

# Village of Williamsville

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE



# COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PLAN

MAY 8, 2025

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## SECTION 1

# OVERVIEW

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### I. ABOUT THE PROJECT

The Village of Williamsville is updating its Community Comprehensive Plan to guide future growth while preserving its historic character and quality of life. The current Community Plan was last updated in 2010 and amended in 2015, no longer addressing the emerging challenges the Village of Williamsville is facing such as housing affordability, aging in place, economic development, transportation, sustainability, and historic preservation.

This update builds on recent public engagement efforts, including community surveys and visioning forums, to ensure the Plan reflects residents needs and aspirations. Specific goals for the Comprehensive Plan Update include:

- Guiding the physical revitalization of Village neighborhoods and districts.
- Protecting and preserving the unique historic, mixed-use character of the Village.
- Mitigating the impacts of traffic on Village life.
- Leveraging the full potential of the pedestrian environment.
- Fostering economic development within the Village.

With strong community input, this updated Comprehensive Plan will provide a clear and actionable roadmap for the Village of Williamsville's future, ensuring it remains a vibrant and livable community for generations to come.

### II. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PLAN (CPP) OVERVIEW

Public engagement is a vital part of the Village of Williamsville's Community Comprehensive Plan update to ensure the Plan reflects both current community values and long-term aspirations. This process will foster broad and meaningful participation, increase awareness, gather local insights, and build support for both the Plan's vision and its future implementation.

The CPP serves as a flexible framework for guiding outreach efforts, coordinating among Village officials, consultants, committees, and stakeholders, adapting as needed throughout the planning process. For effective collaboration and engagement, this document should not be considered a rigid checklist. Rather, the CPP is a general structure for the Village's intended public outreach efforts, ensuring effective collaboration and engagement by all with an interest in this project.

The contents of this document are intended to:

- Establish coordination between the Village, the Consultant Team, Technical Advisory Committee, and Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, as well as community partners and stakeholders;
- Provide an overview of planned public outreach efforts and events, including team roles, responsibilities, and expected outcomes; and
- Outline key methods and channels of communication.

## SECTION 2

# PROJECT COMMITTEES

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### »» I. TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) includes two teams, each serving a distinct purpose for guiding this planning process.

- ◊ **Primary TAC Team.** The primary or “core” TAC group is an administrative body established to ensure adequate coordination between key personnel from the Village, Town of Amherst, and Consultant Team. This core group will be responsible for overseeing project progress and ensuring the proper execution of administrative project needs. Meetings of the Primary TAC Team will provide an opportunity to discuss the current status of the planning process, such as project deliverables, tasks, schedules, and issues or opportunities that may come up along the way.
- ◊ **Code TAC Team.** The role of this secondary TAC group is to guide the code amendment portion of this effort. Therefore, the Code TAC Team includes key Village and review board personnel that have experience with the administration and enforcement of Williamsville’s Zoning Code. This experience and expertise will help to ensure a strong understanding of current code issues and evaluation of potential regulatory alternatives.

#### Participation

Primary TAC Team meetings will be attended by staff members from the Village of Williamsville, Town of Amherst, and prime Consultant, Colliers Engineering & Design (CED), as listed in the table on the following page.

Code TAC Team meetings will include the core group as well as the planning and zoning representatives also outlined in the following table. Meetings of the Primary and Code TAC Teams are not open to the public.

It should be noted that the TAC teams are intended to be flexible groups, allowing for the addition or removal of members as necessary to provide relevant assistance based on the current project stage. For example, subconsultants and other key community partners from various Village, Town, County, and/or regional departments and organizations may also be asked to participate depending on the topic of discussion.

ORGANIZATION	CONTACT	CONTACT INFORMATION
<b>Primary TAC Team</b>		
Village of Williamsville	Sophie Kephart, Community Development Aide	skephart@village.williamsville.ny.us
Village of Williamsville	Suzanne Canell, Administrator/Clerk Treasurer	scanell@village.williamsville.ny.us
Town of Amherst	Dan Howard, Planning Director	dhoward@amherst.ny.us
Town of Amherst	Roberta Rappoccio, Associate Planner	rrappoccio@amherst.ny.us
CED	Molly Gaudioso, Project Manager	Molly.Gaudioso@collierseng.com
CED	John Steinmetz, Planning Principal	John.Steinmetz@collierseng.com
<b>Code TAC Team</b>		
Village of Williamsville	Kate Waterman-Kulpa, Planning Board	
Village of Williamsville	Wally Pacer, Planning Board	
Village of Williamsville	David Vitka, Planning Board	
Williamsville / Amherst	Gary Palumbo, Williamsville Zoning Enforcement Officer / Amherst Associate Planner	

### Format & Schedule

Primary TAC Team meetings will be held via telephone or video conference on a monthly basis. The specific time and date of the recurring monthly meetings will be established at the project start.

