

TUG HILL TIMES

Bi-weekly newsletter bringing you the latest news, trainings, and updates from in and around the Tug Hill region.



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TOWNS OF AVA AND ALBION ADOPT NEW COMPREHENSIVE PLANS

The towns of Ava and Albion adopted new comprehensive plans this week to guide future growth, prioritize capital improvements, and provide direction for land use and development within their communities. Ava's newly adopted comprehensive plan is a full update of their plan adopted in 2012. Albion's newly adopted comprehensive plan is the first comprehensive plan the town has ever written. Both efforts took approximately between 12 and 18 months to complete, which is a typical time frame for these plans to mature from start to finish.

Both plans emphasize preserving farmland, forests, open space, and other natural resources, improving transportation safety and public infrastructure, supporting agriculture and appropriate economic development, expanding recreational opportunities, preserving historic resources, and protecting the rural character and quality of life that residents value. Albion's plan also highlights the importance of protecting the Salmon River and promoting tourism and small businesses, while Ava's plan places additional emphasis on strengthening its agricultural economy. The documents provide roadmaps to ensure that future growth strengthens the towns' economies while preserving the rural character, natural resources, and quality of life that current and future residents enjoy.

TOWN OF AVA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



JULY 14, 2026

TOWN OF ALBION

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



July 14, 2026

OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE FOR METROCOUNT TRAFFIC COUNTER



The [Metrocount](#) season is now in full swing, and opportunities for your municipality to collect traffic data are still available. The Metrocount system collects a variety of data, such as daily traffic count, vehicle speed, and class of vehicle. If your municipality would like traffic data collected on a **town or village-owned road**, please reach out to Chris Barboza (chris@tughill.org) or Maria Covey (maria@tughill.org) to reserve your spot this season.

Newsletter Highlights

- Towns of Ava and Albion Adopt New Comp Plans
- Opportunities for Metrocount Traffic Counter
- Save the Date 2027 Local Government Conference
- Statewide Moratorium on Data Centers Established
- Online Regional Soil Map
- NYPF Training Schools
- North Shore Council of Governments Summer Meeting
- Salmon River Council of Governments Summer Meeting
- SOCRIS Project Continues
- NYCOM Local Government Fundamentals Workshop July 29
- Town Clerk Lunch & Learn July 27
- New Federal Housing Law Highlights Local Role

**36TH ANNUAL
LOCAL
GOVERNMENT
CONFERENCE**

**TUESDAY
APRIL 27, 2027**

**FULL DAY
CONCURRENT SESSIONS
7:00 AM - 4:15 PM**

**SAVE THE
DATE**

**MONDAY
APRIL 26, 2027**

**AFTERNOON FOCUS SESSION
1:00 PM - 5:00 PM**

**RECEPTION
5:30 PM - 6:30 PM**

**TURNING STONE
CONFERENCE
CENTER**



5218 Patrick Road, Verona, NY 13478

STATEWIDE MORATORIUM ON DATA CENTERS ESTABLISHED

Governor Hochul signed an [executive order](#) on July 14, 2026, putting into place a one-year moratorium on data center permitting. The order directs several state agencies to conduct activities, including:

- The NYS Department of Public Service (DPS) to examine impacts associated with the interconnection of data centers to the electric distribution network. DPS is also directed to create a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) to assess the potential environmental impacts of the construction and operation of data centers, including energy demand, water use and quality, air quality, disproportionate impacts on disadvantaged communities, and noise levels. Until the GEIS and associated findings are submitted, the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to hold all applications for discretionary permits, approvals, licenses, etc. related to data centers.
- Empire State Development to consider feedback on and create and post on its website a Community Investment Framework to attain local economic benefits and mitigate potential negative effects of serving as a host community for a data center.
- DPS to consider the development of a way to protect customers from increased electrical rates, including consideration of a New York Grid Acceleration Fund.
- DPS to form a Data Center Interconnection Working Group to identify and resolve issues related to the interconnection of data centers and other large loads.
- DEC to assess if any changes are needed to its water withdrawal program.

