

Town of AuSable

Comprehensive Plan

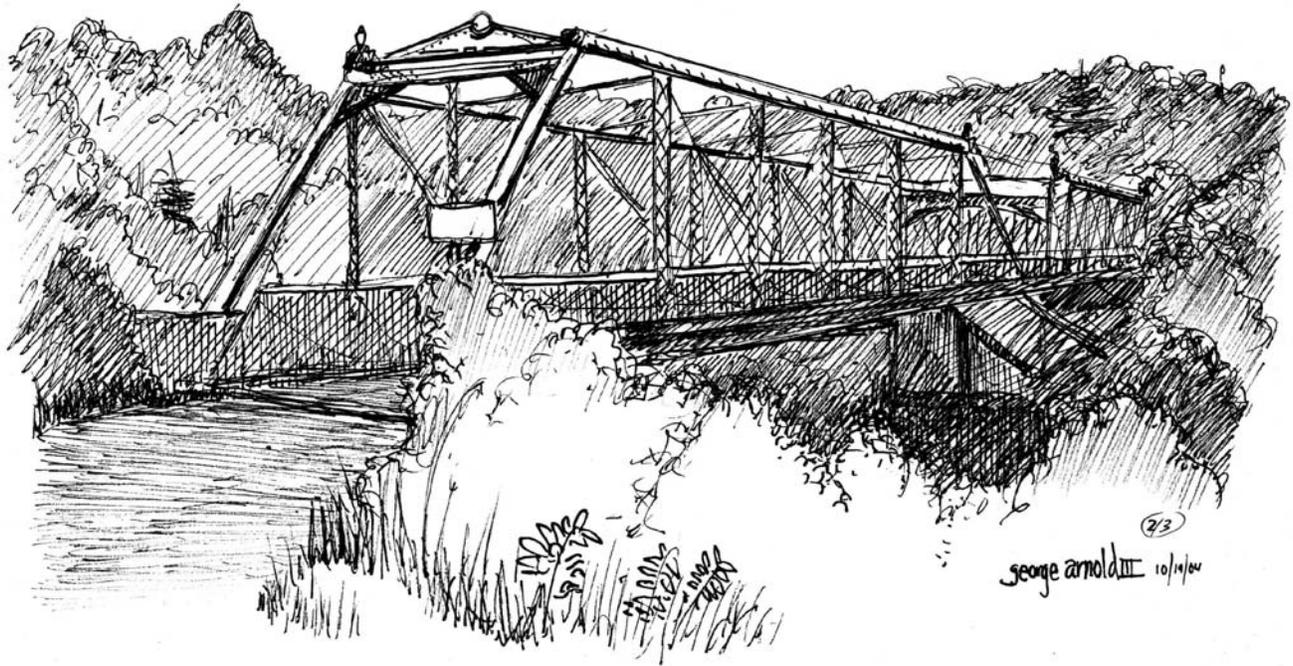


Illustration by George Arnold III

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Acknowledgements

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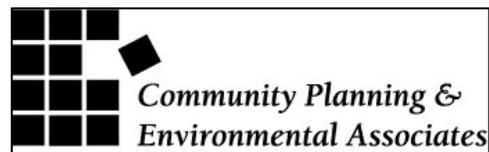
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Introduction

New York State law grants municipalities the authority to prepare and adopt comprehensive plans. As defined by law, a comprehensive plan is a document that identifies goals, objectives, principles, and policies for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth, and development of a community. A comprehensive plan is long-term in nature (10 to 15-year outlook) and provides guidance to municipal leaders, government agencies, community organizations, local businesses, and residents, and helps to ensure that the community's needs are met, both now and in the future. New York's laws also require that local land use regulations be adopted in accordance with a comprehensive plan. The comprehensive plan provides the backbone for local laws such as subdivision, site plan review and zoning.

The Comprehensive Plan is based on community input and an analysis of resources, programs, and other data. A variety of tools were used to gather public opinion and support throughout the planning process. The Plan incorporates the knowledge and skills of a citizen advisory committee, the general public, and a planning consultant. The process was organized around answering three primary questions:

1. What are the current conditions in the Town of AuSable?
2. What is the future direction of the Town desired by the community?
3. What can the community do to attain its vision?

This effort has led to the creation of realistic goals and recommendations that can be implemented through policy changes, new program creation or expansion, organizational changes, grant acquisition, regulatory updates, and other alternatives and actions that will guide the Town toward a successful future.

Listed below are the planning events and milestones that took place over a 24-month period beginning in the spring of 2007 and ending in the spring of 2009:

- Monthly Comprehensive Plan Committee Meetings
- Public visioning workshop
- Town-wide community survey
- Development of town-wide inventory and profile
- Buildout Analysis
- Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis
- Development of Vision Statement
- Development of goals and recommended strategies
- Development of full draft of plan
- Presentation and discussion of plan with Town Board
- Committee-hosted public hearing
- Submittal of Draft Plan to Town Board for their consideration
- Town Board review and public hearing
- Draft plan to Clinton County for review
- State, Environmental, Quality, Review Act (SEQR) determination
- Adoption of Plan by Town Board resolution

Location and General Description of the Town of AuSable

AuSable, a Town in Clinton County, derives its name from the AuSable River which means “of the sand”. The Town is in the southeast corner of the County, south of Plattsburgh. The Town has a total area of 43.9 square miles with 39.1 square miles of land and 4.8 square miles of water. The Town borders Lake Champlain to the east and Essex County to the south. AuSable Chasm, a popular tourist location on the Ausable River is nearby. Interstate 87, the Adirondack Northway, is an important north-south highway that passes through AuSable. US Route 9 runs closer to Lake Champlain than the Northway. US Route 9N runs east-west along the south Town line, joining US 9 in Keeseville. New York State Route 22 is a north-south highway mostly lying west of the Northway.

Communities and locations within AuSable include the following:

- Ausable Beach on the shore of Lake Champlain
- AuSable Chasm, a privately owned tourist location
- Birmingham Falls, a historic location near Keeseville.
- Clintonville, a hamlet near the south Town line on US 9N. This was once an incorporated village (1825) but has since abandoned that status.
- Harkness is a hamlet near the north Town line.
- Keese Corners is a hamlet near the north Town line.
- New Sweden is a historic location in the Town.
- Rogers is a hamlet by the south Town line on US 9N.
- Thomasville is a hamlet in the southwest part of Town.
- Union is a historic hamlet in the Town at the north Town line.



Town History and Background

12,000 years ago, tribes of hunter-gatherer natives fished and hunted along the shores of Lake Champlain and the two AuSable Rivers we know today. Over the millennia the native peoples developed small agricultural communities. When Samuel de Champlain and his men paddled down the great lake from Quebec in 1609 the area was magnificent. Fish and game, black flies and mosquitoes were plentiful. For many years, claim to this land was contested between the Mohawk members of the Iroquois Confederacy and the Algonquians. On his exploration trip, Champlain encountered and fought with the Iroquois who then became fierce enemies of the French invaders. The Iroquois eventually allied with the English and the area surrounding Lake Champlain became a bloody battleground in the French and Indian War. In the Treaty of Paris of 1763, the French surrendered their North American possessions to the British. And, the Iroquois claims to the land between the St. Lawrence River and Lake Champlain were finally recognized.

England’s King George granted land in northern New York to men who had served in his army. One of these was William Gilliland who in 1765 explored the AuSable River from its mouth to AuSable Chasm. Two years later he surveyed what are now the Towns of Chesterfield and AuSable. Gilliland became the first permanent white settler on the western shore of the lake.

The Champlain Valley erupted in war again this time between England and its colonies. The Revolutionary War disrupted all early attempts at settlement including those of Gilliland. In fact,

the English General Burgoyne in 1777 swept through the area with almost 7,400 men and 1,500 horses and destroyed all evidence of the mostly deserted Gilliland settlements.

With the end of the war in 1783, the Iroquois claims to the land were unprotected and the government of New York State paid them \$1600 for all rights and title to any land they had claimed within the state's boundaries. Few natives remained in the area, the last being seen near what is now Keeseville in 1810. Archaeological evidence of the native population has been found on Hallock Hill, along the lake near AuSable Chasm, and north of Harkness.

To recruit defenders for the North Country, the state offered land holdings in its Military Tract legislation of 1786. Ironically, after the land was surveyed and divided into lots, no part of it was ever patented to military claimants. It was this large, state-organized tract that paved the way for permanent white settlement in the Adirondack-Lake Champlain region. Land office commissioners sold mostly small patents to private individuals.

Beginning in 1787, Quaker farmers established a permanent settlement at Union which is on the present boundary of the Towns of AuSable and Peru. These early efforts to farm took advantage of the level, arable land located in the north of the Town of AuSable and in southern Peru. They gradually expanded their fields to Hallock Hill and Harkness where they grew wheat, corn, and potatoes to live on, but later branched out to a lumber and potash trade in Plattsburgh and southern Quebec to supplement their income. The Union Village built the first school house as well as stores, blacksmith shop, taverns, and a religious meeting house in the area. The 1790 Platt Rogers Road went from Willsboro to Keeseville to the top of Hallock Hill and on to Plattsburgh. It was the area's first road. But progress was slow. The harsh climate, rugged terrain, thin and stony soils made agriculture difficult. What was under the soil would prove to be the impetus of the area's growth – iron.

“Late 18th century settlement of the present Towns of Jay, AuSable, Black Brook and Chesterfield centered almost entirely on farming and small-scale mill operations. And yet, during the first half of the 19th century, in no other part of the Adirondack regions was the impact of the iron industry on settlement and demographic growth greater than in the AuSable Valley.” It was during this time that the communities of Clintonville, AuSable Forks, Black Brook, Keeseville, AuSable and New Sweden were established – all driven by the discovery of some of the richest ore mines then known to exist in the country. Iron was actually discovered in the last years of the 18th century in the Town of Jay. Iron was found on Arnold Hill in 1806 and by 1810 mining began. One of the most significant of the mining operators was the Peru Iron Company which created the mining and manufacturing village of Clintonville. Directly south of the Arnold Hill mine, two forges were built on the AuSable River at a place they eventually named New Sweden.

The Peru Iron Company imported Swedish workers to mine the ore. So they changed the name from Finchville to New Sweden. By 1855, 150 people lived there, but the flood of 1857 destroyed the forges and most of the homes. The settlement never recovered. Clintonville played the dominant role of the iron industry in settlement and demographic growth between 1800 and 1845. Incorporated in 1825, Clintonville boasted an iron industrial complex that by 1845 produced over 1600 tons of iron and 1800 tons of nails annually. Over 2000 people lived in the village and surrounding area.

The Town of AuSable was formed in 1839. By this time, the iron manufacturing boom was in full swing. Nestled within the town's boundaries, the Village of Keeseville was benefitting from the general prosperity of the area. Those who farmed prospered from provisioning the families who supported the iron industry. Transportation facilities were developed to support the shipment of iron ore and goods to Lake Champlain and to the developing railroad heads. As people came to the area to work in the mines and villages grew, the need for education and religion led to the building of schools and churches. Originally populated by Quakers, the era of immigration to the United States from Europe led to population by Swedes, Irish, and French. Most of the French who came to the area were from Canada. It was this wave of industrial development in the first half of the 19th century that resulted in the most significant residential growth in the town's history. However, by the 1870's the area's importance in iron production was slipping away to bigger mines in the western United States and to the growing railway system which could service them. The decline of the iron industry in the AuSable Valley signaled the end of the area's growth and development. It was to be replaced by some wood products industry and the increasing tourism industry. "But much of what we see today in the various villages and hamlets was established by the time the iron industry of the AuSable Valley closed in 1893."

Although the mining industry disappeared, the Village of Keeseville was spared economic disintegration because it had a more diverse manufacturing base. Though the horseshoe nail factories closed, the village remained an important transport, manufacturing (wood products, furniture, textiles) and service center. Those communities which had depended so heavily on the iron works, Clintonville for example, suffered rapid decline.

What the railroad no longer exported from the Town and Village – iron manufactories – it now imported to the area – tourists. The Town and Village began to capitalize on what was to become a major industry for the area. This new industry would inspire "...a wave of residential development in previously uninhabited or sparsely inhabited sections of the area." There were really two waves...the first arriving in the late 1800's and early 1900's from visitors arriving by train to visit the Adirondacks and stay in the great hotels and take in the sights...the second by people who had automobiles and the leisure dollars to visit and even build second, vacation homes. In both developments, it was the establishment of the Adirondack State Park in 1892 that made it possible for the public to have access to the park and prevented the land from being in control of the wealthy few. The principal forms of making a living became new types of manufacturing, commercial dairying, recreation and tourism.

AuSable Chasm is a prime example of the shift. "...what started as iron, lumber, paper and flour milling evolved, through economic necessity and the ingenuity of the residents, into a flourishing tourist industry which makes use of the river power in an equally contrasting application to that of the first settlers." The AuSable Chasm Horse Nail Works was one of the last surviving secondary iron manufactories in the region. It closed its doors in 1910. But the AuSable Chasm Company had been operating the chasm as a tourist attraction since 1873. Using housing built by the nail works, the company created the AuSable Chasm Inn complex in 1922. Seven cabins and a motel were added in 1939. Today, over 200,000 people a year visit the chasm where there are over 58 tourist-related buildings. The company now employs over 70 people and is considered a major employer in the town.

A significant impact of loss of the mining industry was the decline in farming. During the first half of the 20th century, many farms in the Harkness-Hallock Hill area were abandoned. Those that

remained specialized in single crop production and dairying. Improved farmland decreased from 501,000 acres in 1880 to 354,000 by 1910. Today, at Hallock Hill the town's oldest homes and farmstead are to be found on Arthur Road, Chasm Road, Hallock Hill Road, and State Route 9N.

Similarly, as the manufacturing of iron products declined, the railroads left too. Case in point, the Keeseville, AuSable Chasm and Lake Champlain Railroad, established in 1890, had provided transportation for industrial and tourist enterprises until 1924 when it stopped operations. Today, the only active rail line is provided by the Canadian Pacific Railroad along the shores of Lake Champlain to connect New York City to Montreal, Quebec. In their wake, the rail lines left a number of striking bridges across the AuSable River, symbols of a vibrant, thriving past.

Automobiles saved tourism in the Adirondacks. Along Routes 9N and 22 in the first half of the 1900's diners, motels, tourist attractions sprang up only to be eclipsed later when the Route 87 Adirondack Northway was constructed through Chesterfield and AuSable bypassing those earlier tourist businesses which then collapsed. On the other hand, the new highway provided the opportunity for the building of summer homes and camps by people who wanted to make a second home in the Park. The development of the last half of the 20th century was principally driven by summer tourism and the demand for second homes.

Today, the Town of AuSable is a pattern of older farms and homes from the iron boom days and buildings that accommodate tourism with a mixture of small commercial enterprises developed by people determined to preserve their rural roots. "The extent to which tourists and summer residents are attracted to these various communities (including the Town of AuSable) is generally the extent to which they are succeeding." The Adirondacks are accessible to over 55,000,000 people. According to recent studies, "...the entire Adirondack-Champlain region is at an important stage in its history. Heavy industry and mining in the region have been almost entirely phased out. Tourism has emerged as the most significant source of revenue in most locations.

In 1995, Plattsburgh Air Force Base closed and the community, including the Town, felt its loss financially. Community leadership emerged to recreate the local economy which had been so dependent on the air base population. Efforts to attract new businesses to the area and to the base property have been highly successful and promise to bring a level of prosperity and increase of residents not seen since the iron mine days. The Town of AuSable is gradually becoming a "bedroom community" for Plattsburgh and its new business people. The Town can expect to see increasing residential development, especially in the eastern half.

Physical and Environmental Features

Topography

The topography of the Town of AuSable varies from a steep river chasm in the eastern portion of the Town to the Adirondack hillsides found in the west (See Topography Map). Elevations within the Town range from 95 feet above sea level at the Lake Champlain shoreline to about 1415 feet above sea level in the northwest corner of the Town along the eastern slope of Flat Mountain. In total there is 1300 feet of relief in the Town.

Prominent peaks are found mostly in the western part of the Town. These include Drag Mountain (1280 feet), Arnold Hill (1220 feet), Cook Mountain and its surrounding peaks (1100 to 1200 feet), Cold Spring Mountain (1083 feet) and Smith Mountain (820 feet). Another prominent topographic feature includes the AuSable Chasm and the ancient Champlain Sea beach ridges that are found east of the Harkness hamlet along the upper stretch of Hallock Hill Road.

As the slope map indicates (see Slope Map), the Town of AuSable terrain is highly variable. Proceeding westward from Lake Champlain there is a relatively level area that, with the exception of the AuSable Chasm continues until just west of the Northway. Another relatively level area is along the Little Ausable River and its tributaries in the northern half of the Town. A large area with slopes of 8 to 15 percent is centered in the central part of the Town on both sides of Hallock Road and Hill Road; a second area is found in the northwestern part of the Town. Areas of steep slopes of over 15% generally border the Ausable River valley from Hallock Road southward.

Bedrock Geology

Bedrock is the many-miles-thick crust of the earth. It is solid rock made up of many individual rock types. It is present everywhere, but is usually covered by other surficial deposits. Bedrock composition influences water supply, topography, and the makeup of surficial soils.

The map titled Bedrock Geology identifies the location of the various formations found in the Town of AuSable. The three major formations in Town include the Potsdam Sandstone, granite gneiss, gneiss, and glacial/alluvial deposits. The glacial/alluvial deposits are found along the lake shore. Some of the other bedrock formations found in smaller concentrations include the Theresa Formation, migmatite, amphibolite, and Charnockite gneiss. Bedrock geology can have a direct relationship with land use because of the water-holding capacity of each rock type.

Surficial Geology

Bedrock is usually covered by a layer of soil and other loose material. This material is a product of weathering which breaks down the bedrock. These loose materials can remain in place or be transported by water, wind, or glacial ice. 90 percent of the bedrock in New York State is covered by surficial deposits more than one meter thick. Most of these deposits were left by glacial activity. The map titled Surficial Geology shows where the various surficial deposits can be found, and the following table further describes the types of surficial deposits in AuSable. Surficial geology has a

direct relationship with land use activities because it determines soil limitations for building and septic systems. Most of the Town is covered in variable texture till. There are several significant areas of exposed bedrock (having no soil coverage). Another major surficial characteristic is lacustrine soils – mostly sands and soils laid down where rivers, streams and former lakes have been. Near Lake Champlain, marine lacustrine deposits and a large area of Kame can be found (see description in box, below). Surficial deposits contribute to the many limitations found in AuSable for septic systems (see Septic System Soil Limitation Map).

t - Till Variable texture (boulders to silt) - usually poorly sorted sand-rich diamict, deposition beneath glacier ice, permeability varies with compaction, thickness is variable (1-50 meters).
r – Bedrock - Exposed or generally within 1 meter of surface.
ls - Lacustrine sand - Generally quartz sand, well sorted, stratified, usually deposited in pro-glacial lakes, but may have been deposited on remnant ice, generally a near-shore deposit or near a sand source, permeable, thickness is variable (2-20 meters).
ld - Lacustrine delta - Coarse to fine gravel and sand, stratified, generally well sorted, deposited at a lake shoreline, thickness is variable (3-15 meters).
lsc - Lacustrine silt and clay - Generally laminated silt and clay, deposited in pro-glacial lakes, generally calcareous, low permeability, potential land instability, thickness is variable (up to 50 meters).
k - Kame deposits - Coarse to fine gravel and/or sand, includes kames, eskers, kame terraces, kame deltas, ice contact, or ice cored deposition, lateral variability in sorting, texture and permeability, may be firmly cemented with calcareous cement, thickness is variable (10-30 meters)
og - Outwash sand and gravel - Coarse to fine gravel with sand, pro-glacial fluvial deposition, well rounded and stratified, generally finer texture away from ice border, permeable, thickness is variable (2-20 meters).
al - Recent alluvium - Oxidized fine sand to gravel, permeable, generally confined to flood plains within a valley, in larger valleys may be overlain by silt, subject to flooding, thickness 1-10 meters.

Surface Waters and Watersheds

A watershed is currently defined as the area of land above a given point on a body of water that contributes run-off water to the flow at that point. The United States Geological Survey (USGS) uses a cataloging system to categorize watersheds into various hydrologic units. These hydrologic units are classified into four levels. The largest geographic area is the region.

The entire Town of AuSable lies within the Lake Champlain drainage basin. In 1990 the Lake Champlain Special Designation Act designated Lake Champlain as a resource of national significance. The Act brings watershed citizens and residents of two states, New York and Vermont, together to implement a comprehensive pollution prevention, control, and restoration plan for protecting the watersheds within the Basin. The act specifies examining water quality, fisheries, wetlands, wildlife, recreational and cultural resource issues.

Lake Champlain Basin

From a terrestrial perspective, the Lake Champlain Basin is comprised of three ecoregions (as defined by The Nature Conservancy). The majority of the watershed is classified as Northern Appalachian Boreal Forest, and is made up primarily of the Adirondack Mountains. The St. Lawrence/Champlain Valley ecoregion defines the area from northern Clinton County, along Lake Champlain, southward through the northern tip of Washington County. The Lower New England/Northern Piedmont ecoregion comprises the smallest part of the Basin: the northern extent of the Hudson River Valley and the Taconic Highlands in Washington County. About 3/4 of the Lake Champlain Basin falls within the Adirondack Park boundary (southeastern Franklin County, the southwestern two thirds of Clinton County, all of Essex County, northeastern Warren County, and northwestern Washington County). The remaining 1/4 of the region outside the boundary includes the relatively open habitats of eastern Clinton County and central Washington County, and the relatively forested northern extent of the Taconic Highlands of northeastern Washington County.

The Lake Champlain Watershed contains many diverse natural communities and important plant and animal species. Critical Wildlife Habitats include forested habitats, wetlands and other aquatic habitats, and grassland habitats. Threats to the area include:

Adirondacks

- Atmospheric deposition
- Habitat loss and fragmentation
- Incompatible forestry practices
- Invasive species
- Human disturbance (illegal animal collection, recreation)
- Climate change

Champlain Valley

- Habitat loss and fragmentation
- Degraded water quality and altered hydrology
- Incompatible agricultural and forestry practices
- Invasive species
- Human disturbance (illegal animal collection, recreation)
- Climate change

Two primary rivers provide drainage within the Town – the Ausable and The Little Ausable (see Water Features Map). The Ausable River and its tributaries drain the southern and eastern part of Town. The Little Ausable is responsible for drainage in the western and central part of AuSable. Southwick Brook and Dry Mill Brook are the main tributaries of the Ausable while Caldwell and Furnace Brook compose the primary tributaries of the Little Ausable.

