 10 and 20 years.</p> <p><b>Common themes included:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walkability and bikeability</li> <li>• Value of open space</li> <li>• Value of agriculture</li> <li>• Traffic concerns</li> <li>• Visual/aesthetic appeal</li> </ul> <p><b>Ideas expressed through this exercise include (in no particular order):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I'd like more hiking trails and better walking connections between neighborhoods. Better sidewalks</li> <li>• Make single family lot sizes bigger.</li> <li>• Residential, open spaces, balanced growth</li> <li>• More public swimming pools indoor &amp; outdoor</li> <li>• Family friendly</li> <li>• Cleaner from garbage</li> <li>• Control/sprawl, over development, turning community into Colonie.</li> <li>• All the remaining privately owned Pine Bush ecosystem has been acquired and added to the Pine Bush Preserve</li> <li>• Keep open spaces for the future.</li> <li>• Preserve delicate ecosystem, stop the blacktop (ex-Costco), fix Rt 20 Blight</li> <li>• A quiet easy to live in, family-oriented town. A place where families and children can thrive.</li> </ul>

**Activity Station 3: What's  
your Vision?  
(Cont'd)**

- Walkable
- Less development (ex-Costco, Strip Malls) more affordable senior housing, less “McMansions”. Bike trails and walkable, less traffic (Rt 20)
- Open space
- Affordable
- A pleasant desirable place to live, safety, air quality, reduced traffic.
- 80-90% residential, 10% commercial (light industrial), 0% heavy industrial
- Sidewalks connecting neighborhoods and businesses.
- Keep the farmland, less traffic.
- Pedestrian bike and bus available, aging population need to get around.
- Pine Bush Preserve- bigger and better.
- While allowing growth, have developers give money instead of land for Parks & Rec. Taking property off the tax roles for parks is not the way to go. We have parks that can be upgraded.
- Balance; Business, Residential and Public Space.
- Point system for commercial buildings which evaluates the proposed building for aesthetically pleasing structures.
- Encourage agriculture by tax bracket.
- Visually appealing architecture, particularly commercial. Safe and friendly.
- Promoting small businesses like Stuyvesant Plaza was decades ago.
- Already too many apartment complexes.
- Tree replacement. Builders must replace trees cut down for building.
- Sidewalks on both sides of the street.
- Would like to see abandoned property on Rt 20 cleaned up, bought & developed to improve our main roadway.
- Preserve the remaining Pine Bush within town boundaries.
- Safer pedestrian crossings on Western Ave.
- Stop Albany Country Clubs’ growth.
- All the streets are bike friendly.
- Dedicated bike lane down Old State/Fuller station (already on bike maps).
- Heavily treed, less lawn, native gardens, quitter, less pollution
- I’d like to see a few nice pubs in the residential areas!
- More nature saved!
- More open spaces, natural places, farms and agriculture preserved, bikeable.

<p><b>Activity Station 3: What's your Vision? (Cont'd)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More Pine Bush Preserve, save the PB ecosystem, no more monster malls and hotels, no Costco, more open space like in the past.</li> <li>• Maintain suburban feel and structure.</li> <li>• Sidewalks connecting neighborhoods.</li> <li>• Require historical facades on commercial buildings.</li> <li>• A “community” that is that. Resident input and careful concern shown to sustainability. Strongly restrict constant development. Strengthen agriculture and green space.</li> <li>• Retaining the very character of town as something I will still recognize as home!</li> <li>• More accessible places for pedestrians.</li> <li>• Take care of what we already have- Redevelop eye sores, plan affordable housing in already urban areas.</li> <li>• More tech and advanced manufacturing companies.</li> <li>• Splash pad at Tawasentha; slide at the pool.</li> <li>• Preserve the farmlands &amp; woods, less traffic, slower development.</li> <li>• Bring art to Guilderland outside &amp; inside.</li> <li>• Bike trails so we don't have to ride 146 to get to Tawasentha or Altamont Village.</li> <li>• Less traffic on Rt 20.</li> <li>• No more apartments!</li> <li>• Commercial development on Rt 20 corridor should be more visually appealing.</li> <li>• No new multi family development, smaller subdivisions. Rehab overpopulation on Rt 20. Change Rt 20 from 4 lanes to 2 lanes.</li> <li>• Expand public transportation. Expanded sidewalks. Expanded streetlights.</li> <li>• A walkable, bikeable town with multiple green spaces (parks, open fields, forests and farms). Some form of electrical public transit to cut down the need for cars.</li> <li>• Support local farms, no industrial or high-density housing.</li> <li>• Quality public space.</li> <li>• Conserve agricultural land.</li> <li>• Growth that allows for open space protection.</li> <li>• Bicycle and pedestrian lanes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Activity Station 4: Challenges &amp; Opportunities</b></p>	<p>This station encouraged participants to share their insight about challenges and opportunities for the Town.</p>



**Activity Station 4:  
Challenges &  
Opportunities  
(Cont'd)**

**Common challenges and concerns raised included:**

- Water Supply
- Traffic Concerns
- Maintain Town Character
- Type and amount of residential development

**Challenges identified by participants include (in no particular order):**

- Preserve old growth of forests and wetlands.
- Quality of life, impact on the value of property and desirability of town to retain residents.
- Greenspaces do not equal development with lawns.
- Worried about water supply, affordable housing, over development.
- Less population and apartments, more preserve, quieter/less traffic.
- Traffic too fast, angry and aggressive.
- A comprehensive plan should be that. Increase concern for the future by initiating development for communities.
- Sidewalks on both sides of the street.
- Water supply for town, hook up to Village of Altamont.
- Changing zoning codes to justify apartments (residential)
- Air & water quality and availability. Water causing flooding/clogging.
- Traffic congestion, too many apartment buildings.
- Meaningful recreation spaces.
- Quality and reliability of potable water. Sustained stream and reservoir fishing.
- No development near reservoir.
- Keep the trees we have. Discourage the predominant use of cars.
- Town needs to be populated within its means. Overextending infrastructure is a major concern.
- Traffic, over development with apartments.
- Stop building large apartment complexes. Too much traffic. Need fields and meadows.
- Town boards always side with commercial property owners, not residents.
- New fresh government!
- Town does not always follow current campaign plan.
- Traffic speed and volume. Heavy trucks and fast cars.
- NYS all electric plan for housing is a bad idea for reliability (cost and storms).

