



UNINCORPORATED MONSEY, HILLCREST, AND WESTERN RAMAPO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

MEETING SUMMARY

Purpose:	Public Open House #2
Date and Time:	March 23, 2026, 6:00 – 8:00 PM
Location:	Town of Ramapo Town Hall Council Room, 237 Route 59, Suffern NY

The Town of Ramapo has initiated an update to its 2004 Town of Ramapo Comprehensive Plan to reflect the needs of today and to identify a vision for the unincorporated Monsey, Hillcrest, and Western Ramapo area's future. The Comprehensive Plan Update and Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) for the unincorporated Monsey, Hillcrest, and Western Ramapo areas will serve as a roadmap for future land use, housing, transportation, and other infrastructure policy and investment. The update will address emerging challenges while ensuring growth aligns with the community's vision and goals.

The Comprehensive Plan Update process is being developed by the Town of Ramapo and a consultant team led by M.J. Engineering, Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Land Surveying, P.C.

On Monday, March 23, 2026, the second public open house for the Comprehensive Plan Update was held. The event took place at the Town of Ramapo Town Hall Council room from 6:00 – 8:00 PM. Approximately 45 residents, property owners, business owners, and other stakeholders participated in the event.

The open house format allowed participants to informally walk through eight (8) activity stations to learn about the project at their own pace and provide their input and ideas. A Participant Guide was provided to attendees to guide them through the various stations.

The activity stations included:

- **Station 1** – Project Overview
- **Station 2** – Project Timeline
- **Station 3** – Public Feedback to date
- **Station 4** – Draft Vision and Goals
- **Station 5** – Emerging Concepts
- **Station 6** – Future Land Use Mapping Stations



- **Station 7** – Kids Table
- **Station 8** – Other Thoughts & Ideas

Additionally, participants had the opportunity to speak with Town staff and the Project Team and share written ideas and/or comments on comment cards.

1. Project Overview	
Discussion	
<p>This station provided an overview of comprehensive planning and the study area.</p> <p>What is a Comprehensive Plan? The Comprehensive Plan Update and Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) for the unincorporated Monsey, Hillcrest, and Western Ramapo areas will serve as a roadmap for future land use, housing, transportation, and other infrastructure policy and investment. This is an update to the 2004 Town of Ramapo Comprehensive Plan. The update will address emerging challenges while ensuring that growth aligns with the community’s vision and goals.</p> <p>The Comprehensive Plan Update process is being developed by the Town of Ramapo and a consultant team led by M.J. Engineering, Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Land Surveying, P.C.</p> <p>To learn more visit: www.Ramapo.org</p> <p>Study Area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town of Ramapo is in Rockland County, New York, and encompasses about 61 square miles. • The Town consists of twelve incorporated villages and three general unincorporated areas: Northeast Ramapo, Monsey/Hillcrest, and Western Ramapo • This Comprehensive Plan Update focuses specifically on the unincorporated Monsey, Hillcrest, and Western Ramapo areas. 	

2. Project Timeline	
Discussion	
<p>This station provided an overview of the project timeline and detailed the first phase of public engagement.</p> <p>Project Timeline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter 2024: Project Kick-Off • Winter 2025: Phase 1 Public Engagement • Winter 2025 – Winter 2026: Initiate SEQR • Winter 2026: Phase 2 Public Engagement • Spring/Summer 2026: Prepare Draft Comprehensive Plan/GEIS • FGEIS and Plan Adoption: TBD <p>Phase 1 Public Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Webpage – ongoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Comment Form 	



2. Project Timeline

Discussion

- Various Materials Posted
- Meeting-in-a-Box – ongoing
 - Available in English, Spanish, Creole, and Yiddish
- Public Open House #1
 - February 2025
 - 200 + In-person contacts
- Pop-Up Table
 - At Ramapo Safety Extravaganza – April 2025
 - 200 + participants
- Community Survey
 - February to June 2025
 - 109 online survey responses
- Stakeholder Meetings - ongoing

Steps for Completing a GEIS

1. Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) & Classify Action (Fall 2025)
2. Designate Lead Agency (Fall 2025)
3. Positive Declaration Requiring GEIS (Fall 2025)
4. Prepare Draft SEQR Scoping Document (Fall 2025)
5. Conduct Public Scoping Session (Winter 2026)
6. Adopt Final SEQR Scoping Document (Winter 2026)
7. Prepare Draft GEIS (*We are Here!*)
8. SEQR Public Hearing & Public Comment Period (TBD)
9. Prepare Final GEIS (TBD)
10. Prepare SEQR Findings Statement (TBD)

3. Public Feedback to date

Discussion

This station provided an overview of key feedback received to date.

