

# Village of Sherman | 2021 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE



# Tonight's Agenda

1. Comprehensive Plan 101
2. Planning Process & Timeline
3. Plan Walk-Thru
4. Public Comment Session





**- COMP PLAN 101 -**  
A Brief Overview

- Why Do We Need A Comprehensive Plan -

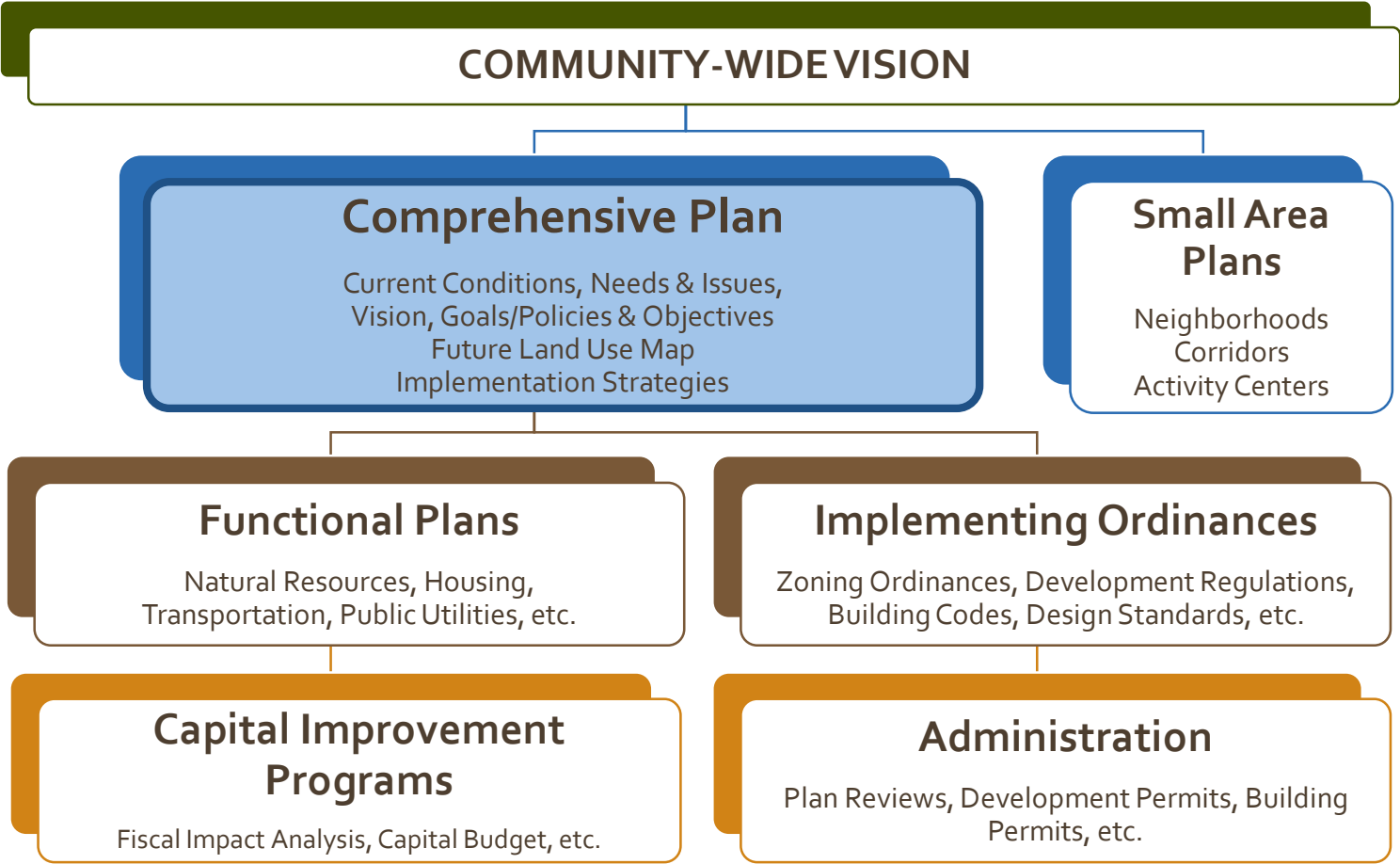
1. Provided for by New York State Law
2. Promotes the health, safety & welfare of the public
3. Provides background information and policies to assist with decision-making
4. Establishes framework for future programs, development & investment



## - Benefits of a Plan -

1. Represents a statement of policy & priorities by the Village
2. Provides direction to decision makers (PB, ZBA, staff)
3. Strengthens the Village's legal position in land proceedings
4. Serves to make government more efficient & responsive
5. Increases chances of funding for the Village & its partners by outside organizations
6. Fosters economic development