**Activity Station 4:  
Challenges &  
Opportunities  
(Cont'd)**

- We need a greater diversity in choice of housing. Most new homes are less than 2500 square feet. Need smaller, more affordable and sustainable homes.
- Diverse population, stay at home support, green space, solar farm, power line right of ways.
- Cramming in houses by reducing lot size. Must set standard, larger than those on Gregory, Coons, Coffee etc.
- We should keep the neighborhood plans from 20 years ago in addition to the updated come plan.
- Set back from Rt 20, 155 + 146 for commercial buildings. Require trees and bushes to beautify the entrance.
- Need standard for commercial building design. No more metal buildings nor storage units on main roads (Rt 20, 146, 155).
- Don't let the State dictate zoning.
- More town services in McKownville
- Want to continue the requirement for 2-acre lots in Western Guilderland.
- Not anywhere near enough open space. A car culture dominated by impatient, aggressive drivers who tailgate. Uncrossable roads.
- Getting the school to stop spending money. The school tax isn't sustainable to live in Guilderland.
- Need to enforce zoning rules to comply with environmental laws before the trees come down.
- Concerned about roads in bad shape and roadsides not being mowed, weed whacked or maintained.
- Enough of overpriced "senior" apartments.
- Future of Crossgates Mall. Traffic on Western Ave.
- Moved here because of its quiet "country like" feel, now its too busy and commercial.
- Too many new high-rise apartments.
- Rail Liner- town safety. 1<sup>st</sup> responder training. Town Oversight on cooperative involvement with NYS.
- Too much wood burning. Too much pollution. Less lawn- more native growth. Quieter/less traffic roar.
- Underutilized buildings on Rt 20.
- Open fire pits in rear lots near trees are a risk.
- Lack of sidewalks.
- Too much development, commercial & residential (large apartment complexes).
- Too much growth (apartments) will result in overcrowded schools needing to expand. Higher school taxes.
- Traffic, taxes, overdevelopment.
- Traffic by Crossgates Mall. Safety, schools crowded.

**Activity Station 4:  
Challenges &  
Opportunities  
(Cont'd)**

- Route 20 has some ugly commercial buildings.
- Kids should be able to walk or ride their bikes to school.
- There are not enough places to walk or bike.
- Old unused eye sore buildings along Western need to go!
- Traffic on Rt 20 + 146 is above speed limits and people pass on double yellow lines.
- Traffic, loss of farmland, high school congestion.
- Protect Farmland, help keep agriculture financially viable.
- Traffic, traffic, traffic.
- Less apartments, too much traffic on Western Ave.
- Speed Enforcement on Fuller Station Rd.
- Don't let developers keep encroaching on Pine Bush. 700+ parking spaces for Costco is a shame!
- Derelict buildings on Rt 20 are wasted space, eye sores and bring down property values.
- Mall = scar on earth. High rise hotel = scar. Too much development is destroying the unique Pine Bush habitat. We owe it to the future residents to preserve more of it.
- Too much traffic. We are not a city! Stop building apartments. It's too much!
- Nearly unlimited new housing seems to be a goal of the town board with little regard to quality-of-life issues for current residents.
- A commercial area should be planned so parking is placed behind the building. Western Ave looks like a long parking lot made to look like a town.
- Water & resources pollution, decline of birds and bees.
- Educating on the means to the was (ex- density, open space)
- No sense of place (lacks character)
- No town/community center
- Water and sewer capacities with increased development
- Sprawling development
- Loss of agricultural land
- Speed enforcement
- Minimum apartment buildings
- Not walkable, bikeable, lots of open space
- Trash on the sides of roads
- Too many malls
- Would like restrictions on solar fields in Western Guilderland

**Activity Station 4:  
Challenges &  
Opportunities  
(Cont'd)**

***Common opportunities and strengths raised included:***

- Engaged residents
- Parks and Trails
- Library and Schools

***Opportunities and strengths identified by participants include (in no particular order):***

- Gade farm, Stuyvesant Plaza, UAlbany
- Small groups of dedicated citizens who want the town to develop responsibly.
- Young, diverse college population of potential residents
- Diversity of people and businesses, good schools, friendly atmosphere
- Smaller community, friendly
- Greater attention to keeping natural resources vital and protected.
- If the town is not trashed by rapid development, it has the opportunity to stay desirable.
- Plan and conduct more community involvement & develop plans to encourage that.
- Pine Bush/open space, library, school district
- Dense housing, micro communities (walkable & bikeable)
- Cohesive zoning to manage commercial development.
- Affordable housing for families and seniors, many small businesses
- Being able to buy local produce, leave farms alone!
- Good, friendly employees
- Good government, snow removal, leaf and yard pickup
- Diverse cultural programs and events
- Residents interested in the future. We can grow the strengths of our community.
- Library, schools, parks
- Blend of rural, commercial, residential
- Tawasentha Park, Pine Bush Preserve, library, school.
- Re-use of Brownfields for commercial use
- The YMCA, library and local businesses are great.
- Add more sidewalks and bike lanes that are safe for kids and adults.
- Add more community gardens.
- No more commercial development below 155.
- Great parks, good schools, wonderful library.

<p><b>Activity Station 4: Challenges &amp; Opportunities (Cont'd)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The transfer station, Brownfield, should be covered with solar panels to power the town.</li> <li>• The schools are great but won't be if development continues.</li> <li>• Change and adjust zoning only in compliance with the comp plan.</li> <li>• Building moratorium, if you don't know where you are going any road will get you there.</li> <li>• Gade Farm- nice but overdeveloped and unsafe road crossing. Golf course could use nicer/more architectural buildings.</li> <li>• Western Golf Course upgrade.</li> <li>• Great parks and trails but they should connect to regional trail system.</li> <li>• Lots of blank, ugly spaces to fill with landscaping.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Activity Station 5: Places We Gather</b></p>	<p>Participants used stickers representing a variety of activities to identify the places they gather in the community and what they are doing there. The activities represented education, religious &amp; spiritual, shopping, recreation, socializing, dining, and neighborhood.</p> <p><b>The following highlights locations for where attendees gather most:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shopping: largely clustered around the intersection of Route 20 and Carman Road, as well as around Crossgates Mall and Stuyvesant Plaza</li> <li>• Dining: Clustered along Route 20 in Westmere and McKownville, as well as in the Village of Altamont</li> <li>• Socializing: Clustered around the Library, the Mall, and in the Village of Altamont</li> <li>• Recreation: Clustered in Tawasentha Park, Vosburgh Trails, DiCaprio Park and the Pine Bush</li> <li>• Neighborhood: Clusters of respondents from McKownville, Altamont, Ft. Hunter, and Westmere, as well as isolated responses in the rural western areas of Town</li> </ul>
<p><b>Activity Station 6: Serving the Generations</b></p>	<p>This station encouraged participants to share their insight about generational needs. Generations tend to share similar characteristics and have similar needs for services, housing, shopping, learning, healthcare, transportation. The generations are categorized by birth year and include Traditionalists or Silent Generation: Born 1945 and before; Baby boomers: Born 1946- 1964; Generation X: Born 1965- 1980; Millennials or Generation Y: Born 1981- 1995; and Generation Z: Born after 1996.</p> <p><b>Common themes identified in multiple generations include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve walkability and bikeability throughout the community</li> <li>• Need for gathering places (e.g., pool, senior center, fitness areas)</li> <li>• Housing needs</li> </ul>

**Activity Station 6:  
Serving the Generations  
(Cont'd)**

**Traditionalists or Silent Generation: Born 1945 and before:**

- None

**Baby boomers: Born 1946- 1964:**

- More parks
- Traffic- speeding in neighborhoods
- More green space, control of traffic on 146, keep Guilderland countrified.
- Traffic is a major issue!
- Fix traffic congestion, safe recreational spaces.
- Roadways and walkways in proper repair and access.
- Easier to find information about senior programs.
- More turning lanes
- Cut branches in road on E. Lydius St for better vision.
- Slow traffic to safe speeds
- Affordable single-family housing built new for under \$200,000.
- A nice local pub within walking distance of home.
- Clear the snow from sidewalks.
- Vibrant senior center.
- Safer traffic flow
- Wider sidewalks
- Enforcement of zoning rules
- Kids and teens could benefit from a town recreation center: pool tables, ping pong, a safe place to hang out.

