

Town of Denmark
Village of Castorland
Village of Copenhagen



2025 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

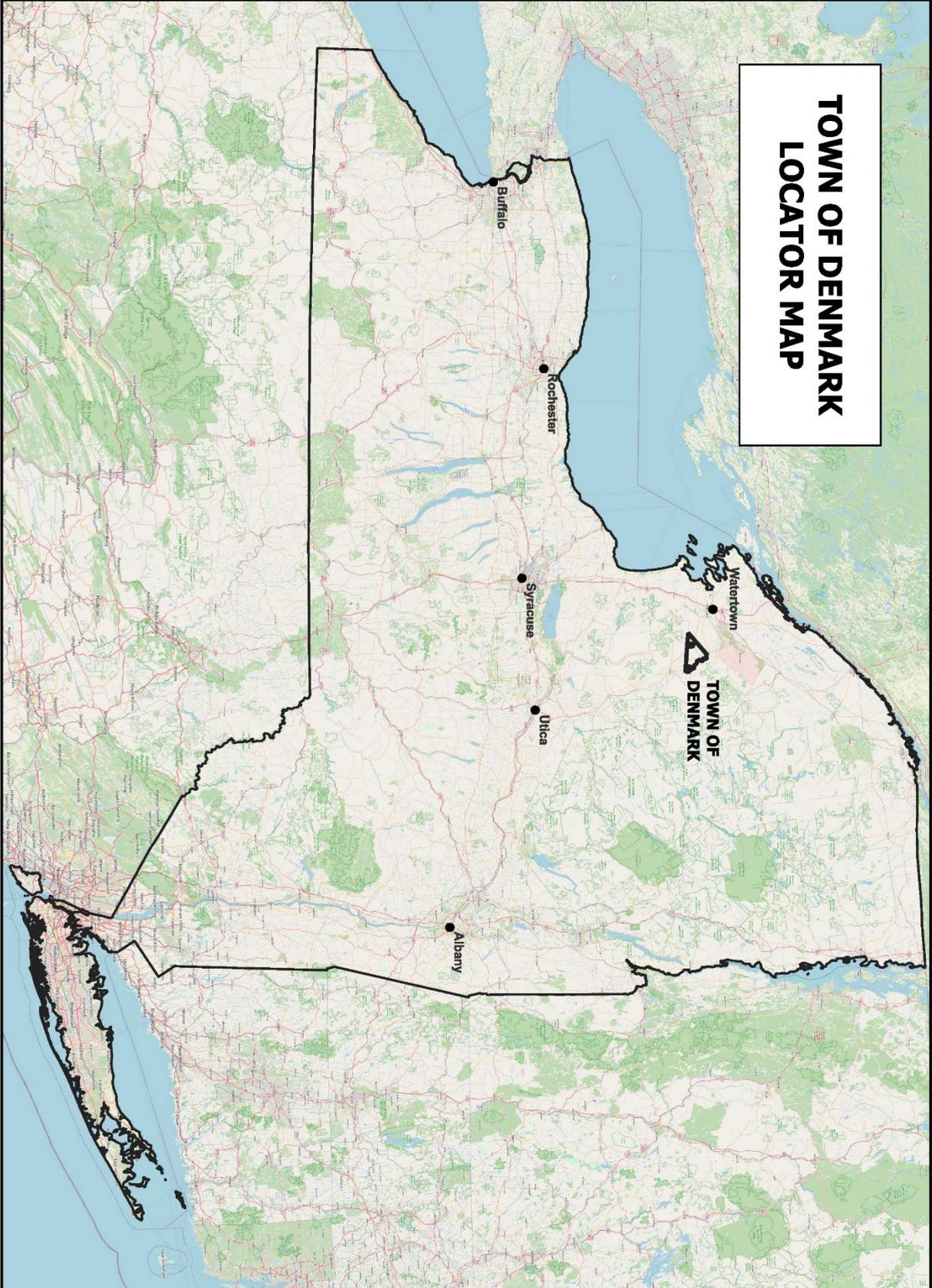


NOVEMBER 19, 2025

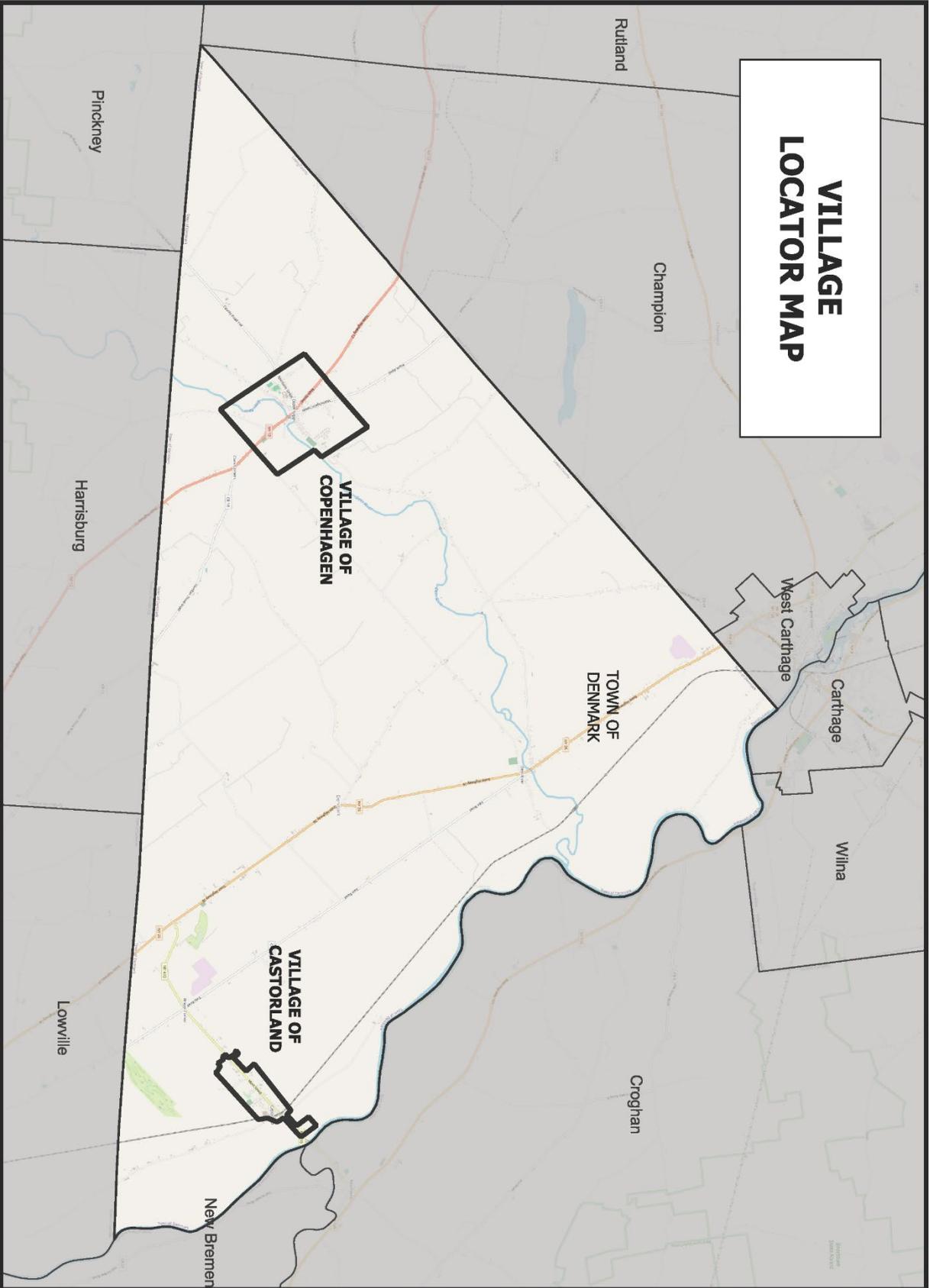
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**TOWN OF DENMARK
LOCATOR MAP**



VILLAGE LOCATOR MAP



INTRODUCTION

The Comprehensive Planning Committee

The Town of Denmark and Villages of Castorland and Copenhagen Boards established a Comprehensive Planning Committee in 2023 to help develop a new joint comprehensive plan for the town and villages. The committee was composed of members of the Municipal Boards, Planning Boards, and other municipal officials. This committee was charged with studying the community and reporting to the Town and Village Boards their recommendations on a joint comprehensive plan. The Planning Committee enlisted the assistance of the New York State Tug Hill Commission and Lewis County Planning Department in helping them with the technical aspects of preparing the plan.

Purpose of The Plan

The purpose of the comprehensive plan is to guide the future growth and development of the town and villages in a way that reflects the priorities and vision of the community. The plan establishes a strategic framework to support sound land use decisions, align with existing zoning regulations, and coordinate infrastructure planning including water, sewer, and transportation networks. It aims to inform capital investment decisions, promote sustainable and resilient development, and encourage collaboration among local, county, and state agencies. Above all, the plan is designed to reflect the vision of residents and ensure that future development enhances the quality of life for all who live, work, and visit the area.

Periodic Review and Update of the Plan

It is the recommendation of the Planning Committee that this plan be periodically reviewed and updated by the Town and Village Boards and others, as designated by the Town and Village Boards, every five years. A five-year review will refresh the Town and Village Boards' perspectives on the longer-range issues affecting Denmark, Castorland, and Copenhagen, and help to reinforce the link between day-to-day development decisions and longer range policies of the town and villages. In addition, a periodic update will keep the plan current with the ever-changing conditions of the town and villages without the need for large-scale planning efforts.

Language Clarification

Within this document, the word "policy" refers to a guiding principle. It expresses direction, intent, or desired outcomes, rather than establishing a rule, regulation, or legal requirement. The use of the term "policy" in this document should not be interpreted as creating enforceable obligations, mandates, or standards. Instead, it represents the communities' collective guidance to inform future decisions and actions.

The Organization of This Document

This document is organized into the following parts:

Part I. Community Profile

This section presents a compilation of relevant facts about the physical make-up of the town/villages, along with other facts and trends that bear a direct relationship on their future physical development. This is the basic set of underlying facts by which the plan was prepared.

Part II. Plan Elements and Strategies

This section presents the community goals which reflect the general desires for the direction in which the citizens of the town/villages wish to go, based upon public meetings and committee discussions with local experts.

Part III. Land Use Policies

This section includes policies which form the framework for the town and villages' land use regulations. All development projects in the town/villages should conform to these standards.

Part IV. Implementation Plan

This section outlines the steps necessary to put the plan's goals, strategies, and potential projects into practice. It identifies specific actions, responsible parties, timelines, and resources required to achieve the community's vision. Monitoring and review mechanisms are also included to ensure progress is tracked and the plan remains responsive to changing conditions. All implementation efforts should align with the policies established in Part III and be coordinated across town and village departments, boards, and committees to ensure consistency and effectiveness.

PART I – COMMUNITY PROFILE

General

The Town of Denmark is approximately 55.95 square miles (35,809.2 acres) and includes the Villages of Castorland and Copenhagen in Lewis County. The Village of Castorland is located in the southeast corner of the town, and the Village of Copenhagen is located in the southwest corner of the town. The town is bounded by the Town of Champion to the east, the Town of Wilna to the north, the Town of Croghan to the east, and the Towns of Pinckney, Harrisburg, and Lowville to the south.

HISTORY

The Town of Denmark, first settled around 1800 and officially formed on April 3, 1807, was carved out of the Town of Harrisburg with a unique triangular shape to ensure proportional riverfront access¹. This shape mirrors that of the neighboring Town of Champion. Denmark sits on Lewis County's northwest boundary and is a key passage into Jefferson County via NY State Route 26. The Deer River, historically known as Deer Creek, has played a vital role in Denmark's economy. Powering water wheels and transporting pulpwood during the early 1900s, the river also irrigated dairy farms through its tributaries. The region is notable for its scenic High Falls (170 feet) and Kings Falls (40 feet). The Hamlet of Deer River, formerly known as French Falls, is one of the area's earliest settlements, established before 1812, with a post office serving the community from 1845 until 1994.

The Village of Castorland, located in the southeastern corner of the Town of Denmark, traces its name to the English translation of "*Couch-sach-ra-ga*," meaning "Land of the Beaver²." NYS-410 runs through the center of the village. Established in 1792 as part of Macomb's Purchase, it was initially intended as a settlement for French refugees from the French Revolution. The area was colonized by French settlers in 1793. The Mississauga Tribe, originally out of the Ontario, Canada area, assisted the settlers with trade and cultural exchange. The Mississauga Tribe provided critical skills to include navigating the dense forests, hunting, and other wilderness survival tactics. The interactions between the French settlers and the Mississauga Tribe were key in the colony's early survival and establishment. However, the colony faced severe challenges including harsh winters, financial setbacks, and livestock loss, which ultimately resulted in the dissolution of the French colony by 1814.

The Village of Copenhagen, situated in the southwestern corner of the Town of Denmark, was first known as Munger's Mills, named after Nathan Munger Jr. and his family, who established saw and grist mills near High Falls around 1800³. The

¹ *History of Lewis County, New York, 1880 – 1965*, ed. G. Byron Bowen (Lowville, NY: The Board of Legislators of Lewis County, 1970), 122.

² Gary Peacock, "Beaver Fever": French Émigrés in Castorland, *The Adirondack Almanack*, October 2020.

³ "*The History of Copenhagen, NY*." YouTube video, published circa 5 years ago, 1:24:30, YouTube, accessed August 7, 2025.

settlement was renamed Copenhagen in 1807, making it the only place in the United States with this name. Incorporated on February 22, 1869, the Village formed its first government in 1870. Copenhagen flourished as an industrial center along Factory Street, with mills producing veneers, cheese boxes, and lumber. Ward's Mill, a leading industry in the village, supplied lumber and cheese boxes until a fire destroyed it in 1918. Historic landmarks include the Sylvester House, built by Munger in 1808, now the Cottage Inn site; the park designated in 1893 for the Soldier's Monument and Band Stand; and the Davenport House, a central establishment in the Village from 1877 until its closure in 2013. Copenhagen also endured challenges, such as the great fire of 1889, which razed four business blocks and several dwellings, underscoring the community's resilience and rich industrial heritage.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population

Table 1 shows population change in Denmark, Castorland, and Copenhagen. The Town of Denmark's population in the 2020 Census was 2,626. Denmark's population decreased about 8.2% between 2010 and 2020. This population decrease is larger in comparison to Lewis County and New York State as a whole, which had a positive percent change.

The Village of Castorland's population in the 2020 Census was 334. Castorland's population decreased about 4.8% between 2010 and 2020. This decrease is smaller in comparison to the Town of Denmark, but greater than Lewis County.

The Village of Copenhagen's population in the 2020 Census was 631. Copenhagen's population decreased about 21.2% between 2010 and 2020. This decrease is much larger than the Town of Denmark, and Lewis County.

These population declines may be attributable to changes in the regional industrial economy. While these communities did not experience recent, major industrial closures, nearby employment industries in Lowville and Watertown saw significant losses between 2009 and 2021. Such industries include Climax Manufacturing (157 jobs), Easton Corporation (93 jobs), Covidien (247 jobs), and NY Air Brake (100 jobs). These employers were within a reasonable commuting distance for residents of the town and villages, and their closures likely reduced regional job opportunities. At the same time, the agricultural sector continued to evolve as larger farms expanded, and smaller family farm operations consolidated or left the area. The emergence of renewable energy development may have influenced local land use, as some farmers have chosen to lease or sell land for solar and wind projects, often to supplement retirement income or transition out of the farming industry. Wind farms such as the Maple Ridge Wind Farm, Number Three Wind Farm, and Copenhagen Wind Farm provide temporary job opportunities during the construction phase, but do not provide long-term, viable employment for residents. These industrial, agricultural, and demographic changes may

provide an explanation for the decline in population observed between 2010 and 2020 in conjunction with an aging population, limited housing turnover, and infrastructure constraints.

Table 1
Population Change 2010-2020

	2010	2020	2022	Percent Change 2010-2020	Percent Change 2020-2022
Town of Denmark (Inc. Villages)	2,860	2,626	2,650	-8.2%	+0.9%
V. of Castorland	351	334	403	-4.8%	+20.7%
V. of Copenhagen	801	631	723	-21.2%	+14.6%
Town Outside Village	1,708	1,661	1,524	-2.8%	-8.2%
Lewis County	27,087	26,582	26,690	-1.9%	+0.4%
New York State	19,378,102	20,201,249	19,677,151	+4.2%	-2.6%

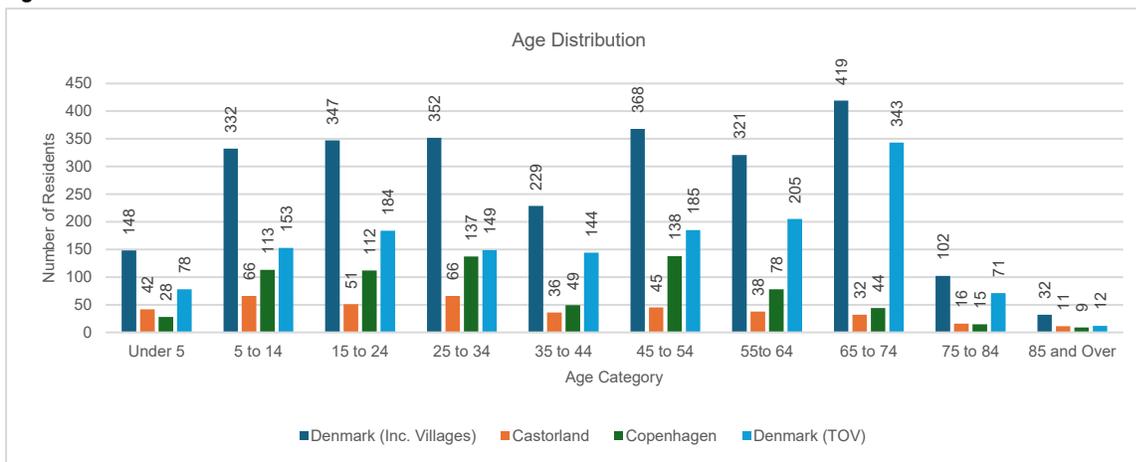
Source: U.S. Census Bureau Decennial Census

Age Distribution

In the Town of Denmark (including villages), the largest age group are people aged 65-74 years old with a total of 419 people, which is 15.8% of the population. The smallest age group in the town is those in the 85 and over age category which includes 32 or 1.2% of the population. In the Village of Castorland, the largest age groups are people aged 5-14 and 25-34 with totals of 66 people each, which is 16.4% of the population for each age category or 32.8% of the population combined. The smallest age group in the village is those in the 85 and over age category which has 11 or 2.7% of the population. In the Village of Copenhagen, the largest age group is people aged 45 to 54 with a total of 138 people, which is 19.1% of the population. The smallest age group in the village is those in the 85 and over age category which has 9 or 1.2% of the population. Figure 1 shows the age distribution for the town (including the villages), the villages, and the town (outside of the villages).

The housing needs of residents aged 85 and older is an important consideration for the town and villages. Many older adults are choosing to age in place, yet much of the existing housing stock consists of older, single-family homes that may not be accessible or easily maintained by seniors. The Lewis County Housing Needs Assessment highlights a growing demand for smaller, affordable, and accessible housing options such as senior-friendly apartments, accessory dwelling units, and assisted living facilities, that allow residents to remain in their communities as their needs for care increase. Land use should encourage a wider range of senior housing types, support mixed-use and infill development near services, and coordinate with county and regional partners to plan for aging-in-place resources and infrastructure.

Figure 1
Age Distribution 2022



Source: U.S. Census Bureau Decennial Census

Households

Table 2 shows changes in the number of households and household sizes from 2010 to 2022. A household includes all the people who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence. From 2010 to 2020, the number of households in the Town of Denmark (including the villages) decreased while the average household size increased. In comparison, the number of households increased in the Villages of Castorland and Copenhagen as well as the average household size. The number of households in Lewis County decreased while the average household size increased. New York State overall increased its number of households while the average household size decreased.

The data suggests that the Town of Denmark may be experiencing household consolidation, while the villages may be experiencing growth or diversification in household composition. These trends could inform planning decisions around housing stock, land use, and services.

Table 2
Household Population

	# of Households 2010	Average Household Size 2010	# of Households 2020	Average Household Size 2020	# of Households 2022	Average Household Size 2022
Town of Denmark (Inc. Villages)	1,004	2.70	987	2.84	1,044	2.52
V. of Castorland	103	2.56	106	3.57	139	2.76
V. of Copenhagen	245	2.27	297	2.45	318	2.27
Town Outside Village	656	2.60	584	2.84	587	2.60
Lewis County	10,761	2.48	10,398	2.51	10,672	2.46
New York State	7,205,740	2.59	7,417,224	2.55	7,604,523	2.55

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

Income

Median household income increased across all municipalities between 2017 and 2022. By 2022, the Town of Denmark had a median income of \$64,939, which is comparable to Lewis County (\$64,401) but remains below the New York State median income of \$81,386. The Village of Castorland, at \$56,250, continues to have the lowest median income among the three municipalities and is also below both county and state levels. The Village of Copenhagen experienced the strongest growth over the period, reaching a median household income of \$75,938 which is higher than Castorland, Denmark, and Lewis County but still below the state's median income.

These trends suggest differing economic dynamics. Copenhagen's significant income growth may be influenced by new employment opportunities, recent residential development, or in-migration of higher-wage households. Castorland's lower income levels may reflect an older population on fixed incomes, fewer employment options, or the out-migration of higher-earning residents. Denmark's steady but moderate-income growth indicates a stable, middle-income community with limited high-income expansion.

Since the data collected was from the United States Census Bureau's five-year American Community Survey, a margin of error is the amount a survey estimate could realistically be off in either direction. It shows how much the true value might vary because the data comes from a sample rather than a full count. A small margin of error means the estimate is very reliable, while a large margin of error means there is more uncertainty in the median income. In the case of Copenhagen, the ACS shows a high median income but with a significant margin of error, meaning that the true income could be much lower than the estimate suggests. The village's locally conducted income survey, based on a strong 74.1% response rate, found a median household income of \$50,000, which falls near the lower end of the ACS range and provides a more precise and realistic reflection of actual household incomes in the community.

Table 3
Median Household Income (\$ adjusted for inflation)

	Dollars (\$) 2017	Dollars (\$) 2022	Margin of Error (\$) 2022	2022 Median Income Range
Denmark	56,806	64,939	± 7,680	\$57,249 - \$72,619
Castorland	45,000	56,250	± 15,052	\$41,198 - \$71,302
Copenhagen	47,500	75,938	± 25,084	\$50,854 - \$101,022
Lewis County	51,475	64,401	± 2,676	\$61,725 - \$67,077
New York State	64,894	81,386	± 350	\$81,036 - \$81,736

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

Housing

Table 4 examines growth in housing units in the Town of Denmark and the Villages of Castorland and Copenhagen. While the town and the Village of Copenhagen saw a decrease in the number of housing units, the Village of Castorland saw a minimal increase in their housing stock. Lewis County and New York State saw minimal growth in housing stock between 2010 to 2020.