Public Open House 1:

- Over 30 attendees, 11 stations and the community survey launch
- Identified Opportunities
 - Diversity within the Town
 - Access to green spaces and educational programs regarding the environment
- Identified Challenges
 - Traffic and overdevelopment concerns
 - Preserving community character

Online Community Survey Snapshot:

- Most survey respondents are 25 – 44 years old (about 40%)
- 67% of respondents own a primary home in the Town of Ramapo
- 60% of respondents have lived in Ramapo for 10 or more years



3. Public Feedback to date

Discussion

- Survey respondents were asked what they valued most about the Town of Ramapo. Most respondents indicated that they value access to outdoor recreation (e.g. trails, public parks, golf courses, etc.)
- Survey respondents were asked to identify challenges/ concerns facing the Town of Ramapo, now or in the future.

Conversations have been held with various stakeholder groups including developers, Town staff, residents, neighborhood groups and community organizations.

The key challenges and concerns identified were as follows:

- Demand for higher density, multifamily rental housing
- Zoning code and land use approval constraints are a challenge
- Strong interest in mixed use and Planned Unit Development (PUD) frameworks
- Transportation, traffic, circulation, access, and parking concerns
- Walkability and open space are repeatedly emphasized
- Mix of housing types and price points needed
- Neighborhood and community character
- Infrastructure, sewer and water

4. Draft Vision and Goals

Discussion

The draft Vision was displayed:

“The Monsey, Hillcrest, and Western Ramapo areas are a unique mix of rural, suburban, and emerging urban neighborhoods. Residents experience a high quality of life supported by diverse businesses, cultures, and character. Ramapo is Ready for the Future with thoughtful, well-managed growth that supports compact, walkable neighborhoods where people can live, work, and play. Parks and recreational amenities will be expanded, and natural resources protected. A focus on attainable housing ensures that families of all types and at every stage of life can find a place to call home. Safe streets, reliable infrastructure, and accessible community services tie everything together. Rooted in family, faith, and connection, Ramapo Ready means everyone can thrive.”

Attendees were prompted to share which key words of the draft Vision resonated for them and for any ideas or words that seemed to be missing.

- Keep Ramapo Green, make Ramapo Clean, regulate better landscaping
- Open space, historical preservation, density too high, habitat preservation for animals
- Fine landlords for lack of resilience, safer neighborhoods, cleaner neighborhoods, crack down on crime
- Preservation of open space
- Heavy Traffic, Taxes too high for retirees, big buildings all over the place
- Taxes too high, area overpopulated, landlords should put emphasis on their tenants to keep their area clean, too much traffic
- Ban developers from buying properties in areas that don't have multi-housing that will destroy the neighborhood
- Too many taxis, streets are filthy, heavy traffic



4. Draft Vision and Goals

Discussion

- Lost the beauty of neighborhoods, overcrowded neighborhoods
- High taxes, too many taxis, not enough open space for parklands, infrastructure for long-term buildings
- Eliminate “faith” from vision and goals. Keep secular focus
- Lower density housing needs to be adhered to
- Renovate existing structures + provide clean safe housing. Fine negligent landlords for lack of maintenance
- Lower the taxes for people who don’t benefit from any school. People will then be able to afford single-family housing in the area
- Can we at least get wider roads with sidewalks on both sides
- Traffic, infrastructure, keeping the beauty of nature in Ramapo, safety, overcrowding
- Walkers, bike riders are not considerate of drivers – walking 2-5 across streets, not moving over, bikes riding on wrong side of the street, no helmets, safety issue for all
- Zoning code + land use approval constraints are a challenge – people ignore the zoning laws that are supposedly in effect currently – how will this be addressed in the plan
- High density housing is not consistent with the ongoing goals or projections for Rockland.

