

Town of Gorham Comprehensive Plan Update 2021 Analysis of Existing Conditions

Characteristics of the Natural Environment

Gorham's topography defines its watersheds, drainage ways, wetlands, floodplains, and scenic views and its soils define desirability for agriculture and other uses. Over time, each of these characteristics has contributed differently to patterns of settlement.

Topography and Scenic Resources

Much of the Town of Gorham is on a plateau at an elevation of 1000' between SR 247 on the west and CR 17/Robson Road or Bassage Road on the east. South of Conklin Road, the plateau extends further west; south of Jones Road the plateau extends to within a mile of Canandaigua Lake. Lowland areas around the Town vary from 692' near the north end of Canandaigua Lake in the Town of Canandaigua on the east to 600' in Geneva. The plateau is intersected by the course of the West River running from the hamlet of Gorham southwest to the Village of Rushville and by the lowlands of Flint Creek that flow from East Potter north toward the hamlet of Gorham and on to Seneca Castle and the Village of Phelps where it joins the Canandaigua Outlet.

Map 7 from the *2005 Town of Gorham Farmland, Open Space, and Resource Conservation Plan* outlines the plateau, prominent hilltops, and scenic views and corridors within the Town. Map A shows areas with slopes greater than 15 percent as well as the outline of the plateau and highpoints.

Areas of steep slope include much of the Canandaigua Lake frontage south of the start of CR 1 at SR 364, land within 1,000' or 1,500' of the Lake south of Jones Road, the sides of the gullies draining to Canandaigua Lake (Deep Run, Gage Gully, Fisher Gully and many unnamed drainages) and drainages to Flint Creek. These areas also have highly erodible soils. Together, these features make use of these lands for agriculture or development difficult without negatively impacting Lake water quality.

Watersheds, Streams, Floodplains and Wetlands

Map B shows major drainage ways and the watershed they drain to and the extent of floodplains and wetlands in the Town of Gorham. **Add acres of wetlands and floodplains**

Lands west of Yautzy Road/Bassage Road generally drain to Canandaigua Lake. This includes lands draining into Freshour Creek and the West River. Lands to the east of Yautzy and south of Depew Road including the hamlet of Gorham are mostly in the Flint Creek Watershed which eventually drains to Lake Ontario. Lands in the north central area of the Town centered on CR 17 north of Depew Road are in the Canandaigua Outlet watershed which also eventually drains to Lake Ontario.

Lakefront lands, Potter Swamp (670 acres in Gorham and nearly 2,700 acres overall), lands along the West River, and many areas along Flint Creek north of Lake to Lake Road are floodplains regulated by the Town in accordance with the standards of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The north end of Potter Swamp, areas along Flint Creek, and additional wetlands north of Depew Road are

regulated by NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC). Development activities are prohibited within 100' of NYSDEC regulated wetland areas. Other wetlands identified by the National Wetland Inventory are subject to field inspections/delineation and if applicable regulated by US Army Corps of Engineers.

Woodlands, Especially Locally Rare and Statewide Rare and Vulnerable Ecological Communities

Appendix B2 of the *2005 Farmland, Open Space, and Resource Conservation Plan* includes information on land use cover categories. This report identified a 3 acre locally rare and moderately vulnerable calcareous cliff community overlooking Canandaigua Lake in the southwest portion of the Town and a locally rare Appalachian oak-hickory forest immediately north of the calcareous cliff community.

Map 5 of the *2005 Farmland, Open Space, and Resource Conservation Plan* shows woodland communities in the Town of Gorham. There are 353 acres of Floodplain Forest, including areas along Flint Creek north and south of the hamlet of Gorham and along the West River east of the Village of Rushville. There are 2,203 acres of Silver Maple-Ash Swamp, including large areas around Potter Swamp and north and south of CR 18 between SR 247 and Yautzy Road. Both these ecological communities are considered rare or vulnerable in NYS with NYS Natural Heritage program ranks of S2 S3. Woodlands are also mapped along many of the gullies that drain to Canandaigua Lake.

Prime Farmlands, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Land in Ontario County Agricultural District

The 2018 Ontario County Agricultural Enhancement Plan (AEP) identified 33,873 acres of land in the Town of Gorham and 27,812 acres (82%) with important agricultural soils. This includes 15,223 acres of prime farmland, 9,582 acres characterized as prime if drained, and 3,007 acres of farmland of statewide importance.

In 2020, 79 percent (26,707 acres, 978 parcels) of land in the Town of Gorham is in consolidated Ontario County Agricultural District #1. An estimated 66 percent (22,332 acres, 325 parcels) of the land in the Ontario County Agricultural District # 1 in Gorham were categorized as land in active agricultural operation based on acres of land receiving an agricultural assessment. The agricultural assessment bases taxes on the agricultural land value not the value of the land for development.

Land in agricultural use has increased slightly from 21, 815 acres in 304 parcels in agricultural use in 2016 as reported in the 2018 AEP. While farm size is increasing overall in Ontario County, in Gorham the 40 to 50 Mennonite farmers maintain small 50-100 acre farms. These farms provide a stabilizing influence on potential conversions to non-farm uses. There are also 3 large farmers who reside in Gorham and several others with land in Gorham who live elsewhere. The 2018 AEP also indicated a relatively low 23 percent of active farmland in Gorham as leased land.

Map ____ shows the geographic extent of lands in Ontario County Agricultural District #1. Areas not in the agricultural district include land along the lakefront and east of SR 364/CR 11 extending to SR 247 along CR 18 and to Arnold/Conklin Roads along CR 1, along the south side of Turner Road, the Marcus

Whitman MS/HS campus, the hamlet of Gorham, the Village of Rushville, and lands to the east of the village along Clark Road.

Map C shows lands with prime soils for farming (most of the town), areas of prime farmland if drained (NW quadrant of the town), and farmland of statewide importance (typically prime soils with slopes of ___ to ___ percent. The map does not indicate the unique farming value of the mucklands of Potter Swamp between East and West Swamp Road.

In Ontario County as a whole, 76 percent of land is prime agricultural land or farmland of statewide importance. Given the abundance of valuable agricultural soils in our area, it is easy to forget such farmland in Ontario County and New York State represents a significant percent of high quality soils worldwide.

Agricultural service businesses and support organizations, such as the Ontario Produce Auction located on Yautzy approximately ½ mile north of SR 245, are also important to maintaining the viability of agriculture in Gorham and across the County.

Bedrock and Aquifers

Map D shows the type of underlying bedrock. The dominant type of bedrock underlying the Town is West River Shale. Map D also shows the location of an Unconfined, High Yield Aquifer under and north of the hamlet of Gorham.

Characteristics of the Built Environment

Human Settlement and Historic Resources

Early settlement activity both of the indigenous Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) people and early Europeans occurred on bottom lands near water resources and later at crossroads. The Seneca tribe is the largest and western most tribe in the Five Nation (later Six Nation) Confederacy that was formed around 1400 CE, though archaeological evidences indicates Haudenosaunee people have occupied Seneca lands since about 1000 CE. (Sources: Ontario County Soil Survey 1958, Town of Seneca Comprehensive Plan 2013, and Wikipedia accessed 2021)

The Seneca allied with the British during the Revolutionary War and in 1779 General George Washington sent General John Sullivan and General James Clinton and an army of several thousand men to immobilize the Seneca by destroying all villages, crops, and food stores. Shortly thereafter in 1788, Oliver Phelps and Nathaniel Gorham sought land rights from the state of Massachusetts and the Confederacy to lands west of Seneca Lake from Lake Ontario to the Pennsylvania border. The 1794 Treaty of Canandaigua formalized land rights between the United States and the Six Nations Confederacy. The Phelps-Gorham syndicate defaulted on land purchase payments to the State of Massachusetts and the Confederacy in 1791 and the land changed hands a number of times before being owned by Sir William Pulteney until his death in 1805. Lands now part of the Town of Gorham were variously called Easton, then Lincoln, and finally European immigrants settled on the name Gorham in 1807.