- A Comprehensive Plan is NOT -

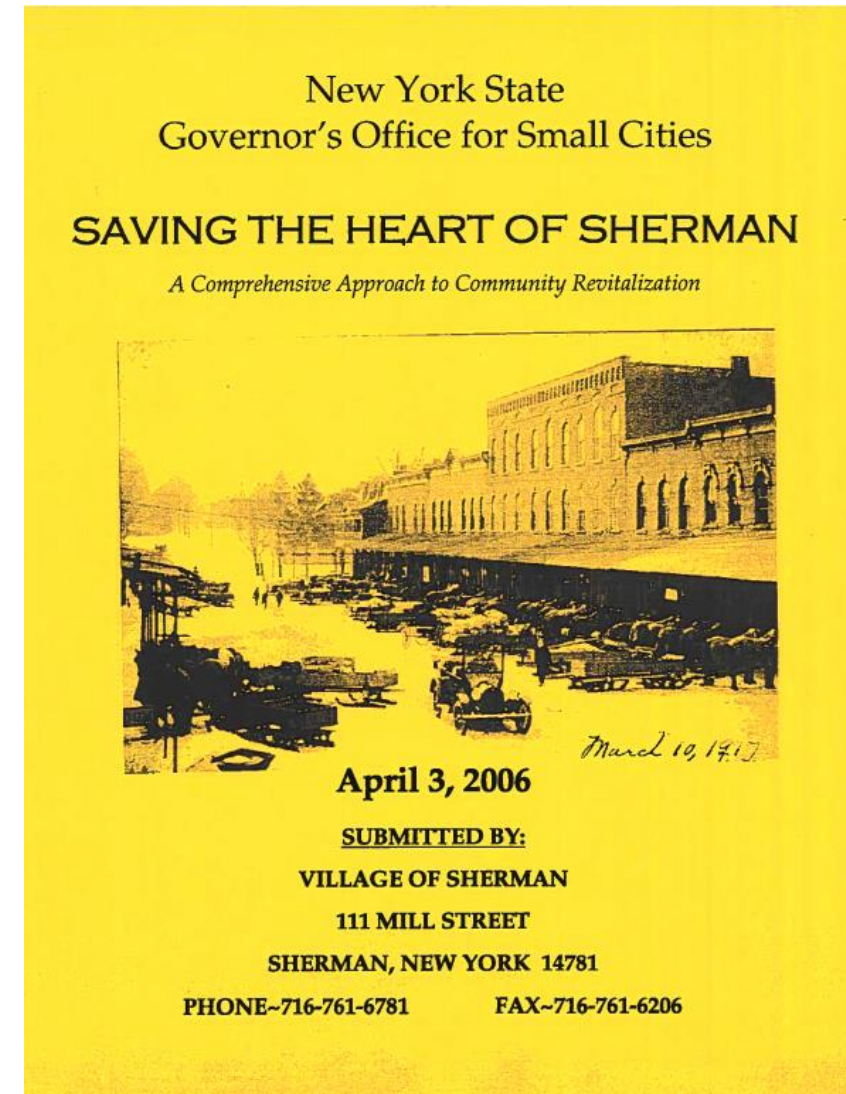


PLAN CONSISTENCY

## - What's In Your Current Plan? -

### "Saving the Heart of Sherman"

- 2006 NYS Governor's Office for Small Cities Grant Application
- Focused on preservation / redevelopment of Main Street structures
- General Goals:
  - Providing assistance to businesses and promoting employment growth
  - Rehabilitating historic mixed-use buildings
  - Retaining / attracting young professionals



## - A Look Back -

### Current Plan Completed in 2006

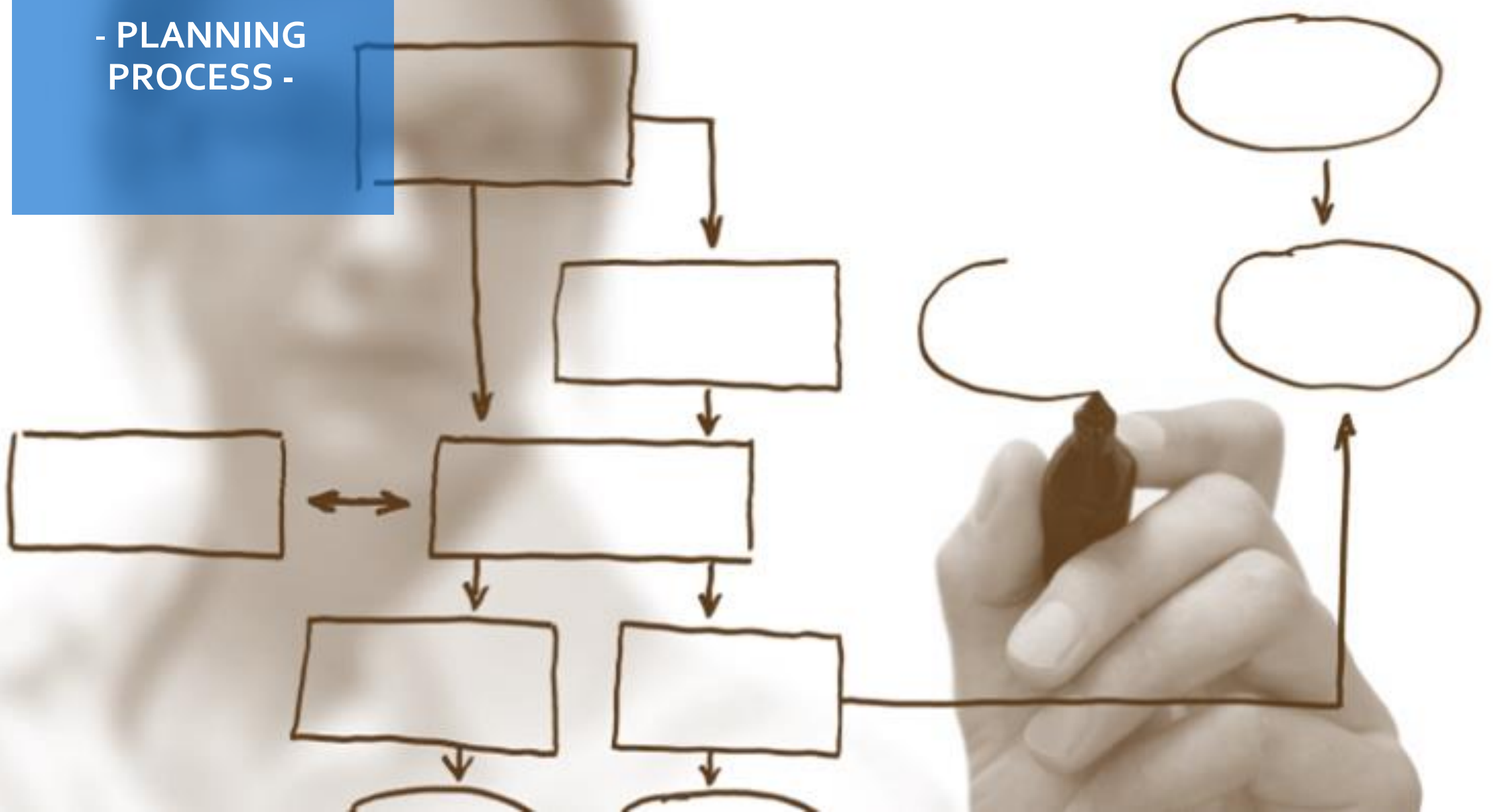
- George W. Bush was President
- Steelers beat the Seahawks in SB 41
- *Crash* won Best Picture
- BluRay Discs were made available
- Facebook had 6M users vs 360M
- Baby Boomers were the largest & most powerful group (born 1946-1964)



