

Town of Jay News

Comprehensive Plan Update Special Edition 2026

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Inside this issue:

This issue is dedicated to the Comprehensive Plan Update

From The Supervisor's Office

Over the past two years, residents, volunteers, town committees, and regional partners have shaped an updated Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Jay, our first major update since 1997.

Throughout this process, we have heard how much people value Jay's natural setting and sense of community. We have also heard concerns about finding housing that local families and workers can

afford, supporting older residents, sustaining local businesses, improving infrastructure, and maintaining the services that make this a good place to live. These issues are connected. Housing helps employers hire and retain workers and keeps families in town. Reliable infrastructure supports residents and creates opportunities for investment and businesses. Strong businesses, schools, and community services help sustain our year-round community.

The draft plan brings these priorities together into a practical framework to guide our shared future. It provides recommendations which will help position the town to pursue grants, partnerships and other resources. Adoption of the plan would not commit the town to specific projects or policies, or mandate funding for its recommendations. Moving each initiative forward will require



further consideration of feasibility, costs, available resources, and public support.

We are now asking the public to tell us whether the draft and the input we have gathered so far reflects the views of the community. Specifically,

- Does it capture the priorities that matter to you?
- Have we overlooked anything significant?
- Are there recommendations which need clarification or refinement?

The draft plan consists of two documents, a 298-page community profile which examines the town's demographics, economic health, statistical data and local character, and a 161-page draft plan of actionable strategies to guide our growth and

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Comprehensive Plan Update Summary

What the Comprehensive Plan means for Jay

Comprehensive Plans are developed by town residents to connect long-term goals with decisions about land use, public investment, services, and partnerships. The Community Profile provides the factual foundation, while the plan's recommendations propose actions for the coming years.

The draft applies New York State Smart Growth principles by encouraging reinvestment in existing communities, aligning growth with infrastructure, and protecting natural and working landscapes. It proposes improving local planning tools through further public processes.

What the draft recommends

The plan is organized around four themes: *Managing Growth, Enhancing Quality of Life, Creating Opportunity, and Leveraging Resources.*

Eight priority action areas bring together its immediate agenda, generally covering the first one to three years. These summaries highlight proposed directions and examples. The full plan contains dozens of additional recommendations and details for implementation.

Direct growth to established settlement areas

Guide development and investment toward suitable locations, considering water and sewer capacity, flood risk, natural resources, and community character.

The draft recognizes that different parts of town have different needs and opportunities. It proposes to guide development and investment toward suitable locations, considering water and sewer capacity, flood risk, natural resources, and community character.

In Au Sable Forks, the emphasis is on Main Street revitalization, reuse of existing buildings and housing supported by available infrastructure. In Jay, the plan reinforces civic and cultural assets and the hamlet's distinctive character. In Upper Jay, it emphasizes flood resilience, recreation, and development in suitable upland locations. AuSable Acres is recognized as an established residential area with unique housing, infrastructure, and neighborhood needs. Protecting the town's natural character implies more town involvement in proposed developments. Over 85% of participants in our first community survey agreed or strongly agreed the Town and its citizens should have an active role in reviewing proposals to develop commercial, agricultural, and residential property.

Recommended early work includes a town-wide land suitability study, updating subdivision regulations, and more involvement in development review in coordination with the Adirondack Park Agency. Proposing changes to APA land classifications would depend on documenting suitability, infrastructure capacity, and environmental protection.

Expand housing for year-round residents

Increase affordable housing choices for workers, families, and older residents while preserving Jay's mixed income, year-round community.

The draft recommends identifying suitable housing sites, rehabilitating existing homes, reusing underused buildings, exploring accessory dwelling units and connecting residents with weatherization and energy-efficiency assistance.

It also recommends assessing the effects of short-term rentals and evaluating registration,

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monitoring, and good-neighbor approaches through a town Short-Term Rental Task Force. The goal is to balance housing needs, neighborhood quality of life and economic benefits.

Use infrastructure to guide growth

Plan investments in water and sewer systems, roads, drainage, and other public infrastructure so that growth occurs where it can be supported.

Recommended work includes water metering, leak detection, rehabilitation of aging distribution systems and wastewater planning to support housing, where feasible. A multi-year capital improvement program would help the town plan maintenance and larger investments rather than responding only when problems arise.

The draft also calls for new developments to bear their proportionate infrastructure and long-term maintenance costs unless public assistance serves an identified community benefit.

Reduce flood risk and protect natural resources

Use flood-risk information and land suitability findings to guide development and infrastructure decisions.

Priorities include East Branch Ausable River restoration, culvert and drainage improvements, emergency preparedness, and protection of forests, wetlands, wildlife corridors, scenic resources, and riverbanks. The goal is to reduce risks to people and property while protecting the natural systems of Jay.

