
Town of Queensbury, New York

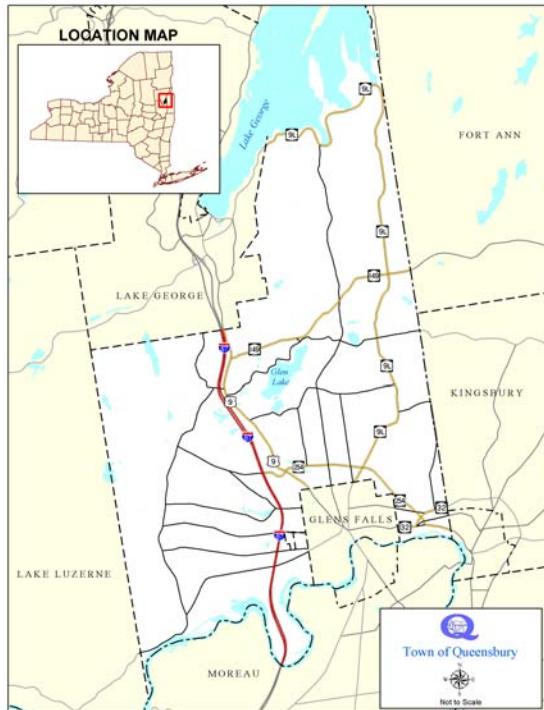
Community Inventory
Appendix to the town's 2006
Comprehensive Master Plan

Committee Review Draft
November 17, 2005

SARATOGA
ASSOCIATES

Introduction

The Town of Queensbury, in New York State's Warren County, extends from the Hudson River up to and along a portion of the southeastern shores of Lake George. It is a half an hour north, along Interstate 87, from the City of Saratoga Springs and just over an hour, along the same route from the state capitol of Albany.



Queensbury presents a number of interesting faces. The shopping along Routes 9 and 254 draw many visitors every day. During the summer, tourists and residents alike enjoy the recreational venues, such as Great Escape, or the natural beauty of Lake George.

Much of Queensbury, outside of the Adirondack Park, has become suburbanized over the years. Residential developments, office parks, and golf courses have spread across the town. North of Route 149 the town takes on a more rural feel. Houses are set back from the road on larger tracts of land and still reflect the town's agricultural heritage. Further north, the community offers a more resort face along Lake George. Over the years, waterfront retreats have grown closer together. Recently, many summer cottages have given way to larger and year-round homes.

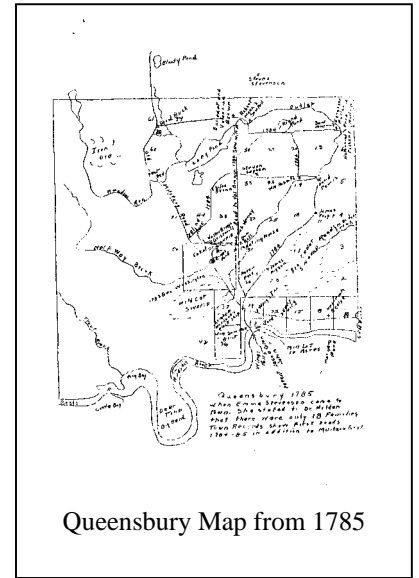
This inventory identifies existing conditions and trends within the Town of Queensbury relating to land use and zoning, growth trends and patterns, infrastructure capabilities, transportation networks, the natural environment, school systems, agriculture, economic development, fiscal conditions, housing, and recreational resources.

History of Town¹

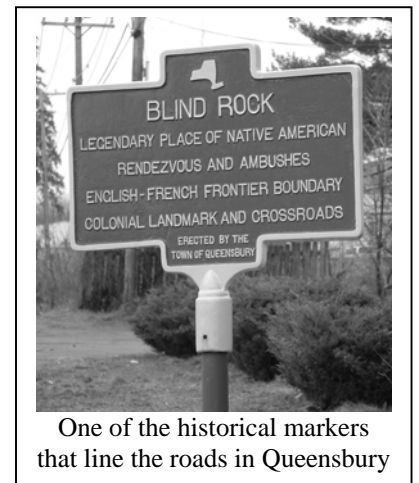
Queensbury was once a part of the great northern wilderness - a favorite hunting and fishing site for the Iroquois during the summer and a route over which their war parties traveled on the way to Canada. During the French and Indian War, the Colonial Army marched through here from Albany in August 1755, building a road as it marched. This Military Road was the first road - the link leading to settlement of the Town of Queensbury. Sometime between 1759 and 1762, Jeffrey Cowper became the first settler in Queensbury when he was given permission by British General Jeffrey Amherst to occupy the post used during the French and Indian War.

As the French and Indian War was drawing to a close, the English Lt. Gov. James DeLancy of the Province of New York issued a proclamation to encourage settlers to the area between Albany and Montreal if they would immediately settle and establish a township. Daniel Prindle from Connecticut applied for a patent of 23,000 acres, but one month later sold the patent to Abraham Wing. The Queensbury Patent, date May 1762, granted by King George III of England, was named in honor of his consort, Princess Charlotte of Macklenburgh Strelitz. In August of that year, Wing arrived here with a surveyor, Zaccheus Towner, and began surveying the township and dividing the land into lots. The work was completed by November. In the summer of 1763, Abraham Wing and Ichabod Merritt moved from Dutchess County and began to carve out new homes in the wilderness. The village was to have been laid out at the Halfway Brook where a small clearing had been made around the original fort, but growth actually sprang up around the falls at the river, where Wing erected a saw mill and grist mill. By the end of the first decade, about two dozen log homes were located in the area, and a few rudimentary roads and bridle paths had been established.

During the Revolutionary War the Quakers, who accompanied Wing from Dutchess County, suffered repeatedly from military requisitions



Queensbury Map from 1785



One of the historical markers that line the roads in Queensbury

¹ Adapted and condensed from "A Brief History of Queensbury" found at <http://www.queensbury.net/historian/TOQhistory.htm>

and twice their dwellings were burned. The Quakers retreated to Dutchess County. However, when the Revolutionary War ended in 1783, the Quakers returned and began rebuilding the community. By the following year, frame houses appeared, roads were being constructed and new settlers were arriving. At the same time in the northern part of the township, the Harris family was developing the "so-called" Harrisena patent, about 2,000 acres bought by Moses Harris, Jr., after the Revolution. Later, other large tracts were added, and by 1788, Queensbury's boundaries included all of what is now Warren County.

As the settlement grew, transportation improved. In 1832, the Feeder Canal was opened, providing transport for lumber, lime, and other products of the area. A plank road was built between the village of Glens Falls and Lake George along the route of the old Military Road in 1848. This led to the stagecoach era, and Lake George and points north became resort areas. In the latter part of the 19th century railroads replaced the stagecoach. Soon after the turn of the century, the horseless carriage made its entrance. Thus, with the village of Glens Falls' continual growth and the resorts further north, farming became a major business, providing dairy products and produce. By the 1870's, agriculture was firmly established and reached its peak about the turn of the century.

In 1908, the City of Glens Falls was incorporated, separating it from the Town of Queensbury. However, the town continued to grow. Floyd Bennett Field opened in 1928 on Miller Hill, an airfield named in honor of a local pilot who flew Admiral Byrd to the North Pole.

[The rest of this history comes from "A Millennium is a Long Time – Part Two" by Marilyn VanDyke, Town Historian. Parts one and two are available on-line at <http://www.queensburynewyork.net/qtr/townhistorian.htm>]

Schools in Queensbury began with the Quaker Meeting House School. Private schools emerged in Glens Falls and the public schools, consisting of many local one-room dwellings, flourished in the town. At one time some 36 one-room schools were in existence. Many of them changed district numbers over time but they remained throughout the town's hamlets until 1948 when the Queensbury Union Free School District School was organized, locating the first of its many buildings on the site of the original Floyd Bennett Field. With centralization, school children in the town now attend schools in Lake George, Queensbury, Hudson Falls and Glens Falls. The old one-room

schoolhouses were sold as residences. Many of them remain today preserved as homes by the new owners. In the 1960's the need for an institution of higher learning surfaced. Adirondack Community College was opened on Bay Road as a 2-year college for academic and vocational students.

