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# Hermon, NY Comprehensive Plan



Adopted December 2016

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# Hermon Comprehensive Plan – December 2016

## Table of Contents

Preface.....	i.
Vision Statement.....	ii.
A Comprehensive Plan defined .....	iii.
How this Comprehensive Plan can be used .....	iv.

<b><i>Executive Summary</i></b> .....	1.
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### ***Community Profile***

• History.....	3.
• Demographic Overview .....	5.
• Natural Feature Assessment .....	11.
• Land Use .....	16.

### ***Community Characteristics, Goals and Recommendations***

• Agriculture .....	19.
• Business and Commerce .....	24.
• Community and Culture.....	27.
• Housing .....	30.
• Infrastructure.....	34.
• Institutions .....	37.

### ***Implementation***

• Overview.....	40.
• Implementation Matrix .....	41.

### ***Map Documents***

- Land Use Classification Map
- Public Lands Map
- Agricultural District Map
- Federal and State Wetlands and Hydric Soils Map
- Prime Soils Map
- Soil Classes Map

### ***Appendices***

• SWOT results, March 17 <sup>th</sup> meeting	Appendix A
• Residential windshield survey results	Appendix B
• Commercial/Other Land Use survey results	Appendix C
• Public input, July 21 <sup>st</sup> Visioning Meeting	Appendix D
• Hermon Community Survey results	Appendix E
• An Introduction to Community Development: How-To	Appendix F

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## *Preface*

This Comprehensive Plan, prepared for the municipality of Hermon, is meant as a guide for future development in the Hermon community. The impetus for the Plan was born out of the decision by Village of Hermon residents to dissolve the Village. A referendum was held in October of 2015, with the Village officially dissolving on December 31, 2016. An exhaustive dissolution study was prepared by the Development Authority of the North Country. A wealth of information about the Town and Village of Hermon was gathered as part of the dissolution study, including a detailed existing conditions report that should be considered a background compendium to this Comprehensive Plan. These data are available on the Town of Hermon's website (<http://hermonny.org/>) and the Development Authorities website: <http://www.danc.org/operations/engineering/hermon-dissolution-study-implementation>.

This Comprehensive Plan focuses on six areas of study: agriculture; business and commerce; community and culture; housing; infrastructure; and institutions. A community profile that addresses the community's history, demographics, natural features and land use provides context for the action items in the Plan.

For each area of study a narrative provides background information, summarizes community based input, identifies specific goals that Hermon should strive toward and recommendations that will assist in the realization of each goal. Some repetition may appear to exist between each section, but while some of the goals may be similar, they are presented in the context of the particular area of study in which they are found.

In order for the Plan to be effective it must be implemented. An implementation matrix is also attached that lists each recommendation and describes who will be responsible for initiating the task, a timeframe, and, if applicable, what funding sources, or outside agencies, can assist with moving the initiative forward. Each entry in the matrix is taken from the recommendations listed in the Plan's main sections.

A series of maps that describe the current land use, natural features, agricultural resources and tax assessment is also included. Additional specific maps that support text within the Plan are also found in the map documents section.

Additional information, found as appendices, includes survey results, public input session summaries and supporting documentation for the areas of study.

This plan was developed by the residents of Hermon with assistance from the St. Lawrence County Planning Office, a review committee made up of local individuals and Town and Village Officials in the spring, summer and fall of 2016.

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## *Vision Statement*



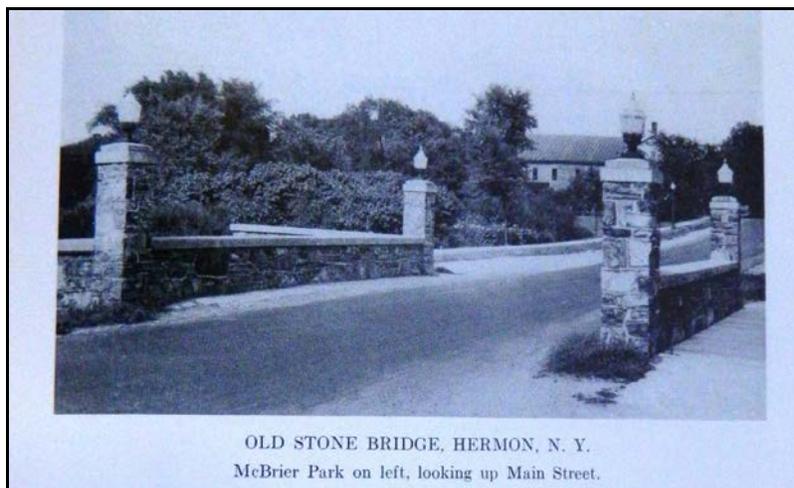
The following vision statement was developed from comments offered by residents during the Hermon Comprehensive plan public consultation process. It reflects the community’s hopes for the future of Hermon and answers the question “what will Hermon look like in 10 years”.

In 2026, Hermon is known for its recreational amenities and access to pristine and unspoiled waterbodies and forest lands. Access to these amenities is on well-maintained roads that are free of litter. The agricultural nature of Hermon is evident with productive farms covering the landscape.

Renewable energy is being produced through solar installations on the less fertile land.

Additional commercial amenities are concentrated in the Hamlet of Hermon and include a diner/ice cream shop, hair salon as well as a vibrant convenience store, bank, library and post office. Sidewalks have also been improved and a recreational trail leads from downtown out to and around the cemetery and to the outdoor ice rink by the fire station. The restored Main Street Bridge makes it easy to get to the revitalized baseball field, play structure and basketball court that are heavily used. The final touches are being put on a state-of-the-art water bottling facility that was developed as a public-private partnership between the Town of Hermon and an established spring water bottler.

Hermon continues to be a safe, friendly, caring community with affordable and improving housing, excellent water and waste water infrastructure and easy access to a rural environment with multiple recreational amenities.



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## *A Comprehensive Plan Defined*

Before the benefits of a comprehensive plan can be realized a clear understanding of what a comprehensive plan is must be established. A number of definitions of a comprehensive plan are listed below. Definitions are drawn from New York State Town Law as well as Planning literature.

New York State Town Law defines a comprehensive plan as:

“The materials, written and/or graphic, including but not limited to maps, charts, studies, resolutions, reports and other descriptive material that identify the goals, objectives, principles, guidelines, policies, standards, devices and instruments for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development of the town, village or city.”

The American Planning Association defines a comprehensive plan as:

“A compilation of policy statements, goals and objectives, standards, maps, and statistical data for the physical, social, and economic development, both public and private of the community.” (Las Cruces, New Mexico)

A general definition of a comprehensive plan is:

“A document that presents, in general terms, proposals and suggestions that guide future development of elements in the physical, social and cultural environment of a community. The comprehensive plan should be seen as a document that envisions what a community wants to be like in the future and puts forth recommendations on how it can fulfill those desires.”

Once a comprehensive plan is formally adopted by a municipality, Town Law, Section 272-a, requires certain compliance with established municipal land use regulations, specifically:

11. Effect of adoption of the town comprehensive plan.

(a) All town land use regulations must be in accordance with a comprehensive plan adopted pursuant to this section.

(b) All plans for capital projects of another governmental agency on land included in the town comprehensive plan adopted pursuant to this section shall take such plan into consideration.

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## *How this Comprehensive Plan can be used*

The following two scenarios describe how this comprehensive plan can be used.

### Scenario 1:

In a few years' time, a developer proposes a large scale commercial development on a piece of property that is near, but not in, the water and sewer district. The development is contingent on municipal infrastructure, but the sewer plant is reaching capacity.

#### *What should the Town do?*

The Town will need to weigh the positive and negative impacts of such a development. As part of its deliberation the Town should also review its adopted Comprehensive Plan. One of the goals of the Comprehensive Plan speaks to the need to encourage additional commercial development in the Town. Ensuring that the water supply and waste water infrastructure is used as efficiently and effectively as possible has also been identified as a goal. Having these two activities written down will remind the Town to budget accordingly to ensure such a development can occur.

### Scenario 2:

Some time in the future, additional funding from the State is released to assist residents of substandard homes to repair their dwelling units. Local government entities can apply for these funds through a competitive grant application process. The funds are available but difficult to obtain because of the high application rate. One of the conditions of the application is that the community applying has identified housing repair as a key goal in its community.

#### *What should the Town do?*

Town officials consulted the Hermon Comprehensive Plan and reviewed the chapter on Housing. In that chapter one of the stated goals reads: Enhance and preserve the condition/appearance of housing in the Town. With this goal, and the supporting documentation that makes up the Housing section of the plan, the Town has a solid background from which to draft the application.

### Comprehensive Plan Review Schedule:

In order for a comprehensive plan to be an effective tool in guiding the desires of Hermon residents it must be reviewed on a regular basis. Ideas and attitudes change over time. Five years from now a goal that is in the current plan may be met and a different goal may have taken its place. **It is recommended that a comprehensive plan be reexamined every five years to ensure that its content is still relevant.**



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## *Executive Summary*

Hermon is a community with a rich history, a wealth of agricultural and natural amenities and a great deal of community creativity. However, like many communities in St. Lawrence County and across New York State, Hermon is faced with a number of challenges.

To encourage communities to better prepare for the changes that time inevitably brings, the State of New York has recommended municipalities create comprehensive plans. Hermon has taken this a step further and, after careful study, has decided to dissolve one of its municipal entities, the Village. While the structures that make up the Village of Hermon will remain the political boundary and Village administration will cease to exist after 2016. To ensure that the new consolidated Hermon has a solid footing, a Comprehensive Plan was initiated by the Town and Village. This plan will help guide the future of Hermon through its next lifecycle; one that has not existed since the founding of the Village in 1877.

The Plan is divided into five main sections: a Community Profile; Community Characteristics, Goals and Recommendations; Implementation; Map Documents; and Appendices. Each section is described briefly below.

The Community Profile describes the history of Hermon, from its days of origin to its current land uses. A demographic overview cites population, school enrollment, income, housing, and other descriptive data for the Town and Village. The Natural Features Assessment contains an inventory and description of natural features throughout the Town, such as the three State Forests and several water bodies. A thorough assessment of the variety of land uses currently in the town is represented in table and narrative form.

The Community Characteristics, Goals and Recommendations section addresses six areas of interest. These are: Agriculture; Business and Commerce; Community and Culture; Housing; Infrastructure; and Institutions.

The Agriculture section gives an overview of the variety of agricultural land uses, describes the soil types, and identifies agricultural land use constraints. The State Agricultural District program is explained. The goal identified in this section addresses the reservation of prime farmland for agricultural purposes. Recommendations include minimizing development on the best soils and examining how land use controls such as site plan review, subdivision and zoning can help future development in the community.

The Business and Commerce section identifies current businesses in Hermon. Three general goals with specific recommendations are made. The three goals for the Hermon community are: to maintain the business presence that currently exists in Hermon; to encourage the development of new appropriately scaled businesses in Hermon; and to promote commercial investment in the community by revitalizing Hermon's downtown district and surrounding hamlet. Specific recommendations include pursuing rehabilitation funding, maintaining an active relationship with current businesses and looking at the feasibility of using Hermon's abundant water supply as a revenue generator.

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The Community and Culture section identifies the pillars of what make Hermon a great place and offers suggestions on how to make it even better. Goals include: creating a community that has an engaged population for all age categories; improving the aesthetic appearance of Hermon; publicizing the history of Hermon as a community asset; and expanding recreational opportunities in Hermon. Some recommendations include holding additional community events, developing walking trails and improving access to Trout Lake.

Housing stock by type and overall condition is described using windshield survey and Census data sources. Homes are more likely to be single family homes, cost less than the average St. Lawrence County home and be slightly older than the County average home. Housing goals include: enhancing and preserving the condition/appearance of housing in the Town; and to increase affordable housing options for rentals. Some recommendations include: implementing a housing rehabilitation program; adopting a Section 421-f tax relief program for residential property improvements and partnering with nearby housing authorities and property management agencies.

Infrastructure was noted as an area of concern throughout the public consultation process. While water is plentiful, water and waste water facilities need maintenance, as do roads, sidewalks and bridges. Broadband infrastructure also needs improving in some parts of Hermon. Four goals specific to infrastructure are proposed: improving the road, sidewalk and bridge infrastructure in Hermon; using the water and waste water infrastructure as efficiently and effectively as possible; promoting Hermon as a solar development friendly community; and improving the broadband presence in Hermon. Some recommendations include allotting additional funding to the Town paving budget, taking underused sidewalks out of commission, and partnering with local Internet Service Providers to improve the broadband presence in the Town.

The Institutions section describes the Hermon Library, the school districts that encompass Hermon's geography, the Hermon Fire and Rescue Department and Hermon municipal government. Goals include: promoting the Hermon Hepburn Library as an integral part of the Hermon community; maintaining the quality and proximity of the current public school presence in Hermon; supporting the Hermon Fire and Rescue Squad as a pillar of the community; supporting the single municipal government structure and promoting partnerships that will allow for town government advancement; and promoting public comments/ participation in the future St. Lawrence Rock Ridge Unit Management Plan. Recommendations range from creating an outdoor skating rink at the fire station to examining the benefits of zoning for the Town.

Implementation is the most critical part of any comprehensive plan. Each recommendation in this plan is listed in a matrix that identifies who will be responsible for implementation, the time frame, potential funding sources, and other agencies that may be able to assist in implementing the recommendation.

Maps to support the various areas of study in this plan are located in the map document section. The appendices contain a variety of raw data and supporting information. Both map document titles and appendix titles are listed in the table of contents.

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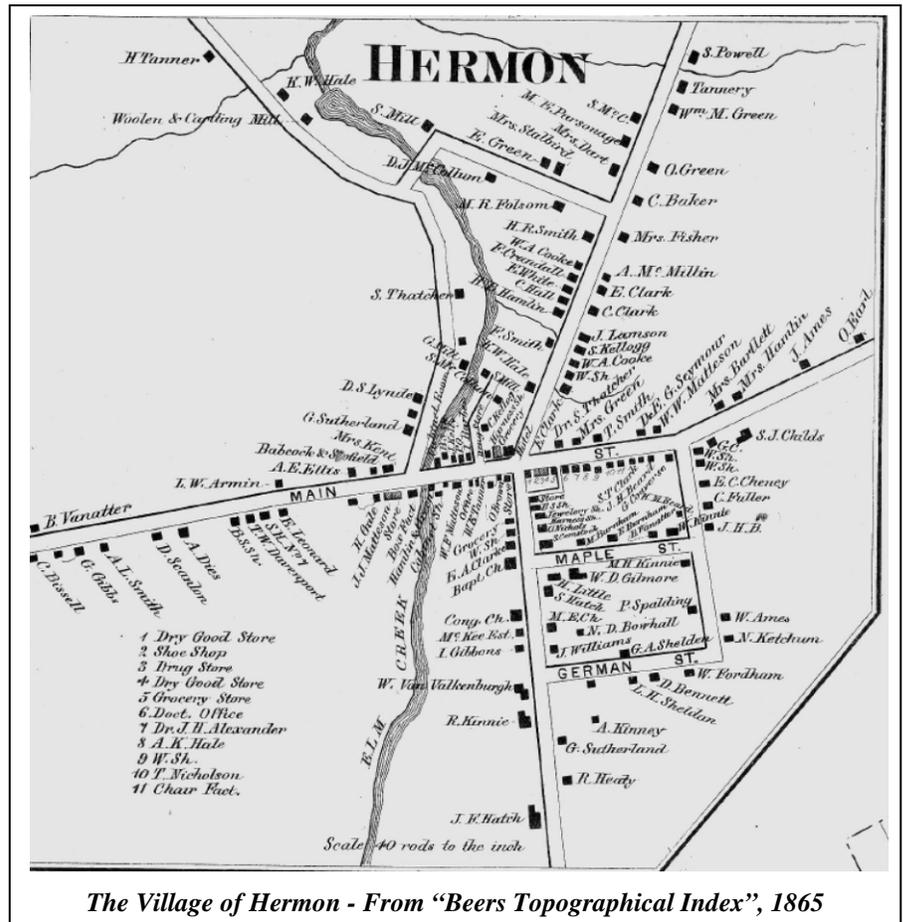
## History

The Town of Hermon was established in 1830, as “Depeau”. This was actually the name of a land developer from Jefferson County who purchased approximately 1/3 of the town’s area in 1828. In 1834, the town was renamed because of confusion with Depauville in Jefferson County; there existed a Hermon Post Office in the Town (located in what later became the Village of Hermon), so the Town took the name Hermon.