Map E identifies a few buildings dating from Revolutionary War times and several dozen each from the 1st and 2nd half of the 19th century. The crossroads hamlets of Reed Corners (Depew Road/SR 247), Babbit Corners (Depew Road/Yautzy Road, Mead Corners (Depew Road/Kearney Road), Pickett Corners (CR 18 at CR 17), Wilson Corners (SR 247/Lake to Lake Road), Baldwin Corners SR 247/SR 245, the hamlet of Gorham, and the Village of Rushville were settled in the late 18th and early 19th century. Reed Corners was also the site of a World's Fair from 1853 to 1927.

Cottage City located on both sides of Hall Creek was developed just before 1900. Crystal Beach (SR 364 between CR 1 and CR 11) was developed on the low bluff just north of Cottage City in the 1920s. Both were developed as seasonal lakeside communities.

Map 8 from the *2005 Farmland, Open Space, and Resource Conservation Plan* identifies the location of 44 structures built from 1827 to 1900, mostly homes but also a tavern, church, the District 10 school house, and the current Gorham Elementary School built in 1931. The map and accompanying table are based on the *Landmark Society of Western NY Town of Gorham Historic Resource Survey*. The Town Historian has also inventoried historic barns. Such barns are concentrated along SR 247 and Depew Roads and in the hamlet of Gorham and the Village of Rushville. Barn locations are mapped on an application on the Ontario County On-Line Resources (OnCor) of the Ontario County website. <https://www.co.ontario.ny.us/714/OnCor>

A rail line from Geneva to Naples via Gorham, Rushville, and Middlesex was started in 1872 but not completed until 1892. The line became part of the Lehigh Valley Railroad in 1893. In its heyday, the feeder line ran twice daily passenger and once daily freight trains and had 2 stops in Gorham the main station on Dewey Avenue in the hamlet of Gorham and a stop on SR 245 near Bassage Road. The line served Naples area vineyards and other area agricultural products. When passenger demand waned, a passenger car was carried on the freight train until passenger service ended in 1930. Freight service was reduce and then abandoned in 1975, though agricultural processing facilities, Comstock Foods in Rushville and Aunt Nellie's Kitchen in the hamlet of Gorham , continued to operate until the mid-1990s.

Modern Transportation System

The transportation system in the Town of Gorham includes roads under state, county, and local jurisdiction and some sidewalks and trail segments. The SR 364/CR 11 Active Transportation Corridor Plan highlights the need for more consistent pedestrian and bicycle accommodations in this corridor. <http://www.co.ontario.ny.us/DocumentCenter/View/25284/2---SR-364-CR-11-ATP-Final-Report>

Pedestrian infrastructure in the hamlet of Gorham includes sidewalks on both sides of South Street nearly to the Flint Creek crossing and both sides of Main Street from South Street east to Maple Street. On the west side of the hamlet, there are sidewalks only on the north side of Main Street from the Flint Creek bridge to East Swamp Road /Kearney Roads and then on both sides west nearly to CR 18. There are existing crosswalks at Main Street and Kearney Road and in the hamlet at the 5-way intersection of SR 245, South Street/Dewey Avenue, and Main Street. Moving the crosswalk west from this 5-way intersection may provide a safer crossing point.

The RTS Ontario public transit system does not include regular service within the Town of Gorham. Locations within ¼ mile of RTS Ontario Route 254 along SR 5/US 20 are typically eligible for first come first serve pick up/drop off with a 24 hour advance registration. Service to all other areas in the Town would require 48 hour advance registration, also on a first come first served basis, through dial-a-ride. As of August 2020 when these route services resumed following the Covid shutdown, RTS Ontario Route 254 is not operating.

NYS Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) assigns a functional classification to state and county roads based on the distance and volume of traffic, density of direct access points, and importance in the larger transportation system. Arterial roads typically carry primarily through traffic over longer distances and are intended to provide managed access to abutting land uses. Collector roads often provide access to individual properties and also carry traffic from local roads to arterial roads. The list of roads in Gorham by functional classification also lists NYS 2019 estimated annual average daily traffic (AADT) <https://gisportalny.dot.ny.gov/portalny/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=28537cbc8b5941e19cf8e959b16797b4> and AADTs from Ontario County Department of Public Works.

Managing access connections on arterial, collector, and local roads is important to maintaining the overall safety and capacity of the road system while also reducing the number of conflict points with bicyclist and pedestrians. In addition to the State and County roads and their functional classification listed below, SR 5/US 20 to the north in the Town of Hopewell is categorized as a major collector route.

State highways in the Town of Gorham include:

- SR 364 a major collector route from Canandaigua south to SR 245 in Middlesex, Yates County then a minor arterial east to Penn Yan also in Yates County, (AADT=2,200-6,700)
- SR 247 a minor collector route south from SR 5/US 20 to SR 245 and then a minor arterial between the Village of Rushville and SR 364 in the Town of Potter, Yates County, (AADT=2,400). SR 245 and SR 247 overlap between the Yates County line and Baldwin Road
- SR 245 is a minor arterial connecting Naples, Middlesex, Potter, the Village of Rushville, the hamlets of Gorham and Stanley, and Geneva (AADT=1,100)

Roads under Ontario County jurisdiction include:

- CR 1- a major collector road from SR 364 north of Crystal Beach to Rushville (AADT=900 NYS, 1,900-2,500 OC)
- CR 11- a major and minor collector route from SR 364 south of Crystal Beach along the lakefront (AADT= 1,100 NYS,)
- CR 18- a minor collector from SR 364 in the Town of Canandaigua to SR 245 just west of the hamlet of Gorham (AADT= 2,500 – 3,100 NYS, 3,000 to 4,500 OC)
- CR 17- a minor collector from SR 5/US 20 in the Town of Hopewell to CR 18 north of Lake to Lake Road (AADT 500-600 OC). The roadway continues as a local road, Robson Road, south of CR 18.
- CR 29- a minor collector from the hamlet of Gorham south connecting to Yates County Route 2 and then SR 14A (AADT northbound 1,300 NYS, 1,700-3,000 OC)

- CR 24- a minor collector from CR 29 south of the hamlet of Gorham connecting to Yates County Route 27 to Voak (AADT 307 NYS, 1,200 OC)

Map F shows state, county, and local roadways.

Water, Sewer, Drainage, and Electric System Facilities

MRB, the Town's engineering consultant, provided updated maps showing the extent of public water and sewer service in the Town of Gorham. The maps indicate no water or sewer service extensions have been made since the maps in the 2009 Comprehensive Plan were prepared. The water pressure zone map indicates there are only small areas (Angela Way, a few parcels on Lake to Lake Road between served areas, on Yautzy Road south of Lake to Lake Road, and south of developed portions of the hamlet of Gorham) that could be easily added to the public water service area.

Maps G and H show the extent of public water and sewer service areas. MRB is currently working on a water master plan to evaluate feasibility of extending public water services to additional areas. The Gorham water district also treats and sells water to some water users in the Town of Hopewell. The Town of Gorham water system has 1,541 billable customers. The District provides water to the Ontario Produce Market on Yautzy south of Lake to Lake Road, however, the service line is not a district facility.

The Gorham Water Plant is located at 4285 SR 364, on the east side north of CR 1 opposite Deep Run Park.

The Village of Rushville and the Marcus Whitman secondary school campus are serviced by the Village of Rushville water system. The system has an intake at 5232 CR 11 at Shale Beach Drive with a 1.5 MGD permitted withdrawal capacity and a treatment plant on Townline Road west of the Village. There is a 250 MG water storage tank on the Marcus Whitman campus and another 200 MG water storage tank in the Village of Rushville.