World War II ushered in many changes in Queensbury. Many men served in the battlefields of Europe and Asia. At home, the airplane spotters kept vigilance in the town. The Peace and Victory Monument, a memorial today to those who died in World War II, was unveiled in 1927. The work of Bruce Wild Saville, sculptor, was erected in Crandall Park. The monument was recently refurbished and rededicated on May 30th, 1999 through the efforts of the Legion Post #233 and Brian Lee, a monument dealer.

Postwar development brought new industries and new citizens to the town. The first housing development at Cottage Hill was begun in 1945 to house the families of returning veterans. The houses were small, simple and built on concrete slabs without basements. At the time, it was believed they were temporary and would not last. Since Cottage Hill, more than 200 subdivisions have blossomed in the town, providing a strong residential component to the community.

Major roads were constructed throughout the area. The Northway (I-87) was built and opened by Governor Rockefeller in 1961. Students from the nearby Queensbury School turned out in numbers to witness the event. The Quaker Road bypass was also constructed in 1961. Aviation Road soon followed. Major efforts by the government added lighting, sewage, and municipal water to the town's infrastructure. In 1961, Aviation Place (later the Mall) was designed to be one of the largest shopping areas between Albany and Montreal. Its parking lot was designed for 1350 automobiles. Other malls were added at Northway Plaza, Queensbury Plaza, and at the Million Dollar Mile Malls.

The People

Growth in the number of people in Queensbury reflects the underlying circumstances within the town and surrounding region. We use this information to understand the community's past and present as well as open a window to its future.

Population growth dramatically changes a community. The increases in houses and traffic are obvious to most people. However, growing communities also reach a point where they require more services. Policing must be increased. Volunteer fire and ambulance services become strained. Schools require more teachers and, eventually, more classrooms.

Proper planning can maximize the benefits of growth while minimizing the costs and problems. A well-planned community can enhance the quality of life of current and future residents. Such planning involves looking at the availability of jobs, housing, infrastructure, public safety, and schools. This must all be done with consideration of the age of population, income and education levels, and cultural trends.

Population Trends

In 2004, 26,889 people lived in the Town of Queensbury, according to estimates by the U.S. Census Bureau. The last official count, conducted in 2000, found 25,441 Queensbury residents.

Queensbury Population, 1980 to 2004

Year	Population	Change
1980	18,978	n/a
1990	22,630	19.2 %
2000	25,441	12.4 %
2004*	26,889	5.7 %

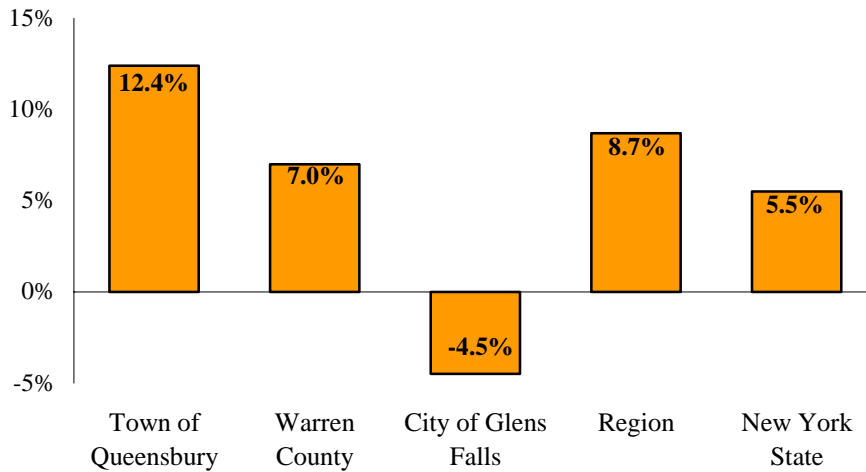
Source: U.S. Census * U.S. Census estimate

The population of Queensbury in 2004 was 26,889 people, up 5.7 percent from 2000.

The following chart shows that Queensbury growth between the last two official census counts (1990 to 2000) outpaced growth in the City of Glens Falls, Warren County, the surrounding Region (defined as the Glens Falls MSA and Saratoga County) and New York State.

Population Change 1990 to 2000

Source: U.S. Census

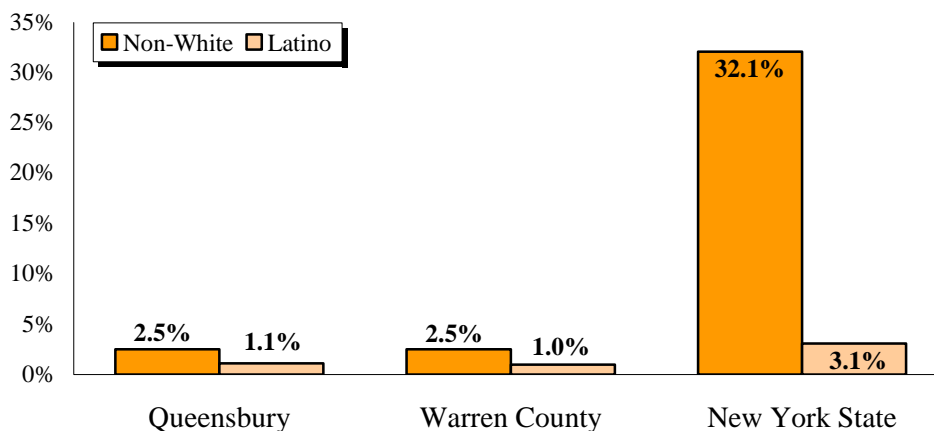


Population growth in Queensbury outpaced growth elsewhere.

Nearly everyone in Queensbury identified themselves as “white alone” in the 2000. U.S. Census. The following chart shows that the percentages of “non-white” and Latino residents are far below those recorded throughout New York State, but in line with the population in Warren County.

Queensbury Race and Ethnicity, 2000

(Source: U.S. Census)



Age

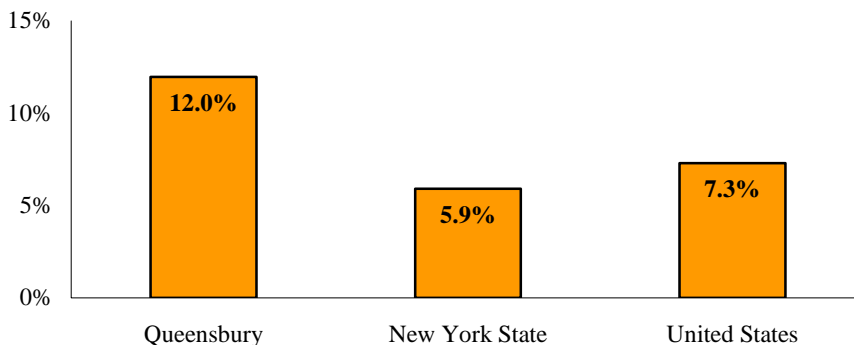
The age of the residents in a community determines, in part, future growth patterns. It also indicates the purchasing power of residents, as well as the kinds of public services, community design and recreational opportunities a community may require. For example, older people often wish to remain active and typically want safe places to walk. Seniors may require more medical services. Parents want their children to have greater recreational opportunities, adequate schools and safe places to play and bike.

The median age of residents (meaning that half are older and half younger) in Queensbury is 39.3 years. It is significantly higher than the state median age of 35.9 years and the nation's of 35.3 years. Since 1990, the town's median age has also risen faster than either the state or the nation.

The people in Queensbury tend to be older than New York residents in general.

Change in median ages, 1990 to 2000

(Source: U.S. Census)



A number of factors may account for the older population in Queensbury. Most directly, in recent years, the town has seen a jump in the number of senior housing units built. Also the town's proximity to the Glens Falls Hospital makes it a comfortable place for older people who typically require higher levels of medical care.

Usually, we also attribute aging population averages with lower economic opportunities, which force young people to leave in search of work. However, as shown in the following table, Queensbury has a higher portion of its population in the 25 to 39 age range than the state.

Young adults also seem to be choosing to live in Queensbury.