As recounted in “The History of St. Lawrence County, New York” (1878), “The name is derived from Scriptures ...”. Mt. Hermon is the highest point in Israel.

Early settlers recognized the value of the landscape for dairying; by 1878, six cheese factories operated in the town, producing 700,000 lbs. of cheese annually. The Town also includes a considerable deposit of hematite (a form of iron ore) along its northern edge; extensive plans were made to excavate after the Civil War, but the national financial panic of 1873-74 scuttled those plans. Ore was mined to some degree until the Stella Mine closed in 1920.

The Village of Hermon was first settled in 1816 along Elm Creek in the northeast portion of the Town. A store was begun in 1823, while the Post Office which ultimately gave the Town its name was established early (1828). By the middle of the century, multiple dry-goods, grocery and drug stores lined the streets of the community; local industries included a tannery, cheese factory, carriage factory, grist mill, saw mill, blacksmiths and other mechanics, etc. There were two churches, three doctors, three lawyers, two dentists and a barber. The Village was incorporated in 1877; population at that time was approx. 800 residents.



Approximately one mile south of the eventual Village (upstream along Elm Creek), another community was established in 1825; it was named Marshville, after an early owner of a saw-mill and grist-mill. Other early settlements within the Town include

Fairbanks Corners, at the eastern Town line on CR 21; Kents Corners, located at the junction of CR 19 and CR 20; and the vacation area around Trout Lake, along CR 19 in the southern part of the Town.

The first school in the Town was established in the Village; by 1877 there were 13 schoolhouses across the town. Of some note was the “Podunk School” (School No. 6) located near the present-day intersection of the Edwards-DeKalb Road (CR 19) and the Evans Road, in the south-central part of the Town.

The Hermon community was repeatedly wracked by major fires, including 1875, and again in 1890. In the aftermath of World War I, industry began to leave Hermon. As noted above, the last iron mine closed in 1920; the last milk plant closed in 1921, as did the railroad connection to the community.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century dairy farming continued to be a mainstay of the local economy. As late as 1950, a cheese factory still operated in Hermon. At that time, a chemical factory still operated, as well as a wooden-plug manufacturer, local school, a bank, two hotels, and 20 other miscellaneous businesses.

By 1980, industry was mostly gone, although Hermon still had a retail sector. In addition to the bank and Post Office, the community boasted a hardware store, two grocery stores, two gas stations, laundromat, clothing store, plumbing supply shop, funeral home, insurance office, hotel and restaurant, welding shop, machine shop, sawmill and a building contractor.

Today, dairy farming makes up just over 10% of active farmland in the Town of Hermon. Local business uses include two taverns; a gas station/convenience store; bank; health care facility; small engine repair shop; taxidermy shop; craft store; maple production facility. In addition, the community retains its Post Office, and includes a Hepburn library, senior housing, village and town offices, fire hall, Town garage, and wastewater treatment plant. A natural gas pumping station is significant, since the owners, Iroquois Gas, are good corporate neighbors, donating funds for local causes and events.

**HERMON BUSINESS DIRECTORY.**

A. Farnsworth...Proprietor Hermon Hotel.  
 Wm. E. Tanner...Justice of the Peace.  
 Picket & Watson...(Hermon Regulator)—Dealers in Dry Goods, Groceries and General Merchandise.  
 Oscar Brown...Dealer in General Merchandise.  
 E. G. Seymour...Physician and Surgeon.  
 Otis Earl...Miller, and Dealer in Flour and Feed.  
 W. W. Matteson...Dealer in Drugs and Medicines.  
 J. A. Ingalls...Watchmaker and Jeweller.  
 R. Healy...Wool Carding and Cloth Dressing.  
 Hamlin & Green...Cabinet Makers & Furniture Dealers.  
 W. F. Matteson... “ “ “ “ “ “  
 Cyrus Fuller...Carpenter and Joiner.  
 R. Kinnie... “ “ “ “  
 E. A. Clarke...Wagon Maker.  
 I. Gibbons...Livery Stable.  
 Jas. Kelly...Blacksmith and Horse-shoeing.  
 W. A. Cooke...Dealer in Boots and Shoes.  
 Clark Baker...School Commissioner.  
 A. E. Ellis...Resident.  
 H. Gale... “  
 G. A. Shelden “  
 K. W. Hale... “  
 D. S. Lynde... “  
 Truman Smith...Dealer in Cattle, and Farmer.

*From “Beers Topographical Index”, 1865*



*Hepburn Library, Hermon*

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## *Demographic Overview*

### **Total Population**

Population in the Town of Hermon in 2014 was 1,082 residents. Hermon ranked 25<sup>th</sup> among 33 County Subdivisions in the County (County Subdivisions include towns and the City of Ogdensburg). By comparison, the Town of Potsdam was the largest Town in the County, with 16,172 residents; Town of Parishville was at the mid-point (ranked 17<sup>th</sup>; pop: 2,068); and the Town of Clare (pop: 121) was the smallest community in the County.

<b>Population</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>% Change 1970-2010</b>
St Lawrence County	112,309	114,347	111,974	111,931	111,944	(-) 0.3%
Town of Hermon	1,087	1,083	1,041	1,069	1,108	1.9%
Town as % SLC	0.97%	0.95%	0.93%	0.96%	0.99%	
Village of Hermon	521	490	407	402	422	(-) 19.0%
Village as % Town	47.9%	45.2%	39.1%	37.6%	38.1%	

*Source: U.S. Census*

Population in the Town of Hermon (which includes the Village) has risen slightly (+ 1.9%) during the past fifty years. This population increase, however modest, differs from the County as a whole, which has slightly declined (- 0.3%). By contrast, population in the Village of Hermon has dropped by almost 20% during the period. This decrease in population has seen the Village becoming an ever-smaller part of the Town.

(**Note:** hereafter, this study will use Town data only; demographics of the Village will not be reported or analyzed separately. Town data include all residents of the Village. The Village will be dissolved at the end of 2016.)

### **Population by Sex**

<b>Males/Females</b>	<b>2000 Males</b>	<b>2014 Males</b>	<b>% Change Males</b>	<b>2000 Females</b>	<b>2014 Females</b>	<b>% Change Females</b>
New York State	9,146,748	9,495,330	<b>3.8%</b>	9,829,709	10,098,352	<b>27%</b>
St Lawrence County	56,861	56,867	<b>0.0%</b>	55,070	55,148	<b>0.0%</b>
Town of Hermon	553	537	<b>(-) 2.9%</b>	516	545	<b>5.6%</b>

*Source: U.S. Census*

Composition of the population of Hermon by sex indicates that the Town has moved from majority-males in 2000 to majority females in 2014. By contrast, St. Lawrence

County has remained majority-male throughout the period, while NYS has remained majority-female throughout.

Population by Age

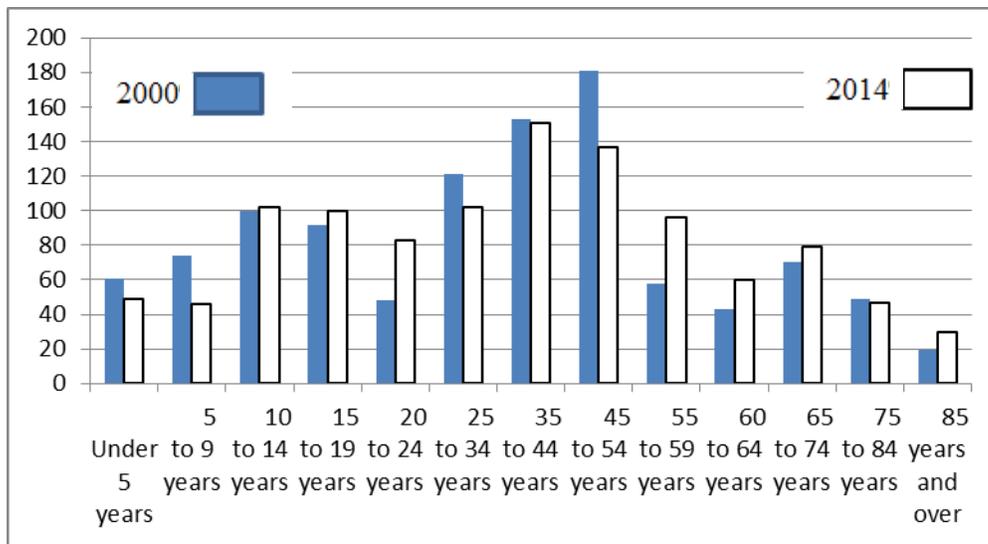
Median Age	2000	2014	Change	% Change
New York State	35.9 yrs.	38.1 yrs.	+ 2.2 yrs.	6.1%
St Lawrence County	35.4 yrs.	37.8 yrs.	+ 2.4 yrs.	6.8%
Town of Hermon	37.7 yrs.	40.5 yrs.	+ 2.8 yrs.	7.4%

Source: U.S. Census

Population in Hermon has aged in similar manner to the County and the State; median age has increased in the Town, County and State by approximately 2+ years during the 2000s. The Town of Hermon has consistently had a higher median age than either the County or the State.

The chart below show how age cohorts have changed between 2000 and 2014:

**Population by Age Cohort, Town of Hermon\***



Source: U.S. Census

Residents of Hermon have expressed concern about an aging population. The evidence on this is mixed. While there were more older residents (55 yrs. and older) in 2014 than in 2000, this pattern is matched by an increase in the 10-15, 15-19, and 20-25 age cohorts in the Town.

In 2014, the percentage of residents in the Town under 18 years of age was 26.0%; those between 18 yrs. and 64 yrs. comprised 59.5% of total population; those 65 and older made up 14.4% of population.

\*Please note that the age cohort in this table changes from 5 to 10 years at age 25.

Overall, while median age for the Town of Hermon rose from 37.7 yrs. (2000) to 40.5 years in 2014 (an increase of 7.4%), there remains a majority of population in their working years.

### **Population by Household**

<b>Household Data, 2014</b>	<b>St. Law. Co.</b>	<b>T. Hermon</b>
# Households	41,579	418
Family Households	26,465	294
As % All Households	63.6%	70.3%
Avg. Family Size	2.95	2.95
Female-headed households with children	2,966	51
As % Family Households	7.1%	12.2%
Non-Family Households	15,114	124
As % All Households	36.4%	29.7%
Avg. Household Size	2.41	2.56

*Source: U.S. Census, ACS 2010-2014*

There is a higher percentage of family households in Hermon (70.3%) than for the County as a whole (63.6%). Hermon also has a higher rate of female-headed households (12.2%) than the County (7.1%). Non-family households in Hermon are slightly bigger (2.56 persons/household) than in the County as a whole (2.41 p/hh).

### **School Enrollment**

<b>Enrollment Data, 2014</b>	<b>St. Law. Co.</b>	<b>T. Hermon</b>
Population enrolled in School	31,399	283
Enrollment, Elementary School, Gr. 1-8	10,347	123
% Pop enrolled in school	33.0%	43.5%
Enrollment, High School	5,538	105
% Pop enrolled in school	17.6%	37.1%
Enrollment, College or Grad School	12,837	34
% Pop enrolled in school	40.9%	12.0%

*Source: U.S. Census, ACS 2010-2014*

School enrollment data indicate that a smaller proportion of residents enrolled in school in the Town of Hermon are enrolled in college or graduate school than for the County.

## Educational Attainment

<b>Educational Attainment, 2014</b>	<b>St. Law. Co.</b>	<b>% SLC Pop &gt; 25</b>	<b>T. Hermon</b>	<b>% Hermon Pop &gt; 25</b>
Population 25 yrs. and older	71,897		702	
Attained less than HS diploma	9,269	12.9%	115	16.4%
Attained HS graduation	25,844	35.9%	212	30.2%
Attained some college	21,269	29.6%	233	33.2%
Attained bachelor's degree	7,754	10.8%	99	14.1%
Attained advanced degree	7,761	10.8%	43	6.1%

*Source: U.S. Census, ACS 2010-2014*

Educational attainment data show that the proportion of Hermon residents (46.6%) with high school or less education is approximately the same as for the County as a whole (48.8%). Hermon has proportionately more residents who have attended or graduated from college (47.3%), compared to the County (40.4%). Only when reporting those with advanced degrees does the County have a higher rate (10.8%) than does Hermon (6.1%).

*It can be concluded that the adult population in Hermon (presumably to include its workforce) is well-educated, compared to the rest of the County.*

## Housing

<b>Housing Units Data, 2014</b>	<b>St. Law Co.</b>	<b>T. Hermon</b>
# Housing Units	52,182	617
% Occupied	79.7%	67.7%
# Seasonal Units	6,985	141
% all units	13.4%	22.8%
% Single-Family Units	70.4%	77.3%
% Mobile Homes	11.1%	14.9%
Median \$ Value, owner-occupied units	\$86,200	\$75,600

*Source: U.S. Census, ACS 2010-2014*

As the table indicates, the Town of Hermon has a lower occupancy rate (67.7%, vs. 79.7%), but a higher incidence of seasonal housing (22.8% vs. 13.4%), than the County. The Town has a higher rate of single-family homes (77.3% vs. 70.4%), and also a higher rate of mobile homes than the County (14.9% vs. 11.1%).

It is worth noting that the median value of homes in the Town of Hermon is significantly lower than for St. Lawrence County as a whole. Presumably, these median values are influenced by the higher rates of seasonal homes, and of mobile homes.