The Gorham Wastewater Treatment System developed in the 1980s is based on a combination of on-site and off-site treatment. The municipally owned and maintained individual septic tanks at homes and businesses provide preliminary and primary treatment. Only the septic tank effluent is collected via small diameter sewers and transmitted to the Gorham Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). The WWTP is located at 4683 and 4687 Kearney Road, less than a 1 mile north of the center of the hamlet of Gorham. The majority of system users rely on gravity collection with 5 small pump stations serving those not collected by gravity. All sewers feed to a lift station at Kearney Road.

The Gorham WWTP has a permitted maximum daily flow of .061 MGD and average daily flow of .032 MGD. The Gorham WWTP services approximately 186 homes, 70 commercial uses, and 38 equivalent units associated with the school (17 units), BOCES (3 units) and other institutional uses. In all it is estimated 600 people in the hamlet are connected to the sewer system.

The Gorham WWTP uses orbital oxidation (aeration), a secondary clarifier, and a post aeration unit. The system outfall is Flint Creek, a Class A waterbody. Remaining sludge is hauled to the City of Canandaigua

WWTP for ultimate disposal at the Ontario County landfill. The WWTP is located outside the 500 year floodzone however, portions of the effluent line pass through the 100 year floodplain.

By 2024, NYSDEC will require the Gorham WWTP to provide effluent disinfection. Gorham is on-track to meet the deadline and has completed and submitted a preliminary design report for submission to NYSDEC. The report recommends installation of a UV disinfection system with a capital cost of \$ 7 million. The proposed system modifications would increase treatment capacity to serve the projected 2040 hamlet population of 950.

Additional Town residents along the shore of Canandaigua Lake are serviced by the Canandaigua Lake County Sewer Districts with a WWTP on the west side of Canandaigua Lake. The sewers around Canandaigua Lake were installed in the 1980s.

Town of Gorham residents in the Village of Rushville are serviced by the Rushville WWTP at 6 Warehouse Street in the Village of Rushville. The Village WWTP also treats only septic tank effluent. The Village WWTP was recently expanded to 0.1 MGC with improved treatment systems. Since 2008, the Marcus Whitman secondary school campus has been an out of district users connected to the Village WWTP.

There is a Flint Creek Watershed Improvement District serving lands in Gorham and the Yates County Town of Potter. In addition to managing water flow to avoid flooding, the district purpose includes recreation and broadening the tax base. The Drainage District and Town of Gorham have previously explored development of a Flint Creek trail but the trail was not pursued due to swampy conditions and dense vegetation.

There are 2 electric substations in the Town of Gorham, one at 2502 Main Street near the Gorham/Seneca Town Line and one in the Village of Rushville southeast of Warren Street at Castle Street/Clark Street. Available information on electrical system capacity doesn't provide clear indication of alternative energy interconnection potential at these substations.

Community Services

Map I shows the location of key community services.

Parks and Trails

Ontario County owns and operates two lakefront parks located in the Town of Gorham. The northernmost park is Ontario Beach Park opposite Angela Way. This park is .6 acre park with 450' feet of shoreline and features picnic sites, a restroom, and parking for 18 vehicles. There is also a Canandaigua Lake County Sewer District pump station at the north end of the property. There is a retaining wall along the shoreline. Swimming is prohibited.

Deep Run Park is a 1 acre park with approximately 353 feet of shoreline and features a popular 200' swimming beach, picnic sites, a restroom/changing area, and parking for 36 vehicles. The park borders

Deep Run Creek. Over time, outwash from the creek has filled in half of the swimming area and the remaining area is very shallow.

The 2020 Master Plan for Ontario County's Canandaigua Lake Shore Parks recommends picnic shelters, renovation of restroom facilities, introduction of green infrastructure practices, interpretive signage and making all features accessible at both parks. The Master Plan also recommends construction of a fully accessible non-motorized boat launch (installed May 2021), a new parking and access layout at Ontario County Beach Park, and restoration of the swimming area at Deep Run Park. The following links to the Executive Summary and 5.0 Recommendations may be of interest. Other Plan sections are posted on the Ontario County website. <http://www.co.ontario.ny.us/DocumentCenter/View/29368/Section-1-Executive-Summary-and-Table-of-Content>
<http://www.co.ontario.ny.us/DocumentCenter/View/29366/Sections-5-6-Recommendations--Implementation-and-Tables--Figures>

The Town of Gorham owns a 9 acre parcel just east of SR 364 and south of CR 1 approximately 500' from Deep Run Park called Easton Park. In 2011 a Park Master Plan was completed to identify park improvements that would complement and support activities at Deep Run Park. Easton Park has a storage building for the Town Water Department and a recently completed four season lodge. The Town also owns Heritage Park, a 54 acre park on Lake to Lake Road. The park has a pavilion, restrooms, a small playground, recreational fields, and picnic facilities for public use.

The Crystal Beach Betterment Association owns 7 parcels including Maiden Lane Waterfront Park, Maiden Lane Picnic Area, Catallo Park Pavilion and Playground, Blossom Road Park, Middle Beach Swim Area, Cottage City ROW and boat launch, and Valeski Park. Access to these parks and facilities is open to Crystal Beach residents and guests only. There is also a private lake access at Lincoln Wood at Deep Run Cove.

An existing Ontario Pathways Trail passes through the northeast corner of the Town of Gorham. The trail extends from Ontario Street/CR 4 in Canandaigua, crosses CR 46 near CR 10 and continues east approximately ½ mile north of NYS 5/US 20 to a parking area at Kearney/Depot Roads. The trail then continues southeast through the northeast corner of the Town of Gorham entering the Town of Seneca at Goose Road north of Charlton Road and continues to the hamlet of Stanley.

The Town of Gorham and the Village of Rushville jointly own a portion of the former Lehigh Valley Railroad ROW extending from the village east to Blodgett Road and have developed the ROW as a trail. The remainder of the former rail corridor is in private ownership.

The Flint Creek drainage ROW south of the hamlet of Gorham is protected from development by easements. The easements allow limited use of the right-of-way for recreation. Trail development has not been pursued due to swampy conditions and dense vegetation.

Review of digital data did not identify other utility corridors that could be developed as trails.

NYS owns and Finger Lake Land Trust manages the Bare Hill Unique Area encompassing 95 acres in the Town of Gorham and a separate 203 acres in the Town of Middlesex. The land includes frontage on the east side of CR 11 and upland area. The primary access to the Gorham property is off Epps Road south of Townline Road in Middlesex.

Other Municipal Facilities

The Town Hall and Court are located in a 1,317 square foot building with 1,317 SF finished basement at 4736-4738 South Street in the hamlet of Gorham. The Town highway barns and transfer station are located at the corner of Lake to Lake Road and Yautzy Road adjacent to Heritage Park. There are plans to add another storage building at the Highway Department.

Gorham Free Library and Gorham Historical Society

The Towns of Gorham and Seneca jointly fund the Gorham Free Library located at 2664 Main Street in the hamlet of Gorham. The library is in one of the oldest building in the hamlet, the former Presbyterian Church built in 1862. The building also houses the Gorham Historical Society. The 3,600 sq. ft. facility has Wi-Fi, a meeting room with a maximum capacity of 25, and a children's room in the basement.

The library has architectural plans for an 864 sq.ft. addition at the back of the building for an expanded children's room. The expansion project is currently on hold.

Emergency Services

The Ontario County Sheriff provides road patrol in the Town of Gorham.

As shown on Map I, the Town of Gorham is served by 3 volunteer fire departments with fire halls in Crystal Beach at 4468 SR 364; in the Yates County portion of the Village of Rushville, and in the hamlet of Gorham at 4676 Kearney Road. The Gorham Fire Department also owns two parcels south of the fire hall.