The Code TAC Team will meet at least four (4) times, beginning halfway through the project process. The delayed start to these meetings will allow for consideration of the preliminary vision and goals developed in the earlier stages of the Plan update. The specific date, time, and format for each meeting will be determined based on Code TAC member availability. Code TAC Team meetings led by CED are anticipated to align with key zoning code amendment deliverables as noted below:

- Code TAC Meeting #1 - Code Assessment Report
- Code TAC Meeting #2 - Preliminary District Alternatives
- Code TAC Meetings #3 & #4 - Draft Mixed Use Zoning Districts, Draft Urban Open Space District, Draft Residential District Classifications

The anticipated timing of these meetings is further outlined in Section 6 (Project Schedule).

### Notification

Code TAC Team members will receive notification for all upcoming meetings from the Primary TAC Team, including a tentative agenda of topics to be covered and discussion points. Any materials to be reviewed on the agenda will be provided at least a week in advance of the meeting.

## II. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CPAC)

CPAC members will play a key role in all aspects of the planning process, including but not limited to reviewing and providing feedback on draft deliverables, providing key insights and direction during the development of the Comprehensive Plan, and participating in public engagement efforts. Members will also serve as spokespeople for the project throughout the planning process.

### Participation

The CPAC is comprised of community partners who provide an array of perspectives, experiences, and local knowledge to inform the Comprehensive Plan planning process. CPAC members include members of the Village Planning Board as well as residents, business owners, developers, and representatives of various local committees and community service organizations. The full list of CPAC perspectives is provided in the table on the following page.

All CPAC meetings will be open to the public. The CPAC will meet in-person on a monthly basis. Meetings with the CPAC conducted by the Consultant Team will be held in accordance with the Format & Schedule section outlined below.

### Notification

CPAC members will receive notification for all upcoming meetings from the Primary TAC Team, including a tentative agenda of topics to be covered and discussion points. Any materials to be reviewed on the agenda will be provided at least a week in advance of the meeting.

Notification of CPAC meeting dates, times, and formats will also be posted to the project website and duly noticed in accordance with Village policy and state law.

### Format & Schedule

CED will facilitate six (6) meetings with the CPAC over the course of this planning process. The specific date, time, and format for each meeting will be determined based on Committee member availability. In general, CPAC meetings with CED are anticipated to align with key project milestones as noted below:

- CPAC Meeting #1 - Project Kick-Off
- CPAC Meeting #2 - Draft Community Profile
- CPAC Meeting #3 - Draft Vision & Goal Framework
- CPAC Meetings #4 & #5 - Draft Community Development Strategy & Action Plan
- CPAC Meeting #6 - Draft Comprehensive Plan

The anticipated timing of these meetings is further outlined in Section 6 (Project Schedule).

When the full Draft Comprehensive Plan has been developed, the CPAC will hold a public hearing, as required by NYS Village Law §7-722 6 (b). The purpose of this hearing is to receive public comment on the Draft Comprehensive Plan and allow for the CPAC to formally recommend the updated Plan to the Village Board. For additional information on this meeting, see Section III - CPAC Public Hearing on page 10.

**NOTE:** The Village may call additional, independent meetings of the CPAC, as deemed necessary throughout the process. These meetings will also be posted to the project website and duly noticed in accordance with Village policy and state law.