The AuSable River has been included in the National Park Service’s Nationwide Rivers Inventory and its entire length is designated as part of the NYS Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers System. Rivers designated as a wild, scenic and recreational river:

- Require an Agency permit and has standards for subdivisions, single family dwellings and most new uses and structures in river areas;
- Regulates the cutting of trees in the entire river area (within 1/4 mile of the river), including a prohibition on cutting within 100 feet of the river;
- Restricts motor boating and other motorized activities;
- Regulates bridge and road building;
- Regulates structures (such as dams) and activities (such as dredging or filling) that alter a river's natural flow;
- Allows continuation of lawfully existing, nonconforming uses, but require permits or variances for expansion or change in use;
- Prohibits certain "noncompatible" uses; and
- Prohibits new structures in Wild River areas.

* The "river area" is almost always the entire area within ¼ mile of the bank of the river. For a few rivers, the boundary of the river area is a different distance from the river.

The entire length of the Ausable River is also included on the NPS's Nationwide Rivers Inventory, which identifies rivers, and river segments, with resources of statewide or national significance. The Nationwide Rivers Inventory recognizes the entire Ausable River as having "outstanding, remarkable, free-flowing, undeveloped and scenic values". It also recognizes the fisheries of the Main Stem and West Branch as being "outstandingly remarkable".

The river has numerous significant recreational resources, both public and private including trail systems, ice and rock climbing, flat-water and white-water boating, tourist attractions, opportunities for nature study, swimming, and trout fishing. The Main Stem of the river ends at the DEC-managed AuSable Marsh Wildlife Management Area. AuSable Chasm is just outside the Town boundary, about 1 mile from Keeseville and is a unique gorge and falls.

The river also has biological, cultural, historic, and recreational resources important to the Town and the region.

The Ausable Watershed is part of the Champlain-Adirondack Biosphere Reserve¹ which includes the Adirondack Mountain Region and the Lake Champlain Watershed in Vermont. Designated in 1989 by the United Nations it is a largely natural area and will be used for research and the conservation of the genetic material of presently or potentially useful species. Below is a description of some of the studies and lists of species within the Ausable Watershed part of the reserve. The Ausable River is identified by fisheries biologists as one of the top ten trout streams in New York State. The entire Ausable River offers good trout habitat. Brook and Brown Trout are mainly found in the East and West Branch. Rainbow Trout and Smallmouth Bass are found in the Main Stem of the river. Landlocked Salmon can be found in the lower five miles of the Ausable River below AuSable Chasm.

Stream Classifications

Certain waters of the state are protected on the basis of their classification. Streams and small water bodies located in the course of a stream that are designated as C(T) or higher (i.e., C(TS), B, or A) are collectively referred to as "protected streams," and are subject to the stream protection

¹ From the Draft Ausable Watershed Management Strategy, July 2008

provisions of the Protection of Waters regulations. All waters of the state are provided a class and standard designation based on existing or expected best usage of each water or waterway segment.

The classification AA or A is assigned to waters used as a source of drinking water. Classification B indicates a best usage for swimming and other contact recreation, but not for drinking water. Classification C is for waters supporting fisheries and suitable for non - contact activities. The lowest classification and standard is D.

Waters with classifications A, B, and C may also have a standard of (T), indicating that it may support a trout population, or (TS), indicating that it may support trout spawning (TS). Special requirements apply to sustain these waters that support these valuable and sensitive fisheries resources. Small ponds and lakes with a surface area of 10 acres or less, located within the course of a stream, are considered to be part of a stream and are subject to regulation under the New York State stream protection category of Protection of Waters.

In AuSable, all classifications can be found but the majority is either C or C (T) (See Stream Classifications Map).

Water quality on the Main Stem is affected by automotive fluids coming from a large junk yard situated adjacent to the stream downstream from Clintonville. Hundreds of cars and busses are stored on sandy outwash and fluvial deposits within the flood plain of the river. The junkyard has been there for many years and continues to expand. The Draft Ausable Watershed Management Plan lists oil and grease, metals, acids, on other toxics washed into the river during flood events as a concern.

Wetlands

Pursuant to Environmental Conservation Law Article 24 Parts 662 and 663, freshwater wetlands larger than 12.4 acres are protected by New York State. Smaller wetlands may also be protected under federal regulations. The Freshwater Wetlands Act, aimed at preventing wetlands being filled or drained, regulates activities within or adjacent to designated wetlands. Under the APA Act and the NYS Freshwater Wetlands Act, almost all land uses, such as draining, dredging, placing fill, structures, and subdivisions in or involving wetlands require an APA permit. Wetlands are defined as: “any land which is annually subject to periodic or continual inundation by water and commonly referred to as a bog, swamp or marsh and which are either (a) one acre in size, or (b) adjacent to a body of water, with which there is a free interchange of water, in which case there is no size limitation.” Property that is flooded every spring by surface water backup or standing water may also be a wetland, as well as forested areas with high ground water. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has jurisdiction over all wetlands not administered by the NYS DEC/APA. Permits need to be secured prior to any filling, alteration, or construction in or adjacent to any wetlands. See Water Features Map.

Aquifers

Groundwater is especially important in rural areas since development is directly related to its availability. Water supplies within AuSable are secured from wells furnished in surficial deposits composed of sand and gravel. Individual subsurface septic systems are the primary means for waste treatment disposal in AuSable.

Flood Hazard Zones

Floodplains parallel major rivers and streams. Floodplains in AuSable exist along the Ausable and Little Ausable rivers. The United States Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has mapped the 100-year and 500-year flood hazard zones in AuSable. The mapped boundaries delineate the flood elevation that has a 1 percent chance (100-year zone) or 0.2 percent chance (500-year zone) of being equaled or exceeded each year. Major floodplains are located along the Ausable and Little Ausable rivers. See Water Features Map.

Properties with buildings in or around these lands will typically be required to purchase flood insurance to safeguard against the danger of inundation. Communities that agree to manage flood hazard areas by adopting minimum standards can participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The standards are contained in Section 60.3 of the NFIP regulations. Communities that do not participate are subject to the sanctions outlined in Section 202(a) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973. Section 202(a) makes flood insurance, Federal grants and loans, Federal disaster assistance, and Federal mortgage insurance unavailable for the acquisition or construction of structures located in the floodplain shown on the NFIP maps. If a property owner believes that his/her land has mistakenly been included within the 100-year flood zone he/she can request a “letter of map amendment” from FEMA to rectify the error.

Soils

The Soil Survey of Clinton County, New York was last updated by the USDA- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in 1989 (See Septic System Soil Limitations Map). NRCS has classified all soils in the Town based on their limitations and potentials for various land uses.

Two of the characteristics described for each soil type are its depth to bedrock and depth to seasonal high water table. Soils in AuSable were formed as a result of glacial action and are appropriately termed glacial till. Glacial till is the end product of a glacier moving over hills and ridges picking up debris as it does so. When the glacier melted, this debris was left behind forming “till”. This is the basic material found in the soils of the Town.

The Shallow Depth to Bedrock Map shows locations in AuSable where soils are very shallow. Much of the central and southern portions of town have very shallow soils that are less than 66 centimeters in depth. This shallow condition limits development of conventional septic systems on about 4,700 acres of land in Town.

The Shallow Depth to Water Table Map shows that much of the rest of AuSable has very wet and poorly drained soils. This shallow depth of soil to the water table adds other significant limitations on development of conventional septic systems on about 9,300 acres of land.

Overall, limitations due to soil features can be summarized as:

- Not Rated (water or gravel mines) - 3,104 acres
- Somewhat limited - 167 acres
- Very limited - the rest of the town, 24,592 acres

Specific conditions for particular sites can only be verified by on-site surveys and investigations.

Building and Septic Capabilities

The Septic Absorption Field Limitations map shows the areas in the Town where standard in-the-ground on-site septic systems would most likely not be approved by the Clinton County Health Department. Soils are rated as having severe limitations if soil properties or site conditions are so unfavorable to overcome that special design, or significant increases in costs or maintenance are required. Some of the factors used to identify these problem areas are high water table, slow permeability, shallow depth to bedrock, excessive slope, poor or too rapid percolation, and ponding/flooding or other wetness problems. Most of the Town would not be acceptable for on-site septic systems without an engineered system.

Prime and State Important Agricultural Soils

Prime farmland is land which has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for the production of crops. It has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields of crops when treated and managed, including water management, according to current farming methods. Farmland of Statewide Importance is land other than Prime Farmland which has a good combination of physical and chemical characteristics for the production of crops. See Agriculture Map.

Significant Ecological Communities

Bird Conservation Areas

New York State has included the Lake Champlain marshes in AuSable and Peru as Bird Conservation Areas. The New York State Bird Conservation Area Program was established in 1997 to safeguard and enhance bird populations and their habitats on State lands and waters. The goal of the Bird Conservation Area (BCA) Program is to integrate bird conservation interests into agency planning, management and research projects, within the context of agency missions.

The BCA Program is modeled after the National Audubon Society's Important Bird Areas (IBA) program, which began in New York in 1996. The BCA Program applies criteria developed under the IBA program to state-owned properties. To date, forty-nine BCA sites have been designated.

Breeding Bird Atlas

New York State maintains data for breeding birds. Two data sets are contained in the Breeding Bird Atlas from 1985 and 2000. Portions of nine different breeding bird inventory blocks have been recorded in AuSable. Given the variety of habitats in Town that range from mountains to lake shore, the breeding bird population in Town is very diverse. Over 100 breeding species have been recorded. Eleven species of birds classified as species of special concern have been inventoried in Town (American Bittern, Osprey, Sharp Shinned Hawk, Coopers Hawk, Red-Shouldered Hawk, Whip-poor-will, Vesper Sparrow, Horned Lark, Common Nighthawk, Common Loon, and Red-Headed Woodpecker). Five species are listed as threatened (Northern Harrier, Least Bittern,

Upland Sandpiper, Bald Eagle, and Common Tern). One endangered species was found in the 1985 census, but not in 2000 (Short-Eared Owl).

Natural Heritage Program

The New York Natural Heritage Program is a partnership between NYS DEC and The Nature Conservancy. They promote conservation of rare animals, plants, and significant communities by combining field inventories, scientific analysis, expert interpretation, and a comprehensive database on New York's biodiversity. According to the most recent Natural Heritage information, a number of threatened, endangered species and significant ecological communities exist in AuSable. The Ausable Delta in AuSable and adjacent Town of Peru as well as Lake Champlain is habitat to a number of critical species including vascular plants, freshwater mussels, and birds. The shorelines, sand/gravel bars, small brooks, marshy areas, floodplain forested habitat, and sand beach habitats make this location critically important to the ecology of the area. Other important habitats in or adjacent to AuSable include the Plains Road Barrens, AuSable Chasm Forest, AuSable Chasm, Wickham Marsh, Dry Mill Brook, Keeseville Barrens, Clinton Mine, Arnold Hill Mine, Harkness Barrens, and the Clintonville Pine Barrens.

The mine areas are hibernaculum for a variety of bat species. The steep ravines and cliffs in AuSable Chasm are habitats for several unique natural communities and several threatened and endangered vascular plant species. Pitch Pine-Heath Barrens are found in several locations in AuSable: some of these areas are in pristine ecological condition while others are significantly disturbed. The short-eared owl, an endangered bird species in New York State has been found in the area of Wickham Marsh in years past. The Ausable Delta, including Dry Mill Brook and the Little Ausable River is a very significant habitat and includes unique communities and species including vascular plants, freshwater mussels, a variety of bird species, threatened moths, and important sand beach/sand bar plant communities. The Delta area also includes a floodplain forest and lake shore habitats.

Adirondack Park Critical Environmental Areas

The Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan requires that proposed developments within certain "critical environmental areas" be subject to review and approval by the Adirondack Park Agency. CEA's are the more sensitive features of the Park's natural environment. They are subcategories of the general land use area classifications and are provided extra protection by the law. These Critical Environmental Areas include wetlands, high elevations, areas around designated study rivers, state or federal highways, and lands in proximity to certain classifications of state-owned lands. More specifically, they include:

- Land at elevation of 2,500 feet or more (except in Hamlet areas) to protect thin soils and open space;
- Land within 1/8 mile of state wilderness, primitive or canoe areas (except in Hamlets);
- Land within 150 feet (in a Rural Use area) or within 300 feet (in a Resource Management area) of the edge of the right-of-way of a federal or state highway;

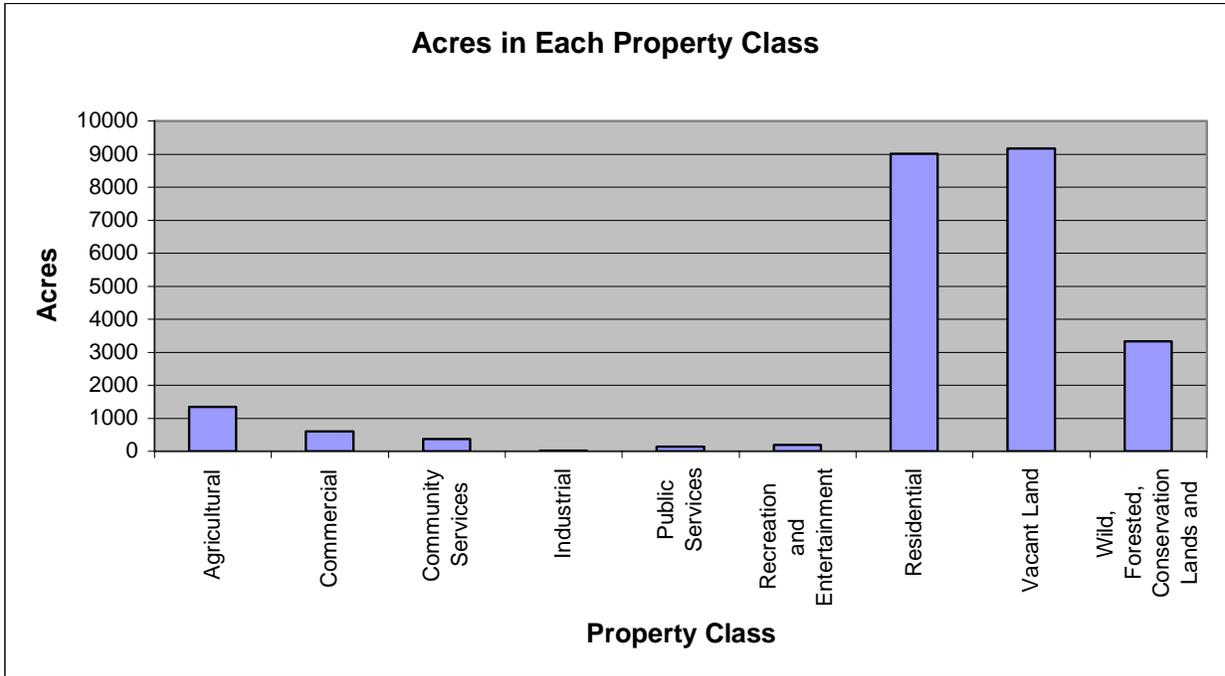
- Wetlands; and
- Land within 1/4 mile of rivers under study for inclusion in the Wild Scenic and Recreational Rivers System, except in Hamlet areas. (Land within 1/4 mile of rivers already classified Wild, Scenic or Recreational is subject to special regulation outside of Hamlet and Moderate Intensity Use areas, and are not designated as Critical Environmental Areas.)

In AuSable, CEA's are located along the Ausable River, along Route 87, and along Route 22 (See APA Critical Environmental Areas Map).

Land Uses

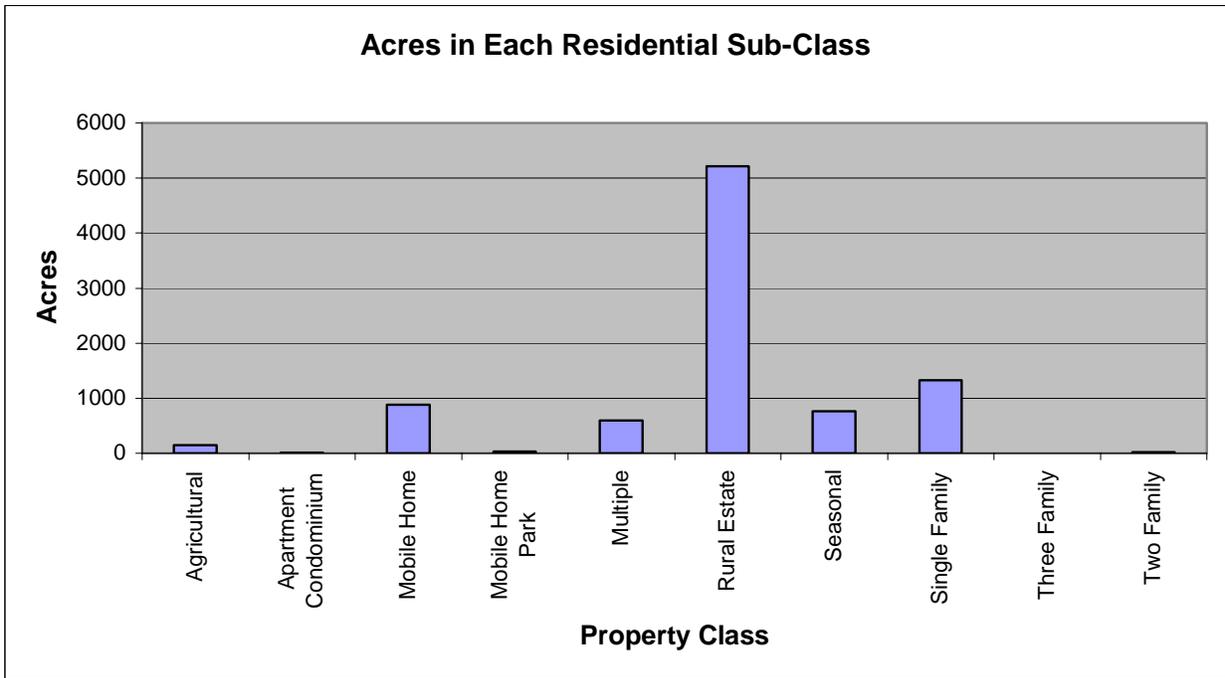
The Property Class Map shows general land use patterns. This map was developed based on tax parcel identification. It offers a "snapshot" into how land is used and the general distribution of various activities throughout the Town. This illustrates the four major (by acreage) land use categories in Town: residential, agriculture, vacant (unimproved lots), and Wild Forest, Conservation Land and Public Parks. By parcels, the most common classifications are for residential and vacant uses. The following tables detail the land uses in AuSable as of 2008.

<i>Property Class</i>	<i>Number Parcels</i>	<i>of Acres</i>	<i>Percent of Land Area</i>
Agricultural	16	1,336.4	5.5%
Commercial	49	601.0	2.5%
Community Services	28	364.8	1.5%
Industrial	3	14.0	0.1%
Public Services	9	135.8	0.6%
Recreation and Entertainment	5	199.8	0.8%
Residential	1,107	9,006.2	37.3%
Vacant Land	364	9,165.9	38.0%
Wild, Forested, Conservation Lands and Public Parks	15	3,323.6	13.8%
Grand Total	1,596	24,147.5	100.0%



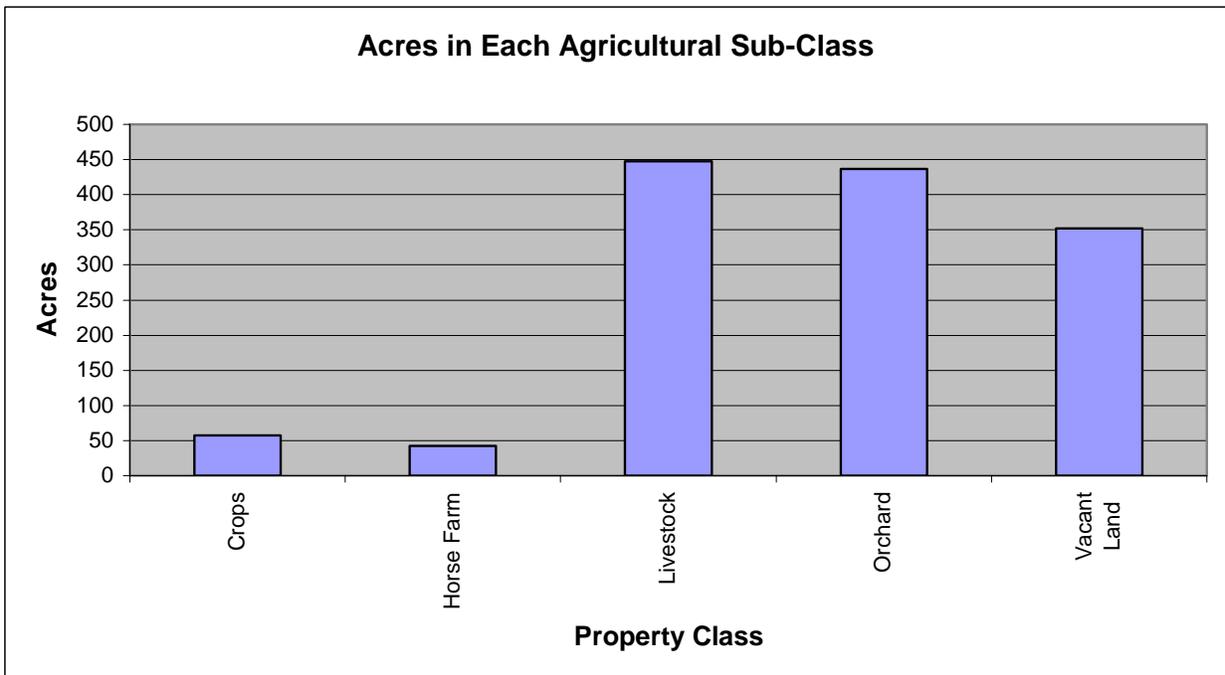
<i>Residential Sub-Class</i>	<i>Number of Parcels</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percent of Land Area</i>
Agricultural	1	145.7	0.60%
Apartment Condominium	15	12.5	0.05%
Mobile Home	125	885.1	3.67%
Mobile Home Park	3	31.2	0.13%
Multiple	9	599.2	2.48%
Rural Estate	75	5,214.8	21.60%
Seasonal	33	762.7	3.16%
Single Family	809	1,329.1	5.50%
Three Family	1	4.1	0.02%
Two Family	36	21.8	0.09%
Residential Total	1,107	9,006.2	37.30%

The most acres in Town are classified as Rural Estates - parcels with a year round residence with more than 10 acres of land. Single family homes and mobile homes are the other prevalent residential classes in AuSable.