The Canandaigua EMS provides service in the Crystal Beach Fire Response Area. The Middlesex EMS provides service in the Rushville Fire District/Response Area and the Middlesex Fire District, and the Stanley/Hall/Gorham EMS provides emergency medical services within the Gorham, Stanley and Hall Fire Districts in the towns of Gorham and Seneca.

Education

Nearly the entire Town of Gorham, as well as portions of the Town of Seneca and the Yates County towns of Middlesex and Potter, is in the Marcus Whitman School District (MWSD). The District has elementary schools in the hamlet of Gorham and in Middlesex just west of the Village of Rushville. The district Middle School and High School are located on a 144 acre campus west of SR 247 at Baldwin Road. A portion of this facility is leased to BOCES to house the Finger Lakes Secondary School. There is a small portion of the Town of Gorham off Yautzy near the Hopewell town line in the Canandaigua School District.

Map I shows school district boundaries and facility locations.

Overall enrollment in the MWSD declined 18 percent from 1,400 students in fall 2010 to 1,148 students in fall 2020. The enrollment decline was steepest at the High School which declined 28 percent while intermediate (grades 3-5) and middle school (grades 6-8) declined 11 and 12 percent. MWSD is currently completing a capital project to add a 2nd story to a portion of the High School to house an indoor track and fitness center

The school, fields, and transportation center occupy approximately 80 acres of the Baldwin Road campus and the site’s woods are used for classroom activities. The land around the water tower and the waterline connecting the tower to the campus are leased to a local farmer.

There are also 3 Mennonite schools located on Depew Road between Mumby and Yautzy, at 4550 Yautzy Road south of Highway Barns, and south of 3371 Walters Road between Crowe and Bassage Road.

Health Services

Primary health care services are offered in Yates County at the Rushville Health Center located off SR 247, which also encompasses a dental clinic, and at Valley View Family Practice located just west of Rushville on SR 245. Valley View has a satellite office on SR 245 on the east side of the hamlet of Gorham.

Emergency health services and a wide range of specialist and diagnostic medical services are available at F.F. Thompson Hospital on the west side of the City of Canandaigua and doctors’ offices located nearby and at Geneva General Hospital and Geneva area medical office in the City and Town of Geneva. F.F. Thompson is affiliated with the University of Rochester Medical Center and Geneva General Hospital is affiliated with Finger Lakes Health.

Existing Land Use

Map J shows existing land use in the Town of Gorham excluding the Village of Rushville based on 2019 Real Property Tax assessment codes. The Real Property Tax commercial use category includes apartments and mobile home parks.

As would be expected based on the extent of agricultural soils and operations, most of the land in the Town is classified as agriculture. Map J also shows areas of undeveloped land outside the agricultural district, particularly along the west side of SR 364/CR 11.

Land Use	Acres in 1997	Percent of Land in Town 1997	Acres 2019	Percent of Land in Town 2019
Single Family on lot < 4 acres	1,018	3.4%	5,952	19.7%
Single Family on lot > 4 acres	4,048	13.4%		

Multi-Family Residential	146	0.5%	173	0.6%
Commercial	98	0.3%		
Industrial	29	0.1%	13	0.04%
Recreation/Open Space ¹	162	0.5%	311	1.0%
Community Services	239	0.8%	234	0.8%
Public Services	12	0.04%	38	0.1%
Vacant Land	2,881	9.5%	2,742	9.1%
Agricultural	15,310	50.5%		
Agricultural vacant land	6,348	21.0%	20,754	68.7%
Total	30,291	100	30,217	100

¹2019 Recreation and Open Space includes 95 acre Bare Hill property

Source: Ontario County Real Property 1997 & 2019.

Commercial uses include a store, restaurant, laundro-mat, and several service uses in the hamlet of Gorham, a convenience store and pizzeria in the hamlet of Crystal Beach, and a gas station/convenience store in the Gorham portion of the Village of Rushville. Recreation uses include LeTourneau Christian Center, Pelican Point Marina, Camp in the Wood Campground, and Lincoln Hill Farms music and wedding venue. Several industrial uses occupy the former food processing buildings in the hamlet of Gorham

See Map I for locations of community services. See Map E for the year the primary structure was built. Map 8 from the *2005 Farmland, Open space, and Resource Conservation Plan* identifies the location of historic resources based on a *Landmark Society of Western NY Historic Resource Survey*.

Development Trends

During the first decade of the 20th century, the Town of Gorham approved several larger lake view residential subdivisions along the eastside of SR 364 including Deep Run and Angela Way. This spurt of development motivated many of the land use planning and regulatory initiatives described in the summary of the *2005 Farmland, Open Space, and Resource Conservation Plan* and the *2009 Comprehensive Plan* in the next section.

From 2010 to 2020, the Town of Gorham authorized an average of 11 building permits for new residential units each year. The number of units authorized ranged from a high of 18 in 2010 to a low of 7 in 2015 and 2019. From 2010 to 2020 there were also 61 demolition permits issued. Many though not all demolition permits were issued for demolition and replacement of homes on lakefront lots. There were 10 commercial or industrial building permits issued, primarily for modifications to existing buildings.

Summary of Previous Planning Studies

1997 Comprehensive Plan and Addenda

The 1997 Plan process involved committees focused on Mapping & Infrastructure, Housing, Neighborhoods, Lakefront, Government, Tourism, Recreation, Business, Environmental, Historic Resources, and Agriculture.

The 1997 Plan laid the ground work for existing development review procedures and regulations to protect environmental features and farming activities, manage access connections to preserve road safety and capacity, and enact a 50 unit per year residential building permit cap. Since this Plan, the Town of Gorham has expanded parkland, though not yet lake access or hiking or biking infrastructure. The Town has also enacted some but not all recommended regulations to protect streams, gullies, woodlots and other natural features.

Gorham has permanently preserved ___ acres of farmland, woodlots, and improved pastureland through federal and state purchase of development rights program. The Town also enacted a recreation fee applicable to new and re-built residential units that can be used for open space preservation for recreation, agriculture, related scenic objectives.

2005 Farmland, Open Space and Resource Conservation Plan

Other portions of this report have summarized agricultural land, environmental features, and scenic and historic resources documented in this Plan. This Plan also includes a property owner survey and provided a methodology to prioritize resources for purchase of development rights or other conservation approaches. The report did not apply the rating factors to properties to create a map of priority preservation areas.

The 2005 Plan also included a study of the cost of public utilities and other community services. The comparison of costs for residential, commercial, agricultural, and industrial uses revealed that it costs more to provide services to residential properties than such properties contribute in revenue while other use types contribute excess revenue.

The Town of Gorham has completed a number of the recommendations of this Plan including:

- Establishing a Conservation Board
- Establishing a fund for land purchases and recreational improvements and collaborating with Finger Lakes Land Trust on Land Preservation - **_____acres preserved and recreation facilities developed**
- Adopting Conservation Subdivision regulations to encourage preservation of natural and scenic qualities of open land by shifting the density of development within a parcel or Incentive Zoning to encourage permanent preservation of high quality farmland; environmental, cultural, or historic resources; other open space; and /or public parks and recreation facilities on the same or different parcel.
- Encourage and assist land owners to take part in conservation practices - the *2009 Comprehensive Plan* indicated 90 percent of farmers participate in the Agricultural Environmental Management Program.

- The Town has also enacted some but not all recommended regulations to protect streams, gullies, woodlots and other natural features.
- During the last decade there have not been proposals for large subdivisions and therefore few opportunities to preserve farmland, natural, scenic, or historic resources in conjunction with such development as envisioned in this Plan.