**Generation X: Born 1965- 1980:**

- Public transportation
- Safe bike lanes to commute to work or school.
- Walkable communities, safe recreation (biking, hiking, walking)
- Improved traffic
- Places for leisure with kids
- Bike paths
- Fitness opportunities
- Smaller, more sustainable housing
- Mid-level housing
- Keeping Guilderland a town, not an extension of Albany
- Affordable taxes

**Millennials or Generation Y: Born 1981- 1995;**

- Transportation
- Green infrastructure
- Education

<p><b>Activity Station 6: Serving the Generations (Cont'd)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality affordable housing</li> <li>• Daycare, universal Pre-K that is not lottery based.</li> <li>• Bike lanes and walking paths.</li> <li>• Affordable apartments- don't build more, make those affordable that are there now.</li> <li>• Daycare, education</li> </ul> <p><b>Generation Z: Born after 1996;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fun places to hangout (community pool)</li> <li>• More nature</li> <li>• Easier to get basic living needs.</li> <li>• Sidewalks, bike lanes</li> <li>• Presentation of natural science programs in town parks and historic sights</li> <li>• Smaller living opportunities that cost less money</li> </ul>
<p><b>Activity Station 7: Getting Around Town</b></p>	<p>Participants were asked to identify on a map where they walk, bike, or use public transportation by affixing stickers with icons representing each travel mode.</p> <p><b>The following highlights areas in the Town that were most identified with each mode of travel:</b></p> <p>Walking: Dispersed throughout the Town, and clustered in Tawasentha Park, the Village of Altamont, and along Gardner Road in the western area of Town</p> <p>Biking: Dispersed widely around the Town – around destinations like the Library, High School, and Crossgates Mall, as well as along the entire length of the Route 20 corridor through Town, and in all neighborhood areas</p> <p>Public Transportation: Clustered along Route 20, especially near UAlbany, the Library, and the intersection with Carman Road.</p>
<p><b>Activity Station 8: Idea Station</b></p>	<p>At the Idea Center, participants were asked to share ideas about a variety of topic areas including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• History &amp; Recreation</li> <li>• Neighborhoods &amp; Housing</li> <li>• Infrastructure &amp; Transportation</li> <li>• Economic Development &amp; Agriculture</li> </ul>



**Activity Station 8: Idea Station (Cont'd)**

**Themes in Neighborhoods and Housing:**

- Development concerns
- Need for community center
- Preservation of historic and agricultural resources

**Input received about Guilderland's community character, neighborhoods, and housing types include (in no particular order):**

- Good blend of uses/zoning.
- Planned communities' incentive, redevelopment of abandoned properties.
- No more apartments & multi-family housing! (x 6)
- We need a large community center for folks to gather & interact.
- It seems that the country hamlet designation is being used very liberally to allow cluttering of homes in rural areas.
- Very little almost no good architecture (commercial or residential).
- No war on suburbia. Protect single family housing.
- I support affordable housing; apartments are part of that picture!
- Need a community center for town activities.
- Trails that connect neighborhoods, more art.
- Diversity of housing options is important. More sustainable housing needed (smaller efficient, affordable).
- Avoid wind and solar on residential lots, avoid industrial look to town.
- No more apartments, less taxes [multiple occurrences of this message]
- Stop with developments approvals until comp plan is finalized and approved.
- More art done by kids and adults/ do neighborhood activities.
- Higher taxes put to good use such as better, safer roads, more sidewalks. Paths, recreational opportunities to create a more livable sustainable community.
- Respect and maintain historical significance.
- Neighborhoods are not valued by the town in favor of an imbalance with industry.
- Neighborhoods are being destroyed by stores, malls and commercial property!
- Connecting and welcoming undergraduate and graduate student population
- Connect buses/bus routes with apartment complexes.
- Neighborhoods with historical presence need to be preserved.

**Activity Station 8: Idea Station (Cont'd)**

- Maintain and support farmland.
- Resist governments political push to eliminate zoning.
- Keep our gas stove.
- Removal or renovation of vacant/condemned properties.
- Paint fire hydrants.

**Themes in History and Recreation include:**

- Maintenance and preservation of existing resources
- Ideas for expanded programming
- Suggestions for increased community art

**Input received about History and Recreation include (in no particular order):**

- More tennis courts.
- Add community art.
- Walking trails like Pine Bush, Willow Street
- Nature trails are nice but there are lots of ticks.
- Tawasentha is great!
- Keep what we have and take care of it.
- Add bronze sculptures of significant history like Schenectady is doing.
- Tree & ecosystem preservation
- Preserving our cultural and natural history is important. Not only does it keep the past alive, but it creates a sense of place.
- Tawasentha is beautiful, Pine Bush trails are all good except for Westmere is swamp land.
- DiCaprio soccer fields
- Preserve more of the globally unique Pine Bush Ecosystem
- How about historic tours? We have a lot of history here that few know.
- More diverse recreational opportunities.
- More trails, less building! Improve what we have!
- Need more pocket parks or park updates.
- Community theater arts program.
- Art focus
- Walking trails & nature preserves
- Add a second pool.
- Honor the values of meaningful historic structures
- Superb historic aspects of town in schools
- Rent wars- history at its bat.
- We need dedicated bike paths through the whole town.
- Continue to restore and maintain Schoolcraft and Munderse Fredrick houses.

**Activity Station 8: Idea Station (Cont'd)**

- Don't forget glass house the glass production in The Pine Bush
- Parks should organize more gatherings.
- More cultural celebrations and community events
- Historical facilities on commercial buildings on major highways organized and popular programming in the town's green spaces
- The trails and parks are great.
- Historical properties need attention before it's too late.
- The town should closely monitor any tree removal. At a certain point we will need to replace every tree cut down for development or some reason.
- Guilderland should acquire all the available privately owned Pine Bush ecosystem.
- Field trips in schools to learn about history, also more informational signs.
- Soccer fields

**Themes in infrastructure include:**

- Water supply concerns
- Renewable energy opportunities
- Making utility infrastructure resilient

**Input received about infrastructure include (in no particular order):**

- Water system upgrades and renewable energy.
- Solar power! [multiple occurrences of this message]
- Invest in water quality.
- Paint fire hydrants
- Underground utilities in places with frequent outages [multiple occurrences of this message]
- Smart town atmosphere sustained by encouraging future land development in/near more intense – use central places.
- Not enough water available in the summer – too many restrictions.
- Reduce neighborhood speed limits, 30MPH is too fast.
- Make sure water pipes stay up to date.
- Knowing your exact source of water.
- More frequent trash pickups to avoid build up of trash on roadways.