<i>Agricultural Sub-Class</i>	<i>Number of Parcels</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percent of Land Area</i>
Crops	1	57.7	0.24%
Horse Farm	1	42.8	0.18%
Livestock	2	447.2	1.85%
Orchard	8	436.4	1.81%
Vacant Land	4	352.3	1.46%
Agricultural Total	16	1,336.4	5.53%

Sixteen parcels and 1336 acres in town are classified as being totally agricultural. Of these, livestock, orchards, and vacant ag lands are predominant.



<i>Commercial Sub-Class</i>	<i>Number of Parcels</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percent of Land Area</i>
Auto	7	13.7	0.06%
Bank	1	0.2	0.00%
Bar	2	3.9	0.02%
Dining	6	14.7	0.06%
Junkyard	3	25.2	0.10%
Kennel	1	2.5	0.01%
Lodging	5	69.1	0.29%
Multipurpose	16	312.4	1.29%
Office	1	0.3	0.001%
Retail	1	0.6	0.002%
Storage and Distribution	6	158.4	0.66%
Commercial Total	49	601.0	2.49%

49 acres of commercial land exist in AuSable. Most are multi-purpose commercial lands, and used for storage and distribution. Three parcels on 14 acres are classified as industrial. Most of this acreage is mining.

<i>Industrial Sub-Class</i>	<i>Number of Parcels</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percent of Land Area</i>
Manufacturing	2	2.4	0.01%
Mining	1	11.6	0.05%
Industrial Total	3	14.0	0.06%

<i>Community Services Sub-Class</i>	<i>Number of Parcels</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percent of Land Area</i>
Cemetery	10	68.1	0.28%
Educational	4	209.1	0.87%
Government	4	19.8	0.08%
Protection	1	3.6	0.02%
Religious	8	23.2	0.10%
Social Welfare	1	40.9	0.17%
Community Services Total	28	364.8	1.51%

Twenty-eight parcels of land on 364 acres are classified as community service lands. The majority of these are cemeteries and the educational facilities. One hundred thirty five acres are used for public services such as electric, waste, and other utilities.

<i>Public Services Sub-Class</i>	<i>Number of Parcels</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percent of Land Area</i>
Communication	1	2.2	0.01%
Electric and Gas	5	47.6	0.20%
Transportation	1	37.4	0.15%
Waste Disposal	2	48.6	0.20%
Public Services Total	9	135.8	0.56%

Two parcels classified as a camp/resort make up the majority of recreational lands in AuSable. Privately owned forested lands make up almost 14% of wild, forested, and conservation lands in town. Only two parcels on 24 acres are government owned wild lands.

<i>Recreation and Entertainment Sub-Class</i>	<i>Number of Parcels</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percent of Land Area</i>
Camp Resort	2	197.6	0.82%
Social	2	0.3	0.001%
Sports	1	1.9	0.01%
Recreation and Entertainment Total	5	199.8	0.83%

<i>Wild, Forested, Conservation Lands and Public Parks Sub-Class</i>	<i>Number of Parcels</i>	<i>of Acres</i>	<i>Percent of Land Area</i>
Government Owned	2	24.5	0.10%
Private	13	3,299.1	13.66%
Wild, Forested, Conservation Lands and Public Parks Total	15	3,323.6	13.76%

<i>Vacant Land Sub-Class</i>	<i>Number of Parcels</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percent of Land Area</i>
Agricultural	51	3,280.4	13.58%
Commercial	15	62.0	0.26%
Residential	261	3,879.0	16.06%
Rural	36	1,944.3	8.05%
Waterfront	1	0.2	0.001%
Vacant Land Total	364	9,165.9	37.96%

Adirondack Park Agency Classifications

The APA Land Classification Map shows the various land use categories that are regulated in the Town of AuSable by the APA. The largest area is classified as resource management, followed by low intensity uses. There are seven acres of wild forest, 660 in hamlets and about 3,000 in open water. These classifications are defined by APA as follows:

Hamlet

These are the growth and service centers of the Park where the Agency encourages development. Intentionally, the Agency has very limited permit requirements in hamlet areas. Activities there requiring an Agency permit are erecting buildings or structures over 40 feet in height, projects involving more than 100 lots, sites or units, projects involving wetlands, airports, watershed management projects, and certain expansions of buildings and uses. Hamlet boundaries usually go well beyond established settlements to provide room for future expansion. There is no limit placed on the number of principal buildings per square mile and no average lot size required by the APA in the Hamlet area.

APA Land Classification In AuSable	Acres
Hamlet	660
Moderate Intensity	1,333
Low Intensity	8,037
Rural Use	4,435
Resource Management	10,360
Wild Forest	7
Open Water	3,053
Total Town	27,886

Moderate intensity use

Most uses are permitted; relatively concentrated residential development is most appropriate. APA places a limit of 500 principal structures per square mile and an average lot size of 1.3 acres in this land use area.

Low intensity use

Most uses are permitted; residential development at a lower intensity than hamlet or moderate intensity is appropriate. APA places a limit of 200 principal structures per square mile and an average lot size of 3.2 acres in this land use area.

Rural use

Most uses are permitted; residential uses and reduced intensity development that preserves rural character is most suitable. APA places a limit of 75 principal structures per square mile and an average lot size of 8.5 acres in this land use area.

Resource management

Most development activities in resource management areas will require an Agency permit; compatible uses include residential uses, agriculture, and forestry. Special care is taken to protect the natural open space character of these lands. APA places a limit of 15 principal structures per square mile and an average lot size of 42.7 acres in this land use area.

In addition to these classifications, there are Critical Environmental Areas (CEA's) that include wetlands, high elevations, areas around state or federal highways, and lands close to certain state-owned lands (see Critical Environmental Areas Map) with specific development requirements. The APA also regulates a variety of land use activities including shoreline setbacks and lot widths (along Lake Champlain), and lands within ¼ mile of the edge of the Ausable River. An APA permit is needed for projects within the Ausable River corridor, certain subdivisions, construction of single family homes in certain areas, and other projects. Tall structures, new commercial or industrial structures (not in the Hamlet area), expansion totaling 25% or more of an existing use or structure, and any multiple family dwelling also need APA permits.

Building Trends

Historic Building and Subdivision Patterns

Between 11/ 2002 and 9/2007, the Town of AuSable has reviewed and approved 38 separate subdivision applications. All but two of these subdivisions were minor (one or two lot splits) except for one 4-lot subdivision and one 17-lot subdivision. By year, the number of subdivisions was as follows:

2002	2
2003	9
2004	7
2005	12
2006	5
2007	3

Between 11/2003 and 6/26/2008, 225 building permits were issued by the Town. Of those, at least 80 were for new homes. Many of those new homes were single or double-wide mobile homes. More new homes were built in 2003 and 2004 (40) than recent years (10 in 2007). Since 2005, about 10 to 12 new homes are built per year in AuSable on average. Comparing building permits to subdivision activity, there were more homes built on already approved lots than new subdivision lots approved.

Build Out Analysis

A build-out analysis is an exercise designed to estimate the amount of development that can possibly occur if all developable land in a Town, Village, or County is built according to that municipality's current land use regulations. The buildout analysis applies current land use regulations, considers environmental constraints that would limit development in certain areas, and calculates the total residential density allowed at full buildout of the municipality. It does not predict when this would occur, at what rate it would occur, or where it would occur first. It only predicts the possible end result. The general process followed to calculate full buildout conditions is:

1. Identify areas that already have residential development and therefore would not allow new development
2. Identify properties subject to conservation easements, or are owned by government entities not likely to allow development
3. Identify areas in the Town having environmental constraints that would not support new residential development
4. Calculate the amount of new residential development allowed by the current land use regulations in the remaining undeveloped areas of the Town.

These steps are outlined in greater detail on the following pages. A geographic information system (GIS) software program is used to conduct the analysis. In essence, the analysis calculates the total land base of the Town, subtracts all lands having environmental constraints and completely built areas, and then applies the various development rules to calculate the number of allowable new residences. For purposes of this analysis, the buildout assumes that all new development would be single-family homes. Note that the results of all of these calculations are only estimates. The GIS layers used are not exact replicas of what is actually found in the real world, only representations of what is there. The processing of the data also introduces a certain amount of error, and can increase the inaccuracy of the data layers. The only way to get an accurate count of allowed residential uses on a particular property is to do an on-site survey of existing conditions.

The buildout starts with the Tax Parcel data obtained from the local Real Property Tax Department. Other GIS layers are also used, such as roads, water features, wetlands, soils, and topography. Extra information is added to the parcel data throughout the process.

The first step is to identify the existing uses for each parcel. Existing residential uses are identified by using the Property Class code found in the table accompanying the GIS parcel layer. Generally, any property with a property class code in the 200 range is a residential use. Some commercial uses, such as mobile home parks and apartment buildings are also essentially residential uses, and considered as such for purposes of the Buildout calculations. These are shown on the Existing

Residential Use map using a small green dot randomly placed on the parcel. The dot does not indicate the exact location of the building on the property; it only indicates there is a residential building on it.

The density layer determines the allowed density in each district. The “fully built” parcels are identified by using the Property Class code found in the table accompanying the GIS parcel layer, calculating the total area of the parcel, and comparing it with the minimum lot size required in the district where the parcel is located. Further inspection using the Aerial Photographs helps to identify more parcels that are developed in a way that would not allow further subdivision. Houses placed in the middle of a large lot would be one example. Some intensively developed non-residential uses can also be removed. There may be parcels in the municipality with conservation easements on them. They are also removed from the calculations. State owned lands, cemeteries, and churches are also usually removed after inspection of the aerial photos. What is left after subtracting the fully built parcels is a layer showing the buildable parcels in the municipality; those that can potentially be further subdivided and/or built upon.

The next step is to identify any environmental features that would prevent development. Two categories of constraints are usually identified. Absolute constraints, such as open water and streams, wetlands and flood plains are considered major environmental constraints. Other areas such as the land within 100 feet of the water and wetland features, and slopes over 15% are included in a second constraints layer. These constraint layers are merged into new layers, and used as a sort of “cookie-cutter”, removing these constraints from the already identified buildable parcels.

The result of all of these operations is a layer showing the developable area within the buildable parcels found in the municipality. This is the layer the final computations are made on. The 0.85 multiplication factor is used to allow room for new roads, and any other infrastructure needs. The Zoning Density will vary according to the district each parcel is located in. Parcels that span districts are split along the district boundary into separate parcels. This final calculation gives the potential buildout for the entire municipality based on current zoning regulations.

The following table shows the results of the buildout calculations for the entire town. See Also Buildout Maps.

AuSable Buildout Results

Land Use Area	Hamlet	Moderate Intensity	Low Intensity	Rural Use	Resource Management	Wild Forest or Water	Total
Existing Residences	98	187	374	98	84	0	841
Density	No APA Restrictions, but a 1/3 acre lot size was used for this buildout	One dwelling unit per 1.3 acres	One dwelling unit per 3.2 acres	One dwelling unit per 8.5 acres	One dwelling unit per 42.7 acres	No Further Development Allowed	
Potential New Residences	310	634	1,692	349	184	0	3,169

Notes: The Hamlet LUAC has no minimum lot size requirement from the APA. However, a 1/3 acre lot size was used after looking at the existing average developed lot size in the Hamlet Land Use area. **The Village of Keeseville was not included in any of these calculations.**

Cultural and Historic Resources

Recreation

There are two recreation areas in AuSable, two of which are adjacent to and maintained by the schools. The 180-acre campus of the Middle High School in Clintonville has large playfields, tennis courts, ball fields, and a playground. At the Keeseville Elementary School there is a playground, tennis courts and ball fields. In addition, the Middle High School has an Olympic swimming pool that is open to the public on most evenings as well as an auditorium that is widely used for community entertainment and recreation purposes. There are no hiking or snowmobile trails in the Town at the present time. The Town Highway Department has sought to clear abandoned road right of ways in the Arnold Hill area to be used as snowmobile trails.

Libraries

The Keeseville Free Library has been operating out of their current Front Street village location since the 1930's. Full time and seasonal residents alike from the Village of Keeseville, AuSable, Chesterfield and surrounding communities are welcome to use the Library's wealth of information and services. In addition to authors and subjects from A to Z, the library offers an array of current magazines for use, and sometimes due to lack of storage, gives away previous months issues. Annual summer book sales help support library functions; used books are welcome and appreciated for this purpose. In addition to reading material, music CD's and movie DVD's are available to take out with library registration. The lower level of the library is the children's domain. Books, toys and games fill the room and summer reading programs with children's entertainment is available to library members. Membership is free and easy. During the summer months, the library has become a tourist information stop due to the lack of another one in the area. Maps are on hand and information is gladly given.

The Keeseville Free Library is equipped with four computer stations and they have recently gone wireless for those who prefer to use their own laptops but cannot get high speed connections. Free computer classes are offered on computer basics, internet browsing, and email set-up. In addition, the library is registered with Novel NY Database initiative, an electronic database access project that enables libraries across New York State to give their communities online access to the full text of hundreds of journals, newspapers, and other references. The library also offers a free download of audio books online. The only requirement is members own an MP3 player.

The library also sponsors an Artists' Multimedia Art Show and Sale to showcase local artists. This includes a reception. Library hours and days vary slightly during both summer and winter months.

In addition, each of the schools in the AuSable Valley Central School District has libraries which are available to the Town's people. Clinton County also has a mobile library that comes to AuSable periodically.

Historic Sites, National and State Register Sites

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) maintains the following list of sites on the National and State Historic Register for the Town of AuSable:

- CR 17B, Old State Road Bridge Over Ausable River
- Palmer Brook Bridge Over Palmer Brook
- 664 Hallock Hill Rd, Miller Farm
- NY 9N, Clintonville Methodist Church, Clintonville, North Side East of Rectory St.
- US 9 AuSable Chasm Bridge Over Ausable River
- US 9 Carpenters Flats Bridge

The SHPO historic survey also includes many sites that are potentially eligible for listing on the state and national register. These are:

Street Address/Location/Bldg. Name
13 JACKSON ST OTIS/MARTIN HOUSE
ALICE FALLS HYDROELECTRIC PLANT
ARNOLD HILL MINING COMPLEX
ARNOLD HOMESTEAD
BATTEY'S IRON MINE
BATTEY'S IRON MINE & FORGE
BATTEY'S UPPER FORGE
CHASM RD
CLINTONVILLE FURNACE & FORGE
CLTN-31 (NYSM 3098)
CLTN-32 (NYSM 3099)
CLTN-33 (NYSM 3100)
COOK IRON MINE
COOK'S IRON MINE & FORGE
DELAWARE & HUDSON RAILROAD BRIDGE (NORTH BRIDGE)
DELAWARE & HUDSON RAILROAD BRIDGE (SOUTH BRIDGE)
EAST SIDE; WEST OF RTE 9
FERRONA RAILROAD STATION
FORMER GEORGE GRAVELLE PROPERTY
HALLOCK HILL
J MACE MOULDING SAND BED
KEESEVILLE RD KEESEVILLE ROAD SITE FLOODPLAIN OF AUSABLE RIVER; NORTHWEST SIDE
KETCHUM FURNACE
MACE IRON MINE & STONE QUARRY
MILL RD GEORGE GRAVELLE
MRS. CLEERY'S TEA ROOM AND BOARDING HOUSE SITE
NEW SWEDEN FORGE

Street Address/Location/Bldg. Name
NY 9N SAINT CATHERINE'S CATHOLIC CHURCH CLINTONVILLE: NORTH SIDE; 4TH BLDG EAST OF SMITH ST
OLD IRON BRIDGE HISTORIC DISTRICT (ESSEX-CLINTON)
OLD US 9 OLD US ROUTE 9 BRIDGE (BIN #3-33596-0)
RAINBOW FALLS-AUSABLE HYDROELECTRIC PLANT
SOUTH SIDE
Stone Arch Bridge (1843) over Ausable River in Keeseville
Swing Bridge (1888) suspension bridge over Ausable River in Keeseville
UNION RD KEESE HOUSE WEST SIDE; AT ARTHUR RD; NORTH
Upper Bridge (1878) wrought iron truss bridge over Ausable River in Keeseville
WEST SIDE OF AUSABLE RIVER NEAR RAINBOW FALLS
WINTER IRON MINE

All these above structures and sites have been reported to SHPO from various agencies and individuals and would all require verification and study prior to being determined to be eligible for listing on the register.

The 1976 Town Plan includes the Robert Battery Historic Site, the Quaker Cemetery Historic Site, Keese Homestead and Arnold Homestead as other significant historic sites in Town. There are several sites in the Village of Keeseville as follows:

AuSable St.	Keeseville	Clinton
664 Hallock Hill Road	Harkness	Clinton
Main Street over AuSable River	Keeseville	Clinton
Over Ausable River between Clinton, South AuSable Streets	Keeseville	Clinton/Essex

Scenic Areas

The 1976 AuSable Land Use Plan (The Future Development of AuSable: A Final Report on the Town of AuSable Land Use Planning Program) included an extensive discussion of scenic vistas. See Scenic Resources Map that includes the 1976 analysis along with new input received for this planning process.

Route 9N along the Ausable River corridor is described as having short range views of the winding river framed by the distant mountains in the background. Good examples of exceptional long range scenic views are found along Hallock Hill Road. From these vantage points, one can clearly see Lake Champlain, Burlington, Mt. Mansfield, and the surrounding Green Mountains of Vermont. Travel corridors that are scenic include Arthur Road where it passes through agricultural areas and other open spaces.

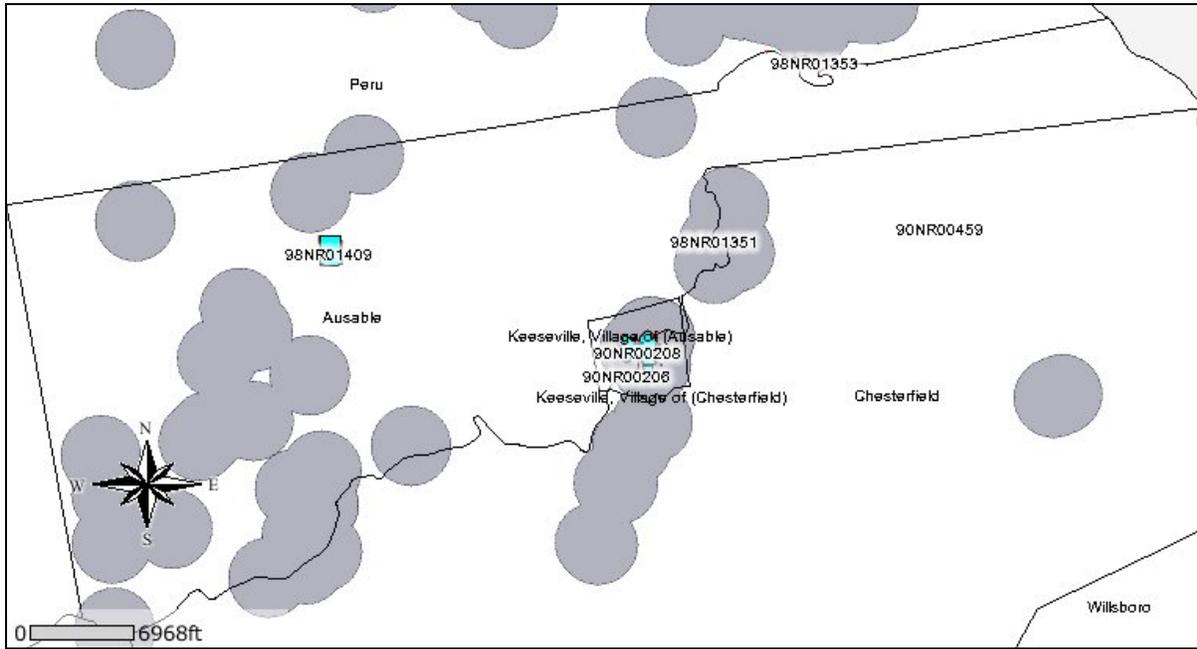
Major scenic view areas include:

- Ausable River Overlooks – all land in the River corridor as it passes through Town and is characterized by short range overlooks of the river combined with long range views of the mountains. Scrub growth along the highway has obscured many of these locations.
- I-87 Open Area - Situated along both sides of the Northway, this area contains open views of farmlands with mountains in the background. The views are open to virtually all directions.
- Open Uplands: Sandwiched between forested uplands and the open farmland along I-87, this area combines features of both and this areas higher elevations have impressive scenic views. Most impressive of all are from the top of Hallock Hill Road.
- Lake Front – The area along the Lake Champlain shoreline has long range views of Vermont combined with shorter range views of the Lake.

As mentioned in an earlier section of this Plan, the AuSable River is listed on the National Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers System and includes several scenic areas. Some roads in Town are also included as part of the Lakes to Locks Passage Scenic Byway, and the Town is also included in the Lake Champlain Bike Trail.

Archeological Sites

The map below depicts the information obtained from the NY State Historic Preservation Office website (<http://www.oprhp.state.ny.us/nr/main.asp>). This map shows areas where the discovery of archeological sites is predicted. These areas contain the locations of all known sites that are included in the SHPO Archeological Site files and the New York State Museum Archeological Site files. The exact locations are not displayed on the map since they are protected from disclosure by Section 304 (16 USC 4702-3) of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and Section 427.8 of the implementing regulations for the State Historic Preservation Act of 1980. This information can only be accessed at the SHPO in accordance with the SHPO's Policy on Access to Files, Data, and Information. The information depicted on the map reflects known sites protected by randomly placed buffer zones. These defined sites with their buffer zones are used by the SHPO to provide recommendations to state and federal agencies regarding the need for archeological surveys. The locations in gray, shown below are areas identified by New York State as being archeologically sensitive.