2009 Comprehensive Plan

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan identified recommendations in the following goal area:

1. Community identify and character – 3 recommendations
2. Residential living- 10 recommendations
3. Community collaboration- 8 recommendations
4. Lake issues- 16 recommendations
5. Economic development- 7 recommendations
6. Parks and Recreation – 7 recommendations
7. Natural resources and Open space – 10 recommendations

Many of the recommendations include sub recommendation and many recommendations call for continued adherence to existing and recommended regulatory standards for preservation of natural features; minimizing character impacts of home occupations/businesses and mobile homes; appropriately locating higher density development; and adhering to review, approval and construction procedures to minimize impacts of lakefront, lake view, and hamlet development activities.

Notable land use policy recommendations include:

- Recommending no extension of public utilities south along CR 11 and no extension of water lines in Ontario County agricultural district.

Implemented Plan recommendations include:

- Establishing Agricultural Advisory Board
- *2015 Design Guidelines* that identify desired design elements for development in Hamlet Residential, Hamlet Commercial, and Lakefront Residential districts and development in the Farmland Preferred district and along ridgelines.
- *2019 Master Plan for Ontario County's Canandaigua Lake Shore Parks* and recent installation of a long awaited accessible hand powered boat launch at Ontario Beach Park.
- *2020 SR 364 and CR 11 Active Transportation Corridor Plan* to identify specific roadway changes to better accommodate bicycle and pedestrian users in this corridor.
- Quarterly Town newsletter and digital communication to keep residents informed of Town happenings.
- Posting Historic Barns inventory on Ontario County website
- Regional stormwater management facilities such as at Southeast corner of CR 1 and Lake to Lake Road
- Hamlet facade and sidewalk improvements, though more work remains
- Easton Park acquisition, develop Master Plan, and undertake initial development of park lodge

- Established sensible salting program and erected related signage on Middle Road
- **Removal of unused underground fuel storage tanks ??**

Other recommendations related to affordable and senior housing and preservation of open space have not progressed give the nature of development activity in Gorham in the last decade.

There are also some recommendations from the *2009 Comprehensive Plan* that were not addressed or require on-going attention including:

- Acquisition of lakeside property along CR 11 for expanding public lake access
- Continued improvements to streetscape and building facades in hamlets of Gorham and Crystal Beach
- Heritage Park Improvements
- Graphically identifying priority properties for permanent protection based on scenic, historical, ecological, or agricultural value including gully ecosystems potentially made more vulnerable by the woolly adelgid infestation
- Updates to Dock & Mooring law
- Digitizing locations and posting the *Landmark Society of Western NY Town of Gorham Historic Resources Survey* and supporting property owners to list historic buildings on the State and National Register of Historic Places.
- Revision of subdivision and site plan review regulations to address preservation of scenic views and corridors, streams, and gullies
- Expand cable service area
- Expand use of Bare Hill NYS Unique Area and consider adding trail
- Increase open space set aside from 30 to 50 % for new development in limited development overlay

Summary of Zoning, Access Management, and Design Guidelines

Land in the Town of Gorham is divided into the following 9 mapped zoning districts. Map K shows the 9 mapped zoning districts and 2 mapped overlay districts. The town also has several unmapped overlay districts.

Base Zoning Districts

1. Agriculture/Farmland Preferred (A/FP)– a district covering most of the Town that identifies farming and preservation of the Town’s rural character as the priority use; all other allowed uses are subject to site design guidelines to minimize their impact on the viability of agricultural uses. Residential lot sizes of 15,000 SF to 2 acres are allowed depending on availability of sewers.
2. General Business (GB) – provides locations for community scale business development that complements the Town’s rural character. Current uses zoned GB include Pelican Point Marina, People’s Line storage on CR 1 just south of Hall Road, and a 6.7 acre residential property with lake frontage on SR 364 between CR 1 and Driftwood Lane.
3. Hamlet Commercial (HC) – mapped in the hamlets of Gorham and Crystal Beach to accommodate neighborhood commercial uses on small lots in close proximity to dense residential development.

4. Hamlet Residential (HR) - mapped in the hamlet of Gorham and Crystal Beach to include a mix of residences on small lots and undeveloped land intended for additional neighborhood scale, compact walkable residential development with structural and site elements to promote interaction such as porches and sidewalks. Minimum residential lot size is 10,000 SF.
5. Industrial (I) – mapped on lands in the hamlet of Gorham historically used for industrial food processing to accommodate manufacturing, warehousing, and commercial uses with outdoor storage.
6. Planned Development District (PDD) – a district currently mapped north and south of CR 18 east of SR 247. The PDD is intended to accommodate a mix of residential, commercial, light industrial and/or recreational uses. The intent of this district is to provide flexibility for mixed use development that benefits the Town, not to relax the standards applied to residential, commercial or light industrial development in other districts. The PDD requires 25 percent of residential uses to be available to low and moderate income households as workforce or starter/retirement housing.
7. Planned Residential Development (PRD) – a district intended to accommodate multi-family dwellings and compact residential developments, including manufactured home parks in appropriate locations within the Town. This district is currently mapped on a single 4.5 acre parcel with a 19th building housing multiple residential units.
8. Rural Residential (RR) – the intent of this district is to provide a transitional area for low-density residential development between agricultural lands and dense lakefront and hamlet development. Such development is expected to minimize impact on agricultural operations, be compatible with the rural character of the Town, and protect natural resources. This district is mapped along SR 247 at Reed Corners, along Middle Road south of Kipp/Powell Roads, south of Crystal Beach, at the southwest quadrant of SR 247/Lake to Lake Road (Wilson Corners), along Lake to Lake Road from CR 17 to Kearney Road, and south of Jones Road. Allowable residential lot size is 1-2 acres with sewers and 2 to 5 acres on septic depending on percolation rates.
9. Single Family Residential (R-1) – mapped along SR 364 and CR 11 to guide development of lots along these lakefront roads and promote the preservation of the character of these residential neighborhoods while preserving lake water quality. Allowable residential lot sizes are 15,000 SF to 1 acre with sewers and 2.5 to 5 acres on septic depending on percolation rates.

Overlay Districts

1. Floodplain Overlay (FO) – mapped along sections of Flint Creek and Potter Swamp that are in the 100 year floodplain.
2. Forestry Overlay District – Map K shows a Forestry Overlay District for all lands west of SR 364 south of CR 11 intersection. The zoning code posted on the Town website does not appear to include this overlay district.
3. Telecommunications Overlay (TOD) – zoning regulations for this floating district identify areas suitable for development of telecommunications facilities where they will have minimal visual or environmental impact.
4. Lake Front Overlay (LFO) – as outlined in the zoning regulations, in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan and Design Guidelines this overlay district is intended to ensure that

development/redevelopment of lakefront and lake view properties does not negatively impact the Lake water quality, character of the lakefront, neighboring properties, or public safety.

5. Wind Farm District – zoning regulations for this floating district indicate the Town Board can approve rezoning to Wind Farm District any property or a group of properties east of Middle Road and CR 18 and in the FP or I district.

The Gorham zoning code defines three classes of commercial/industrial uses allowed in conjunction with residential or farm use in any district.

Home Occupations are conducted completed inside a home with no clients or customers visiting the home and no exterior modifications.

Class A Home Businesses are allowed only in owner-occupied single-family homes, may not result in a character that differs from the existing neighborhood character, and may only employ 4 non-family members. Such business may have a maximum of 4 clients or customers on site at any time and limit hours of operation to 7 am to 9 pm.