Strengthen community assets and services

Support the services and places residents rely on, including childcare, senior services, transportation, healthcare access, libraries, emergency services, and community gathering spaces.

Recommendations include an aging-in-place initiative, better coordination of service referrals, and community facilities that are accessible and can support emergency needs.

Recreation priorities include improvements at the Upper Jay Picnic Area and riverfront, Douglas Memorial Park, Henry's Trail, and Riverside Park; community and pollinator gardens; and a volunteer supported dog park at modest or minimal cost to the town. Plans for state land on Stonehouse Road known as the Four Peaks tract would address trails, parking, access, safety, and stewardship through coordination with state and regional partners and opportunities for public input.

The draft recognizes Au Sable Forks Elementary School as an important community asset and recommends continued engagement with the school district. Without presuming closure, it also calls for exploring potential reuse options and partners should the building become available.

Connect the Town of Jay to regional economic opportunity

Support existing businesses, entrepreneurs, year-round employment, and reinvestment in vacant or underused buildings.

Recommendations include Main Street revitalization in Au Sable Forks, pursuing NY Forward or Downtown Revitalization Initiative grants which would bring state funding to augment private investment, and supporting façade improvements, historic-building reuse and more active storefronts.

The draft calls for partnerships among employers, schools and training providers to strengthen skilled trades and workforce opportunities. It also identifies potential shared business fa-

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cilities, such as co-working space, flexible commercial space, and shared kitchens, alongside financing and technical assistance for businesses and property owners.

The draft also supports agriculture, arts and culture, remote work, and recreation-related businesses. Farm priorities include market access, local-product visibility and farm succession. Recreation investments should benefit residents and connect visitors with hamlet businesses while protecting community character.

Close digital and transportation gaps

Treat reliable broadband and cellular service as essential infrastructure for work, education, safety, and healthcare.

Better connectivity would support public safety, quality of life, home-based businesses, remote workers, students, and telehealth access.

Transportation recommendations include a town transportation plan, an ongoing Complete Streets initiative, safer pedestrian and bicycle connections along routes such as Springfield Road and Route 9N, and longer-term connections among hamlets and neighboring communities. These efforts would improve access to jobs, services, and recreation for residents of different ages and abilities.

Build capacity and maintain implementation momentum

Set a first-year action agenda, assign responsibilities, prepare projects for funding opportunities, and track progress.

Town committees, volunteers, businesses, non-profit organizations, neighboring communities, county and state partners all have roles. The draft recommends regular public reporting so residents can see what is advancing and provide

feedback on priorities or approaches which need adjustment. Committees will monitor and adapt to changing technology, particularly as artificial intelligence has increasing potential to affect people and policy in both positive and negative ways.

How implementation would work

The plan organizes 68 detailed recommendations into four tiers. Tier 1 brings together the highest priority early actions, generally in the first one to three years. Tier 2 addresses medium-term initiatives, generally in years four to seven, and Tier 3 includes longer-term actions, generally in years eight to ten. Tier 4 covers ongoing programs, monitoring, and future opportunities.

Early work includes technical studies, partnerships, updated planning tools and preparations for investment alongside projects already ready to advance. Larger investments may require additional feasibility work, design, funding and approvals. The tiers guide priorities rather than guaranteed construction schedules. Timing can adjust as needs, resources, and opportunities change. Project decisions would also consider local costs, staffing and maintenance.

A plan built from community input

The Comprehensive Plan update builds on over 650 survey responses across two surveys, approximately 70 open house attendees, 25 workshop participants, and 16 stakeholder interviews and focus-group sessions involving almost 100 individuals. Five working groups helped translate this input into recommendations for the draft plan.

The Community Profile and Atlas brings that input together with demographic, housing, economic, infrastructure, and environmental research. The draft Comprehensive Plan uses its findings to connect community priorities with recommended actions.

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Across these opportunities, participants most desired housing for year-round residents, reliable internet and cellular service, stronger Main Streets and local businesses, services for families and older adults and protection of Jay's natural setting. Participants also raised concerns about costs, taxes, development impacts and the town's capacity to carry out improvements.

Views differed on some approaches, including short-term rentals, tourism and energy policy. The draft draws on both shared priorities and differing perspectives, as well as technical analysis. This stage of review is an opportunity to assess how well it reflects that work, to identify anything significant that was overlooked, and to clarify or refine the proposed recommendations.

Community initiatives during development of the plan

Town committees and community partners have been working to implement some of these priorities as the plan was being developed. The Human Services Committee established the community food pantry, coordinated information and referrals and supported outreach to older residents and young people.

The Climate Task Force helped the town achieve Climate Smart Communities Bronze certification and advance energy-efficiency initiatives. A review of our roads, sidewalks and other transportation issues is now beginning under a New York State Complete Streets grant.

