



Village of Homer

Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan

Steering Committee Meeting #1

Date: Wednesday, March 4, 2026

Time: 6:00 pm

Location: Homer Community Building, Building Behind the Fire Department, 45 S Main St, Homer, NY 13077

Meeting Summary

I. Welcome & Introductions

Mayor Clune welcomed the Steering Committee and the Consultant Team and thanked them for being part of the planning process. Mayor Clune emphasized how the Village is in a great position to update the prior comprehensive plan, written in 2009, and build on the recent progress of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI). Following the welcome, Emma Falkenstein from Highland Planning facilitated a round of introductions and asked each person to state their affiliation with the Village, their favorite thing about Homer, and their hopes for the planning process.

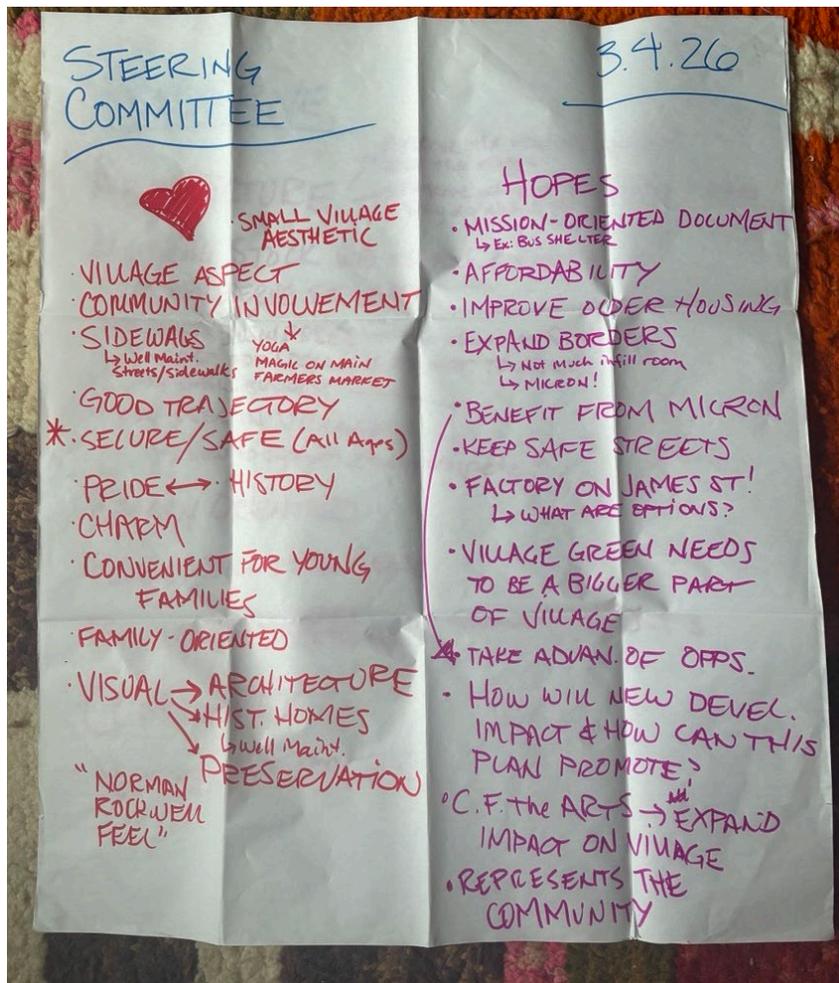
A summary of the Steering Committee's responses is below.

What is your favorite thing about the Village of Homer?

- Small village aesthetic
- Village aspect
- Community involvement
- Good trajectory
- Community pride and history
- Village charm
- Convenient for young families
- Family-oriented
- Visual → architecture, well-maintained historic homes, preservation
- "Norman Rockwell feel"

What do you hope to get out of the planning process/what do you hope the comprehensive plan can do for the Village of Homer?