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## Income

<b>Per Capita Income</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>% Change</b>
St Lawrence County	\$ 19,427	\$ 22,908	17.9%
Town of Hermon	\$ 19,213	\$ 21,050	9.6%

Source: U.S. Census

Per Capita Income (PCI) has risen for residents of Hermon and of the County during the 5-year period 2009 – 2014. Without correcting data for inflation, it is instructive to see that PCI for the County rose at a much higher rate than for Hermon. In only five years, the difference between PCI for Hermon and the County has grown from only \$213 in 2009 to a margin of over \$1,850 by 2014. *On a per-capita basis, the County is now significantly wealthier than the Town of Hermon.*

<b>Median Household Income</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>% Change</b>
St Lawrence County	\$ 41,670	\$ 44,454	6.7%
Town of Hermon	\$ 44,554	\$ 42,500	(-) 4.6%

Source: U.S. Census

Median Household Income (MHI) rose for the County while falling for Hermon households during the 5-year period 2009 – 2014. These data are consistent with the PCI data above.

*These income data indicate that residents in the Town of Hermon are not making economic progress to match the County as a whole.*

## Poverty

Poverty level rose slightly during the 5-year period 2009 – 2014 in St. Lawrence County and in the Town of Hermon. However the increase in poverty rate in Hermon was more than 50% greater than for the County as a whole.

<b>Poverty Rates – Individuals</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>Change</b>
St Lawrence County	16.6%	19.7%	3.1 % points
Town of Hermon	17.4%	22.1%	4.7 % points

Source: U.S. Census

Another frequently-observed indicator of poverty is the percentage of Low- or Moderate-Income Households (LMIH). The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has established a criterion for eligibility for many of its anti-poverty programs: to be eligible, a community must have 51% or higher rate of LMIH.

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<b>Low - and Moderate-Income Households</b>	<b>2014</b>
St Lawrence County	41.43%
Town of Hermon	43.41%

*Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development / U.S. Census*

As seen in the table above, the Town of Hermon has a higher percentage of LMI households than does the County as a whole. This data point is consistent with Hermon's lower Per Capita Income, its falling Median Household Income, the jump in poverty rate in the Town, and its higher rate of Low- or Moderate-Income households.

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## ***Natural Features Assessment***

### *Inventory of Natural Features*

The Town of Hermon is located in southwest St. Lawrence County, along the inside edge of the band of deep, fertile soils of the St. Lawrence River Valley, where the landscape begins its transition to the foothills of the Adirondacks. The Town, however, is entirely outside the “Blue Line” of the Adirondack Park. Its general topography is rolling hills, with sandy loam soils interspersed with sand. Elm, Tanner and Carter Creeks are its largest streams. Trout Lake is a notable feature in the southern part of the Town; a portion of nearby Cedar Lake is also in Hermon. This same area holds the Town’s publicly-owned forest lands: Trout Lake State Forest, Fire-Fall State Forest, and a portion of Wolf Lake State Forest.

### **Trout Lake State Forest**

Trout Lake State Forest covers 1,087 acres in the Towns of Hermon and Edwards. The topography is very hilly with thin soils and exposed rocky ridges. Upland sites in the Forest support a mixture of northern hardwood, hemlock, and white pine forests, while lower quality sites are dominated by red oak, eastern hophornbeam, hickories, and other species adapted to nutrient-poor soils. Pine and spruce plantations were established on what were formerly farm fields and pastures. Flatter ground supports open wetlands and shrub swamps, which gradually transition to swamp hardwoods in seasonal flooded areas. Possible wildlife includes white-tailed deer, turkey, ruffed grouse, mink, black bear, red and gray fox, and migratory songbirds. Smooth green snake, eastern garter snake, wood turtle and painted turtle may also be present.

- Trails include the Trout Lake Trail (0.8 mile); Campbell Trail (0.9 mile); and Cedar Lake Trail (0.1 mile - provides an access route from the parking area on the Cedar Lake Public Forest Access Road to the water). All trails in Trout Lake State Forest are open to mountain biking; however, they are not specifically maintained for mountain biking. In addition, all trails are open for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing in the winter, but are not groomed for those activities.
- There are no designated campsites in the forest, but at-large primitive camping is allowed.
- Hunting and trapping are allowed in accordance with State laws and regulations.
- There is a picnic area accessible via the Trout Lake Trail from the Cedar Lake Public Forest Access Road. This picnic area is also accessible by water for small boats and canoes; however, Trout Lake does not have a public access point for such craft.

**Access:** Trout Lake State Forest can be accessed from the Campbell Road and the Campbell Public Forest Access Road in the town of Edwards. It can also be accessed from St. Lawrence County Route 19 and the Cedar Lake Public Forest Access Road in the town of Hermon.

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**More information:** <http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/104571.html>

### **Fire-Fall State Forest**

Fire-Fall State Forest covers 1,601 acres located in the southern part of the Town of Hermon. The southeastern portion of this area shares a common boundary with nearby Trout Lake State Forest. Topography, soils, trees/vegetative cover and likely wildlife are consistent with those of the Trout Lake State Forest (see above).

This forest consists of four parcels which were purchased between 1950 and 1965 for the purposes of reforestation, wildlife management, timber production, recreation, and watershed protection. Fire-Fall State Forest gets its name from the many destructive forest fires that raged throughout this area in the early 1900s. Much of the area was burned so severely that the root systems of the trees and the organic matter in the soil were consumed, which caused the already thin soils to erode and left exposed bedrock. These forests still contain large areas which are in the early stages of forest succession. Fire-Fall State Forest contains a stand of over 600 acres which is composed primarily of bedrock covered with lichens, shadbush, and scattered hardwood saplings and pole timber sized trees. Charred stumps of eastern hemlock and other conifers remind visitors of what happened here many years ago.

- The Big Maple hiking trail extends from St. Lawrence County Route 19.
- There are no designated camp sites on this property. Backcountry camping is allowed.
- Hunting and trapping are allowed in accordance with State laws and regulations, unless otherwise posted.

**Access:** This forest can be accessed from St. Lawrence County Route 19 in the town of Hermon.

**More information:** <http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/82459.html>



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## **Wolf Lake State Forest**

Wolf Lake State Forest is a reforestation area of 4,316 acres in the Towns of Hermon and Edwards. It was purchased by the State to return idle and abandoned farmlands to productive use as a source of timber and to provide land for public recreation. Old roads which once serviced local farms provide vehicular access to the Wolf Lake State Forest. The remote interior section of the Forest is characterized by bare rock, stands of native red and white pine at higher elevations and stands of hardwood trees between the ridges, all likely related to the disturbances of logging and fires in the late 1800's to early 1900's.

- Trails: Talcville to Moon Lake Trail (2.7 miles); Moon Lake to Wolf Lake Trail (0.6 mile); Moon Lake to Huckleberry Lake Trail (1.7 miles); Talcville to Huckleberry Lake Trail (2.2 miles); Sam Day Road to Wolf Lake Trail (3.9 miles); and Sam Day Road to Moon Lake Trail (aka Beaver Ponds Trail - 5.0 miles). All trails in Wolf Lake State Forest are open to mountain biking; however, they are not specifically maintained for mountain biking. In addition, all trails are open for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing in the winter, but are not groomed for those activities.
- There are several designated campsites in the forest. Lean-tos are located at Huckleberry, Moon and Wolf Lakes. At-large primitive camping is also allowed.
- Hunting and trapping are allowed in accordance with State laws and regulations.
- The property has numerous creeks and streams for fishing, which is allowed in accordance with State laws and regulations.

**Access:** Wolf Lake State Forest can be accessed by Gates and Sam Day Roads in the Town of Hermon in the north. Wolf Lake can also be accessed by Ames Road in the Town of Edwards to the south.

**More Information:** <http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/7995.html>

## **St. Lawrence Rock Ridge Management Unit**

The NYS DEC does not yet have a Unit Management Plan (UMP) describing the management activities for these three State Forest tracts. When completed, the St. Lawrence Rock Ridge Unit Management Plan will include 15 State Forests, nine detached Forest Preserve parcels and two Conservation Easements. In addition to forestry management objectives, the UMP will contain detailed information on natural features, recreational infrastructure, geology, natural & human history, habitats, wildlife and fisheries. The DEC is planning for public input in the development of the UMP; additional information is available from the NYS DEC (Region 6) via e-mail, at [r6.ump@dec.ny.gov](mailto:r6.ump@dec.ny.gov).

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## **Trout Lake**

The Trout Lake State Forest and Fire-Fall State Forest provide extensive public frontage on Trout Lake, which is accessible by (foot) trail from the Cedar Lake Public Forest Access Road. However, public use of the 371-acre lake itself for boating, fishing, swimming and related activities is, at best, significantly hindered by the lack of a direct public access boat launching site. Public access is carry-in only.

Fishing: Trout Lake is known for quality rainbow trout and lake trout, but is also home to largemouth and smallmouth bass, and panfish. The DEC stocks Rainbow and Lake Trout annually; landlocked salmon have also been stocked, and special regulations allow for year-round angling.



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## **Cedar Lake**

There is also extensive public frontage on Cedar Lake. Recreational users should be aware that the operation of mechanically propelled vessels other than those powered by an electric motor with a rating of five horsepower or less, is prohibited on any portion of Cedar Lake. Cedar Lake also lacks a public access boat launching site.

### *Community SWOT Analysis*

Hermon's Community SWOT Analysis and visioning exercise demonstrate the relative pragmatism of Town residents. Full SWOT results are available in Appendix A, with items related to the area's natural features highlighted below.

Plentiful, high-quality water ranked, by far, the highest of Hermon's natural resource-related Strengths. Good water was followed by space – participants cited available affordable property, available acreage and the possibility of seclusion for those who seek it. Other related strengths noted include outdoor recreation, Trout Lake and recreation, parks and small town attributes.

Two Weaknesses related to natural resources were identified: foremost, lack of public access (or a public beach) to Trout Lake; and lack of walking trails outside State Forest lands.

Natural resources-related Opportunities were not significantly noted by SWOT participants; however, several opportunities attributed to other categories (institutions/ infrastructure, private sector, culture) are directly dependent upon Hermon's natural resources. Examples include: the availability of quality water with potential for bottling, developing walking/biking trails and ATV/snowmobile trails; and public access to Trout Lake.

Threats relative to natural resources noted by participants include: invasive species (primarily with respect to Trout Lake), beavers, and climate change.

## Land Use

The following table lists land uses in Hermon based on acreage, number of parcels and taxable value.

*Composition of Land Uses in Hermon*

Class	Use	Acres	%	Parcels	%	Taxable Value	%
<i>Agricultural</i>		20,188	60%	226	21%	\$ 15,183,580	26%
105	Farmland	4,742		51		\$ 2,048,454	
112	Dairy farm	2,516		17		\$ 2,052,210	
113	Cattle farm	1,116		9		\$ 988,188	
116	Other livestock	403		2		\$ 215,057	
120	Field crops	366		5		\$ 278,860	
240	Residence 10+ acres	6,312		64		\$ 6,697,405	
320	Rural vacant land	4,733		78		\$ 2,903,406	
<i>Residential</i>		3,658	11%	485	45%	\$ 37,260,436	64%
210	Single family residence	1,301		260		\$ 17,465,676	
220	Two family residence	52		4		\$ 154,090	
230	Three family residence	1		1		\$ 44,200	
260	Seasonal	1,644		147		\$ 16,980,415	
270	Mobile home	572		71		\$ 2,446,455	
280	Multiple residence	83		1		\$ 141,100	
416	Mobile home park	5		1		\$ 28,500	
<i>Vacant</i>		1,938	6%	247	23%	\$ 3,125,115	5%
311	Residential vacant	594		125		\$ 1,486,140	
312	Vacant with garage	1,153		40		\$ 1,198,730	
314	Vacant less than 10 acres	188		72		\$ 436,145	
315	Vacant, underwater	1		1		\$ 200	
330	Vacant commercial	1		8		\$ 3,900	
340	Vacant industrial	2		1		\$ -	
<i>Commercial</i>		127	0.4%	12	1%	\$ 655,300	1%
425	Bar	1		1		\$ 62,100	
433	Auto body	0.2		1		\$ 17,500	
449	Storage	2		2		\$ 90,900	
461	Bank	0.3		1		\$ 60,900	
475	Junkyard	121		1		\$ 115,000	
480	Multiple use building	2		6		\$ 308,900	
<i>Municipal or Public Institution</i>		46	0.1%	22	2%	8,600	0.01%
592	Athletic field	4		1		\$ -	
611	Library	0.3		1		\$ -	
620	Church	1		2		\$ -	
633	Senior housing	2		1		\$ -	
651	Highway garage	1		3		\$ -	
662	Police/fire station	8		3		\$ -	
681	Cultural building	0.1		1		\$ 8,600	
682	Recreation facility	8		4		\$ -	
695	Cemetery	22		6		\$ -	
<i>Public or Private Utility</i>		9	0.03%	4	0.4%	\$ 73,274	0.1%
822	Water supply	6		2		\$ -	
831	Telephone communications	0.2		1		\$ 32,900	
842	Rail line	3		1		\$ 40,374	
<i>Park or Forest</i>		7,569	23%	73	7%	\$ 2,322,826	4%
910	Private forest	3,397		58		\$ 1,573,612	
941	State forest	2,717		5		\$ 738,400	
942	County forest	29		1		\$ 10,814	
961	State-owned park/rec area	1,413		7		\$ -	
963	Municipal park	13		2		\$ -	
<b>Total</b>		<b>33,535</b>		<b>1,069</b>		<b>\$ 58,629,131</b>	

Each property in the county is classified by a local assessor according to its primary use. If multiple uses are present on a lot, they may not be reflected in the classification assigned by the assessor. For instance, the doctor's office in Hermon's library is not

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recorded as a commercial use in the summary above because the business is housed in an institutional building.

Hermon's real property tax records indicate there are 1,069 parcels totaling 33,535 acres with a combined taxable value of \$58.6 million. Agriculture is the largest land use which uses 60% or 20,188 acres in the community and represents 26% of the Town's taxable value at \$15.1 million. There are 485 residential lots which account for 11% of the Town's land base but represent 64% of the taxable value in Hermon. The largest residential category is seasonal homes, which totals 147 parcels with a taxable value of \$16.9 million. Forests and parks represent 7,569 acres or 23% of Hermon's land base and represent 4% of the taxable value in the town. Six percent of the land (1,938 acres) is classified as vacant. There is a very small presence of commercial properties in the town. There are 12 commercial parcels in the community that encompass 127 acres with a combined taxable value of \$655,300 which is 1% of the total taxable value in the town.

### *Community SWOT Analysis*

Strengths in Hermon include its small mix of businesses and services downtown, including a bank branch, a physician's office, convenience stores, two bars, a Post Office, two churches, the ARC Center and library. Residents also value the town's agricultural heritage and maple syrup industry, and identify its modest property values and reasonable taxes as assets. Residents identified Hermon's quaint, small town atmosphere and proximity to Canton as a bedroom community as additional assets.

Weaknesses in the community include vacant or dilapidated structures, the disappearance of historical buildings, and sidewalks that are in disrepair. The absence of a grocery or hardware store, and personal services such as a barber shop or hair salon, and few employment opportunities were also identified as weaknesses.

Opportunities for Hermon are the redevelopment of its downtown district, expanding the mix of local businesses in the community, diversifying farming and adding value to agricultural products. Residents also identified hosting a variety of community events such as field days and ice cream socials to promote Hermon's small town atmosphere. The town's abundant water supply also presents an opportunity to establish a water bottling plant.

Threats to the community include a decline in the Town's population, forgetting Hermon's cultural heritage, and the loss of local businesses.