Draft Goals were also presented to the public on a wide range of topics including housing, transportation, infrastructure, sustainable growth, parks and recreation, and natural resources and environmental health.

5. Emerging Concepts

Discussion

Participants were given the opportunity to provide input on emerging concepts by goal/topic areas.

Housing

Draft Goal: Expand housing options by reducing regulatory barriers and encouraging a diverse range of housing types and price points that are attainable for individuals and families of all kinds, at every stage of life.

Attendees were asked to share their thoughts and ideas relating to this goal and emerging concepts:

- ADU on some of the larger existing lots
- Too many variances are provided, please don’t reduce any more regulatory barriers
- No reduction in regulatory requirements they are not barriers but developed as good planning goals
- Eliminate secondary conversion of ADU. Eliminate current accessory + redefine property
- This will change the whole semi-rural quality of life that people are moving here for we are not a city
- Reducing reg. barriers is bad. Adjusting regulations to facilitate well defined changes = good
- Maintain low density in critical environmental areas. Provide affordable, safe options to serve to residents + protect them from unscrupulous landlords
- Please provide us more housing we are a young couple who cannot afford living in the Town we grow due to the scarcity
- I support low-density neighborhoods to preserve our natural environment, to keep taxes low
- Buffers should be mandated + implemented and defined in code. In addition to select parcels



5. Emerging Concepts

Discussion

Transportation

Draft Goal: Promote a Complete Streets network that improves safety and accessibility for all users, with a particular focus on increasing pedestrian access and connectivity while minimizing the impacts of traffic congestion to protect quality of life.

Attendees were asked to share their thoughts and ideas relating to this goal and emerging concepts:

- Bicyclists are riding on the sidewalks, feels very unsafe, also scooters
- People must be aware of the rules of the road – pedestrians, bikers, vehicle drivers –
- Need tree boulevards for major corridors to provide tree/flower + reduce jaywalkers

Infrastructure

Draft Goal: Make strategic investments in water, sewer, and stormwater systems in already developed areas, and encourage future development with existing infrastructure capacity to support long-term growth and environmental health.

Attendees were asked to share their thoughts and ideas relating to this goal and emerging concepts:

- Hillcrest: drains are always clogged, please keep them clear
- Hillcrest area too dense – garbage, potholes need fixing
- There are no barriers. We want to maintain the out of city lifestyle, lower taxes, keep our trees plant life and wildlife.
- What about homes with wells – will the water source be affected by all the changes to the environment
- Issues with potholes, piles of garbage, garbage pickup issues in every neighborhood

Sustainable Growth

Draft Goal: Promote well-managed, inclusive growth that supports long-term community resilience by encouraging development patterns that protect neighborhoods, preserve community cohesion, and align with available infrastructure capacity. Growth should enhance quality of life while minimizing impacts on essential services and supporting equitable access to housing, transportation options, and opportunity.

Attendees were asked to share their thoughts and ideas relating to this goal and emerging concepts:

- People disrespect neighborhoods + roadways by dropping litter as they are walking – will this be addressed?
- Need to figure out average cost for water, sewer, sidewalk, traffic signals, etc. Make developers pay.

Parks and Recreation

Draft Goal: Enhance and expand access to well-maintained, small-scale recreation and public spaces (i.e. playgrounds and pocket parks). Provide neighborhood based recreation and leisure opportunities that support active lifestyles for all residents of all ages and abilities and strengthen community cohesion.

Attendees were asked to share their thoughts and ideas relating to this goal and emerging concepts:

- Renovate Harry Reiss Park



5. Emerging Concepts

Discussion

- Suzanne Lake: attention to what the residents and volunteers really want there please. Can the responsible department reach out to those in the community trying to ameliorate the situation
- Ramapo Rail Trail – do parts of it faster
- Money un lieu of land is a joke. Need to increase - make amount relevant to density

Natural Resources and Environmental Health

Draft Goal: Balance development and protection of critical natural resources by encouraging land use patterns and site design that minimizes environmental impacts.