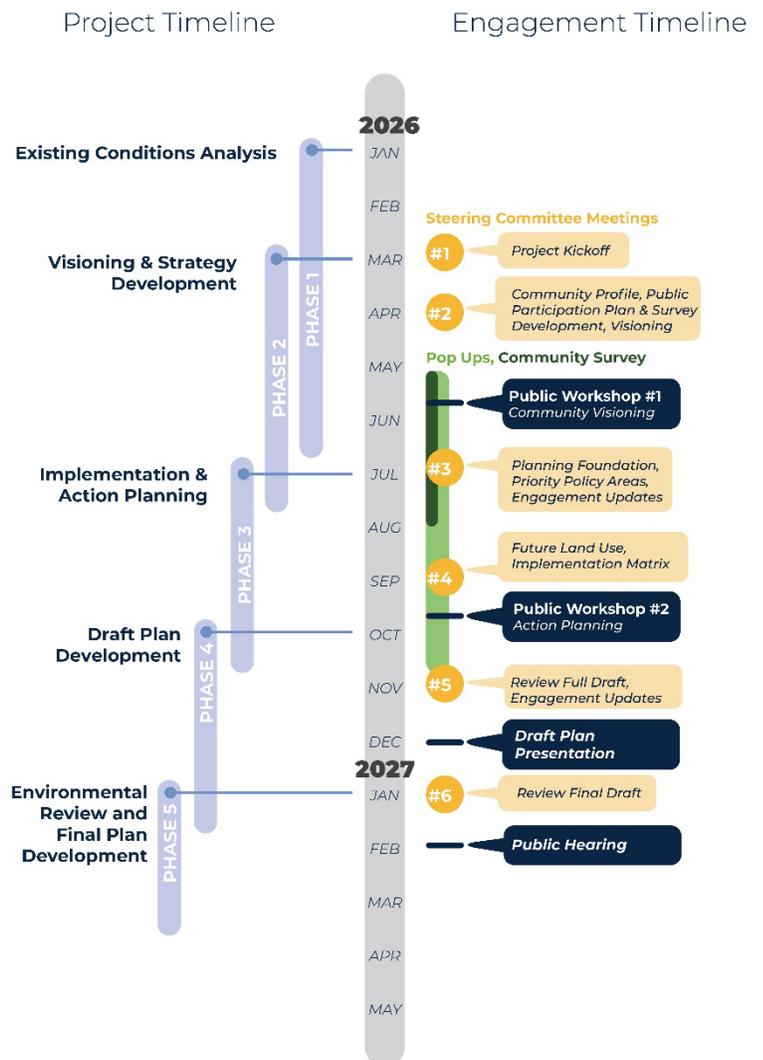
- Mission-oriented document to guide the Village
- Maintain the Village's affordability
- Improve older housing stock
- Expand Village borders (limited space for infill development and future development pressure from Micron)
- Take advantage of future opportunities → e.g., Micron
- Keep the community safe
- Identify redevelopment opportunities → e.g., factory on James Street
- Village operation of the Village Green
- Understand the impacts of new development and how to appropriately plan
- Harness the impact of the Center for the Arts to continue to build positive outcomes for the Village
- Represents the community



II. Project Overview & Timeline & Engagement Elements

After the introduction, Emma Falkenstein provided an overview of the purpose of the comprehensive plan and the planning process timeline. She emphasized how having an up-to-date comprehensive plan will enable the Village to have a strategic roadmap to guide decision-making, identify community priorities, and help secure funding resources.

Emma guided the Steering Committee through a review of the project timeline and key planning phases outlined by the graphic below. She outlined the primary engagement strategies, noting the requirements from NYS DOS, including two public workshops, multiple stakeholder interviews/focus groups, and a community survey. She noted that the Project Team is working to develop the Community Participation Plan (CPP), which will outline the engagement strategies in more detail. Emma noted that the Project Team is developing a stakeholder database, which will be shared with the Steering Committee later this spring. She emphasized how the Steering Committee will play a vital role in promoting engagement opportunities and identifying key stakeholders, and that there will be multiple opportunities for them to be involved.



III. Steering Committee Roles

Emma Falkenstein provided an overview of the role of the Steering Committee, noting their key role as community liaisons for the planning process. Leanne Voit, Highland Planning, emphasized how the Steering Committee plays a critical role in guiding plan development with their local experience, sharing information about the comprehensive plan with their networks, and encouraging public participation in the planning process. Emma noted that the Steering Committee will meet bimonthly throughout plan development, with some meetings taking place and others virtually over Zoom. The primary form of communication will be email, and she will be the primary point of contact for the Project Team.