Table 4
Total Housing Stock

	2010	2020	Percent Change
Denmark (Inc. Villages)	1,209	1,179	-2.5%
Castorland	137	139	+1.5
Copenhagen	371	343	-7.5%
Lewis County	15,112	15,464	+2.3%
New York State	8,108,103	8,488,066	+4.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

Table 5 details the occupancy and vacancy rates of housing between 2010 and 2020. The town and the Village of Copenhagen experienced a decrease in both occupancies and vacancies. The Village of Castorland saw a decrease in occupied housing and an increase in vacancies which more than doubled that of 2010. Lewis County experienced a similar increase for both occupied and vacant housing, while New York State saw an increase in occupied housing and a decrease in vacancies.

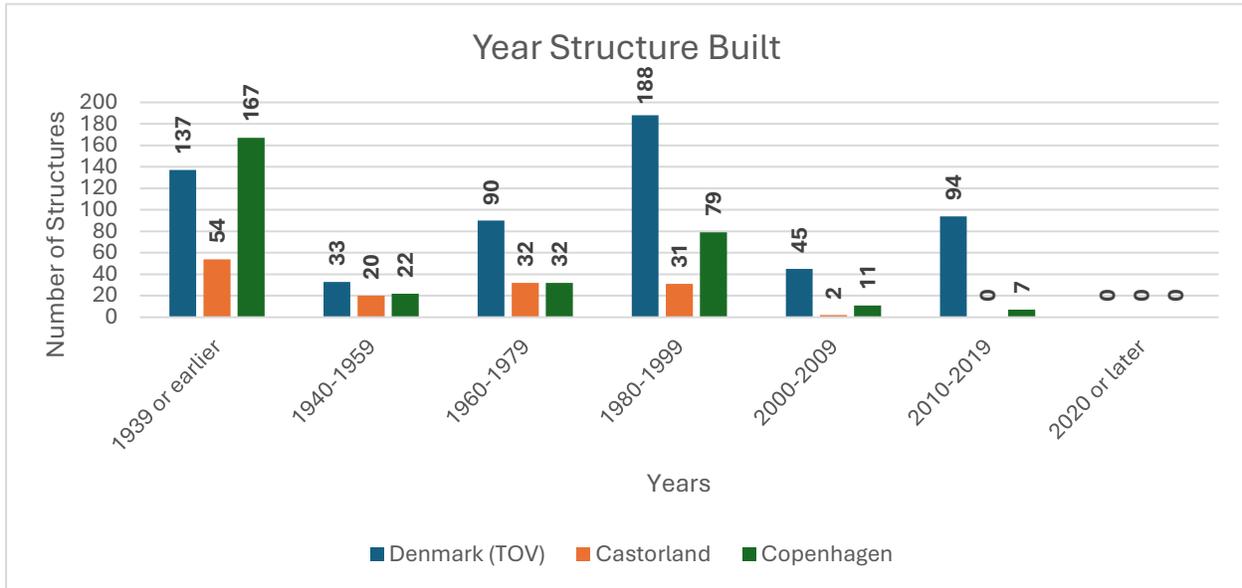
Table 5
Occupancy / Vacancy of Housing Stock

	Occupied 2010	Vacant 2010	Occupied 2020	Vacant 2020	Percent Change (Occupied)	Percent Change (Vacant)
Denmark (Inc. Villages)	1,040	169	1,018	161	-2.1	-4.7
Castorland	127	10	112	27	-11.8	+170.0
Copenhagen	320	51	316	27	-1.3	-47.1
Town Outside Villages	593	108	590	107	-0.5	-0.9
Lewis County	10,514	4,598	10,754	4,710	+2.3	+2.4
New York State	7,317,755	790,348	7,715,172	772,894	+5.4	-2.2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Decennial Census

Figure 2 compares the time periods when housing structures were built. The housing stock in the town and both villages was primarily built prior to 1940. An aging housing stock may require rehabilitation/renovation to attract new residents and decrease housing vacancies. Figure 2 identifies that a slight number of housing structures were built after 1999.

Figure 2
Year Structure Built (2022)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

Housing affordability is roughly measured by dividing median housing value by median household income in a given community. A score of 2 or lower is considered an indicator of affordability. The Village of Copenhagen is below 2 at 1.8, the Town of Denmark, the Village of Castorland, and Lewis County are above two at 2.5, 2.7, and 2.3 respectively. New York State, as a whole, has a rating of 4.7. These scores are indicative of general affordability of housing in the Town and Villages.

Table 6
Housing Affordability (2022)

	Median Value for All Owner-Occupied Units	Median Household Income	Score
Denmark (Inc. Villages)	163,200	64,939	2.5
Castorland	151,000	56,250	2.7
Copenhagen	134,500	75,938	1.8
Lewis County	146,100	64,401	2.3
New York State	384,100	81,386	4.7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

Employment Characteristics

Table 7 assesses employment status in the Town of Denmark and the villages, as compared to that of Lewis County and New York State. The civilian labor force includes the population 16 years of age and older not in the military. As of 2022, the Village of Copenhagen had the lowest unemployment rate when compared to the town, the Village of Castorland, the county, and New York State. The town had a higher unemployment rate than the Village of Copenhagen and New York State. The Village of

Castorland had the highest percentage of unemployment (5.3%) according to the American Community Survey.

Table 7
Labor Force 2010 - 2020

	Civilian Labor Force (2010)	Armed Forces (2010)	Percent Unemployed (2010)	Civilian Labor Force (2020)	Armed Forces (2020)	Percent Unemployed (2020)	Percent Change (Labor Force)
Denmark (Inc. Villages)	1,237	69	3.8%	1,232	29	4.2%	-0.4
Castorland	96	5	0.0%	171	0	5.3%	+78.2
Copenhagen	248	60	7.0%	373	13	3.2%	+50.4
Lewis County	13,012	172	6.4%	12,517	94	5.2%	-3.8
New York State	9,781,731	26,419	4.8%	10,009,209	23,512	3.6%	+2.3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

Table 8 examines the poverty status of the population within the town and villages in 2022. The percentage of people in the Village of Castorland living below the poverty line was estimated at 14.1%, and is higher than the county and state. The percentage of people in the Village of Copenhagen living below the poverty line was estimated at 16.9%, which is an increase of 0.7% from 2021 and is higher than the county and state. The percentage of people in the Town of Denmark living below the poverty line was estimated at 15.2%, which is a decrease of 1% from 2021, but is still higher than both the county and New York State.

Table 8
Poverty Status 2022

2022	Pop. for whom poverty status is determined	# of people below poverty line	% of people below poverty line
Denmark	2,650	404	15.2
Castorland	403	57	14.1
Copenhagen	723	122	16.9
Town Outside Village	1,524	225	14.8
Lewis County	26,429	3,459	13.1
New York State	19,516,967	2,655,662	13.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

Civilian residents of the Town of Denmark are employed in a variety of fields. The top category, by a significant margin, is educational services, health care, and social assistance (26.7%). This is followed by retail trade (12.5%), and public administration (10.5%). The estimated average travel time to work for Town and Village residents is approximately 20.9 minutes.

Table 9
Employment by Industry (Denmark) 2022

Industry (Town of Denmark Including Villages) 2022	#	%
Information	24	2.0%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	36	3.0%
Wholesale trade	38	3.2%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	45	3.7%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	61	5.1%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	65	5.4%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	78	6.5%
Manufacturing	80	6.6%
Construction	88	7.3%
Other services, except public administration	91	7.6%
Public administration	127	10.5%
Retail trade	150	12.5%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	321	26.7%
Total	1,204	100

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

In the Village of Castorland, the top category is educational services, health, and social services (26.7%). This is followed by public administration (10.5%), professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management (10.5%), and retail trade (10.5%). The estimated average travel time to work for village residents is approximately 25.4 minutes.

Table 10
Employment by Industry (Castorland) 2022

Industry (Village of Castorland) 2022	#	%
Other services, except public administration	0	0.0%
Manufacturing	3	1.9%
Wholesale trade	3	1.9%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	5	3.1%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	8	4.9%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	9	5.6%
Information	10	6.2%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	13	8.0%
Construction	14	8.6%
Retail trade	17	10.5%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	17	10.5%
Public administration	17	10.5%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	46	28.4%
Total	162	100

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

In the Village of Copenhagen, the top category, by a significant margin, is educational services, health care, and social assistance (32.7%). This is followed by retail trade (13.3%), and finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing (10.8%). The estimated average travel time to work for village residents is approximately 21.0 minutes.

Table 11
Employment by Industry (Copenhagen) 2022

Industry (Village of Copenhagen) 2022	#	%
Wholesale trade	0	0.0%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	4	1.1%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	6	1.7%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	13	3.6%
Information	14	3.9%
Public administration	19	5.3%
Other services, except public administration	20	5.5%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	21	5.8%
Manufacturing	29	8.0%
Construction	30	8.3%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	39	10.8%
Retail trade	48	13.3%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	118	32.7%
Total	361	100

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

Education

Table 12 examines the educational attainment of residents 25 years of age and older in the Town of Denmark and the Villages of Castorland and Copenhagen according to the US Census Bureau 2022 American Community Survey. The percentage of students that obtained a high school diploma or higher includes the numbers from the categories to the right. For example, 94.3% of students in the Town of Denmark obtained a high school diploma or higher. Out of 94.3%, 48% only obtained a high school diploma or equivalency, 18% obtained some college with no degree, and so on.

Table 12
Educational Attainment Population 25 Years Old and Over (2022)

	Total % High School Diploma or higher	% High School Diploma (Only)	% some college/no degree	% Associates Degree	% Bachelors Degree	% Masters Degree
Town of Denmark (Inc. Villages)	94.3	48	18	11.1	10.5	6.7
Village of Castorland	85.7	36.1	24.2	6.1	13.1	6.1
Village of Copenhagen	96.2	38.9	23.6	11.9	14.9	6.8
Town Outside Village	95.5	54.5	14.2	11.9	8.1	6.8
Lewis County	91.2	43.4	15	13.6	10.8	8.5

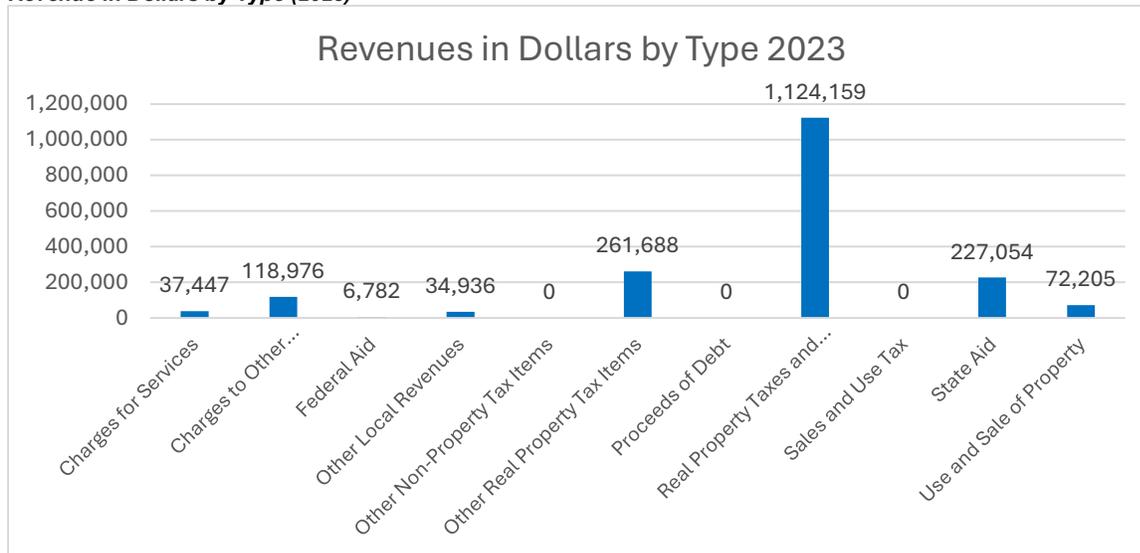
Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

Finance

Town

According to the NYS Comptroller, 2023 revenues for the Town of Denmark totaled \$1,883,248 and were raised mostly from real property taxes and assessments (60%) and other real property tax items (14%). The third highest category was state aid (4%).

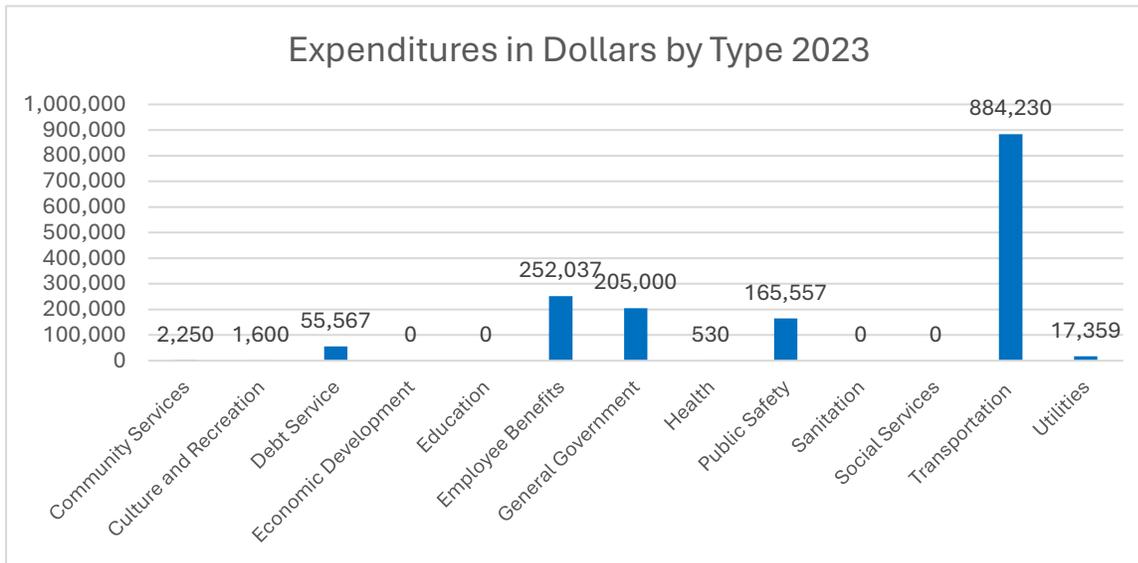
Figure 3
Revenue in Dollars by Type (2023)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

According to the NYS Comptroller, 2023 expenditures for the Town of Denmark totaled \$1,584,131. Transportation made up the largest expenditure (56%) followed by employee benefits (16%) and general government (13%).

Figure 4
Expenditures in Dollars by Type (2023)

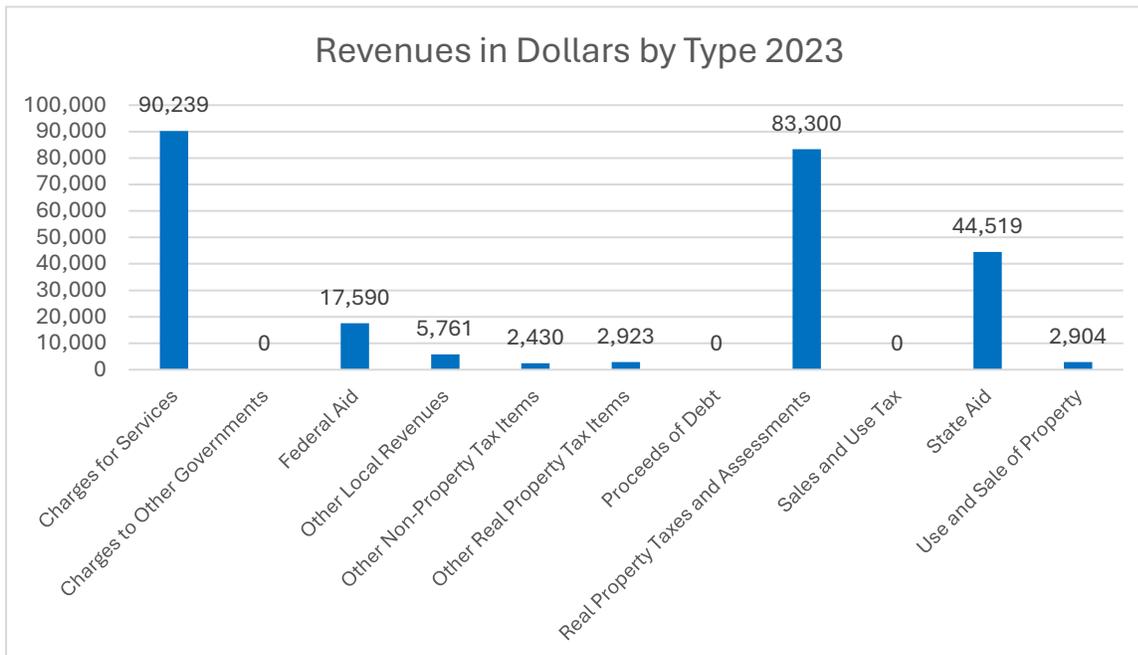


Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

Village of Castorland

According to the NYS Comptroller, 2023 revenues for the Village of Castorland totaled \$249,665 and were raised mostly from charges for services (36%) and real property taxes and assessments (33%) followed by state aid (18%).

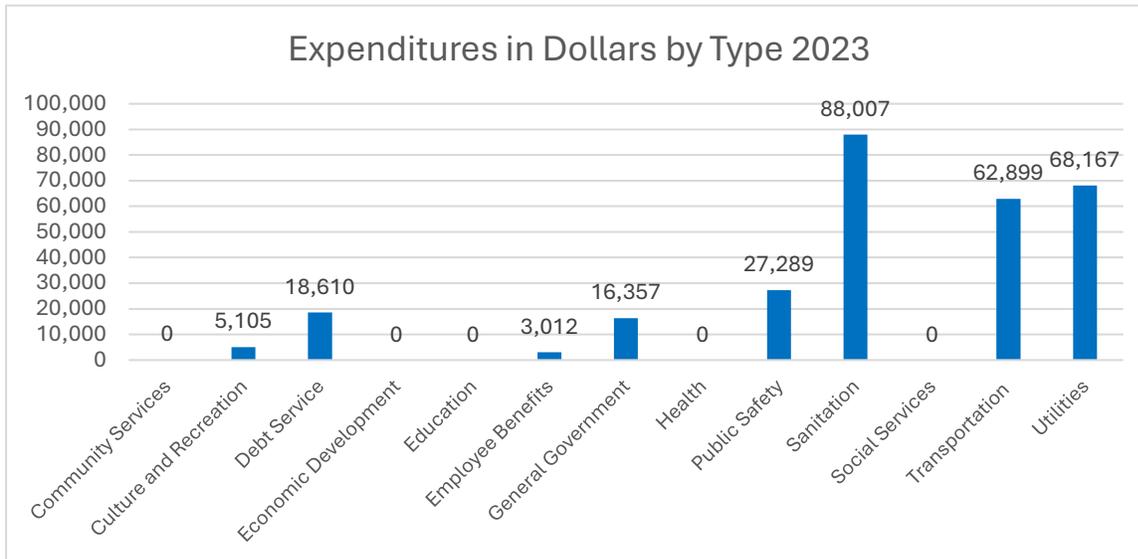
Figure 5
Revenue in Dollars by Type (2023)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

According to the NYS Comptroller, 2023 expenditures for the Village of Castorland totaled \$289,446. Sanitation made up the largest expenditure (30%) followed by utilities (24%) and transportation (22%).

Figure 6
Expenditures in Dollars by Type (2023)

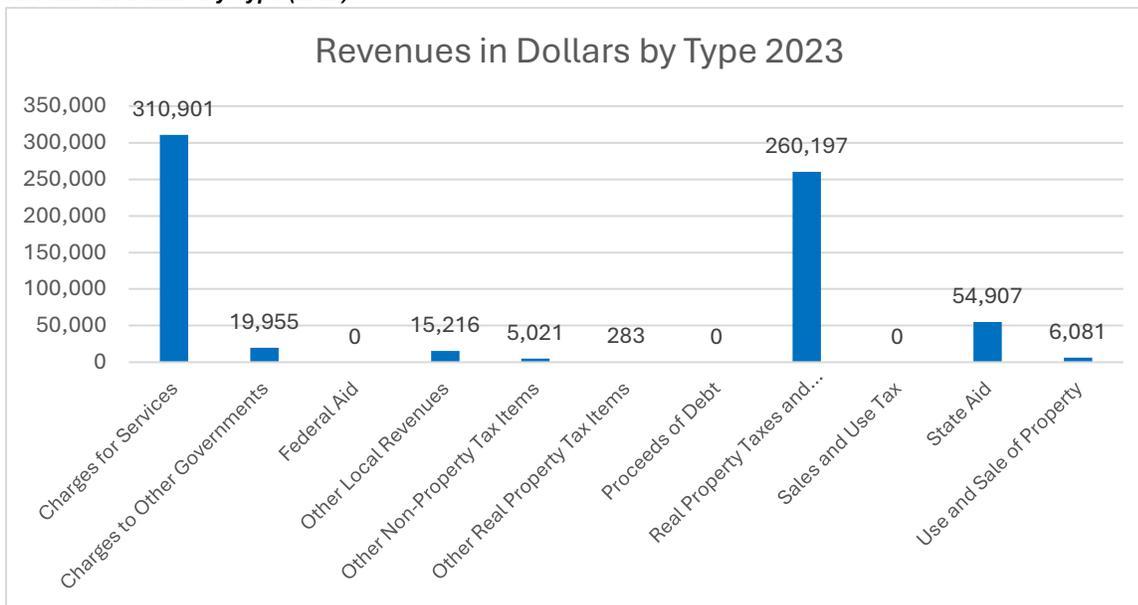


Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

Village of Copenhagen

According to the NYS Comptroller, 2023 revenues for the Village of Copenhagen totaled \$672,562 and were raised mostly from charges for services (46%) and real property taxes and assessments (39%). The third highest category was state aid (8%).