Queensbury distribution of ages, 2000

Age cohort	Under 5	5 - 9	10 - 14	15 - 19	20 - 24	25 - 29	30 - 39	40 - 49	50 - 59	60 - 64	65 - 74	75 - 84	85 +
Queensbury	5.8%	7.4%	7.8%	6.5%	3.9%	11.3%	17.0%	15.3%	5.6%	4.2%	7.9%	5.3%	2.0%
Region	6.1%	7.1%	7.4%	6.7%	5.2%	5.7%	16.1%	16.2%	12.6%	4.0%	6.9%	4.5%	1.5%
New York	6.5%	7.1%	7.0%	6.8%	6.6%	7.0%	16.0%	15.0%	11.3%	4.0%	6.7%	4.5%	1.6%

Source: U.S. Census

Household Income

In Queensbury, the median household income (meaning that half of the households earned more and half earned less) in 2000 was \$47,225, slightly higher than the State’s median income of \$43,393. It was significantly higher than the median income in Warren County (\$39,198) and the City of Glens Falls (\$30,222). When compared to the rest of the state, fewer Queensbury households had incomes at the extreme lower end of the range, but also fewer at the very high end.

The median income of households in Queensbury was \$47,225 in 2000.

Household Income Distribution, 2000

Income Range	Queensbury	Warren County	Region	New York State
Less than \$10,000	4.0%	7.3%	5.8%	11.5%
\$10,000 to \$24,999	15.8%	22.3%	18.8%	18.1%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	14.0%	14.6%	14.6%	11.5%
\$35,000 to \$44,999	13.5%	13.3%	13.5%	10.4%
\$45,000 to \$59,999	15.7%	15.4%	16.7%	12.9%
\$60,000 to \$74,999	12.3%	10.4%	11.3%	10.0%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	11.6%	8.1%	9.8%	10.6%
\$100,000 to \$124,999	6.2%	4.1%	4.8%	6.0%
\$125,000 to \$149,999	2.9%	1.7%	2.2%	3.1%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	1.7%	1.3%	1.3%	2.9%
\$200,000 or more	2.2%	1.5%	1.7%	3.3%

Source: U.S. Census

Poverty

The number of people living in poverty in Queensbury is low compared to elsewhere. However, the definition of living in poverty (which varies by family size) in 2005 for a family of four is an income of merely \$19,350.

Five percent of people in Queensbury live in poverty – half the rate of the county and one-third of the state’s poverty rate.

Poverty Rate, 2005

Area	Portion of total population
Queensbury	5.0%
Warren County	9.7%
Region	7.2%
New York	14.6%

(Source: U.S. Department of Labor & U.S. Census)

Another indicator of the number of needy people in a place is the percentage of children eligible for free lunch through the public school system. It should be noted that many of these school districts cross town boundaries.

Queensbury Children Eligible for Free Lunch

School District	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03
Queensbury	10.7%	7.4%	9.9%
Glens Falls	19.3%	18.0%	19.8%
Hudson Falls	30.1%	26.5%	29.1%
Lake George	6.1%	6.7%	6.6%

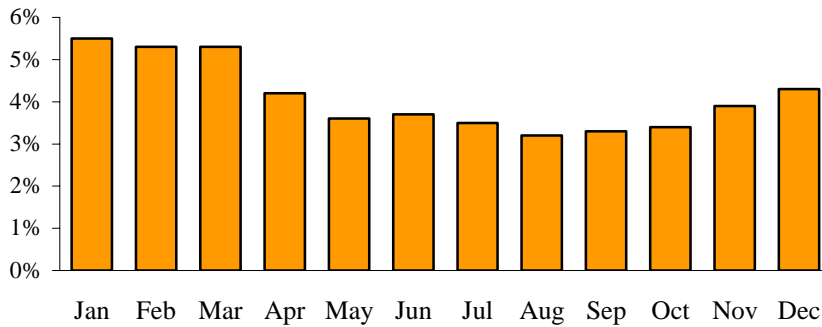
(Source: NYS School Report Card 2002-2003)

Joblessness

In September 2005, the unemployment rate in Queensbury was 3.6%. However, as in many areas, the unemployment rate varies considerably during the season. For example, a summer tourism or construction season usually lowers the rate as companies hire laborers. The fluctuating unemployment rate in Queensbury is illustrated in the following chart.

Queensbury unemployment, 2004

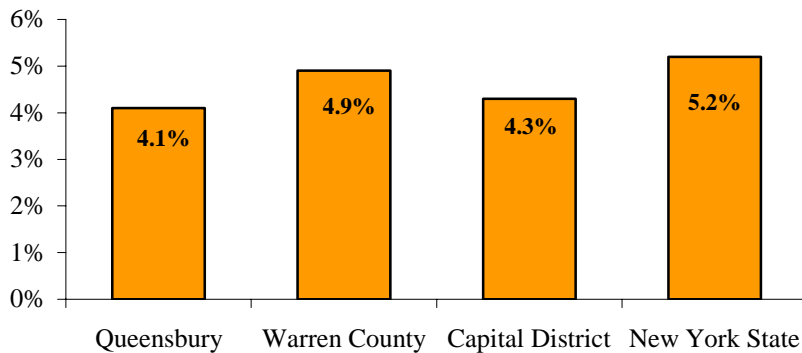
(Source: NYS Department of Labor)



In 2004, the average annual unemployment rate in Queensbury was slightly lower than the Capital District as a whole. The town rate was significantly lower than Warren County and New York State. Later in this document, we will review the kinds of jobs held by Queensbury residents.

Annual unemployment rates, 2004

(Source: New York State Department of Labor)



The annual unemployment rate in Queensbury (4.1% in 2004) was lower than the region and state rates.

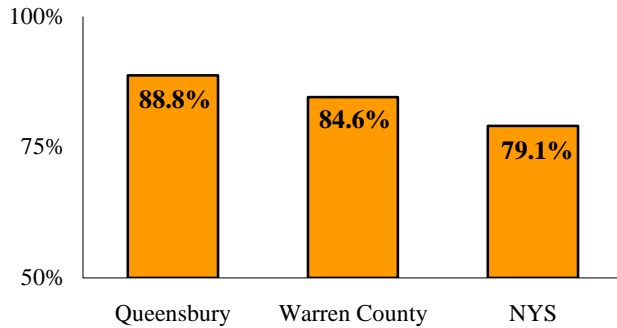
Education

Educational attainment, or percentage of people who reach a certain level of schooling, is important for economic development. Most of the companies that create good-paying jobs demand an educated workforce. To judge educational attainment, we examine two factors: people, over the age of 25 who have a high school diploma and those who have a bachelor's degree.

The people of Queensbury have a higher of educational attainment than either Warren County or New York State as a whole. The following charts show the percentage of the population, over 25 years old, with high school diplomas and bachelor degrees.

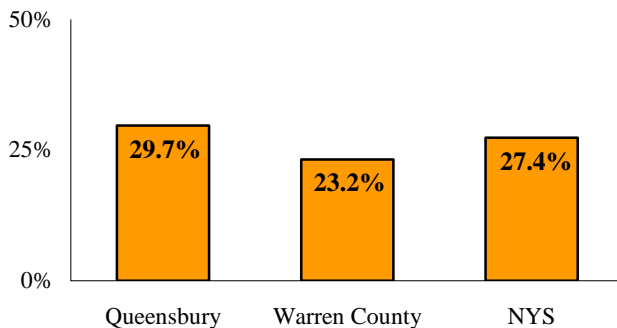
Percentage of people with a H.S. diploma, 2000

(Source: U.S. Census)



Percentage of people with a college degree, 2000

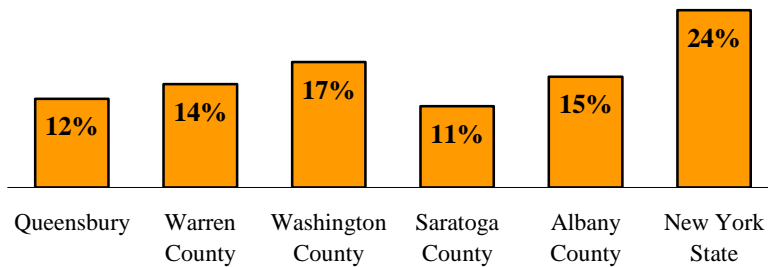
(Source: U.S. Census)



Another measure of a community's education level is the literacy rate. The local literacy volunteer organization is called Literacy NENY, which serves Warren, Washington and Saratoga counties. According to the group, the latest data on literacy is in a 1996 report called the State of Literacy in America. The report estimates Level One literacy, which is reading at or below a fifth grade level. The following chart shows the literacy rates in Queensbury, Warren County, surrounding counties and New York State.

Illiteracy Rate, 1996

(Source: State of Literacy in America)



Twelve percent of adults in Queensbury read at or below a fifth grade level.