### *Online Survey Analysis*

Based on responses from Hermon's online community survey, town characteristics residents would like to see change are: improvements to streets and sidewalks; improving the community's appearance by abating dilapidated buildings, cleaning up yards and fixing buildings; and increasing outdoor recreation opportunities.

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Characteristics that should remain the same, as identified in the survey, are unmetered water and sewer services; the community' quality of life; and the continued presence of a bank branch, the doctor's office, post office, library and existing businesses.

Business opportunities: Forty-two percent of respondents (42%) agreed or strongly agreed that existing businesses and services in Hermon were adequate for their day to day needs. An equal percentage disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement, while 16% were neutral on the issue. The most common businesses or services to establish in Hermon were a grocery store, a diner, a mechanical repair shop, and seasonal ice cream shop.

Housing: While 83% of respondents said they agreed or strongly agreed that their personal dwelling is in satisfactory condition or better, 45% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that the overall condition of houses or apartments in Hermon was satisfactory or better.

Recreation: Sixty-nine percent said more activities were needed for families. When asked what additional activities or services were needed, recreational programming and infrastructure received the most suggestions from respondents (66%). Forty-three percent of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed there was adequate access to outdoor recreational facilities. Seventeen percent were neutral, and 40% agreed or strongly agreed. The most commonly identified facilities recommended for installation were trails, sports facilities, and parks.



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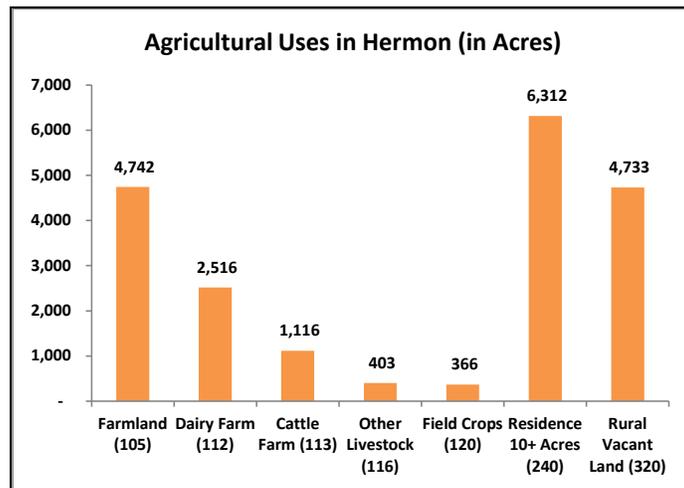
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## *Agriculture*

### *Agriculture Land Classifications*

Hermon's property records indicate there are 232 parcels totaling 20,188 acres (58% of total land area) that are being used for agricultural purposes. Residences with 10 or more acres is Hermon's largest agricultural classification and accounts for 31% of the total acreage that is used for farming in the community. Agricultural Land (property class 105) is the second largest category with 4,742 acres, followed by lands classified as Rural Vacant (320) at 4,733 acres. More than 2,500 acres are classified as Dairy Farms (112), and approximately 1,100 acres are associated with Cattle Farms (113). The two smallest farmland classifications are Other Livestock (116) at 403 acres, and Field Crops (120) at 366 acres. Nearly all of these agricultural lands are found north of Trout Lake. A Land Classifications Map depicting the location and type of farmland in the town is appended to this report.

Based on the accuracy of local assessor records, farming activity in Hermon since 2006 grew by an additional 79 parcels totaling 3,178 acres. This growth primarily occurred in Rural Vacant Lands (property class 320), which accounts for 92% (2,925 acres) of this total.



### *Maple Production*

New York is 2nd in the nation for maple syrup production, and St. Lawrence County consistently ranks as one of the top 10 counties for total number of taps and gallons of maple syrup. Hermon is home to Woody's Maple, a family-owned business that has been making maple syrup since the 1860s. The operation includes 10,000 taps on 100 acres of land and is regularly featured during New York's annual Maple Weekend festivities. The business on the Underwood Road offers tours of its sugar house, which includes a 2,400-gallon capacity reverse osmosis machine that removes 75% of the water from sap before the evaporator boils 320 gallons of sap per hour. In spring 2016, Woody's boiled 4,280 gallons of syrup.

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*Soil Classes and Prime Farmland*

The US Department of Agriculture groups soils into classes which are used as a guideline to determine whether land is suitable for cultivation. There are eight classes total, and classes 1 to 4 are most suitable for farming. The lower the soil class number indicates a higher suitability for cultivation. Soil Class 1 is not present in St. Lawrence County. Twenty-three percent of the land (7,881 acres) in Hermon is most suitable for production purposes (soil classes 2, 3 and 4), and are primarily found in and around the former Village, and along the eastern border of the Town. Soil class 3 accounts for 13% of this total and is the most prevalent productive soil type in the community.



**Concentration of Soil Classes Present in Hermon**

Map Legend	Soil Class	Cultivate?	Acres	%
Dark Green	2	Yes	919	3%
Green	3	Yes	4,464	13%
Light Green	4	Yes	2,498	7%
Yellow	5	No	3,972	12%
Light Orange	6	No	11,767	35%
Dark Orange	7	No	9,550	28%
Red	8	No	927	3%
White	Not Assigned	No	2	0%

*Total 34,099*

A map showing the distribution of soil classes in Hermon is appended to this report and depict soil classes 2 – 4 in green that are suitable for production purposes. Lands colored in yellow, orange and red are not suitable for cultivation, but may be used as pasture, grazing purposes, woodlands, recreational or aesthetic purposes.

The USDA NRCS also designates which class 2, 3 and 4 soils contain characteristics that are most ideal for agricultural production. These soils are defined as: Prime farmland; prime farmland if drained; or farmland of statewide importance. The application of these definitions reveals 21% of land in the Town (%) is prime farmland, prime if drained, or farmland of statewide importance. Prime farmland and farmland of statewide importance accounts for approximately 1 out of every five acres that is present in Hermon. An associated map appended to this report reveals most prime farmland in the town is used for production purposes and receives an agricultural valuation. This valuation indicates a farm operation is farming at least 7 acres and generating \$10,000 in annual sales receipts.

**Concentration of Prime Farmland in Hermon**

Prime	Acres	%
All Prime	711	2%
Prime if Drained	3,667	11%
Farmland of Statewide Importance	2,704	8%
<i>Total</i>	<i>7,083</i>	<i>21%</i>

*Wetlands and Hydric Soils*

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Federal and State Wetlands, and hydric soils preclude certain types of development and land uses. Freshwater wetlands regulated by the Department of Environmental Conservation are at least 12.4 acres in size, and include a 100' wide protection zone around its perimeter. State wetlands are grouped into four classes: Class I to Class IV. Class I wetlands are the most valuable and are subject to the most stringent standards. Activities in a State wetland and associated buffer are restricted. Most agricultural activities are permitted, but require a permit. Activities requiring a permit include: filling or depositing soil; clear-cutting trees; road construction which involves moving earth or altering water flow; filling spoil; and erecting structures not required to enhance or maintain the agricultural productivity of the land (State Freshwater Wetlands Permit Requirements are detailed in NYCRR Part 663.2).

Federal wetlands meanwhile, are not determined by size and do not include a buffer around their perimeters. Activities that are regulated in federal wetlands include (but are not limited to): dredging, filling, excavating, land clearing, use of mechanized equipment, ditching, stream channelizing and relocation, shoreline protection and dock construction. Land that is already under agricultural production is exempt from federal wetland regulations, but regulations do apply for converting wetlands to agricultural production.

A majority of the State and Federal wetlands present in the town (depicted in pink and purple on the associated map) are in the southern portion of the municipality, and are particularly concentrated along its shared border with Gouverneur, Edwards and Russell.

The full extent of wetlands in a community is more accurately reflected by the presence of hydric soils. Hydric soils are saturated with moisture and are known to damage or destroy conventional construction methods for septic systems, roads and basements. These hydric soils are found primarily in the northern half of the town, and appear in concentrations that parallel Trout Lake Road, Pond Road, and County Route 13.

#### *Protecting Agriculture through the Agricultural District Program*

While no local land use regulations are in effect in the Town, a majority of land that is north of Trout Lake is located in Agricultural District 1, which extends State protections to farm operations that engage in sound agricultural practices. Under New York State's Agriculture and Markets Law, farm operations in ag districts can be protected from nuisance lawsuits and unreasonable land use regulations. So long as a farm operation is not violating applicable State or Federal regulations, the farm operation cannot be sued for causing a nuisance.

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*Goal and Recommendations*

Goal A: Encourage the preservation of soil designated as prime farmland for agricultural purposes.

***Recommendations:***

1. Future non-agricultural development should be minimized in areas that take the best soils out of production.
2. The presence of wetlands and hydric soils should be recognized for their limited development potential.
3. The Town should examine whether site plan review, subdivision regulations and or zoning should be adopted to help guide future development in the community. Design and siting considerations could be incorporated to ensure future development is consistent with the community's desired development pattern, minimizes conflicts between uses, and enhances the Town's quality of life.





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## *Business and Commerce*

While Hermon was identified primarily as a bedroom community for other population centers as well as a summer retreat for those with camps around Trout Lake, a number of businesses were identified. Many were single proprietor operations like taxidermy and auto repair, but there is also a gas and convenience store, bank, two bars and a large number of agricultural operations. A list of existing, non-agricultural businesses was recorded during a windshield survey of all Town and Village roads in June of 2016. Survey results can be found in Appendix C.

Farms are businesses and generate income for a community because they sell a product, also because of the tax base generated from the large amount of land that is owned by the farming community. More detailed information, including goals and recommendations can be found in the Agriculture section of the Comprehensive Plan.

### *Community SWOT Analysis*

The March, 2016 Community SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis identified a number of Business and Commerce related items, which are highlighted below. Full SWOT results are available in Appendix A.

Hermon's Strengths are that there is a convenience store in the community, as well as numerous personal and professional businesses. A strong agricultural and maple industry also exists.

Weaknesses: while basic necessities can be met in Hermon there is a lack of diverse employment opportunities; some critical personal needs are not provided for in Hermon.

Opportunities in Hermon include the promotion of one of the most essential commodities in the world: water. Hermon has an abundance of spring water and capitalizing on such an asset should be explored.

Threats to Hermon's business and commerce include on-line services that could take away customers from the few remaining businesses that exist.

### *Goals and Recommendations*

The following goals and recommendations are based upon the comments and discussion generated at public meetings and through other public input means.

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Goal B: Maintain the business presence that currently exists in Hermon.

**Recommendations:**

1. Maintain an active relationship with the bank and post office to ensure that both remain a fixture on Church Street and Main Street.
2. Encourage all small business owners to participate in any tax relief initiatives, and business management training offered through the Small Business Development Center and other like entities.
3. If beneficial and practical, create a Local Development Corporation to strategically invest in local projects.

Goal C: Encourage the development of new businesses in Hermon.

**Recommendations:**

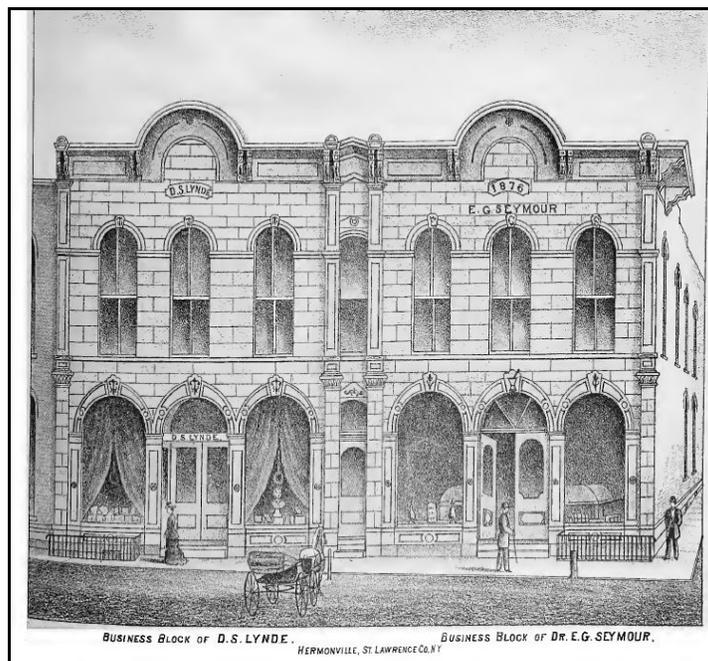
1. Numerous business ideas were generated during the public consultation process for this Plan. Some ideas include a diner or restaurant, convenience store, ice cream shop, barber/salon.
2. A significant amenity, spring water, exists in abundance in the Town of Hermon; the community should undertake a feasibility study to determine how the excess water can be better utilized for the benefit of Hermon.

Goal D: Promote commercial investment in the community by revitalizing Hermon's downtown district and surrounding hamlet.

**Recommendations:**

1. Pursue State and Federal funds to rehabilitate and restore residential and commercial properties on Church Street and the surrounding neighborhood. In addition to repairing buildings that create a blighting influence on the community, housing and Main Street rehabilitation projects elsewhere in the County have successfully encouraged adjacent property owners to improve the appearance of their homes and properties. Improving the appearance of a downtown district is a visual indication to visitors, residents and small business entrepreneurs that Hermon is a community worth visiting and investing in.

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2. Demolish and abate dilapidated properties – particularly in and around Hermon’s downtown where water and sewer service is available - to increase the number of properties that can accommodate new commercial development. The likelihood of success for a new small business is significantly improved when it is conveniently nearby other services and businesses that are regularly frequented by customers.



***Business Block of Hermon – 1876***



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## *Community and Culture*

Throughout the public consultation process carried out for development of the Comprehensive Plan a similar theme was heard, that Hermon is a tightknit, caring community. That's not to say it does not have its problems, but positive aspects of the community clearly outweigh the negative.

The municipality clearly rallies around the basic pillars of the community, including the fire department, municipal offices, the Post Office, the library, and the area's agricultural heritage. Also, Hermon has a rich history that needs to be remembered and promoted as an asset. Further engaging the population of all ages to carry out community improvement projects is necessary and attainable.

### *Community SWOT Analysis*

The March, 2016 Community SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis identified a number of Community and Culture related items, which are highlighted below. Full SWOT results are available in Appendix A.

Hermon's Strengths are that the community is a safe and quiet caring community that is off the beaten path, with a long historic tradition.

Weaknesses include a loss of historical buildings and a declining interest in the history of Hermon. A lack of social activities and other economic factors have curtailed in-migration and manifested itself in some acts of vandalism in the Community.

Opportunities in Hermon include the promotion of the small town atmosphere to appeal to individuals who are willing to forgo urban amenities in order to gain a slower pace and an engaged community.

Threats to Hermon's community and culture come in the form of population loss, drug use and crime, the absence of activities for youth, and the potential for forgetting where we came from.

### *Goals and Recommendations*

The following goals and recommendations are based upon the comments and discussion generated at public meetings and through other public input means.