**Themes in transportation and mobility include:**

- Sidewalks and pedestrian safety
- Traffic improvements
- Public transportation



**Activity Station 8: Idea Station (Cont'd)**

***Input received about transportation and mobility (bicycles, pedestrians, vehicles, transit, accessibility and connectivity, etc.) include (in no particular order):***

- Need a traffic circle at 155/20 intersection.
- The bike rack is at the town hall – not useful.
- Reroute Rapp & Costco away from Rt 20.
- The sidewalk on the side of Rt 20 and the Northway is a hazard. Right turn on red after exiting the Northway makes a driver/pedestrian hazard.
- Safer pedestrian crossings length of Rt 20.
- Enforce speed limits!
- Sidewalk should not end at Northway ramp.
- Add flashing pedestrian lights at Northway exit on Fuller rd.
- Improve traffic flow at Western & 155.
- Electric public transportation.
- Rush hour traffic is a problem.
- 6 dirt bikes, no license plate on Fuller Station Rd.
- Work toward developing a town center that is walkable/bikeable. Roads and the new buildings are too large for that community.
- The city of Glens Falls doesn't need to bus its students; they can all walk to school. How cool is that? That would solve a lot of problems in Guilderland.
- Need more public transportation.
- Help optimize industrial park but not increase traffic.
- Please make a turning lane from Carman & Old State.
- Please keep 18 wheelers off Willow St.
- I miss the 763 bus, I used to ride to work at Albany Med.
- Connection between neighborhoods and shopping, buses. More bike paths.
- E. Lydia's St could have improved sight lines by reducing size of the road. It's not safe for delivery trucks and school buses.
- Green infrastructure- charging stations, less congestion on Western.
- More signs in traffic circles. Remind people to yield to those in the circle, remind them about speed.
- Impossible to enter or exit our own streets.
- Less buses, less traffic.
- Traffic has become difficult and impairs quality of life. Fix this before expanding developments.
- Bike paths, bike lanes, hiking trails and sidewalks. All leading to a nice neighborhood pub!
- Need safer pedestrian crossings.

**Activity Station 8: Idea Station (Cont'd)**

- Safe bike/pedestrian lanes.
- More sidewalks in neighborhoods.
- Connectivity, bikes & walking.
- Implement measures to slow down traffic in residential areas.

**Themes in economic development include:**

- Support local businesses
- Enhance visual appeal of commercial corridors
- Concerns about Crossgates and Costco

**Input received about economic development (retail, commercial, business) include (in no particular order):**

- More small local businesses [multiple occurrences of this message]
- Discourage chain stores so Guilderland isn't a cookie cutter community.
- Keep it small, that's why we moved here.
- Redevelop eyesore areas to attract new businesses.
- Wish we had an Art school for kids & adults.
- Encourage small local businesses for their uniqueness. This is to encourage people to shop here and not at all the places where they all have the same stores as 90% of the country.
- Good diversity of businesses, continue to invest in small businesses.
- Make a beautiful entry into Guilderland with flower beds.
- Easier access to food stores.
- Don't need Costco [multiple occurrences of this message]
- Space for a farmers' market.
- Fix, repair, maintain. Growth does not reduce the cost of operating the town.
- Lower taxes.
- Stop approving zoning changes and exceptions.
- Congested traffic needs to be assessed before new growth.
- Quality not quantity- make what we already have better.
- Crossgates gets a tax break, we should all get the same percentage reduction. Build Costco in one of the Crossgates parking lots.
- Develop a plan to make commercial corridors more attractive.
- Fix up abandoned businesses and stores on Rt 20.
- Keep good setbacks for commercial buildings on major roads.
- Affordable housing

<p><b>Activity Station 8: Idea Station (Cont'd)</b></p>	<p><b>Themes in Agriculture include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservation Easements</li> <li>• Preservation of agricultural land</li> <li>• Sustainable agricultural practices</li> </ul> <p><b>Input received about Agriculture include (in no particular order):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserve agricultural land [multiple occurrences of this message]</li> <li>• Taxes need to be affordable.</li> <li>• Conservation easements [multiple occurrences of this message]</li> <li>• Farms are being lost to development.</li> <li>• Use less pesticides.</li> <li>• Plant more wildflowers for bees and other pollinators being affected by climate change.</li> <li>• Sustainable farming practices, increase agricultural land.</li> <li>• Increase community involvement in land use, increase green practices, restrict tree cutting, constant building without concern for sustainability.</li> <li>• Encourage farming.</li> <li>• Community gardens near apartments &amp; condos.</li> <li>• Respect zoning guidelines.</li> <li>• Opportunities for young farmers.</li> <li>• No building in Pine Bush preserves eco system. Build apartments in empty stores.</li> <li>• Indoor &amp; outdoor farmer's market.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Activity Station 9: Kids Corner</b></p>	<p>This was a place for kids to be creative and share their ideas. Comments received included pictures of a waterslide at the Town pool and a picture of an expansive children's playground.</p>
<p><b>Activity Station 10: Take the Survey</b></p>	<p>The station included a tablet enabling participants to take the online community survey. Which is available at <a href="https://www.research.net/r/Guilderlandsurvey">https://www.research.net/r/Guilderlandsurvey</a></p>
<p><b>Activity Station 11: Other Thoughts and Ideas</b></p>	<p>This station included an opportunity for any additional thoughts and ideas. The thoughts shared are listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accountability for use of ideas and input for community involvement from comprehensive plan.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Activity Station 11: Other Thoughts and Ideas (Cont'd)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guilderland is a great place to live. Continued investment in schools and businesses.</li> <li>• Look at what the towns in Maryland have done around D.C. to make them still look like a town-controlled central shopping area.</li> <li>• Reduce the taxes so senior citizens can stay in their homes.</li> <li>• The comprehensive plan committee needs to truly be engaged in a leadership role. Is there a chairman yet?</li> <li>• Find a way to fix the toxic lands problem along Rt 20, the old dry cleaner and service station properties.</li> <li>• Republish current plan in the paper. Enforce rules we already have.</li> <li>• Endangered wildlife habitat protection.</li> <li>• Too much traffic in Guilderland Center.</li> <li>• Get rid of Bigots.</li> <li>• Keep small town feel, stop building! [multiple occurrences of this message]</li> <li>• Town and school tax is too high, especially for people with no children in schools!</li> <li>• Why do we have DEI people in such a diverse community?</li> <li>• Stop granting exceptions to zoning codes.</li> <li>• The comprehensive plan when completed, must be followed. After all this input and work to ignore it would be a sin.</li> <li>• Zoning codes to be respected.</li> <li>• Seek more representation from the diverse immigrant groups in the community.</li> <li>• Help for people who are technologically challenged.</li> <li>• Better looking commercial architecture- friendly, warm, welcoming, calming.</li> <li>• Guilderland has amazing potential.</li> <li>• No school taxes to DEI causes.</li> <li>• Stabilize tax levy.</li> <li>• Enough "staff" in Guilderland Center.</li> <li>• Protect the Watervliet Reservoir. I have seen trucks dumping here.</li> <li>• Follow the laws already in place.</li> <li>• Deliberate, planned development.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Input Provided on Written Comment Cards</b></p>	<p>In addition to gathering input via maps and station boards, participants had the opportunity to provide input on written comment forms. Below is a list of written comments received:</p>



**Input Provided on  
Written Comment Cards  
(Cont'd)**

Comment #1

I grew up here. It is so, so, so sad to see what this town has become. My mom tried to stop the "mall (maul)" – now obsolete and will be empty. Wee all pay for it as they request lower tax assessments, etc. The place will soon be empty on a globally unique habitat. Guilderland is considering Costco, Lawton Terrace breaks my heart. 3 deer in the downed tree area tonight –THEIR HOME – the disregard for nature in this town makes me sick. It was so beautiful. At least some Pine Bush ecosystem has been preserved.

I am very low income senior now but I pay taxes on my parents' postage stamp of vacant land that I held on to for nature. I hope never to have to sell it.