Health

The health of residents has personal and societal implications. Poor health is directly related to decreased productivity and increased medical costs. One of the biggest problems facing Americans is obesity. The epidemic is caused by poor diets coupled with increasing time spent in cars and fewer opportunities for walking, biking or other recreation. From 1998 to 2000, the New York State Department of Health says, obesity-related illnesses cost the United States an estimated \$117 billion and New York State more than \$6 billion.

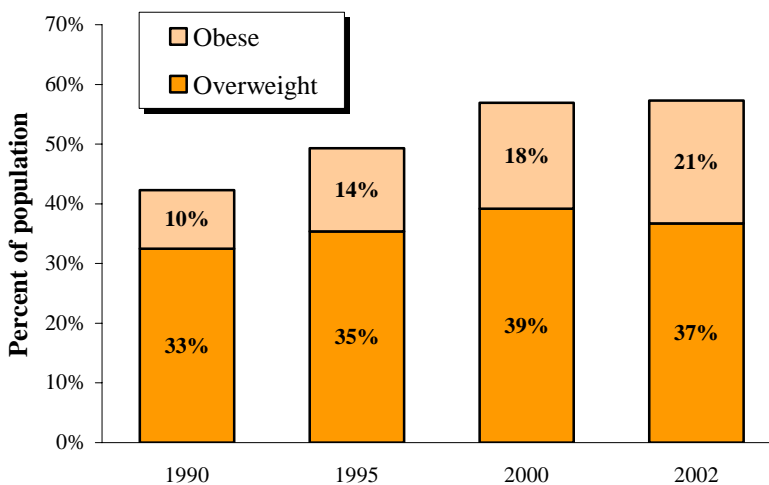
In New York State, the obesity epidemic costs more than \$6 billion in related illnesses from 1998 to 2000.

In 2003, 39.5 percent of the people in Warren and Washington counties were overweight. Another 20.7 percent were obese, according to a survey by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The New York State Health Department reports that obesity amongst children has tripled over the past three decades.

A survey of Warren and Washington counties found that 39.5 percent of people are overweight and another 20.7 percent are obese.

Overweight and Obesity in New York, 1990 to 2002

(Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)



The New York State Department of Health says overweight and obesity are major risk factors for many serious conditions including heart disease, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes, cancer and osteoarthritis. The state links obesity to serious shame, self-blame and low self-esteem.

The obesity epidemic is caused by poor diets coupled with increasing time spent in cars and fewer opportunities for walking, biking or other recreation.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control define someone as overweight when their body mass index (BMI) is between 25.0 and 29.9. A BMI of 30.0 or above makes a person obese. The body mass index is calculated using a person's height and weight. The CDC has a BMI calculator for adults and children at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/bmi/calc-bmi.htm>

Queensbury residents at work

Understanding where residents work is important in helping determine land uses. Do most residents work in the community? So provisions must be made for those employers. Are they mostly working in particular sectors? If so, does a community want those to grow and how does that growth fit into the overall vision for the future.

Most Queensbury residents work in the health care and social services industry. The second highest sector of employment is manufacturing, followed closely by retail trade and education. Unfortunately, classifications changed between the 1990 to 2000 census, so tracking trends is difficult. However, the following chart does compare industrial sectors across the state and the nation.

Employment of residents by industrial sector, 2000

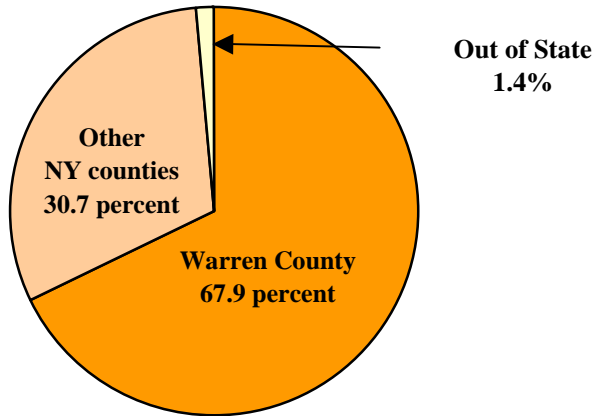
Industrial sector	Queensbury	New York	Northeastern U.S.	U.S.
Health care and social services	13.9%	13.9%	13.0%	11.2%
Manufacturing	12.8%	10.0%	12.9%	14.1%
Retail trade	12.6%	10.5%	11.3%	11.7%
Educational services	11.5%	10.4%	9.7%	8.8%
Professional, scientific, management & admin.	7.8%	10.1%	10.0%	9.3%
Finance, insurance and real estate	7.6%	8.8%	8.1%	6.9%
Accommodation and food services	6.9%	5.4%	5.4%	6.1%
Construction	5.8%	5.2%	5.6%	6.8%
Public administration	5.8%	5.2%	4.6%	4.8%
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	4.2%	5.5%	5.1%	5.2%
Wholesale trade	3.1%	3.4%	3.6%	3.6%
Information	2.9%	4.1%	3.6%	3.1%
Other services (except public administration)	2.8%	5.1%	4.7%	4.9%
Arts, entertainment and recreation	1.9%	1.9%	1.7%	1.8%
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	0.4%	0.6%	0.8%	1.9%

(Source: U.S. Census Bureau)

Most residents of Queensbury do not have to go very far for work. About 20 percent live and work in Queensbury itself. In addition, as the following chart shows, about two-thirds of people stay in Warren County for work.

Queensbury Residents' Work Location, 2000

(Source: U.S. Census)



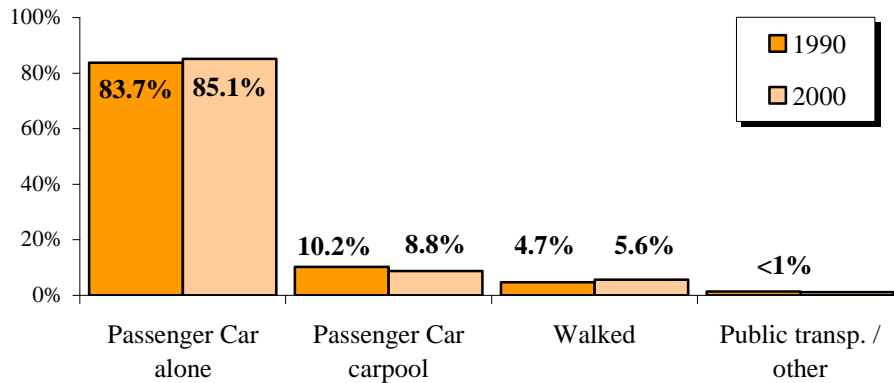
Getting to Work

Queensbury residents spend about 20 minutes commuting to work. As in the rest of the nation, most residents of Queensbury commute to work in their cars. And most drive alone. Only about nine percent of town residents carpool, and that number is down slightly from 1990. Only one-half of one percent of people use public transit to get to work

Queensbury residents spend about 20 minutes driving to work.

Modes of commuting, Queensbury resident

(Source: U.S. Census)



The Community

In addition to an understanding of the residents in the Town of Queensbury, it is important to inventory the physical, economic and social aspects. On the following pages we will examine:

- > Built Environment
- > Housing
- > Existing Land Uses
- > Recreation, Historical and Cultural Resources
- > Road Ownership
- > Community Resources
- > Agricultural Resources
- > Major Industries
- > Tax Rates
- > School Systems
- > Role of the Adirondack Park Agency in Queensbury

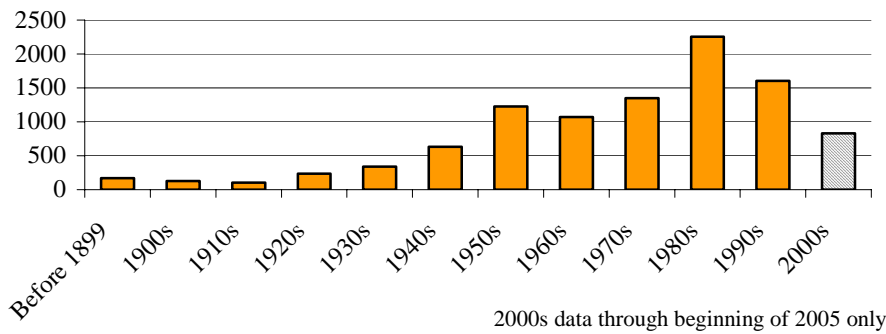
The Built Environment

The transition of Queensbury from a rural community to a suburban one took place largely over the past half century. As is typical in American communities, the construction boom started after World War II. In Queensbury, the peak occurred during 1980 to 1989. Although building slowed after that, more than 1500 structures were erected during the 1990s and the first five years of this decade seem to be on a similar pace.