IV. Smart Growth Principles

Lissa D'Aquanni from the NYS Department of State (NYS DOS) provided an overview of Smart Growth Principles, noting that the Plan is being funded by the [NYS DOS Smart Growth Community Planning Grant program](#). Lissa emphasized that the Village of Homer is already incorporating many of these principles in their planning and project implementation and noted the DRI as a prime example. She stated that the Smart Growth Principles are essentially good planning principles and that their incorporation into the comprehensive plan will enable the Village to develop land use and community development practices to successfully enhance livability, sustainability, and equity in the village.

The list below outlines the 10 Smart Growth Principles:

- **Encourage Mixed-Uses:** Allow for and encourage neighborhoods with a mix of uses, such as residential, commercial, and community spaces.
- **Expand Housing Choice:** Enable a diverse mix of housing types, providing opportunity and choice for people of all ages, abilities, and incomes.
- **Revitalize Existing Urban Centers:** Prioritize infill and redevelopment of existing buildings to revitalize neighborhoods and downtowns, including areas around public transit.
- **Create Great Spaces:** Provide well-planned, equitable, and accessible public spaces for people of all ages and abilities.
- **Make Smart Infrastructure Investments:** Encourage compact neighborhood design and concentrated development around existing infrastructure.

- **Preserve Open Space & Farmland:** Preserve open space, agricultural resources and natural resources.
- **Expand Transportation Choices:** Prioritize transportation options that are safe and accessible for everyone, including pedestrians, cyclists and public transit users.
- **Protect the Environment & Address Climate Change:** Promote climate resiliency and adaptation, preferably through nature-based solutions, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Respect Community Character:** Build on unique traits to create an attractive and welcoming community with a strong sense of place.
- **Plan Inclusively & Collaboratively:** Engage in an inclusive, collaborative public planning process that considers the needs and character of the community

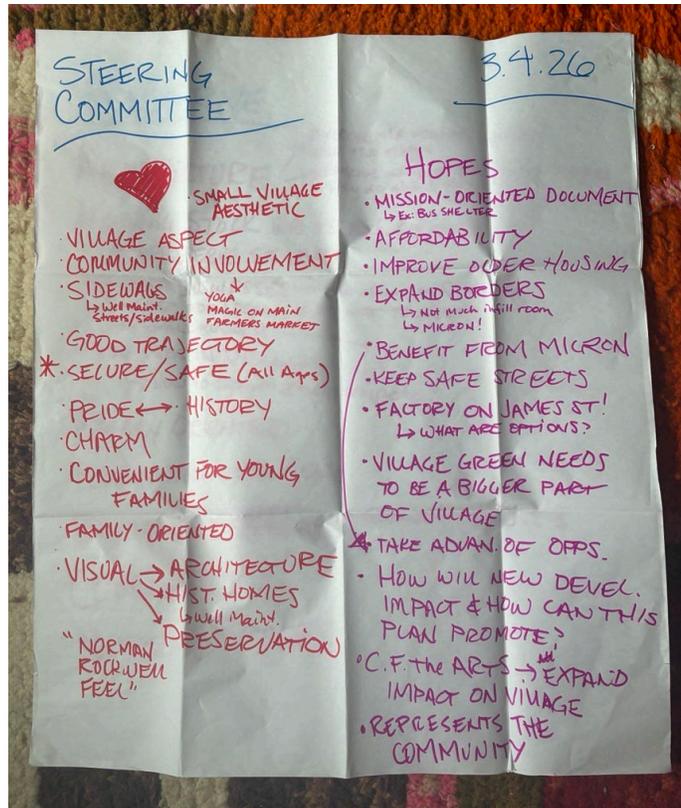
Emma Falkenstein noted that following the kick-off, she would send additional materials for the Steering Committee to review to learn more about Smart Growth.

V. Interactive Activity

Emma Falkenstein led the Steering Committee an interactive planning activity, asking attendees a series of questions. A summary of the responses is outlined below.

What is one thing in the Village of Homer that you want to preserve at all costs?