Goal E: Create a community that engages all age categories of the population.
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### **Recommendations:**

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1. Form a community group that will undertake small, attainable landscape improvement projects within the population centers in the Town. Personally invite people to participate and declare success after each project is completed. Some examples include: flower planter boxes, sidewalk/roadway clean up, Main Street Park upgrade, etc.
  2. Ensure that the population has an opportunity to voice their opinion to local officials on what should change and what should stay the same in Hermon.
  3. Sponsor or coordinate annual community events throughout the year such as a winterfest, Memorial Day parade, summer festivals, cook-off competitions, talent shows and pot lucks.

Goal F: Improve the aesthetic appearance of Hermon.

**Recommendations:**

1. Institute a Town-wide rubbish/metal collection on a semi-annual basis.
2. Promote an “adopt-a-roadway” program for as many roads as possible throughout the Town.
3. Partner with waste haulers to remove refuse from demolished buildings.

Goal G: Publicize the history of Hermon as a community asset.

**Recommendations:**

1. Maintain an active role for the Town Historian, to ensure that Hermon’s past is not forgotten.
2. Initiate local history workshops at the library for children, teens and adults.
3. Create self-guided walking tours of historic areas of Hermon such as the cemetery, and downtown.
4. Ensure that the historic buildings that remain in Hermon, such as the library, bank building, the churches and many of the homes, are retained for future generations.

Goal H: Expand recreational opportunities in Hermon.

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**Recommendations:**

1. Improve the 7 acre municipally owned park on Main Street to better fit the community's needs.
2. Better promote the public car top boat launch access to Trout Lake and Cedar Lake.
3. Solicit public support and funding to construct, operate and maintain a public boat launch at Trout Lake.
4. Develop a public walking path to and through the Hermon Cemetery.





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## *Housing*

### *Current Conditions - Data and Statistics*

Data related to the Town of Hermon's housing stock has been collected from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2010-2014 American Community Survey (ACS), and from a windshield survey conducted by staff of the St. Lawrence County Planning Office in June 2016.

The windshield survey identified 416 housing units (Planning staff disregarded any housing unit that appeared to be seasonal/second home). Of those units surveyed, 235 (56.9%) were determined to be in standard condition, while 170 (41.0%) appeared to be in substandard condition and 9 (2.1%) were determined to be dilapidated. Thirty-six (8.6%) of the identified units were mobile homes; most of these (35 units, 8.4% of all housing units) were found to be in substandard condition. Results of the windshield surveys are available in Appendix B.

ACS data report a total of 617 housing units in the Town. While these data also indicate a Town vacancy rate that is significantly higher than St. Lawrence County as a whole (32.3% versus 20.3%), this is easily explained by the seasonal nature of many housing units in the Town (141 seasonal units; 22.8% of all housing units).

ACS data further indicates:

- In the Town of Hermon, 52.2% of the homes were built prior to 1960. In St. Lawrence County respectively, fewer than half (25,959 units; 49.7%) of housing units were built before 1960.
- It is notable that the Town had a significant number of homes constructed since 1980: 201 (30.6%) of the Town's homes were built during this period. The County had a slightly lower rate of homes built since 1980: 28.9% of its housing units. The period since 1980 is significant because these units are presumed to be free of lead-based paint contamination. Lead-based paint was outlawed in 1978.
- Mobile homes have long been known to play a larger role in the housing stock of the North Country than they do in other parts of New York State. ACS indicates that 2.5% of the State's housing units are made up of mobile homes. In the County, 11.1% of houses are mobile homes. Hermon has an even greater percentage than the County at large: 14.9% of the Town's housing units are mobile homes.
- The proportion of mobile homes in the Town is significant because mobile homes are often the only way for a lower-income household to obtain/establish a "home" of their own. In many cases these households cannot qualify for a mortgage to buy a conventional home; they obtain a building lot at a very low cost, and the mobile home unit is purchased/financed at a much lower cost than would be a conventional home.

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- While mobile homes provide access to homeownership for lower-income households, they can also represent a kind of trap: a conventional home often holds its value or increases in value, but mobile homes, like automobiles, tend to depreciate in value over time. Thus, a household paying for a mobile home usually does not build equity in the way that an owner of a conventional home does; mobile homes do not build wealth like a conventional home does.
  - Homes in Hermon are more likely to be single family homes than multi-units: in the Town, 77.3% of homes are single-unit structures. In the County, 70.4% are single-units.
  - Occupancy data in the Town indicate a low rate of tenure by renters: 22.0% of occupied homes are renter-occupied. The County's renter-occupied housing rate is 29.4%.
  - Median home values in Hermon are significantly lower than the County as a whole: Median value of owner-occupied homes in the Town is \$75,600; in the County \$86,200.
  - Owner-occupants in Hermon pay a median cost per month for homes of \$986, compared to \$1,094 in the County. By contrast, in homes without a mortgage, owner-occupants in Hermon pay a median cost per month of \$475, while across the County, similar households pay \$454.
  - The rental market in Hermon is not large; only 18.6% of occupied units paid rent in 2014. Median rent in Hermon (\$650) is somewhat lower than the County, at \$698.
  - "Gross rent as a percentage of income" is often reviewed as a way to look at affordability for renters. In Hermon, over 67% of renters pay more than 30% of income for rent. This compares to a County figure of 52%. (**Note:** Rental housing is considered affordable if total shelter costs do not exceed 30% of gross monthly household income. Therefore, more than two-thirds of renters in Hermon are "rent burdened".)
  - Utility gas, or natural gas, is utilized as a heating fuel by the majority (53.4%) of New Yorkers, while an additional 31.3% of State residents rely on fuel oil or kerosene. In Hermon, the majority of Town residents (49.0%) rely on fuel oil or kerosene and the next largest group (21.5%) heat with wood, followed rather closely by bottled, tank or LP gas at 15.3%.

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### *Community SWOT Analysis*

The Community SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Analysis, held March 17, 2016, identified a number of housing-related items. Full SWOT results are available in Appendix A, with housing-related topics highlighted below.

Hermon's strengths include: good school; system inexpensive property; intimacy of neighbor relations, caring community; reasonable taxes.

Weaknesses indirectly related to housing include: infrastructure (water contamination); vacant buildings & dilapidated structures; limited tax base lack of young families, increasingly older population; lack of diverse employment; need to travel for work.

Opportunities identified in the SWOT indirectly related to housing include: promote small town atmosphere, with field days, ice cream socials, community engagement, summer programs; redevelopment of downtown.

Threats indirectly related to housing include: failing infrastructure; loss of population; loss/consolidation of schools.

Additional public input was gathered at a public meeting on July 21, 2016. SWOT results were presented; attendees were asked for further comments related to strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats; and were asked to provide input on a vision for the future with specific related achievements.

Housing-related components of residents' vision for the future of Hermon include:

*“Hermon continues to be a safe, friendly, caring community with affordable and improving housing, excellent water and waste water infrastructure and easy access to a rural environment with multiple recreational amenities.”*

### *Housing-Related Goals, Impediments and Recommendations*

The following goals and recommendations are based upon the comments and discussion generated at public meetings and through other public input means.

Goal I: Enhance and preserve the condition/appearance of housing in the Town.

#### **Recommendations:**

1. Implement a housing rehabilitation program. Possible funding sources: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), NYS HOME. Look for partner agencies (Development Authority of the North Country; SLC Planning; North Country Housing Council).

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2. Promote development of housing in areas already served by municipal infrastructure. Use public funds to develop a “land-bank” as needed to purchase lots and hold them until preferred development alternatives exist.
  3. Develop a Historic District / Landmark Buildings program. Technical assistance, information on weatherization of historic properties and historic preservation tax credits are available through the New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).
  4. Adopt a Section 421-f partial tax exemption for increased assessments related to reconstruction of and improvements to residential property (this is relevant to all applicable taxing jurisdictions, i.e. Town and school district). Section 421-f allows a municipality to phase in any assessed value increase due to renovation of a residential property over an eight-year period, with local authority over precise definitions and allowances.

Goal J: Increase affordable housing options for rentals.

**Recommendations:**

1. Contact housing authorities and property management agencies in proximate areas to discuss possible partnerships. Suggested agencies include:
  - St. Lawrence County Community Development Program (CDP)
  - St. Lawrence County Office for the Aging
  - Housing Authorities (Canton, Edwards, Gouverneur, Ogdensburg, DeKalb)
  - North Country Housing Council
  - Development Authority of the North Country (DANC)
  - United Helpers
  - USDA Rural Development
2. Contact local development agencies to discuss marketing of the community to private developers and to explore potential funding options. Suggested agencies include:
  - St. Lawrence County IDA
  - St. Lawrence River Valley Redevelopment Agency
  - Development Authority of the North Country (DANC)
  - New York Dormitory Authority
3. Implement a revitalization project in “downtown” Hermon (former Village). Include housing as an option above stores (NOT on first floors in a business area). Possible funding sources: New York Main Street, Rural Area Revitalization Project (RARP), Empire State Development.

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## *Infrastructure*

A variety of infrastructure concerns were raised during the consultation process for the comprehensive plan. In particular, the poor condition of many local roads was acknowledged as well as the deficient downtown bridge. There was also acknowledgement of infrastructure strengths and opportunities in the community.

Water in Hermon is bountiful, clean and a great asset for the community. Water is so plentiful in the water district that meters are not used to record how much is used. While this is the preferred option for the consumers, it is poor long-term management strategy. State regulations may require a water conservation program be in place before additional water could be removed, which would impact a water bottling facility. The Hermon sewer plant, while generally operating below design capacity, is subject to periodic inflow inundation and this could limit future expansion. Ensuring that both Hermon's water and sewer assets are adequately managed is of paramount importance.

Energy production and usage has always been a delicate subject. Renewable energy has been at the forefront of a national conversation recently and this is being addressed locally in a number of different ways. While Hermon does not have any major waterbodies that could be used for hydroelectric generation, it does have an abundance of open land that is accessible to the sun. More and more solar energy projects are emerging in the North County and Hermon is as eligible as any other community to take advantage of solar development.

The Internet continues to shrink the divide that exists due to geography. However, this is only possible if high-speed Internet access is available. Due to the rural nature of Hermon and the small population base, high speed Internet is less prevalent and available to the citizens of Hermon; this needs to change in order for the community to continue to develop.

### *Community SWOT Analysis:*

The March, 2016 Community SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis identified a number of infrastructure related items, which are highlighted below. Full SWOT results are available in Appendix A.

Hermon's infrastructure Strengths include the abundance of water, water and waste water infrastructure, and open space.

Weaknesses include an aging road network, deficient sidewalks and a structurally unsound bridge. Poor Internet access in certain parts of the Town are also problematic.

Opportunities in Hermon include the development of a recreational trail, better access to the snowmobile trail network, capitalizing on the surplus water that exists from municipal wells, and solar access.

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The biggest Threat to Hermon's infrastructure that was identified was the possible contamination to the water supply.

*Goals and Recommendations*

The following goals and recommendations are based upon the comments and discussion generated at public meetings and through other public input means.

Goal K: Improve the road, sidewalk and bridge infrastructure in Hermon.

**Recommendations:**

1. Incrementally raise the highway department paving budget to allow for additional paving to occur on town roads.
2. Ensure that the County roads throughout the town are in the County paving schedule.
3. Decommission sidewalks that are underused so that those that see more foot traffic can be better maintained.
4. Continue to solicit funds from a variety of sources to repair the Main Street bridge.

Goal L: Use the water supply and waste water infrastructure as efficiently and effectively as possible.

**Recommendations:**

1. Ensure that water springs and water supply lines are maintained by carrying out regular inspections and controlling access to the water supply.
2. Examine possibility of a metered water system to better control the usage water and its impact on the waste water system.

Goal M: Promote Hermon as a solar development friendly community.

**Recommendations:**

1. Consult with local NYSERDA representatives (Adirondack North Country Association) and land owners to market solar friendly developable land to potential solar development companies.
2. Promote the St. Lawrence County Solarize campaigns.

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Goal N: Improve the broadband presence in the Hermon.

**Recommendations:**

1. Partner with TDS and other providers that provide internet access to Hermon residences to capture funds from the New New York Broadband program to improve connectivity.
2. Create nodes of Wi-Fi connectivity at locations throughout the community.





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## *Institutions*

The Hermon Hepburn Library is one of the few remaining historically-significant structures in the Village of Hermon. The library was chartered in 1921 and built in the classic Hepburn library style. It remains a focal point of the community today and has regular hours of operation.

While there is no school located in Hermon, the majority of school age residents attend Hermon-DeKalb Central School, in the adjacent town of DeKalb. Two other school districts, Gouverneur Central and Edwards-Knox Central are located within the Town boundary as well.

The Hermon Fire and Rescue Department is an incorporated not-for-profit that has served the community since mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. Fire and rescue services are provided throughout Hermon and rescue services are also provided to the adjacent town of DeKalb.

A significant change in municipal government occurred in Hermon in 2016 with the dissolution of the Village of Hermon. This decision was made through a Village referendum after a detailed study was prepared by the Development Authority of the North Country. The Town Government will assume the responsibility of managing the land area of the former Village on January 1, 2017.

### *Community SWOT Analysis:*

The March, 2016 Community SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis identified a number of institution related items, which are highlighted below. Full SWOT results are available in Appendix A.

Hermon's Strengths include the Hermon-DeKalb Central School, the fire and rescue squad, both of which received the most votes, consecutively. Other institutional strengths include the Library and municipal government.

No Weaknesses with the institutions of Hermon were identified at the SWOT meeting.

Opportunities for Hermon's institutions were not identified at the SWOT analysis.

Threats to Hermon's institutions include school consolidation, unfunded mandates that impact the fire and rescue squad, the highway department and other facets of municipal government.

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*Goals and Recommendations*

The following goals and recommendations are based upon the comments and discussion generated at public meetings and through other public input means.

Goal O: Promote the Hermon Hepburn Library as an integral part of the Hermon community.

**Recommendations:**

1. Maintain an active relationship with the North Country Library System and other library support networks to ensure that the library remains open and vibrant.
2. Continue to promote activities at the library such as the Ice Cream Social and other educational programs to engage as many members of Hermon Community as possible in library activities.
3. Ensure that the basement doctor's office remains rented by a healthcare professional to ensure a healthcare presence in Hermon.

Goal P: Maintain the quality and proximity of the current public school presence in Hermon.

**Recommendations:**

1. Encourage the retention of the Hermon-DeKalb school district in its current configuration as long as this remains in the best interest of the Hermon student population.
2. Work with all school districts that cover the Town of Hermon (Hermon-DeKalb, Edwards-Knox and Gouverneur) to ensure the best possible education for the school age residents of Hermon.

Goal Q: Support the Hermon Fire and Rescue Squad as a pillar of the community.

**Recommendations:**

1. Continue to provide funding to Hermon fire and Rescue through the municipal budget.
2. Support all grant opportunities that exist to offset the cost of machinery, equipment and vehicles for the fire and rescue squad.
3. Encourage the return of the Fireman Field Days event in Hermon.

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4. Promote the development of an outdoor skating rink at the fire station.
  5. Encourage public involvement with the Fire and Rescue squad through an expanded Fire/Rescue auxiliary.

Goal R: Support the single municipal government structure for Hermon and promote partnerships that will allow for Town government advancement.