The 1980s was the biggest building decade for the Town of Queensbury.

Structures Built Per Decade Town of Queensbury

(Data Source: Queensbury Assessor's Office)



The maps on the following page illustrate how the growth of buildings has spread across Queensbury over time. It clearly shows that in the flat middle part of the town construction has proceeded rapidly. Indeed, as described in the build-out study, a large percentage of the buildable land in Queensbury has been consumed.

The spread of homes across the town has been limited, so far, by environmental constraints, such as steep slopes and wetlands. This has allowed much of the northern and western parts of town to remain relatively rural.

**INSERT 11x17 PAGE WITH SIX MAPS SHOWING DOTS
SPREADING ACROSS QUEENSBURY.**

Housing

The 2000 Census found 11,233 housing units in Queensbury – a jump of more than 16 percent from 1990. In 1990, the Census found 9,632 housing units in Queensbury. The growth in the town’s housing stock during the 1990s far outpaced housing growth in the county or the state. During that decade, the number of housing units also grew faster than the number of people.

Housing Unit Growth, 1990 to 2000

Place	Change
Queensbury	16.6%
Warren County	9.8%
New York	6.3%

(Source: U.S. Census)

With a slight exception in 2001, the growth of residential buildings continued during the first few years of the 21st century. The following table shows the number of building permits issued during the first five years of the 21st century.

Building Permits Issued, Town of Queensbury, 2000 to 2004

Type of Permit	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Single-family	160	112	162	147	119
Two-family	18	3	1	0	1
Townhouses	11	10	46	25	4
Apartments	4	0	0	7	10
Commercial/Industrial	8	11	18	16	12
Non-residential	48	31	39	31	36

(Source: Queensbury Buildings and Codes office)

The town assessor's records show that single-family homes dominate the market. As illustrated on the following chart, there is very little choice within the Town of Queensbury in terms of housing options.

90 percent of residential units in Queensbury are single-family homes.

Distribution of Queensbury Residential Buildings, 2005

Housing type	
Single-family	89.9%
Two and three family	1.8%
Seasonal	4.1%
Mobile homes (not including mobile home parks)	2.8%
Apartment building	0.6%
Other	0.7%

(Source: Queensbury Assessor's Office)

Housing Values

The Queensbury assessor's office calculates that market values of housing across Queensbury increased 12 percent in both 2003 and 2004. They estimate that growth in market value will be 10 percent in 2005. The following table contains a distribution of the market values of single-family homes in Queensbury.

The market value of homes in Queensbury has grown 12 percent in each of the last two years.

**Full-market value, single-family homes
Queensbury, 2005**

Price Range	Percentage of homes
Less than \$75,000	6.2%
\$75,000 to \$149,999	41.4%
\$150,000 to \$249,999	34.9%
\$250,000 to \$499,999	13.3%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	2.2%
\$1,000,000 or more	2.0%

(Source: Queensbury Assessor's Office)

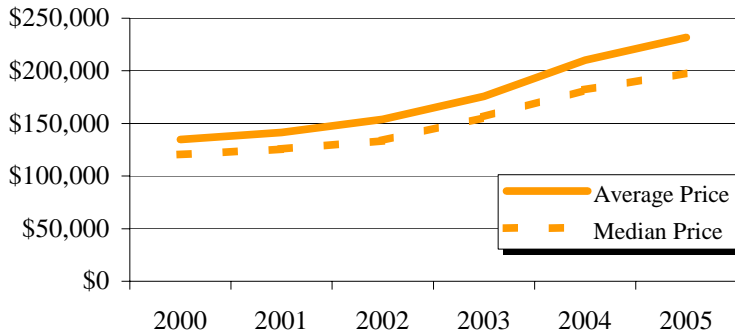
Housing Sale Prices

Sale prices are typically more relevant to a community as it examines its housing situation because sale prices reflect the cost of housing that is available. In Queensbury, the cost of housing has increased dramatically over the past few years. Though the upward momentum has slowed from 2004 to 2005, it is still substantial.

The sale price of homes in Queensbury has risen sharply, especially since 2002.

Sale Prices of Single-Family Homes Queensbury, 2000 to 2005

(Data source: Town Assessor's Office)



Change in median sale price of single-family homes Queensbury, 2000 to 2005

Years from / to	Change
From 2000 to 2001	4.4%
From 2001 to 2002	6.1%
From 2002 to 2003	17.0%
From 2003 to 2004	16.7%
From 2004 to 2005	8.7%

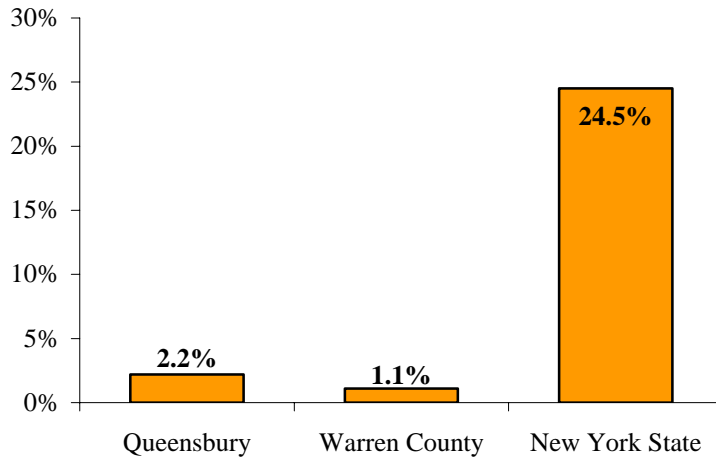
(Source: Queensbury Assessor's Office)

Housing Rents

Between 1990 and 2000, the increases in rent in Queensbury were double those in Warren County. However, they were only a fraction of the rise measured statewide.

Changes in Median Rents, 1990 to 2000

(Source: U.S. Census)



Median Rents, 1990 and 2000

	1990	2000	% Change
Queensbury	\$540	\$552	2.2%
Warren County	\$452	\$457	1.1%
Region	\$467	\$485	3.9%
New York State	\$486	\$605	24.5%

(Source: U.S. Census)

Affordable Housing Study

In many places, the people vital to the local economy and community cannot afford a place to live. Fireman, policemen, teachers, nurses, administrators and store clerks, for example, often find themselves priced out of the housing market in the communities where they work. In part, this recognition by the town that affordable housing is a key component of economic development drove the creation of an affordable housing strategy in December 2003.

Most significantly, the study calculated that affording a newly constructed home (with a median price of \$223,500) required a household income of \$88,000. Affording an older, already existing home (median price \$140,000), required an income of \$57,484.

Buying a newly constructed home in Queensbury in 2003 required a household income of \$88,000. Buying an older, already existing home required an income of \$57,484.

However, in 2003, the median household income was \$44,000, which could only afford a house costing \$109,200. The highest paid professional people in Warren County received an average wage of \$39,403. Service sector employees earned less than half of the \$44,000 median. Households that spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing are considered to be overpaying.

Other findings included the following.