Attendees were asked to share their thoughts and ideas relating to this goal and emerging concepts:

- All environmentally sensitive areas shall be protected
- Don't uproot or tamper with natural green spaces and waterways
- All rezoning analysis should be exclude all undevelopable land – wetlands, steep slopes, road (Public +Private) easement, flood plains. This adjusts new density based on constraints

6. Future Land Use Mapping

Discussion

This station included two maps of the Town of Ramapo, an existing zoning map and a general map of the study area.

Common themes from the 'Future Land Use Mapping' activity:

- **Preservation** for specific zones including RR-80 & RR-160 which do not only protect the residents who live there, but also the natural resources that all town residents cherish.
- **Parks**, specifically pocket parks sprinkled across the Town to provide all residents with access to green and open space.
- **Smart Development** including developers sharing costs for municipal infrastructure such as roads, play areas, and sewer to limit the burden on residents.
- **Affordable Housing** through infill development would make a positive impact on the community as a whole.
- **Traffic** was a common concern among respondents at key intersections including Viola and West Maple, Route 59 and Route 306, Route 306 and Viola, and Old Nyack Turnpike.
- **Safer Roads** were noted with a focus on improvements to current infrastructure including sidewalks, wider roads, and crosswalks.

Map comments (Written as presented, in no particular order):

- Infrastructure turning lanes & crosswalks
- Pascack Ridge – litigation vs approval
- Suzanne Lake – concerns: garbage, accessible, needs volunteer help – this is what the neighborhood wants
- Better public transportation
- 500 sq ft required play area per unit on 3 and over units
- Sewer failing flow meter in the Monsey area



6. Future Land Use Mapping

Discussion

- Play areas
- Pocket Park
- Focused growth in the Monsey area, other areas should be protected
- Growth in Spring Valley
- Infill development (affordable apartments)
- Access to commercial space with residential developments such as PUDS
- Infill development
- safety
- Signage
- Community Park / pocket park
- Design standards
- Ramapo Rail Trail development expand trail to make continuous
- RR-80 – protect open space
- Viola & West Maple – Traffic, turning lanes
- RR-160 – Protect
- Contaminated materials along the western side of Route 87
- Protection Safety/Traffic
- Developers should share costs
- Higher density with required infrastructure and roads
- Traffic at the intersection of Route 59 & 306
- Garbage & vacant lots
- Parks and nature
- Traffic along Old Nyack Turnpike, where it meets Route 73
- Traffic guidance
- Neighborhood convenience stores & synagogue as they would share parking (alternate peak times)
- More shoulders for bikes
- Rezone Grove Street to R-15A to R-15C
- Add roundabout to the saddle old Nyack intersection
- Sidewalk improvements on Old Nyack
- Crosswalks
- Extend rail trail into the northeastern corridor
- Mitigation fees for developers
- Lower Taxes and Safety
- Sidewalks
- Suzanne Lake, Parks & Trails
- Increase residential density in the R-15 District in the Monsey area
- Coordination of garbage pickup at night to reduce traffic
- Rail line trail – more parcels for the rail trail
- Traffic – road widening turning lane on Old Nyack Turnpike and Rock Hill Road
- Traffic – Route 306 and Viola Road
- Traffic – W Maple Ave and Viola Road

7. Kids Table

Discussion

This was a place for kids to be creative and share their ideas.

8. Other Thoughts & Ideas

Discussion

This station included an opportunity for any additional thoughts and ideas. No comments were left at this station throughout the duration of the Open House.

9. Input Provided on Written Comment Cards

Discussion

In addition to gathering input via maps and station boards, participants had the opportunity to provide input on written comment forms. Below is a list of written comments received (in no particular order and presented as written):

- We are young couple who wants to live in the Town we grown. But there is scarcity of housing which forces us to leave. We support the Comp Plan to provide more housing and bring more young people to the Town.
- I have never received a survey which was claimed to be mailed to each property owner. The board noted over 30 attendees that is a miniscule number of responses and not indicative of the majority of residents. Faulty data
- I never Received a survey, low event attendance, more public engagement is needed, have you considered methods of contact for public.

Please find on the subsequent pages 10 through 14 images of the comments received on the Station Boards.