CPAC Member Perspectives

<b>PERSPECTIVE</b>
Planning Board, resident, neighborhood 5
Planning Board, resident, neighborhood 5
Planning Board, resident, neighborhood 2
Planning Board, resident, neighborhood 5
Planning Board, resident, neighborhood 2
Planning Board, resident, neighborhood 4
Williamsville Library
Business owner, George’s Market, resident, neighborhood 4
Canal Bank, Williamsville Business Association
Developer, Architect, Uniland
Developer, Iskalo
Village Historian
Business owner, Rationales, resident, neighborhood 2
Youth & Rec Chair, resident, neighborhood 2
Urban Forestry, resident, neighborhood 3
Business Owner, Sweet Jenny’s
Arts & Culture Chair, resident, neighborhood 3
Williamsville School Board
Resident, neighborhood 3
Resident, neighborhood 4
Real estate attorney, resident, neighborhood 2
ZBA Chair, Firefighter, resident, neighborhood 2
Business owner, Snyder Track & Field
Resident, neighborhood 2
Principal Planner, Erie County Planning & Development
Senior Planner, Erie County Planning & Development

## SECTION 3

# STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

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Stakeholders are individuals and small groups with a specific interest in or ability to serve and/or inform the project and act as a partner in implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. Communication and collaboration with community partners will help identify needs and opportunities, expand awareness of the project, and ensure key objectives are implementable while achieving plan goals.

These interviews will allow for the Primary TAC Team to delve further into key topic areas, such as historic preservation, housing, infrastructure, transportation, sustainability, and economic development, as well as reach target demographics. This may include but is not limited to: Village and Town department heads, community service providers, grassroots organizations, and citizen committees.

### Participation

Stakeholder Interviews are not open to the public. They will be held with CED Staff and the interviewees only. CED will conduct up to four (4) community stakeholder interviews over the course of the project. Village Staff and CPAC members may host additional meetings as desired. A list of Stakeholders will be provided by the Primary TAC Team upon request.

### Notification

Stakeholders will receive an invitation from the Village of Williamsville or consultant team.

### Format

The format of stakeholder outreach will vary based on the size and preference of the group. In some cases it may make sense to engage multiple stakeholder groups at one time depending on topic area and interest. Meetings may be held in person, via telephone, or video conference and may include, but are not limited to, the following formats: One-on-one Interviews; Small Group or Focus Group Meetings; and Virtual Office Hours.

### Schedule

Initial community conversations will occur at the start of the planning process to gather information related to existing issues, opportunities, and challenges facing the Village today. Additional interviews may be held later in the process for feedback as the Draft Comprehensive Plan is developed.

### Materials

CED will produce a Report/Memo Summary for each interview, but will not include transcripts.

## SECTION 4

# PUBLIC EVENTS

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The following public events are designed to facilitate the largest level of engagement throughout the process, allowing for a direct dialogue between the public, TAC Teams, and CPAC. The approach and topic for each event will be tailored to the project needs at that time. Together each of these events will help to achieve the following:

- Inform the community about the project and the planning process;
- Build consensus and understanding with respect to the Village’s future vision and goals;
- Ensure the community has a voice in the Village’s future growth; and
- Gather feedback on the Draft Comprehensive Plan, its recommendations, and proposed code amendments.

### Participation

These events are open to the public. Residents and community partners will be strongly encouraged to attend and participate in these events. CED will be the lead coordinator and facilitator of events; however, it is anticipated that TAC and CPAC members will also attend and participate.

### Notification

Public events will be advertised via press release in the Amherst Bee at least on month in advance. Information on upcoming public events will also be posted on the project website at least two weeks in advance.

Additional advertising and communication tools will be utilized to maximize awareness and public engagement. This may include, but is not limited to the materials in the Advertising Toolkit outlined on page 11.

### Public Event Locations

All public meetings and events will be held at centrally located venues with ADA accessibility.

### Public Event Times

Public meetings may be held in the daytime or evening, in an effort to accommodate varying residents schedules. Traditional holidays and school breaks will be avoided.

### Materials

CED will provide a meeting summary after each public event. Materials for the facilitation of each public event will include:

- Meeting Presentations
- Informational & Interactive Boards
- Activity Station Supplies
- Village Maps
- Resolutions for Public Hearings
- Resolutions for Recommendation / Adoption

## III. PUBLIC WORKSHOP | MAY 13, 2025

This initial public engagement event will serve to introduce the project, provide context for policy development and future land use planning, and create meaningful opportunities to share ideas and engage in conversation. The agenda will be finalized with the Primary TAC Team, but may include:

- Overview of the project goals, schedule, and scope;
- Summary of information gathered to date; and
- Interactive stations / discussion facilitation that dives deeper into the key takeaways for the Comprehensive Plan Update goals and code amendments (as outlined in Section 1).