*First iPhone didn't come out until 2007*



- PLANNING  
PROCESS -



- Planning Process -



- What We Heard -



**- What We Heard -**

***STRENGTHS***

- 1. A wealth of local history & historic buildings**
- 2. Amish community**
- 3. Quaint, walkable village**
- 4. Natural features**
- 5. School district**

- What We Heard -

***WEAKNESSES***

- 1. Lacks a sense of identity**
- 2. Not much for kids to do other than school activities**
- 3. Taxes**
- 4. Empty storefronts downtown**
- 5. Negative attitudes towards progress**

- What We Heard -

*OPPORTUNITIES*

1. Embracing the Amish culture
2. Rehab old buildings
3. Marketing to people outside the area

- What We Heard -

*THREATS*

1. Rising cost of living
2. Apathy
3. Resistance to change
4. Poor property maintenance

- Plan Walk-Thru -





# Community Profile & Context

## Demographics & Trends

### INTRODUCTION

This section includes a summary of descriptive population, housing and economic trends and statistics for the Village of Sherman compared to that of the Town of Sherman, and Chautauqua County. These figures provide a snapshot of the current demographic and socio-economic character of the Village, Town, and County based on the information available through the US Census Bureau. Where noted, this data has been compiled from the Decennial US Census, the New York Department of Education, and American Community Survey (ACS). A community demographic profile helps identify existing and potential issues, opportunities, and threats with respect to the Village's residents, homes, and economic environment.

### POPULATION

The success of a community should not be measured by its rate of population growth or loss, but rather by the maintenance of community desirability and quality of life in spite of growth or decline. Communities seeking to preserve their small village character may pursue stabilizing their population while also employing development practices for controlled growth. The Village of Sherman's population has been decreasing since 1980. As shown in Table 1, the Village's population has decreased 5.3% since 2010, consistent with both the Town and County's population loss (-5.5% and -3.3%, respectively).

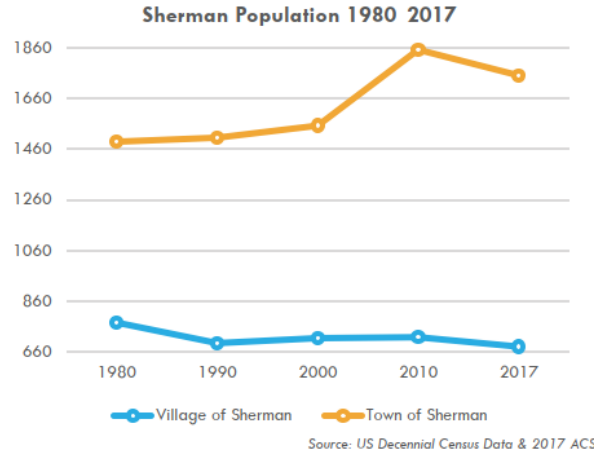


Table 1

Population	Village	Town*	County
Population (2017)	680	1,751	130,846
% Change in Population (2010-2017)	-5.3%	-5.5%	-3.3%

\* Town population includes the Village's population

Source: US Decennial Census Data & 2017 ACS

### At a Glance!

Population	Land Area	Density	Median Age	Year Settled
680	0.8 sq. mi.	850/sq. mi.	34.9	1890

Source: 2017 ACS

### POPULATION BY AGE GROUP

In terms of age distribution, the 20 to 34 year old age group is the largest cohort, making up 24.7% of the population. The 65+ age group is the second largest cohort at 21% of the population, and experienced the most significant growth (9.8%) between 2010 and 2017. Conversely, the 5 to 19 year old age group had the greatest decline (-15.9%) since 2010, and the 35 to 54 year old age group had the second greatest rate of decline at -11.1%. Gains and losses within these age groups in the Village are consistent with that of Town and County trends, but the Village is experiencing them at a more drastic pace, as seen in Table 2.