I wish this town would preserve more open space. Build senior apartments in Crossgates – seniors can walk year-round. Young people need affordable housing too. And make single room occupancy spaces for homeless so they can sleep, be safe, and re-enter society.

Malls are dead. Help save the planet. Pavement creates more heat, warms the planet. Need green Crossgates.

Comment #2

Hazardous situation!!! Bicycling EB on Western from Leto to past Schoolhouse Rd. Riding EB – cyclists must ride in road 2<sup>nd</sup> lane which is between the on-ramp lane to the Northway. Being a major interstate connection, sometimes experienced drivers from both EB lanes cross over to the NW lane on-ramp. A very scary situation riding EB between all the lanes in a 40 mph zone. Add to this mix vehicles exiting Church Road.

Comment #3

Hazardous situation: Sidewalk crossing – Northway. Only sidewalk on 1 side of Western. All pedestrian traffic must cross the WIDE Northway exit. The main issue is right-turn-on-red vehicles exiting creates a serious conflict. Many drivers look left – RT on red so not always looking right for pedestrians! Someone is going to get killed here! Eliminate right on red from Northway. Same issue with cyclist conflict.

This meeting summary conveys our understanding of the items discussed and input received. Please forward any additions, corrections and/or questions to my attention.

Submitted by: Jesse McCaughey, MJ Engineering and Land Surveying, P.C.

cc: Consultant Team, CPUC, Town Planning Department



# PATHWAY TO OUR FUTURE GUILDERLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



## TOWN OF GUILDERLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE OPEN HOUSE & VISIONING WORKSHOP

The Comprehensive Plan Update Committee (CPUC) welcomes you to the Guilderland **Open House and Visioning Workshop**. Share your ideas and help shape the future of Guilderland.

Please provide input at one or more of the activity stations. If you have any questions about an activity, just ask a member of the project team!

### PARTICIPANT GUIDE FOR ACTIVITY STATIONS

- Station #1 – Project Overview:** The what, why and how of the project
- Station #2 – Community Profile:** Highlights of existing conditions
- Station #3 – Community Vision:** Use the sticky notes to describe what you want the Town to be like in 5, 10 or 20 years.
- Station #4 – Challenges & Opportunities:** Share your concerns for the Town and identify opportunities.
- Station #5 – Places We Gather:** Using the stickers and map, identify where you go and what you do there.
- Station #6 – Serving the Generations:** What are your generational needs? (Housing, healthcare, etc.?)
- Station #7 – Getting Around Town:** On the map, identify areas where you walk, bike, and use public transit.
- Station #8 – Idea Station:** Share your ideas on a variety of topics such as open space, transportation, infrastructure, arts, economic development, housing, community character and more.
- Station #9 – Kids Corner:** This is a place for kids to be creative and share their ideas.
- Station #10 – Take the Survey:** Take the online community survey live!
- Station #11 – Other Thoughts and Ideas:** Have more to share? Share at this station.

For more information, go to the Project Website: [www.pathwaytoguilderlandsfuture.com](http://www.pathwaytoguilderlandsfuture.com)

Questions and comments can be shared at any time through the Project Website. Scan the QR code.



Engineering and  
Land Surveying, P.C.



WELCOME



PATHWAY TO OUR FUTURE  
**GUILDERLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**



# Open House & Visioning Workshop

March 20, 2023 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM



# WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

A Comprehensive Plan is both a vision for the future and a blueprint for how to get there. A Comprehensive Plan creates a framework for future decision-making on a range of topics such as land use, economic development, infrastructure, and housing. The Town of Guilderland adopted its current Comprehensive Plan in 2001, and the update process will help guide Guilderland into the future.

The planning process is being led by the Guilderland Comprehensive Plan Update Committee and facilitated by Town staff and a consultant team led by MJ Engineering and Land Surveying and supported by E.M. Pemrick & Company and Community Planning and Environmental Associates.

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE

- ❖ Jim Abbruzzese
- ❖ Cody Betton
- ❖ Richard Brustman
- ❖ Tara Cristalli
- ❖ Caitlin Ferrante
- ❖ Lisa Hart
- ❖ Elizabeth Lott
- ❖ Dominic Rigosu
- ❖ Stephen O. Wilson



### Guilderland Population: 36,976

Source: US Census estimate (2021)

### Population Growth 2010-2020

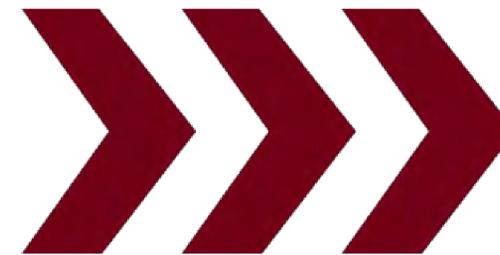
	2010	2020	2010-2020 % Change	Population Difference
Town of Guilderland	35,303	36,848	4.4%	1,545
Albany County	304,032	314,848	3.6%	10,816
New York State	19,378,102	20,201,249	4.2%	823,147



- ❖ Guilderland's population grew by 1,545 people between the 2010 and 2020 US Census counts.
- ❖ The percentage increase in population (4.4%) was slightly higher than the rate for NY State.

### Age Groups in Guilderland - Comparison

	Preschool 0-4	School Age 5-17	College Age 18-24	Young Adult 25-44	Adult 45-64	Older Adult 65+
Guilderland	4.9%	13.6%	14.2%	23.3%	25.2%	18.8%
NY State	5.7%	15.2%	9%	27.2%	26.3%	16.6%
U.S.	5.9%	16.6%	9.2%	26.5%	25.6%	16%