- Preserve the architecture → People say nice things and come to the Village to see the architecture
- Housing Stock → preserve single-family homes (limiting

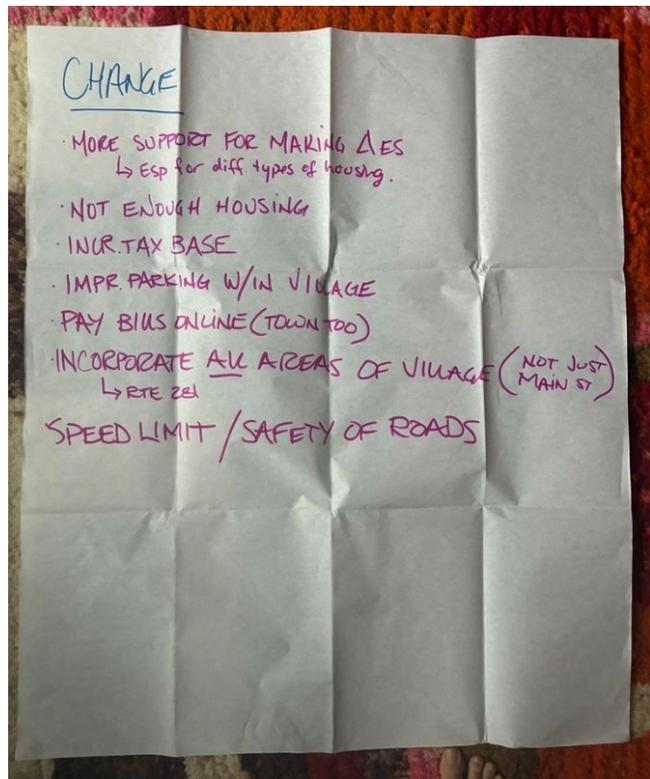


conversion) while creating more housing stock

- Main Street businesses → ensure a vibrant business community that serves residents and visitors; enable local businesses to compete and thrive; limit first-floor offices (prioritize first-floor commercial)
- Mix of Uses → ensure a mix of uses in the Main Street and commercial corridors
- Family-oriented → families choose to live here; kids can walk outside
- Population → stabilize population base to support housing stock rotation, population density, and school district
- Community → be a community where people want to be
- Natural Spaces → maintain places where people and youth can be outdoors

What is one thing in the Village of Homer that must change for the community to be better than it is today?

- Enhancing the housing stock → more support for different types of housing
- Increasing the tax base → stabilizing population and land use
- Improving parking within the Village → more signage and better use of existing spaces
- Updating Village technology → ability to pay bills online
- Support all areas of the Village → ensure the comprehensive plan looks at all areas (like Route 281), not just Main Street
- Improve road safety → Village speed limit, road improvements, etc.



Following the activity, Emma emphasized how this discussion and feedback provides a launching point for the planning process, and that there will be many more opportunities to dig in further at future meetings.

VI. Activity Prior to Next Meeting

Emma identified the following activities/action items to be completed prior to the next Steering Committee meeting:

- 1) Draft Community Participation Plan (HP)
- 2) Stakeholder database (HP)
- 3) Community Profile (HP)
- 4) In advance of the next meeting, send draft materials to the Steering Committee (HP)
- 5) In preparation for the meeting, review draft materials (SC)

HP = Highland Planning. SC = Steering Committee

VII. Next Meeting

Emma indicated that she would send out a new Doodle Poll with options for the end of April/beginning of May to identify the next Steering Committee meeting.

Attendance

Steering Committee	Present
Patrick Clune, Village Mayor	X
Dan Egnor, Village Clerk	X
Don Ferris	X
Jane Hall	
Victoria Hess	X
David Lee	X
Ashley Neiderman	
Meg Peroli	X
Kai Schrimp	
Donald Walsh	
Dillion Young	X
Haley Zurell	X
Consultant Team	Present
Leanne Voit, Highland Planning	X
Emma Falkenstein, Highland Planning	X
NYS DOS Representative	Present
Lissa D'Aquanni, NYS DOS Office of Planning, Development, and Community Infrastructure	X



Village of Homer **Comprehensive Plan**

What Is A Comprehensive Plan?