Class A Home Businesses are limited to 20 trips/week for clients/customers and deliveries; tractor trailer deliveries of more than 1 per week are subject to PB review. Such uses are permitted use in the FP District and the RR District and require a special use permit in all other districts. Class A Home Businesses may occupy a maximum of 40 percent of the gross floor area up to a maximum of 1,000 square feet plus they may occupy one accessory structure. For homes located in RR, R-1, and HR districts no outdoor storage of materials is allowed and a maximum of 2 pieces of equipment and 2 commercial vehicles may be parked in the rear yard. In the FP outdoor storage is allowed in the rear yard if screened, but no outdoor display of goods is allowed. Accessory buildings are subject to a minimum 75' setback and required off-street parking and outdoor storage and display are subject to a 50' setback, 75' from the public ROW

Class B Home Business may be allowed only in the FP District and require a special use permit. Such businesses may employ up to 15 non-family members, accommodate a maximum of 10 clients/customers at any one time, and may involve outdoor display of goods. Such uses may not differ in character from the existing neighborhood and are subject to floor area, outdoor storage of materials and equipment, hours of operation, minimum setbacks similar to Class A Home Businesses.

Access Management standards were adopted as Addendum C to the 1997 Comprehensive Plan and codified in Chapter 30 of the Town of Gorham code. Chapter 30 applies to all land abutting public arterial, collector and local roadways. The regulations include access connection spacing standards of 245' to 660' depending on the speed limit on arterials such as SR 245 and 125' to 440' depending on speed limit for other state, county, and local roads. These spacing standards dictate minimum lot frontage unless internal roadways are provided. The regulations also include off set spacing standards of 125' to 660' depending on speed limit. The regulations provide information on required cross or shared access, spacing standard waivers, and granting temporary access connections.

The map included in Chapter 30 shows areas where new roadway connections are needed, locations where left turn lanes can be accommodated, locations where the density of development is limited due to inability to accommodate a turning lane, and locations for pedestrian only connections in the SR 364/CR 18/Middle Road area.

In 2015 the Town of Gorham adopted design guidelines to identify desired design elements for Hamlet Residential, Hamlet Commercial, and Lakefront Residential development and development in the Farmland Preferred district and along ridgelines.

Hamlet Residential Design Guidelines- maintain shallow front setbacks, sidewalks, street trees, and front porches to encourage community interaction and ensure compatible massing, materials, and garage placement.

Hamlet Commercial Design Guidelines- little or no front or side setbacks, street trees, side or rear parking from shared curb cuts, traditional height to width ratio for buildings and windows, 60 to 80 percent façade transparency on ground floor, include base and cornice or parapet, limit of 3 front façade materials or sign colors, pedestrian scale lighting 12' to 14'.

Lakefront Residential Design Guidelines- retain or replant native shoreline vegetation and avoid disturbance of hillside forests; use landscaping, muted colors and natural materials for building exterior and shoreline protection to minimize impact on views from lake; reserve side yards for stormwater conveyance.

Design Guidelines for Residential Development in Farmland Priority District – maintain field access and geometry while using existing hedgerows, stream corridors, and woodlots to buffer new homes from the dirt, noise and odor of continuing adjacent agricultural operations to protect viability of farming and preserve the visual character. Residential development to be on clustered lots on 18' dedicated roads thus maintaining capacity and safety of existing roadways and their visual character.

Design Guidelines for Ridgeline Development – apply to hillside areas visible from Canandaigua Lake or opposite shore. Maintain integrity of forest canopy when developing hillside. This involves fitting mass and height of homes within canopy; using exterior materials and colors that blend with natural vegetation; orienting rooflines, roads and driveways parallel to the slope contours; and minimizing disturbance of existing vegetation to avoid gaps in tree canopy.

Adjacent lands in the Town of Canandaigua are zoned Residential (20,000 sq.ft. lots) or Residential Lakeshore which accommodates a range of lots sizes. Adjacent areas in the Town of Hopewell to the north are zoned Low Density Residential in the southwest corner, Low Intensity Commercial along SR 247 and including a large parcel to the west with access on SR 5/US 20, and Agricultural along most of the shared boundary. Adjacent land to the east in the Town of Seneca is zoned Agricultural except a small R-1 District on the north side of Gorham Road east of the hamlet of Gorham. Adjacent areas in the Town of Middlesex to the south are zoned Lake Residential, Agricultural/Residential, and along SR 245 west of Rushville, Hamlet Residential. Adjacent areas in the Village of Rushville are zoned R-1 Residential.

Town of Gorham and Ontario County Population, Housing, and Household Trends

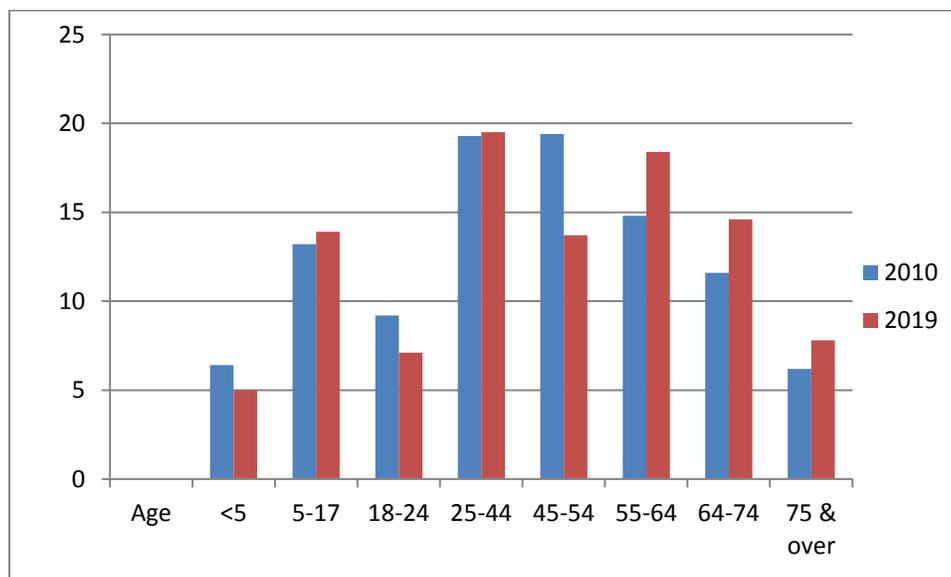
Based on the American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year population estimates, the population of the Town of Gorham (Census Tract 513) increased by 80 people (1.9 percent) from 4,168 in 2010 to 4,248 in 2019. The median age increased from 45.7 to 48.2.

From 2010 to 2019, Ontario County added 3,213 residents (3 percent). In 2019, the median age of County residents was 43.7. Though substantially lower than the median age of the Town of Gorham, it increased at a similar rate from 2010 to 2019.

Population Age Trends

In the Town of Gorham, the portion of the population under age 25 decreased from 28.8 percent in 2010 to 26 percent in 2019 with the school age portion of the population increasing, and the portion under age 5 and age 18 to 24 decreasing. The portion of the population age 25 to 54 decreased from 38.7 percent to 33.2 percent with all of the decrease among persons age 45 to 54, a decline of 227 people. The portion of the population age 55 to 74 increased from 26.4 in 2010 to 33 percent in 2019 with both the 55 to 64 and 65 to 74 age groups contributing to the increase of almost 300 people in this age range. The portion of the population age 75 and over increased from 6.2 percent to 7.8 percent, an increase of 73 people.

**Figure 1 Changing Percent of Population by Age
Town of Gorham (tract 513)**



Source: American Community Survey S0601 5 year estimates 2010 and 2019

From 2010 to 2019 the American Community Survey reported Ontario County added 3,400 residents. Changes by age segment are varied with the largest increases, 4,400 additional county residents age 65 to 74 and 1,200 additional county residents age 75 and over. The increase in the number of county residents age 55 to 64 (2,500) is slightly more than the decrease in the number of county residents age

45 to 54 (-2,100). The number of county school age residents 5 to 17 decreased by 1,950, the number of county residents age 25 to 44 decreased by nearly 800, and the number of county residents less than 5 decreased by 264.