Although there has been a rapid age increase in the Village, the median age of 34.9 falls between the County's median age of 42.3 and the Town's median age of 29.0. It is imperative that the Village's vision and goals take into account the community's aging population. Promoting an age friendly community not only benefits seniors, but the population as a whole. At the same time, young professionals and young families are important age groups to attract and retain as they tend to foster a number of growth opportunities within the community in which they live.

Village Age Distribution (2017)

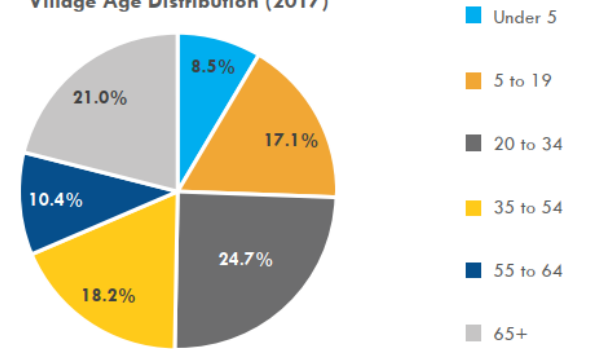
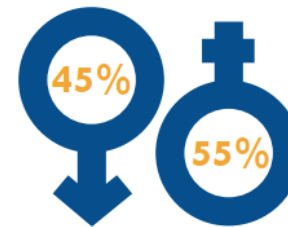


Table 2

% Change in Age Group, 2010-2017	Village	Town	County
Under 5	6.8%	0.8%	-0.1%
5 to 19	-15.9%	-4.9%	-2.0%
20 to 34	9.7%	4.9%	0.9%
35 to 54	-11.1%	-5.2%	-3.5%
55 to 64	0.7%	0.9%	2.3%
65+	9.8%	3.5%	2.2%

Source: US Decennial Census Data & 2017 ACS

### Male-Female Gender Distribution, 2017



Source: 2017 ACS

# Community Profile & Context

## HOUSING BURDEN

Another economic indicator related to housing is the cost burden facing households. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development defines cost-burdened families as those who pay more than 30% of their income for housing. Families who are cost burdened often face additional financial stress when budgeting for everyday necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and medical care. At the first public meeting for this Comprehensive Plan effort, residents of Sherman expressed concern over increasing housing costs, which is consistent with the housing market trends summarized below.

Table 6 displays rent/mortgage costs as a percent of household income for the Village, Town, and County. Nearly 40% of Village residents are considered to be housing cost burdened, higher than that of the Town and County. As seen in Table 7, the percentage of households in the Village paying over 35% of their income for housing has increased by 13.7% since 2010. This is a significant increase, especially compared to the Town, which saw an increase of 1%; and the County, which saw a decrease of households in this category by 0.2%. As a result, future efforts to preserve housing affordability will be important to maintaining resident quality of life.

**Table 6**

Rent/Mortgage as % of household income, 2017	Village	Town	County
Less than 20%	38.4%	40.7%	41.7%
20%-24%	14.1%	14.9%	12.8%
25% - 29%	8.6%	11.6%	9.0%
30% - 34%	8.6%	4.9%	6.9%
35% or more	30.3%	28.0%	29.6%

Source: 2017 ACS

**Table 7**

Change in Rent/Mortgage as % of household income	Village	Town	County
Less than 20.0%	-1.3%	2.8%	4%
20 to 24%	0.5%	1.9%	-2.0%
25 to 29%	-3.9%	2.8%	-1.6%
30 to 34%	-8.9%	-8.6%	-0.2%
35% or more	13.7%	1.0%	-0.2%

Source: 2017 ACS

## EMPLOYMENT INDUSTRIES

The top four employment industries in the Village of Sherman make up 78.4% of resident employment for the 237 workers who live in the Village (US Census). These industries include educational services, and health care and social assistance (27.6%); retail trade (20.9%); arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services (16.6%); and construction (13.3%) as shown in Figure 8. As previously stated, the Village's unemployment rate is consistent with the Town and County's. It should be noted that it is also on par with that of western New York as a whole, which is 5.5%.

The figure below shows the inflow and outflow of all jobs within the Village of Sherman. In 2017, 22 jobs were held by people who both lived and worked within the Village, while 294 people worked in the Village, but lived outside. It is estimated that 215 residents travel outside the Village for work.



