

HOT TOPICS AND COMPREHENSIVE PLANS FOR SMALL TOWNS

**Presented By
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AGENDA

- Refresher: Role of Comprehensive Plans
- Helpful Planning Techniques to Include
- What are Hot Topics in Many Towns?
 - Short Term Rentals
 - Solar Facilities
 - Affordable Housing
 - Climate Change
- How to Address Hot Topics in Plan?
- Q & A



COMPREHENSIVE PLANS - IMPORTANT BECAUSE THEY...

- **Engage community**
- Answer the **three basic planning questions**:
 - a. **Where you are now (Current community characteristics and conditions)?**
 - b. **Where do you want to be (Vision and Goals for future)?**
 - c. **How do you get there (Actions and Strategies)?**
- **Establish policy**
- Are needed for **grant writing success**
- Provides **foundation for land use regulations**★

THE 21ST CENTURY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Values driven: The plan addresses the issues and manifests the values expressed by the community.

Collaborative: The planning process meaningfully engages citizens, organizations, businesses, and other community stakeholders.

Thematic based: The plan is organized into cross-cutting themes rather than discrete elements.

Linking process and outcome: The plan connects community values to a clearly defined action agenda.

Regional in focus: The plan addresses issues that are regional in scope.

Beyond paper: The plan uses digital technology, visualizations, and other techniques that transcend the traditional limitations of written documents.

APA'S SUSTAINING PLACES COMPONENTS

- **Principles**

- Livable Built Environment
- Harmony with Nature
- Resilient Economy
- Interwoven Equity
- Healthy Community
- Responsible Regionalism

- **Processes**

- Authentic Participation
- Accountable Implementation

- **Attributes**

- Consistent Content
- Coordinated Characteristics

PUBLIC MEETING

Town of Washington “Virtual” Open House

If you were not able to attend our Open House event last Saturday, you can still participate by interacting with our “Virtual” Open House, which includes copies of the same review materials, questions and comment forms.

Participate online at:

<https://tinyurl.com/washingtonopenhouse>

Thank you!

APPENDIX C: PLAN SCORING MATRIX

BEST PRACTICES FOR PLAN PRINCIPLES	N/A	0	1	2	3	Source
1. LIVABLE BUILT ENVIRONMENT—Ensure that all elements of the built environment, including land use, transportation, housing, energy, and infrastructure, work together to provide sustainable, green places for living, working, and recreation, with a high quality of life.						
1.1. Plan for multimodal transportation.						
1.2. Plan for transit-oriented development.						
1.3. Coordinate regional transportation investments with job clusters.						
1.4. Provide complete streets serving multiple functions.						
1.5. Plan for mixed land-use patterns that are walkable and bikeable.						
1.6. Plan for infill development.						
1.7. Encourage design standards appropriate to the community context.						
1.8. Provide accessible public facilities and spaces.						
1.9. Conserve and reuse historic resources.						
1.10. Implement green building design and energy conservation.						
1.11. Discourage development in hazard zones.						
TOTAL SCORE: 1. LIVABLE BUILT ENVIRONMENT						

**Use the APA
Sustaining
Places Plan
Scoring Matrix
as benchmark**

Use as a resource as
you develop your own
solutions.

Sustaining Places – Best
Practices for
Comprehensive Plans.
Godschalk, D. and D.
Rouse. American Planning
Association. 2015. PAS 578

SUSTAINING PLACES: BEST PRACTICES FOR COMPREHENSIVE PLANS
PAS 578, APPENDIX C

APPENDIX C: PLAN SCORING MATRIX

BEST PRACTICES FOR PLAN PROCESSES	N/A	0	1	2	3	Source
7. AUTHENTIC PARTICIPATION—Ensure that the planning process actively involves all segments of the community in analyzing issues, generating visions, developing plans, and monitoring outcomes.						
7.1. Engage stakeholders at all stages of the planning process.						
7.2. Seek diverse participation in the planning process.						
7.3. Promote leadership development in disadvantaged communities through the planning process.						
7.4. Develop alternative scenarios of the future.						
7.5. Provide ongoing and understandable information for all participants.						
7.6. Use a variety of communication channels to inform and involve the community.						
7.7. Continue to engage the public after the comprehensive plan is adopted.						
TOTAL SCORE: 7. AUTHENTIC PARTICIPATION						
8. ACCOUNTABLE IMPLEMENTATION—Ensure that responsibilities for carrying out the plan are clearly stated, along with metrics for evaluating progress in achieving desired outcomes.						
8.1. Indicate specific actions for implementation.						