Population Trends in Work Force Participation, Carpooling, Working From Home, and Education

From 2010 to 2019, the portion of the population 16 and over not in the labor force increased from 33.6 percent in 2010 to 41.1 percent, an increase of 345 people. Among those in the labor force, the number of self-employed people declined by 121 and the number of government workers declined by 102 from 2010 to 2019. Employment in sales occupations increased while employment in services; production/transportation; natural resources, construction, and maintenance; and management occupations declined. These occupational trends are difficult to reconcile with employment by industry trends that show increased employment in construction and wholesale trade. The apparently conflicting trends may be due to grouping of construction with natural resources in occupational data. .

Those carpooling to work decreased from 3.4 percent to 2.9 percent and the percent working from home decreased from 4.8 percent to 4.1 percent though reported change in working from home could be the result of sampling variability.

The proportion of the population age 25 and over with some college education increased from 63 percent to 66 percent, with the largest increase among those with a Bachelor's degree.

Population Trends in Disability and Poverty Characteristics, Benefits, and Diversity

There are currently an estimated 460 (10.8 percent) Gorham residents with a disability characteristic. Nearly half of residents with disability characteristics are under age 65. People under age 65 are most likely to have an ambulatory, cognitive, independent living or self-care difficulties while those over age 65 are more likely to have hearing or vision difficulties. When the ACS first reported disability characteristics for the Town of Gorham in 2012, 8.6 percent of town residents reported one or more disability characteristics.

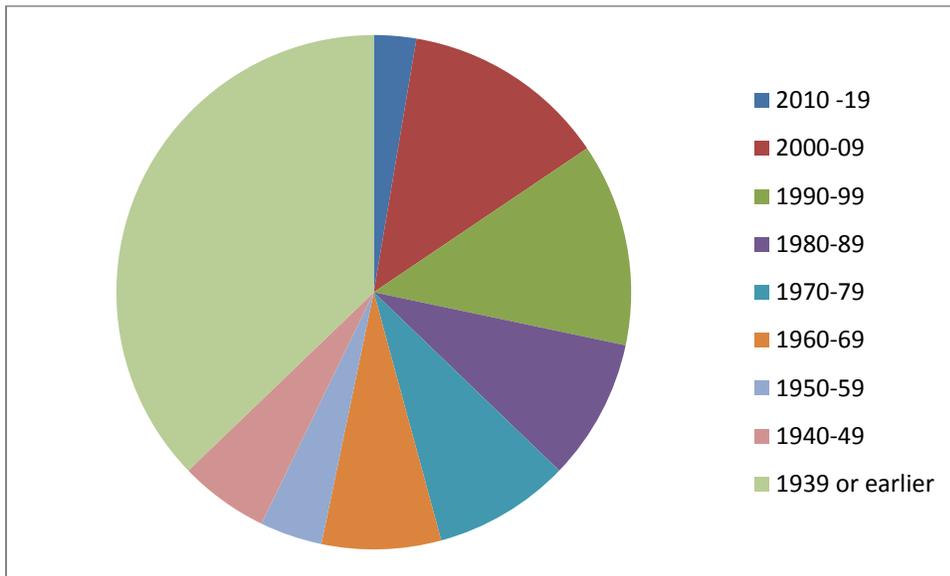
There was a decrease in the percent of people with income below the poverty line from 10.7 percent in 2010 to 6.5 percent in 2019. The largest change was the decrease in poverty among those 65 and over, a decline of 200 people among this growing age group. In spite of this decline in poverty, the percent of people using SNAP benefits increased from 5.5 to 7.2 percent. This change in use of SNAP benefits may be the result of sampling variability.

The population has become slightly less diverse (98.7 % white in 2010 and 98.4 % white in 2019) and slightly more likely to speak English at home (95% in 2019 and 94 % in 2010), though those who do not speak English at home, are now more likely to not speak English well.

Housing Year Built, Type, Tenure, Cost Burden and Heat Source Trends

The number of housing units in the Town of Gorham increased by 80 from 2,216 in 2010 to 2,296 in 2019 representing a 3 percent change. Building permit records indicate 112 new housing units built 2010 to 2019. A number of newly constructed homes are likely replacement homes on lakefront lots. Gorham residents reported approximately 200 housing units built in each decade from the 1960s to the 1980s and nearly 300 housing units built each decade 1990 to 2009. The 1940s and 1950s averaged 110 housing units built per decade and 37 percent or 854 housing units in the Town of Gorham were built in 1939 or earlier.

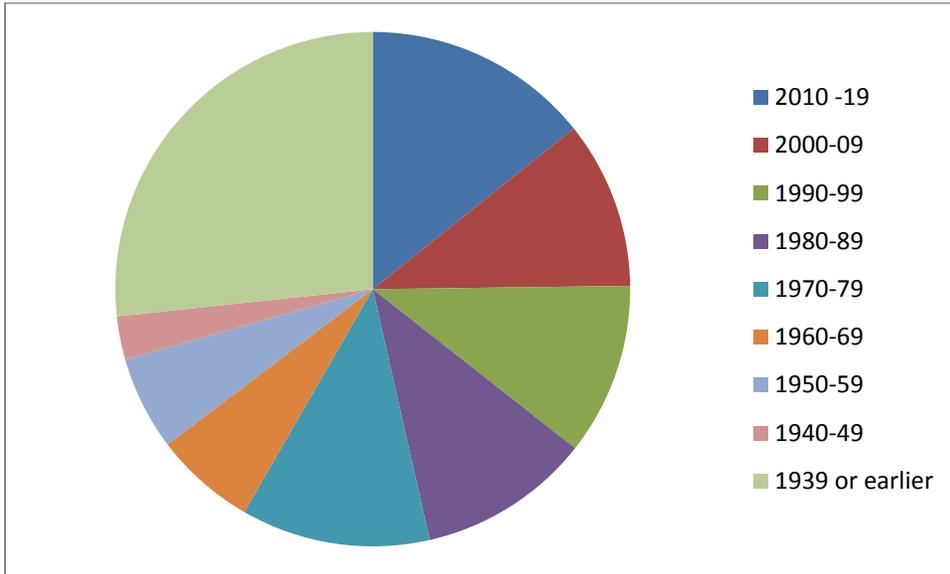
**Figure 2 2019 Housing Stock by Year Built
Town of Gorham (tract 513)**



Source: American Community Survey DP04 5 Year Estimates 2019

County residents reported nearly 8,000 housing units built from 2010 to 2019, an increase of 16.6 percent. County-wide, the housing stock added 1,500 housing units in the 1940s, and twice that in the 1950s and 1960s. From 1970 to 2009, Ontario County added an average of 6,100 housing units per decade.

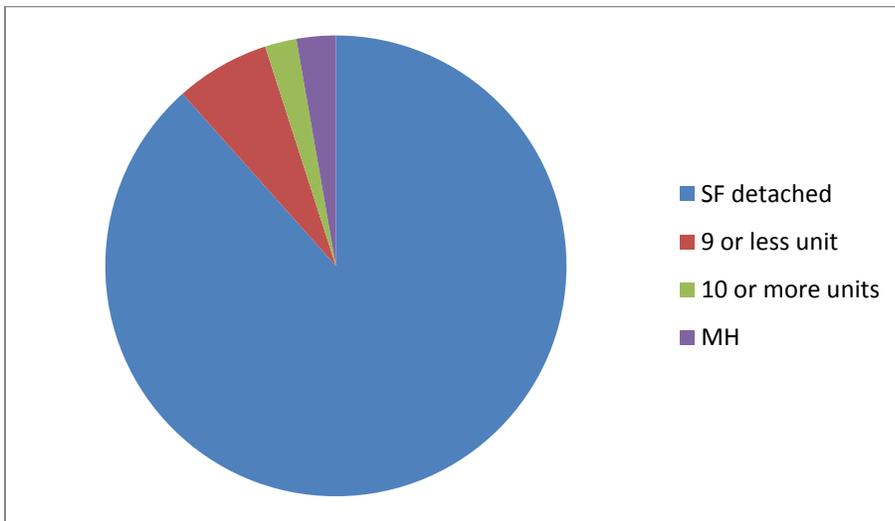
**Figure 3 2019 Housing Stock by Year Built
Ontario County**