Community Facilities and Infrastructure

Transportation

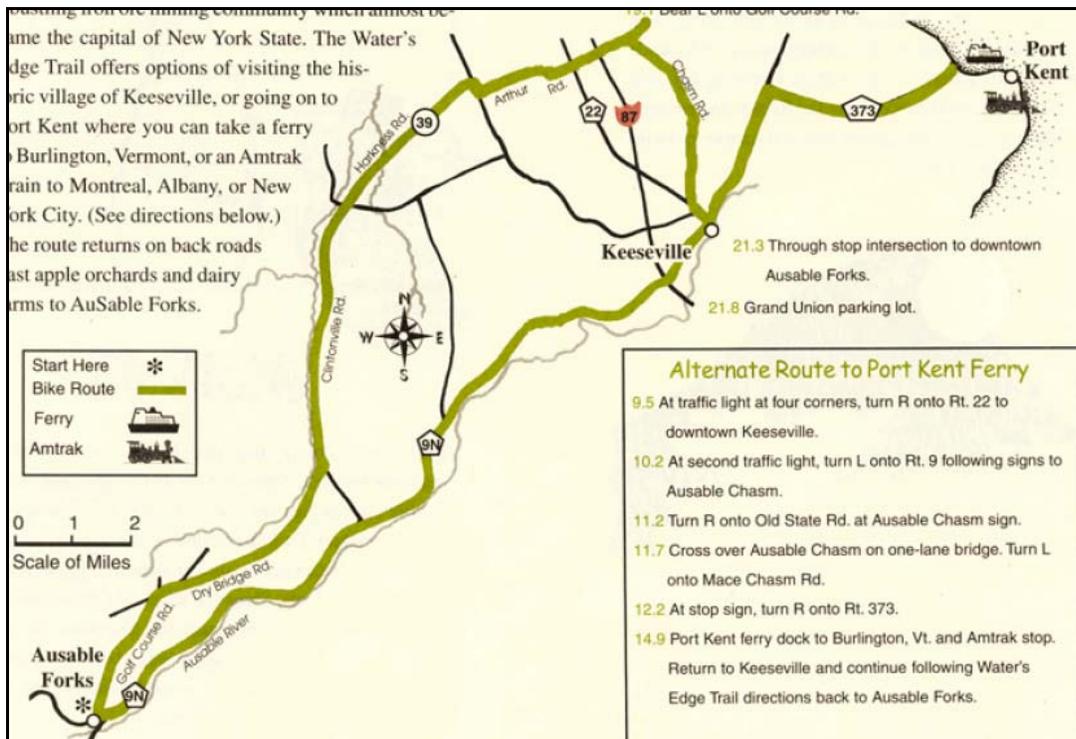
Bike Paths

The Champlain Bikeway:

One of North America’s finest bicycle trails goes through AuSable along a 1,300+ mile network of bicycle routes, known as Lake Champlain Bikeways, in the Lake Champlain Valley of Vermont, New York, and Québec. The network includes a total of 35 loops and tours ranging from 10 to 60 miles in length, in addition to the Champlain Bikeway. Based on a rich array of natural, cultural, and historic themes, these loops meander along quiet back roads through extraordinary mountain and countryside scenery. In AuSable, the Waters Edge Loop is as follows:

- 0.0 Turn R out of the IGA parking lot onto Rt. 9N.
- 9.3 Enter Keeseville, continue to traffic light.
- 9.5 At traffic light at four corners, turn L onto Rt. 22 to return to AuSable Forks
- 9.6 At top of hill, turn R onto Grove St. (becomes Chasm Rd.)
- 10.4 Chasm Rd. bears L, past apple orchard.
- 11.1 L at stop intersection onto Arthur Rd.
- 11.5 Straight through Rt. 22 intersection
- 12.5 Turn R at stop intersection onto Union Rd.

- 12.6 At next intersection, turn L onto Harkness Rd.
- 15.2 Through intersection onto Clintonville Rd.
- 16.8 Bear R to Dry Bridge Rd.
- 19.1 Bear L onto Golf Course Rd.



Public Transportation

Clinton County Public Transit (CCPT) serves Clinton County and the City of Plattsburgh. It is a public transportation provider with a fleet of 12 buses. CCPT provides approximately 130,000 rides per year linking all the Towns within Clinton County to the City of Plattsburgh. C.C.P.T. offers transportation to and from the City of Plattsburgh by way of the Towns of AuSable, Peru, Churubusco, Mooers, Champlain, Standish, Riverview, and Rouses Point. Service is also provided throughout the City of Plattsburgh between Clinton Community College, SUNY Plattsburgh, downtown Plattsburgh, Cumberland Head, and the stores along Cornelia Street. The Town of AuSable is served by the South AuSable Route with stops at AuSable Chasm and in Keeseville (IGA).

Traffic and Highway Maintenance

AuSable is served directly by the Northway, Interstate 87. This highway is one of the most important routes in northern New York State. It connects to the Town of Plattsburgh and Montreal on the north and to Albany, NY City, and all other points accessible via the Interstate System to the south. Another major federal highway is US Route 9. This highway, important mainly to the eastern portion of the Town and the Village, provides an important North-South connection to the surrounding area as does the Northway. However, Route 9 does not simply duplicate the functions

of the Northway. It is used mainly for short trips to adjoining communities and to the lakefront and Plattsburgh to the north.

New York State Highways

State Routes through AuSable include 9, 9N, 22, and I-87. As shown below, some road segments have seen decreased traffic volumes and others have experienced increased traffic volumes over the past few years. Route 9 has seen a 12.5% to 17.4% decrease in traffic volumes over approximately the past decade. Most segments of Route 9N, however, have seen moderate increases in volume ranging from 3.2% to 4.9% increases. The segment of Route 22 from the county line to the start of Route 9N has experienced decreased traffic volumes while the segment from 9N to through Keeseville has had increased volumes. Traffic on I-87 has increased moderately from Exit 35 north, but decreased from the Clinton County line to Exit 34.

Route	Annual Daily Count	Average Traffic	Change in Traffic Volumes
US 9 from Clinton County Line to Rt 9N, end of Rt 22	2030 (2007) 2020 (2005) 2460 (1999)		-17.5%
US 9 from Rt 9N and end of Rt 22 to Essex County Line	2590 (2007) 2760 (2003) 2960 (1997)		-12.5%
US 9N from Clinton County Line to CR 39 Clintonville Rd	2870 (2007) 2810 (2004) 2780 (1999)		+3.2%
US 9N from CR 39 Clintonville Rd to Route 87	2990 (2007) 2960 (2005) 2850 (1997)		+4.9%
US 9N from Route 87 to Start of Rt 22	3620 (2007) 4240 (2003) 4050 (1998)		-10.6%
US 9N from Start of Rt 22 to Rt 9 and end of 9N	1740 (2007) 1717 (2004) 1680 (2000)		+3.5%
NY 22 from Clinton County Line to End of Rt 9 start of 9N	2030 (2007) 2020 (2005) 2460 (1999)		-17.5%
NY 22 from Start of 9N to end of Rt 9N in Keeseville	1740 (2007) 1710 (2004) 1680 (2000)		+3.6%
I-87 from Clinton County Line to Exit 34	8900 (2007) 8590 (2004) 9850 (1998)		-9.6%
I-87 from Exit 34 to Exit 35	12060 (2007) 11470 (2005) 11680 (2003)		+3.3%

County Highways and Roads

Not all county roads have had traffic volume studies. The most recent data for county roads in AuSable are:

Route	Annual Average Daily Traffic Count
Clintonville Road (Rt 39) from CR 38A to CR 40	1605 (2006)
Arthur Road (Rt 38)	472 (2006)
Hibernia Road from Murphy Rd to Allen Hill	70 (2004)
Old State Rd from SR 9 to Essex County Line	200 (2000)
Thomasville Road from Buckhill Rd to Arnold Hill	60 (2004)
Main Street Keeseville from County Line to Pleasant St	5600 (1999)

Town Roads and Highway Department

The Town of AuSable Highway Department has a 1972 three-bay garage located on Clintonville Road and operates a sand pit on Dry Bridge Road. As of 2007, there were four regular employees and two seasonal ones who maintain 39.88 miles of road. There are 32 miles of Type I Hot Mix pavement and 7.88 miles of Doby Mix pavement. The Town does not have an equipment replacement program but has a comprehensive annual inventory of machinery, tools, and equipment. As of 2007, most of the equipment listed in the inventory was in good shape. The Town Board has authorized the Superintendent of Highways to enter into shared service agreements on behalf of the Town with adjacent municipalities for the borrowing or lending of materials and supplies, and for leasing, renting or maintaining machinery or equipment. The Department did not feel that there were any areas of concern to be addressed.

The Town Highway Department is located in the Harkness hamlet along County Road 46. The holdings consist of two structures on a 10 acre parcel. The building is in poor shape and the Town is currently deciding how to address this.

Municipal and Not-for-Profit Properties

The Town Hall, located in Keeseville houses all of the Town offices (except the Highway Department) and includes a medium sized meeting room. The structure is in excellent condition. Other Town owned properties includes highway department facilities on Clintonville Road and Dry Bridge Road, 28.3 acres of vacant land on Dry Bridge Road, and 2.76 acres on Plains Road.

The New York State Department of Transportation has a maintenance facility at the intersection of the Northway and NYS Route 9N. This installation is primarily for maintenance activities on the Northway.

Included in this category are facilities that are generally open to the public but are owned by private or semi-private organizations. These include the Independent Baptist Church, United Methodist Church and Parsonage, and several cemeteries (see below).

Cemeteries

Several cemeteries are found within AuSable including:

- St. John's Cemetery
- West Peru Cemetery
- Upper Cemetery
- Riverside Cemetery
- AuSable Chasm Cemetery
- Evergreen Cemetery
- Quaker Cemetery
- Harkness Cemetery
- Keeseville Village Cemetery

Infrastructure and Facilities

Water/Sewer

The Clinton County Department of Health does all permitting for septic systems and wells. Water is provided through private water systems with the exception of private water systems for the two subdivisions in the Town and certain areas served by Keeseville municipal water. Most of these systems are wells finished in surficial deposits, usually sand and gravel. The source of the Keeseville water system is Butternut Pond, five miles from the Village in the Town of Chesterfield. The Town has an additional water district behind SunLea village (AuSable Heights).

Emergency Services

There is no local police in AuSable. Clinton County provides emergency 911 services and the New York State Police and County Sheriff provide police services.

Fire Protection

AuSable, Chesterfield and Keeseville Joint Fire District have one fire fighting volunteer company. Facilities are located at 8 Pleasant Street in Keeseville. The area served by the facility is AuSable, Town of Chesterfield and the Village of Keeseville. There are 42 active firefighters. The number of members has decreased over the past 20 years; the previous manning levels were 60 members with a waiting list. The fire district offers \$10,000 life insurance coverage and a pension plan is being explored. The sense of public commitment does not have the attention it once had. The many hours of training and work environment of families makes volunteering more difficult.

The Fire Department has the following vehicle inventory:

- 2004 American LaFrance 2000 gpm pumper

2003 Brush firefighting truck with pump and water tank
2002 Van used by fire police
2000 Mack chassis with 3000 gal water tank and 600 gpm pump
1997 Mack chassis with heavy rescue body
1996 Mack chassis with 2000 gal water tank and 500 gpm pump
1995 KME custom 1500 gpm pumper
1975 Mack chassis with 75 foot tower ladder

Most of the equipment is less than fifteen years old with the exception of the tower ladder which has undergone extensive upgrades. The fire district has initiated a 20-year replacement policy and a replacement fund reserve was initiated in 1990, the year the district was formed. All of the equipment listed is fully paid for.

The fire department receives about 200 calls per year. The level of service is critical during the week day when a great percentage of the members are working; however the fire department is very active in the Clinton and Essex County mutual aid system. Automatic aid was initiated about 15 years ago. If the fire department is called to a confirmed structure fire, the closest mutual aid department is also dispatched. The Town of AuSable has not had any appreciable change in types of structures, there are no industrial parks, with the exception of a very large dairy operation, and home construction is pretty much the bulk of additional fire load within the Town.

The water supply within the fire company boundaries varies. Within the village, hydrants are available and work well, water flow is excellent and the hydrants are well maintained by the Village. In the greater part of the Town of AuSable, the fire department has to rely on tanker operations and receives its water supply by pumping from the river or various streams.

Rescue Squad

The AuSable, Chesterfield, Keeseville Joint Fire District, through the Keeseville Fire Department operates one volunteer rescue squad. The squad operates out of the fire station in Keeseville. The area served is the same as the fire department. The Rescue Squad is comprised of 25 volunteers who are also members of the fire department. There are 2 tech level fives and 15 advanced EMT. The other members are Basic EMT's. The trends in EMS providers are even more critical than that of the fire department. The fire district commissioners have entered into a two district agreement with Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital (CVPH) medical center to provide paid EMS coverage seven days a week 24 hours a day. The Peru District and Keeseville District have done this jointly. Our volunteers still respond; however, instead of 10 to 15 minutes, it is now under a minute. The fire district operates a 2005 Horton ambulance in addition to the ambulance owned by CVPH which operates out of the Keeseville fire station. The rescue squad answers about 800 calls per year. The rescue squad is also a part of the Clinton and Essex county mutual aid system. There are really no specific areas of concern within the Town of AuSable.

Solid Waste

Clinton County sponsors a comprehensive recycling program. Recyclables and solid waste can be brought to the AuSable Convenience Station on 242 Dry Bridge Road, open 9am to 5pm on Tuesday and 9am to 4pm Saturday. Some residents hire private haulers.

Utilities

New York State Electric and Gas provides electricity.

Verizon and Frontier provide wire phone service.

Charter Communications provides cable service.

There is no natural gas service currently in the Town.

Charter, Verizon, and Frontier all offer broadband internet service.

Keeseville Youth Commission

The Youth Commission provides instructional sport and reading opportunities to the youth in the Town of AuSable. A fifteen member volunteer board oversees the various programs that run year round. With the emphasis on teamwork, sportsmanship and responsibility the commission oversees seven programs for our youth.

Winter: An outdoor skating rink provides ice time for all ages and skill level, along with a warming room, the AuSable Valley Central School district lends its elementary gym for our basketball program for boys and girls in grades 3-6.

Spring/Summer: In the early spring, our baseball/softball program gets underway with opportunities for all children from age 4 to 16 to learn and play the game of baseball/softball. Once school is dismissed for the summer our Summer Reading Program is begun for a two week immersion of reading, arts and crafts for children in Kindergarten through third grade. A different theme is decided each year and the children's reading and activities center on the theme. Swimming lessons begin following the 4th of July holiday every year. The children are bused to the AuSable Valley High School pool where certified WSI instructors teach children in Kindergarten through sixth grade the American Red Cross swim instruction levels beginner through intermediate.

Tennis follows in late summer using tennis courts located in the Town of Chesterfield in Port Kent.

Fall: Late in August our Soccer Program is put in motion, the instructional program is open to all children ages 4 to 13. With fields provided by the Village of Keeseville's JC Park, children learn to play the game, as well as understand the rules of the game.

All programs with the exception of skating have sign-up periods which are advertised in the local paper as well as in the AuSable Valley Central School system. The Keeseville Youth Commission provides all children the opportunity to enjoy exercising the mind and body throughout the year.

All programs run by the Keeseville Youth Commission are made possible through line item allocations from the Town of AuSable, Town of Chesterfield, and Village of Keeseville annual budget and the many parents who volunteer their precious time to our children and community.

Demographics

The US Census of 2000 was used to provide important demographic information about the Town. As of 2000, there were 3,015 people in the entire Town (including the Village of Keeseville), 1,180 households and 831 families. The population density was 77.1 persons per square mile. There were 1,347 housing units at an average housing density of 34.4 units per square mile. The racial makeup of the Town was primarily white (97.7%) with African American, Native American, Asian and other races making up the difference.

Of the 1,180 households in 2000, 33.2% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 53.7% were married couples living together, 11.6% had a female householder with no husband present, and 29.5% were non-families. Twenty-three percent of all households were made up of individuals and 12.1% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.53 and the average family size was 2.95.

The Town population was spread out with 26.0% under the age of 18, 7.5% from 18 to 24, 29.1% from 25 to 44, 23.0% from 45 to 64, and 14.4% were 65 years old or older. The median age was 38 years. For every 100 females there were 97.4 males.

The median income for a household in the Town was \$34,118, and the median income for a family was \$39,906. Males had a median income of \$30,213 versus \$22,933 for females. The per capita income for the Town was \$15,789. About 7.7% of families and 12.0% of the population were living below the poverty line, including 16.9% of those under age 18 and 14.7% of those aged 65 or over.

Comparison of Census 2000 Population Data to Past Data

The Town's population peaked in 1850 with 4,492 persons. Lowest population levels were found in the 1920's and 1930's and has been slowly rebounding ever since. The 1940 to 1970 population increase in the Town was 61.1%. In 1970, there were 1,442 persons in Town. The 1970 to 1990 population about doubled from 1,442 to 2,860 – a 98% population increase or about 71 people per year. Since that time, population growth has slowed.

In 1990, the total Town population was 2,860 people with 805 families and 1075 households. The 1990 to 2000 population growth was about 5% to 3,015 persons. Outside the Village of Keeseville there were 1,079 people, 344 families and 536 households in 2000. The 1990 to 2000 growth rate in population was higher outside the Village (8.1%). The Village's population increased by about 3.8%. During the 1990's, population growth was about 16 persons per year. The US Census estimates a 2007 total Town population of 3,027 persons (an increase of 12 people). However, based on population trends (births and deaths), the 2007 Village of Keeseville population has been estimated lower at 1,780, a loss of 69 persons.

At the same time the Town (outside Village) population grew by 8.1%, the number of housing units in Town grew by 12.4%. Overall, the number of housing units grew from 1,218 units in 1990 to 1,347 units in 2000 with slightly more being built in the Village than elsewhere (71 units in the Village and 58 elsewhere.)

General Demographic Characteristics of Town, Village, and Town Outside Village

General Characteristics	# Total Town	% Total Town	# Keeseville	% Keeseville	# Town Outside Village	% Town Outside Village	U.S.
Total population	3,015	(X)	1,850	(X)	1,165	(X)	
Male	1,488	49.4	900	48.6	588	50.5	49.10%
Female	1,527	50.6	950	51.4	577	49.5	50.90%
Median age (years)	37.7	(X)	36.2	(X)	1.5	(X)	35.3
Under 5 years	190	6.3	118	6.4	72	6.2	6.80%
18 years and over	2,231	74	1,348	72.9	883	75.8	74.30%
65 years and over	435	14.4	236	12.8	199	17.1	12.40%
Households	1,180	(X)	706	(X)	474	(X)	97.20%
Families	832	(X)	477	(X)	355	(X)	2.80%
Average household size	2.53	(X)	2.57	(X)	(X)	(X)	2.59
Average family size	2.95	(X)	3.04	(X)	(X)	(X)	3.14
Total housing units	1,347	(X)	816	(X)	531	(X)	
Occupied housing units	1,180	87.6	706	86.5	474	89.3	91.00%
Owner-occupied housing units	875	74.2	476	67.4	399	84.2	66.20%
Renter-occupied housing units	305	25.8	230	32.6	75	15.8	33.80%
Vacant housing units	167	12.4	110	13.5	57	10.7	9.00%
Population 25 years and over	2,007	(X)	1,144	(X)	863	(X)	
High school graduate or higher	1,527	76.1	838	73.3	689	79.8	80.40%

General Characteristics	# Total Town	% Total Town	# Keeseville	% Keeseville	# Town Outside Village	% Town Outside Village	U.S.
Bachelor's degree or higher	254	12.7	149	13	105	12.2	24.40%
Civilian veterans (civilian population 18 years and over)	389	17.4	214	16	175	19.8	12.70%
Disability status (population 5 years and over)	705	24.9	697	39.7	8	11.1	19.30%
In labor force (population 16 years and over)	1,399	60.1	840	59.9	559	45.3	63.90%
Mean travel time to work in minutes (workers 16 years and over)	24.8	(X)	22.7	(X)	22.1	(X)	25.5
Median household income in 1999 (dollars)	34,118	(X)	32,813	(X)	(X)	(X)	41,994
Median family income in 1999 (dollars)	39,906	(X)	36,181	(X)	(X)	(X)	50,046
Per capita income in 1999 (dollars)	15,789	(X)	13,939	(X)	(X)	(X)	21,587
Families below poverty level	64	7.7	52	10.9	12	3.4	9.20%

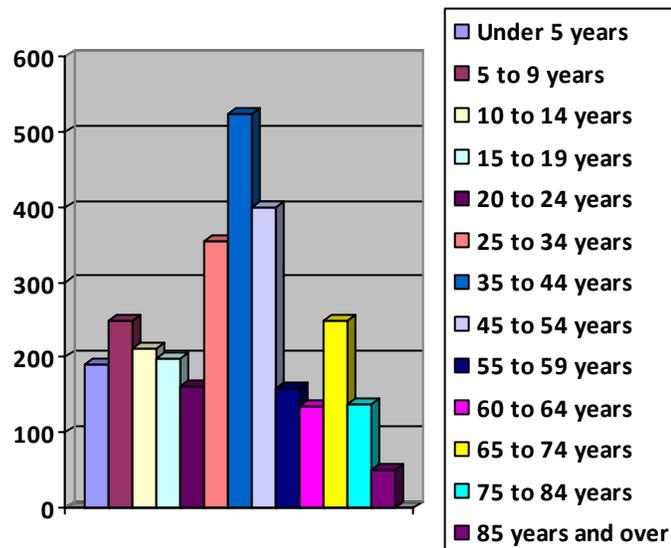
General Characteristics	# Total Town	% Total Town	# Keeseville	% Keeseville	# Town Outside Village	% Town Outside Village	U.S.
Individuals below poverty level	358	12	279	15.3	79	6.8	12.40%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 2000 Source.