# Community Profile & Context

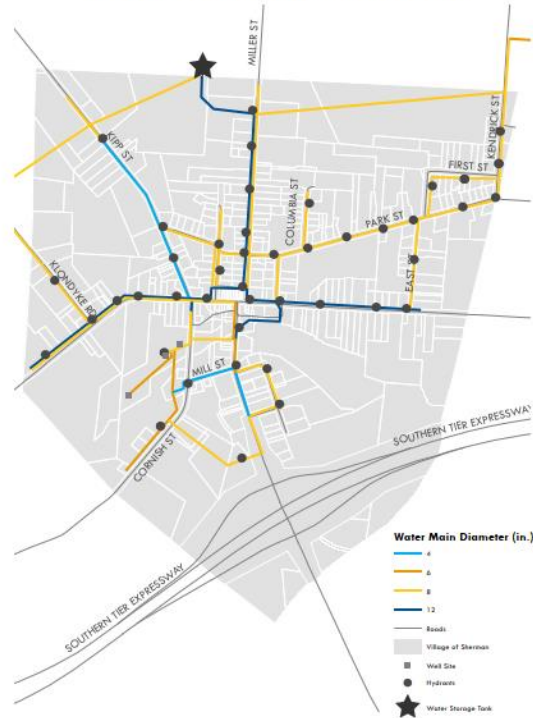
## WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

The Village of Sherman owns and operates a water system that was originally constructed in the early 1800s and currently consists of two well houses, a 300,000 gallon storage tank, and 7.9 miles of water distribution mains (see Map 4). Several components of the water system are in need of significant rehabilitation or replacement. In 2018, the Village applied for and received a \$50,000 Community Planning Grant through the NYS Office of Homes and Community Renewal to complete a comprehensive evaluation of its drinking water system. The evaluation recommended the design and construction of a Drinking Water System capital improvement plan (CIP) to address its deficiencies. The Village is currently moving forward with implementing these improvements.

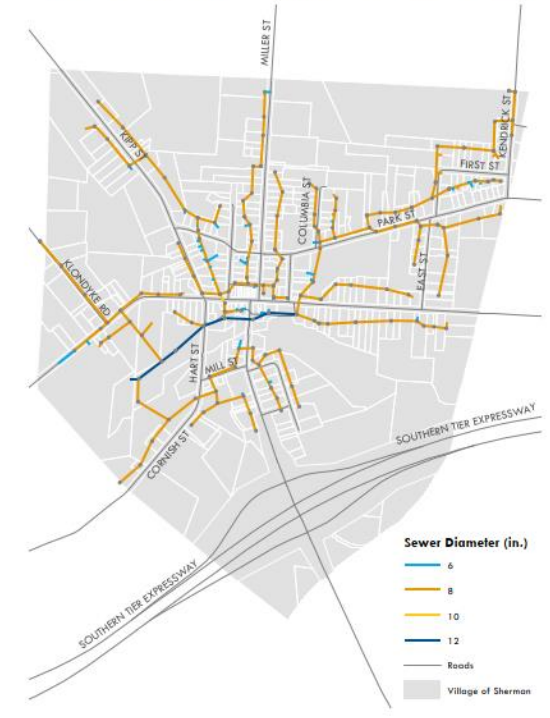
## SANITARY SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE

The Village operates a wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) that was constructed in the late 1970s and has had little to no renovations. Most of the WWTP process equipment has exceeded its useful service life. Many treatment components have experienced age-related deterioration, are not in service, or need improvements to reflect modern standards. Proper treatment of the Village's wastewater is essential for protecting the water quality of French Creek. The Village is in the early stages of upgrading the WWTP in addition to minor upgrades to the sanitary sewer collection system for reducing inflow and infiltration (I/I) and addressing structural deficiencies in pipes and manholes. Map 5 displays the locations and diameters of the sewer lines.

Map 4: Existing Water System



Map 5: Existing Sanitary Sewer System

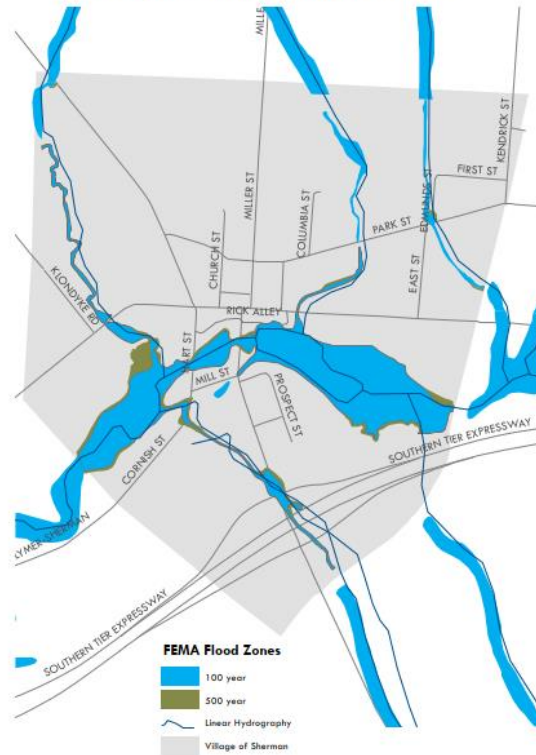


# Community Profile & Context

## FEMA FLOOD ZONES

Areas of the Village with creeks and streams are located in designated Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood zones, as shown on Map 8. Flood zones are geographic areas that FEMA has defined, according to varying levels of flood risk. Based on FEMA's Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), Zone A areas are in the 100 year Flood Zone, Zone B areas are in the 500 year Flood Zone, and Zone C areas are outside of all Flood Zones.