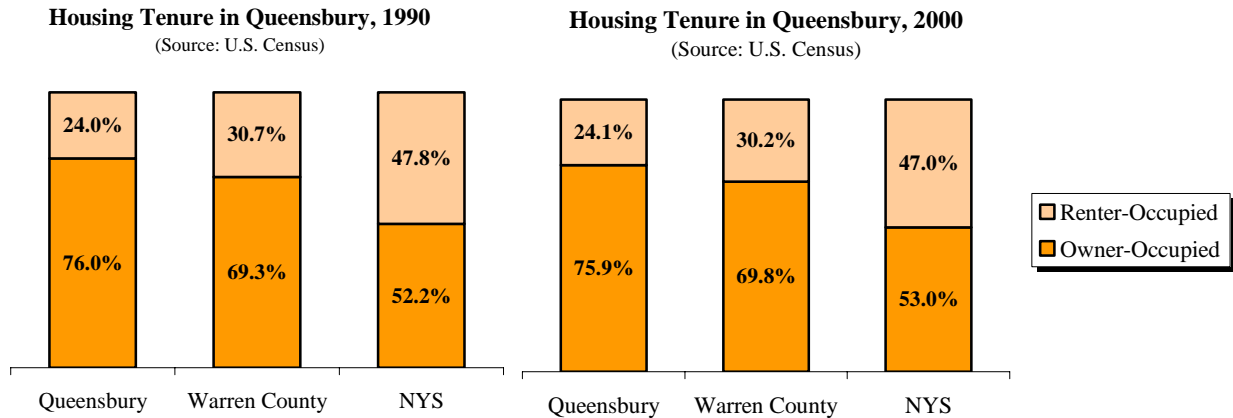
- > More than half of all renter households with incomes of less than \$35,000 pay more than 30 percent of their income on housing.
- > Moving up to bigger, more costly homes is difficult for existing homeowners. Most households living in single-family homes have incomes of \$35,000 or less.
- > Slightly more than half of owner households with incomes less than \$35,000 spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing.
- > From 2000 to 2003, more than half of all multi-family housing built or approved was targeted towards senior citizens.
- > The New York State Affordable Housing Corporation in 2002 identified Warren County as a “high cost area”, which means that the average single-family home price is greater than 2.2 times the area median income considered.
- > Warren County has the 11th highest housing costs in New York State and the highest outside of the New York metropolitan area.

The document also outlined several strategies to increase housing affordability in Queensbury. These will be discussed, where appropriate, in the Comprehensive Plan.

Housing Vacancy & Tenure

In 2000, the vacancy rate for the Town of Queensbury was 11.4%. Over 65% of these vacancies were vacation, seasonal, and second homes. Data gathered by the U.S. Census is for April 1 of the census year.

Traditionally, home ownership is linked to more stable neighborhoods. However, rental housing offers living space for younger, working families and people who care little for the rigors of home maintenance. The 2000 U.S. Census found that owners live in 75.9% of all occupied units in Queensbury. As illustrated on the following chart, the owner-occupancy rates in Queensbury are higher than the Region, the County, and well above that of the State. The percentage of owner-occupied units in the town remained the same from 1990 to 2000.



Existing Land Uses

The map on the following page shows the land uses in the Town of Queensbury. One-third of the land (almost 12,500 acres) is devoted to residential uses. Just over one-fifth of the land is vacant. This category includes empty residential lots, vacant commercial property and abandoned agricultural land. Forests comprise the third most common land use. These lands include private and public forests as well as public parks and conservation lands. Kinds of lands included in the Public Services category are those set aside for water supply, landfills and transportation/utility/communication facilities.

Existing Land Uses in Queensbury, 2005

Land Use	Number of Parcels	Acreage	Portion of Land Area
Agricultural	2	40.44	0.1%
Commercial	479	1,156.96	3.1%
Community services	82	731.61	1.9%
Forested	161	7,334.46	19.5%
Industrial	103	1,008.99	2.7%
Public Services	67	4,060.77	10.8%
Recreation and entertainment	59	2,390.95	6.3%
Residential	9,738	12,483.25	33.1%
Vacant	2,236	8,499.91	22.5%
Totals	12,927	37,707.34	100.0%

Insert “Land Use” Map

Existing zoning regulations

The map on the following page shows the current zoning districts for the Town of Queensbury. There are 28 zoning districts described on the map and at least five Planned Unit Developments (PUD) designated. The distribution of land amongst the districts is described in the table below. (Note that the total land area does not match the sum of the land use table because of different ways that such things as roads and other rights of way are measured.)

Land Distribution by Zoning District in Queensbury, 2005

Zoning District	Acreage	Portion of Total
Land Conservation (LC-10A)	8,491	22.3%
Suburban Residential (SR-1A)	5,133	13.5%
Rural Residential (RR-3A)	3,665	9.6%
Rural Residential (RR-5A)	2,763	7.3%
Land Conservation (LC-42A)	2,594	6.8%
Single Family Residential (SFR-1A)	2,562	6.7%
Planned United Development (PUD)	2,468	6.5%
Light Industry (LI)	1,832	4.8%
Waterfront Residential (WR-1A)	1,294	3.4%
Recreational Commercial (RC-3A)	1,081	2.8%
Parkland Recreation (PR-42A)	967	2.5%
Highway Commercial Intensive (HC-Int)	950	2.5%
Suburban Residential (SR-20)	908	2.4%
Waterfront Residential (WR-3A)	743	2.0%
Professional Office (PO)	560	1.5%
Recreational Commercial (RC-15)	258	0.7%
Multifamily Residential (MR-5)	242	0.6%
Commercial Industrial (CI-1A)	223	0.6%
Urban Residential (UR-10)	189	0.5%
Single Family Residential (SFR-10)	186	0.5%
Mixed Use (MU)	174	0.5%
Heavy Industrial (HI-3A)	161	0.4%
Highway Commercial Moderate (HC-MOD)	154	0.4%
Single Family Residential (SFR-20)	140	0.4%
Suburban Residential (SR-15)	83	0.2%
Enclosed Shopping Center (ESC-25A)	69	0.2%
Urban Residential (UR-1A)	61	0.2%
Neighborhood Commercial (NC-1A)	57	0.1%
Neighborhood Commercial (NC-10)	22	0.1%
	38,033	100.0%

The current zoning code raises the following concerns. Some of these are based on our analysis, while others reflect sentiments expressed by town staff, board members and community members. This list is not exhaustive, but illustrative of some important issues.

- > The large number of zoning districts and PUDs, as well as the way they are scattered around the town, indicates that the code is not working off of a central vision. Some pockets (such as the design areas) are starting to counteract that trend, but the large majority of the districts seem carved to accommodate current uses and not long term vision.
- > The code does not contain adequate explanations for different regulations. Such explanations (often called “findings” or “statements of legislative findings”) inform planning and zoning board members, developers and the public of the desired outcome of the code. Findings are also important when any regulations are challenged in court.
- > Clustered developments are not allowed in single-family housing districts – the kind of development that stands to benefit the most.
- > There is no overarching framework to guide the kind, amount and location of open space created in clustered developments.
- > Term definitions are inadequate and sometimes contradictory.
- > The “Good Neighbor Code” is too vague to be effective.
- > Planned Unit Developments are not creating the kind of mixed-use areas that the code is typically designed to produce.
- > The parking cap rules do not have an adequate explanation as to when the planning board may allow an applicant to exceed them. In addition, shared parking rules are not flexible enough.
- > Important connections between residential areas and between residential and commercial areas are missed. In many communities such automobile and pedestrian connections alleviate traffic congestion, increase access for emergency vehicles and bring vibrancy to neighborhoods.
- > The regulations are too vague in terms of penalties, which opens the town up to drawn out legal disputes.

Insert Zoning map

Development Constraints

This section highlights portions of the project area containing wetlands, steep slopes and floodplains. These natural resources can be important natural amenities. In many cases, development in or around them can prove to be more expensive and limited by regulation.

Floodplains

Most floodplains are found in low areas adjacent to rivers, creeks, lakes and oceans and are prone to periodic flooding. In undeveloped areas this natural interaction restores soil fertility, recharges groundwater supplies and creates unique and recognizable floodplains.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has designated 100-year flood zones. This designation does not mean that flooding will occur only once a century. Instead it means that, in any given year, there is a one-in-one hundred chance of flooding. Flooding often occurs more or less often depending on weather conditions and upstream development changes to the river and along its banks.

Wetlands

Wetlands are among the most productive ecosystems in the world. These water-laden lowlands are a breed ground for vegetation, fish and wildlife. They also provide invaluable services to people in the form of water-cleaning filtration and flood control.

Wetlands in the Town of Queensbury fall into three categories: state defined (DEC), federally defined (NWI) and those defined as wetlands by the Adirondack Park Agency. The locations of the three kinds of wetlands are shown on the map on the following page.

Steep Slopes

The high costs associated with building on steep slopes make them undesirable for development. The areas are prone to erosion and instability. Many places limit development on steep slopes for safety reasons or to protect the views to the slopes as a natural amenity.

The steep slopes in Queensbury are in the western part of the town, although some can also be found along the eastern border with Fort Ann and to an even lesser extent, Kingsbury. These are detailed on the map on the following page.