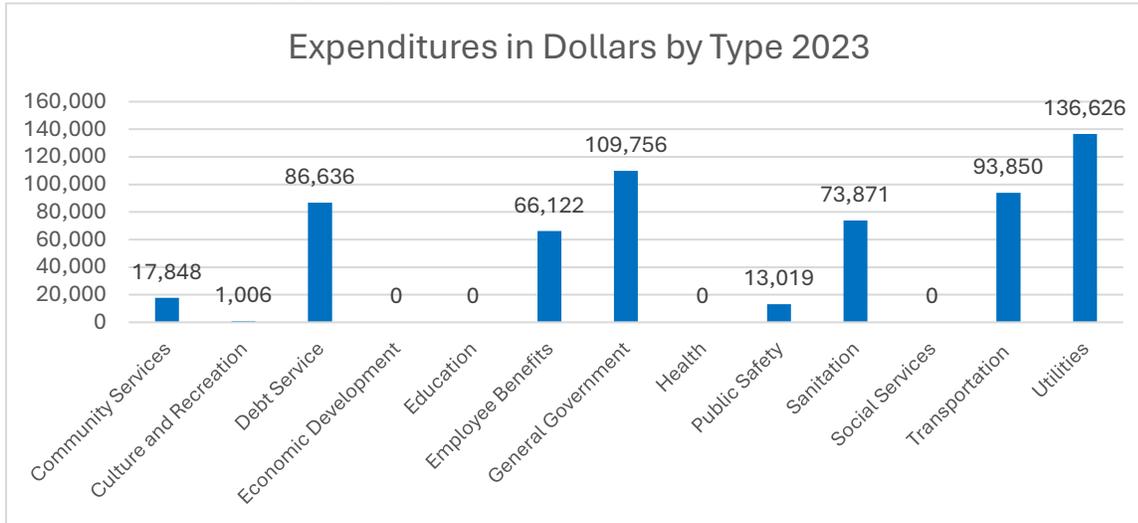
Figure 7
Revenue in Dollars by Type (2023)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

According to the NYS Comptroller, 2023 expenditures for the Village of Copenhagen totaled \$598,733. Utilities made up the largest expenditure (23%) followed by general government (18%) and transportation (16%).

Figure 8
Expenditures in Dollars by Type (2023)

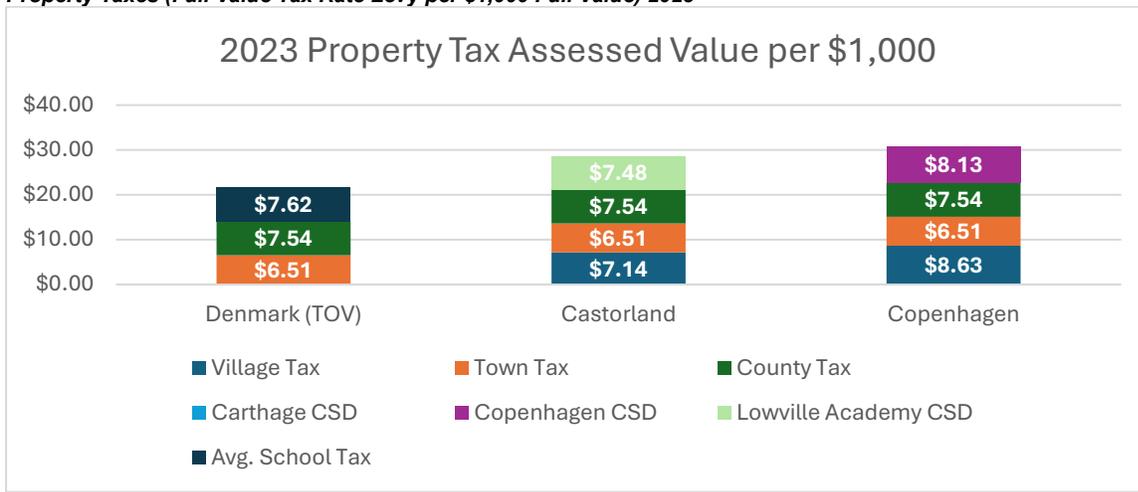


Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

Property Taxes

In 2023, Village of Copenhagen property owners paid \$30.81 per \$1,000 assessed value in property taxes (this includes village, town, county, and school taxes). Village of Castorland property owners paid \$28.67 per \$1,000 assessed value in property taxes (this includes village, town, county, and school taxes.). Town of Denmark (outside the villages) property owners paid \$21.30 (Carthage CSD), \$22.18 (Copenhagen CSD), and \$21.53 (Lowville CSD) per \$1,000 assessed value in property taxes (this includes town, county, and school taxes).

Figure 9
Property Taxes (Full Value Tax Rate Levy per \$1,000 Full Value) 2023

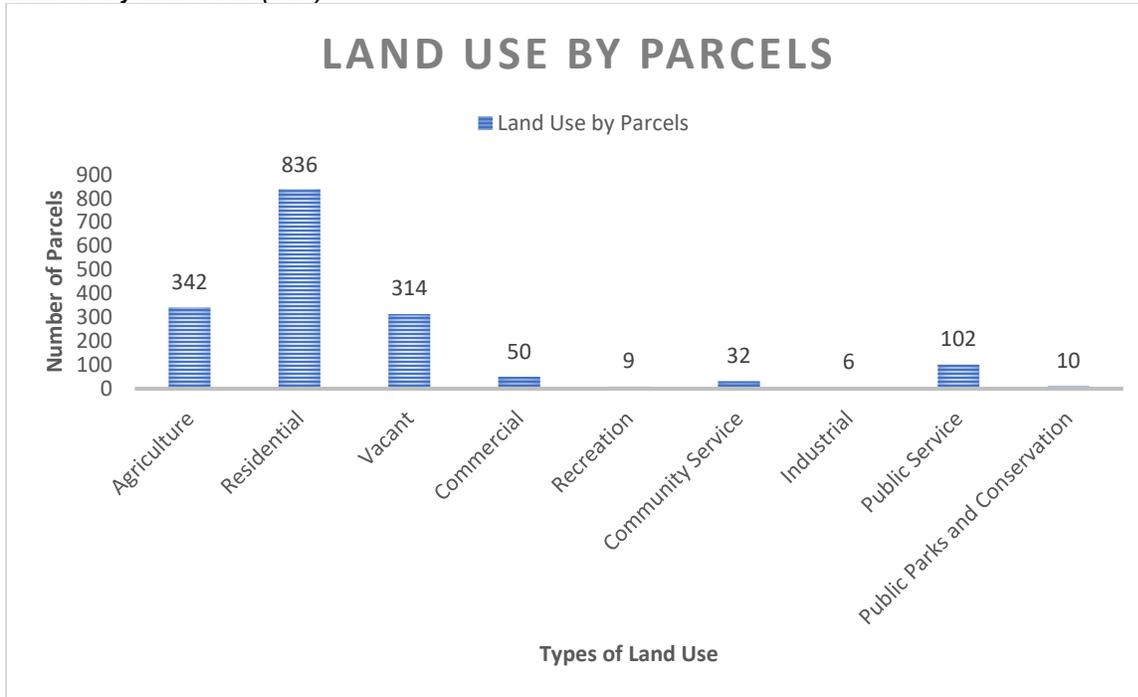


Source: Office of the New York State Comptroller

Land Use

Town of Denmark

Figure 10
Land Use by Tax Parcels (2023)



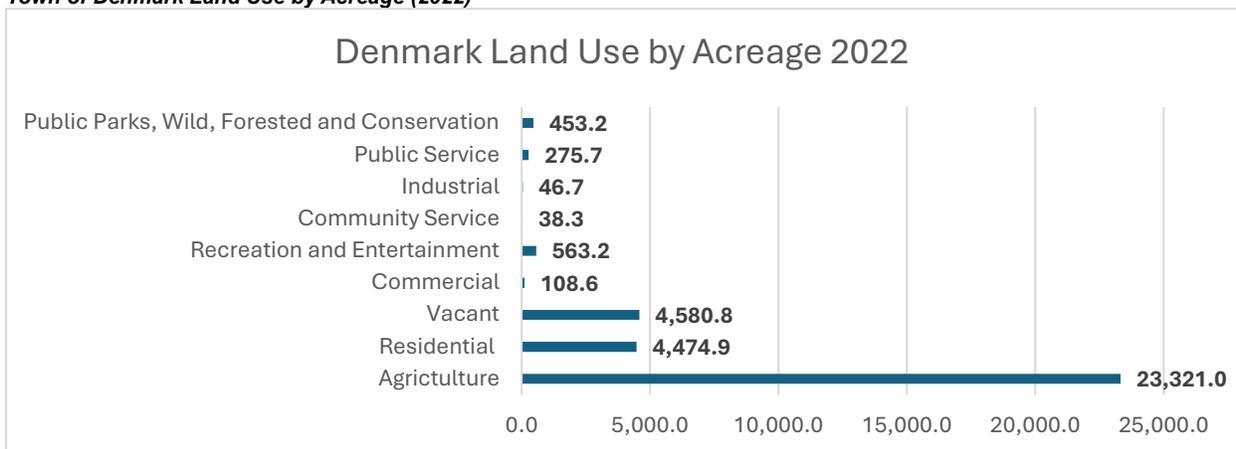
Source: New York State Office of Real Property Tax 2023

Land Use by Acreage

Town of Denmark (TOV) – Total Acreage: 33,862.4

The largest land use within the Town of Denmark is agriculture which totals about 23,321 acres. The next largest land use by acreage is vacant land, accounting for about 4,580.8 acres, and the third highest is residential land use at about 4,474.9 acres. Recreation and entertainment contain about 563.2 acres, and the fifth largest land use by acreage is public parks, wild, forested and conservation with about 453.2 acres. Public service parcels make up of about 275.7 acres. Commercial parcels tally up to about 108.6 acres. Industrial uses account for about 46.7 acres, and lastly, community service parcels have about 38.3 acres.

Figure 11
Town of Denmark Land Use by Acreage (2022)

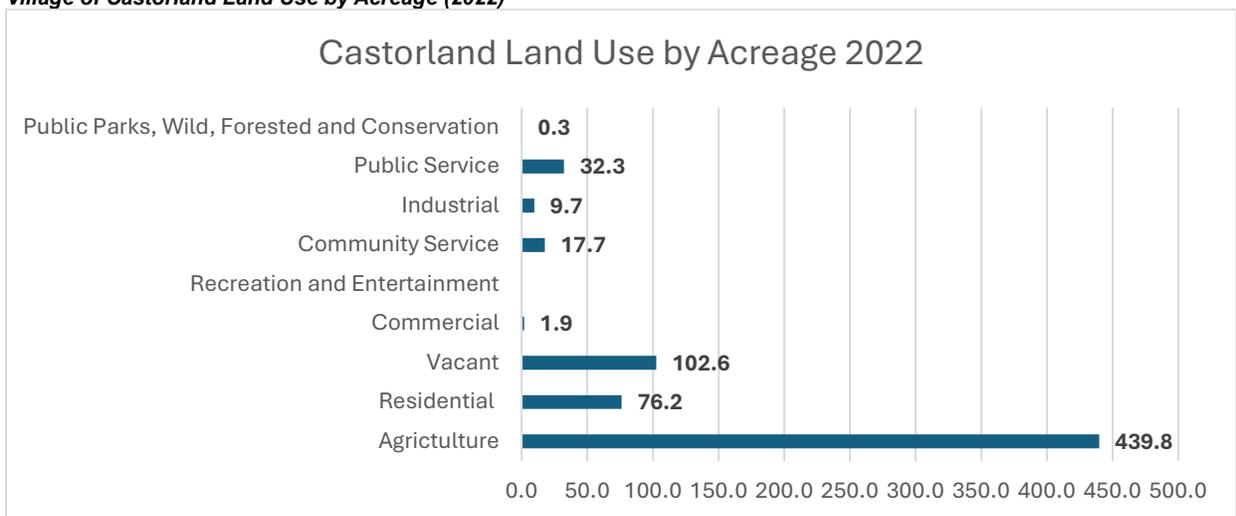


Source: New York State Office of Real Property Tax Services

Village of Castorland – Total Acreage: 680.5

The largest land use within the Village of Castorland is agriculture which consists of about 439.8 acres. The second largest land use is vacant land containing about 102.6 acres. The next largest land use by acreage is residential which contains about 76.2 acres. Public service accounts for about 32.3 acres, community service with about 17.7 acres, industrial with about 9.7 acres, and public parks, wild, forested and conservation with about 0.3 acres.

Figure 12
Village of Castorland Land Use by Acreage (2022)



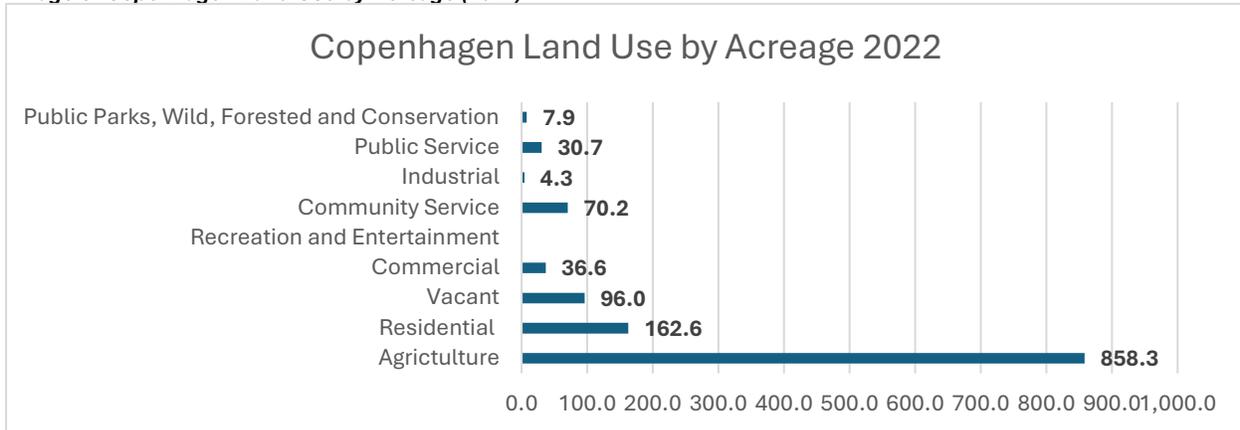
Source: New York State Office of Real Property Tax Services

Village of Copenhagen – Total Acreage: 448.65

The largest land use by acreage in the Village of Copenhagen is agriculture which consists of about 858.3 acres. Residential makes up about 162.6 acres. Next, vacant land accounts for about 96 acres, and community service contains about 70.2 acres.

Commercial parcels combine for about 36.6 acres, public service parcels have about 30.7 acres, and public parks, wild, forested and conservation account for approximately 7.9 acres.

Figure 13
Village of Copenhagen Land Use by Acreage (2022)



Source: New York State Office of Real Property Tax Services

Definitions

Agricultural: property used for the production of crops or livestock.

Residential: property used for human habitation. Living accommodations such as hotels, motels, and apartments are in the Commercial category.

Vacant: property that is not in use, is in temporary use, or lacks permanent Improvement.

Commercial: property used for the sale of goods and/or services.

Recreation: property used by groups for recreation, amusement, or entertainment.

Community Services: property used for the well-being of the community.

Industrial: property used for the production and fabrication of durable and nondurable man-made goods.

Public Services: property used to provide services to the general public.

Forest: reforested lands, preserves, and private hunting and fishing clubs.

PART II. PLAN ELEMENTS – GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES

This section of the comprehensive plan presents issues and strategies that pertain to seven topical areas – open space and agriculture, historic resources, economic development, housing, infrastructure, transportation, community facilities, and recreation. These strategies are the result of the planning process and are based on a community survey, public visioning meetings, and meetings with experts in each topic. It is intended that responsibility for pursuing these strategies will be that of various town/village groups, including the Town/Village Boards, the Planning Boards, committees, and community volunteers.

OPEN SPACE, AGRICULTURE, AND RURAL CHARACTER

Denmark has a rich agricultural history, with much of the town characterized by active farmland that contributes to its rural charm. Preserving the rural and natural character, along with protecting valuable farmland, is a top priority for the community, which values its agricultural heritage, open spaces, and distinctive atmosphere. The Town of Denmark is approximately 33,862.4 acres not including the two villages. The town has approximately 23,321 acres of parcels that are assessed as agricultural land, while approximately 33,437 acres are part of the New York State Agricultural District Program. The Village of Castorland is approximately 680.5 acres in size and consists of 439.80 acres of agricultural land that are part of the New York State Certified Agricultural District Program. The Village of Copenhagen is approximately 1,266 acres in size and consists of 858.3 acres of agricultural land that are part of the New York State Certified Agricultural District Program. Approximately 97% of the total land area of the town, including the villages, is part of the agricultural district. The Agricultural District Program helps protect farmland from non-agricultural development and supports viable farming activities, while the Agricultural District Assessed Value Program provides tax benefits to farmers by assessing land based on its agricultural use rather than its potential market value.

A strong majority of residents surveyed expressed a desire to preserve the rural atmosphere that defines the town and villages, with 62% identifying it as the primary reason they choose to live in the area. Support for maintaining the town's character is further demonstrated by the fact that 48% of respondents deemed its preservation "very important," while another 39% considered it at least important. When asked about specific aspects they value, 94% cited the rural atmosphere, 91% noted the small population, and 87% highlighted the importance of farmland. Additionally, a majority of respondents indicated support for encouraging development focused on recreational trails and agriculture. Looking ahead, over the next five years, residents believe the town and villages should prioritize initiatives such as fostering a farmers' market, maintaining rural character, protecting scenic vistas and environmentally sensitive areas, and safeguarding agricultural land and agribusiness. Furthermore, 42% of respondents indicated that encouraging agricultural commercial development within the town should be a key focus.

Agricultural opportunities in silviculture offer a sustainable way to preserve land while actively producing harvestable trees. Additionally, there is a potential for growth in the soybean industry, particularly with the possibility of a soybean facility being developed in nearby St. Lawrence County, which could further strengthen regional agricultural production. The Town of Denmark is exploring the potential development of an approximately 100-acre industrial park to support value-added agriculture and strengthen regional supply chains. The site could attract industries that complement existing and proposed facilities, including a potential livestock processing facility in Denmark, Kraft's planned expansion in the Town of Lowville, and the proposed Chobani facility in Rome, New York. By promoting collaboration between these regional industries, the industrial park could encourage growth in transportation, cold storage, and trucking operations, while creating local employment opportunities, and agri-manufacturing.

Survey results reflect a strong local interest in balancing economic growth that builds on the area's agricultural strengths. Over half of respondents (53%) identified agricultural development as a top priority, followed by light industry (45%) and manufacturing (41%). A majority (67%) agreed that attracting new businesses and commercial development should be a focus over the next five years, while 72% of respondents support the protection of agricultural lands and agribusiness. Nearly half (45%) also favored encouraging agricultural commercial development. These results suggest that residents value growth that complements the town's rural and agricultural identity, supporting business expansion and job creation while preserving farmland and reinforcing the community's role within the regional agricultural economy.

Lewis County developed an Agricultural and Farmland Enhancement Plan in 2021, which should be utilized by the town to ensure its policies align with county-wide goals for preserving agricultural land. There are several key partners and programs that support land preservation and funding for agricultural development. The Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust is a valuable organization that preserves farmland through conservation easements, ensuring that the land remains dedicated to agriculture. In terms of funding, the Farmland Protection Implementation Grant (FPIG) provides financial assistance to implement farmland preservation projects, while the Farmland Protection Planning Grant (FPPG) supports local governments in developing strategies to protect and enhance farmland. These programs are vital in maintaining the communities' rural character and supporting long-term agricultural viability.

The Town of Denmark and the Villages of Castorland and Copenhagen recognize the State's Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) and the goals it establishes for renewable energy and carbon reduction. At the same time, the municipalities affirm their authority under New York State law to regulate land use within their boundaries to protect the health, safety, and welfare of their residents. The town and villages are committed to ensuring that renewable energy development occurs in a manner consistent with local priorities, including the protection of agricultural lands, rural character, scenic resources, and environmental quality. Large-scale solar, wind, and battery energy storage projects, while contributing to clean energy objectives, may pose

conflicts with these local resources if not carefully sited. The siting of renewable energy projects will align with the Lewis County Agriculture Enhancement Plan and Solar Overlay District to ensure compatibility with agricultural operations and community priorities. Accordingly, the municipalities prefer that these projects are appropriately located on marginal or previously disturbed lands rather than on prime farmland.

To ensure local land use laws are aligned with community needs, the Town of Denmark plans on reviewing their zoning law and may implement a temporary moratorium on new renewable energy projects to allow time for amendments. This approach ensures that future development is consistent with local priorities and supports both environmental sustainability and the protection of agricultural and rural resources.

Recent state building code changes requiring electric heating and high-efficiency systems in new construction, while advancing statewide decarbonization goals, underscores the need for local oversight to ensure energy reliability and resilience, particularly in rural areas prone to power outages. The municipalities will review and guide infrastructure improvements, balancing statewide energy goals with local priorities and community safety. Through these measures the town and villages will review and direct land use and energy decisions within their communities in a manner that reflects local needs and values.

A growing land use concern involves the purchase of large parcels by members of the Amish community, who often utilize only a portion of the land for agricultural or residential purposes. Specific areas that are experiencing an increase in Amish families include Roberts Road, Doran Road, and River Road. This partial use can lead to underutilized or fragmented parcels, which may conflict with community goals such as the development of recreational trail networks or the preservation of contiguous open space. When such parcels occupy key locations along proposed trail corridors or within targeted growth areas, opportunities for public access, connectivity, and coordinated land use planning can become limited. Over time, this pattern of land use may restrict the flexibility of municipalities to implement long-term development strategies and public infrastructure projects. Addressing these challenges requires a thoughtful approach that respects the private landownership and the Amish community while ensuring that land resources are used in ways that align with local and regional planning goals.

GOAL: PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES, RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT, ENHANCE PUBLIC ACCESS TO OPEN SPACES, AND SUPPORT COLLABORATION WITH THE AMISH AND OTHER LOCAL FARMING COMMUNITIES.

Objectives

1. Encourage the preservation of farmland through conservation easements, zoning, and other land use tools to reduce rural sprawl and protect prime agricultural lands.

2. Promote sustainable farming methods and agricultural innovations that improve soil health, boost productivity, and protect the environment such as agrivoltaics, strip cropping, and other soil health initiatives.
3. Encourage municipal coordination, voluntary participating, and the use state programs to promote climate adaptation and resiliency projects that help farmers adapt to changing environmental conditions.
4. Partner with local businesses and farms to create agricultural tourism opportunities, such as farm tours and local produce sales.
5. Encourage the development of trails that provide views of active farms, allowing people to learn about local agriculture through signage and educational programs.
6. Engage with all local farming communities, including the Amish, to share information on voluntary conservation programs, land stewardship, and agricultural best practices.
7. Encourage the development of value-added agricultural businesses to strengthen the local agricultural economy, while maintaining alignment with community goals for land preservation and sustainability.