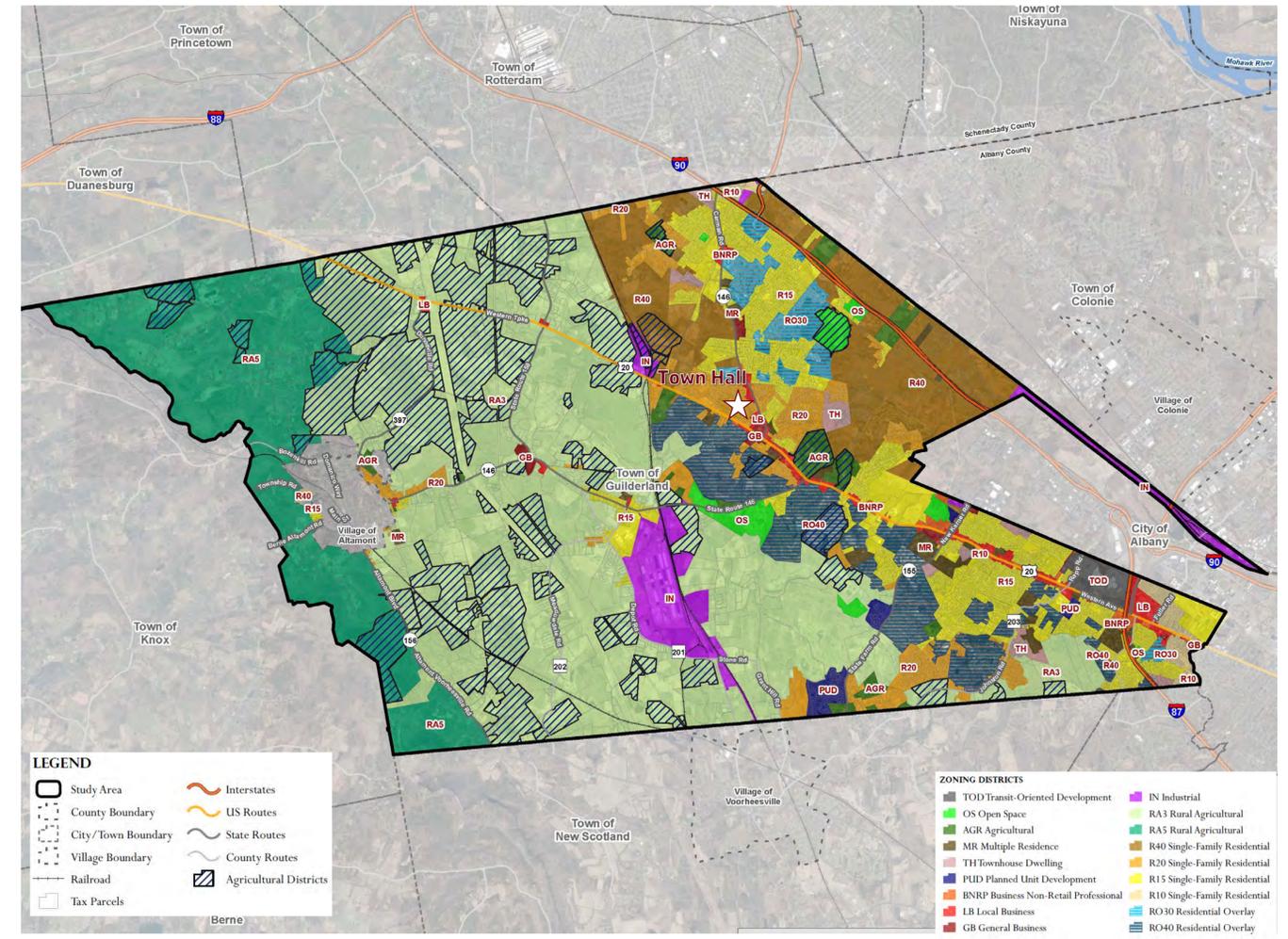
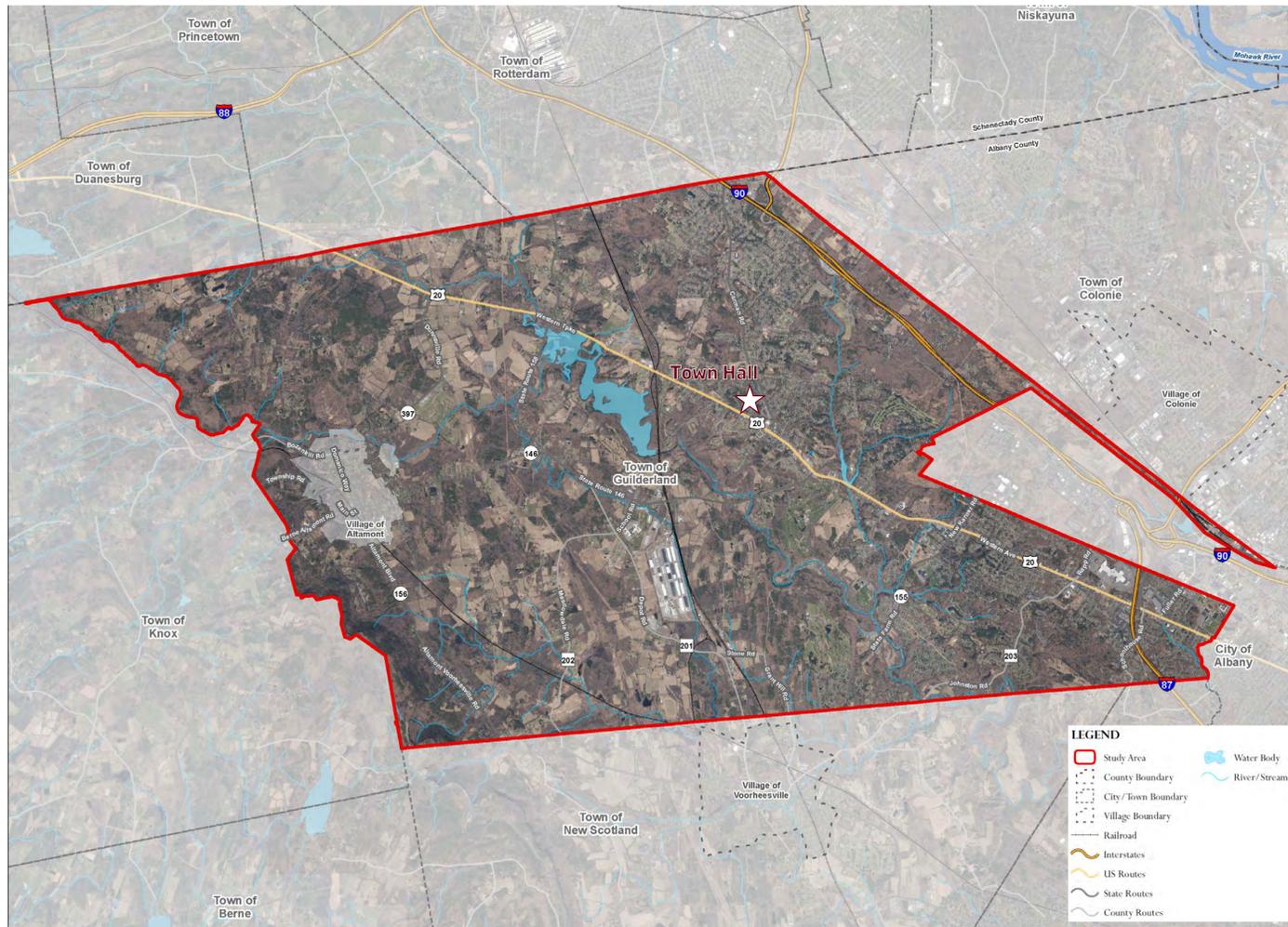


- ❖ Guilderland has a higher percentage of college-age residents than NY State and the nation.
- ❖ Guilderland also has a higher percentage of its population in the 65+ category than the State and nation.