Map 8: FEMA Flood Zones



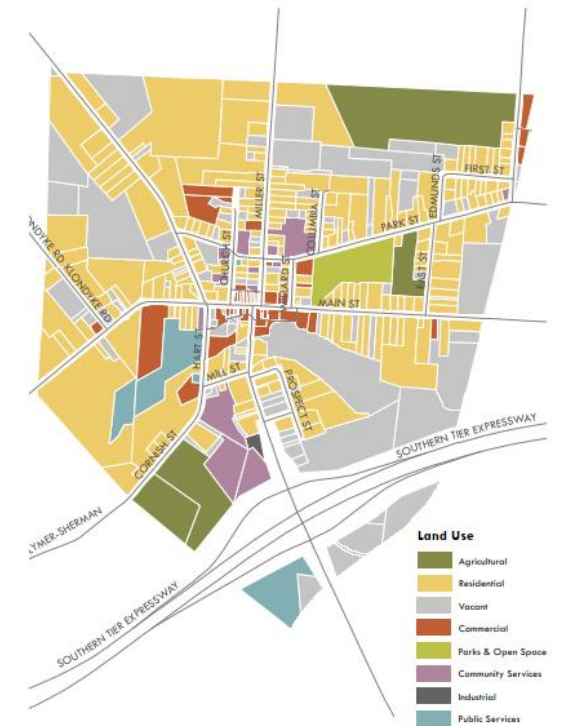
## LAND USE

There are 409 parcels within the Village totaling 396.5 acres (map 9). According to the New York State Office of Real Property Services, land classification codes and the Village of Sherman's property information, more than 75% of the Village's total area is used for residential or agricultural purposes, or is vacant.

Residential is the largest land use category covering 35.4% of the Village's total area. Most of the residential properties (203 out of 235) are categorized as single-family parcels. The next most prevalent residential uses are two-family parcels (21), mobile homes (6), and three-family residences (3). As mentioned previously, a vast majority of the homes were built prior to 1940, contributing to the traditional and historic character of the Village. Many of the homes near the border are more rural in character with a larger lot size and building setback.

Although only four parcels are designated as such, agricultural uses make up 47.9 acres (12.1%) of the Village's total land area. Commercial is the third most prevalent land use with 44 parcels or 6.1% of the total area. The majority of the commercial properties are located along Main Street. Commercial uses found in the Village center include a mix of retail shops such as auto parts stores and pharmacies, as well as service businesses such as hair salons and banks.

Map 9: Existing Land Use



# Community Vision

The Village of Sherman has transformed from its historic roots as a sawmill and dairy farming community to become a Village which cultivates economic, educational, and recreational opportunities for families and residents of all ages. We value our historic character and take pride in our heritage as a hardworking, self-sufficient community. The presence of the Sherman Central School District campus, our traditional Main Street, and the Village's convenient proximity to I-86 has served as the catalyst for our economic growth and prosperity. Sherman's small-scale and tight-knit settlement pattern is complemented by its natural resources, such as French Creek, which provide environmental, recreational, and aesthetic benefits. We value our relationship with the local Amish community, Town of Sherman, and Chautauqua County. The Village and its partners will continue to work with all residents to preserve our assets, keep true to our heritage, and provide a high quality of life for current and future generations.

## To achieve this vision, the Village of Sherman will:

- ◇ **Cultivate local economic development opportunities;**
- ◇ **Provide diverse residential living options and preserve existing property values;**
- ◇ **Protect natural resources and open spaces;**
- ◇ **Showcase the Village's spirit through culture, recreation, and community design; and**
- ◇ **Maintain quality community services to better serve businesses and residents.**

# Policy Example

## **POLICY 4:** Showcase the Village's spirit through culture, recreation, & community design

It is the policy of the Village to showcase Sherman's spirit through our history, culture, recreation activities, and the design of our community. We celebrate our history and culture through exhibits at the Yorker Museum, school district curricula, and community events. Our recreation programs and facilities not only create opportunities for physical activity, but also help to keep our residents connected and engaged. We enjoy the friendly and close-knit atmosphere that these community and school related activities have fostered from generation to generation. We also recognize that the physical character and design of our community further defines the identity of Sherman and fosters local pride and a strong sense of place.