Other Demographic Characteristics of AuSable (total Town)

Age and Population

The data and chart below show the age structure of the Town. The largest age group is from 25 years to 54 years. 22% of the Town's population is school aged and 19% is over the age of 60. Within the next 10 years (by 2018) there could be a large increase in the number of senior citizens living in AuSable. In 1990, the age patterns were almost exactly the same as in 2000 (21% school aged, 42% aged 25 to 54, and 18% over age 60).



Subject	Number	Percent
Total population	3,015	100.0
SEX AND AGE		
Male	1,488	49.4
Female	1,527	50.6
Under 5 years	190	6.3
5 to 9 years	249	8.3
10 to 14 years	212	7.0
15 to 19 years	198	6.6
20 to 24 years	161	5.3
25 to 34 years	355	11.8
35 to 44 years	522	17.3
45 to 54 years	400	13.3
55 to 59 years	158	5.2

Subject	Number	Percent
60 to 64 years	135	4.5
65 to 74 years	248	8.2
75 to 84 years	137	4.5
85 years and over	50	1.7
Median age (years)	37.7	(X)

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 2000 Source.

Housing Characteristics

In 2000, the Census recorded a total of 1,347 housing units in AuSable: 524 of those are outside the Village, or 39% of the housing stock. There are about 12.4% of those units that were vacant in 2000 with the majority of them being in the Village. Only 9% of the vacant units were located outside the Village of Keeseville. About 4.8% of housing units were seasonal/recreational units. The homeowner vacancy rate was very low (1.7%) with a higher rental vacancy rate (11.6%). About 74% of housing units were owner-occupied. 297 mobile homes were recorded Town-wide in 2000, or about 22% of the housing stock in Town. About 43.6% of all houses in Town were built before 1940. There was a large amount of house building between 1970 and 1990 and the 1990's had a much lower rate of building than other years.

Subject	Number	Percent
HOUSING OCCUPANCY		
Total housing units	1,347	100.0
Occupied housing units	1,180	87.6
Vacant housing units	167	12.4
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	65	4.8
Homeowner vacancy rate (percent)	1.7	(X)
Rental vacancy rate (percent)	11.6	(X)
HOUSING TENURE		
Occupied housing units	1,180	100.0
Owner-occupied housing units	875	74.2
Renter-occupied housing units	305	25.8
Average household size of owner-occupied unit	2.60	(X)
Average household size of renter-occupied unit	2.35	(X)

Total housing units	1,347	100.0
UNITS IN STRUCTURE		
1-unit, detached	864	64.1
1-unit, attached	2	0.1
2 units	53	3.9
3 or 4 units	36	2.7

5 to 9 units	41	3.0
10 to 19 units	13	1.0
20 or more units	41	3.0
Mobile home	297	22.0
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0	0.0
YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT		
1999 to March 2000	21	1.6
1995 to 1998	66	4.9
1990 to 1994	131	9.7
1980 to 1989	176	13.1
1970 to 1979	241	17.9
1960 to 1969	124	9.2
1940 to 1959	193	14.3
1939 or earlier	395	29.3
Specified owner-occupied units	628	100.0
VALUE		
Less than \$50,000	135	21.5
\$50,000 to \$99,999	402	64.0
\$100,000 to \$149,999	70	11.1
\$150,000 to \$199,999	5	0.8
\$200,000 to \$299,999	2	0.3
\$300,000 to \$499,999	0	0.0
\$500,000 to \$999,999	0	0.0
\$1,000,000 or more	14	2.2
Median (dollars)	71,000	(X)
Specified renter-occupied units	292	100.0
GROSS RENT		
Less than \$200	20	6.8
\$200 to \$299	19	6.5
\$300 to \$499	87	29.8
\$500 to \$749	132	45.2
\$750 to \$999	12	4.1
\$1,000 to \$1,499	0	0.0
\$1,500 or more	0	0.0
No cash rent	22	7.5
Median (dollars)	512	(X)
GROSS RENT AS A PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN 1999		
Less than 15 percent	31	10.6
15 to 19 percent	39	13.4
20 to 24 percent	46	15.8
25 to 29 percent	37	12.7
30 to 34 percent	9	3.1

35 percent or more	96	32.9
Not computed	34	11.

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 2000 Source.

Housing Affordability

There are about 465 units in the Town that were valued at less than the median value of a home (\$71,000 in 2000). There were 15 units in the Town valued over \$500,000 and one in the Village. Eighteen units were valued at over \$125,000 in the Village in 2000.

Comparative Number of Owner-Occupied Housing Units by Value, 2000

	Clinton County, New York	Au Sable Town	Keeseville
Total:	20,162	875	492
Less than \$10,000	342	8	4
\$10,000 to \$14,999	373	17	13
\$15,000 to \$19,999	469	23	14
\$20,000 to \$24,999	511	28	12
\$25,000 to \$29,999	604	18	10
\$30,000 to \$34,999	568	36	13
\$35,000 to \$39,999	648	38	32
\$40,000 to \$49,999	1,393	106	65
\$50,000 to \$59,999	1,777	149	89
\$60,000 to \$69,999	1,823	62	67
\$70,000 to \$79,999	2,138	139	70
\$80,000 to \$89,999	2,200	99	52
\$90,000 to \$99,999	1,797	32	8
\$100,000 to \$124,999	2,328	40	25
\$125,000 to \$149,999	1,262	54	4
\$150,000 to \$174,999	710	5	7
\$175,000 to \$199,999	356	4	0
\$200,000 to \$249,999	372	0	0
\$250,000 to \$299,999	259	2	6
\$300,000 to \$399,999	90	0	0
\$400,000 to \$499,999	92	0	0
\$500,000 to \$749,999	18	1	1
\$750,000 to \$999,999	6	0	0
\$1,000,000 or more	26	14	0

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 2000 Source.

There are several ways to determine if housing is generally affordable in a community. Since the adoption of the Urban and Rural Recovery Act of 1983, the 30% Rule has been the Federal standard for determining housing affordability. In other words, housing is generally considered to be affordable if no more than 30% of a household's monthly income is spent on housing related

expenses.² Housing related expenses include not only rent but also utilities paid by the tenant such as heat, hot water, water and sewer charges. Some additional typical expenses such as telephone and cable TV are not included. There were 105 households in 2000 that spent more than 30% of their income on rentals.

According to the 2000 Census, the Median Monthly Rental Rate in the Town of AuSable was \$512. The Median Household Income (MHI) in the Town was \$34,118; therefore, the median monthly income was \$2,843. To meet the 30% Rule, the median Town household, in 2000, could spend \$852 on rent. With a median monthly rental rate of \$512, the rental rate in 2000 would be considered affordable only for those households earning at or above about \$30,000 annual household income. In AuSable, 424 or about 36% of all households earn less than \$30,000.

Home-Ownership Affordability Ratio

One common analysis tool to determine the affordability of ownership housing units is to compare the median value of single-family ownership units with median household income. Nationally, a ratio of 2 or less is considered “affordable”. For instance, to affordably purchase a home costing \$200,000, the household should earn an income of \$100,000 to achieve a ratio of 2.

In 2000, the affordability ratio for the Town was 2.1. The affordability ratio for Clinton County was 2.3 and for New York State was 3.4. Therefore, in 2000, homes in AuSable and Clinton County could be considered generally affordable. Homes would not be affordable to households with incomes below median.

2000 Housing Affordability Ratio

	Town AuSable	Clinton County	New York State
Median house value	\$71,000	\$84,200	\$148,700
Median household income	\$34,118	\$37,028	\$43,393
Affordability Ratio	2.1	2.3	3.4

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 2000 Source.

Housing estimates for 2005 indicate a significant increase in the price of homes in the Town, which has resulted in a diminished affordability of home buying power. According to 2005 housing value estimates, the median housing value for the Town increased to about \$89,700 and the estimated median household income in 2005 was \$39,300. Using those figures, the affordability ratio in 2007 was 2.3 for the Town of AuSable. This is using an estimated median household income of \$51,600. It should be noted that prices have gone up comparatively across the County and the State as a whole even with the 2008 housing slump.

Education and Employment Characteristics

Subject	Number	Percent
SCHOOL ENROLLMENT		
Population 3 years and over enrolled in school	758	100.0

² National Low Income Housing Coalition, “Putting the Housing Wage to the Test”, Research Note # 07-03. <http://www.nlihc.org/template/index.cfm>.

Subject	Number	Percent
Nursery school, preschool	33	4.4
Kindergarten	52	6.9
Elementary school (grades 1-8)	374	49.3
High school (grades 9-12)	173	22.8
College or graduate school	126	16.6
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT		
Population 25 years and over	2,007	100.0
Less than 9th grade	188	9.4
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	292	14.5
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	762	38.0
Some college, no degree	333	16.6
Associate degree	178	8.9
Bachelor's degree	142	7.1
Graduate or professional degree	112	5.6
Percent high school graduate or higher	76.1	(X)
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	12.7	(X)
EMPLOYMENT STATUS		
Population 16 years and over	2,326	100.0
In labor force	1,399	60.1
Civilian labor force	1,399	60.1
Employed	1,282	55.1
Unemployed	117	5.0
Percent of civilian labor force	8.4	(X)
Armed Forces	0	0.0
Not in labor force	927	39.9
Females 16 years and over	1,207	100.0
In labor force	655	54.3
Civilian labor force	655	54.3
Employed	626	51.9
Own children under 6 years	215	100.0
All parents in family in labor force	130	60.5
COMMUTING TO WORK		
Workers 16 years and over	1,235	100.0
Car, truck, or van -- drove alone	959	77.7
Car, truck, or van -- carpooled	191	15.5
Public transportation (including taxicab)	0	0.0
Walked	28	2.3
Other means	3	0.2

Subject	Number	Percent
Worked at home	54	4.4
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	24.8	(X)
Employed civilian population 16 years and over	1,282	100.0
<i>Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 2000 Source.</i>		

Income Characteristics

Subject	Number	Percent
INCOME IN 1999		
Households	1,174	100.0
Less than \$10,000	138	11.8
\$10,000 to \$14,999	106	9.0
\$15,000 to \$24,999	180	15.3
\$25,000 to \$34,999	175	14.9
\$35,000 to \$49,999	237	20.2
\$50,000 to \$74,999	227	19.3
\$75,000 to \$99,999	51	4.3
\$100,000 to \$149,999	51	4.3
\$150,000 to \$199,999	0	0.0
\$200,000 or more	9	0.8
Median household income (dollars)	34,118	(X)
With earnings	836	71.2
Mean earnings (dollars)	40,068	(X)
With Social Security income	376	32.0
Mean Social Security income (dollars)	11,117	(X)
With Supplemental Security Income	82	7.0
Mean Supplemental Security Income (dollars)	5,878	(X)
With public assistance income	19	1.6
Mean public assistance income (dollars)	12,926	(X)
With retirement income	321	27.3
Mean retirement income (dollars)	13,331	(X)
Families	835	100.0
Less than \$10,000	43	5.1
\$10,000 to \$14,999	64	7.7
\$15,000 to \$24,999	112	13.4
\$25,000 to \$34,999	119	14.3
\$35,000 to \$49,999	200	24.0
\$50,000 to \$74,999	194	23.2
\$75,000 to \$99,999	50	6.0
\$100,000 to \$149,999	48	5.7
\$150,000 to \$199,999	0	0.0
\$200,000 or more	5	0.6

Median family income (dollars)	39,906	(X)
Per capita income (dollars)	15,789	(X)
Median earnings (dollars):		
Male full-time, year-round workers	30,213	(X)
Female full-time, year-round workers	22,933	(X)
POVERTY STATUS IN 1999 (below poverty level)		
Families	64	(X)
Percent below poverty level	(X)	7.7
With related children under 18 years	58	(X)
Percent below poverty level	(X)	14.0
With related children under 5 years	24	(X)
Percent below poverty level	(X)	14.7
Families with female householder, no husband present	34	(X)
Percent below poverty level	(X)	29.3
With related children under 18 years	31	(X)
Percent below poverty level	(X)	37.3
With related children under 5 years	19	(X)
Percent below poverty level	(X)	82.6
Individuals	358	(X)
Percent below poverty level	(X)	12.0
18 years and over	231	(X)
Percent below poverty level	(X)	10.3
65 years and over	64	(X)
Percent below poverty level	(X)	14.7
Related children under 18 years	126	(X)
Percent below poverty level	(X)	16.9
Related children 5 to 17 years	92	(X)
Percent below poverty level	(X)	16.5
Unrelated individuals 15 years and over	130	(X)
Percent below poverty level	(X)	26.8

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 2000 Source.

School Districts

The AuSable Valley Central School District was formed in 1968 after merging the AuSable Forks and Keeseville school districts. The merger produced a district that covers 177 square miles and encompasses virtually all of the Towns of AuSable and Chesterfield as well as parts of Black Brook, Peru, Jay, Keene, Willsboro, Wilmington and Franklin County. The AuSable Valley Central School District includes a middle high school at Clintonville, an elementary school at Keeseville,

and a primary school at AuSable Forks. The old school building at Clintonville became the Central Administration Office for the District.

The following information characterizes the AuSable Valley Central School District between 1997 and 2006. As the table below illustrates, enrollments are declining. Since 1997, the enrollment has declined about 16%. As enrollments declined the teacher/pupil ratio has gone from 13.5 students per teacher to 10.6 in 2005/2006. The dropout rate has increased and the percent of students going to college has increased substantially as well. Expenditures per pupil have risen from \$8,532 in 1996/1997 to \$15,373 in 2005/2006. At the state level, the average expenditure per pupil for the 2005/2006 school year was \$15,035. Figures from the 1976 plan indicated that in 1975, there were 2,057 students with an expected decline. That decline continues through today.

Measurement	1975	1996-1997	2002-2003	2004-2005	2005-2006
# students	2057	1,583	1,415	1,367	1,327
# teachers per pupil	NA	13.5	12.2	11.0	10.6
Dropout rate	NA	1.1%	4.1%	5.1%	7%
Percent of graduates going to college	NA	68%	72%	80%	84%
Expenditures per pupil	NA	\$8,532	\$6,497	\$7,411	\$15,373

Economy

Historically, economic growth in the Adirondacks has been associated with the successful exploitation of natural resources. Conversely, economic stagnation has resulted when the resource supply diminished or when the resource could be obtained elsewhere at lesser cost. In AuSable's case, the important resources were lumber and iron ore. By the mid-1800's, the Town had developed into a bustling industrial center. The Peru Steel and Iron Company's mines in the Arnold Hill area provided an abundance of high quality iron ore. Along the Ausable River at Clintonville were located rolling mills that produced nails and other iron and steel products. Located in Keeseville was the AuSable Horse Nail Factory, one of the two most important forge nail manufacturers in the United States. Also at Keeseville was Prescott's Furniture Factory, a large operation that provided substantial employment in that area. As the 1800's came to a close the economy of the Town declined. The iron mines, which were at their peak during the Civil War era, had been forced to close before 1900. The continuing development of the Mid West caused this decline as ore could be extracted more cheaply. The census data tells the story more dramatically – by 1920 the Town's population had decreased from its peak of 4492 residents in 1850 to 1636. In 2000, the population was 3,015 (total Town).

About 70% of the Town workers are private wage and salary, 23% government workers, and 8% self-employed. This is compared to 1976 figures of 61% private wage earners, 24% government workers, and 12% self-employed. Jobs are fairly diversified but with a very low number involved in farming, fishing and forestry occupations (See table below).

OCCUPATION	#	%
Management, professional, and related occupations	321	25.0
Service occupations	308	24.0
Sales and office occupations	279	21.8
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	18	1.4
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	142	11.1
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	214	16.7
INDUSTRY		
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	26	2.0
Construction	60	4.7
Manufacturing	160	12.5
Wholesale trade	50	3.9
Retail trade	174	13.6
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	41	3.2
Information	21	1.6
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	47	3.7
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	64	5.0
Educational, health and social services	350	27.3
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	80	6.2
Other services (except public administration)	77	6.0
Public administration	132	10.3

According to the Real Property Office, Clinton County has 1,932 commercial (including industrial) properties and the Town of AuSable has 25. The following data is from the County/City Data Book for 2007, published by the U.S. Department of Commerce. Essex County has 33 manufacturing establishments, with an approximately 8% decline in number between 2000 and 2005. The overall employment in this sector, 1269, increased by almost 10% during this time however. Clinton County has 103 manufacturing establishments, with an approximately 25% increase in number between 2000 and 2005. The overall employment in this sector, 5,271, decreased by almost 8% during this time however.

Essex County had 18 banks, and 223 retail establishments in 2005. There was \$356 million in retail sales during this year. Essex County had 203 accommodation and food service establishments in 2005 and \$107 million in sales in this sector. Clinton County had 28 banks and 388 retail establishments in 2005. There was \$935 million in retail sales during this year. Clinton County had 175 accommodation and food service establishments in 2005 and \$91 million in sales in this sector.

Essex County had 236 farms in 2005, with an average size of 233 acres. The average value of products sold annually was \$36,576. \$3.6 million in farm products were sold in the County. 57% of these farms were livestock/poultry-based and 43% were crop-based. Clinton County had 604 farms in 2005, with an average size of 279 acres. The average value of products sold annually was \$129,863. \$26 million in farm products were sold in the County. 78% of these farms were livestock/poultry-based and 22% were crop-based.

Northern Essex County has two commerce parks with the predominant industrial properties within the area. Chesterfield Commerce Park (the Town of Chesterfield borders the Town of AuSable to the south) is 90 acres and is planned for build-out at roughly 16 industrial properties. Four of these are “shovel-ready” for up to 40,000 square foot buildings. Willsboro Commerce Park, south of Chesterfield, is 100 acres and is planned for approximately 15 industrial properties at build-out with up to 500,000 square feet of industrial space.

The majority of the industrial properties in Clinton County are in the central portion of the county, approximately 16-20 miles north of the Town of AuSable, in the City and Town of Plattsburgh and Town of Beekmantown. The largest industrial parks are located in the Town of Plattsburgh, owned by The Development Corporation, a private not-for-profit. Air Industrial Park is located on 26 acres next to the former Clinton County Airport on Route 3, with 18 industrial properties comprising approximately 1,250,000 square feet. Banker Road Business and Technology Park on Banker Road includes 75 acres of industrial land with four properties built and one under construction, for a total of 291,000 square footage of industrial development. Several miles north, the Gateway Industrial Park in the Town of Beekmantown has 100 acres of industrially zoned land adjacent to Interstate 87 Exit 40. Approximately 65 acres of land remains for development. Five industrial buildings are currently sited within the park.*

Tourism in the greater region is strong. The “Leisure Travel Information Study” completed by TAC in 2007 for the Lake Placid-Essex County Convention and Visitors Bureau conservatively estimates tourist visitation of the County at 310,000. The average daily expenditure per visitor party per day in Essex County was measured to be \$405.45, with the average stay being 5.7 days. This totals over \$179 million in estimated visitor spending in the County. Clinton County estimates approximately 500,000 visitors.

The Plattsburgh North Country Chamber of Commerce houses the Lake Champlain Visitor’s Convention Bureau and plans to measure visitor spending patterns and demographics in a project in fall 2008. While it has not been measured, the Town of AuSable does not see a significant share of this tourist traffic which largely funnels into the Lake Placid area and Lake Champlain. It does have the historic attractions of its portion of the Village of Keeseville. Also, some of these travelers exit Interstate 87 at the Town of AuSable and spend money on gas, food or other services.

County Business Patterns by Zip Code

The US Census tracks some businesses and these can be searched by county or zip code. Businesses included in this data base are those that file income and employment data to state and federal governments. It does not include some home based businesses or those that do not have any employees to report. Very little other data exists at the local level.

Zip Code Analysis

The following zip codes were included in this analysis: 12985, 12912, 12972, and 12944. Most of the Town of AuSable is included in these zip codes, although portions of other adjacent Towns are too. Thus, this data illustrates more regional economic activity.

Total for ZIP Code 12912						
Number of establishments: 50						
First quarter payroll: 1,172,000						
Number of employees: 299						
Annual payroll: 6,008,000						
Number of Establishments by Employment-size class:						
Industry	Total Estabs	'1-4'	'5-9'	'10-19'		
Total	50	40	5	4		
Forestry, fishing, hunting, and agriculture	2	2	0	0		
Construction	14	13	1	0		
Manufacturing	2	1	1	0		
Retail trade	9	5	2	2		
Information	1	1	0	0		
Finance & insurance	2	2	0	0		
Real estate & rental & leasing	2	2	0	0		
Professional, scientific & technical service	2	1	0	1		
Admin, support, waste mgt, remediation ser	1	0	0	0		
Health care and social assistance	5	4	1	0		
Arts, entertainment & recreation	1	1	0	0		
Accommodation & food services	5	5	0	0		
Other services (except public administration	4	3	0	1		
Total for ZIP Code 12944						
Number of establishments: 97						
First quarter payroll: 4,397,000						
Number of employees: 750						
Annual payroll: 21,450,000						
Number of Establishments by Employment-size class:						
Industry	Total Estabs	'1-4'	'5-9'	'10-19'	'20-49'	'50-99'
Total	97	59	20	8	7	3
Forestry, fishing, hunting, and agriculture	3	2	1	0	0	0
Construction	11	6	3	1	1	0
Manufacturing	8	6	1	1	0	0
Wholesale trade	5	2	0	0	3	0
Retail trade	14	7	2	5	0	0
Transportation & warehousing	1	0	0	0	1	0
Information	2	1	1	0	0	0

Finance & insurance	2	1	1	0	0	0
Real estate & rental & leasing	5	5	0	0	0	0
Professional, scientific & technical service	8	6	2	0	0	0
Admin, support, waste mgt, remediation ser	3	3	0	0	0	0
Health care and social assistance	12	4	4	0	1	3
Accommodation & food services	11	8	2	0	1	0
Other services (except public administration	12	8	3	1	0	0
Total for ZIP Code 12972						
Number of establishments: 89						
First quarter payroll: 2,417,000						
Number of employees: 471						
Annual payroll 10,730,000						
Number of Establishments by Employment-size class:						
Industry	Total Estabs	'1-4'	'5-9'	'10-19'	'20-49'	
Total	89	52	23	9	5	
Construction	13	11	0	2	0	
Manufacturing	2	1	1	0	0	
Wholesale trade	2	0	1	1	0	
Retail trade	12	4	4	3	1	
Transportation & warehousing	2	2	0	0	0	
Information	2	2	0	0	0	
Finance & insurance	5	2	3	0	0	
Real estate & rental & leasing	6	4	2	0	0	
Professional, scientific & technical service	3	3	0	0	0	
Admin, support, waste mgt, remediation ser	7	6	1	0	0	
Health care and social assistance	14	9	2	2	1	
Arts, entertainment & recreation	1	1	0	0	0	
Accommodation & food services	8	1	4	1	2	
Other services (except public administration	12	6	5	0	1	
Total for ZIP Code 12985						
Number of establishments: 16						
First quarter payroll: 211,000						
Number of employees: 87						
Annual payroll: 1,054,000						
Number of Establishments by Employment-size class:						
Industry	Total Estabs	'1-4'	'5-9'	'10-19'	'20-49'	'50-99'
Total	16	13	1	1	0	1
Forestry, fishing, hunting, and agriculture	3	3	0	0	0	0
Mining	1	1	0	0	0	0
Construction	4	3	0	0	0	1

Retail trade	2	0	1	1	0	0
Transportation & warehousing	1	1	0	0	0	0
Admin, support, waste mgt, remediation ser	1	1	0	0	0	0
Health care and social assistance	1	1	0	0	0	0
Other services (except public administration	2	2	0	0	0	0
Unclassified establishments	1	1	0	0	0	0

In 2006, there were 252 establishments in these zip codes with 1,607 employees. The Keeseville area (12944) has the most establishments and employees. Zip code 12985 has the least with 16 establishments and 87 employees. As a comparison, in 1998, these same zip codes had 225 establishments and 1,202 employees. Thus in nine years, 27 new establishments formed and 405 employees were added. New establishments were formed in all zip code areas except for 12944. Overall, there was a 12% increase in new establishments and 34% increase in employment.