Potential Projects

- Explore the development of a livestock processing plant along County Route 194.
- Pursue the development of an industrial park on an identified 100-acre lot.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

Preserving and rehabilitating historic buildings is essential for rural communities, as these structures offer a tangible link to our shared past, often drawing tourists and contributing to local economies. Historic buildings, typically constructed with superior materials and craftsmanship, are not only durable but also foster job creation through rehabilitation projects, which can be more resource-efficient than new construction. Properties that meet criteria set by the National and State Registers of Historic Places may be eligible for listing, which can open access to various benefits, such as grants and tax incentives for preservation efforts. A list of these properties is found in **Appendix C**. In particular, the Tug Hill Commission can offer support to villages like Copenhagen in establishing historic districts, enabling local property owners to leverage these resources. Some examples of important historic properties include the John Betts Cemetery (a Native American burial ground dating back to the War of 1812), the original Climax factory on Climax Street, the Old Iron Bridge on Old State Road in Copenhagen,

and the Basslin Saw Mill. Castorland Creek, with ties to early encounters with indigenous peoples as documented in the Castorland Journal, is an important resource as well. Recognizing these landmarks and utilizing accessible grant programs like Preserve NY and the NYS Environmental Protection Fund, offers a pathway to preserve local heritage and foster pride in the community's unique historical identity.

The town has identified vacant land and deteriorating barns and agricultural structures as an issue. These properties could benefit from programs such as the New York State Historic Barn Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program offered through the Preservation League of New York State. The program offers 25% state income tax credit on qualified rehabilitation expenditures. The initiative supports the repair and preservation of agricultural outbuildings and barns built before 1946, contributing to historic preservation while revitalizing the community. More information on the program can be found at <https://parks.ny.gov/shpo/tax-credit-programs/>.

The majority of survey respondents expressed the importance of preserving the character of the communities with 83% of respondents stating that it is very important or at least important to preserve the overall character of the communities. 38% of respondents expressed the need to protect historic structures over the next five years while 35% of respondents had no opinion, and 18% did not agree with the protection of historic structures.

GOAL: FOSTER COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH THROUGH HISTORIC PRESERVATION.

Objectives

1. Promote the cultural, historical, and economic benefits of historic preservation through workshops, online content, and educational materials for residents and property owners.
2. Organize walking tours that highlight local heritage and encourage participation from residents and visitors.
3. Develop itineraries and marketing campaigns to attract visitors interested in local history and preservation.
4. Assist property owners in identifying and applying for rehabilitation funding, such as the NYS Environmental Protection Fund and NYS Preservation League grants.
5. Identify and prioritize barns in the town, outside the village, for preservation and pursue opportunities as they become available.

6. Establish a comprehensive, centralized database of historic properties, identifying and documenting buildings and sites of historic or architectural significance to support their preservation.

Encourage the preservation and protection of historic cemeteries in the town and villages through guidance, outreach, and partnerships with local organizations.

Potential Projects

- Explore establishing a National Register historic district along Main Street in the Village of Copenhagen, including research and outreach.
- Seek grant or community support for upkeep and maintenance of the Union Cemetery in the Village of Castorland.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

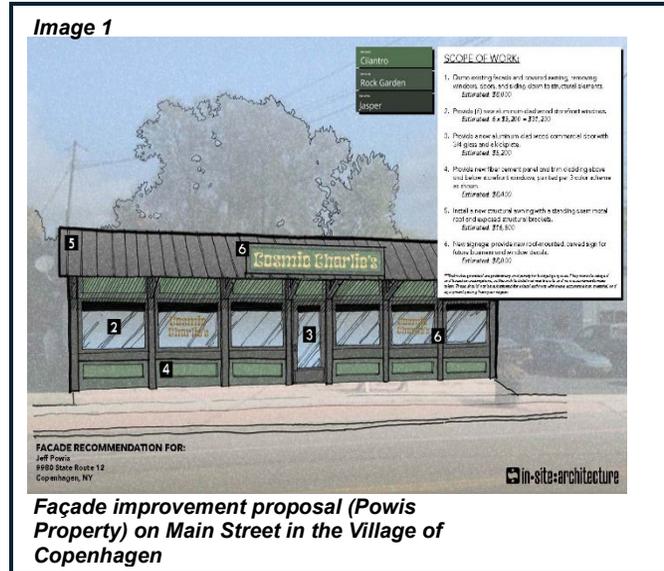
Economic development is a critical driver for the vitality of a community, enhancing the quality of life for residents while fostering job creation, infrastructure improvement, and long-term sustainability. To enhance economic development, Denmark can capitalize on its tourism opportunities by leveraging its natural beauty, which remains underutilized. Efforts should focus on promoting public access to natural areas, many of which are privately owned, to create a more inviting environment for visitors. The development of a Castorland River Trail presents a key opportunity to draw outdoor enthusiasts and establish a distinctive attraction in the area. Additionally, Denmark should utilize ILOVENY funds, through partnerships with Naturally Lewis, to market the area and attract tourists. Learning from the success of the Finger Lakes Region, the town and villages can emphasize collaboration among similar businesses to create a network of unique experiences that complement rather than compete, developing an attractive tourism niche.

There are opportunities to develop small-scale agricultural industries such as livestock processing plants and greenhouses. A long-term goal may include the development of a larger-scale livestock processing plant, which would require infrastructure investments including water and sewer services. A large-scale livestock processing plant could provide quality, well-paying jobs for residents. Opportunities also exist for milk processing or fresh vegetable distribution, which could benefit from partnerships with the local Amish community.

Addressing infrastructure needs is essential for Denmark's economic development. Copenhagen's joint water project with West Carthage provides opportunities for housing development and business growth. Additionally, investing in water infrastructure could enable the conversion of an eleven-acre property into housing development in Copenhagen. Pedestrian infrastructure is another area for development. The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding should be sought by Castorland and

Copenhagen to pursue sidewalk upgrades connecting residents with community facilities and other services. Not only will this provide an efficient and safe sidewalk network for pedestrians to encourage active transportation but will support economic growth and stability.

Downtown and main street revitalization and business infill present opportunities for economic growth in the Village of Copenhagen. Buildings, such as the old hardware store, can be rehabilitated to attract new businesses and developers to the area. With the lack of developable land in Copenhagen, the village can benefit from programs focused on adaptive reuse and rehabilitation to foster microbusinesses and economic development in the community. Existing businesses like Dollar General and Stewarts have proven successful, demonstrating the impact of well-placed development. One benefit to the businesses along Main Street is that they are located along a highly trafficked state road (NYS-12). Businesses along the state route should provide services to residents as well as those traveling through the village. Another opportunity for Copenhagen would be the development of a childcare facility to provide services centrally located between the City of Watertown and the Village of Lowville.



Façade improvement proposal (Powis Property) on Main Street in the Village of Copenhagen

The village could be missing out on business development opportunities due to not having a zoning law. While a zoning law could provide structure and guidance for future development, there is some local resistance to implementation which necessitates a balanced approach to planning.

Copenhagen has an opportunity to convert the old fire hall into a municipal complex. The development of a municipal complex presents the opportunity of creating a multi-functional space, including a community center, commercial kitchen, and municipal offices. This type of development can foster civic engagement while encouraging economic activity.

Castorland has an opportunity to support façade improvements and rehabilitation of the Turning Point building located on NYS-410. The village has received a proposal to provide necessary upgrades, transforming the lower portion of the building to a café or ice cream shop, and providing the opportunity for the development of affordable homes on the upper floor.

Image 2

Turning Point Property NYS-410 Castorland, NY

This property provides an opportunity for the village to create a mixed-use development.

One potential use for the underutilized property is to develop a small café or ice-cream shop on the lower floor, while creating affordable housing units on the upper floor.

This property can serve as an example of reusing underutilized properties while enhancing quality of life.

SCOPE OF WORK:

1. Review and update of the existing architectural drawings and specifications for the proposed project. Estimate: \$10,000
2. Provide a preliminary 3D rendering of the proposed project, including site plan, floor plan, and exterior elevations. Estimate: \$15,000
3. Provide a preliminary 3D rendering of the proposed project, including site plan, floor plan, and exterior elevations. Estimate: \$15,000
4. Provide a preliminary 3D rendering of the proposed project, including site plan, floor plan, and exterior elevations. Estimate: \$15,000
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6. Provide a preliminary 3D rendering of the proposed project, including site plan, floor plan, and exterior elevations. Estimate: \$15,000
7. Provide a preliminary 3D rendering of the proposed project, including site plan, floor plan, and exterior elevations. Estimate: \$15,000
8. Provide a preliminary 3D rendering of the proposed project, including site plan, floor plan, and exterior elevations. Estimate: \$15,000
9. Provide a preliminary 3D rendering of the proposed project, including site plan, floor plan, and exterior elevations. Estimate: \$15,000

FACADE RECOMMENDATION FOR:
Shannon Sauer
5196 State Rte. 410
Castorland, NY 13357

OPTION A

Dark Brown
Light Brown
Cream
White

in-site:architecture

The economic development strategy must address both challenges and long-term concerns of the town and villages. The rising cost of fire services, as a result of new OSHA regulations, have placed strain on resources. An increase in tax rates may occur to purchase equipment for the town thus highlighting the importance of business development to expand the property tax base and alleviate some of this burden. Dilapidated and vacant properties have become eyesores and may require zoning adjustments to facilitate their redevelopment or rehabilitation. There are sectors that are working well within the town and villages. Agriculture operations remain strong and provide a stable economic foundation. The Stewarts expansion in Copenhagen provides increased services to residents and traveling customers. Castorland and Copenhagen's shared services agreement increases efficiency and helps reduce costs between the two villages. Furthermore, community engagement through local festivals like Fall Fest and the Lavendar Fest, along with the communal use of the pavilion and park in Copenhagen, bring people together and enhance the area's appeal. These factors contribute to building a foundation for future economic development efforts.

GOAL: FOSTER SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS, INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.

Objectives

1. Build community and business partnerships to support redevelopment efforts and market vacant properties for potential redevelopment.

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2. Explore grant opportunities through the Lewis County Façade and Streetscape Improvement Program and the New York Main Street Program for the downtown revitalization of Main Street in the Village of Copenhagen.
3. Market festivals and events, such as Riverfest along the Black River, to attract visitors.
4. Develop partnerships with local organization, such as Naturally Lewis, for support with identifying potential new businesses.
5. Work on youth engagement strategies, including transportation solutions for events.
6. Continue successful initiatives like Food Truck Fridays, local fests, and other community-driven programs.

HOUSING

Housing plays an integral part of community stability and potential growth in the Town of Denmark and the Villages of Castorland and Copenhagen. Access to quality, affordable housing directly impacts economic development, and local businesses, and helps retain residents, which in turn sustains enrollment in local school districts and strengthens community services. For these rural communities, where land availability, limited infrastructure, and rising housing costs present challenges, a well-planned approach to housing is necessary to identify and implement solutions. Expanding housing options that are both affordable and family-oriented will address the pressing needs of current residents while attracting new families to the communities. This comprehensive plan will guide strategic investments in infrastructure, land use, and partnerships and will assist with aligning housing development with the communities' unique characteristics and future growth potential.

When residents were asked why they chose to live or work at their current residence only 22% of respondents mentioned affordable housing as a reason of why they reside at their current residence. 12% of residents identified that affordable housing would discourage them from staying in their current communities. When asked about how the community has changed over the last two years, 25% of residents identified the increase in dilapidated buildings. Dilapidated buildings provide the potential for rehabilitation to provide future infill commercial or residential uses within the communities.

Residents identified a strong desire for the encouragement of single-family housing development (74% respondents), senior housing (47% of respondents), and multi-family housing (16% of respondents). Tract or development housing (51% of respondents), condominium and townhomes (42% of respondents), and manufactured homes (41% of respondents) were identified as housing developments that should be discouraged

within the town and villages. Survey respondents identified the Village of Copenhagen, the Hamlet of Deer River, and the Village of Castorland as viable areas for further housing developments. Further developments are limited in these areas due to the lack of water and sewer infrastructure, but they could be potential locations for future development as infrastructure is further developed.

The Village of Copenhagen faces critical housing challenges, with limited developable land and infrastructure constraints impacting potential growth. The largest available property in Copenhagen is designated for cemetery use, and while farmland could be repurposed, this option is limited. Land along Woodbattle Road may be viable for new housing but requires public sewer to be developed. Copenhagen's water capacity is also nearing its limit, which has already prevented high-water-use businesses from establishing themselves. Rental housing is in short supply and highly priced, with two-bedroom apartments often exceeding \$1,200 monthly, making them inaccessible for many residents. Additionally, the old 801 housing off Cataract Street is deteriorating, further limiting affordable housing options. Opportunities for development do exist for land near the 801 housing, though it is lacking in infrastructure. Properties that exist between Doran Road and Grove Street in Copenhagen may be suitable for housing development of up to 20 homes.

A parcel on the Village of Castorland's Colmer Road is equipped with some utilities that could support the development of additional housing. The village could also consider rehabilitating the former state-owned facility on Church Street, potentially for hospice care, although this would require cooperation with the state. Family-oriented housing is a priority to support the local school district, and partnerships with county and state agencies could help secure land and develop the necessary infrastructure.

Snowbelt housing manages Happy Acres, providing housing for the aging population, while the Murphy Building on NYS Route-12 presents an opportunity for a future daycare facility on the lower floor and residential housing on the top floor, though concerns about outdoor space for children must be addressed.

Lewis County is focused on addressing housing needs through targeted initiatives and programs aimed at expanding affordable housing options, redeveloping vacant properties, and supporting diverse community needs. The county's housing accelerator task force has been established to fast-track housing solutions including the adaptive reuse of properties, landlord incentives, and resource allocation. Lewis County encourages the Villages of Copenhagen and Castorland to apply for the Pro-Housing Community Program. This designation opens the communities up for Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) funding, NY Forward funding, and infrastructure improvement programs. Other programs such as the Small Rental Development Initiative (SRDI) and state-subsidized apartments are vital for maintaining affordable rents, with rehabilitation funds available to landlords who commit to providing low-income housing. Through partnerships with organizations like the Development Authority of the North Country (DANC), efforts are being made to promote homeownership, reduce vacancies, and stabilize families in local schools.

GOAL: ENHANCE HOUSING AVAILABILITY, AFFORDABILITY, AND ACCESSIBILITY ACROSS THE COMMUNITIES.

Objectives

1. Assess and prioritize developable areas, including vacant land near Woodbattle Road, to expand available land for housing.
2. Reduce housing vacancies by promoting homeownership programs through partnerships like DANC, and Snowbelt Housing Company, targeting families and first-time buyers, and stabilizing neighborhoods to support schools and local economies.
3. Incentivize property owners to rehabilitate vacant or underutilized properties, ensure compliance with building codes, and explore partnerships with the county's property rehabilitation program to repurpose dilapidated properties into new housing.
4. Promote the development of diverse housing types, including market-rate, senior, and affordable units.
5. Seek pro-housing community designation to access further funding opportunities.
6. Encourage mixed-use development to support the potential to develop housing units above commercial spaces to attract residents while supporting small business growth.
7. Collaborate with landlords to provide renovation support tied to affordable rents, utilize state programs such as the SRDI, and assess accessibility challenges for residents.

Potential Projects

- Assess the feasibility of repurposing the State House building on Church Street in the Village of Castorland for use as a hospice facility.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Sewer, water, and storm drainage infrastructure is necessary to support sustainable development in the town and villages while benefiting public health, environmental protection, and economic development. Reliable water and sewer systems ensure access to clean water and proper waste management, reducing the risk of contamination and waterborne diseases. Well-planned infrastructure enhances a community's resilience to flooding and other environmental challenges, ensuring long-

term sustainability. Investing in sewer and water infrastructure not only improves the quality of life for residents but also makes towns and villages more attractive for future development and economic opportunities.

The town and villages have been proactive in upgrading and addressing water and sewer infrastructure to meet community needs and support future development. The Village of Copenhagen has modernized its water and sewer systems, which will assist with ensuring that the community is ready to implement Complete Streets initiatives that improve accessibility and transportation options. Copenhagen's upgraded infrastructure aligns the village for Complete Streets development without the need to develop or upgrade infrastructure first. Copenhagen is currently pursuing a project to develop a connection to the Village of West Carthage water system. This project provides opportunities for further development to occur within the Town of Denmark outside the villages.

The Village of Copenhagen's water system operates under constraints that limit its long-term sustainability and resilience, particularly during periods of drought. According to the *Central Lewis County Regional Water Supply Study* (January 2022, Miller Engineers), the NYSDEC permits a maximum water withdrawal of 100,000 gallons per day (gpd) from Village sources. The primary treatment facility on Stoddard Road relies on three wells (Wells 3, 4, and 5), with Wells 3 and 5 influenced by surface water conditions. Well 4, with an estimated capacity of 64,800 gpd, becomes the sole operational source during droughts due to regulatory limitations, reducing daily water availability to only 45,000 gpd. The village's average daily water usage is estimated at 68,500 gpd, though a 2022 study assessed a slightly lower use of approximately 56,000 gpd. This points to a significant shortfall during drought periods, when demand can exceed available supply by over 20,000 gpd. To address these capacity concerns and build system reliance and resiliency, the Village of Copenhagen has pursued two strategic initiatives which include the establishment of a water connection with the Village of West Carthage and the rehabilitation of the Woodbattle Road Treatment Plant.

Flooding concerns exist within the Villages of Castorland and Copenhagen. More specifically, Copenhagen experiences flooding issues caused by filled-in ditches and the removal of natural drainage paths. Broad Street, Mechanic Street, and Maple Street are particularly affected, with water backing up through the school parking lot, exacerbating localized flooding. One opportunity to address flooding issues is to use lidar mapping to track the flow of water and identify problem areas. A challenge that the Village faces involves cleaning storm drains on private property. The village could work with their attorney to obtain easements to obtain access to clean storm drains. Emergency mitigation measures remain a priority to alleviate flooding concerns and restore proper drainage throughout the municipalities.

Flooding in the Village of Castorland typically occurs during the spring thaw in open spaces adjacent NYS Route-410 due to rising levels of the Black River. While these flood-prone areas do not currently pose a direct threat to residential structures or critical infrastructure, the persistent presence of standing water creates ideal conditions for

mosquito breeding. This has the potential to impact on the quality of life for nearby residents and increases the risk of mosquito-borne illnesses. Although not a traditional flood hazard, this localized nuisance flooding presents a public health concern that may warrant targeted drainage improvements or land management strategies to mitigate standing water and reduce associated health risks.

GOAL: DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE HOUSING GROWTH, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE.

Objectives

1. Support the expansion and improvement of water, sewer, and utility capacity to accommodate anticipated residential and business growth.
2. Coordinate with County and State agencies to develop long-term infrastructure plans aligned with community growth and housing goals.
3. Evaluate utility requirements for key undeveloped parcels and create a phased approach to add sewer, water, and electrical connections consistent with anticipated development.
4. Address water quality and reliability concerns and develop contingency strategies to ensure uninterrupted service during emergencies and extreme weather events.
5. Restore and preserve natural drainage systems by clearing filled ditches and removing obstructions and conducting assessments of existing stormwater management infrastructure in coordination with County and State agencies.
6. Promote public awareness of proper drainage and flood mitigation practices.
7. Collaborate with local, County, and State agencies to design flood mitigation measures to reduce the impact on vulnerable areas.
8. Support shared services agreements between municipalities for water, sewer, and waste management to enhance efficiency and resilience.

Potential Projects

- Establish a shared services agreement between the Villages of Castorland and Copenhagen.
- Increase water infrastructure capacity and quality through the Copenhagen and West Carthage water expansion project.

TRANSPORTATION

Road infrastructure is important for the municipalities as it supports economic development, public safety, and community well-being by providing the efficient transportation of goods, services, and residents to essential facilities. This section of the comprehensive plan presents discussion and strategies that address transportation conditions and concerns in the town, including roadway jurisdiction, highway categorization, and public transportation.

Transportation and mobility focus primarily on the maintenance and preservation of existing infrastructure while fostering strong intergovernmental relationships and addressing community transportation needs. NYSDOT has identified the need for the New York State Route 410 bridge to be replaced in the Village of Castorland. The bridge project is currently scheduled to begin in 2026. During bridge construction, NYDOT anticipates that there will be little disruption to the flow of traffic as the old bridge will remain in place until the new bridge is completed. The new bridge will include widened shoulders to allow for the safe passage of pedestrians, cyclists, and other non-motorized modes of transportation.

Lewis County has undertaken several initiatives to enhance transportation infrastructure focusing on both roadways and bridges within the town and villages. The Complete Streets Project is a county-wide effort aimed at improving non-motorized transportation by upgrading crosswalks, street lighting, and sidewalks. This includes conducting walkability assessments in the village centers and implementing traffic calming measures, particularly in Copenhagen, where reducing vehicle speeds is a priority. A road ownership and efficiency study are being conducted by Lewis County to determine whether specific roads should be managed by the town or the county. Transferring road ownership to the county would assist municipalities with road management and maintenance costs. Lewis County is considering taking ownership over some of the bridge infrastructure located within the Town of Denmark. Transferring bridge ownership to the county would ensure that the bridges are maintained and replaced when necessary.

The New York State Traffic Data Viewer is a useful tool for visualizing estimated annual average daily traffic patterns on state and county roads. The Lewis County Highway Department and the Town of Denmark Highway Department are also useful local transportation resources.

State Roads

State Route 12, 26, and 410 are major routes that run through the Town of Denmark, and the Villages of Castorland and Copenhagen. State Route 12 passes through the Town of Denmark and the Village of Copenhagen. As of 2023, average daily traffic on Route 12 between the Town of Watertown and the Village of Copenhagen was 3,535 vehicles. On this same stretch of Route 12, annual average daily truck traffic was 309 trucks. As of 2023, average daily traffic on Route 12 between the Village of Copenhagen

and Roberts Road was 4,169 vehicles. On this same stretch of Route 12, annual average daily truck traffic was 476 trucks.

State Route 26 is a major route that runs through the Town of Denmark from a northwesterly direction, from the Jefferson County line in a southeasterly direction towards the Town of Lowville. State Route 26 from the Jefferson County Line to the Hamlet of Deer River had an average daily traffic count of 3,790 vehicles in 2023. The average daily traffic count for trucks for this section of Route 26 was 489 trucks. State Route 26 from the Hamlet of Deer River to the intersection of State Routes 26 and 410 had an average daily traffic count of 3,404 vehicles and an average daily traffic count of 424 trucks in 2023. State Route 410 runs through the Village of Castorland. Route 410 connects State Routes 26 and 126. As of 2023, average daily traffic on Route 410 through the Village of Castorland was 1,526 vehicles. The average daily truck traffic was 149 for the same stretch of Route 410.

County Roads

The Lewis County Highway Department maintains County Routes 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 55, and 194 throughout the Town of Denmark and the Villages of Castorland and Copenhagen.