A Comprehensive Plan is a long-term policy and land use document that will guide development and community investments in the Village of Homer. The Comprehensive Plan (the Plan) will outline a vision for Homer, planning goals and objectives, and implementation action items to move the Village toward the future vision of the community.



Outline a vision for the future of the Village of Homer.



Identify community goals & strategies to guide land use, housing, community; development, sustainability, transportation, and infrastructure investments.



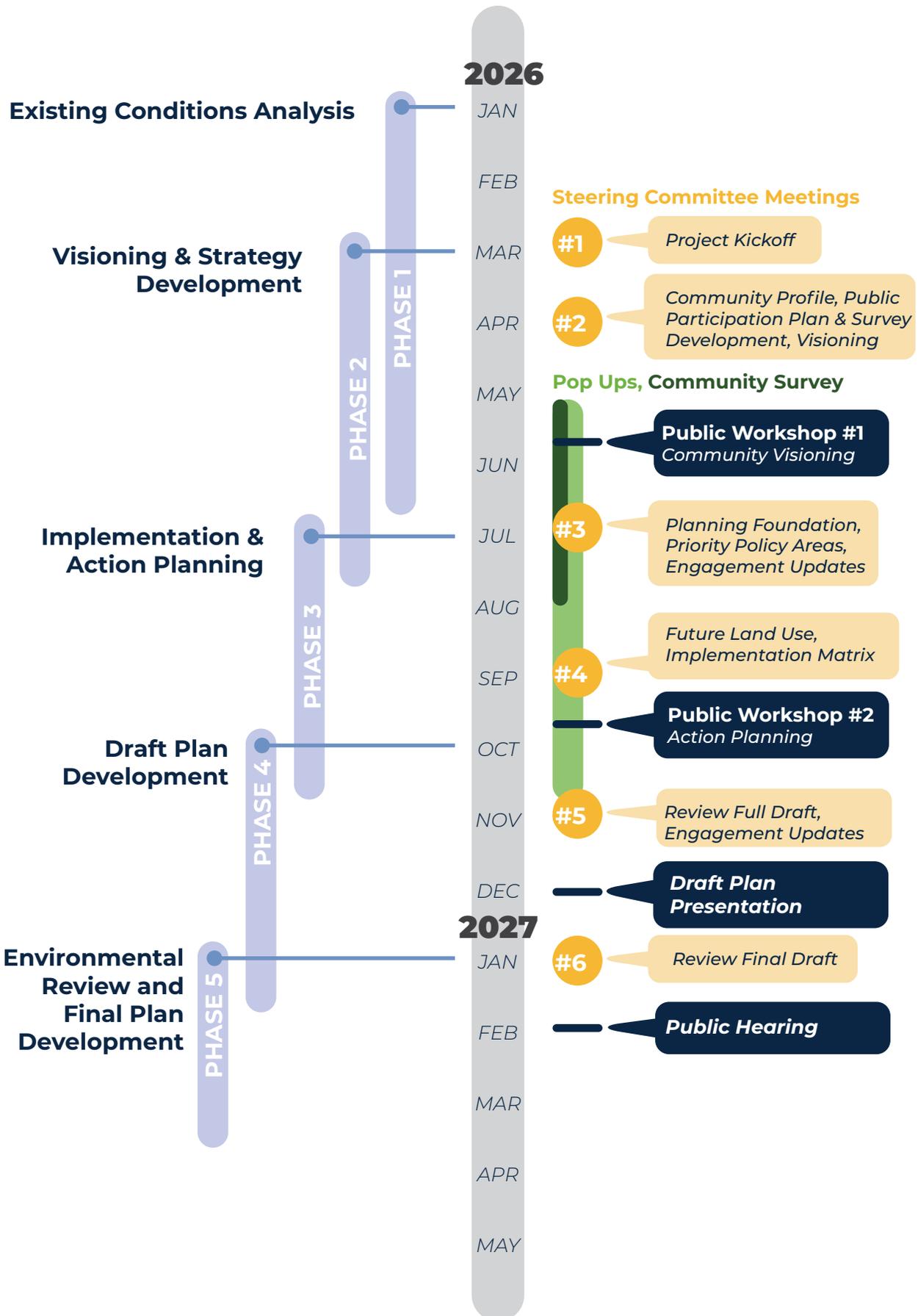
Create a future land use plan to guide development & zoning updates.