Local Government

Town Budget

Property Taxes and Exemptions

The Town budget summary between 2001 and 2008 is as follows, in dollars:

Year	General	General B	Highway DA	Highway DB	Fire District	LD#2	LD#3	LD#4	LD#5
2001	383,478	31,635	250,875	181,650	98,212	3,745	2,500	2,100	1,200
2002	391,328	36,135	272,161	213,310	98,711	3,745	2,500	2,050	1,175
2003	412,051	42,553	284,296	198,420	133,967	3,400	2,300	1,900	1,075
2004	454,415	46,836	264,977	197,967	119,714	3,400	2,300	1,900	1,075
2005	441,448	56,723	285,882	201,692	135,659	3,400	2,300	1,900	1,075
2006	468,157	55,844	319,083	203,192	136,448	3,400	2,300	1,935	1,200
2007	490,236	70,326	336,444	212,211	154,492	3,672	2,382	1,961	1,214
2008	518,856	78,127	350,605	209,127	134,953	3,672	2,382	1,961	1,214

Town Assessed Values between 2001 and 2008, rate per thousand is, in dollars:

Year	General	General B	Highway DA	Highway DB	Fire District	LD#2	LD#3	LD#4	LD#5
2001	3.372	.047	2.315	1.698	1.127	1.485	.709	.515	.207
2002	3.441	.053	2.381	1.661	1.116	1.463	.706	.500	.203
2003	3.644	.0552	2.399	1.936	1.505	1.347	.646	.459	.200
2004	3.470	.0532	1.961	1.653	1.186	1.159	.552	.390	.221
2005	3.020	.645	2.086	1.924	1.317	1.157	.549	.384	.219
2006	2.623	.603	2.260	1.851	1.151	.814	.394	.252	.227
2007	2.3098	.7541	2.0808	1.6296	1.2274	1.058	.3821	.2517	.2038
2008	2.1379	.8101	1.9982	1.5030	1.1159	1.0533	.3798	.2445	.2341

Grants and Loans

Town has a four-year tax increment break for new businesses to act as a small incentive for economic development.

Current Land Use Related Regulations

Local Law #1 of 1970: Regulations of junk yards

Local Law #1 of 1985: Governing Dog Control

Local Law #2 of 1985: Requiring prior notice as to defects on streets and roads

Local Law #1 of 1987: Amending Local Law #1 1970 Governing Junk Yards

Local Law #1 of 1992: Governing Use of Mobile Homes

Local Law #1 of 1993: Flood Damage Prevention

Local Law #2 of 1993: Amending Local Law #1 of 1992 (Mobile Homes)

Local Law #1 of 1996: Dog Control Law

Local Law #1 of 1997: Prior Written Notice Law related to roads and bridges

Local Law #3 of 1997: Amending Local Law #1 of 1992 (Mobile Homes)

Local Law #2 of 1999: Subdivision Regulations

Local Law #2 of 2004: Amending Local Law #1 of 1996 (Dog Control Law)
Local Law #1 of 2005: Town of AuSable Junk and Junkyard Law
Local Law #2 of 2005: Moratorium Law on Accumulation and Disposal of Solid Waste and By-Products
Local Law #3 of 2005: Amending Local Law #1 of 1992 (Mobile Homes)
Local Law #1 of 2006: Moratorium Law on Junk and Junkyards
Local Law #1 of 2007: Administration and Enforcement of the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code
Local Law #2 of 2007: Flood Damage Prevention

Road Specifications: The Town has road specifications and procedures for dedication of new roads as Town roads. It includes standards for surfacing, grades, ditches and culverts, use of road fill, dead-end roads, and procedures for road dedication.

County and Regional Planning Efforts

The County has few regional plans. However, there is a Countywide Hazard Mitigation Plan, Emergency Services Plan and Ag and Farmland Protection Plan.

Other Studies or Reports

The AuSable River Association has produced a variety of reports, fact sheets, and other materials and has almost completed an Ausable Watershed Management Plan.

The Lake Champlain Basin Program (<http://www.lcbp.org>) has maps, data, and planning documents related to the Lake Champlain Basin.

Local Organizations

- Anderson Falls Historical Association
- Friends of the North Country
- AuSable River Association: is a cooperative organization that brings together landowners, Town governments, other non-profit organizations, and State and Federal agencies to protect and enhance the natural and cultural resources of the AuSable River Watershed. Its purpose is to improve water quality, minimize erosion, enhance fish habitat, promote river related recreation, manage floodplains, and provide education to the public.
- Lake Champlain Basin
- Champlain Watershed Improvement Coalition of New York
- Plattsburgh North Country Chamber of Commerce
- AuSable Youth Commission
- Nature Conservancy (Wickham Marsh)
- Adirondack Architectural Heritage Association

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

This comprehensive plan and the goals it establishes are based upon an analysis of AuSable's various strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). These SWOTs were identified through public workshops, analysis of a resident survey and other public input, and a detailed analysis of the Towns' demographic, environmental, and cultural characteristics. The SWOT analysis provides many important clues about potential strategies for the Town's future that build on its strengths, takes advantage of its opportunities while it overcomes or minimizes the effects of weaknesses and threats. The following outlines the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing AuSable:

STRENGTHS

Environment:

The Town is located in a beautiful environment with the following the following features:

- Watershed
- Mountains
- Wildlife
- Lakes

Community:

- Relatively Safe
- Good Emergency Services
- Moderate Growth Rate
- Government
- Affordability
- Schools
- Religious Diversity

Historical Significance

- Three bridges on Historic Register
- Historic buildings
- Historic iron mine sites

Infrastructure

- Utilities
- Highways

WEAKNESSES

Aging population

- Senior facilities lacking
- Young people leave the area to find opportunity

Lack of economic opportunity and motivation

- Insufficient retail and light industry jobs
- No local focus on economic development
- High unemployment and entrenched welfare society
- Low average income

Lack of communication services

- Cell telephone black out
- Limited Internet access

Municipal Governments (Town and Village) not pro-active

No litter/trash control to improve area's appearance

Lack of youth support and facilities

OPPORTUNITIES

- **To promote and facilitate tourism**
- **To promote a good quality of life**
- **To increase government action and involvement**
- **To encourage and support civic action groups (litter clean up by civic groups, etc.)**
- **To promote interest in historic sites. (Cooperate w/ Adirondack Architectural Heritage Association, etc.)**
- **To promote quality of and public access to the watershed**
- **To promote communications technology, (Web page for the Town)**
- **To support Clinton and Essex Counties Economic Development Agencies**

THREATS

- **Lack of "curb appeal"**
- **Lack of Town Board initiative for economic growth**
- **Fear of change**
- **Loss of local control**
- **Loss of population**
- **Lack of conflict resolution process**
- **Lack of community self esteem**
- **Lack of communication between Town, Village, etc.**
- **Lack of funds**

Vision Statement

The public input was studied to determine what direction the residents and landowners desire in the future for AuSable. The following statement summarizes that direction and consensus:

“The Town of AuSable will be a community that takes pride in its history, protects and utilizes its beautiful natural environment, is committed to providing superior public services, and is a safe and affordable place to live.”

Goals

A goal provides general purpose and direction. They set the broad direction or intent based on the needs of AuSable. A goal is general and without a specific time frame associated with it. They generally should reflect perceived need and vision. Goals should be able to be effectively pursued and realistic for the Town to accomplish at some point in the future.

1. Enhance the economic viability of the Town and surrounding area. Capitalize and expand tourist development, and local businesses that serve local residents and encourage large industrial and manufacturing uses to the Chesterfield Industrial Site. Encourage other businesses to in or near the Village where infrastructure extensions are more feasible.
2. Foster an increased sense of pride and place in our community, and promote community-oriented conversations and communication to engage the public.
3. Conserve our natural assets and beauty, and maintain the health of our natural systems including watersheds, mountains, lakes, wetlands and streams, and wildlife habitats.
4. Provide quality and pro-active government, public and emergency services.
5. Encourage village-style, higher density development east of Union Road and foster new development west of Union Road that is compatible with our rural community character and environment.
6. Preserve historic structures and sites.
7. Effectively communicate with the Village of Keeseville and surrounding towns on topics of mutual interest.
8. Improve the aesthetic character of our Town.
9. Enhance recreational opportunities, especially for our young people and promote public access to open spaces.
10. Provide up-to-date communication technologies, roads, and other infrastructure to support economic development and quality of life for our residents.
11. Enhance facilities and programs to ensure our senior citizens remain active members of our community.

Recommended Strategies and Actions

The following strategies and actions are recommended to help the Town of AuSable meet its goals and achieve the long-term vision of the Town. These recommendations came from input from the public (workshop, survey, and other public meetings), the Comprehensive Plan Committee, the Town's consultant and from analysis of the many maps, resources, and data about AuSable contained in the profile and inventory included in this Plan. They are organized into three action categories: programs, capital improvements, and local laws and enforcement.

The recommendations are further refined by our long-range goals, categorized as follows:

1. Economic Development
2. Sense of Pride
3. Natural Resource Protection
4. Government
5. Development Patterns
6. Historic Resources
7. Communication
8. Community Character
9. Recreation
10. Infrastructure
11. Senior Citizens

A. Strategies and Actions Related to Programs

Community Character

1. Provide for large/bulk trash collection days for items such as furniture, tires, refrigerators, hazardous waste, etc.
2. Place signs stating violations and fines for littering and dumping of junk.
3. Initiate a Beautification Committee for the Town that includes representatives from the Village. The role of this committee would be to identify locations and activities that negatively impact the aesthetic character of Town and to recommend specific actions the Town could take to improve those issues.
4. Work with local landowners, non-profits, and individuals to provide assistance in maintaining local cemeteries.
5. Work with NYS DOT, the County, and the Town Highway Department to establish a local "adopt a highway" program and get citizens involved with cleaning roadsides and building pride in the area.
6. Establish a town-wide clean up day.
7. Create a comprehensive scenic inventory that is based on both resources and community input. Use the 1976 Comprehensive Plan Scenic Inventory as a model and base. Update this map and ensure that the map is available to the public as well as the Planning Board for reference.

8. Open up views of the Ausable River from Route 9N by selectively thinning vegetation.

Recreation

9. Develop a long range recreation plan that meets the needs of all residents, but especially teens and seniors. Appoint a volunteer committee to coordinate and oversee this effort on behalf of the Town Board. Development of this plan should have wide community and landowner involvement and bring together people from different walks of life.
10. Work with NYS DOT, the County, and the Town Highway Department to develop a shared roadway system to allow bicyclists, and pedestrians safe shared use of roads in AuSable.
11. Re-establish the AuSable Field Days.
12. Enhance recreational opportunities on the Ausable River. Within the guidelines of the NYS DEC Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers Permit Program, work with NYS DEC and willing private landowners to identify new locations that could provide access to the Ausable River. Provide appropriate signage to identify them.
13. Plan for and establish a non-motorized trail along the length of the Ausable River. Purchase property and/or work with private landowners to obtain easements for the creation of a trail. Work with agencies that are currently engaged in developing and permitting trails.

Infrastructure

14. Enhance public awareness of what goes on at the Fire Department facility. Continue to publicly recognize the dedication of these volunteers. The Town should continue to support local fire and ambulance departments through volunteerism promotion and participation in fund raising activities. Work with volunteer fire and emergency services and continue to look for innovative ways to provide for the recruitment and training of citizen volunteers. Offer all available tax incentives to attract new volunteers.
15. Evaluate and implement shared services with the Village of Keeseville and surrounding towns to reduce expenses and taxes. The Shared Municipal Services Initiative is a New York State program designed to provide financial assistance to municipalities interested in investigating opportunities to work together. Conduct a feasibility analysis and needs assessment to determine the benefits of full or partial consolidation of Town/Village functions or operations.
16. Work with Clinton County to establish public transportation options, especially for seniors.
17. Highway Staff should participate in the Cornell Local Roads training programs and Town roads should be built, and maintained as per low volume rural road standards as established by the Cornell Roads program.

Economic Development

18. Establish an economic development program. This should be founded on the principal to maintain the Town's working landscape, scenic beauty, the environment, and quality of life for residents. The economic development plan should support rural-based enterprises, public-private partnerships, and open space, agricultural and environmental protection so that the essential nature of the Town is maintained while promoting new enterprises. Such an economic development program must be done in coordination with the Village of Keeseville, the County, and the region. The Town should take advantage of its location, access, diversity of landscapes, and linkages with both the Adirondacks

and Lake Champlain. This program should provide for and balance year-round and seasonal residents' needs as well as focus on tourist opportunities. Support the Lakes to Locks Passage Corridor Management Plan goals and objectives related to Economic Development, Recreation, and Tourism. The following objectives from that Plan are also relevant and adaptable to AuSable:

- a. Support stewardship activities of the environment
- b. Support the sustainable use of lake, river, and other natural resources
- c. Support the development of economic activities that take advantage of the recreational aspects of the lake, river, and mountains.
- d. Encourage companies to locate in the Village of Keeseville and the Chesterfield Business Park where infrastructure already exists. Help the Village of Keeseville promote adaptive reuse of existing buildings for commercial space.
- e. Promote a buy-local campaign for both agricultural, artisan, and other locally produced products.
- f. Take advantage of the Lakes to Locks Passage branding and signage as well as the Lake Champlain Bike Trail.
- g. Support the Lakes to Locks Passage tourism development initiatives.

Natural Resource Protection

19. Formally agree to cooperate with the Final AuSable Watershed Management Plan as a partnering municipality.
20. Work with appropriate agencies and organizations to support implementation of the AuSable Watershed Management Plan.
21. Work with NYS DEC, NYS DOT, the Town Highway Department, Clinton County, and other appropriate agencies and organizations to implement Best Management Practices for town roads that address road deicing and sand use, road construction standards, and sedimentation and erosion from roads.
22. Evaluate all town services and properties for energy efficiency/improvement.
23. Work with local farmland landowners to ensure that all those eligible for participating in the agricultural tax exemption program do so as part of an effort to maintain farms, farmland, and open spaces in AuSable.
24. Encourage use of conservation easements that preserve open spaces and support willing landowners who wish to donate or sell their development rights.

Communication

25. Foster communication between the Town Board and residents/landowners by establishing an annual or semi-annual town-meeting day with residents. This would also be an opportunity for the Town Board to hear concerns and issues from the public and to develop an annual (or semi-annual) work-plan to address critical needs.
26. Establish a community advisory committee. This committee could work to develop and promote activities and programs to build community spirit and involvement in the Town. Use town-wide events and activities to bring different groups of people together in a positive way. This group could assist in planning community/youth events, cultural/social events, and community festivals to involve local government and residents. Consider initiating a volunteer-based welcome wagon-type of program as these can be very effective in involving

new residents in the AuSable community.

Development Patterns

27. Seek funding from federal and state sources to rehabilitate sub-standard housing, facilitate home-ownership and restore historic homes.
28. Apply for funding to establish a Homeownership Assistance Program. This can be used for down payment assistance, a grant to buy down the interest rate, or for rehabilitation assistance.
29. Promote development of quality senior citizen housing, especially in and near the Village of Keeseville.

B. Strategies and Actions Related to Capital Improvements

Infrastructure

1. Evaluate the costs and feasibility of providing another transfer station in Town so that it is easier for people to find locations throughout Town for depositing trash. Consider also extending hours so that there are more opportunities for people to use the transfer station instead of dumping trash.
2. Develop a 5-year rolling Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) that addresses all long range staff, equipment, property, budgetary and other capital needs related to highway, town buildings, town properties, recreation, and other capital expenditures. A CIP is a multi-year schedule that lays out a series of Town projects, facilities and large equipment, and their associated costs. Over the five-year period considered by the CIP, the plan shows how the Town will maintain, expand or renovate facilities and services as needed to meet the demands of existing or new population. These documents are updated each year, dropping off the previous year and adding one more year at the end of the cycle. A capital budget is updated annually as part of the Town's regular budget process. It will show what projects are already on line, what projects will need funds in the current budget year, and what projects will be started in the current budget year. The information helps decision-makers improve coordination of services for greater efficiency and assess short-run financing requirements in the context of long-run fiscal needs and constraints. The Town should establish a formal CIP process, by adopting a resolution to create and empower a CIP committee. Establish equipment and pavement replacement schedule based upon their useful life and include this in plan.
3. Consider having Highway Department staff help with trash pickup along local roads as part of their maintenance duties. Work with local volunteers in an "adopt a road" cleanup program.
4. The recommended CIP, above, should formalize a road paving schedule and budgeting needed to do that long-term.
5. No new additional public sewerage or water systems are recommended at this time. No public water or sewer should be provided in the less developed western portions of Town. However, any future consideration of public waste treatment should be oriented to hamlets and other more densely developed areas. Work with the Village to expand existing water and sewer service to adjacent areas in the Town.

Communication

6. Develop and maintain a Town website. Ensure that this is linked to area businesses, and other efforts such as the Lakes to Locks Passage and Lake Champlain Bike Trail websites.
7. Establish a community bulletin board in a prominent location to advertise community events and activities.
8. Work with State, County, and regional organizations and agencies to explore and implement options for enhanced access to DSL, cell phone, and high-speed internet.

Recreation

9. Plan for additional recreational facilities with an emphasis on walking trails, bike trails, and other pathways for pedestrians, and creation of a community recreation center. Use the survey results included in this plan as a base for starting discussion of community recreation needs. Work to enhance trail linkages between Lake Champlain, the Ausable River, the Village of Keeseville, and other areas within the Town.
10. Enhance the Beach area for residents and seek grant funding to provide for these improvements.
11. Work with NYS DOT and the County to establish a program to allow a formal shared roadway program to enhance use and safety of roads and shoulders for pedestrians and bikers where possible.
12. Work with agencies and organizations to plan for an organized and maintained ATV trail system.
13. Work with willing local landowners to develop trails, access points, and parking areas to enhance access to the Ausable River and Lake Champlain.

Community Character

14. Establish gateway landscaping and signs at the major roadway entrances to the Town. Work with area agencies and organizations to ensure compatibility of signage (such as Lakes to Locks, Inc, and the Lake Champlain Bike Trail).
15. Along the Ausable River corridor, work with NYS DOT, the Highway Department, and landowners to remove trees and scrub growth needed in very specific locations in the right-of-way or beyond where scenic views may be opened up to the river beyond these vegetated barriers.

C. Strategies and Actions Related to Local Laws and Enforcement

Natural Resource Protection

1. Establish as a local law, site plan review. Authorize the Planning Board to review site plans related to new commercial, commercial recreational, and multi-family residential projects. The purpose of the site plan review law should primarily be to protect community character, scenic beauty, and the environment when new development occurs. See also Strategy # 7 below.
2. AuSable contains unique Pine Barrens habitats that contain rare, threatened, and ecologically sensitive plant and animal species. Consider establishing a critical environmental area to encompass the Harkness Barrens, Keeseville Barrens, Clintonville Pine Barrens, and Plains Road Barrens as allowed under SEQRA (this is NOT a critical environmental area under APA). A SEQRA critical environmental area does not prohibit or regulate development, but classifies all uses in those areas as a Type I action that requires a more complete environmental review when a project is proposed. In this manner, the Town can more fully review projects that may impact these unique areas. ATV use in these areas should be carefully managed to protect these environments.
3. Maintain the existing Flood Damage Prevention law.
4. Consider updating the subdivision law and include in the recommended site plan law, development standards to ensure that stormwater runoff rates after development do not exceed rate that existed prior to development. Ensure that the Planning Board is familiar with the most recent version of the New York Standards and Specifications for Erosion and Sediment Control.
5. Consider updating the subdivision law Section IX (General Requirements and Design Standards) to include a standard that requires erosion/stormwater controls on slopes of 15% to 25% showing proper site design, drainage control, protection of vegetative cover, and use of erosion control techniques to minimize water runoff impacts. Further, consider establishing a standard that requires development on slopes > 25% to be moved to the maximum extent practical to areas of lesser slope on the parcel.