Table 13: Country Road Annual Average Daily Traffic Counts (2022)

COUNTY ROAD	AADT
CR-11 (Mechanic Street)	1,282
CR-12 (Station Road)	126
CR-13 (Limburg Forks Road)	1,223
CR-14 (Number Three Road)	1,144
CR-15 (Washington Street)	1,077
CR-16 (Plank Road)	723
CR-17 (Woodbattle Road)	97
CR-19 (East Road)	1,217
CR-55 (Deer River Road)	1,105
CR-194	579

Source: NYSDOT Traffic Data Viewer

Town Roads

According to the 2022 NYS DOT local highway inventory, the town contains 35.24 miles of town-maintained roads, of which 30.55 miles are paved, and 4.69 miles are unpaved. The town and villages do not have any designated seasonal roads, minimum maintenance roads, or bike routes. The Black River Trail Scenic Byway on NYS-126 runs along the southeast border of the town's municipal boundary.

Functional Classification

A useful tool for analyzing public highways is to examine exactly how they are used. The functional classification system is an excellent means of accomplishing this task.

This system identifies five categories of highways. These are principal arterials, minor arterials, major collections, minor collectors, and local roads and streets.

Arterials link one end of a state or region with another. Mobility is the most important factor, while access is the least important. A major collector links local communities, while a minor collector provides connections within a community. NYS Route-12 is a principal arterial that travels through the Village of Copenhagen connecting the Town of Watertown with the Town of Lowville. NYS Route-26 is a principal arterial that travels through the Town of Denmark and runs through the Village of Lowville. Access is more important for collectors than it is for arterials. NYS Route-410 is a major collector that runs through the Village of Castorland connecting NYS Route-126 with NYS Route-26. County Routes 13 and 55 are major collectors, County Routes 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 194 are minor collectors, and County Routes 12 and 19 are designated as local roads along with all town and village roads. Local roads serve adjacent land uses. The total mileage in these categories is 11.52 miles in principal arterial, 9.95 miles in major collectors, 7.25 miles in minor collectors, and 73.5 miles in local roads.

Pedestrian Issues / Concerns

Pedestrian safety remains a key concern in the Villages of Copenhagen and Castorland, where current infrastructure conditions pose challenges for non-motorized travel. In Copenhagen, attention is needed at the intersection of Mechanic and Loud Streets, near the Copenhagen School, where improved pedestrian crossings are essential for student safety. While the village has recently purchased two digital radar speed signs to reduce speeding in the school zone, a comprehensive Safe Routes to School or walkability assessment would further identify necessary improvements. Such an assessment could evaluate the most-traveled routes by students, highlight areas lacking crosswalks or in need of ADA-compliant upgrades, and address the need for bicycle lanes and related infrastructure. Additionally, pedestrian safety along NYS Route-12 is threatened by high vehicle speeds and limited shoulder space. In Castorland, concerns focus on the deteriorating sidewalk network along NYS Route-410, with numerous broken and missing sections forcing pedestrians to use the shoulders of the road, particularly near Heritage Park. The village could also benefit from the creation of a walking path between Elm and Church Streets to better connect residential neighborhoods. Planning and investment in pedestrian-friendly facilities should focus on enhancing the safety, connectivity, and overall walkability within these communities.

Public Transportation

Lewis County's public transportation system plays a vital role in connecting the rural communities of Denmark, Copenhagen, and Castorland with other destinations. With a focus on accessibility and convenience, the system provides scheduled bus routes and demand-response services that cater to residents and visitors. These services ensure reliable connections across the communities supporting access to essential services such as schools, healthcare facilities, and local businesses. Other bus routes include

connections to Utica, Jefferson Community College, Fort Drum, and Old Forge. By offering affordable and environmentally conscious travel options, the transportation system fosters community cohesion and promotes economic activity.

GOAL: ENHANCE TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE AND SAFETY WHILE ENSURING LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH STRATEGIC UPGRADES, COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY, AND COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS.

Objectives

1. Develop crosswalks, sidewalk infrastructure, wayfinding signage, and lighting in the Villages of Castorland and Copenhagen to promote active transportation, connect residents to basic amenities and services, and improve pedestrian safety.
2. Promote pedestrian and bicycle connectivity between residential areas, commercial centers, and key community services.
3. Collaborate with County and State agencies to introduce traffic calming measures in high-traffic areas.
4. Collaborate with County and State agencies to preserve, maintain, and restore aging and historically significant bridges by pursuing funding and historic preservation opportunities.
5. Explore the development of workforce training and compensation strategies to enhance local skills in heavy machinery operation, retain qualified operators, and support necessary equipment purchases.
6. Collaborate with County agencies to support the expansion and improvement of town-wide public transportation, with an emphasis on promoting the service and increasing the frequency of available trips.
7. Utilize existing Complete Streets plans as guidance for transportation improvements and to support applications for state and federal infrastructure and safety funding.

Potential Projects

- Develop a pedestrian connectivity trail linking Washington Street to the Dollar General Store in the Village of Copenhagen.
- Restoration or replacement of the Old Iron Bridge on Old State Road in the Town of Denmark.

- Acquire retired maintenance equipment through Fort Drum to reduce equipment costs and increase services.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The following is an inventory of identified community facilities within the town and villages:

Name	Location
Castorland Fire Company Incorporated	5187 State Route 410, Castorland, NY 13620
Congregational Church	10727 State Route 26, Deer River, NY 13627
Copenhagen Central School	3020 Mechanic St, Copenhagen, NY 13626
Copenhagen Family Health Center	9732 NY-12, Copenhagen, NY 13626
Copenhagen Fire Department	
Copenhagen Happy Acres	2949 Stoddard St, Copenhagen, NY 13626
Copenhagen Post Office	
Crystal Light Mennonite Church	8672 NY-812, Lowville, NY 13367
Deer River Post Office	
Denmark Mennonite Church	10211 State Route 26, Carthage, NY 13619
Grace Episcopal Church	2939 Cataract St, Copenhagen, NY 13626
Hillside Cemetery	9548 State Route 26, Carthage, NY 13619
John Betts Cemetery (Native American Sites)	Old State Rd, Carthage, NY 13619
Karcher Country Estates	4892 State Route 410, Castorland, NY 13620
NYS Office for People with Development Disabilities House	
RC Cemetery	9714 State Route 12, Copenhagen, NY 13626
River of Life Fellowship	9871 Number Three Rd, Copenhagen, NY 13626
Riverside Cemetery	3018 Cataract St, Copenhagen, NY 13626
St. Mary's Church	State Route 12, Copenhagen, NY 13626
Swineburne Cemetery	3726 Roberts Rd, Deer River, NY 13627
The Arc Buildings	4898 NY-410, Castorland, NY 13620
Town Highway Garage	3707 Roberts Rd, Carthage, NY 13619
Town of Denmark Municipal Building	3707 Roberts Rd, Carthage, NY 13619
United Church of Copenhagen	9932 State Route 12, Copenhagen, NY 13626
Village of Castorland DPW	5185 State Route 410, Castorland, NY 13620
Village of Castorland Municipal Building	5185 State Route 410, Castorland, NY 13620
Village of Castorland USPS (Post Office)	5158 State Route 410, Castorland, NY 13620
Village of Copenhagen DPW	9915 State Route 12, Copenhagen, NY 13626
Village of Copenhagen Municipal Building	9915 State Route 12, Copenhagen, NY 13626

Community Facilities

The communities lack a dedicated library facility. A potential solution is to pursue a partnership with Copenhagen Central School for after-hours library access. This would require volunteers to staff the library to provide access to the public.

Various churches provide necessary services to the residents. The River of Life Church distributes turkey dinners, Grace Episcopal Church offers donation-based meal services, and the United Church operates a small thrift store and hosts senior meal programs. Additionally, Cornell Cooperative Extension partners with the Copenhagen

School District to provide clothing items to families in need. These services provide residents with access to essential resources and support systems.

Municipal Buildings and Services

The Town of Denmark Municipal Building is mostly capable of providing necessary services to residents. However, the building needs vital upgrades to support court proceedings. The building requires expansion, additional parking, and separate entrance for court services. The town is planning on providing residents with a garbage collection day with dumpster access. The Village of Copenhagen Municipal Building provides efficient services to residents but needs facility upgrades. The building is in need of adequate meeting space and vehicle parking. Copenhagen has an opportunity to convert the former fire hall into a municipal complex. The development of a municipal complex presents the opportunity of creating a multi-functional space, including a community center, commercial kitchen, and municipal offices. This type of development can foster civic engagement while encouraging economic activity. The Village of Castorland Municipal Building recently has been renovated and provides the necessary services to village residents. Garbage disposal services are included for the Village of Castorland and Village of Copenhagen residents.

Emergency Services

Law enforcement is provided by the Lewis County Sheriff's Office and the New York State Police Department, though response times have been identified as being inadequate. Ambulance services, currently provided by Lewis County Search and Rescue, are transitioning to an essential service model within the next year. The region is served by several fire departments including the Town of Rutland Fire Department, the Village of Castorland Fire Department, and the Village of West Carthage Fire Department.

Youth/Community Organizations

Youth programs, such as the 4-H club and Copenhagen's School's Honor Society contribute to the Village of Copenhagen by maintaining flowerpots located along Main Street. The CARES group in Copenhagen actively coordinates festivals and organizes community events. The River Area Council of Governments (RACOG) has recently created the Civil Service Student Activity Program (CSSAP) and the youth board to encourage youth participation in local governance. This will provide opportunities for students to participate in community development and service projects.

Community Events

Annual events such as the Memorial Day Parade in Copenhagen, the Tractor Parade in Castorland, and season festivals including the Hopenhagen Farms Lavender Festival, Fall Festival, and Pink Week in Copenhagen, draw residents and visitors to the area. Fire department activities and BBQs in Castorland remain popular, as do traditional

celebrations like the Tree Lighting Ceremony at Heritage Park. Future event planning efforts include coordinating with National Grid for decorative pole lighting in Castorland, leveraging a recently received \$18,000 grant for Heritage Park improvements, and integrating food truck events with fire department activities to increase community participation.

The establishment of a farmers' market in Copenhagen could provide residents with access to fresh, locally sourced produce and support small-scale vendors, including the Amish community. The village is exploring potential locations for a farmers' market which includes open space behind the old firehall, the parking lot near Grace Episcopal Church, or at the Copenhagen Central School. Holding the farmers market at the school will require coordination with the school to ensure that the market does not interfere with school activities. Additional proposed projects include the development of a community center or community kitchen to serve as a gathering space, introducing food truck events in Copenhagen and Castorland to provide various dining options to residents, and hosting a carp fishing tournament at the boat launch area at the end of Station Road in the hamlet of Deer River.

GOAL: ENHANCE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR RESIDENTS WHILE PROMOTING ECONOMIC GROWTH, RECREATION, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.

Objectives

1. Repurpose and upgrade vacant buildings for community facilities such as childcare, senior services, or other local needs.
2. Promote the adaptive reuse of existing municipal buildings to support community services, events, and engagement opportunities.
3. Develop a farmers' market, or similar local food initiatives, establishing partnerships with the Amish community and other local vendors to provide fresh produce to residents and visitors.
4. Explore enhancing and diversifying community recreational opportunities through the development and improvement of accessible, multi-use outdoor spaces that serve a variety of interests and activities.
5. Encourage the development of enhanced community gathering spaces with accessible amenities such as pavilions, restrooms, seating areas, and picnic areas to support public events and recreational activities.

Potential Projects

- Repurpose the old fire hall in the Village of Copenhagen as a community center and municipal building.

- Explore the development of a farmers’ market in the Village of Copenhagen.
- Develop a dog park in the Village of Castorland.
- Develop a large pavilion with accessible restrooms at Heritage Park in the Village of Castorland.

RECREATION

The following is an inventory of identified recreational opportunities within the town and villages:

Name	Description	Location
Card Campground	Campgrounds	Zecher Rd Town of Denmark
Carlowden Country Club	Golf Course	4105 Carlowden Rd, Carthage, NY 13619
Cedar Creek Campground	Tent, Campers / open field and wooded sites. Various activities: swimming, volleyball, horseshoe pits, tennis court, baseball field, playground, and nature trail. Offers various weekend activities.	4531 NY-410, Lowville, NY 13367
Cedars Golf Course	Golf Course	9368 E. Rd, Lowville, NY 13367
Boat Launch	Boat Launch and Fishing Access. Known for Carp	Station Road, Deer River, NY
Copenhagen Central School	Playground, tennis courts. Outside school hours/when not in use.	3020 Mechanic St, Copenhagen, NY 13626
Denmark Apple Orchard	Seasonal. Tourist Attraction. Apple Picking/Apple Cider Making.	Denmark Gardens Apple Orchard. 10080 Old State Road, Denmark, NY 13619
Heritage Park		Castorland, NY
Jacob's Campgrounds	Disc Golf, Tubing	Old State Road, Town of Denmark
Village Gazebo and Picnic Area	Gazebo and pavilion. It can be used for family picnics or taking in the scenic Deer River. Nestled along the Deer River off High Street (NYS-12).	2932 Cataract Street, Copenhagen, NY 13626
Village of Castorland Park		Castorland, NY

The Town of Denmark and the Villages of Castorland and Copenhagen have a variety of recreational areas for residents and visitors to enjoy. Recreation plays a vital role in the well-being and health of residents by promoting stress reduction, promoting positive mental health, and fostering an active lifestyle. The communities have plans to enhance outdoor spaces, improve and develop recreational trails, and develop additional recreational opportunities to meet the needs of their residents. By developing new walking/hiking and snowmobile trails, improving access to the Black and Deer Rivers, and exploring new park developments, the communities plan to create safe and accessible outdoor environments for residents and visitors to enjoy.

Trail Systems

A major focus of the communities is the expansion and enhancement of trail systems to promote outdoor recreation and active transportation. Proposed projects include a

snowmobile trail that connects West Carthage to Old State Road in the Town of Denmark and exploring additional snowmobile access in the Village of Copenhagen that connects the Cottage Inn to trail users. Blueway Trail enhancements, such as new signage noting scenic vistas can increase visibility of the Black and Deer Rivers. The Village of Copenhagen has plans to develop a village walking trail that connects services and basic amenities improving accessibility and safety for residents. Part of the village trail development will require the expansion of sidewalk infrastructure and will require additional funding. Castorland and Copenhagen can jointly pursue funding in the form of grants such as the Transportation Assistance Program (TAP) and Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) grants to fulfill sidewalk infrastructure needs in both villages. Looking ahead, Lewis County is working on developing the rails-to-trails project which will run from Lowville to Carthage through Denmark and Castorland. The rails-to-trails will create additional recreational opportunities and transportation options for the region.

Parks

Proposed park developments include transforming open space behind the town highway garage near the Deer River into a recreational area. However, there is concern for safety due to changing water levels and proximity to a waterfall. If a park is developed, designs should address potential safety concerns and methods to mitigate risks. The Village of Copenhagen has identified property on Mill Street behind the Cottage Inn, a popular location for scenic photography and weddings, that could be designed as a public park. Conservation easements can be obtained to assist with acquiring, preserving, and developing the property. Copenhagen is also focused on improving access to the gazebo and picnic area by developing and providing parking spaces. Available land has been identified that can be developed into additional parking to increase accessibility for community gatherings and events. The Village of Copenhagen can pursue the development of an ice rink park at the intersection of Maiden and Washington Streets to provide winter recreation opportunities.

GOAL: IMPROVE OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND ACCESSIBILITY TO PROMOTE AN ACTIVE, HEALTHY LIFESTYLE WHILE FOSTERING A CONNECTED COMMUNITY.

Objectives

1. Promote year-round, non-motorized recreational opportunities, including walking, hiking, biking, and cross-country skiing.
2. Support the development and connectivity of regional trails for motorized recreation, such as snowmobiles and ATVs/UTVs.
3. Encourage the development and enhancement of community parks that prioritize safety, accessibility, and inclusive design providing recreational access for all residents and visitors.

4. Promote improved visibility and access to natural resources through the development of community-oriented natural parks, trails, and scenic areas.
5. Develop a community calendar of events that can be hosted on a website, to promote community events and locations.
6. Encourage the enhancement of local recreational infrastructure by improving trail connectivity, expanding diverse activity opportunities, and incorporating ADA-compliant and accessible design principles.
7. Promote a variety of recreational facilities, including courts, trails, and multi-use spaces, in coordination with village residents and local organizations.

Potential Projects

- Develop a park behind the Denmark Town Hall or in the hamlet of Deer River.
- Create a disc golf course off of the river trail in the Village of Castorland.
- Create a natural park along Mill Street (behind the Cottage Inn) in the Village of Copenhagen.
- Upgrade the 1.5-mile walking trail in the Village of Castorland to connect “pocket parks.”
- Develop a community calendar of events to be shared on municipal websites.
- Explore the construction of a pickleball court and half-court basketball court in the Village of Castorland.
- Promote the construction of a village park behind the old fire hall in the Village of Copenhagen.
- Explore the development of an ice rink park at the intersection of Maiden and Washington Streets that aligns with the Village of Copenhagen Downtown Community Design Plan (2009).

PART III. LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

This section of the comprehensive identifies the land use policies that, when implemented, will guide development in the town and villages over the next 10 to 20 years. The policies provided in this section may be implemented through existing or new Smart Growth management techniques such as site plan review, zoning, and subdivision regulations.

BASIC DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

1. Concentrate development near existing infrastructure and village centers.

Development should be prioritized in already developed areas where sewer and water systems, sidewalks, and streetlights exist and are easier to expand.

2. Plan housing growth in line with the county housing analysis and comprehensive plan. These documents are useful for integrating local needs with a regional-wide perspective and strategy.

3. The villages and hamlets should be compact and have well-defined edges.

Development should occur (to the extent possible) within a ½ mile radius of the center. Infill development on empty lots is highly encouraged.

4. Lot sizes and frontages should generally increase and land use diversity should decrease from the village and hamlet centers outward. Smaller lots and a more diverse mix of uses should occur at the center.

5. Development patterns should take their cue from street layout, not from lot lines. Development should not create stand-alone pods that are the result of carving the most lots out of a given parcel.

6. All streets should (to the extent possible) connect two other streets and form a block pattern. Cul de sacs and loop streets should be allowed sparingly.

7. Development in villages and hamlets should form mixed-use neighborhoods.

Neighborhoods should be predominantly residential with occasional small commercial uses at corners and some nodes of purely commercial or industrial uses located at the edges.

8. Highway commercial development should be concentrated at major intersections to allow access from several directions. Aside from the fact that these locations give businesses better access, these locations alleviate traffic because cars can disperse in three or more directions (as opposed to two if a business is located in the middle of a road segment).

PRESERVING SENSITIVE LANDS

There are numerous areas in the Town of Denmark and the Villages of Castorland and Copenhagen that have limited suitability or unsuitable for development. There are other areas where development should be avoided due to the valuable natural character of the area in which the character would be lost or damaged if disturbed. Areas which are either unsuitable or fragile include floodplains, wetlands, steep slopes, and stream corridors.

Floodplains

Character: Floodplains are areas which are completely inundated at certain times with water. They are usually divided between a floodway and a fringe area. The floodway is the area where floodwaters must be free to flow completely unrestricted. The adjacent fringe areas are flooded but are not as critical to floodwater flow.

Where located: Certain floodplains have been mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) (see the Development Constraints map in Appendix E). These include flood hazard areas which have a probability of flooding at least once in 100 years. These areas include but are not limited to the Black River, Deer River, and adjacent low-lying areas that are susceptible to flooding.

Consequences of Development: These areas are considered severe hazards to development. Floodway areas must remain completely undeveloped, as any structures in these areas may act as obstructions which impede floodwaters, thus increasing damage and loss further upstream of the obstruction. The fringe areas may be subject to limited development where base flood elevations will not be increased. Any development which increases base flood elevations will increase flooding upstream.

Wetlands

Character: Wetlands are areas where groundwater is exposed on the surface of the ground. These areas often act as recharge areas, areas for filtering and cleaning water, and as significant wildlife habitat.

The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) currently regulates wetlands that are 12.4 acres or larger, or those identified as having unusual local importance. Beginning January 1, 2028, regulated wetlands will include those that are 7.4 acres or larger, as well as wetlands of any size that are classified as having unusual importance. Based on the DEC's informational wetlands map, wetlands are scattered throughout the Town, with the larger and more significant wetlands located in the flood zones along the Black River.

Consequences of Development: Wetlands are generally considered a severe hazard to development. Development can lead to loss of valuable and irreplaceable wildlife habitat. Wetlands are particularly important as they may directly recharge groundwater

supplies and are vulnerable to pollution. Thus, in areas where potable water is obtained from ground water, some wetlands need a high level of protection. Development can also lead to a loss of valuable open space. Development of these areas is expensive, as landfill is usually needed and flood protection is often necessary.

Steep Slopes

Character: These are areas which have slopes greater than 10 percent, which means that there is a vertical rise of ten feet for each 100 feet of horizontal distance.

Where located: Steep slopes are scattered throughout Denmark, with the highest concentration near the center of the town (see the Development Constraints map in Appendix E).

Consequences of Development: Slopes of less than 10 percent are generally considered slight constraints on development. Slopes of between 10 and 15 percent are generally considered moderate constraints on development. Slopes of greater than 15 percent are considered severe constraints on development. The development of slopes is not recommended for several reasons. There are some environmental concerns, such as erosion and stream sedimentation. It is also more expensive for communities to service development on steep slopes with roads, water lines, and sewage facilities.

Stream Corridors

Character: Stream corridors act as important fish and wildlife habitats. They may be important for their significance as drainage conduits. Some have relatively steep slopes.

Where located: Named streams include Stebbins Creek, Stony Creek, Negro Creek, and the Deer River.

Consequences of Development: Stream corridors must be developed carefully so as not to destroy their amenity. Improper development can lead to erosion of the stream banks, resulting in siltation of the stream and the loss of stabilizing soil. Water quality can be impaired, and the recreational use of the stream degraded. The aesthetic qualities of the stream may likewise be destroyed by improper development, thus degrading the quality of life in the town.

Climate Adaptation Strategies

The Lewis County Hazard Mitigation Plan promotes climate adaptation through green infrastructure that manages flooding and protects wetlands. Strategies include restoring natural floodplains, improving stormwater infiltration, and preserving wetland areas to reduce runoff and erosion. Coordination with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) will ensure local actions align with state floodplain management, wetland protection, and climate resilience programs.

LAND USE

Town of Denmark

The character and location of the Town of Denmark outside the villages is rural. The town consists of woodlands, farms, manufactured homes, and low-density residential development of single-family dwellings. Other non-residential uses and land features within the town include commercial, industrial, wetlands, and flood hazard areas. Agriculture is important to the economy of both the town and the region. Agriculture operations create employment opportunities, support agri-business, and agri-tourism opportunities. It is also associated with developing the culture and rural atmosphere that residents overwhelmingly identified as important. The rural atmosphere is created by open space, farm fields, pastures, farm buildings and outbuildings. Amish owned farms also contribute to the rural aesthetic in their unique way while maintaining the active production of prime farmland.