Identify and outline actions to implement the Plan.

Project Timeline

Engagement Timeline



Steering Committee Roles & Responsibilities

Purpose:

The Steering Committee comprises village residents, business owners, community organization representatives, Village staff, elected leadership, and other local and regional stakeholders. The role of the Steering Committee is to guide the planning process by providing locally grounded perspectives and experiences on a variety of topics and elements of the Plan. The Steering Committee will be ambassadors of the planning process, working with Village Staff, the Consultant Team, and other local leaders to engage the public throughout the development of the Plan.

Timeline:

The Steering Committee time commitment is expected to last approximately 10-12 months.

Responsibilities:

The Steering Committee will assist in the development of the Plan by:

- Providing guidance throughout the entirety of the planning process;
- Advising the Consultant Team by reviewing and providing feedback on community data and plan documents;
- Representing broad community interests and helping to identify challenges and opportunities impacting the village;
- Assisting with the development of a community vision, planning goals and strategies, and action items for the Plan;
- Providing guidance on community engagement strategies and encouraging community and stakeholders to participate in the planning process;
- Promoting general awareness, participation, and support of the goals and development of the Plan;
- Acting in an advisory capacity to the Planning Board and Village Board of Trustees.

Activities:

The Public Participation Plan (currently in development) outlines the purpose and expected community engagement activities that will take place throughout the planning process. The following is a general list of meetings and other community engagement activities that the Steering Committee will be invited to attend.

Steering Committee Meetings:

Attend six (6) in-person or virtual meetings throughout the planning process. The meetings will take place bi-monthly (every two months) and last approximately 1.5-2 hours. Steering Committee members will review content and materials ahead of time to enable working session-style meetings.

Community Survey:

The Steering Committee will help inform the development of the survey. Committee members will share the survey with their networks and help distribute promotional flyers throughout the Village.

Public Workshops:

Two (2) public workshops will provide opportunities for the Homer community to learn about the comprehensive planning process, provide input, and shape the direction and strategies of the Plan. Steering Committee members are encouraged to attend to help answer questions about the planning process, as well as to invite their networks to participate in the events.

Community Walking Tour:

The Consultant Team will lead a community walking tour to identify opportunities and challenges impacting the village. The walking tour will be open to the public and offer an opportunity for the community to provide feedback to inform the Plan.

Pop-Ups:

The Consultant Team will attend at least two (2) pop-up events to spread awareness about the Plan and engage with stakeholders who might not otherwise participate in the planning process. The Consultant Team will prepare materials to support Village staff and Steering Committee members attending additional pop-ups at community events.

What Makes This A

Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan?

The Village of Homer Comprehensive Plan is funded by the NYS Smart Growth Community Planning Grant Program. What makes this plan a “Smart Growth” Comprehensive Plan is that it will incorporate the following Smart Growth Principles to guide land use policies and community development practices to enhance livability, sustainability, and equity in the Village of Homer.



Encourage Mixed-Uses

Allow for and encourage neighborhoods with a mix of uses, such as residential, commercial, and community spaces.



Expand Housing Choice

Enable a diverse mix of housing types, providing opportunity and choice for people of all ages, abilities, and incomes.



Revitalize Existing Urban Centers

Prioritize infill and redevelopment of existing buildings to revitalize neighborhoods and downtowns, including areas around public transit.



Create Great Spaces

Provide well-planned, equitable, and accessible public spaces for people of all ages and abilities.



Make Smart Infrastructure Investments

Encourage compact neighborhood design and concentrated development around existing infrastructure.



Preserve Open Space & Farmland

Preserve open space, agricultural resources and natural resources.



Expand Transportation Choices

Prioritize transportation options that are safe and accessible for everyone, including pedestrians, cyclists and public transit users.



Protect the Environment & Address Climate Change

Promote climate resiliency and adaptation, preferably through nature-based solutions, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.



Respect Community Character

Build on unique traits to create an attractive and welcoming community with a strong sense of place.



Plan Inclusively & Collaboratively

Engage in an inclusive, collaborative public planning process that considers the needs and character of the community