Development Patterns (to accomplish both Community Character and Natural Resource Goals)

6. Update the existing subdivision law and include in the new recommended site plan law purpose statements in local laws should be expanded to include the importance of preserving community character and to also recognize agriculture's contribution to the town's rural quality through open space, wildlife habitats, watershed purification, and natural resource preservation.
7. Establish a local law authorizing Site Plan Review so that all neighborhoods, physical and existing environmental site conditions are taken into consideration when evaluating new development proposals. In order to promote new development that is consistent with the goals of this Comprehensive Plan, the Site Plan Review law should provide development standards and an efficient review process to detail expectations for how the Town wants new

development to look and function. The site plan law should apply to all new commercial, commercial recreational businesses, and multi-family residences, but not agricultural related or minor home based businesses, and standards for the following:

- a. Lighting to reduce light pollution and glare.
 - b. References to NYS DEC and Federal stormwater requirements. All commercial land disturbances greater than one acre requires preparation of a State Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan, as does all residential development that disturbs more than five acres. Establish erosion and sedimentation control standards that incorporate NYS DEC best management practices. Work to minimize impervious surfaces, and avoid compaction of soils over large areas in areas having hydrological vulnerability.
 - c. Identification and protection of critical natural habitats.
 - d. Access management to reduce the number of curb cuts onto existing highways and ensure safety of pedestrians.
 - e. Protection of scenic views (including those of the Ausable River, AuSable Chasm, and other critical views as established by the Town) to minimize new developments' impact on scenic resources. Incorporate procedures to evaluate visual impacts during review of projects such as using the SEQRA Visual Assessment Form or using the NYS DEC model for Visual Assessments. Projects undergoing site plan review should include an inventory of scenic resources on site, determine the extent of visibility of the project, determine if the project will have a significant negative impact on the aesthetic character, and mitigate impacts. The Site Plan law could include:
 - i. Use of screening, relocation, camouflage, low profiles, or downsizing visible structures.
 - ii. Avoid placement of buildings in the middle of large open areas. Place structures along the edges.
 - iii. Protection of mature trees and other unique features found on the site.
 - iv. Commercial building design and siting that is consistent with historic and traditional architecture and development patterns in the area.
 - f. Protection of historic resources.
 - g. Building and structures siting, design, and layout to be compatible with the Town's rural character. However, development along Route 9 and areas adjacent to the Village of Keeseville should reflect the different character found in this part of Town compared to those areas west of Union Road.
 - h. Parking lots.
 - i. Landscaping.
 - j. Provision of utilities.
 - k. Excessive noise.
 - l. Standards to address items identified by the public as important (as shown in the resident survey, pages 8 and 9)
 - m. Wind and Cellular Towers
8. Review and revise the Town's existing Subdivision Law to ensure that natural, cultural, and historic resources are preserved during subdivision. The review process and required information should place more emphasis on the relationship between the proposed building and the environment and rural character.

9. Revise the current subdivision law to include review of prime agricultural soils, and soils of statewide significance and authorize the Planning Board to approve subdivisions that are designed to protect these farmland soils. The Town should limit the impact of new development on farmland by moving non-farm structures away from active farm fields, prime soils, soils of statewide importance, etc, and requiring buffer zones between farmland and new residential uses. New residential uses should provide its own buffer area, not the farm.
10. The current density requirements of the APA.
11. Consider adopting a local right-to-farm law to demonstrate the importance of farming to the community, and include provisions that authorize local mediation of conflicts before courts are involved.
12. Consider adopting a local law that establishes front, side, and rear yard setbacks, and building height limitations. As part of this local law, consider requiring that all major subdivisions (five or more lots) be designed in a conservation layout (called a conservation subdivision) to protect open space and the environment. This should include procedures for designing a conservation subdivision, open space requirements, preservation methods of that open space, and other conservation design principles.
13. Study wind resources in Town to determine if there is any feasibility for these structures and if so, consider establishing a local law that defines specific locations suitable for commercial wind farms and that establishes control of noise, safety, aesthetic impacts, and shadow flicker. As an alternative, the Town could establish a local law that prohibits commercial wind farms but allow for personal use wind turbines. All wind towers should be permitted subject to site plan review at the minimum.
14. Consider establishing a local law that regulates size, placement and height standards for signs. Consider prohibiting billboards.
15. Screening for junkyards. Junkyard regulation – 2 or more unregistered/unlicensed cars.
16. Local Law #1 of 2005 (Town of AuSable Junk and Junkyard Law) establishes the rules and regulations for control of junk in Town. As junk and the unsightliness of junk was a major concern to the citizens of AuSable, and the Town already has a local law to address the issue, the Town Board should fully enforce this local law to the maximum extent. Consider revising this law to prohibit the establishment of new junkyards in Town.
17. Consolidate all local laws related to mobile homes including Local Law # 1 of 1992, Local Law #2 of 1993, Local Law #3 of 1997, and Local Law #3 of 2005. Include in this consolidation a revision that requires site plan approval for all new mobile home park and standards to ensure that the mobile home park protects important environmental features of the site, that it is designed to be consistent with the rural character of the Town of AuSable; that the mobile home park be designed to include open space; that the interior roads be designed to have a maximum width of 18 or 20 feet instead of 30 feet; that adequate interior landscaping be included; and that the maximum number of units allowed in each mobile home park be capped.
18. Consider adopting a property maintenance law to address derelict buildings and properties. Work to improve the overall aesthetics of the hamlets by addressing issues such as vacant or dilapidated buildings. Identify and work with land owners to improve the use and appearance of residential, commercial, or mixed-use buildings throughout the Town.

Communication

19. Allow for inter-municipal review of projects during the review process required under SEQRA. Work with adjacent towns to establish municipalities as “interested agencies” under SEQRA. In order to foster regional analysis of environmental impacts and to increase

communication between towns, adjacent municipalities in the region should have the opportunity to review proposals as interested agencies and vice versa. Current state law requires notification of any public hearing when a project falls within 500 feet of a town boundary. However, this step often comes too late for effective participation. As interested agencies, adjacent towns can be notified in the earliest stages of a project review and offer input.

Infrastructure

20. Work with the County Sheriff and NYS Police to enhance speed enforcement along State highways through town.
21. Review and update town road standards in the subdivision law, and ensure that they reflect rural road standards. Consider adopting the low volume road classification and maintenance standards advocated by the Local Roads Research and Coordination Council (Manual: Guidelines for Rural and County Roads, December 1992) and the AASHTO Guidelines for Geometric Design of Very Low-Volume Local Roads, 2001. Minimize use of cul-de-sac roads. Cul-de-sacs should only be used when no other alternatives exist. Should a dead-end road be necessary, use a “T” end or a “hammerhead” instead of a cul-de-sac. Where a cul-de-sac is the only alternative, reduce the “bulb” width to minimize negative impacts.
22. Revise the subdivision law and include in the recommended Site Plan law an “adequate public facilities” requirement that ensures a developer will provide the service himself or will pay for the increase in the current level of community service.
23. Long-term, promote more intensive development in those areas where public services are available, such as near the Village of Keeseville or other hamlet areas as they may develop.

D. General Strategies and Actions

1. Continue to demonstrate respect for individual rights, freedoms, and visions while working to meet the common goals expressed by the community.
2. Work towards better enforcement of local and NYS building code and building maintenance requirements.
3. Keep this plan current by formally reviewing it every five years and making changes as needed.

Priority Action Plan

To be completed by the Town Board

Public Input

Planning and Visioning Workshop

The Town of AuSable hosted a visioning workshop in May 2007. The development of a shared vision statement is important for the long-term success of AuSable's Comprehensive Plan. A vision statement is necessary to judge future policies, programs, and actions. It also acts as a “consistency test” for decisions made at the local level. Visioning is a strategic tool that will help AuSable:

- Develop a greater sense of community consensus
- Establish long-term direction for the community
- Initiate effective and creative problem solving
- Build commitment to implement the vision and plan
- Develop priorities for the comprehensive plan

At the workshop held in May, over 60 participants worked through a planning process to develop a vision for the future of the town. Small groups worked together to identify specific elements of their vision and to devise a statement that characterizes that vision. The first step was to identify both negative and positive elements of the Town. These elements, or factors, were recorded, and then ranked by the individual participant by placing a "priority" sticker next to the factor each felt was the most significant. The following is a summary all the workshop results. See Appendix XXX for a full accounting of the results.

Summary of Major Positive Characteristics

Small town feel
Friendly and neighborly
Quiet and peaceful
Good sense of community
Country lifestyle, privacy
Scenic beauty and natural beauty
Open spaces
The landscape and natural resources
Rural character
Good fire department and rescue
A safe place
Accessibility to the Adirondacks, attractions, urban areas
Good road crews
Good quality of life
Good schools
Historic lands and structures
The environment, including the climate and seasons
Outdoor recreational opportunities

Participants Ideas to Maintain or Enhance Positives

- Schools: community needs to be involved.
- Community awareness of safety issues – youth programs, neighborhood watch, etc.
- Encourage and support people who are involved and committed to town government and activities.
- Set up beautification committee.
- Rural portions – “leave us alone”.
- Less development over rivers, mountain tops.
- Maintain small community atmosphere and close family ties.
- Maintain a high quality school district.
- Community leaders need to be receptive to needs and concerns of residents.
- Keep a reasonable tax structure.
- More stores to shop in – shopping areas.
- No speeding in the town.
- Advertise via website, also document history, cultural resources, etc.
- Fix the 2 bridges on access points to the Town.
- Many people enjoy a quality of life that we must preserve and this quality is unique to the Town of AuSable.
- Bring back the Field Days.
- Fire & Rescue Departments – enhance public awareness of what goes on at the Fire Department facility. Continue to publicly recognize the dedication of these volunteers.
- Zoning is needed to keep the quality of the area.
- Preservation – choices for type of lifestyle preference.
- No positives with this Town Board.
- Stock River to bring in fisherman – fishing tournaments.
- Town plan cannot out way private property rights.
- Help citizens that take care of themselves – lower welfare role. People who deserve/need help don’t get it.
- Town needs a plan to enhance growth to enable positive atmosphere.
People working together to enhance business.

Summary of Major Negative Characteristics

Poor appearance of houses, properties, and area in general, especially related to deterioration and disrepair of properties.

Too many junkyards, salvage yards, junk cars, garbage, trash along roads

Inadequate road maintenance and inadequate snow plowing

Lack of recreational areas and programs, especially for youth and teens

Lack of communication technology such as cell service and high speed internet

Lack of public transportation

Lack of local law enforcement

Lack of speed limit enforcement

Lack of land use laws, programs and enforcement

Taxes too high

Lack of business and jobs, especially to keep young people in area

Water quality and system concerns (in village especially)

Participants Solutions to These Negatives

- **Illegal dumping:**
 - Issue tickets and enforce the law by code enforcement officer.
 - Have days for collection: furniture, tires, hazardous waste, etc.
 - More signs stating violations and fines for violators.
 - Coordinate with landfill to comply with law.
 - Another transfer station.
 - Lobby for higher bottle deposits.
- **Junk Yards:**
 - Mid-term solution is to research what other communities have done to regulate.
 - Enforcement of junk yard ordinance – aesthetics are important.
 - Enclose junk yards and enforce setbacks.
 - Junkyard regulation – 2 or more unregistered/unlicensed cars.
- **Disrepair of Buildings & Lots:**
 - Law to limit number of vehicles that one residence can have.
 - Fencing to screen.
 - Assess properties for additional liabilities for children getting hurt on other properties.
 - Mini-farm regulations.
- **Windmills:**
 - Start with a moratorium.
 - Discussion to enact a law banning them.
- **Build sidewalks**
- **Enforcement:**
 - Enforce speed limits.
 - Poaching on Chasm Road – illegal hunting – enforce law.
 - Lack of enforcement of local laws. (vacant mobile homes)
- **Develop a Town website.**
- **Explore options for access to DSL or high-speed internet.**
- **Water Quality/District:**
 - Employ knowledgeable and qualified individuals to run the plant.
 - Water district should be expanded and upgraded.
 - Culverts needed.
- **Unsafe Skateboarding:**
 - Law to prohibit skateboarding outside of park. Enhance the park. Make more parks.
- **Recreation:**
 - More facilities – bike path, ball field, tournaments, ice rink – free for Town residents, charge for others to use.
 - Pursue grants for recreation area/park for children. Rec Center.
 - Easement system or some other system for use of ATV trail network.
- **Comprehensive Plan:**
 - People need a public vote on Plan.
 - Plan will have to address the poverty in the area.
 - Needs to address issues of poorly maintained homes and properties.
- **Pursue solution to better services and infrastructure at Ausable Beach area.**

- New Jobs: research higher paying jobs, new business, employment to our town.
- More local control on zoning, planning and enforcement.
- Better land use control.
- Taxes:
 - Ideas for raising tax base.
 - More houses, lower taxes.
 - Accountability by the elected officials to voters.
 - Property tax relief.
- To prevent loss of open space: more housing developments, cluster housing.
- Town should look into better quality of housing for seniors.
- Clean-up Town:
 - Beautification Committee.
 - Recommend Town support beautification.
 - More help maintaining cemeteries.
 - Make Town look nice again.
- Transportation: establish improved public transportation.
- Roads:
 - Sunlea Village paving – big truck usage, interior roads.
 - Clear fire access road on Pine (sp?) St. as a safety issue.
 - Serious road repairs needed on Thomasville Road.
 - Local “adopt a highway” programs getting more people involved with cleaning roads and giving more pride in area.
 - Road shoulders need to be widened so people can walk without being in the road.
 - Look for money to pave roads.
- Signs: So. of AuSable Chasm, Rt. 9 – sign for School Bus Stop, Day Care Center – populated.

Looking Towards the Future

Participants were asked to identify those features they would desire to see in AuSable in the future. These specific elements were then combined at the workshop and each table worked to develop a vision statement. These statements, together with the list below are a summary of the specific vision elements identified by all participants.

In the future, AuSable will have:

Property Maintenance

- No garbage visible, homes look neat and well-kept.
- No junk yards, owners show pride in their homes and property.
- Junk cars, trucks, etc. would be removed and streets would be orderly.
- Well-maintained residential neighborhoods, yards and property.
- Historic property and houses are well-maintained.

Business/Industry Development

- Job opportunities close to home. Good jobs.

- A busy downtown with farmers markets, pharmacy, post office, antique shops, tea houses – where people live and play.
- Front Street is thriving with stores, theaters, restaurants, professional offices. No vacancies.
- Prosperous business is providing employment and services; most staples are available and affordable. Low unemployment.
- Bring industry and business back like it was 50 or 60 years ago when everyone was employed.
- Prosperous farms and orchards. Farming has flourished in the Town.
- A location that permits local talents/products available for area residents and tourists.
- Economic opportunity for our children and grandchildren – business and light industry.
- Business parks and trade zones.

Safety

- Safe community.
- No crime, low crime rate.
- Clean up the drugs.
- Kids are off the street at night.

Government

- Responsible Town government; Good law enforcement.
- Maintain integrity of all government – local and state.
- Town and Village government work together for the betterment of the community.
- Town government and citizens working toward realistic, measurable goals.
- Well-run Town government with no duplication of services. Maintaining the Town government at a reasonable rate.
- Laws enforced to ensure positive development and land use.

Infrastructure

- Good water system. Work on water lines.
- Outstanding Fire Department.
- Shared Services. Check on seniors in the winter.
- No Village. Both Towns work to support Village.
- The 2 towns (AuSable & Chesterfield) have become one – crossing county lines.
- Buried power and communication lines.
- Healthcare: More doctors and dentists, health clinic, lower prescription drugs.
- Keep our good churches. Beautiful churches.
- Beautification Committee
- Police and fire protection.

Taxes

- Lower taxes. Proposition 13 passed to limit taxes.
- Low taxes for families and elderly.
- Good tax base to pay for public projects.
- Reasonable taxes so that people (especially the elderly) do not have to give up their homes.
- Reasonable property values not based on superfluous things such as views.
- Schools providing great education without having school/land taxes which force some people to lose their homes.

Housing

- Multi-family affordable housing; not over-developed; Land use is used to the optimum.
- Nice trailer parks.
- Homes being built maintain a country setting. No high-rise condos or buildings.
- Nice housing for seniors. Elderly Care Facility.
- Affordable real estate and housing – you can find most any kind of home from large historic homes to modest-sized tract houses to well-maintained mobile home parks.
- Developments have names.
- No trailer parks – nice, low-income housing.

Energy

- Abundant use of renewable resources – solar, wind, geothermal, etc.
- Energy-efficient services.
- Quiet, electric cars; solar panels on every public building.
- Utilizing unused land for local Wind farm.

Transportation/Roads

- Great transportation to Plattsburgh.
- Well-maintained roads. Clean roadsides.
- Transportation for people who can't drive. Free public transportation.
- No traffic lights just stop signs.
- Provide sound shielding from 87.
- Fix bridges. Town signs giving directions to area attractions.

Technology

- DSL, broadband, TV, voice available to everyone
- Town Webpage: forum to discuss town issues, e-mail for suggestions, etc.
- Website: detailed, scenic – for residents and tourists.

Environment

- Clean, safe, energy-efficient environment.
- Maintain natural resources – mountains, Chasm, Lake. Harmony between people & nature.
- Keep the country the way it is. Open Land.
- All pollution sources are controlled so that no waterways, air quality or land contamination are impacted.
- Controlled logging.

Community Development/Aesthetics

- People are walking on streets, visiting with people. Improve neighborhoods.
- No stray dogs or cats. Dogs are on leashes.
- Sidewalks. Safe, green streets – trees, flowers, etc.
- Tranquil village with good Main Street shops, trees lining the street – a sense of Paris in Keeseville.
- All of the compromised resources have been recovered.

Regulatory

- No APA.
- APA is easy to work with.
- Zoning.
- Town of AuSable has perfect Comprehensive Plan

Growth

- Future growth of land, business, recreation. Planned growth and order.
- Keep scenic country settings and natural resources.
- Still slow-paced because there is controlled development.
- Mixture of residential, business and agricultural areas.

Recreation

- Recreation for adults and kids. Lots of events for all ages. Bike paths, rec building.
- Town beach picnic day; Parks and trails along the River and Lake.
- Museums and culture; Advantages for people of all ages to come together.
- Continue with scenic byway theme – birding trail, retirement incentives.
- Nice motels to stay in that complement the area. A facility for meetings, banquets, etc.
- Well-maintained parks and playgrounds. River banks are clean and fishermen are using it.
- Places for teenagers to go; quality child care centers.
- Town Field Day – all or part of town entities are represented and people can/should be recognized for all of their efforts. Firemen Field Days have returned.
- There is live music/dancing, storytelling, regular community gatherings, pie festivals; A place where summer music can be heard (an amphitheater) or a play for little or no money.
- Tourism – Town is a 12-month tourist attraction. Year-round sports programs
- Walking and ski trails on every road.
- Historic sites developed for public display/access.
- Youth and Senior centers; horse show arena, programs for seniors.

Schools

- No school district.
- Residents overjoyed to help school teachers; support kids to stay in school. Our schools have a 100% graduation and job placement rate.

Values

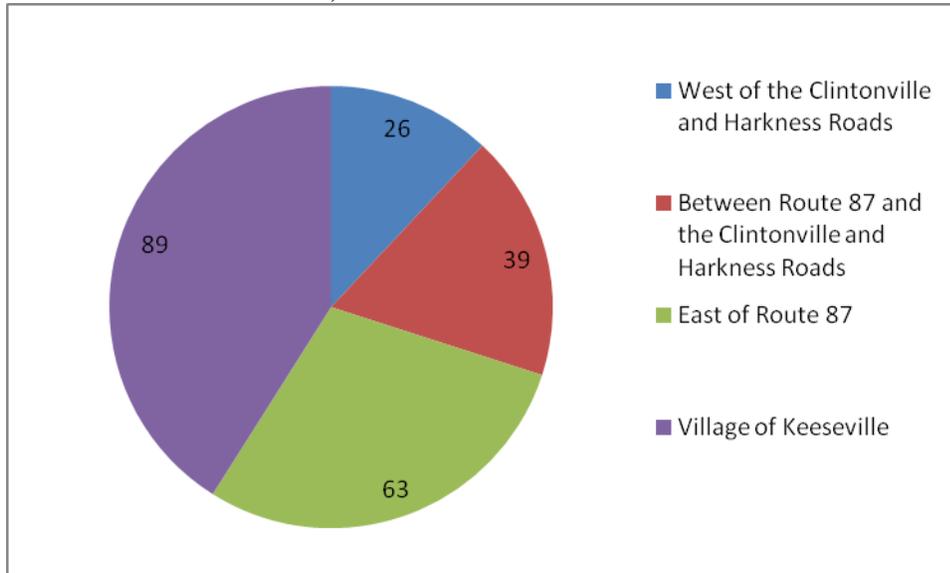
- Demonstrated respect for individual rights, freedoms, achievements and visions.
- People really appreciate the history of the town and the beauty of the area- lakes, mountains, etc. Historic river front is well-kept along with historic architecture.
- The Ten Commandments are proudly on display in the Town on a granite sculpture.
- Quality of life, historic values, openness of citizenship.
- Youth are more respectful to elders; everyone knows everyone else, community pride.
- No one considered poor – everyone has basic necessities of life – food, clothing, etc.
- Spiritual people.

Resident Survey

Summary of Results: Town, including Village

1. Where in AuSable do you live? Please choose from one of the areas below.

More residents from Keeseville participated in the survey than from other areas in Town (41%). This was followed by 29% of participants from areas east of Route 87. About 18% were from the area between 87 and Clintonville/Harkness Roads, and 12% were west of the Clintonville/Harkness Roads.



2. How many years have you lived or owned land in AuSable?

Over half the participants have lived in town 20 years or more. However, a good portion was newcomers (almost 21%) with 19% at 6 to 15 years and 5% 16 to 20 year-long residents. The 21% new resident response is quite high compared to other communities.