Insert Development Constraints Map Here

Municipal Infrastructure

The map on the following page shows the infrastructure in Queensbury. It includes routes for water lines and sewer lines. In the town, most of the facilities are found around the borders of the City of Glens Falls. The availability of infrastructure is an important element in determining an area's future. Typically, for example, denser development is allowed in places served by water and sewer lines. Poorly planned development in areas without water and sewer service sometimes leads to supply and/or pollution problems.

Insert Municipal Instructure

Recreational, Historic and Cultural Resources

The map on the following page illustrates the recreational and cultural resources in the Town of Queensbury.

A bike trail, much of it on its own Right Of Way, bisects the town from southeast to northwest. It connects to trails that extend beyond the town boundaries. This is an important amenity that can form the backbone of a more extensive network.

The inventory points out that perhaps the biggest recreational amenity missing from the Town of Queensbury is a public beach and public boat ramp along the water bodies that border the town or are contained within it. By and large, boating public access to Lake George in Queensbury is through private launch sites.

A handful of sites listed as Natural Register of Historic Places are scattered around the town. The town historian notes that there are many other cultural sites important to the rich history of Queensbury. The historian has gathered information on over 100 notable places that fall into the following general categories.

Barns. The historian has surveyed and photographed 210 old barns that reflect the community's agrarian heritage.

Burial grounds, the most notable being the Quaker Burying Ground. The town-owned site is currently in the process of being evaluated for National Historic Register status. Others need to be reviewed for historic importance.

Churches built by the early settlers and 19th century residents of Queensbury. Two notable houses of worship include the Harrisena Church on Ridge Road and the Bay Road Presbyterian Church.

Library. The Mountainside Library, built in the late 1800s, was funded by Andrew Carnegie.

Private homes of potentially historic importance are scattered around the town, particularly on the north-south roads.

School buildings, especially one-room school houses. Many of these have been converted to residential use.

INSERT RECREATIONAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES MAP

Road Ownership

The map on the following page shows all of the roads in the Town of Queensbury and describes who owns them. The town owns most of the streets, however many of the larger roads belong to the county, state or federal government.

INSERT ROAD OWNERSHIP MAP

Community Services

On the community service map, which follows, the four school districts, school buildings, fire stations, and other service or municipal facilities are located.

Insert Community Services map

Agricultural Resources

The U.S. Department of Agriculture classifies the productivity of soils. The two most productive categories are *soils of statewide significance* and *prime farmlands*. Those in the Town of Queensbury are shown on the following map. The goal of soil mapping is to help communities understand the location of their agricultural resources and, where possible, protect them. Funding is often available to protect productive soils in the proper situations.

Prime farmlands are best suited to food feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. These soils produce the highest yields with the lowest inputs of energy or economic resources such as fertilizer and labor. Prime farmlands do not include built-up areas. On the accompanying map, the term ‘prime soils’ is used to designate prime farmland areas. Soils of statewide importance are nearly prime and can producing high yield crops if managed properly.

Much of the prime farmland in the Town of Queensbury, especially south of Route 149, now hosts homes and businesses instead of crops and livestock. Although farmable lands still exist, and some farms still operate, the time of agriculture as a community mainstay has passed.

INSERT AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES MAP HERE

Major Industries

The U.S. Census Bureau measures economic activity every five years. The latest survey was in 2002. It puts figures to what people can see on the ground, that Queensbury has become a regional retail hub. Retail trade tends to generate the most economic activity in the average American community. However, in Queensbury, the retail sector dominates. The following table presents the information collected on the Town of Queensbury.

Economic Census of Queensbury, 2002

Economic sector	Numb. of Establish.	Sales / Revenues (\$1,000)	Annual Payroll (\$1,000)	Number of Employees	Average Wage (statewide)
Manufacturing	34	Not disclosed	Not disclosed	1,000 to 2,499	\$39,558
Wholesale trade	32	111,498	9,580	311	\$47,848
Retail trade	182	618,791	59,030	2,766	\$21,667
Information	9	Not available	Not disclosed	20 to 99	\$59,927
Real estate, rental, and leasing	31	21,611	3,059	157	\$36,993
Professional, scientific, and technical services	47	21,029	7,473	272	\$59,907
Administration and waste management	41	30,243	11,536	565	\$26,943
Educational services	4	Not disclosed	Not disclosed	0 to 19	\$25,520
Health care & social assistance	72	Not disclosed	Not disclosed	1,000 to 2,499	\$35,229
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	23	Not disclosed	Not disclosed	250 to 499	\$33,526
Accommodation and food services	82	50,536	16,235	1,178	\$15,019
Other services (except public admin.)	55	19,969	6,277	332	\$26,657

(Source: U.S. Census Bureau)

The Adirondack Regional Chambers of Commerce regularly survey businesses in the area. Their latest effort was completed this fall and resulted in the compilation of a Top 25 list of employers (in terms of

number of workers) in the region. We reproduce the list below, with the caveat from the chamber that not all companies responded to their survey.

1. Glens Falls Hospital, Glens Falls, 2,810 employees
2. C.R. Bard, Inc., Queensbury, 941 employees
3. Finch, Pruyn, and Company, Glens Falls, 880 employees
4. Boston Scientific, Glens Falls, 812 employees
5. The Sagamore, Bolton Landing, 500 employees
6. Hudson Headwaters Health Network, Glens Falls, 408 employees
7. Glens Falls National Bank and Trust, Glens Falls, 405 employees
8. Tribune Media Services, Glens Falls, 400 employees
9. Wal-Mart, Queensbury, 400 employees
10. Community, Work and Independence, Inc., Glens Falls, 392 employees
11. SCA Tissue North America, LLC, South Glens Falls, 370 employees
12. Travelers, Queensbury, 358 employees
13. Irving Tissue, Inc., Fort Edward, 328 employees
14. T.D. Banknorth, Glens Falls, 326 employees
15. Warren / Washington ARC, Queensbury, 314 employees
16. General Electric Co., Fort Edward, 290 employees
17. Fort Hudson Health System, Inc., Fort Edward, 268 employees
18. The Great Escape & Splashwater Kingdom, Queensbury, 265 employees
19. Telescope Casual Furniture, Inc., Granville, 256 employees
20. Angio Dynamics, Queensbury, 255 employees
21. National Grid, Glens Falls, 224 employees
22. Tyco Healthcare/Kendall, Argyle, 210 employees
23. Hollingsworth and Vose, Greenwich, 208 employees
24. Eden Park Health Care Center, Glens Falls, 190 employees
25. Prospect Child and Family Center, Queensbury, 187 employees

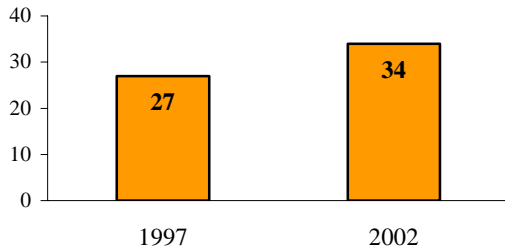
Trends in the Queensbury Economy

The charts and tables that follow show some short-term trends in the Queensbury economy. Interpreting these numbers is problematic since, like the natural environment, companies and workers transcend municipal boundaries. In addition, due to changes in methodology, easy comparison is only possible between 1997 and 2002. (Industry categories were changed just before the 1997 Economic Census.) Finally, as noted above, many important numbers are deliberately muddled on the local level in order to protect corporate confidentiality. Still, it is very important to consider businesses, their trends and their needs when creating a master plan for a community.

In Queensbury the number of manufacturing establishments grew between 1997 and 2002 by 25.9% from 27 to 34 firms. Although the data has been largely suppressed to protect business confidentiality, it is possible to discern that the manufacturing sector probably had the highest total payroll in Queensbury.

Manufacturing Establishments 1997 to 2002

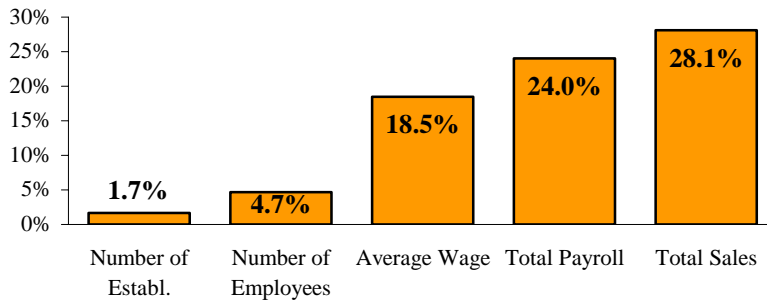
(Source: U.S. Economic Census)



In both 1997 and 2002, retail trade dominated the Queensbury economy. After adjusting for inflation, the total revenues in the retail sector grew by over 28 percent during those five years. Total payroll grew somewhat slower and the average wage grew significantly slower. Interestingly, the number of establishments and total number of employees barely nudged upwards, possibly indicating a more efficient use of space and personnel.