### **Objective A: Increase awareness and appreciation of the Village's historical assets**

#### **Potential Action Items:**

- Invest in historical signage
- Support initiatives of the Yorker Museum through non-financial and financial means
- Educate the community on the benefits of State and National Historic Registration and promote use of tax credits for historic building rehabilitation and reuse
- Pursue listing the Main Street business district and significant historic Village properties on the State and National Registers of Historic Places
- Expand municipal practices that encourage walking or biking to Village destinations

### **Objective B: Provide activities and programs to meet the recreational needs of all age groups**

#### **Potential Action Items:**

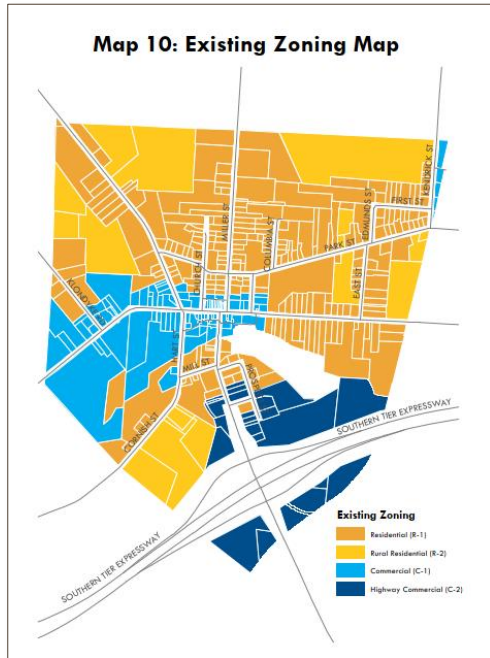
- Monitor and address the recreational needs of the community as they evolve
- Provide information on recreational opportunities including park and trail maps, program schedules, and community amenities on the Village website
- Explore opportunities for intergenerational activities such as the shared use of community facilities
- Increase activities available to the community's youth outside of school hours
- Establish a community development/service center
- Pursue trail improvements, including development of new greenway trails and linkages between the Dog Park, Rails to Trails trailhead, and Nature Conservancy Pond on First Street
- Encourage walking and biking to Village destinations as a means of transportation and opportunity to practice health and fitness

### **Objective C: Invest in streetscape amenities including façade improvements, street-lighting, street trees, and well-maintained sidewalks to improve neighborhood safety and attractiveness**

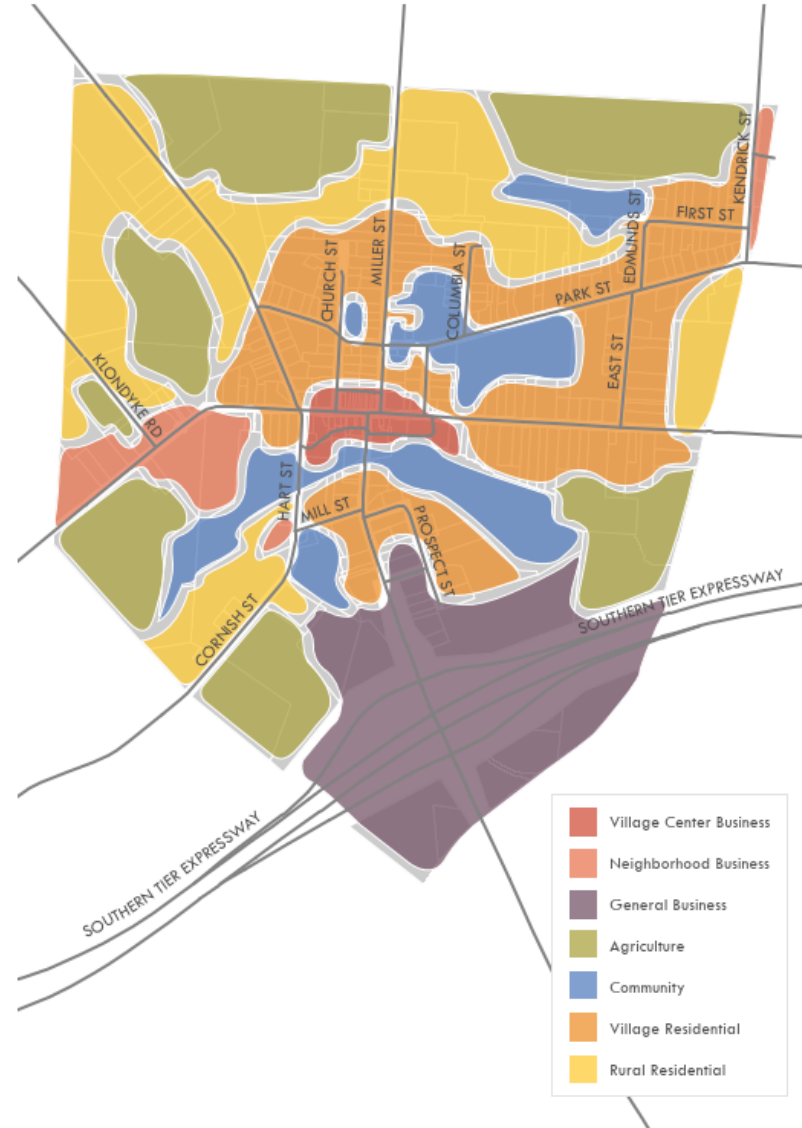
#### **Potential Action Items:**

- Pursue implementation grant funding for storefront façade improvements through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program or a NY Main Street Grant
- Complete the streetscape improvements shown in the concept diagrams on page 46 to enhance multi-modal transportation routes and safety through the Main Street business district by integrating traffic calming and pedestrian features into the planned streetscape enhancement project
- Invest in opportunities to expand the Village's tree canopy on public and private lands
- Develop design guidelines or renderings of potential façade improvements to preserve Main Street's character
- Improve and enhance rear-lot parking behind the commercial buildings fronting the south side of Main Street, including allocating more spaces for the Amish to park their horses and buggies

# Future Land Use



## Future Land Use Map & Recommendations



### Village Center Business

#### Goals

- Protect the historic character of the Village center;
- Promote walkability and reduce presence of auto-oriented, suburban uses and site design practices; and
- Support downtown as a vibrant, mixed-use activity center.