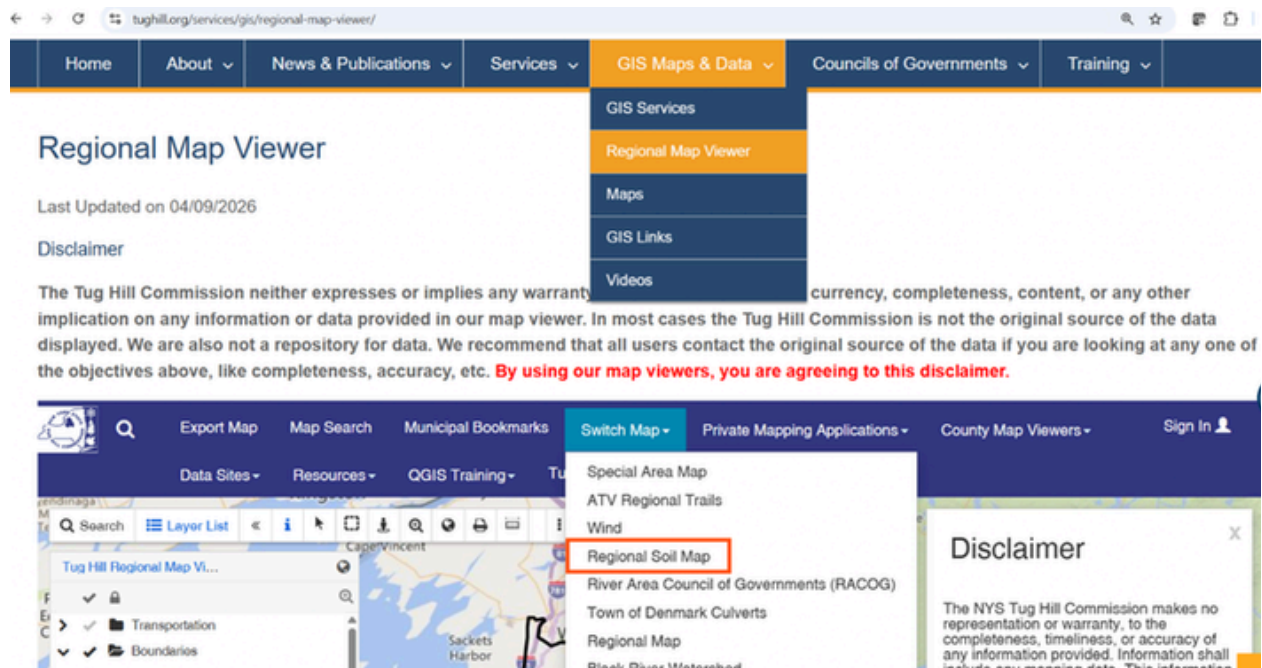
A data center is defined in the executive order as “a facility or group of facilities located on the same site or contiguous sites used to house computer servers, associated components, or computing or telecommunications equipment for the storage, processing, distribution, and/or management of data.” Characteristics include facilities with uninterruptible power supply systems, specialized cooling systems designed for high-density computing loads, and/or contain cybersecurity systems designed for secure digital infrastructure operations; that provide data serves on a continuous twenty-four-hour cycle; and consume or can consume 50 megawatts of energy or more. Facilities primarily used for manufacturing, research, education, or the provision of medical are not covered by this definition and are not subject to the executive order.

ONLINE REGIONAL SOIL MAP AVAILABLE

In recent months, there has been increased discussion about farmland and what constitutes prime or productive agricultural land. This topic can be complicated because different agencies and stakeholders classify farmland in different ways. The NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets relies on USDA soil classifications, while NYSEDA uses a separate classification system when evaluating sites for solar, battery energy storage, and wind energy facilities. These classifications may also differ from how local farmers define good, productive farmland based on their own experience and land use needs.

To help display the various datasets and make the information more accessible, the Tug Hill Commission created a regional soils map for Jefferson, Lewis, Oswego, and Oneida counties. Advice and feedback on the map were provided by partners working in agriculture. The map brings together several key resources, including soil classifications, tax parcel data, electrical transmission lines, roads, and municipal boundaries. The intent is to provide information for local officials, municipal boards, landowners, farmers, developers, and members of the public.

The new online map can be accessed through the Tug Hill Commission website by visiting www.tughill.org, selecting GIS Maps & Data, selecting Regional Map Viewer in the dropdown menu, and then using the Switch Map option in the top bar of the map to select Regional Soil Map from the second dropdown menu. It can also be accessed directly at tughill.giscloud.com/.