HELPFUL PLANNING TECHNIQUES

- **Community Engagement Techniques**

- Surveys
- In-person/online open houses/workshops
- Focus groups and interviews
- GIS Storymaps/digital input

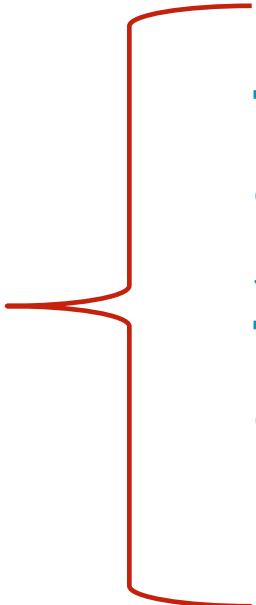
- **Mapping and map analysis**

- **SWOT Analysis**

- **Visioning –clear vision/goals/objectives**

- **Develop actions and strategies**

- **Develop implementation steps**



**These are
also the
Steps You
Take to
Complete a
Plan!**

SHORT-TERM RENTALS & THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

- **Public Engagement:** Ask what STR are in your Town; What issues have arisen? Do they need to be regulated? How is it affecting community? Why?
- **Mapping and data:** Define STRs? Where are they? How many? Related to housing data.
- **SWOT:** What are the Benefits, Challenges, Opportunities related to STR?
- **Goals/Objectives:** What is the policy direction you want for STR?



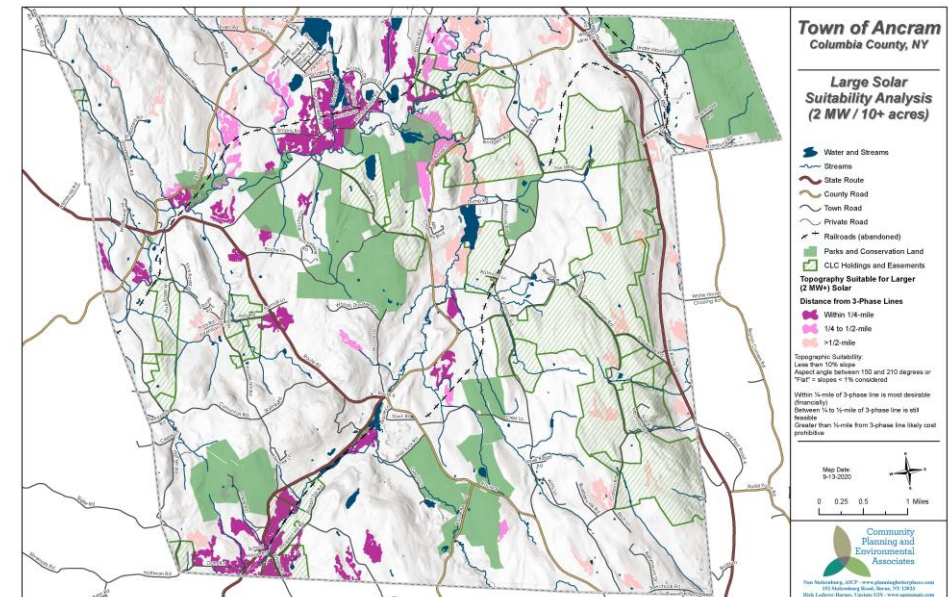
SHORT TERM RENTALS: ACTIONS & STRATEGIES

- Registration/Inspection/Fee system with as of right STR use.
- Regulate in some districts or places in zoning.
- Require a Special Use Permit (could be renewable).
- Limit number days per year, or limit # of guests of STR per property.
- Require it to be owner occupied (or have different rules for owner occupied STRs).
- Limit use of STR for commercial events such as weddings, large parties.
- Penalties for violations.
- Have complaint process.