The Hamlet of Deer River is located in the northeastern portion of the town along NYS Route-26. Land use in Deer River is primarily low-density residential, consisting of single-family homes. Surrounding areas include agricultural lands, forested areas, and open space resembling the town's rural character. The Deer River runs through the hamlet with riverbanks preserving environmental, recreational, and scenic amenities. The Hamlet of Denmark is centrally located within the town at the intersection of NYS Route-26 and Old State Road. Land use in the hamlet is a mix of residential, limited commercial, and civic uses, with small clusters of single-family homes. There are also small businesses and institutional buildings such as the Denmark Mennonite Church and municipal buildings. Surrounding areas include agricultural lands, open space, and forested areas which contribute to the town's rural setting. The Black River lies east of the hamlet and provides recreational and scenic opportunities.

Challenges to agriculture in the area are the loss of family-owned, small farms and the loss of prime farmland for residential purposes. A decrease in family-owned, small farms can result in a loss of diverse farming practices, a loss of town identity and character, negatively impact local food production, and increase dependency on large-scale farms. Residential properties in agricultural areas can be impacted by agricultural operations. Residents must understand the nature of such operations which include heavy machinery, use of chemicals, spreading of manure, noise, lights, and smells when building or purchasing homes in agricultural areas.

The protection and preservation of agricultural land is important to preserve the rural character of the town. With 97% of the Town located in an agricultural district, and limited infrastructure, development pressures in the town are relatively low. Amish farmers are buying farmland which further preserves prime agricultural land and soil while maintaining the rural atmosphere of the town. Opportunities for development exist for agricultural related industries and businesses. This includes the further expansion and development of Johnson's Lumber Industrial Park coordinated by the Lewis County Planning Department and Naturally Lewis. Johnson's Lumber Industrial Park is located

along NYS Route-26, northeast of the Hamlet of Denmark, in the town. The site is surrounded by forested land and open space with direct access to key transportation routes (NYS-26). Its location provides a buffer from nearby residential areas protecting the residents' quality of life. The development of agricultural operations should be in conjunction with the 2021 Lewis County Agricultural and Farmland Enhancement Plan. This plan provides a vision, goals, and strategies to ensure that agriculture remains a sustainable and key industry in Lewis County.

The Town of Denmark (excluding the villages) is divided into multiple zoning districts that accommodate a mix of agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial, and conservation uses. Certain areas permit manufactured home parks by special permit, while riverfront conservation zones protect lands along the Black and Deer Rivers. The town also includes highway/mixed-use and industrial districts, providing flexibility for commercial and economic development.

Village of Copenhagen

The Village of Copenhagen consists of commercial uses, small business, and residential properties with agriculture land on the periphery. The village's Main Street area is situated along NYS Route-12 and consists of commercial uses and small businesses, several with traditional storefronts. The Main Street façades could be revitalized to support the infill of small, local businesses and improvement of the streetscape. The design of the main street area should incorporate mixed-use development to provide affordable housing options located above small businesses. Main Street revitalization efforts can promote walkability and should be completed in collaboration with Lewis County's Complete Streets efforts, the Lewis County Downtown Design Guidelines, and the Village of Copenhagen Downtown Community Design Plan created on February 26, 2009 by Behan Planning and Design.

Residential areas in the village are composed of single-family dwellings and apartment complexes. Apartment complexes include Happy Acres-McNeil Park, Sunburst, and Pinecrest Manor apartments which offer low-income housing managed by Snowbelt Housing Company, Inc. Options for additional housing development include vacant land adjacent to NYS Route-12, Stoddard Street, and Woodbattle Road. For development to occur, infrastructure will need to be developed for water, sewer, and electricity. Although the village does not have a zoning law, development should comply with the 2022 Housing Needs and Market Analysis for Lewis County, and the 2024 Lewis County Downtown Design Guide and the Village's existing land use regulations which include the Site Plan Review Law, Subdivision Law, Outdoor Wood Burning Furnace Law, Property Maintenance Law, and Junkyard Law. With the future potential for development, the village should consider adopting a traditional, robust zoning law.

Village of Castorland

The village is situated along NYS Route-410 and consists of residential and small business uses with agriculture uses on the periphery. Residential areas are composed

of single-family dwellings and apartment complexes. Karcher Country Estates provides low-income apartment units for residents. The village is situated along NYS Route-410 and consists of residential and small business uses. With limited availability of developable land, the village would benefit from infill and mixed-use developments. Opportunities for such development include the Castorland Hotel, which could support a small business with affordable housing units above. Land behind Karcher County Estates could be used to support the development of additional housing structures. However, in the absence of a zoning law, development should consider the 2022 Housing Needs and Market Analysis for Lewis County to steer housing development. Although the Village of Castorland does not have a robust zoning law it does have local laws which include a Site Plan Review Law, Subdivision Law, and Outdoor Boiler Law.

With the need for market rate housing and senior housing, the town and especially the villages can encourage the development of accessory dwelling units (ADUs). ADUs can provide additional affordable housing opportunities, increase population density, and allow senior residents to age in place. ADUs can be an attached or detached stand-alone dwelling unit that is equipped with separate kitchen, bathroom, and living area separate from the principal dwelling unit.

Land Use and Development Guidance

Rural Areas Outside Villages and Hamlets

- Limit development in riparian areas, wetlands, and flood-prone areas.
- Encourage conservation easements and protection of scenic and ecological assets.
- Land subdivisions should preserve large lots of agricultural and wooded lands whenever possible.
- Residential lots should be large enough to ensure that sewage, which is disposed of onsite can safely percolate, and that wells will not overdraw groundwater supplies.
- Lot frontages outside should be wide enough for adequate spacing of driveways.
- Trees, vegetation and other landscape features such as stone fences should be retained as much as possible on development sites. Uses should be appropriately landscaped so as to fit into the rural setting.
- Sites should be designed to protect important animal and plant habitats.
- Maintain rural aesthetics through context-sensitive design and open space preservation.
- Nonfarm intrusions into agricultural areas should be minimized, thus minimizing conflicts with existing agricultural operations.
- Encourage agri-business, agri-tourism, and support for small and Amish-owned farms.
- Promote small-scale commercial uses compatible with rural settings.
- Infrastructure, such as cell towers, solar, and wind facilities should be sited so as not to detract from the rural character.

- Signs should be limited and placed so as to minimize impacts on naturally aesthetic views.

Village and Hamlet Centers

- Support adaptive reuse of underutilized structures for mixed-use or commercial purposes.
- Mixed-use development in the downtown areas should be encouraged.
- Sidewalks and street trees should be provided.
- New construction should respect the architectural character of neighboring buildings.
- Promote façade improvements and infill development to attract local businesses and housing.
- New buildings should be four stories or less in height to match the character of neighboring structures.
- Buildings should respect a maximum setback or “build-to” line.
- Parking should be to the rear of buildings.
- Use design guides and Complete Streets principles to enhance walkability and streetscape quality.

Village and Hamlet Residential Areas

- Lots should be predominantly at or below 1/2 acre so that efficient use of existing infrastructure (sewer system, sidewalks, etc.) is made.
- Future streets should be laid out in a block pattern that respects the current one.
- Sidewalks and street trees should be provided.
- Residential uses should be relatively close to the street.
- Multi-family dwellings require parking to rear, adequate space, screening, bulk control, sidewalks and street orientation.
- Expand affordable, senior, and market-rate housing using infill, vacant land, and mixed-use design.
- Encourage accessory dwelling units (ADUs) for affordability and aging in place.
- New construction in should respect the architectural character of neighboring buildings.
- Buildings should mostly be three stories or less in height.
- Buildings should respect a maximum setback or “build-to” line.
- Where parking lots abut residential uses, buffering/screening should be provided.

Industrial Areas

- Manufacturing uses should be buffered and screened from residential areas.
- Lighting on manufacturing lots should be shielded and downfacing to limit light pollution on adjacent properties and roadways.

Highway Commercial Areas

- Where parking lots abut residential uses, buffering/screening should be provided.
- New curb-cuts should be limited and shared access should be encouraged or required.
- Highway commercial uses and buildings should be developed in an aesthetically pleasing way as these areas are located at the entrances to the villages.
- Free standing signs should have height and size limitations.

PART IV. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Goals	Strategy	Responsible Party	Suggested Timeline	Notes/Advisory
PROMOTE DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION	Develop façade improvement grants and streetscape enhancement.	Town Board / Village Boards / Local Business Association	1 - 3 Years	Coordinate with regional economic development programs to maximize funding.
IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN AND BIKE CONNECTIVITY	Construct sidewalks, bike lanes, and crosswalk improvements along key corridors.	Town Highway Department / Village DPWs / NYSDOT	2 - 5 Years	Prioritize routes near schools and commercial centers.
ENHANCE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT	Implement green infrastructure, retention basins, and street tree plantings.	Town Highway Department / Village DPWs / County Planning / Environmental Consultants	3 - 5 Years	Develop a phased approach to reduce budget impact and encourage grant eligibility.
PRESERVE AGRICULTURAL LANDS	Update zoning overlay districts to protect prime farmland.	Town Planning Board / Village Boards / Agricultural Advisory Committees	1 - 2 Years	Reference NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets guidelines.
EXPAND BROADBAND ACCESS	Partner with providers to identify service gaps and incentives for expansion.	Town Board / Village Boards / County IT / Private Providers	1 - 4 Years	Explore state and federal broadband grant programs to reduce local costs.
INCREASE AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPTIONS	Encourage mixed-use developments and accessory dwelling units (ADUs).	Town Planning Board / Village Boards / Developers	2 - 5 Years	Ensure compliance with NYS housing policy and Fair Housing Act requirements.
PROMOTE TOURISM AND RECREATION	Develop trail systems, signage, and marketing campaigns.	Town Board / Village Boards / Chamber of Commerce	1 - 3 Years	Coordinate with regional tourism initiatives.
STRENGTHEN MUNICIPAL COORDINATION	Establish intermunicipal working groups for shared services.	Town Board / Village Boards / County Government	1 - 2 Years	Focus on cost savings, shared grant applications, and coordinated planning.

APPENDIX A

**2024 Town of Denmark, Villages of Castorland and
Copenhagen Community Survey**

Final Results: July 31, 2024

The Town of Denmark and Villages of Castorland and Copenhagen mailed out 830 postcards with a URL and QR code for online access to the survey in July. One hundred (108) surveys were completed online. This is a 13% response rate which is not a good representation of the majority of the population.

1. What is your residency status?

26 (24%) Village of Copenhagen Resident	51 (47%) Town Resident (outside of Villages)
5 (5%) Hamlet of Deer River Resident	26 (24%) Village of Castorland Resident

2. What are your reasons for choosing to live/work at your current residence? What aspects would DISCOURAGE you from staying in the community? (Choose all that apply).

	Reasons for Live/Work	Discourage
Distance to work	32 (30%)	13 (13%)
Distance to friends and relatives	50 (47%)	12 (12%)
Affordable housing	24 (23%)	13 (13%)
Tax Rates	15 (14%)	64 (63%)
Quality of life	50 (47%)	18 (18%)
Quality of schools	35 (33%)	6 (6%)
Historic buildings	0 (0%)	1 (1%)
Crime rate	36 (34%)	26 (25%)
Sense of community and community pride	25 (24%)	7 (7%)
Rural atmosphere	66 (62%)	6 (6%)
Proximity to nature and outdoor recreational opportunities	24 (23%)	5 (5%)
Own a business	9 (9%)	0 (0%)
Grew up in Town	37 (35%)	0 (0%)
Childcare/daycare	0 (0%)	8 (8%)
Rate of pay/salary	1 (1%)	0 (0%)
Quality of Services	6 (6%)	22 (22%)

3. How satisfied are you with the quality of life in the community? (Please mark only one circle).

Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
30 (29%)	50 (48%)	19 (18%)	5 (5%)	1 (1%)

4. How important is it to preserve the character of the community? (Please choose one answer).

Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
50 (48%)	40 (38%)	12 (12%)	2 (2%)

5. From the following list, what characteristics of the area do you like or dislike? (Please mark one choice per row).

	Like	Dislike	No Opinion
Rural atmosphere	100	2	4
Small population	96	2	8
Farmland	92	2	12
Small Town government	63	15	27
Absence of public water/sewer	14	19	67
Access of public water/sewer	49	14	41
Absence of industry	26	46	32

6. How do you feel the community has changed over the last two years? (Please check each one that applies).

36 (35%) No change	18 (17%) More/Less population	14 (13%) Improved roads
10 (10%) Recreational development	14 (13%) More/Less farmland	4 (4%) New camps
7 (7%) More/Less people on weekends	26 (25%) More/Less Junk	27 (26%) Abandoned structures
12 (12%) More/Less crime		

7. Which of the following issues are you concerned about?

79 (76%) Property taxes	43 (41%) Road maintenance
13 (13%) Uncontrolled dogs	17 (16%) Stream quality
29 (28%) Job availability	45 (43%) Fire & police services
7 (7%) Hunting & fishing	17 (16%) ATV's
23 (22%) River quality	11 (11%) Snowmobiles
1 (1%) Tourists	32 (31%) Solar development
12 (12%) Pollution problems	5 (5%) Volunteering/Volunteer opportunities
17 (16%) Decreasing Population	

8. What kinds of development would you like to see in the Town and the Villages? (Choose all that apply).

	Yes	No Opinion	No
Manufacturing	44	29	28
Retail	60	28	13
Restaurants	77	19	6
Grocery store	57	33	12
Agriculture	58	38	4
Forestry	39	52	7
Light industry	49	38	13
Tourism	39	47	16
Wind turbine	22	30	47
Solar facilities	21	27	52
Recreational trails	68	16	16
Public transportation	47	46	8

9. What type of housing development should be ENCOURAGED/DISCOURAGED in the Town and the Villages? (Choose all that apply).

	Encouraged	Discouraged
Single-family housing	80 (79%)	2 (2%)
Multi-family housing	27 (27%)	26 (26%)
Condominiums/Town houses	8 (8%)	45 (45%)
Senior housing	51 (51%)	4 (4%)
Apartments	25 (25%)	30 (30%)
Single-family dwelling converted to apartments	8 (8%)	26 (26%)
Tract or development housing	4 (4%)	55 (55%)
Mobile homes	4 (4%)	44 (44%)
Seasonal residences	11 (11%)	16 (16%)
Short-term rentals (ex. Airbnb)	7 (7%)	28 (28%)
Tiny homes	19 (19%)	15 (15%)
None	3 (3%)	7 (7%)

10. Where should new HOUSING DEVELOPMENT be concentrated within the Town of Denmark?

Village of Castorland	15 (15%)
Village of Copenhagen	29 (29%)
Hamlet of Deer River	26 (26%)
Other Areas	31 (31%)

11. What type of commercial developments should be ENCOURAGED/DISCOURAGED in the Town and Villages? (Choose all that apply).

	Encouraged	Discouraged
Bar	18 (18%)	46 (46%)
Family style restaurants	79 (77%)	0 (0%)
Large business	14 (14%)	43 (43%)
Home-based business	49 (48%)	0 (0%)
Offices	28 (27%)	16 (16%)
Garden center	44 (43%)	0 (0%)
Gas station/garage	34 (33%)	11 (11%)
Light manufacturing	44 (43%)	9 (9%)
Forestry	27 (26%)	3 (3%)
Agriculture	48 (47%)	3 (3%)
Cannabis cultivation/sales	15 (15%)	60 (60%)
Solar facilities	18 (18%)	59 (59%)
Wind towers	16 (17%)	50 (50%)

12. Where should new COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT be concentrated within the Town of Denmark?

Village of Castorland	14 (14%)
Village of Copenhagen	34 (34%)
Hamlet of Deer River	21 (21%)
Other Areas	30 (30%)

APPENDIX B**Village of Castorland SWOT Exercise**

Session Facilitated by: Christopher Barboza, Matthew Smith, Mickey Dietrich, and Pual Shephard NYS Tug Hill Commission

Thursday, April 11, 2024 –Village of Castorland Municipal Building – 6:30 p.m.

In attendance:

Heidi Lehmann
Merv Moser
Prudence Greene
Scott Doyle
Donna Diller
Ingrid Moshier
Scott Moshier
Gary Ashline

STRENGTHS (Current)

- No zoning
- Infrastructure water and sewer (partnership with DANC)
- Proximity to the Black River; recreational opportunities (boat launch, fishing, kayaking)
- Strong community support: Fire Department
- Good playground with little library in the pavilion
- Village garbage pickup
- Annual tractor parade (July 4)
- Old railroad bed
- Low taxes: houses sell fast, draws people into village
- Small population
- Recreational walking trail
- Location of village provides natural view shed (aesthetic)
- Village proximity to Fort Drum and Lowville School District
- Brand new fire hall
- New municipal building

WEAKNESSES (Current)

- Lack of childcare/day care
- Lack of public interest to fulfill local government positions
- Need to travel at least 10 miles for shopping: proximity to Carthage, Lowville, and Croghan
- No room for expansion/land-locked
- Mosquitos from flooding: flood plain by boat launch
- Size of plow equipment has outgrown narrow streets within the village
- Climax Street: lacking sidewalks on both sides (hinders walkability)
- Lack of small diners/eateries
- Limited employment opportunities
- Lack of available housing
- Public interest in municipal meetings

OPPORTUNITIES (Future)

- Bridge reconstruction/redeveloped boat launch
- Shared services between the Villages of Castorland and Copenhagen (garbage, water, sewer)
- Village owned, undeveloped land: expansion of walking trail, creation of a sledding hill at the playground during winter
- Town/Village of Lowville recreation program: shared costs from Village of Castorland/Town of Denmark for kids attending program

- Rail
- More grain production around Castorland; currently requires far travel distance to load onto rail, opportunity for transportation development
- State House (owned by NYS): Village could purchase and convert to a daycare facility or other amenity
- Housing for military members
- Open land across from municipal building; development of a pavilion to support users of potential Rails to Trail development

THREATS (Future)

- Persistent flooding
- Low household income but same tax rate as Village of Copenhagen
- Public service “burnout”, lack of public interest/involvement, lack of candidates for elections
- Long commute time for residents to work; travel time takes time away from community involvement

Newspaper headlines in five years read:

“New Ice Cream Shop Opens”

“Motorized Vehicles Banned from Rails to Trails through Castorland”

“New Business Opens”

“Tractor Parade Participation Triples”

“New Stewart Shop Opens”

“Grand-Opening of Local Community Center with Local Recreation Program”

“Castorland Completes Water Tower Project”

Town of Denmark SWOT Exercise

Session Facilitated by: Christopher Barboza, Jillian Lee, Mickey Dietrich, and Pual Shephard NYS Tug Hill Commission

Thursday, April 18, 2024 –Town of Denmark Municipal Building – 6:30 p.m.

In attendance:

Prudence Greene

Scott Doyle

Kevin Gaines

STRENGTHS (Current)

- Primarily, entire town is located in Agricultural District (97%)
- Average age population is 35.8 years old
- Average family income is \$70,895
- Town government is well managed and engaged
- Excellent relationships with all Emergency Services
- Excellent relationships with Village Boards (Copenhagen and Castorland)
- In-house building and codes, and zoning
- Denmark facilities and equipment are well maintained
- Denmark water district infrastructure is relatively new
- Forward thinking (planning): green energy, environmental protection (salt barn project), established reserves
- Equipment upgrades planning and income investment planning
- Large corporate type farms and open grain farms are filling the void of disappearing family-sized farms
- 90% of residents remain in the Town year after year
- Seasonal snow for tourism
- RACOG and Tug Hill Commission Members provide lots of benefits (grant development opportunities)
- Copenhagen Central School is excellent; major employer
- Growing maple syrup industry
- Town reserve funds are now managed
- Ability to fill local government vacancies through community participation and succession planning
- Town has four campgrounds (two on the river) and two golf courses
- Black River and Deer River

WEAKNESSES (Current)

- Lack of industry
- Lack of employment and daycare opportunities
- Lack of community events in the town outside of villages (villages host community events)
- No public spaces (public benches, parks, ball fields)
- Limited water infrastructure outside of villages; no sewer infrastructure outside of villages
- Little room for new business development due to limited infrastructure
- Small resident involvement in local government at town level (public meetings)
- No room for low income or managed housing due to infrastructure
- Young adults are leaving Denmark for better job markets with higher salaries
- Town does not own land outside of municipal building (3707 Roberts Rd)
- Shrinking family farm numbers (non-Amish)
- Large corporate farm equipment causing infrastructure deterioration (roads, culverts, etc.)
- Proximity to a main thoroughfare for shipping and transportation
- No public facilities for youth and family enrichment
- Denmark is heavily dependent on the existence of Fort Drum and the Copenhagen Central School
- No local market for farms
- No senior facilities: no way to support seniors (hot summers-don't have ACs)
- High/Increasing taxes

- Lewis County keeps sales tax revenue
- Increase in costs for ambulance services
- Lack of specialized health care regionally

OPPORTUNITIES (Future)

- Copenhagen water line connection to West Carthage (increase house values, new house developments)
- Engage Lewis County Government on growth opportunities (grain storage and shipping facilities, rail development, developing Town infrastructure)
- Expansion of water and sewer infrastructure to enhance development opportunities
- Finding and funding water development within the town (Deer River area)
- Development of a family type park/facility in Denmark (Deer River area)
- Acquisition of property for future development in Deer River (publicized as family friendly)
- Infrastructure that will support agricultural equipment sized for corporate farms
- Grant funding for cemetery upgrades
- Identify and acquire blighted properties with Naturally Lewis and Lewis County that can be rehabilitated (grant funded), sold, and placed back on tax roles
- Development of dedicated snowmobile trail system, enhance tourism traffic from Tug Hill Region
- Development of low-income housing with Lewis County Government support
- Shared services with Lewis County Highway on duplication of highway equipment
- Shared services for town water operators with Villages of Copenhagen and Castorland
- Investigate future shared services with Lewis County real property and assessors
- Efficiency analysis of cost for town to perform certain functions (plowing, mowing, administrative functions, full-time court clerk)
- Efficiency improvements in highway department
- Electronic digital sign for information dissemination to taxpayers in addition to town website
- Development of a meat packing plant (increase job opportunities, support agricultural operations – beef farms, fit with agricultural character)

THREATS (Future)

- Good potable water source specific to Copenhagen and Denmark water district users
- Shrinking population in town and villages
- Heavily reliant on Federal Government, Fort Drum, and school system
- Consolidation of schools
- Lewis County keeps sales tax
- Inflation increases costs at the town level, which increases taxes, and stifles housing development
- PILOT for wind farm has 15 years remaining
- RPT 575b implications (decreasing tax value): loss of home rule governance of green energy expansion, impact to fire district funds requiring increase in tax
- State laws governing fire departments and EMS operations and training requirements: increase makes it difficult to maintain operations and people involved due to time commitments
- Cemetery associations are going broke
- Money for upkeep of roads/infrastructure

Newspaper headlines in five years read:

“Denmark Holds Community Days”

“Denmark-Deer River Park Opens”

“Shared Services Sewer District Formed in Deer River”

“Town of Denmark Acquires Land for Sewer and Water Treatment Plant Facility”

“Town of Denmark and Lewis County Develop Low-Income Housing Program through Home Rehabilitation”

Village of Copenhagen SWOT Exercise

Session Facilitated by: Christopher Barboza, Matt Johnson, Matthew Smith, and Mickey Dietrich NYS Tug Hill Commission

Thursday, May 10, 2024 – Copenhagen Central School (Cafeteria) – 6:30 p.m.