**Recommendations:**

1. Leverage the relationship with Iroquois Gas to ensure that Hermon is receiving all possible benefits from the gas easement that runs through the Town.
2. Continue to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of greater land use control in the Town, specifically zoning; and ensure that any zoning regulations be consistent with this comprehensive plan.

Goal S: Promote public comments/participation in the future St. Lawrence Rock Ridge Unit Management Plan.

**Recommendations:**

1. The Town should monitor anticipated public comment periods of pending UMPs available on the NYS DEC website at:  
[http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/4979.html#A-Z\\_UMP\\_Index](http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/4979.html#A-Z_UMP_Index)
2. It is possible for interested parties to submit general inquiries/comments about the upcoming UMP to the DEC via e-mail (r6.ump@dec.ny.gov). For example, the Town could consider a resolution relevant to public access to Trout Lake to be submitted to the DEC for consideration during initial development of the UMP.





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## *Implementation Matrix Overview*

A comprehensive plan only has worth if its recommendations can be implemented. In order to implement what is identified in the plan a clear representation of tasks must be made. This is best done in a chart form or matrix.

The matrix found in this chapter contains the following information: area of study; responsible party; time frame; potential funding sources; and other agency assistance.

The area of study corresponds with the Community Characteristics, Policies and Recommendations section of the plan. In the body of the plan is a goal, followed by recommendations. Below each goal in the matrix will be the listed recommendations.

The responsible party refers to the group within Hermon that will be responsible for addressing the recommendation. This does not mean that they are to carry out the recommendation directly, but will ensure that it is addressed. This responsible party will usually contain at least the municipal board, as they are the elected officials responsible for municipally sanctioned undertakings.

Time frame is important for action is more likely to happen if a finite amount of time is allotted for a task. There are four categories of time frames. They are:

Within 1 year

1-3 years

4-10 years

Ongoing

Potential funding sources will be suggested for those recommendations that require financial assistance. Many initiatives can be undertaken with human capital, but others will require financial assistance from Hermon and other funders. This list will not be exhaustive as additional funding sources may become available or may no longer be available in the future.

Other agency assistance lists other organizations, government entities and groups that may be able to help implement the recommendation. Hermon should always feel that it can reach out to other entities to advance its community.



## Hermon Comprehensive Plan Implementation Matrix

AREA OF STUDY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES	OTHER AGENCY ASSISTANCE
<b><i>AGRICULTURE</i></b>				
<b>Goal A:</b> Encourage the preservation of soil designated as prime farmland for agricultural purposes.				
Recommendations:				
1. Non-agricultural development should be minimized in areas that take the best soils out of production.	Town/Community	Ongoing	NA	Cooperative Extension, USDA
2. The presence of wetlands and hydric soils should be recognized for their limited development potential.	Town	Ongoing	NA	Cooperative Extension, USDA, County Planning Office
3. Examine whether site plan review, subdivision regulations and or zoning should be adopted to help guide future development.	Town	1-3 years	New York State Ag and Markets	County Planning Office, NYS Department of State
<b><i>BUSINESS AND COMMERCE</i></b>				
<b>Goal B:</b> Maintain the business presence that currently exists in Hermon.				
Recommendations:				
1. Maintain an active relationship with the bank and post office to ensure that both remain a fixture on Church Street and Main Street.	Town/Community/ Bank/USPS	Ongoing	NA	Local State and Federal Officials
2. Encourage all small business owners to participate in any tax relief initiatives, and business management training offered through the Small Business Development Center etc.	Town/Community	Ongoing	ESD Division of Small Business Micro Lending and Capital Access Program US Small Business Administration	Small Business Development Center at SUNY Canton, County Chamber of Commerce, County IDA

## Hermon Comprehensive Plan Implementation Matrix

AREA OF STUDY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES	OTHER AGENCY ASSISTANCE
3. If beneficial and practical, Create a Local Development Corporation to strategically invest in local projects.	Town and business owners	4-10 years	NA	County IDA, County Chamber of Commerce NYS Comptroller
<b>Goal C:</b> Encourage the development of new businesses in Hermon.				
Recommendations:				
1. Numerous business ideas were generated some include a diner or restaurant, convenience store, ice cream shop, barber/salon.	Town/Community	Ongoing	Empire State Development Capital Funds through the Consolidated Funding Application DASNY	Small Business Development Center at SUNY Canton, County Chamber of Commerce, County IDA
2. A significant amenity, spring water, exists in abundance in the Town of Hermon; the community should undertake a feasibility study to determine how the excess water can be better utilized for the benefit of Hermon.	Town	1-3 years	Empire State Development Strategic Planning funds through the Consolidated Funding Application  USDA Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG)  Technical assistance through Clarkson University	Town Engineer, DANC, IDA, Clarkson University, USDA Canton Service Center
<b>Goal D:</b> Promote commercial investment in the community by revitalizing Hermon's downtown district and surrounding hamlet.				
Recommendations:				
1. Pursue State and Federal funds to rehabilitate and restore residential and commercial	Town/Community	1-3 years	CDBG funds, Repairs to the Elderly (RESTORE) Program, USDA Section 504	County Planning Office, DANC, USDA Canton Service Center

## Hermon Comprehensive Plan Implementation Matrix

AREA OF STUDY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES	OTHER AGENCY ASSISTANCE
properties on Church Street and the surrounding neighborhood.			Home Repair Program, RESTORE NY (through Empire State Development)	
2. Demolish and abate dilapidated properties – particularly in and around Hermon’s downtown where water and sewer service is available - to increase the number of properties that can accommodate new commercial development.	Town/Community	1-3 years	CDBG funds, RESTORE NY (Empire State Development), OPRHP, National Grid Main Street Program, NYS Main Street Program	County Planning Office, DANC, County IDA
<b>COMMUNITY AND CULTURE</b>				
<b>Goal E:</b> Create a community that engages all age categories of the population.				
Recommendations:				
1. Form a community group that will undertake small, attainable landscape improvement projects within the population centers in the Town. Personally invite people to participate and declare success after each project is completed. Some examples include: flower planter boxes, sidewalk/roadway clean up, Main Street Park upgrade, etc.	Town/Community	Within 1 year	Foundation grants: Home Depot Community Impact Grant Program, Walmart Foundation Community Grant Program, Northern New York Community Foundation, Golub (Pricechopper) Foundation, Iroquois Gas Community Grant Program. Also: Big Box retail stores tend to offer supplies/materials at reduced cost for community projects. Inquiry should be directed to local store manager. Town Budget	NYS Department of State, County Planning Office, DANC

## Hermon Comprehensive Plan Implementation Matrix

AREA OF STUDY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES	OTHER AGENCY ASSISTANCE
2. Ensure that the population has an opportunity to voice their opinion to local officials on what should change and what should stay the same in Hermon.	Town/Community	Ongoing	NA	
3. Sponsor or coordinate annual community events throughout the year such as a winterfest, Memorial Day parade, summer festivals, cook-off competitions, talent shows and pot lucks.	Town/Community	1-3 years	Foundation grants, RVRA Town Budget	Other local communities that have undertaken initiatives such as Colton, Canton, Clifton-Fine
<b>Goal F: Improve the aesthetic appearance of Hermon.</b>				
<b>Recommendations:</b>				
1. Institute a Town-wide rubbish/metal collection on a semi-annual basis.	Town/Community	1-3 years	Town Budget DEC Waste Reduction and Recycling Programs	SLC Solid Waste Department, DANC, Village of Massena
2. Promote an “adopt-a-roadway” program for as many roads as possible throughout the Town.	Town/Community	1-3 years	NA	State DOT, SLC Highway Department
3. Partner with waste haulers to remove refuse from demolished buildings.	Town/Community	Within 1 year	DEC Recycling Coordination and Education Projects	DANC, local haulers

## Hermon Comprehensive Plan Implementation Matrix

AREA OF STUDY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES	OTHER AGENCY ASSISTANCE
<b>Goal G:</b> Publicize the history of Hermon as a community asset.				
Recommendations:				
1. Maintain an active role for the Town Historian, to ensure that Hermon's past is not forgotten.	Town Historian/Town Board	Ongoing	NYS Archives, American Historical Association	NYS Archives, County Historian
2. Initiate local history workshops at the library for children, teens and adults.	Town Historian/Library	1-3 years	NYS Archives, NYS Council on the Arts, St. Lawrence County Arts Council	NYS Archives, County Historian, History Departments at local colleges & universities
3. Create self-guided walking tours of historic areas of Hermon such as the cemetery, and downtown.	Town Historian	1-3 years	NA	NYS OPRHP
4. Ensure that the historic buildings that remain in Hermon, such as the library, bank building, the churches and many of the homes are retained for future generations.	Town/Community	Ongoing	NYS OPRHP DASNY	NYS OPRHP/State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)
<b>Goal H:</b> Expand recreational opportunities in Hermon.				
Recommendation:				
1. Improve the 7 acre municipally owned park on Main Street to better fit the community's needs.	Town/Community	1-3 years	NYS OPRHP, Foundation grants, St. Lawrence Health Initiative, Iroquois Gas	
2. Better promote the public car top boat launch access to Trout Lake and Cedar Lake.	Town/Community	Ongoing	I Love New York, through County Chamber	NYS DEC, SLC Environmental Management Council
3. Solicit public support and funding to construct, operate and maintain a public boat launch at Trout Lake.	Town/Community	4-10 years	NYS OPRHP, Foundation grants	NYS DEC

## Hermon Comprehensive Plan Implementation Matrix

AREA OF STUDY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES	OTHER AGENCY ASSISTANCE
4. Develop a public walking path to and through the Hermon Cemetery.	Town/Community	4-10 years	Foundation grants	Local and County Highway Departments
<b>HOUSING</b>				
<b>Goal I:</b> Enhance and preserve the condition/appearance of housing in the Town.				
1. Implement a housing rehabilitation program.	Town	Ongoing	Development Block Grant (CDBG), NYS HOME.	Development Authority of the North Country; SLC Planning; North Country Housing Council
2. Promote development of housing in areas already served by municipal infrastructure. Use public funds to develop a “land-bank” as needed to purchase lots and hold them until preferred development alternatives exist.	Town	Ongoing	Town Budget	NYS Department of State Empire State Development
3. Develop a Historic District / Landmark Buildings program. Technical assistance, information on weatherization of historic properties and historic preservation tax credits are available through the New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).	Town	4-10 years	NYS OPRHP	NYS OPRHP/SHPO, local communities w/Historic Districts (Canton, Potsdam)
4. Adopt a Section 421-f partial tax exemption for increased assessments related to reconstruction of and improvements to residential property.	Town	1-3 years	NA	County Planning Office, County Real Property Office

## Hermon Comprehensive Plan Implementation Matrix

AREA OF STUDY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES	OTHER AGENCY ASSISTANCE
<b>Goal J:</b> Increase affordable housing options for rentals.				
Recommendations:				
1. Contact housing authorities and property management agencies in proximate areas to discuss possible partnerships. Suggested agencies include: St. Lawrence County Community Development Program (CDP), St. Lawrence County Office for the Aging, Housing Authorities (Canton, Edwards, Gouverneur, Ogdensburg, DeKalb), North Country Housing Council, Development Authority of the North Country (DANC), United Helpers, USDA Rural Development	Town/Community	1-3 years	NA	County Planning Office
2. Contact local development agencies to discuss marketing of the community to private developers and to explore potential funding options. Suggested agencies include: St. Lawrence County IDA, St. Lawrence River Valley Redevelopment Agency, Development Authority of the North Country (DANC), New York Dormitory Authority	Town/Community	1-3 years	NA	County Planning Office
3. Implement a revitalization project in “downtown” Hermon. Include housing as an option above stores (NOT on first floors in a	Town/Community	4-10 years	New York Main Street, Rural Area Revitalization Project (RARP), Empire State Development.	County Planning Office, DANC

## Hermon Comprehensive Plan Implementation Matrix

AREA OF STUDY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES	OTHER AGENCY ASSISTANCE
business area).				
<b>INFRASTRUCTURE</b>				
<b>Goal K:</b> Improve the road, sidewalk and bridge infrastructure in Hermon.				
1. Incrementally raise the highway department paving budget to allow for additional paving to occur on town roads.	Town	Ongoing	Town Budget	
2. Ensure that the County roads throughout the town are in the County paving schedule.	Town	Ongoing	NA	County Highway Department
3. Decommission sidewalks that are underused so that those that see more foot traffic can be better maintained.	Town	1-3 years	NA	
4. Continue to solicit funds from a variety of sources to repair the Main Street bridge.	Town	Ongoing	NYS DOT	
<b>Goal L:</b> Use the water supply and waste water infrastructure as efficiently and effectively as possible.				
Recommendations:				
1. Ensure that water springs and water supply lines are maintained by carrying out regular inspections and controlling access to the water supply.	Town	Ongoing	NA	Town engineer, DANC
2. Examine possibility of a metered water system to better control the usage water and its impact on the waste water system.	Town	1-3 years	USDA Rural Development	

## Hermon Comprehensive Plan Implementation Matrix

AREA OF STUDY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES	OTHER AGENCY ASSISTANCE
<b>Goal M:</b> Promote Hermon as a solar development friendly community.				
Recommendations:				
1. Consult with local NYSERDA representatives (Adirondack North Country Association) and land owners to market solar friendly developable land to potential solar development companies.	Town/Community	1-3 years	NA	
2. Promote the St. Lawrence County Solarize campaigns.	Town/Community	Within 1 year	NA	St. Lawrence County
<b>Goal N:</b> Improve the broadband presence in the Hermon.				
Recommendations:				
1. Partner with TDS and other providers that provide internet access to Hermon residences to capture funds from the New York Broadband program to improve connectivity.	Town	1-3 years	Connect NY Broadband Program, USDA Telecommunications Infrastructure Loan Program	DANC
2. Create nodes of Wi-Fi connectivity at locations throughout the community.	Town/Community	1-3 years	Connect NY Broadband Program, USDA Telecommunications Infrastructure Loan Program, service providers	DANC
<b>INSTITUTIONS</b>				
<b>Goal O:</b> Promote the Hermon Hepburn Library as an integral part of the Hermon community.				
Recommendations:				

## Hermon Comprehensive Plan Implementation Matrix

AREA OF STUDY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES	OTHER AGENCY ASSISTANCE
1. Maintain an active relationship with the North Country Library System and other library support networks to ensure that the library remains open and vibrant.	Town/Library Board	Ongoing	NA	
2. Continue to promote activities at the library such as the Ice Cream Social and other educational programs to engage as many members of Hermon Community as possible in library activities.	Town/Library Board	Within 1 year	Foundation grants Town Budget	State Aid for Library Construction through the NYS Department of Education; Other Agency Assistance: North Country Library System
3. Ensure that the basement doctor's office remains rented by a healthcare professional to ensure a healthcare presence in Hermon.	Town/Community	Ongoing	NA	Local Hospitals
<b>Goal P: Maintain the quality and proximity of the current public school presence in Hermon.</b>				
<b>Recommendations:</b>				
1. Encourage the retention of the Hermon-Dekalb school district in its current configuration as long as this remains in the best interest of the Hermon student population.	Town/Community	Ongoing	NA	SLL BOCES
2. Work with all school districts that cover the Town of Hermon (Hermon-Dekalb, Edwards-Knox and Gouverneur) to ensure the best	Town/Community	Ongoing	NA	SLL BOCES