**Be sure to look into connection
between affordable housing and STR**

SOLAR FACILITIES & THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

- **Public Engagement:** Ask what the issues are. What policy is desired. Understand local vs State regulation of solar facilities.
- **Mapping and definition:** Where are they located? How big are they? What capacity is there in town for new facilities and where? What resources need to be protected when they are built?
- **SWOT:** What are the Benefits, Challenges, Opportunities?
- **Goals/Objectives:** What is the policy direction you want for facilities < 20 megawatt?



SOLAR FACILITIES: ACTIONS AND STRATEGIES

- Building Mounted, Building Integrated, Small-scale – allow as of right with Unified Solar Building permit
 - Some ground mounted small systems go through site plan review
- For up to 20 megawatt, you can:
 - Prohibit
 - Limit by location (solar overlay district)
 - Limit by size (acreage or MW)
- Where allowed, include policy for:
 - Natural resources to be protected
 - Prohibit clear-cutting of forested areas
 - Protect active ag areas (or promote agrivoltaics)
 - Screening and fencing
 - Setbacks
 - Decommissioning



AFFORDABLE HOUSING & THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

- **Public Engagement:** What the issues and needs are; What Policy is desired.
- **Mapping and data about housing conditions:** What types of housing are offered? Where? Vacancy Rate? Housing Affordability Calculations? What does your zoning allow for?
- **SWOT:** What are the Needs, Challenges, Opportunities
- **Goals/Objectives:** Policy direction?
 - What type of housing is needed?
 - Where?
 - Density allowed?
 - Type of housing allowed?
 - Incentives offered?



AFFORDABLE HOUSING: ACTIONS AND STRATEGIES

- Zoning code updates
 - Improve development and approval process
 - ADU allowance
 - Inclusionary zoning rules
 - Incentives
 - Increase density (in certain places)/Housing Overlay District
 - Missing Middle – Three and Four Plex homes
- Housing Land Trust
- Home Share Programs
- Housing Action Plan/Inventory of Suitable Land for Housing
- Short Term Rental Regulations
- Community Outreach and Partnerships
- Tax exemptions to specific types of properties and demographic groups



CLIMATE CHANGE & THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

- **Public Engagement:** Is community aware of it? Is it important?
- **Mapping and data about housing conditions:** How might (or has) it affected your community? What is affected? Where? Other impacts?
- **SWOT:** What are the Needs, Challenges, Opportunities?
- **Goals/Objectives:** Policy direction?



CLIMATE CHANGE: ACTIONS AND STRATEGIES

[To download the old (April 2021) versions of these two documents, click the following links: [PDF of the Old Action Checklist](#), [Excel File of the Old 2021 Action Checklist](#), [Old CEC/CSC Crosswalk](#).]

Search Actions

Type in a word(s) to identify all actions with that word(s) in the title

☐ Mandatory ☐ Priority

The Action Totals box at right will also reflect only those actions selected. Click on the Clear Search button to return to the full action listing.

SEARCH ACTIONS

CLEAR SEARCH

↑ BACK TO TOP

EXPAND ALL ▼ COLLAPSE ALL ▲

- 1. Build a climate-smart community. ▼
- 2. Inventory emissions, set goals, and plan for climate action. ▼
- 3. Decrease energy use. ▼
- 4. Shift to clean, renewable energy. ▼
- 5. Use climate-smart materials management. ▼
- 6. Implement climate-smart land use. ▼
- 7. Enhance community resilience to climate change. ▼
- 8. Support a green innovation economy. ▼
- 9. Inform and inspire the public. ▼
- 10. Engage in an evolving process of climate action. ▼

Other bookmarks

Certification Criteria

	🏆
Mandatory	2
Priority	3
Points	120
Pledge Elements	4

Show requirements for:

☒ BRONZE ☐ SILVER

Planned Action Totals (Planned)

Mandatory	0/2
Priority	0/13
Total Points	0/1097
Pledge Elements	0/12
Total Actions	0/115

Mark actions as planned to determine whether or not your application would meet certification criteria.



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



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