# TOWN OF GUILDERLAND

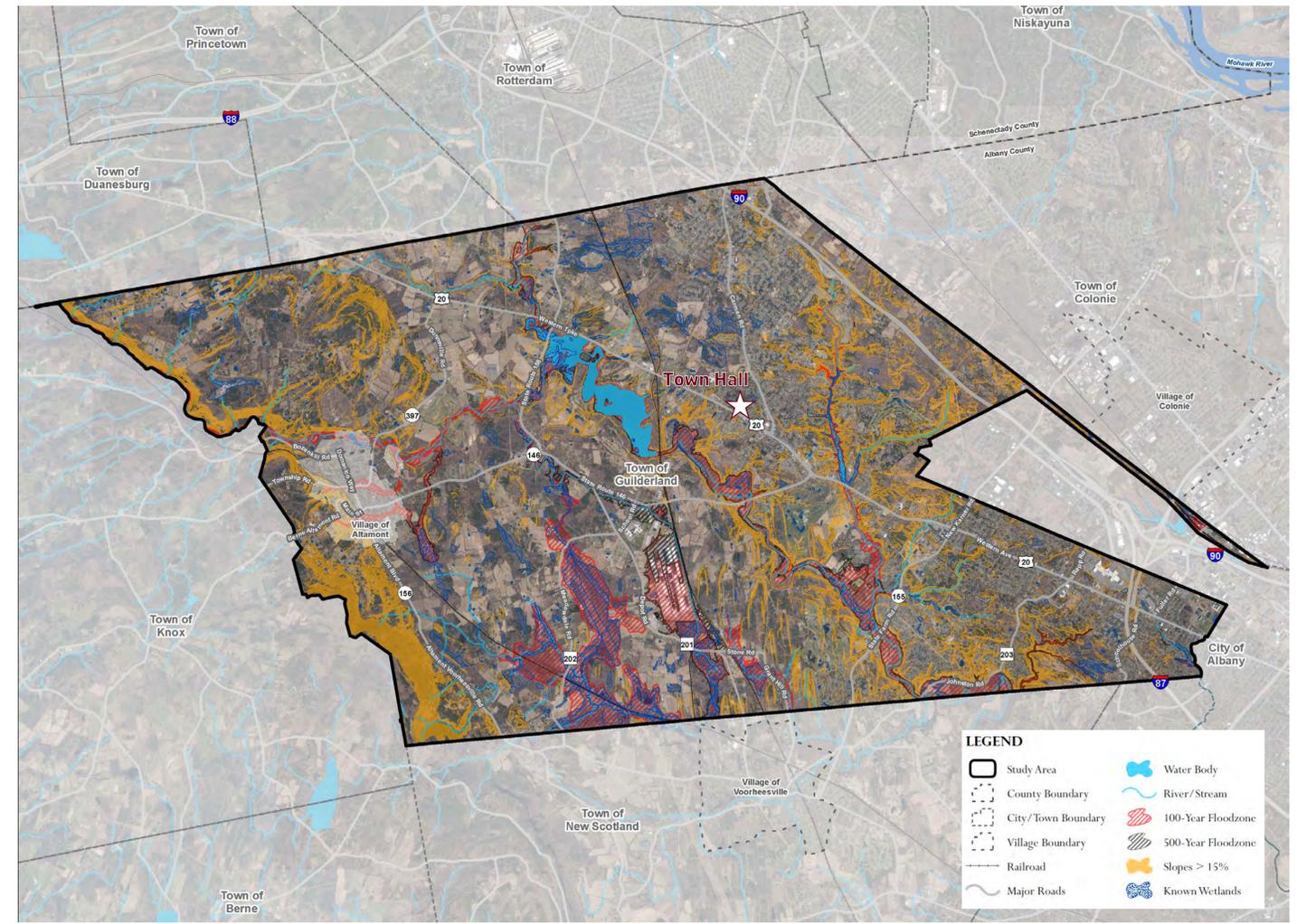
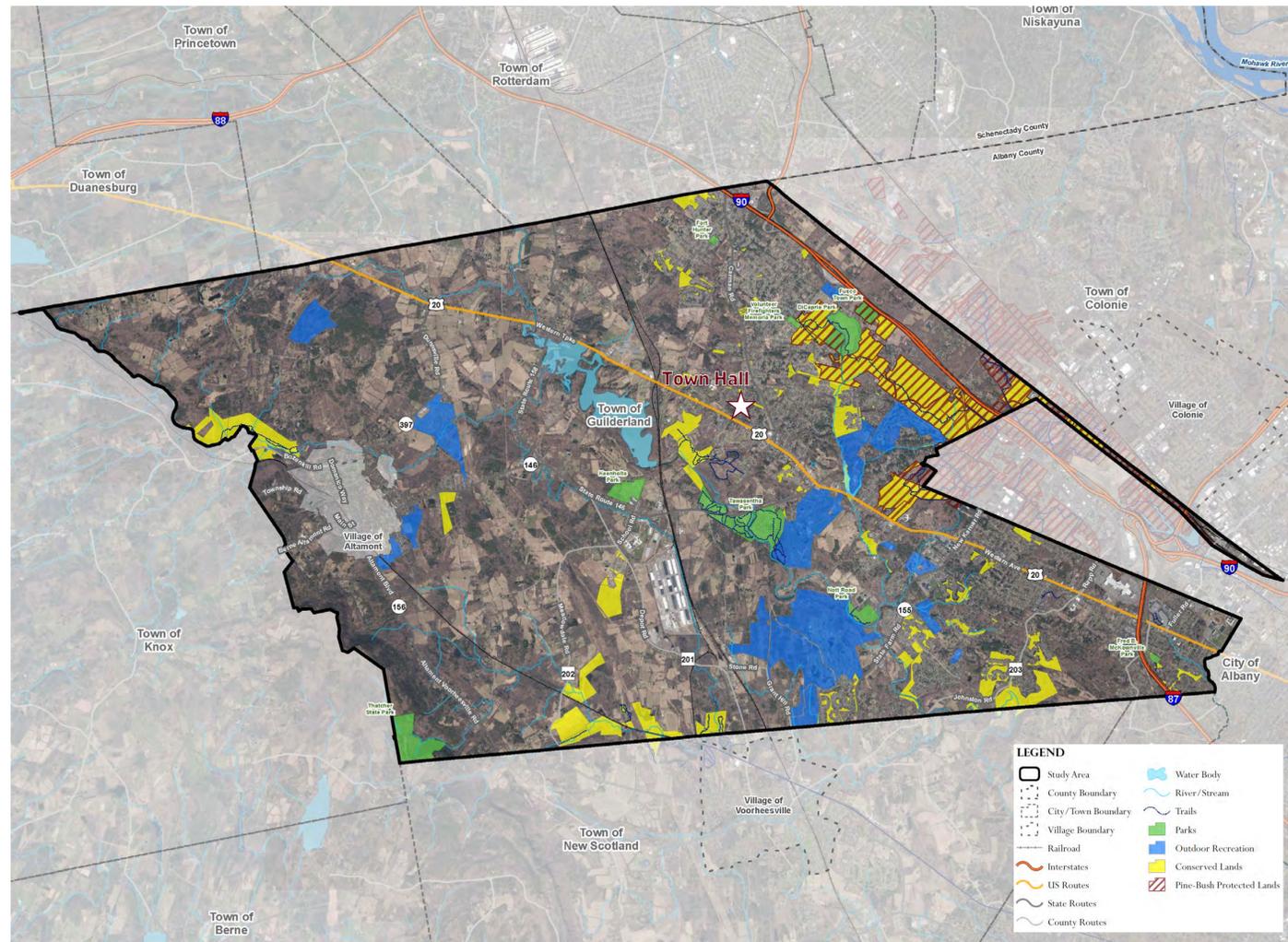
## PROJECT AREA & ZONING



- ❖ 58 square miles (37,621 acres)
- ❖ The project area is the entire Town of Guilderland. It does not include the Village of Altamont.
- ❖ Neighboring municipalities include: Towns of New Scotland, Knox, Duanesburg, Princetown, Rotterdam, Colonie, and Bethlehem; Villages of Colonie, Altamont, and Voorheesville; and the City of Albany.

- ❖ 16 Zoning Districts + 2 Residential Overlay Districts
- ❖ Largest Zoning Districts (by acreage)
  - ❖ RA 3 Rural Agricultural
  - ❖ RA 5 Rural Agricultural
  - ❖ R 15 Single-Family Residential





- ❖ Parks (Local, County, State) make up 1.5% of the Project Area
- ❖ Outdoor Recreation areas make up another 5% of the Project Area
- ❖ Conserved Lands (including Pine Bush Preserved Lands) make up 6.5% of the Project Area.