## Hermon Comprehensive Plan Implementation Matrix

AREA OF STUDY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES	OTHER AGENCY ASSISTANCE
possible education for the school age residents of Hermon.				
<b>Goal Q:</b> Support the Hermon Fire and Rescue Squad as a pillar of the community.				
Recommendations:				
1. Continue to provide funding to Hermon fire and Rescue through the municipal budget.	Town	Ongoing	Town Budget	
2. Support all grant opportunities that exist to offset the cost of machinery, equipment and vehicles for the fire and rescue squad.	Town/Fire Department	Ongoing	FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG), FEMA Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grants, FEMA Fire Prevention & Safety (FP&S) Grants	
3. Encourage the return of the Fireman Field Days event in Hermon.	Town/Fire Department	1-3 years	Town Budget	
4. Promote the development of an outdoor skating rink at the fire station.	Town/Fire Department	1-3 years	NYS OPRHP, Foundation grants	
5. Encourage public involvement with the Fire and Rescue squad through an expanded Fire/Rescue auxiliary.	Town/Community	1-3 years	NA	
<b>Goal R:</b> Support the single municipal government structure for Hermon and promote partnerships that will allow for Town government advancement.				
Recommendations:				

## Hermon Comprehensive Plan Implementation Matrix

AREA OF STUDY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES	OTHER AGENCY ASSISTANCE
1. Leverage the relationship with Iroquois Gas to ensure that Hermon is receiving all possible benefits from the gas easement that runs through the Town.	Town	Ongoing	Iroquois Gas	
2. Continue to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of greater land use control in the Town, specifically zoning; and ensure that any zoning regulations be consistent with this comprehensive plan.	Town/Community	1-3 years	Department of State/New State Department of Agriculture and Markets	County Planning Office
<b>Goal S:</b> Promote public comments/participation in the future St. Lawrence Rock Ridge Unit Management Plan.				
Recommendation:				
1. The Town should monitor anticipated public comment periods of pending UMPs available on the NYS DEC website at: <a href="http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/4979.html#A-Z_UMP_Index">http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/4979.html#A-Z_UMP_Index</a>	Town	Ongoing	NA	
2. It is possible for interested parties to submit general inquiries/comments about the upcoming UMP to the DEC via e-mail (r6.ump@dec.ny.gov). For example, the Town could consider a resolution relevant to public access to Trout Lake to be submitted to the DEC for consideration during initial development of the UMP.	Town/Community	Ongoing	NA	

# *Appendices*



*Town of Hermon Sorted SWOT Results  
March 17, 2016*

<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>Votes</b>
<b>Institutions/Infrastructure</b>	
Schools (Hermon-DeKalb)	12
Volunteer Fire Department & Rescue Squad	11
Bank	6
Library	5
Senior living option	2
Private doctor	2
Interested historian	2
Post Office	2
Town Highway Department	2
Water lines and sewers/waste water treatment	1
ARC Center	1
2 Churches	0
Cemetery, lots available, ambiance	0
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Environment/Natural Resources</b>	
Good water, Water supply, quality/quantity (bottling plant)	19
Inexpensive property, available acreage & seclusion if wanted	5
Outdoor recreation	1
River feature	1
Trout Lake	1
Recreation parks/small town attributes	1
Walkable community	0
Community spaces	0
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Culture</b>	
Safe	6
Intimacy of neighbor relations, caring community	4
Historic tradition/endowment, McBrier	4
Quiet, off beaten path	3
Reasonable taxes	2
Uncommercial	1
Multi-generational family histories, population migration	0
Agricultural heritage	0
Bedroom community (good housing)	0
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Private Sector</b>	
Gas/Convenience Store	4
2 Gin Mills (bars)	4
Maple industry/Agricultural uses	2
Personal/professional services	0

*Town of Hermon Sorted SWOT Results  
March 17, 2016*

Laundromat	0
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>WEAKNESSES</b>	<b>Votes</b>
<b>Institutions/Infrastructure</b>	
Roads need repair	14
Infrastructure (water contamination)	12
Vacant buildings & dilapidated structures	8
Stone bridge needs to be fixed	8
Sidewalks incomplete/need repair	7
Excess runoff/limited storm drains	7
Poor internet	5
Wastewater (Infiltration/Inflow)	3
Lack of easy access to highway, broadband access (Village better than Town)	1
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Culture</b>	
No space for historical uses/loss of historical building(s)	12
Lack of young families, increasingly older population base, lack of social activities	5
New York State is obstructionist	3
Vandalism	3
Police presence	3
Small community/limited tax base	1
Need to travel for work	1
Transition from agricultural to bedroom community	0
Community identity (townies vs villagites)	0
Examine assessment compared to other county waterfront (Trout Lake)	0
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Private Sector</b>	
No grocery/hardware/clothing/barber/hairdresser	7
Lack of diverse employment, Loss of higher wage employment	6
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Environment/Natural Resources</b>	
Lack of public access to Trout Lake, public beach	4
No walking trails	3
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>7</b>

*Town of Hermon Sorted SWOT Results  
March 17, 2016*

<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>Votes</b>
<b>Institutions/Infrastructure</b>	
Walk/bike trail in the Town that was formerly the Village (Iroquois Gas, DOT)	13
Solar farms	11
Year-round trails for ATV/snowmobile, more grooming	10
Create public access & recreation at Trout Lake	9
Redevelopment of downtown: strategy	3
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Private Sector</b>	
Utilization of spring water, assets - bottling plant, brewing activity	15
Mix of local business, including franchises	5
Tax relief tools (IDA)	5
Diversify Agriculture: processing plants, recruit young/small farms, recapture productive land, fruit, wholesome foods	3
New industry: increase tax base	2
Cheese curd stores	1
Cranberry farms	1
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Culture</b>	
Promote small town atmosphere: field days, ice cream socials, community engagement, summer programs	19
Cheaper land	1
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Environment/Natural Resources</b>	
Hydro on river	0
Reforestation	0
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>0</b>

*Town of Hermon Sorted SWOT Results  
March 17, 2016*

<b>THREATS</b>	<b>Votes</b>
<b>Institutions/Infrastructure</b>	
Contamination of water supply/damage to infrastructure	12
School consolidation	5
Funding dependency on NYS (eg. Consolidated Highway Improvement Program)	4
Unfunded State mandates: Fire Department, Highway Department	4
Loss of sales tax, money from the County	2
School consolidation	2
Infrastructure failing	0
Decrease of school support	0
Assessment challenges (Iroquois Gas)	0
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Culture</b>	
Lack of youth activities	12
Loss of population	9
Population decrease, lower tax base, costs go up	1
Drug Use/Crime Rate	1
Forgetting our history: Loss of historic records, threat to our heritage	0
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Private Sector</b>	
Business loss	14
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Environment/Natural Resources</b>	
Loss of Trout Lake (invasives)	4
Beavers	1
Climate change	1
Ticks	0
Train derailment	0
Threats to wood stock	0
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>6</b>

Hermon Windshield Survey

June 3, 2016

T or V	Road	1	2	3	Vac 1	Vac 2	Vac 3	Mobile 1	Mobile 2	Mobile 3	Seasonal 1	Seasonal 2	Seasonal 3		
Town	Alverson Rd	1													
Town	Battle Hill Rd														
Town	Beaver Cove Ln (Tr Lk)														
Town	Blueberry Ln (Tr Lk)														
Town	Briggs Rd	1													
Town	Campbell Rd	1	2												
Town	Cedar Lake N Shore Rd														
Town	Chub Lake Rd	2	1						1						
Town	Coffey Rd														
Town	Cook Rd		1												
Town	CR 13	3	3												
Town	CR 17	2							1						
Town	CR 19	36	17			5			2						
Town	CR 20	13	12	3					2						
Town	CR 21	23	7			1	6		3						
Town	Dewey Rd (Tr Lk)	2	1												
Town	E DeKalb Rd	2				1									
Town	Evans Rd		1												
Town	Fairbanks Rd	1	1				1		1						
Town	Gates Rd	1	1												
Town	Graham Rd (Tr Lk)														
Town	Grass Rd (Tr Lk)	1													
Town	Halcyon Way (Tr Lk)														
Town	Hansen Traingle (Tr Lk)														
Town	Harris Rd	1													
Town	Hayden Rd	3	1	1											
Town	Hermon Rd (Beach Rd)	2				1									
Town	Inlet Cove (Tr Lk)														
Town	Jonesville Rd	10	7			1	1	1	2						
Town	Lazy River Rd			1					1						
Town	Leader Ln (Tr Lk)										3				
Town	Leader Rd (Tr Lk)														

Hermon Windshield Survey

June 3, 2016

T or V	Road	1	2	3	Vac 1	Vac 2	Vac 3	Mobile 1	Mobile 2	Mobile 3	Seasonal 1	Seasonal 2	Seasonal 3		
Town	Long View Ln														
Town	Marshville Rd	3	1			1	2		2						
Town	Marway Rd (Tr Lk)														
Town	McMillian Ln (Tr Lk)														
Town	Miles Rd														
Town	Morrow Rd	1	2				3								
Town	Orebed Rd	1													
Town	Owl Pond Rd														
Town	Parker Rd														
Town	Pond Rd	10	3			1			1						
Town	Rock Hollow Rd	11	4							1					
Town	Rocky Rd (Tr Lk)														
Town	Sam Day Rd														
Town	Scotch Settlement Rd														
Town	Small Flats Rd	3													
Town	Spruce Rd														
Town	Sunrise Cir N (Tr Lk)														
Town	Sunrise Cir S (Tr Lk)														
Town	Sunset Blvd														
Town	Trout Lake Rd	14	10			2		1	1						
Town	Underwood Rd	3	1						2	2					
Town	Woodrow Rd (Tr Lk)														
Town	Woods Bridge Rd														
Town	Woods Rd	1													
Village	Catherine St	4	3			1			1						
Village	Canton St	14	6												
Village	Church St	10	10												
Village	E Main St	16	7						1						
Village	Germain St	8	5						1						
Village	High St	1							1						
Village	Jefferson St	1	3												
Village	Main St	8	11			2	1		1						

Hermon Windshield Survey

June 3, 2016

T or V	Road	1	2	3	Vac 1	Vac 2	Vac 3	Mobile 1	Mobile 2	Mobile 3	Seasonal 1	Seasonal 2	Seasonal 3		
Village	Maple St	7	4	1											
Village	Miles Rd	3	3			1			3						
Village	Pleasant St	3	3						2						
Village	Russell Rd														
Village	Thatcher	1	1			1			1						
Village	Washington St	4	6			1									
Village	Water St	3	1						1						
	Total	235	139	6	0	19	14	2	31	3	3	0	0	0	0

**Commercial/Other Land Uses – Town/Village of Hermon – 2016**

<b>Road Name</b>	<b>Business or Other Land Use</b>
Canton Street	Senior Housing, McBriar Park Manor
Main Street	Recreation Park; Post Office; Skunks Nest Bar
East Main	Library, Healthcare, Heritage Hall, Water Tower
Maple	Town Garage
Catherine	TDS Telecom
Russell	2 Cemeteries
Church	Methodist Church, Baptist Church, Community Bank, Town Office, Lone Wolf Saloon, Village Office
Water	WWTP
CR 21	Woody's Convenience/Gas, Fire Station, Cemetery
Evans Rd	Natural Gas Pumping Station
Chub Lake	Wildlife Wonders Taxidermy, Maple Production
Jonesville	Beartown Pioneer Burial
CR 19	Methodist Church, Small Engine Repair
Rock Hollow	Tanner Creek Crafts
Marshville	Kimco/Gravel Yard
Underwood	Porter Hill Cemetery

## July 21<sup>st</sup> Visioning Meeting Public Input

Question #1: What do you want Hermon to look like in 10 years?

1. Maintain historic buildings
  - a. Library
  - b. Doctors office
2. Build road to Trout Lake
  - a. Off road to Cedar Lake
  - b. Check DEC UMP's
3. Fire Falls Topo
4. Pretty/improved residences
5. Local trash/recycle program
6. Public can recreate at Trout Lake with car-top boat launch
7. Paved walking and biking path
8. Renovated and occupied downtown buildings
9. Energy-efficient street lighting (LEDs)
10. Continues to be a safe place
11. Suggested businesses:
  - a. Diner
  - b. Barber/salon
12. Improved streets
13. Curbs replaced
14. Trees planted
15. Clean and tidy properties
16. Well maintained and improved water system
17. Repair bridge in village
  - a. Funds are set aside - \$50k
18. Properties will look good
  - a. No trash/no junk
19. Local transfer/recycle station
20. Solar power
  - a. Municipal
  - b. Private
21. Additional business
22. Local music/talent
23. Community based organization/committee
  - a. More you people involved

Question #2: How do we get there?

1. Form community group
  - a. Pick an easy project
  - b. Do it
  - c. Declare success
2. Personally invite people to participate
3. Implementation Committee
  - a. Remember to bring cake
4. Committee regarding water system improvement
  - a. 2-3 people meet with Chris regularly
5. Iroquois Gas – resource
6. Invite residents to work on a community organization
7. Active local group
8. Bottling plant
  - a. Located/established
9. Clinic remains open in community
10. Network of trails created and connected
11. Access to Trout Lake
  - a. Talk to DEC; add to UMP
12. Off footpath on Cedar Lake Road to Boyscout Camp AKA The Beach
13. Water mains
  - a. Improved and maintained
  - b. Establish reserve
  - c. Based on asset management plans (under development by DANC)

**Hermon Community Survey  
Summer 2016**

**46 Respondents**

<b>Recommendations:</b>	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>Votes</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>1) Area of Hermon in which you live</b>	<b>31</b>		
Town of Hermon		3	10%
Village of Hermon		25	81%
Trout Lake Area		3	10%
<b>2) Two most important things that you would like to see changed in Hermon</b>	<b>56</b>		
<b>Infrastructure</b>	<b>16</b>		<b>29%</b>
Repairs to road and paving		6	
Better roads		1	
Water drainage in village		2	
Better sewage		1	
Sump pumps not emptying into streets		1	
Sidewalks fixed		1	
Curb appeal and bridge repair		1	
Fix bridge by post office		1	
Cable		1	
High speed internet		1	
<b>Community Appearance</b>	<b>10</b>		<b>18%</b>
Clean up old buildings that are torn down		2	
Tear down Carr's property across from post office		1	
Clean up the building of John Tacchino's that was torn down		1	
Clean up Church Street lots		1	
Clean up Main Street		1	
Personal property and vacant lots cleaned up		1	
Property maintenance		1	
Improvement upkeep		1	
Have junk day collections		1	
<b>Recreation</b>	<b>10</b>		<b>18%</b>
Beach on Trout Lake		1	
able to use Trout Lake boat ramp		1	
Water parks		1	
No permit for campground/trailer park starting up in Trout Lake		1	
Monitor water quality of Trout Lake		1	
Waterfront multi-use trail		1	
Improvements to Hermon Recreation Park softball field		1	
Playground could be kept better		1	
More places for kids to play		1	
Community events: field days, etc.		1	