#### Recommendations

- Redefine the C-1 District to suit the character of downtown.
- Develop downtown design standards to preserve historic structures and guide infill development.

### Neighborhood Business

#### Goals

- Provide for increased commercial opportunities while preserving existing residential character;
- Enhance the walkability and connectivity of neighborhoods, goods, and services; and
- Minimize nonresidential use impacts on adjacent properties.

#### Recommendations

- Craft a new Neighborhood Business (NB) zoning district.
- Expand upon existing landscaping and buffer requirements to better address transitions between residential and nonresidential uses.

### General Business

#### Goals

- Accommodate the widest variety of commercial and industrial operations; and
- Establish a regional service area for the traveling public.

#### Recommendations

- Revise the C-2 District.
- Improve landscaping and buffer requirements for uses that border residential districts.
- Consider implementing general nonresidential building and site design standards to get more desirable developments.

### Agriculture

#### Goals

- Continue to support existing farming operations and protect land from future development pressures.

#### Recommendations

- Consider establishing an Agricultural Zoning District, to reduce the potential for residential encroachment and preserve the right-to-farm.

### Community

#### Goals

- Protect community service uses and assets;
- Support use and extension of parks and trails; and
- Preserve areas of open space and utilize natural stormwater management methods.

#### Recommendations

- Consider the addition of a Floodplain Protection Overlay District along French Creek and its major tributaries.
- Encourage use of green infrastructure with new development.
- Identify and map future park and trail connections.

### Village Residential

#### Goals

- Preserve the traditional character and walkability of existing traditional neighborhoods; and
- Allow for the infill of vacant residential properties.

#### Recommendations

- Revise the R-1 District to better reflect existing development patterns with respect to minimum lot width, lot area, and front setback.
- Consider permitting two-family dwellings as well.

### Rural Residential

#### Goals

- Continue to provide large-lot residential opportunities;
- Support viable farm operations; and
- Maintain a natural transition between the outer rural environment and the denser Village center.

#### Recommendations

- Review applicability of the R-1 District to these areas with respect to use and lot requirements and rezone accordingly.
- Adjust the R-2 District lot requirements as appropriate.



# Future Land Use

## Village Center Business

The Village Center Business land use area is depicted in red on the FLUM and located at the heart of the Village, along Main Street. Main Street has historically been the community's primary business district and was the easiest land use area for residents to define. Its character and form consists of a mixture of traditional multi-story buildings and a mix of residential, commercial, and civic uses.

The Village Center Business area is zoned Commercial (C-1), which supports a very suburban character of development with minimum lot requirements of 100 feet wide and 15,000 square feet in area. Over 55% of parcels in the C-1 District do not conform to these standards, including the entirety of Sherman's historic downtown core (see map at right). The traditional multi-story, mixed-use buildings of the Village Center Business area also do not conform to the minimum front setback (50 feet) or maximum building height (30 feet) restrictions of C-1 as they are built to the street and reach up to three stories in height.

### Goals

- Protect the historic character of the Village center;
- Promote walkability and reduce presence of auto-oriented, suburban uses and site design practices; and
- Support downtown as a vibrant, mixed-use activity center.

### Recommendations

- Redefine the C-1 District to suit the character of downtown:
  - Reduce min lot width and area requirements.
  - Reduce min front setback to zero and implement a maximum setback or "build-to line."
  - Increase max building height to 40+ feet.
  - Increase max lot coverage requirement.
  - Permit upper-floor residential and office uses.
  - Restrict auto-oriented uses (drive-ins, etc.).
- Develop downtown design standards to preserve historic structures and guide infill development (see next page).



The revised C-1 District should be consistent with the existing traditional character of the Village center, protecting beloved buildings like the above.

## DOWNTOWN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

To protect and enhance the traditional character of Village Center, the following design principles should be applied:

### Building Scale & Location

- » Little to no building setback from the street/sidewalk
- » Buildings of at least two stories in height
- » Breakage of structures with wide frontages into smaller visual increments

### Building Facades

- » Mostly transparent first floors
- » Upper floors with less transparency, but consistent with the rhythm of transparent openings on the first floor
- » Facades that are tripartite in design, defining a bottom, middle, and top to structures (see graphics at right)
- » Installation of awnings that match the window shape
- » Use of wood, brick, or other traditional materials

### Signage

- » Flush-mounted wall signs and projecting signs
- » Avoidance of flat sign faces
- » Signage that does not interfere with the view into the building
- » Signs with size and placement consistent with the building's architectural features



### TRIPARTITE DESIGN:

Using architectural features and/or a change in materials to provide a clearly defined base, midsection, and crown on building facades. This treatment may be applied to both multi-story and single-story structures (see above).



## - Public Hearing -

### Ground Rules

- State Your Name & Address
- We will record your comments
- They will be reviewed by the Committee & forwarded to the Village Board