5

EMERGING CONCEPTS TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION

Draft Goal: Promote a Complete Streets network that improves safety and accessibility for all users, with a particular focus on increasing pedestrian access and connectivity while minimizing the impacts of traffic congestion to protect quality of life.

EMERGING CONCEPTS

Adopt and implement **Complete Streets principles in transportation planning**, design, and capital improvements to ensure that roadways safely accommodate all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, motorists, older adults, and individuals with disabilities. Incorporate universal accessibility standards and context-sensitive design to improve mobility, safety, and comfort for people of all ages and abilities, by requiring sidewalks and pedestrian connectivity.

Implement improvements identified by the Townwide Traffic Study at key intersections and within key corridors to address safety issues, operational challenges and improve traffic levels of service.

Continue targeted investments such as crosswalks, traffic calming measures, signal timing adjustments, pedestrian refuge islands, and improved sidewalk and bicycle infrastructure to strengthen connectivity and reduce conflicts between users.

COMMENTS

Add comments and other ideas here!

Populists are riding on the sidewalks. Very unsafe. Also scooters

Need to be more aware of the rules of the road - Pedestrians, bikers, vehicle drivers

People must be aware of the rules of the road - Pedestrians, bikers, vehicle drivers

5

EMERGING CONCEPTS INFRASTRUCTURE

INFRASTRUCTURE

Draft Goal: Make strategic investments in water, sewer, and stormwater systems in already developed areas, and encourage future development with existing infrastructure capacity to support long-term growth and environmental health.

EMERGING CONCEPTS

Prioritize strategic investment in water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure to support planned growth, improve system reliability, and protect environmental resources.

Promote **green infrastructure practices**, such as permeable pavement, rain gardens, and natural stormwater management systems, in both public projects and private development to enhance water quality, reduce runoff, and strengthen climate resilience.

Coordinate with water service provider to ensure system capacity, upgrades and ongoing maintenance meet the Town's existing and future needs.

COMMENTS

Add comments and other ideas here!

Millions of dollars - always clogged. Please keep them clear

There are no barriers to water to maintain the out of any damage. Lower costs. Keep no trees, plants, and waste.

Issue of water. Plus of drainage. Manage water. Issue of water. Issue of water. Issue of water.

Water - always clogged. Please keep them clear

What about homes with wells - will the water source be affected by all the changes to the environment

5

EMERGING CONCEPTS SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

Draft Goal: Promote well-managed, inclusive growth that supports long-term community resilience by encouraging development patterns that protect neighborhoods, preserve community cohesion, and align with available infrastructure capacity. Growth should enhance quality of life while minimizing impacts on essential services and supporting equitable access to housing, transportation options, and opportunity.

EMERGING CONCEPTS

Establish policies and development review criteria that promote well-managed, inclusive growth aligned with the community's long-term vision and infrastructure capacity. **Guide new development and redevelopment to locations where adequate public facilities and services, such as transportation, utilities, schools, and emergency services can efficiently support additional growth.**

Encourage centralized neighborhood nodes that are walkable, accessible and provide a range of neighborhood services.

Encourage new development and major redevelopment projects to **incorporate sustainable design and construction practices** consistent with U.S. Green Building Council standards, including the principles of the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) rating system, in order to advance energy efficiency, environmental stewardship, and long-term community sustainability.

COMMENTS

Add comments and other ideas here!

People don't expect neighborhood to be walkable. They want to drive. They want to drive to work, shopping, etc. They want to drive to school. They want to drive to the grocery store.

Need to figure out what's best for walking. Encourage walkable. Try to make walking more attractive.

5

EMERGING CONCEPTS PARKS AND RECREATION

PARKS AND RECREATION

Draft Goal: Enhance and expand access to well-maintained, small-scale recreation and public spaces (i.e. playgrounds and pocket parks). Provide neighborhood based recreation and leisure opportunities that support active lifestyles for all residents of all ages and abilities and strengthen community cohesion.

EMERGING CONCEPTS

Enhance and expand access to well-maintained, small-scale recreational and public spaces, including playgrounds, pocket parks, and neighborhood gathering areas, to ensure that residents have convenient access to outdoor amenities within their neighborhood. Prioritize the equitable distribution of these spaces for all to have opportunities for nearby recreation and informal social interaction.