3. Do you live in AuSable full-time or part-time?

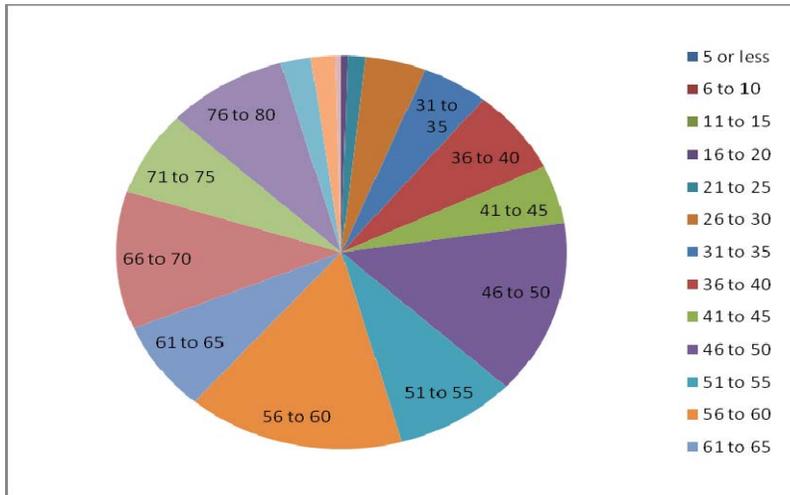
Except for one participant, all others were full-time residents.

4. Do you own or rent your home?

90% of participants own their own home.

5. What is your age? _____ (the age of the person filling out this questionnaire)

A wide range of ages from 16-20 years through 96 to 100 years filled out the survey. About 11% were under 35 years old, 46% were 36 to 55 years old, 41% were 56 to 75 years old, and 13% were over 76 years old.



6. How many children under the age of 18 are there in your household? _____
Almost 40% indicated that they had one child under the age of 18 in the household and 43% said they had two. About 19% said they had more than 2 children living in the household.

7. If you work, where is this work located?
30% said they work in Clinton County but not in the town, and 31% said they were retired. Less than 1% was home-based, 12% said within the Town, 14% said other locations, and 12% said they did not work.

8. Looking back 5 years, is the quality of life in AuSable generally improved, the same, or worse?
The majority (55%) said that the quality of life is still the same compared to 5 years ago. 23% said it was worse, and 7.8% said it was better. 14% had no opinion.

9. Is there a need for additional housing for senior citizens in the community?
42% said there is a need for senior housing, 13% said there is no need, and 44% said they had no opinion.

10. Is there a problem with finding housing that is affordable in the community?
36% said there is a problem finding affordable housing, 20% said there is not a problem, and more people (44% said they had no opinion)

11. If you answered yes to #10, what would you prefer to see in Town to address this?
For those that answered yes (there is a problem), most (60%) preferred moderately priced single family dwellings to address the issue. 39% said senior citizen housing complexes, 14% said apartments, 8% said townhouses, 8% said mobile home parks, and 2% said accessory dwelling units.

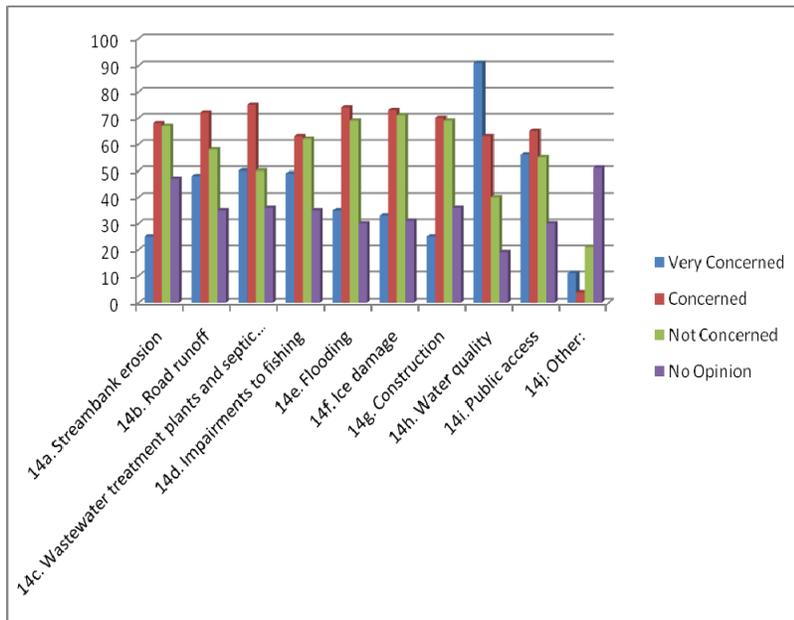
12. If your drinking water source is a private well, are you concerned with any of the following issues?
About half the participants answered this question. Of those, there were more people who had some level of concern (very or just concerned) about their water quality. There were less people concerned about water quantity. 54% said they were not concerned about water quantity, but 28% said they had some level of concern.

13. Are road improvements needed?
59% said that road improvements were needed while 26% said no improvements were needed. 15% had no opinion.

14. How concerned are you about the following issues related to the Ausable River and/or its tributaries, and lakes within the Town of AuSable?
Of all the river oriented features explored in this question, there was the most concern about water quality of the river. Each of the features had some people who had no opinion or were not concerned. Other than water quality, about 22% to 27% of participants were very concerned about road runoff, wastewater treatment plants/septic systems, impairments to fishing and public access. 12% to 17% were very concerned about stream bank erosion, flooding, ice damage, and other (see text answers). About 30 to 35% of participants consistently

indicated that they were “concerned” about all these features. Adding together “concerned” and “very concerned” showed that overall, the majority of participants had some level of concern about all the river features.

River Features Explored in this Question were:
a. Stream bank erosion
b. Road runoff
c. Wastewater treatment plants and septic systems
d. Impairments to fishing
e. Flooding
f. Ice damage
g. Construction
h. Water quality
i. Public access
j. Other:



15. Where would you prefer to see industrial development in AuSable located? Check all that apply.

The highest response was that industrial development should occur along Route 9, 9N and 22 (44%), followed by in or near the Village (33%). 12% said it should be in or near hamlets, 9% said other locations, and 10% said no further commercial development is desired. 22% said they didn't know.

16. Where would you prefer to see retail development in AuSable located?

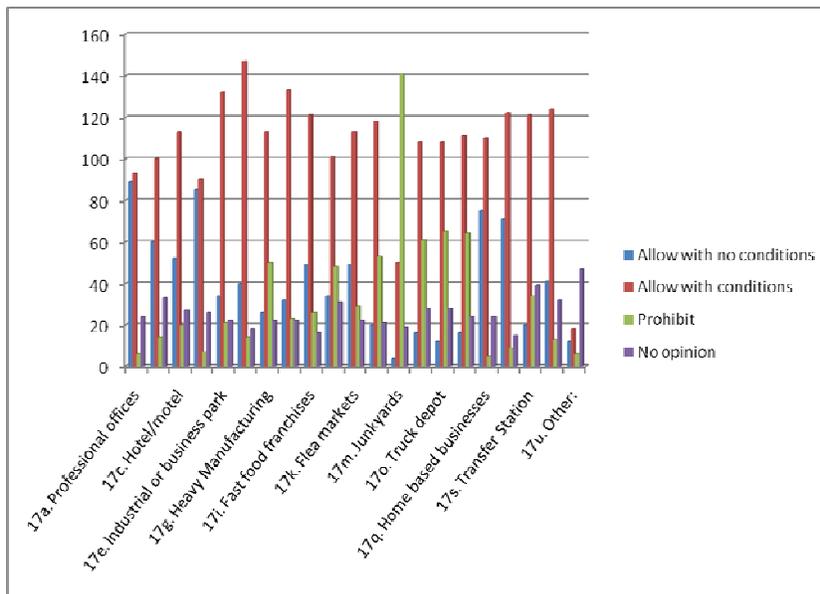
See Text Answers. A variety of locations were offered...many were downtown, in the Village, Near the Village, and Route 9 but the majority were in the Village.

17. Which of the following types of commercial and/or industrial development should be allowed in the Town of AuSable, outside the Village?

Of all the types of commercial developments explored in this question, junkyards were the only one that had a lot of consensus about prohibiting them (66%). About 30% said prohibit a truck depot, bars, and mining gravel and rock. 20% to 25% said to prohibit warehouses, big box retail, and used car lots. Less than 10% of participants desired to prohibit the other uses. The majority wanted to allow these other various uses, but there

were more people that wanted to allow them with conditions than those that wanted to allow them with no conditions. For example, 77% said to allow corporate office parks, but 48% said to allow with conditions. A strong majority of participants wanted to allow with conditions the following uses: hotel/motel, industrial/business park, light manufacturing, heavy manufacturing, warehouse/distribution center, fast food franchise, big box stores, flea markets, mining, truck depot, bars, home based businesses, retail stores, transfer station, and agri-businesses. The survey did not explore what type of conditions might be expected to be imposed.

Land Uses Explored in this Question	
a. Professional offices	
b. Corporate office park	q. Home based businesses
c. Hotel/motel	r. Retail stores
d. Tourism	s. Transfer Station
e. Industrial or business park	t. Agri-businesses
f. Light manufacturing	u. Other:
g. Heavy Manufacturing	
h. Warehouses/distribution centers	
i. Fast food franchises	
j. Big box stores	
k. Flea markets	
l. Used car lots	
m. Junkyards	
n. Mining gravel and rock	
o. Truck depot	
p. Bars	

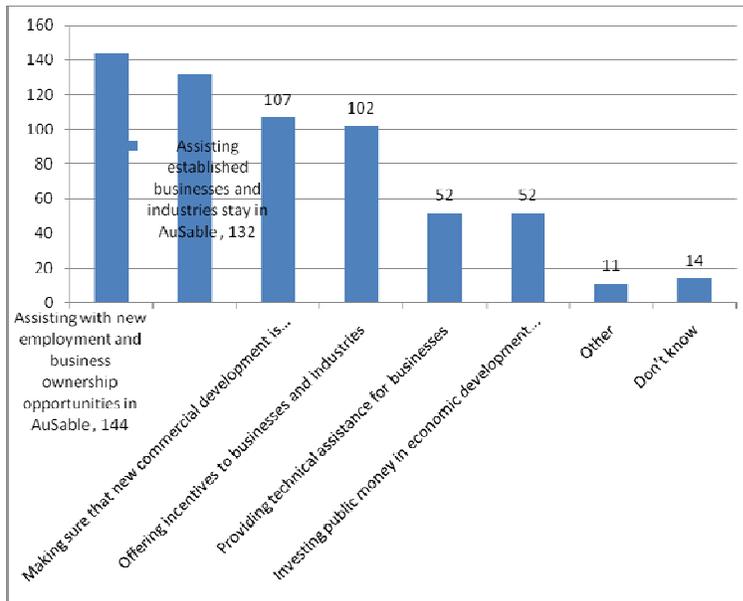


18. Do you feel that the Town government should play a role in enhancing economic development in AuSable?
 A large majority of participants said that the Town government should play a role in enhancing economic development in Town. 81% said yes, 8% said no, and 11% had no opinion.

If so, what is the most important role that the Town of AuSable should play related to economic development? (Choose up to 4 that are most important to you.)

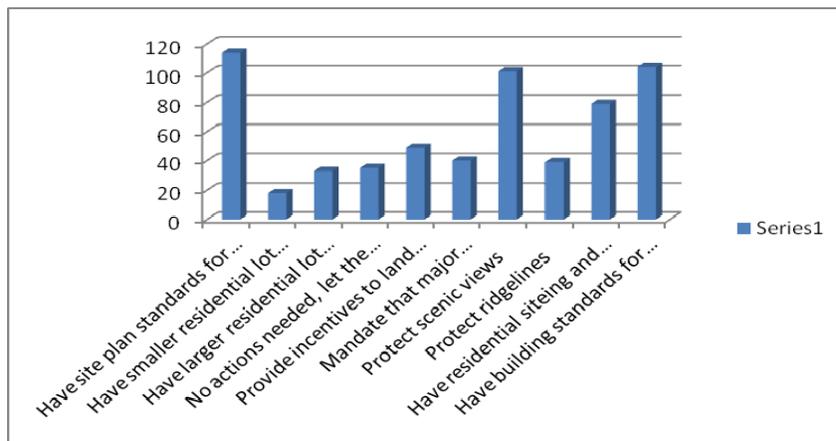
People were asked to choose up to four different roles the town could play in economic development. The top four choices, in order from most favored were: assist with new employment and business ownership opportunities, assist established businesses and industries, make sure new development is consistent with the aesthetics, scale, and character of AuSable, and offer incentives. Each of these had over 50% of participants feel they were important roles. The first category had 73% of participants favorable towards it (assisting with new

business development). About 26% of participants said they feel the town could provide technical assistance, and investing public money in programs.



19. What are the important actions that the Town of AuSable should take related to land use? (Choose up to 4 that are most important to you.)

The most favorable action for the Town to take related to land use was to have site plan standards for commercial uses related to landscape, signage, etc (53%). This was followed by having building standards to review scale and design of commercial uses (48%), and then protect scenic views (47%). About 37% said have residential standards that serve to protect rural character, and 23% said an important role would be to provide incentives to gain desired amenities such as open space. 19% said the town should mandate open space in major developments, and 16% said no actions are needed – let the market decide. 6% said other (see text) and 11% did not know.



20. How satisfied are you with the following aspects of your local government?

No category (below) received more than 45% of the participants indicating they were “very satisfied” with the various aspects of local government. Ambulance/rescue and fire protection received the most “very satisfied” responses (about 44% each). Many categories however showed general satisfaction by many people. Hours of town hall operation, town hall facility, overall road maintenance all received 50% to 53% “satisfied” ratings. Overall road maintenance received the highest “not satisfied” answers followed by youth programs (26% not satisfied), tax assessor (23%), responsiveness to town resident concerns (24%), and code enforcement/building inspection (22%). The results show a general overall satisfaction with the local government services but show

areas for improvement. Some categories had many people indicate they had no opinion. For example, 53% said they had no opinion about the town Zoning Board of Appeals and 47.8% said no opinion about the Planning Board. This is likely because these participants have not used those town agencies before.

Local government services explored in question
a. Accessibility of town records
b. Ambulance/Rescue Squad
c. Tax Assessor
d. Code Enforcement & Building Inspection
e. Fire protection
f. Hours of operation (town hall)
g. Town Hall Facility
h. Overall road maintenance
i. Responsiveness of Town to residents' concerns
j. Town Board
k. Library services
l. Town Planning Board
m. Town Zoning Board of Appeals
n. Youth Programs Sponsored by Town
o. Other:

21. How important are the following for you and your family to have in the Town of AuSable?

A large majority of participants felt that the items on the list (below) were “important”. Very strong consensus showed for more local job availability, more locally-owned businesses, litter control, junk/property maintenance, educational facilities/schools, youth activities, historic sites, public safety, services for senior citizens, streams/ponds/wetlands, public access to open space, and scenic views. Each of these had more than 70% of participants say they were “important”. Also of importance to the majority (50% to 69%) included additional commercial development, enhanced tourism, garbage removal, water/sewer, high speed internet, forestlands/wildlife habitats, opportunities for community involvement, public transportation, farms and farmland, small hobby farms, open spaces, and protection of sensitive environmental sites.

There were mixed feelings on putting more limits on new residential development. About 35% said that was “important” and 38% said “not important” with another 30% saying “no opinion”. Somewhat less mixed reaction was seen with the “more residential development allowed” where 48% said that was important, 22% said that was “not important” and 30% said “no opinion.”

Features Explored in this question
a. Additional commercial development
b. Enhanced tourism
c. More local job availability
d. More locally-owned/ operated businesses
e. Garbage Removal
f. Litter Control
g. Control of Junk/Property Maintenance
h. Provide water and sewer service
i. High speed internet connection
j. Cultural activities
k. Day care
l. Educational facilities/Schools

Features Explored in this question
m. Youth Activities
n. Forestlands/Wildlife habitats
o. Historical sites, structures, cemeteries
p. Opportunity for community involvement
q. Public safety
r. Public transportation
s. Services for senior citizens
t. Streams, ponds and wetlands
u. Farms and farmland
v. Small hobby farms/recreational farms
w. Open spaces
x. Public access to open space
y. Scenic views and landscapes
z. Sensitive environmental sites protected
aa. More limits on new residential development
bb. More residential development allowed
cc. Other:

22. From the above list in Question 21, please list, by number, the five that are most important to you:

The five most important features explored in #21 above were (in order): control of junk/property maintenance, more local job availability, additional commercial development, more locally-owned businesses, and youth activities. Those items that were the least important were: more limits on new residential development, more residential development allowed, open spaces, protect sensitive environmental sites, farms and small farms, day care, and cultural activities. This question did not explore why those items were considered most important or not important.

23. Are you interested in seeing any of the following recreation uses in AuSable?

Three items received the most interest as indicated by “strong interest”: these were recreation and fishing access to the River (45%), walking/running paths (44%), and a teen center (42%). Of all the items, only snowmobile trails were not favored (51% said “no interest”). If “strong interest” and “some interest” is combined, golf and horse trails had the least support, but for all other recreational uses listed, there was some level of support.

Recreational uses explored in question
a. Athletic Fields (baseball, softball, soccer, tennis)
b. Bike paths
c. Camping areas
d. Community center
e. Cultural activities (music, theater, etc.)
f. Golfing
g. Hiking trails
h. Horse trails
i. Ice skating
j. Playgrounds with equipment
k. Public picnic areas
l. Public swimming pool
m. Senior citizen center
n. Snowmobiling trails
o. Supervised recreational activities for senior adults
p. Teen center
q. Walking/running path
r. Recreation and fishing access to the River
s. Other ()

24. Beyond the basic services you expect to be provided by the Town, would you be in favor of spending funding to accomplish any of the following, and if so, to what extent?

This question explores whether residents would be in favor of spending funding on various programs. For all categories, there were more people who said “yes” and “yes as a mix of private and public funds” than those who said “no”. For those that said “yes” or “yes, mix of private and public”, there were more people who said “yes” than those that said “mix of funding”. The most support was for sidewalks, curbs, signs, and similar infrastructure, street beautification, and providing public water and sewer. (This is one question that the village residents might have highly influenced.) Funding for protection of open spaces had the most people who did not favor expending funds (41%) although 58.6% did indicate some level of support for funding.

(Please check only one box per line)
a. Protect open spaces
b. Protect working farms and farmlands
c. Develop more recreation opportunities
d. Protect historic buildings and sites
e. Protect scenic landscapes
f. Protect sensitive environmental sites
g. Provide for public water and sewers
h. Convert empty buildings into commercial space
i. Sidewalks, curbs, signs, and similar infrastructure
j. Street beautification
k. Other:

25. From the above list in Question 24, please list by number, the five that are most important to you:

The most important features to spend funding on were (in order): develop more recreation programs; sidewalks, curbs, signs, and similar infrastructure; provide public water and sewer; convert empty buildings into commercial space; street beautification; and protect scenic landscapes.

26. What 3 things do you like the most about the Town of AuSable?

See text answers. The majority of the comments revolve around the character of the town including quiet, rural, and safe, the people, the natural beauty of the area, and natural resources (including the River).

27. What 3 things do you like the least about the Town of AuSable?

See text answers. These comments were wide-ranging. Lack of property maintenance and junkyards were among the most common responses, including dilapidated buildings. People also expressed many concerns about the aesthetic character of Keeseville, lack of employment, lack of opportunities for kids, lack of local retail opportunities, road conditions, taxes, and some water issues.

28. How would you describe the type of place you desire AuSable to be in 20 years?

People described the future AuSable to be a community oriented place, affordable, attractive, clean, safe, family oriented, good jobs, more business, more youth activities, and a small town feeling.

29. Do you think the town has an identity of its own that distinguishes it from other surrounding communities?

41% said that “yes” the town has an identity that distinguishes itself from other communities, and 37% said “no”. 22% had no opinion.

30. Please indicate how important it is to balance community needs and private individual’s property rights in the future by using the following scale:

Overall, the results to this question showed very mixed feelings. There was not a clear consensus one way or the other. There were no strong indications that the majority feel strongly on one side or the other. About 1/3 seem oriented to the community needs; 1/3 to the private individual needs, and 1/3 in the middle. See charts below.

- b. There were slightly more retired people, fewer who work within the County and more who work within the Town of AuSable in the Village.
- c. Slightly more people who live in the Village feel that the quality of life has gotten worse and slightly more in the Town feel the quality of life is still the same.
- d. Village residents saw a higher level of need for senior housing than did those outside the Village. They also felt there were more problems finding affordable housing than those in outside the Village.
- e. There was slightly more concern about water quality outside the Village than among Keeseville residents.
- f. There was slightly more concern about road maintenance outside the Village.
- g. Village residents had more concern related to water treatment plants and the Ausable River. Water quality of the River was important to both types of residents, but Town outside the Village residents placed more emphasis on public access and concerns about impaired fishing.
- h. Village residents felt that offices should be allowed with no conditions whereas Town outside village residents felt that offices should be allowed with conditions.
- i. Both types of residents felt strongly that the government should play a role in economic development but Village residents felt even more strongly about that.
- j. Both had similar reactions to what could be done to encourage economic development, but Village residents felt more strongly about offering incentives, and the town was more concerned about making sure that commercial development is consistent with aesthetic characteristics and scale.
- k. Village residents were less satisfied with code enforcement, overall road maintenance, responsiveness to residents' concerns, and youth programs. They were very satisfied with emergency services. Overall, Town outside village residents were more satisfied with local government functions and services.
- l. Village residents did not feel it was as important to provide cultural activities, nor on putting new limits on new residential development. Town outside village residents did not feel it was important to provide for garbage removal, water and sewer, cultural activities, and day care, nor on putting limits on new residential development.
- m. Village residents were more interested in bike paths, picnic areas, walking paths, and recreational access to the River. Other Town residents were most interested in recreational access to River.
- n. Village residents were more willing to spend funds to provide for more recreational opportunities, public water and sewer, conversion of empty buildings into commercial space, protect historic buildings, and street beautification and curbs and sidewalks. Town residents outside the Village had smaller percentages of people in favor of spending funds, but their

priorities were slightly different: these residents said “yes” to funding for recreational opportunities, protecting working farms, protecting scenic landscapes, as well as street beautification and sidewalks, signs, and curbs.

- o. Town outside village residents felt that AuSable has more of a unique identity than Village residents.
- p. When asked about balancing community needs and individual property rights, both Town and Village residents had more people answer that in the middle indicating that there needs to be a balance, but Village residents gave rankings more oriented to the community needs as being most important whereas the Town outside village residents gave rankings more oriented to the private individual landowner rights are most important.