## II. OPEN HOUSE #1 | SPRING 2026

Once the Draft Comprehensive Plan has been prepared, an open house will be held giving an opportunity for the public to review the preliminary draft in an interactive and informal setting. It is anticipated that a series of activity stations related to key components of the Plan will be set up so attendees can ask questions and provide direct feedback on the content.

*According to NYS Village Law §7-722 6 (b)...*

*if a special board or committee prepares the comprehensive plan or plan update, that committee must hold its own public hearing prior to referral of the plan to the Village Board.*

## III. CPAC PUBLIC HEARING | SPRING 2026

Prior to the Draft Comprehensive Plan going to the Village Board, NYS Law requires the CPAC hold their own public hearing. This hearing will be conducted in accordance with Village policy and state law. At the close of the public hearing, the CPAC will vote by resolution to refer and recommend the Draft Comprehensive Plan to the Village Board for adoption.

## IV. OPEN HOUSE #2 | SUMMER 2026

Once the Draft Code Amendments have been completed, a second public open house will be held. The purpose of this final open house is to demonstrate the alignment of the Code Amendments with the Draft Comprehensive Plan while also soliciting public feedback on both documents. Informational boards will be prepared as well as comment tools to allow the community to provide direct input on the Draft Plan and Code content. This open house would be held prior to the Village Board public hearing so the Primary TAC Team, including consultant team members, may address any questions or concerns in an informal setting. The Code and Plan Drafts will be updated following the open house to address public comment, as necessary.

## V. VILLAGE BOARD PUBLIC HEARING | SUMMER 2026

Following the completion of SEQR and the county referral required by NYS General Municipal Law §293-m, the Village Board will hold their own public hearing to obtain any final comments and feedback from the public on the updated Zoning Code and Comprehensive Plan documents. Adoption of the Draft Comprehensive Plan will be made by resolution, while the adoption of the Draft Code Amendments will be made by local law.

## SECTION 5

# COMMUNICATION METHODS

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### »» I. PROJECT WEBSITE

Information throughout this process will be available via a project website monitored by the consultant:

[www.WilliamsvilleCompPlan2025.com](http://www.WilliamsvilleCompPlan2025.com)

The website will launch prior to the first public workshop and will be updated as the project progresses. CED will work with Village Staff and the CPAC to determine and generate the materials necessary for posting. This may include, but is not limited to, the project Scope, Organizational Memo, Meeting Notes, Draft/Final products, Community Participation Plan, and videos of meetings and hearings.

A comment form will also be set up for residents and stakeholders to submit feedback and/or questions at any stage in the process. This will be important when there are no outreach events scheduled at that time. CED will work with the Primary TAC Team to respond to any inquiries.

At the end of this project, CED will work with Village Staff to transfer the website so that it can be directly managed by the Village or transferred to the Village of Williamsville's existing website and maintained as a record of the planning process.

### »» II. ADVERTISING TOOLKIT

To maximize reach and participation in engagement events, the consultant team will prepare an Advertising Toolkit that includes an array of media for use across multiple communication channels. The materials will be updated and adapted for each public event. These tools may also be utilized for distributing project information, sharing process updates, and directing the public to key documents and deliverables.

#### Media Materials

Advertising and informational materials prepared by CED will include:

- Press Releases
- Print Materials (flyers, handouts, postcards, etc.)
- Social Media Graphics
- Email Invitation Language

#### Communication Channels

CED will assist with the distribution of advertising materials through the following channels:

- Village Website & Social Media
- Local News & Media Outlets
- Stakeholder & Community Contact List
- Others (as identified by the Village throughout the planning process)

## SECTION 6

# PROJECT SCHEDULE

The anticipated timeline for this project is approximately 18 months. The graphic below shows the general timing and schedule for key project milestones, meetings, and outreach efforts. This schedule may be modified over the course of the project, as needed and directed by the Primary TAC Team or CPAC, to ensure all project needs and issues are met. The specific dates and times for meetings, deliverables, and outreach efforts will be determined by the TAC Teams and CPAC as the project progresses.