In attendance:

Mark Souva
Kim Vogt
Shareef Stokely
Diane Mahar
Patty Bates
Heidi Lehman
Jackson Augustine
Kimberly Augustine
Ryan Augustine
Eric Johnson
Scott Doyle

STRENGTHS (Current)

- School
 - Small, but allows for one-on-one experience (teacher/student ratio)
 - Staff and faculty from the community (increases connectedness)
 - Technologically strong
 - Good grant writers
- Geographic location, centrally located
- Safe community
- Access to amenities, basic services
- Diverse religious community
- Amish community
- Strong Town and Village leadership
- Streets open to ATVs and snowmobiles
- Lavendar Festival
- Maple industry
- Youth sports and alumni banquet
- Winter sports
- Outdoors sports (hunting & fishing)
- Working with BOCES students on projects for the village

WEAKNESSES (Current)

- Demographics: losing young people
- Lack of businesses: the village has basic businesses, but not much competition
- Water source: limits development
- Not much room in the village to grow: municipal boundary
- Large geographic area to cover by essential/emergency services
- Lack of community participation
- Lack of code enforcement
- Sidewalk infrastructure
- Speeding through the village (NYS-12)
- Lack of volunteerism
- Winter
- Lack of housing inventory
- Potholes
- Snow removal areas: snow storage

OPPORTUNITIES (Future)

- Downtown streetscape
- Rivers (Deer/Black River): recreation and development?
- Land: developable parcels
- Fort Drum missile defense system
- Code enforcement (property maintenance, parking issues)
- Fire department: potential community hub?
- Water: joint water commission with Carthage and West Carthage
- Sidewalk infrastructure
- “Walking school bus”
- Agri-tourism: farmers’ market – pavilion as a space to hold market
- Utilize trail systems: ATVs/snowmobiles. Effective marketing?
- Promote winterfest
- Maple industry
- Grant funding for water infrastructure/drainage/flooding (potential NY Forward)
- Shared services
- Childcare opportunities
- Working with BOCES students on projects for the village

THREATS (Future)

- Speeding through the village (NYS-12)
- Water
- Fort Drum: increase or decrease in growth
- Lack of investment: all kinds
- Lack of maintenance has led to necessary updates/upgrades to water/sewer infrastructure: cost of updates/upgrades could result in higher taxes
- Wild animals: beavers causing flooding due to dams
- Geographic area is prone to flooding: poor drainage system
- A lot of unknowns about the location and status of infrastructure
- Larger municipalities not addressing problems within the town/village
- Resistance to change or higher tax rates
- Heavy traffic due to Stewart’s shop expansion: diesel gas provided with expansion
- Traffic enforcement of recreational vehicles
- Lack of crosswalks

Newspaper headlines in five years read:

“Soccer State Championship”

“Village Receives State Grant for Infrastructure”

“New Carthage/West Carthage to Copenhagen Water Line Ensures Future of the Village”

“Shared Services Between the Town and Villages Becomes a Model for Other Municipalities”

“Zoning Board Approves a 10-House Subdivision Plan”

“Multiple Festivals Successful in Copenhagen”

“Copenhagen Business Receives Small Business of the Year Award”

“Meat Market Makes Community Marvel”

**APPENDIX C
ELIGIBLE HISTORIC STRUCTURES/SITES**

Eligible Sites

Town of Denmark

USN	Type	Name	Photo
04902.000001	Building	Freedom Wright's Inn - 9918 NY 26, Denmark NY	
04902.000002	Building	Blodgett Inn & Tavern - 9977 NY 26, Denmark NY	
04902.000003	Building	Jesse Blodgett House - 9993 NY 26, Denmark NY	
04902.000006	Building	Cook House - 9905 NY 26, Denmark NY	

04902.000009	Building	Norton-Dunham-Knapp House - 9906 NY 26, Denmark NY	
04902.000059	Building	Denmark Hillside Cemetery - 9548 NY 26, Denmark NY	
04902.000060	Building	10207 Old State Rd, Denmark NY	
04902.000061	Building	-10051 Old State Rd, Denmark NY	
04902.000062	Building	-9304 SR 26, Denmark NY	

04902.000063	Building	10740 Old State Rd, Denmark NY	
04902.000082	Building	Austin Cemetery - 9550 Mud Street Rd, Denmark NY	
04902.000085	Building	Harrison Blodgett House - 10051 NY 26, Denmark NY	

Village of Copenhagen

USN	Type	Name	Photo
04943.000051	Building	St. Mary's Church - 9790 NY 12, Copenhagen NY	
04943.000052	Building	St. Mary's Rectory - 9790 NY 12, Copenhagen NY	

04943.000053	Building	The Cottage Inn - 9794 NY 12, Copenhagen NY	
04943.000054	Building	Monument Park - NY 12, Copenhagen NY	
04943.000055	Building	9854 NY 12, Copenhagen NY	
04943.000075	Building	9972 NY 12, Copenhagen NY	
04943.000076	Building	Residence, Frame Greek Revival w/temple front - 9978 NY 12, Copenhagen NY	

04943.000091	Building	Copenhagen Central School Main Building - 3020 Mechanic Street, Copenhagen NY	
04943.000096	Building	Queen Anne Residence - 2968 Cataract St, Copenhagen NY	
04943.000101	Building	United Church of Copenhagen (Congregational Church 1880) 9932 NY 12, Copenhagen NY	
04943.000102	Building	Residence, Frame Greek Revival - 2963 Mechanic St, Copenhagen NY	
04943.000103	Building	Riverside Cemetery - 3018 Cataract St, Copenhagen NY	

04943.000116	Building	Baptist Society of Copenhagen - 1033 Washington St, Copenhagen NY	
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APPENDIX E

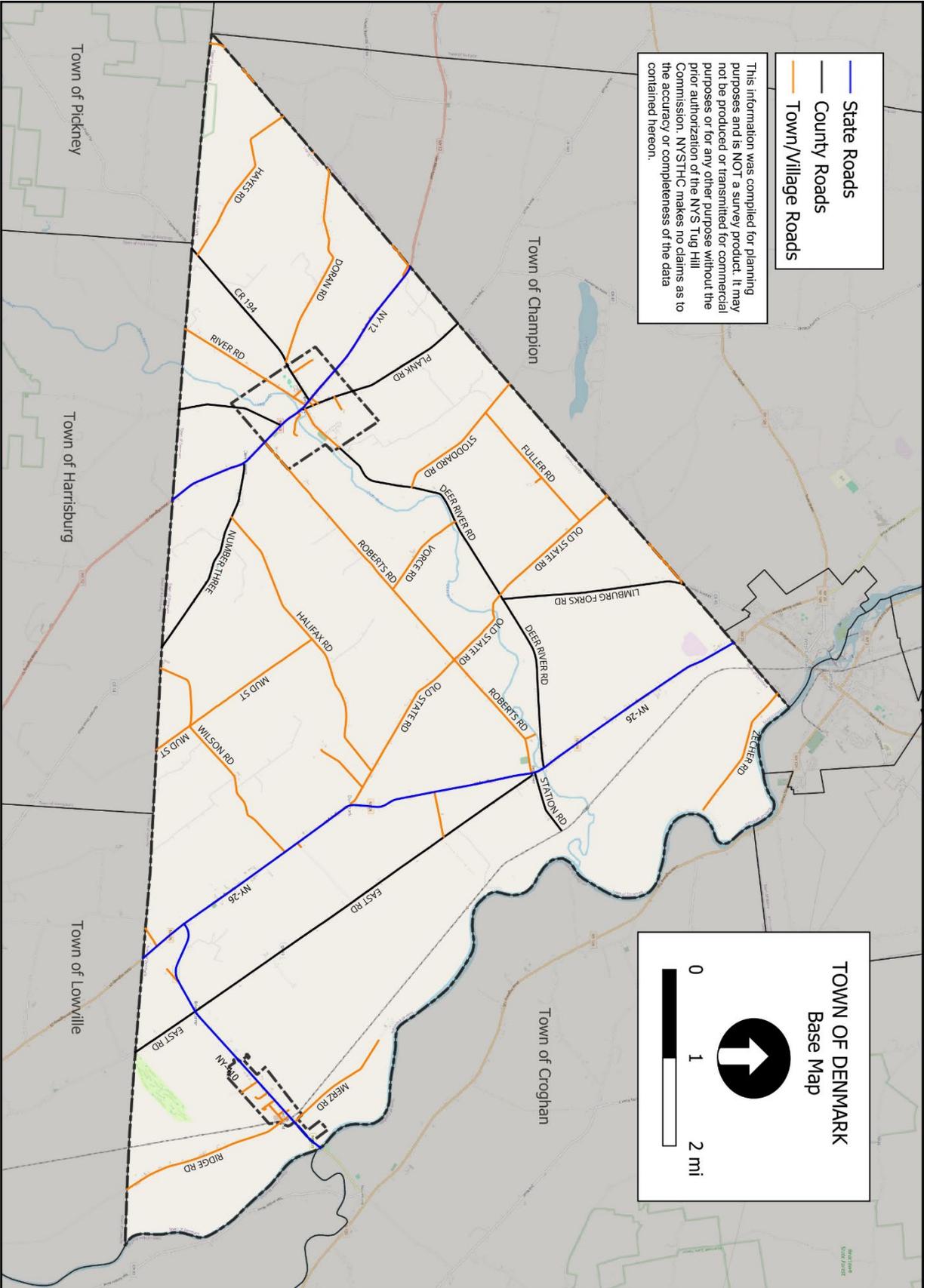
Base Map

Assessed Land Use Map

Public Lands Map

Development Constraints Map

Zoning Map



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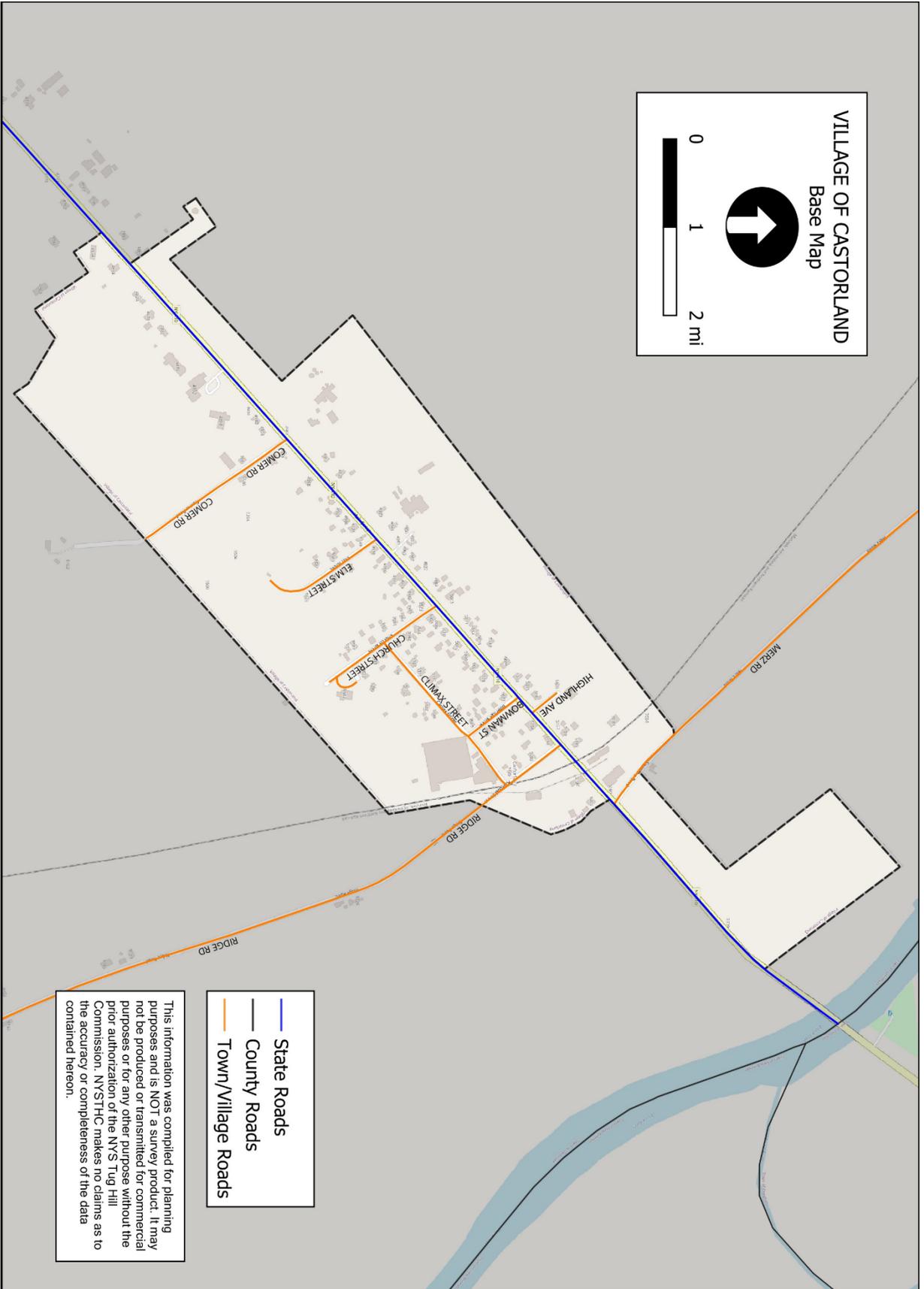
- State Roads
- County Roads
- Town/Village Roads

TOWN OF DENMARK
Base Map





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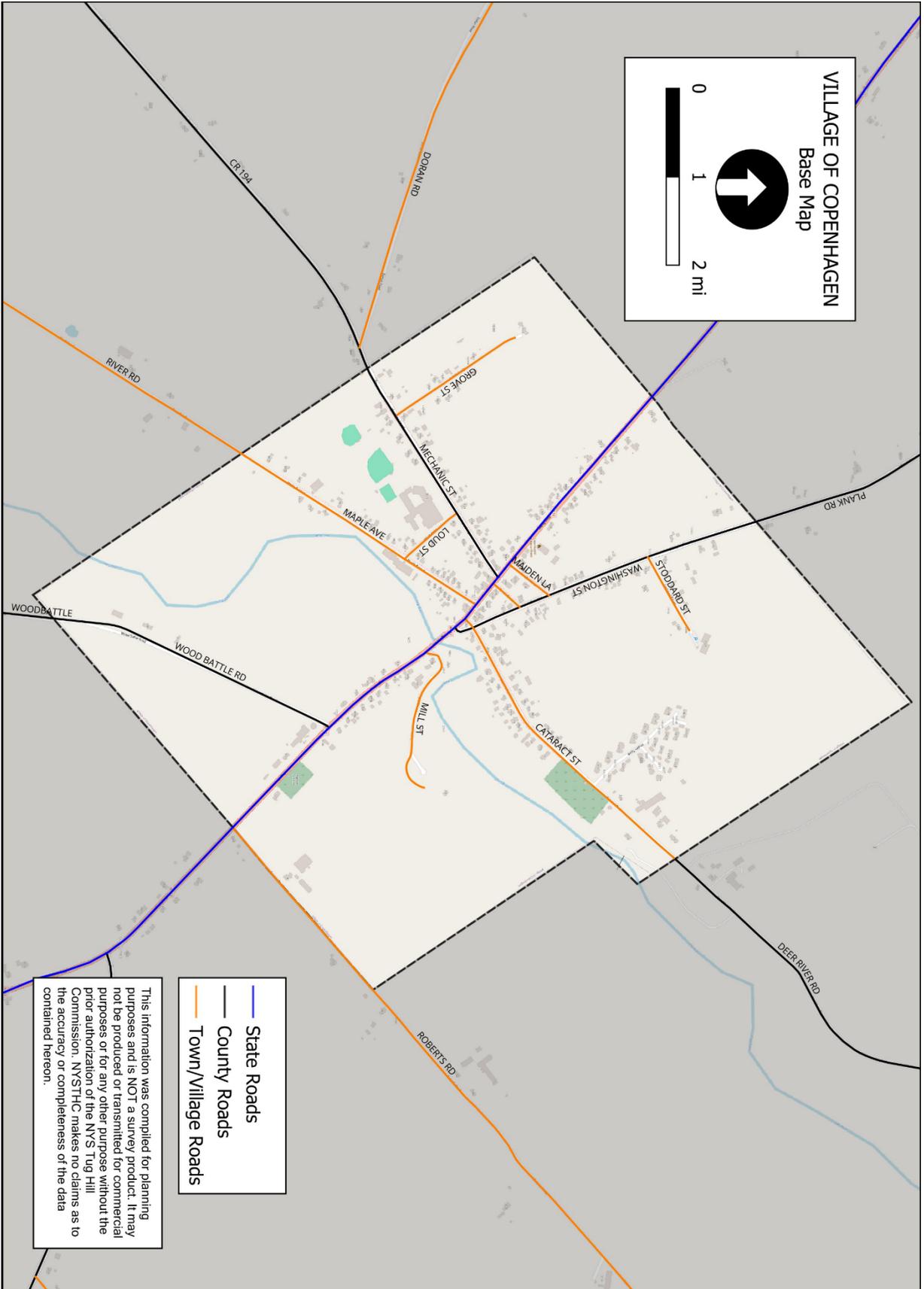


VILLAGE OF CASTORLAND
Base Map

0 1 2 mi

- State Roads
- County Roads
- Town/Village Roads

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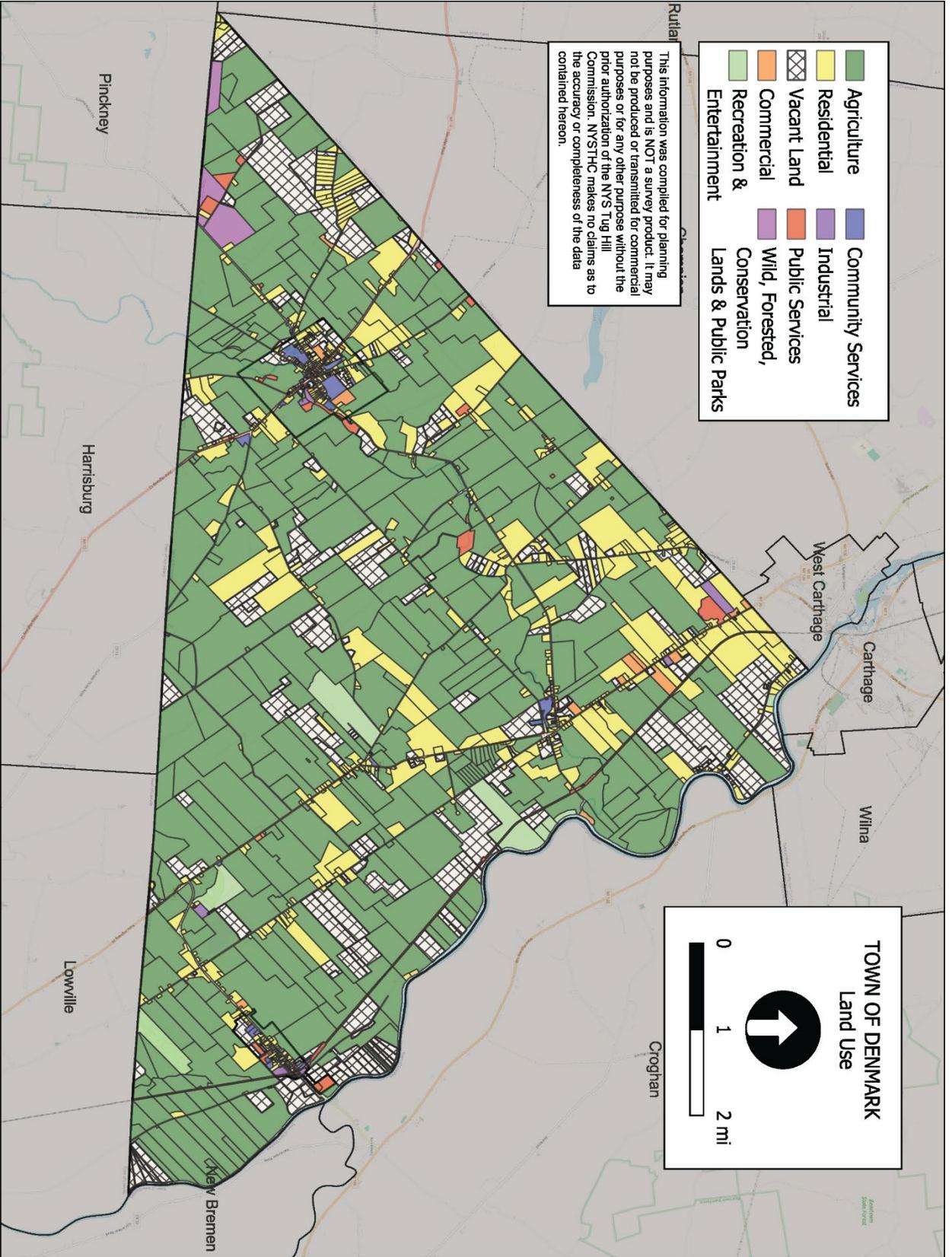