Growth in Retail, 1997 to 2002

(Source: U.S. Economic Census)



After retail, the next most visible sector to residents is probably Accommodations and Food Services. This industrial sector has the second highest payroll and probably the third highest number of employees after retail trade and manufacturing. The following chart shows the breakdown in the total sector between the Accommodation subsector and the Food Services and Drinking Places subsector.

Breakdown of Accommodation & Food Services Sector, 2002

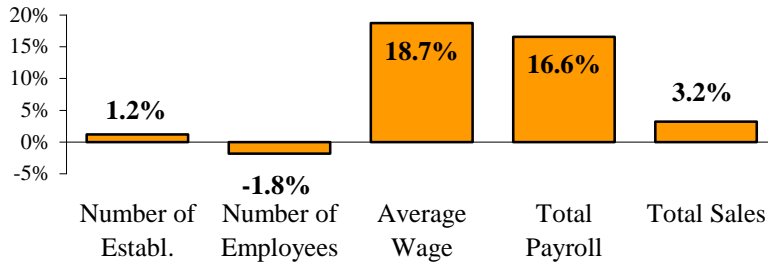
Subsector	Total Establishments	Total Sales	Annual Payroll	Number of Employees	Average Wage
Accommodations	14	\$9,905,000	\$2,614,000	101	\$25,881
Food services & drinking places	68	\$40,613,000	\$13,621,000	1,077	\$12,647

(Source: U.S. Economic Census)

The following chart shows the total change in the growth in the Accommodation and Food Services sector. The percentages reflect real growth after adjusting for inflation. The changes tell a much different story than retail trade – perhaps a story of thin profit margins, greater competition.

Change in Accommodation & Food Services, 1997 to 2002

(Source: U.S. Economic Census)



The U.S. Census Bureau does not break out tourism as a separate industrial sector. However, it is obviously a major factor in the Town of Queensbury. Located in the town are Lake George, several golf courses and public parks, the Great Escape, and the gateway to the Adirondack Park. Retail trade is directly related to the success of the tourism industry, as well as food services and accommodations.

The Great Escape recreational complex has been growing in the last several years. The Great Escape Lodge is the latest addition, scheduled to open during the winter of 2005 – 2006, will feature a 200-room hotel and 38,000 square foot indoor waterpark open year round.

Tax Rates

Owing in large part to the sales tax revenue, Queensbury has no town tax rate. However, some town-level services have their own taxes. And each of the four school districts levies a property tax. The following table presents the taxes paid by town residents.

Town-wide Taxes, 2005	
Item	Tax rate / \$1,000 AV
Fire Service	\$0.860
Emergency Service	0.132
Crandall Library	0.382
County Property Tax (2004)	4.240

(Source: Town assessor's office)

School Taxes, 2005	
Item	Tax rate / \$1,000 AV
Queensbury	\$16.39
Lake George	6.54
Glens Falls	18.68
Hudson Falls	19.15

(Source: Town assessor's office)

The following table presents the tax rates of other towns in Warren County.

Town taxes in Warren County, 2003	
Town	Tax rate / \$1,000 AV
Bolton	\$1.22
Chester	1.48
Hague	0.76
Huricon	1.78
Lake George	2.19
Lake Luzerne	4.83
Thurman	5.85

(Source: NYS Office of Real Property Services)

Schools in the Town of Queensbury

Queensbury students attend schools in four different school districts: Glens Falls, Hudson Falls, Lake George, and Queensbury. Each of these districts includes students from outside the town as well in Queensbury.

The location of these districts can be seen on the map on the following page.

The following table shows the total number of students in each of the district according to the New York State School Report Card. Only the Queensbury School District has seen steady growth over the three years listed.

Student Enrollment, Grades K-12

School District	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Queensbury	3,802	3,867	3,906
Glens Falls City	2,673	2,607	2,522
Hudson Falls	2,427	2,861	2,418
Lake George	1,075	1,100	1,096

Source: NYS School Report Card

The cost per student for each of the four districts in Queensbury, as reported for the 2002-2003 school year, was lower than the New York State average cost per student. This applies to both general and special education, as shown in the following table.

Cost Per Student Year 2002-03

School District	General Education	Special Education
Queensbury	\$5,278	\$12,087
Glens Falls City	\$7,543	\$14,548
Hudson Falls	\$5,954	\$13,787
Lake George	\$7,337	\$12,601
New York State	\$7,595	\$17,818

Source: NYS School Report Card

New York State's Regents Examination scores are reported for each school district in Math, Global History & Geography, and Chemistry. Although a grade of 65 is passing for most tests, the Regents Exam requires that a score of 85 or better be achieved in order to receive credit towards a Regents Diploma.

Math Test Scores, School Districts in Queensbury

Test Score	Queensbury	Glens Falls	Hudson Falls	Lake George
2001-02				
55-100	84.0%	56.0%	81.0%	87.0%
65-100	68.0%	17.0%	61.0%	72.0%
85-100	33.0%	0.0%	14.0%	32.0%
2002-03				
55-100	85.0%	82.0%	93.0%	82.0%
65-100	71.0%	67.0%	79.0%	70.0%
85-100	22.0%	10.0%	20.0%	17.0%
2003-04				
55-100	96.0%	99.0%	96.0%	100.0%
65-100	86.0%	94.0%	88.0%	99.0%
85-100	28.0%	16.0%	14.0%	48.0%

(Source: NYS School Report Card)

Global History/Geography, School Districts in Queensbury

Test Score	Queensbury	Glens Falls	Hudson Falls	Lake George
2001-02				
55-100	95.0%	96.0%	80.0%	97.0%
65-100	85.0%	89.0%	64.0%	88.0%
85-100	31.0%	29.0%	11.0%	27.0%
2002-03				
55-100	95.0%	98.0%	80.0%	98.0%
65-100	88.0%	92.0%	70.0%	93.0%
85-100	42.0%	43.0%	25.0%	44.0%
2003-04				
55-100	96.0%	92.0%	86.0%	100.0%
65-100	87.0%	86.0%	75.0%	99.0%
85-100	38.0%	43.0%	23.0%	64.0%

(Source: NYS School Report Card)

Chemistry, School Districts in Queensbury

Test Score	Queensbury	Glens Falls	Hudson Falls	Lake George
2001-02				
55-100	97.0%	99.0%	82.0%	91.0%
65-100	81.0%	95.0%	65.0%	79.0%
85-100	20.0%	40.0%	4.0%	17.0%
2002-03				
55-100	97.0%	100.0%	82.0%	95.0%
65-100	76.0%	100.0%	53.0%	66.0%
85-100	18.0%	56.0%	4.0%	16.0%
2003-04				
55-100	97.0%	92.0%	90.0%	98.0%
65-100	85.0%	84.0%	76.0%	73.0%
85-100	25.0%	25.0%	8.0%	24.0%

(Source: NYS School Report Card)

Role of Adirondack Park Agency

A large portion of Queensbury, along the northern and western boundaries, sits within the Adirondack Park. New York State created the Park in 1892 over concerns about the area's water and timber resources. Encompassing about six million acres, the Park is the largest publicly protected area in the United States – larger than Yellowstone, Everglades, Glacier and Grand Canyon National Parks combined. Almost half of the Park's lands are owned by New York and protected as 'forever wild' forest preserve.

In 1971, New York State created the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) to develop land use plans for both the public and private land within the Park. The APA developed the Adirondack Land Use and Development Plan in 1973 from which regulations were derived governing new land use and development in the Park. The Law also provides the opportunity for municipalities to adopt an APA Approved Local Land Use Plan, which allows these municipalities to approve certain projects that the APA would normally have to review. Since the Town of Queensbury has an approved plan, any amendments to their land use laws must be reviewed and approved by the APA. Coordination with the APA on the comprehensive plan will be required because the plan forms the basis for future zoning and map changes. In addition, Agency staff members are a good resource for regional environmental and economic information.