Require play areas and open space requirements as part of future development and redevelopment.

Consider a centralized **indoor recreation and community center** to serve all Town residents.

COMMENTS

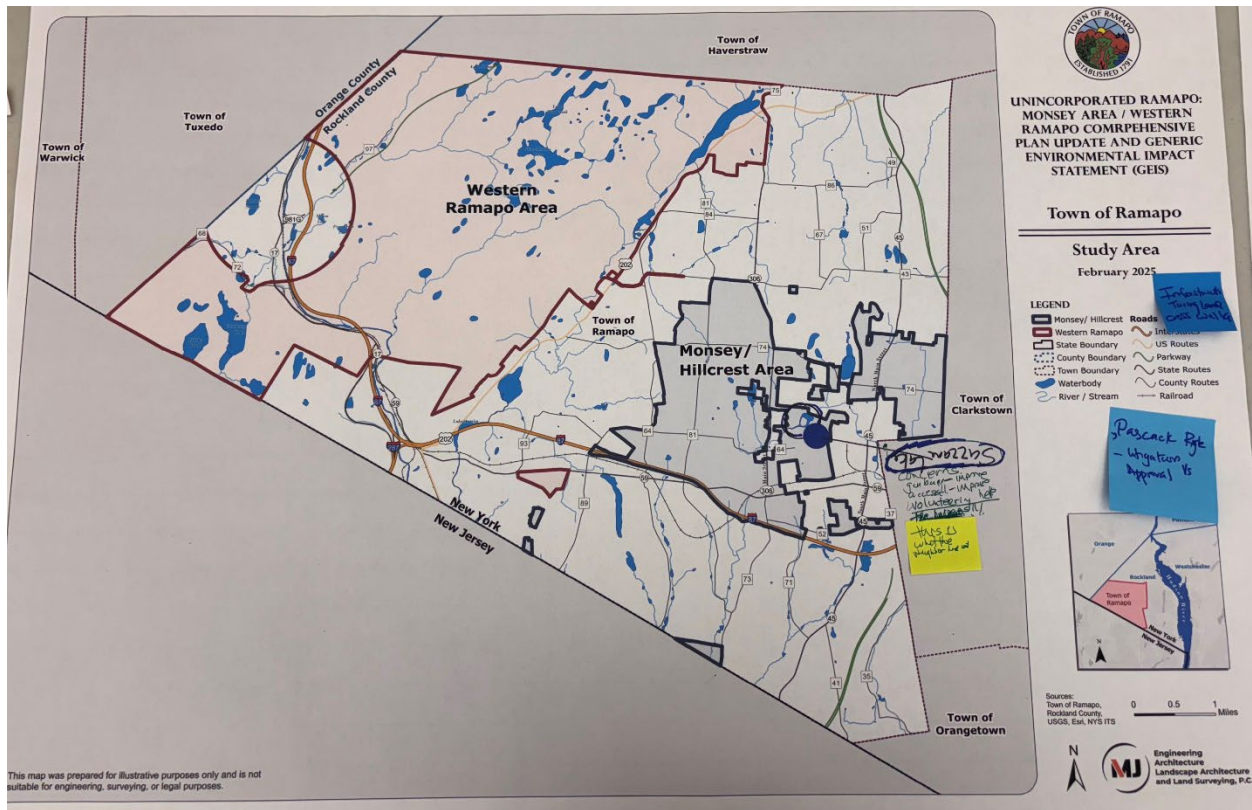
Add comments and other ideas here!

People don't expect neighborhood to be walkable. They want to drive. They want to drive to work, shopping, etc. They want to drive to school. They want to drive to the grocery store.

Need to figure out what's best for walking. Encourage walkable. Try to make walking more attractive.

People don't expect neighborhood to be walkable. They want to drive. They want to drive to work, shopping, etc. They want to drive to school. They want to drive to the grocery store.

Require play areas and open space requirements as part of future development and redevelopment.



This meeting summary conveys our understanding of the items discussed and agreements reached at this meeting. Please forward any additions, corrections and/or questions to my attention.

Submitted by:
Aneisha Samuels, AICP, MJ Engineering and Land Surveying, P.C.

cc: Consultant Team, Town, File