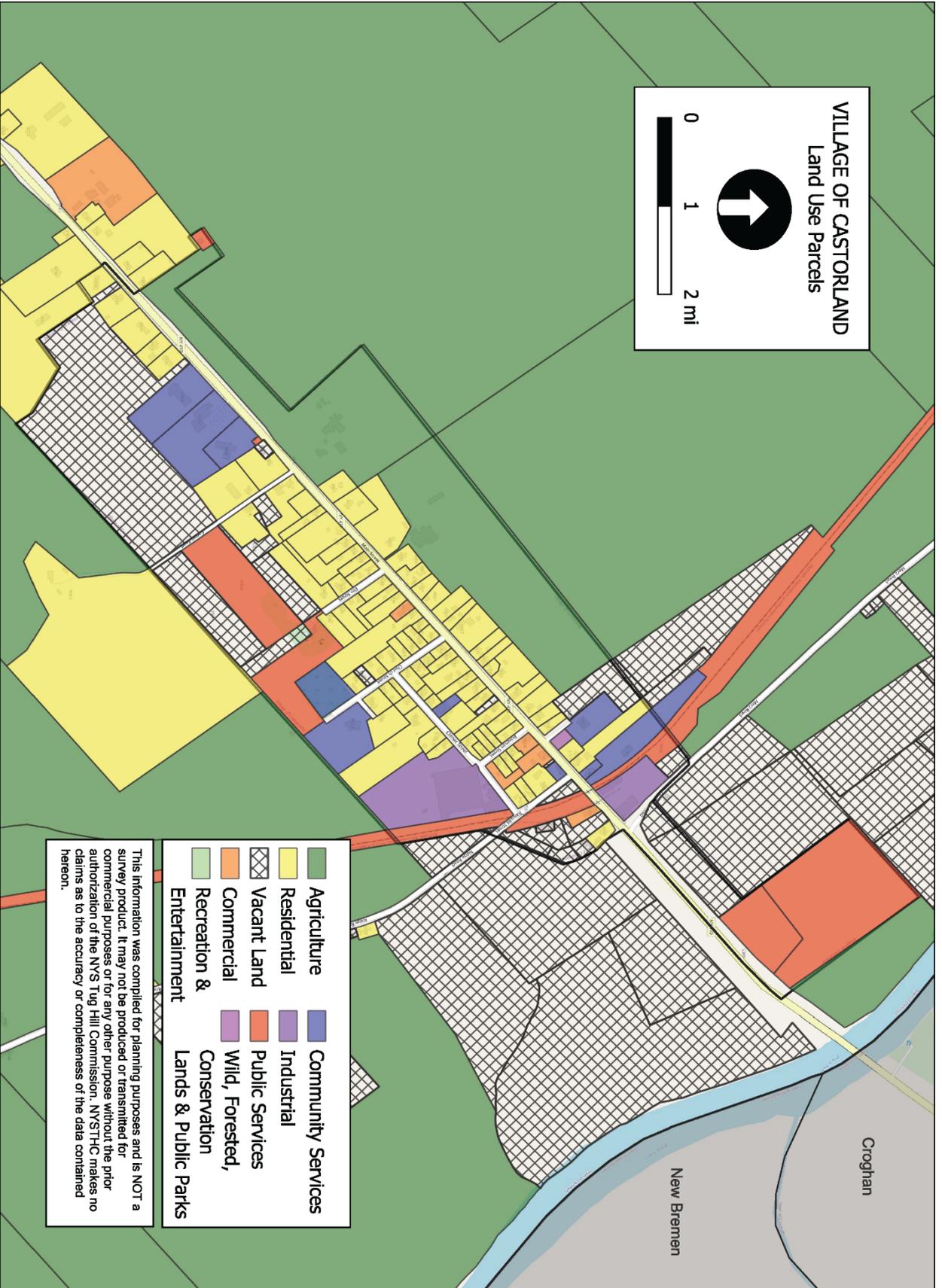
VILLAGE OF COPENHAGEN
Base Map

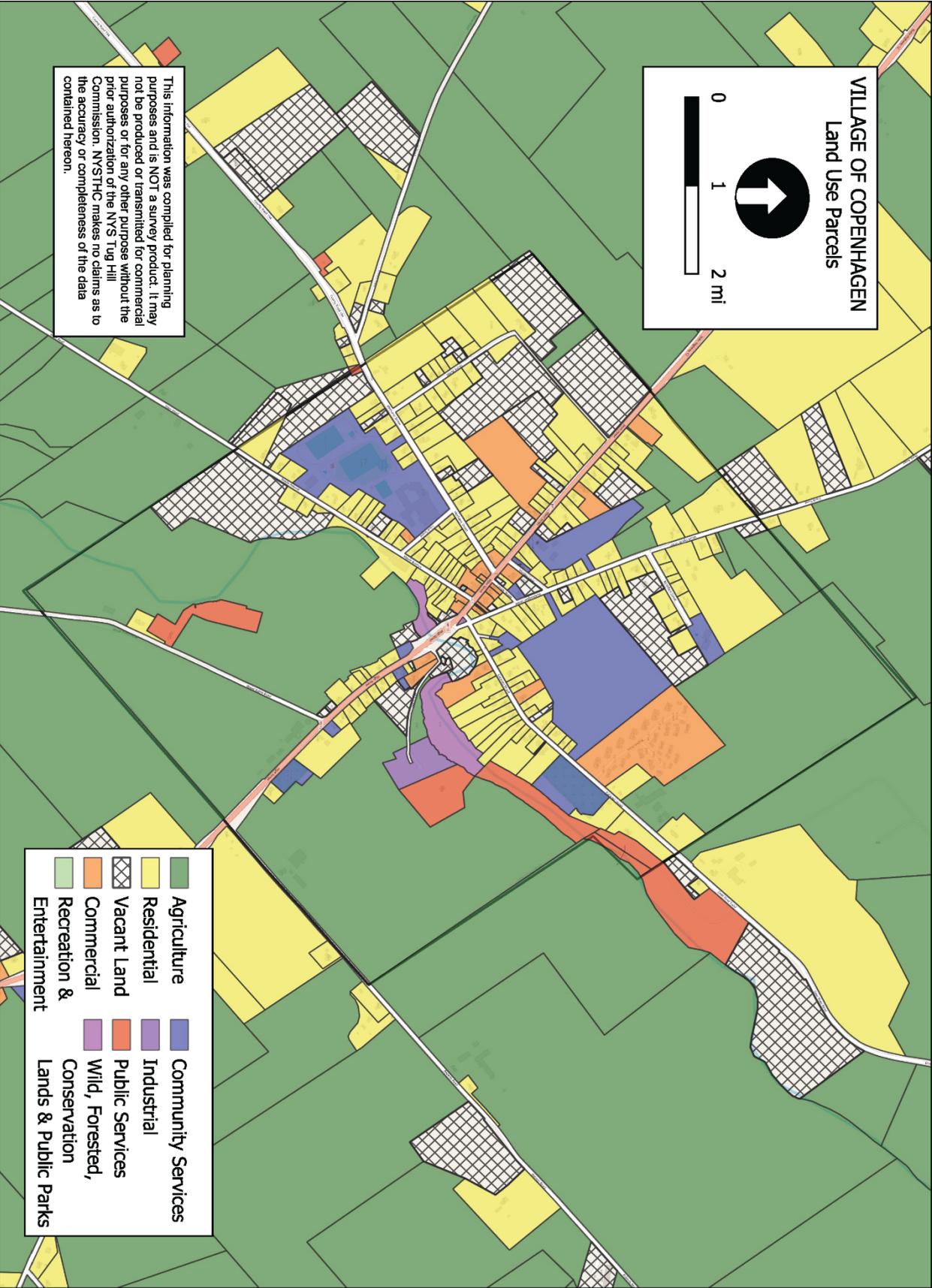
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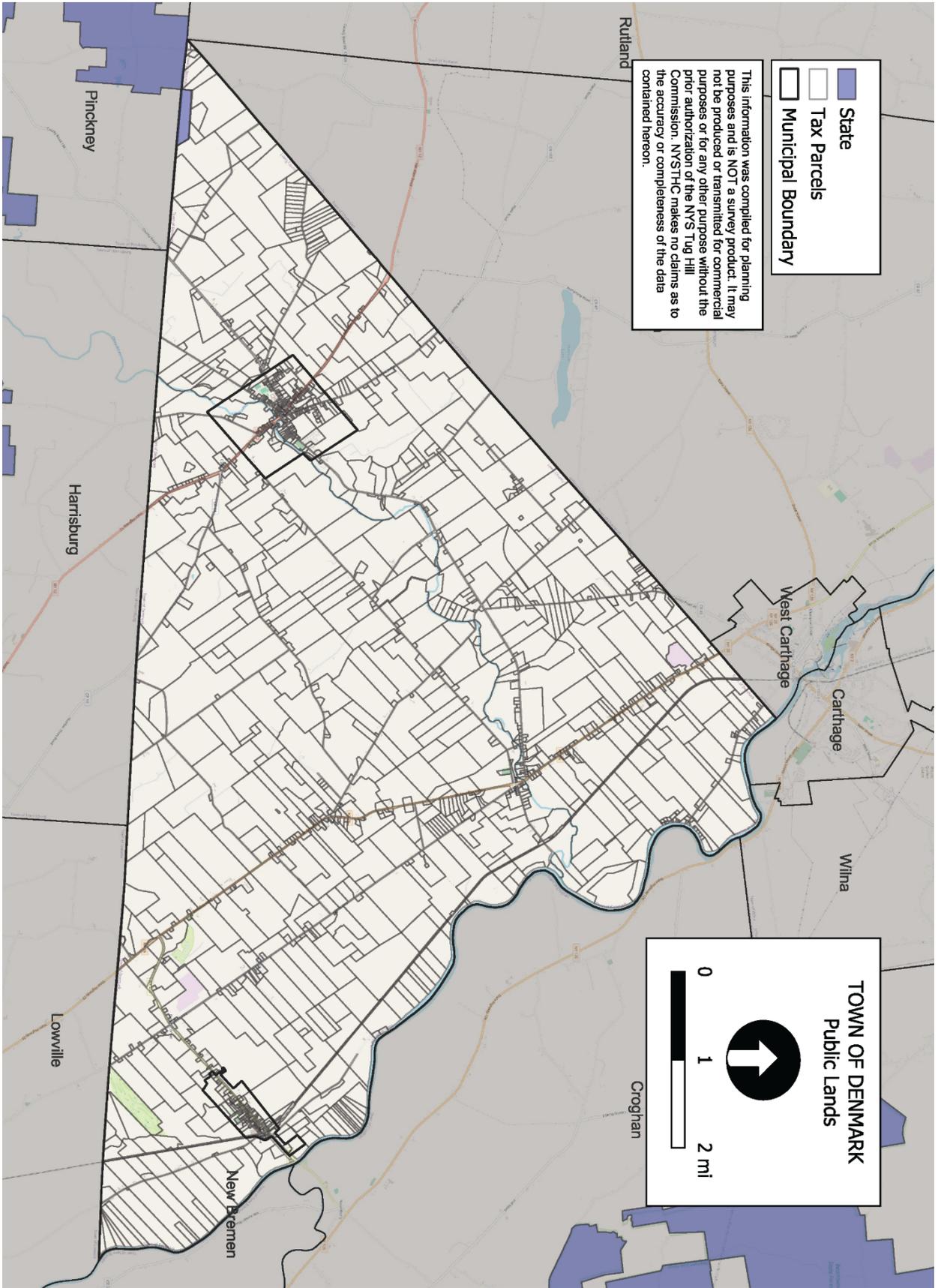
- State Roads
- County Roads
- Town/Village Roads

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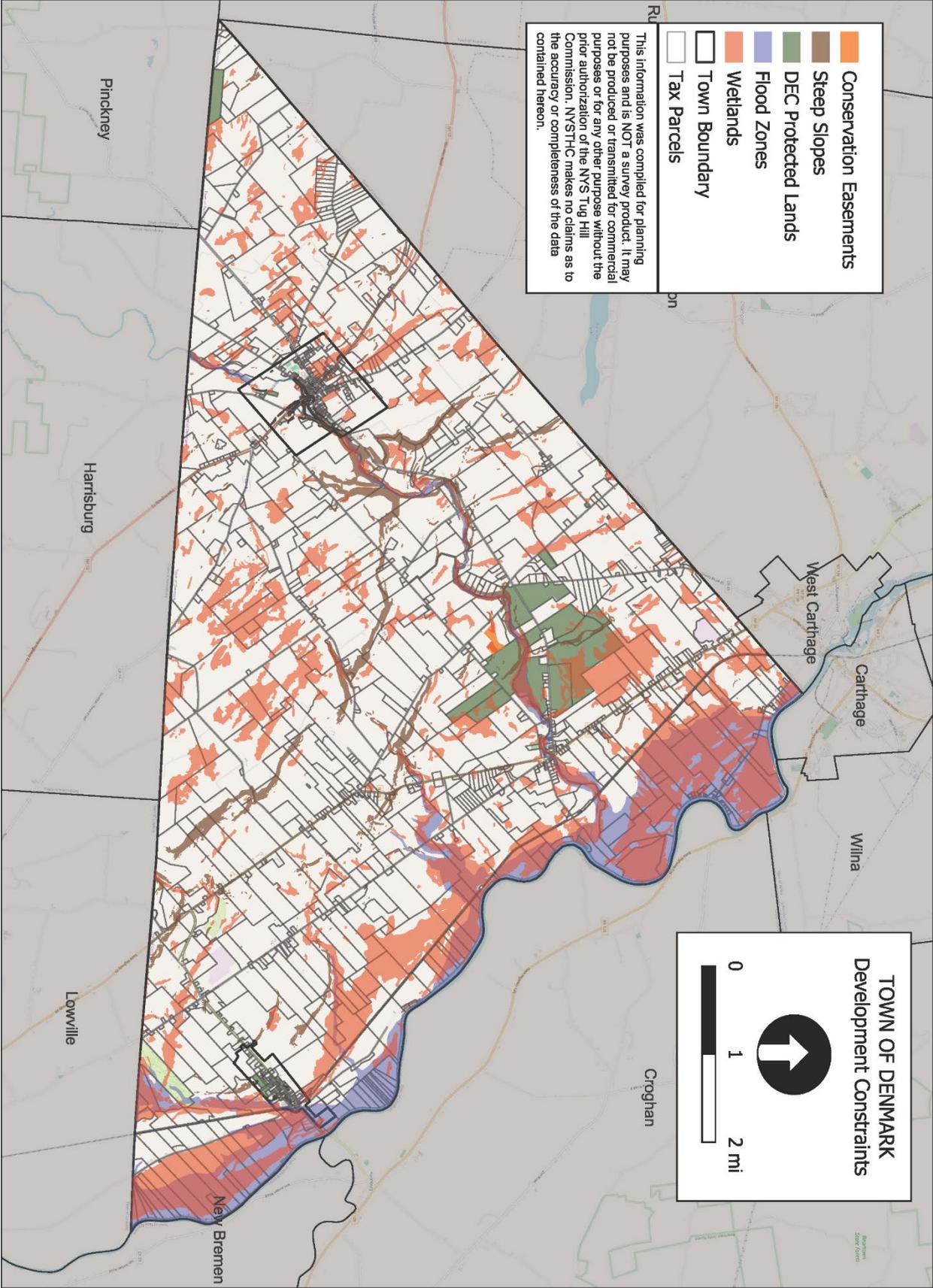


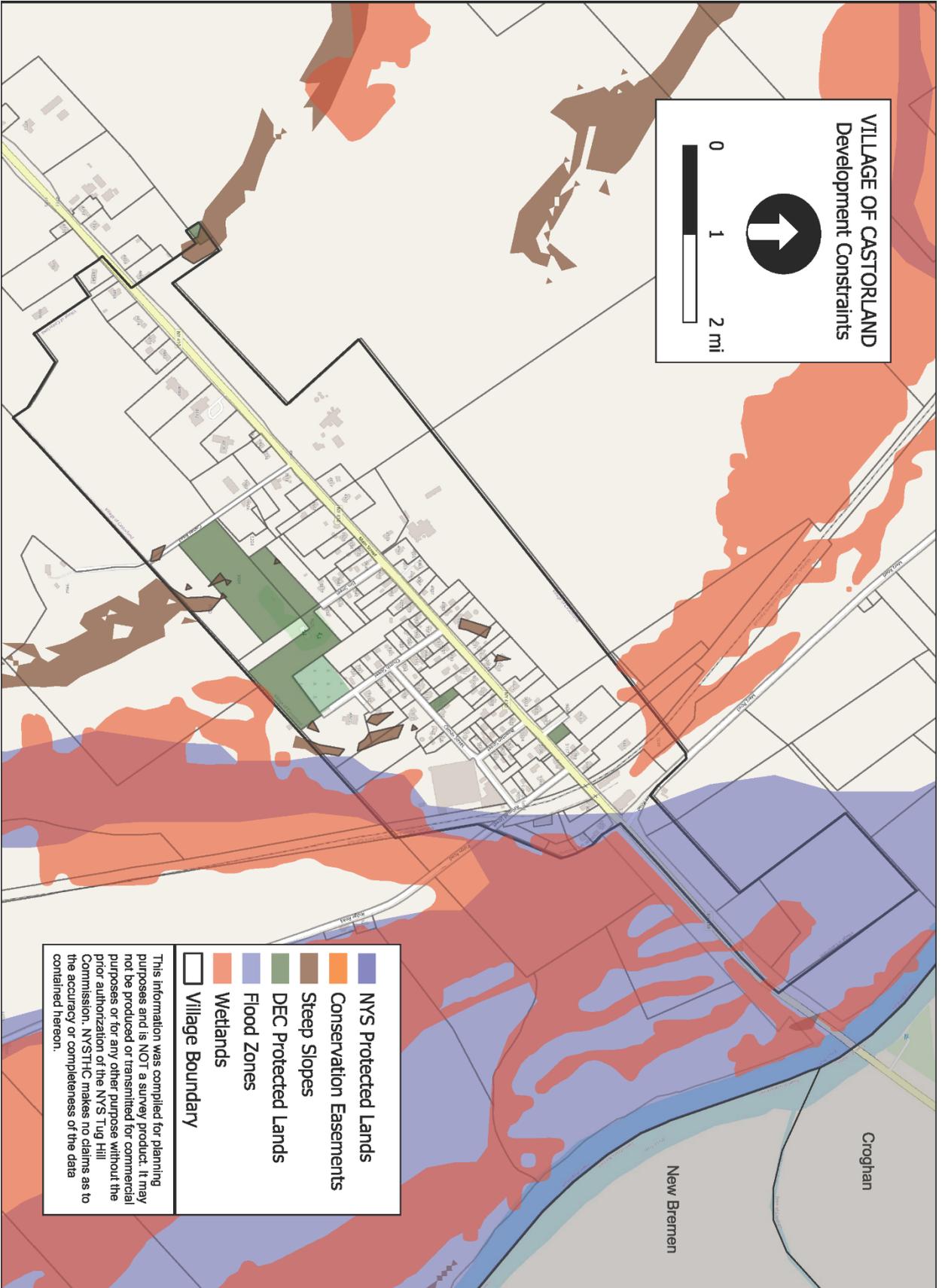
-  Conservation Easements
-  Steep Slopes
-  DEC Protected Lands
-  Flood Zones
-  Wetlands
-  Town Boundary
-  Tax Parcels

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TOWN OF DENMARK
Development Constraints







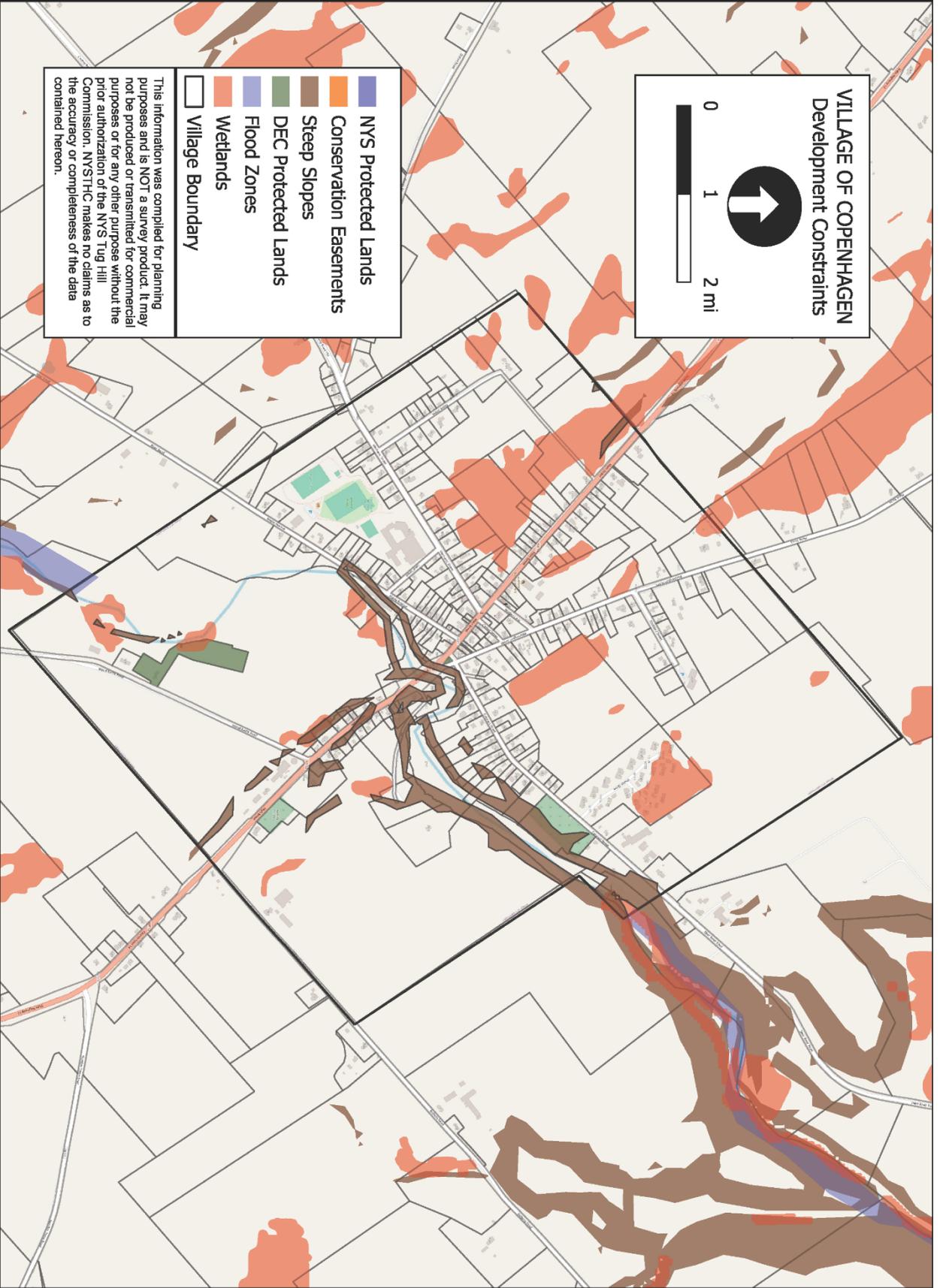
VILLAGE OF CASTORLAND
Development Constraints

0 1 2 mi

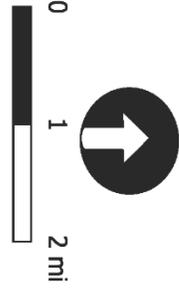
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- NYS Protected Lands
- Conservation Easements
- Steep Slopes
- DEC Protected Lands
- Flood Zones
- Wetlands
- Village Boundary



VILLAGE OF COPENHAGEN
Development Constraints



- NYS Protected Lands
- Conservation Easements
- Steep Slopes
- DEC Protected Lands
- Flood Zones
- Wetlands
- Village Boundary

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ZONING MAP Town of Denmark