The Parks and Open Spaces Committee's efforts have included volunteer workdays, Upper Jay improvements, Four Peaks planning, and technical assistance through a Federal Recreation Economy for Rural Communities program that will ultimately make our outdoor assets, such as the Ausable River, more accessible.

The town's Economic Development Committee and its community partners have advanced historic preservation, housing rehabilitation, Main Street and façade initiatives, and visitor information.

The Planning Board and town leadership have begun coordination with the Adirondack Park Agency and Ausable Freshwater Center on land suitability and growth management.

These accomplishments and activities provide a foundation for future work. They do not mean that every recommendation in the draft has been approved or funded. Proposed initiatives would still require the decisions and approvals needed to move forward.

What happens next

The Comprehensive Plan Special Board will review comments and consider revisions before recommending the plan to the Town Board. County and state agency reviews are anticipated during December 2026 and January 2027. Submission of the plan to the Town Board is anticipated in March 2027. The Town Board will hold its own public hearing before considering adoption of the plan at a date to be announced.

How to learn more

The Community Profile, draft Comprehensive Plan Update and many other documents are available on-line at planjay.com. Printed copies of these documents and the plan's appendices can also be examined at the Town Clerk's office at 11 School Lane, Au Sable Forks, or at either of the town's two libraries, Wells Memorial Library at 12230 Route 9N, Upper Jay, or the Au Sable Forks Free Library at 9 Church Lane in Au Sable Forks.

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From The Supervisor's Office—Continued from page 1

preservation. Your comments, suggestions and perspectives on these draft documents will be essential to shaping our next steps.

You do not need to read the entire plan to provide useful feedback. This newsletter summarizes its main directions, and the full draft is available for those who wish to explore particular topics. The last page of this newsletter identifies ways for you to give feedback or get involved in finalizing this plan.

The planning effort has been supported by a grant from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's Smart Growth program and county occupancy tax funds. No

funds were used from the town budget. The grant enabled assistance from an engineering firm, AES Northeast, and an expert planning consultant, Dr. Ann Ruzow-Holland. However, the ideas, recommendations and details of this draft plan are from town residents, working as volunteers.

To everyone who contributed to this draft update, whether by taking a survey, participating in a working group, attending a workshop or open houses, or sitting down for an interview, thank you. Together, through your voice and involvement, we are building a Stronger Jay.

Matt Stanley

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A Town Open House at the Community Center on Thursday October 22, 2026, from 5:30-8 pm initiates public review of the draft and provides opportunity to speak with the volunteer leaders of the town's Comprehensive Plan Special Board who led drafting of the plan. Information slides from this Open House are also available at planjay.com.

How to submit feedback

- Go to the feedback link at planjay.com.

CLICK HERE 
TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK ON THE
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DRAFT

- Drop off written feedback at the Town Clerk's Office, the libraries, or mail comments to:

Town of Jay
Supervisor Matt Stanley
PO Box 730
Au Sable Forks NY 12912

- Submit written comments or oral remarks of up to three minutes at a Public Hearing

before the town's Comprehensive Plan Special Board at the Community Center on Tuesday, November 17, 2026 beginning at 6 pm.

All feedback submitted before December 1 will be considered by the Comprehensive Plan Special Board. Additional feedback opportunities will occur in early 2027 after agency reviews and submission of the plan to the Town Board.

Getting Further Involved

All meetings of the Town Board, the Comprehensive Plan Special Board and the town's various committees and task forces are open to the public at the Community Center and online. Their schedules are on the town calendar at the town website, <https://www.townofjayny.gov/jay-town-calendar/>.

If you wish to join one of the town committees contact the Town Supervisor. All work on town committees is by volunteers on a non-partisan basis.

Comprehensive Plan Open House

**THURSDAY
OCTOBER 22**

*5:30 to 8:00 p.m.
drop in anytime*

Community Center
11 School Lane, Au Sable Forks

Au Sable Forks, Jay, and Upper Jay

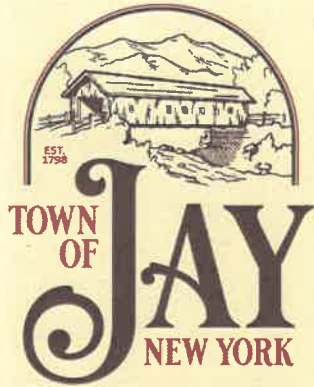
Learn about the draft plan to guide our community's future vision, goals, and policies—and share your feedback!



FOR MORE INFORMATION

(518) 647-2204 EXT. 102

WWW.PLANJAY.COM

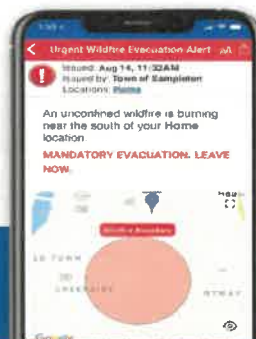


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