**Hermon Community Survey  
Summer 2016**

**46 Respondents**

<b>Recommendations:</b>	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>Votes</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Police &amp; Enforcement</b>	<b>9</b>		<b>16%</b>
Zoning needed		2	
Enforcement of unmaintained property		2	
Rental codes		1	
Drugs		1	
Speed enforcement and banning atv/snowmobiles within the village		1	
More law enforcement presence		1	
Better dog warden		1	
<b>Government Services</b>	<b>6</b>		<b>11%</b>
Lower taxes		2	
Wasteful government spending		1	
Hours of town clerks office, after business hours		1	
New Highway Superintendent		1	
The assessor		1	
<b>Economic Development</b>	<b>5</b>		<b>9%</b>
Water bottling		2	
Incentives for new business		2	
Stop the ghost town: business and employment growth		1	
<b>3) Two most important things that should remain the same</b>	<b>26</b>		
<b>Infrastructure</b>	<b>13</b>		<b>50%</b>
Unmetered water bill		4	
Free water usage for residents		1	
Water & Sewer services		1	
Water quality		3	
Maintain roads. Subcontract only what is out of their capabilities.		2	
Main Street bridge		1	
Parks		1	
<b>Quality of Life</b>	<b>8</b>		<b>31%</b>
Small town atmosphere		4	
High safety for family		1	
Community outreach		1	
Town spirit		1	
Continue/expand Ice Cream Social		1	
<b>Services &amp; Institutions</b>	<b>6</b>		<b>23%</b>
Post Office		3	
Fire Department		1	
Maintain the library		1	
Church		1	

**Hermon Community Survey  
Summer 2016**

**46 Respondents**

<b>Recommendations:</b>	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>Votes</b>	<b>%</b>	
<i>Economic Development</i>	<b>6</b>		<b>23%</b>	
Bank		3		
Doctor		1		
Store		1		
Keep businesses		1		
<i>Community Appearance</i>	<b>4</b>		<b>15%</b>	
Hanging flowers		2		
Community clean and presentable		1		
Hermon Cemetery is the most beautiful in the county		1		
<i>Government Services &amp; Enforcement</i>	<b>2</b>		<b>8%</b>	
Dog leash law		1		
Lower taxes		1		
<b>4) My family and I feel safe in Hermon</b>	<b>40</b>			
Strongly Agree		10	25%	68%
Agree		17	43%	
Neither Agree or Disagree		11	28%	
Disagree		2	5%	5%
Strongly Disagree		0	0%	
<b>5) Roads in Hermon are satisfactory or better</b>	<b>41</b>			
Strongly Agree		1	3%	33%
Agree		12	30%	
Neither Agree or Disagree		6	15%	
Disagree		16	40%	55%
Strongly Disagree		6	15%	
<b>6) Hermon's water and wastewater services are satisfactory or better</b>	<b>53</b>			
Strongly Agree		0	0%	80%
Agree		32	80%	
Neither Agree or Disagree		12	30%	
Disagree		1	3%	23%
Strongly Disagree		8	20%	
<b>7) The businesses and services in Hermon are adequate for my day today needs</b>	<b>43</b>			
Strongly Agree		4	10%	45%
Agree		14	35%	
Neither Agree or Disagree		7	18%	
Disagree		16	40%	45%
Strongly Disagree		2	5%	

**Hermon Community Survey  
Summer 2016**

**46 Respondents**

<b>Recommendations:</b>	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>Votes</b>	<b>%</b>	
<b>8) What business or service that is not in Hermon would I most want to see</b>	<b>37</b>			
<i>Retail</i>	12		32%	
Grocery Store		7		
Another store		2		
Dollar Store		1		
Full service store		1		
Walmart		1		
<i>Food Service</i>	12		32%	
Restaurant		11		
Ice cream shop		1		
<i>Recreation &amp; Entertainment</i>	6		16%	
Rec center for children		1		
Place for kids to see movies		1		
Business for children, educational, fun, arts		1		
Internet		1		
Ice Rink		1		
Public gun range		1		
<i>Other Services</i>	5		14%	
Mechanical repair		1		
Hair salon		1		
Beverage business: take advantage of great water		1		
Public municipal drinking water outlet		1		
Garbage collection service at major road intersections		1		
<i>Financial Services</i>	2		5%	
Drive thru bank w/ATM		1		
ATM at Community Bank		1		
<b>9) The quality of internet services in Hermon is satisfactory or better</b>	<b>42</b>			
Strongly Agree		4	10%	43%
Agree		14	33%	
Neither Agree or Disagree		9	21%	
Disagree		5	12%	36%
Strongly Disagree		10	24%	
<b>10) The condition of houses and apartments in Hermon is satisfactory or better</b>	<b>43</b>			
Strongly Agree		1	2%	26%
Agree		10	24%	
Neither Agree or Disagree		13	31%	
Disagree		15	36%	45%
Strongly Disagree		4	10%	

**Hermon Community Survey  
Summer 2016**

**46 Respondents**

<b>Recommendations:</b>	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>Votes</b>	<b>%</b>	
<b>11) There are affordable houses or apartments available in Hermon that meet the needs of my family</b>	<b>43</b>			
Strongly Agree		1	2%	45%
Agree		18	43%	
Neither Agree or Disagree		16	38%	
Disagree		4	10%	19%
Strongly Disagree		4	10%	
<b>12) My home is in a satisfactory condition or better</b>	<b>44</b>			
Strongly Agree		16	38%	83%
Agree		19	45%	
Neither Agree or Disagree		5	12%	
Disagree		3	7%	10%
Strongly Disagree		1	2%	
<b>13) How many households can you turn to in an emergency</b>	<b>44</b>			
0		3	7%	
1		4	10%	
2		8	19%	
3		7	17%	
4 or more		22	52%	
<b>14) Hermon needs to do more activities for:</b>	<b>87</b>			
Families		29	69%	
Seniors		11	26%	
Adults		7	17%	
Teens		20	48%	
Children		20	48%	
<b>15) What additional activities or services are needed</b>	<b>24</b>			
<i>Recreational Programming</i>	<b>8</b>		33%	
Something for teens		4		
Summer program for youths		1		
Activities for kids and families		1		
Expand youth sports		1		
Co-ed kickball league		1		
<i>Recreational Infrastructure</i>	<b>8</b>		33%	
Rec center		3		
Skating rink		1		
Walk/bike trail		3		
Beach at Trout Lake on DEC land		1		

**Hermon Community Survey  
Summer 2016**

**46 Respondents**

<b>Recommendations:</b>	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>Votes</b>	<b>%</b>	
<i>Community Events</i>	<b>4</b>		<b>17%</b>	
Community events: block dance, Christmas activities		2		
Weekly events, socialism		1		
Clean up day/afternoon for playground		1		
<i>Housing</i>	<b>2</b>		<b>8%</b>	
Grants for home repairs		1		
Build apartment buildings		1		
<i>Businesses</i>	<b>2</b>		<b>8%</b>	
High speed internet		1		
Motor repair service and boat storage for seasonal waterfront residents		1		
<b>16) There is adequate access to outdoor recreational activities in Hermon</b>	<b>42</b>			
Strongly Agree		1	2%	40%
Agree		16	38%	
Neither Agree or Disagree		7	17%	
Disagree		16	38%	
Strongly Disagree		2	5%	43%
<b>17) What additional outdoor recreational activities or facilities would you like to see in Hermon</b>	<b>23</b>			
<i>Trails</i>	<b>8</b>		<b>35%</b>	
Walk/bike trail		4		
Trails: follow the river to and from all 3 bridges		1		
Nature trail		1		
Four wheeler trails		1		
Open all roads to ATV's		1		
<i>Sports Facilities</i>	<b>6</b>		<b>26%</b>	
Open pavilion		1		
Rec Center		1		
Ice rink		2		
Soccer field		1		
Public firing range		1		
<i>Parks</i>	<b>5</b>		<b>22%</b>	
Beach on the lake		2		
Picnic area		2		
Updated safe park not across street from sex offenders		1		
<i>Programming &amp; Community Events</i>	<b>4</b>		<b>17%</b>	
Kick ball league		1		
Promote				
ATV/snowmobile/horseback/hiking/walking/skiing/skating/dance/		1		
Volleyball, horseshoes, badminton		1		
Annual events for residents i.e. Colton Days in Colton. Hermon Field Day		1		

**Hermon Community Survey  
Summer 2016**

**46 Respondents**

<b>Recommendations:</b>	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>Votes</b>	<b>%</b>	
<b>18) I would recommend Hermon to ANYONE as a good place to live</b>	<b>43</b>			
Strongly Agree		6	14%	60%
Agree		19	45%	
Neither Agree or Disagree		10	24%	
Disagree		7	17%	19%
Strongly Disagree		1	2%	
<b>19) I would recommend Hermon to FAMILIES with CHILDREN as a good place to live</b>	<b>43</b>			
Strongly Agree		10	24%	60%
Agree		15	36%	
Neither Agree or Disagree		12	29%	
Disagree		5	12%	14%
Strongly Disagree		1	2%	
<b>20) I would recommend Hermon to SENIORS as a good place to live</b>	<b>43</b>			
Strongly Agree		7	17%	50%
Agree		14	33%	
Neither Agree or Disagree		13	31%	
Disagree		2	5%	21%
Strongly Disagree		7	17%	
<b>21) The T&amp;V of Hermon does a good job of getting info out to Hermon residents</b>	<b>44</b>			
Strongly Agree		2	5%	26%
Agree		9	21%	
Neither Agree or Disagree		19	45%	
Disagree		10	24%	33%
Strongly Disagree		4	10%	

**22) Any other suggestions you have for the Comprehensive Plan**

*Recreation*

- DEC should finish access rd. off Campbell to Boy Scout Bay for all residents (started in 2008)

*Government Services*

- Towns of Hermon and DeKalb should merge for economy of scale

- Why are school taxes based on the value of our homes. Some people don't have children in school anymore. Some take pride in their homes and property and are being penalized by a higher rate of tax which has nothing to do with the school system.

**Hermon Community Survey  
Summer 2016**

**46 Respondents**

**Recommendations:**

**Subtotal**

**Votes**

**%**

*Communication*

- We need a better phone system, internet system as TDS really suck for out of town, village they need competitor
- (Reverse 911) when there is weather advisory, when there is a crime, school closings, or other info people should know about. Automated phone call, and/or text to any one who signs up for the service.
- Reverse 911 either by phone email or text. Have local channel added to the cable so During Town Meetings, and school sport games, etc. are aired live w/multiple reruns, also live cam of portions of town.
- Ask to use Trout Lake Assoc. email list when sending out info. Prior question should say Hermon taxpayers not residents.

*Land Use Regulations*

- Zoning overlays for Trout Lake; vacate or privatize town roads that don't serve more than 10 yr round residents. Tax relief for residents that make septic system improvements to waterfront property. Advocate for revision of state laws that discourage small specialty cheese factories. Encourage small ag operations. Be cautious about pollution impact of factory cow/calf operations, and help existing CFO's obtain grants for methane digesters to improve their operations and profits.
- We must start planning for solar installation.

**23) Email for additional information about the Comp Plan process**

[hplake@tds.net](mailto:hplake@tds.net)

[adk46er10364@yahoo.com](mailto:adk46er10364@yahoo.com)

[wgrangerjr@icloud.com](mailto:wgrangerjr@icloud.com)

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## ***An Introduction to Community Development: How-To***

**Step One** to making your community a better place to live is to develop a shared vision for the future. Usually, a community vision gets hammered out during a series of meetings; luckily, in 2016 the Town and Village of Hermon convened a series of such meetings and developed a “Vision Statement”, which says:

*“In 2026, Hermon is known for its recreational amenities and access to pristine and unspoiled waterbodies and forest lands. Access to these amenities is on well-maintained roads that are free of litter. The agricultural nature of Hermon is evident with productive farms covering the landscape. Renewable energy is being produced through solar installations on the less fertile land.*

*Additional commercial amenities are concentrated in the Hamlet of Hermon and include a diner/ice cream shop, hair salon as well as a vibrant convenience store, bank, library and post office. Sidewalks have also been improved and a recreational trail leads from downtown out to and around the cemetery and to the outdoor ice rink by the fire station.*

*The restored Main Street Bridge makes it easy to get to the revitalized baseball field, play structure and basketball court that are heavily used. The final touches are being put on a state-of-the-art water bottling facility that was developed as a public-private partnership between the Town of Hermon and an established spring water bottler.*

*Hermon continues to be a safe, friendly, caring community with affordable and improving housing, excellent water and waste water infrastructure and easy access to a rural environment with multiple recreational amenities.”*

**Step Two:** Armed with the “Vision Statement”, it is appropriate to call an open meeting for the community. Give adequate notice (at least a week’s notice). Social media helps here, but don’t forget to put up fliers at the Post Office and library, at churches and at local businesses. Have a sign-in sheet, and take notes. Also, serve cake.

At this meeting, talk about the Vision Statement. These can be kind of artificial, but they are just a vehicle to begin thinking about the future. Try to lead the discussion toward a decision by the group to pick one small project that is in keeping with the Vision Statement.

For example, in the Statement above, there are several references to recreational amenities. Think about the recreational facility(ies) in Town. What could be done simply, easily and quickly by a small group of people to make these amenities better? Maybe the ballfield dugouts need painting. Maybe flower beds could be planted at the entrance to the recreational area.

***The key here is “What could be done simply, easily and quickly by a small group of people”?***

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**Step Three:** Now that you have an idea for a civic improvement, DO IT. DO IT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. Ask some local businesses, or ask the Town, to chip in toward material costs (money or materials). Ask permission as required to be allowed to do your project. Organize some people to get together, turn out and do the project. Ask a service organization, scout troop or church group to participate.

Then, ***celebrate your success***. Invite all the workers, and thank them publicly. Thank those who contributed toward the project. Thank the Town for letting you do it. Cake works here, too.

(NOTE: Do NOT skip this part. This is the key to working with volunteers: “Thank them and feed them”, in that order. People will move the world in return for some acknowledgement of their efforts, and for a sense that what they are doing/have done makes a difference to others. So, **celebrate!**)

**Step Four:** Call another public meeting. Give adequate notice (at least a week’s notice). Social media helps here, but don’t forget to put up fliers at the Post Office and library, at churches and at local businesses. Have a sign-in sheet, and take notes. Also, serve cake.

At this meeting, talk about what the group can do next. Try to lead the discussion toward a decision by the group to pick another small project that is in keeping with the Vision Statement.

**Step Five:** Now that you have an idea for a civic improvement, DO IT. DO IT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. Ask some local businesses, or ask the Town, to chip in toward material costs (money or materials). Ask permission as required to be allowed to do your project. Organize some people to get together, turn out and do the project.

Then, ***celebrate your success***. Invite all the workers, and thank them publicly. Thank those who contributed toward the project. Thank the Town for letting you do it. Cake works here, too.

**Final note:** The secret to doing community development is YOU.

YOU have to WANT to see things be/get better.

YOU have to keep inviting new people to become involved, for a little while or for a long time.

YOU have to be relentlessly positive, and keep moving toward the goals that the group has achieved consensus about.

YOU have to celebrate your successes.

***If you have a success, and you celebrate with your neighbors,***

***You have developed your community.***