NYPF ONE DAY TRAINING SCHOOLS

The NY Planning Federation has four one day training schools scheduled between August and October across the state, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. each day, with a light breakfast and lunch available. There are three classes for each location, each running 1.5 hours, for total training credits of 4.5 hours for each day. The cost is \$125 for NYPF members and \$140 for non-members. Details on topics and presenters at each school are available at www.nypf.org.

- Canandaigua - Finger Lakes Community College - August 7 (registration deadline is July 23)
- Hyde Park - Wallace Center - September 9
- Long Island - Hofstra University - October 6
- Lake Placid - Cambria Hotel - October 14



North Shore Council of Governments Summer Meeting

Wednesday, July 28th 6:30pm

Central Square Fire Hall (687 N. Main St, Central Square NY 13036)



Salmon River Council of Governments Summer Meeting

Thursday, July 29th 6:30pm

Orwell Town Office Building(1999 County Route 2, Orwell NY 13426)

SOCRIS PROJECT CONTINUES TO ADVANCE

Planning continues for the Southern Oswego County Regional Interceptor Sewer (SOCRIS) project, a regional wastewater initiative designed to improve infrastructure, protect water quality, and support future growth throughout southern Oswego County. The proposed interceptor sewer would extend from the town of Constantia to the city of Fulton, primarily following the county-owned rail-trail corridor. Wastewater collected from participating municipalities would be conveyed to Fulton's existing wastewater treatment facility, utilizing available treatment capacity while reducing reliance on individual wastewater systems.

The project is intended to serve the towns of Constantia, West Monroe, Hastings, Schroepfel, and Volney, as well as the village of Central Square. County officials have identified the project as a long-term investment that will improve environmental protection, encourage economic development, and provide regional infrastructure capable of supporting future residential and commercial growth, particularly given the area's proximity to the Micron project. Oswego County recently launched a [special districts page](#) on its website featuring maps, project descriptions, and updates on SOCRIS and other regional sewer initiatives.

NYCOM LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUNDAMENTALS WORKSHOP JULY 29

Join the New York State Conference of Mayors, and presenter Wade Beltramo, on Wednesday, July 19, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., at the Evan Mills Fire Department, 8615 LeRay Street, Evans Mills, as they provide a practical overview of the fundamentals of local government. Whether you are newly elected, recently appointed, or looking to refresh your knowledge, this in-person training will cover the roles and responsibilities of elected and appointed local officials, required and recommended policies for local governing boards, an overview of the Open Meetings Law, and FOIL compliance and records management best practices. The interactive session is designed to provide a strong foundation for municipal officials and includes ample time for questions and discussion. While there is no cost to attend the workshop, attendees need to register [here](#).

TOWN CLERK LUNCH & LEARN - BINGO AND GAMES OF CHANCE JULY 27

Join the Oneida County Town Clerks Association on Monday, July 27, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., at the Verona Municipal Offices, 6600 Germany Rd, Durhamville, as they present a training on BINGO and games of chance. There will be plenty of time for questions and answers. For more information or to register, contact Forestport Town Clerk Tracy Terry, townclerk@townofforestport.gov or 315-272-2890. Lunch will be provided.

NEW FEDERAL HOUSING LAW HIGHLIGHTS LOCAL ROLE

A new federal housing law is bringing renewed attention to housing supply, affordability, and the important role local governments play in shaping where and how housing is built. The 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act became law in July 2026. The law takes a broad approach to housing by updating existing federal programs, reducing barriers to development, and giving local and regional partners more flexibility to address housing needs. For Tug Hill communities, its provisions may support housing planning, affordable and workforce housing, reuse of vacant or deteriorated properties, manufactured housing, small-dollar mortgages, and better coordination between HUD and USDA rural housing programs. While the law may create new tools for municipalities, planning boards, counties, and housing organizations, some programs will still depend on future funding and guidance before local projects can move forward.

The most immediate takeaway for Tug Hill communities is that housing planning remains a local responsibility. Federal programs can provide support, but municipalities still need to understand their own housing conditions, infrastructure limitations, zoning regulations, vacant properties, and community goals. Comprehensive plans, zoning updates, infrastructure studies, and local housing inventories will continue to be important steps for communities that want to position themselves for future funding opportunities. As the new law is implemented, the commission will continue to monitor housing-related guidance and funding opportunities that may be relevant to the region. Communities interested in housing planning, zoning review, infrastructure capacity, or redevelopment of vacant properties are encouraged to begin local conversations now so they are prepared when funding or technical assistance becomes available.

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