- ❖ Wetlands, steep slopes, and flood zones are environmental constraints to land use
- ❖ Steep slopes are present in 17.5% of the Project Area
- ❖ Known wetlands make up 5.5% of the Project Area
- ❖ FEMA's 100-year and 500-year flood zones make up a combined 10% of the Project Area.



3

# WHAT IS YOUR VISION?

**Describe what you want Guilderland to be like in 5, 10 or 20 years...**

Post-It Notes Here

Post-It Notes Here



4

# CHALLENGES AND CONCERNS

**Share your concerns and what you see as challenges for Guilderland.**

Post-It Notes Here

Post-It Notes Here



4

# OPPORTUNITIES AND STRENGTHS

**What opportunities and strengths do you see in Guilderland?**

Post-It Notes Here

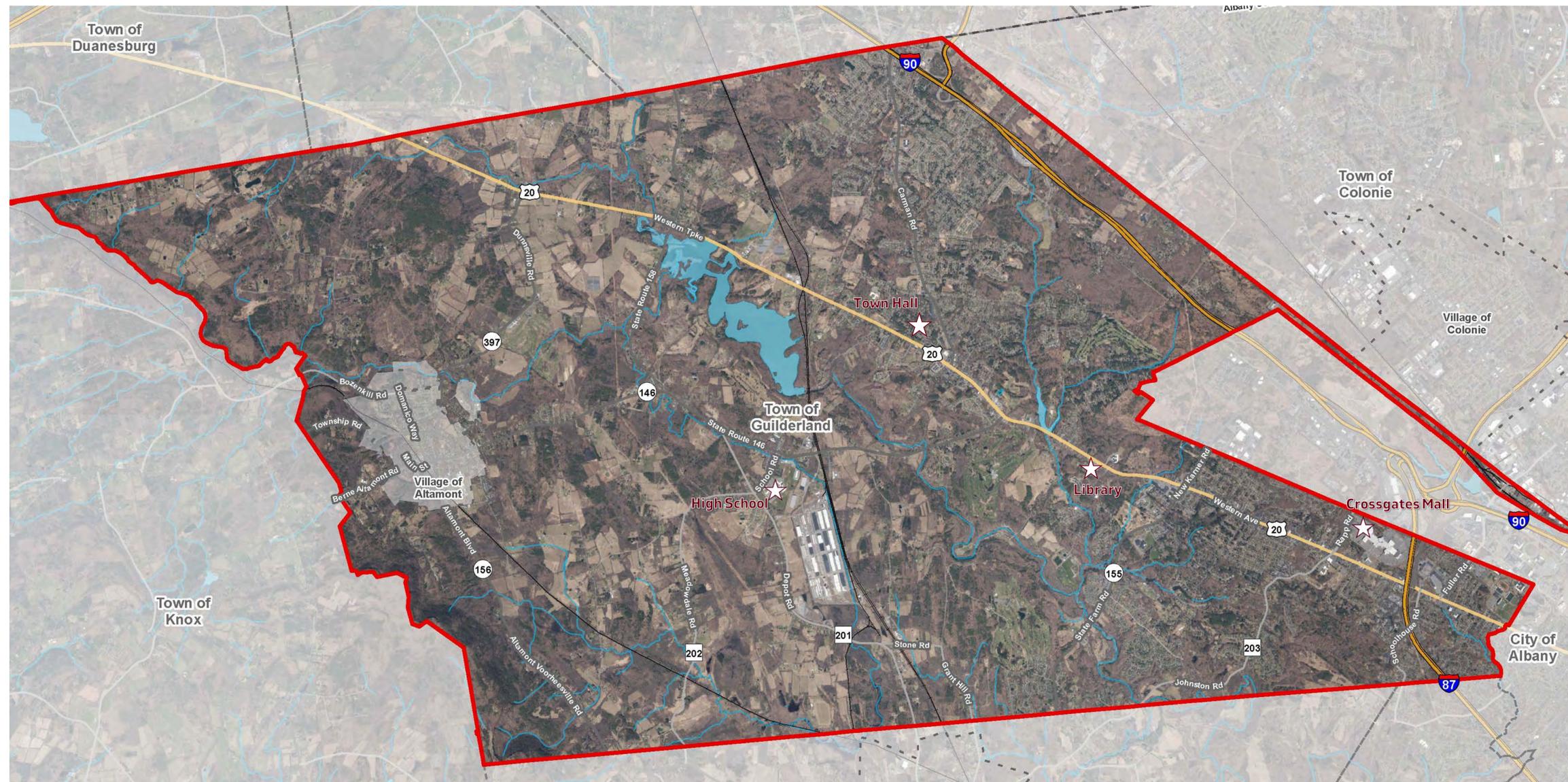
Post-It Notes Here



# THE PLACES WE GATHER

...AND WHAT WE DO THERE

Place stickers on the map to show the places you gather in your community and what you do there...



My neighborhood



Socializing



Shopping



Religious & Spiritual



Dining



Education



Recreation



# 6

# SERVING THE GENERATIONS

What are your generational needs (services, housing, shopping, learning, healthcare, transportation, etc.)?

Traditionalists or Silent Generation:  
Born 1945 and before

Baby Boomers:  
Born 1946-1964

Generation X:  
Born 1965-1980

Millennials or Generation Y:  
Born 1981-1996

Generation Z:  
Born after 1996

Post-It Notes Here



Map mobility in your community! Put a sticker on the map where you walk, bike or take public transportation.



Walk



Bike



Public Transportation



8



# IDEA CENTER

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & AGRICULTURE

Share your ideas about economic development in Guilderland.

Share your ideas about agriculture in the community.

Post-It Notes Here

Post-It Notes Here



8



# IDEA CENTER

## INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION

Share your ideas about infrastructure (electric, water, sewer, etc.) in Guilderland.

Share your ideas about transportation and mobility (bicycles, pedestrians, vehicles, transit, accessibility and connectivity, etc.) in and around Guilderland.

Post-It Notes Here

Post-It Notes Here



8

# IDEA CENTER

## HISTORY & RECREATION

Share your ideas about history and recreation in Guilderland.

Post-It Notes Here

Post-It Notes Here



8

# IDEA CENTER

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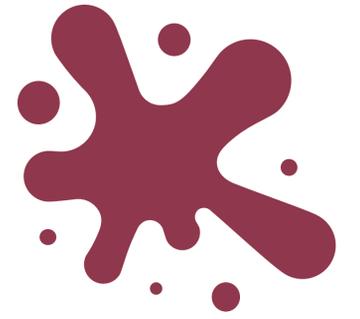
## NEIGHBORHOODS & HOUSING

Share your ideas about Guilderland's community character, neighborhoods and housing types.

Post-It Notes Here

Post-It Notes Here





# KIDS CORNER



10

# TAKE THE SURVEY

Participate in the online community survey to provide more thoughts and ideas about your community!



Scan the QR code to take the survey on your smartphone or tablet!



Scan the QR code to take the survey on your smartphone or tablet!



# OTHER THOUGHTS AND IDEAS

Share any additional thoughts and ideas you have for Guilderland here!

Post-It Notes Here

Post-It Notes Here