Source: American Community Survey DP04 5 Year Estimates 2019

In the Town of Gorham, single family detached homes account for 88 percent of Gorham housing units. Housing units in structures with 10 or more units account for another 7 percent (152 units), and mobile homes and single family attached units or units in 2 to 9 unit structures account for 3 and 2 percent respectively

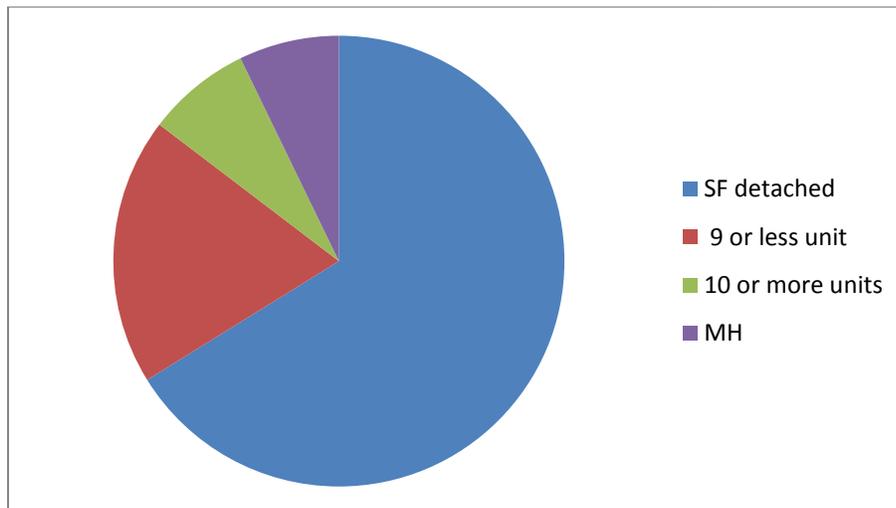
**Figure 4 2019 Housing Stock by Units in Structure
Town of Gorham (tract 513)**



Source: American Community Survey DP04 5 Year Estimates 2019

County-wide, the housing unit breakdown is 66 percent single family detached homes, 19 percent in single family attached units or structures with 2 to 9 units, and 7 percent each mobile homes and structures with 10 or more units.

**Figure 5 2019 Housing Stock by Units in Structure
Ontario County**



Source: American Community Survey DP04 5 Year Estimates 2019

Among the 1,747 occupied housing units in 2019 in the Town of Gorham, 90 percent were owner occupied and only 10 percent were renter occupied. In 2010, the percentage of renter occupied housing units in Gorham was 20 percent. County-wide, the percent of renter occupied housing increased slightly from 24.5 percent to 26.2 percent over this period.

The decline in renter occupancy in Gorham appears to have been largely among lower income households; in 2010, 51 percent of households paying rent spent 35 percent or more of income on rent and in 2019, 29 percent of households paying rent paid 35 percent or more of income on rent. The percent of cost burdened owner households also declined from 2010 to 2019.

The percent of vacant housing units in Gorham, likely seasonally occupied homes, increased from 21 percent in 2010 to 24 percent in 2019. This change could be the result of sampling variability.

In 2019 the ACS reported a Town of Gorham homeowner vacancy rate of 0.0 and a rental vacancy rate of 4.9 though these rates are subject to a wide margin of error due to sampling variability. For Ontario County as a whole, the 2019 homeowner vacancy rate was 1.3 percent and the rental vacancy rate was 7.8 percent, higher than the desirable 6 percent needed to allow mobility.

The proportion of Gorham housing units reported as heating with utility gas increased from 43 percent in 2010 to 55 percent in 2019 while the share of housing reported as heating with fuel oil/kerosene declined from 24 percent to 14 percent. The proportion of housing reported as heating with electricity

also increased, while the share of housing reported as heating with LP gas decreased though these shifts could be due to sampling variability.

The number of occupied housing units reported as lacking complete plumbing facilities was 51 units (1.8 percent). The number of housing units lacking complete kitchen facilities was 19 units and the number lacking telephone service was 12 units, both under 1 percent of occupied housing units.

Median Housing Value and Median Gross Rent

Median housing value and median gross rent in the Town of Gorham have increased faster than the national rate of inflation. The median value of owner occupied housing units in Gorham was \$169,000 in 2019 compared to \$132,800 in 2010. Based on changes in the national consumer price index (CPI) which indicates a cumulative 17.2 percent rate of inflation from 2010 to 2019, the expected 2019 median housing value would only be \$155,700. The median gross rent in Gorham was \$837 in 2019 compared to \$664 in 2010. Applying the national CPI, the expected 2019 median gross rent would only be \$779.

County-wide for 2019, the median housing value of \$161,900 was similar to that of the Town of Gorham, while the median gross rent was \$896, 7 percent higher than in Gorham.

Household Trends

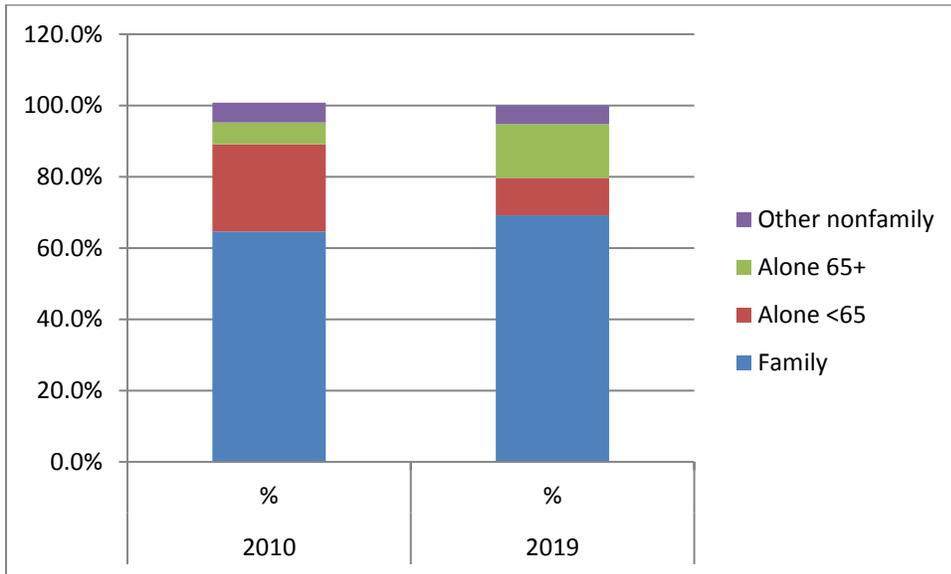
In spite of modest increases in the population and the number of housing units in the Town of Gorham, the number of households appears to have declined slightly from 1,756 in 2010 to 1,747 in 2019. The average household size in Gorham increased from 2.37 in 2010 to 2.41 in 2019. The apparent decline in the number of households and increase in the average household size could be the result of sampling variability given a margin of error of 131 households.

Overall, 25.6 percent of 2019 households in Gorham are people living alone, down from 30.0 percent in 2010. However, the percent of single person households age 65 and over increased from 6.2 percent in 2010 to 15.2 percent in 2019 an estimated increase of over 150 such households.

In 2019, 69 percent of households in Gorham were family households, up from 64.6 percent in 2010 and 5.2 percent are households with 2 or more unrelated people, down from 5.5 percent in 2010.

Among family households, there was a slight decrease in the overall portion of families with children under 18 (from 27.2 percent in 2010 to 25.4 percent in 2019), with the percent of family households with children age 6 to 17 decreasing faster than the increase in percent with children under age 6.

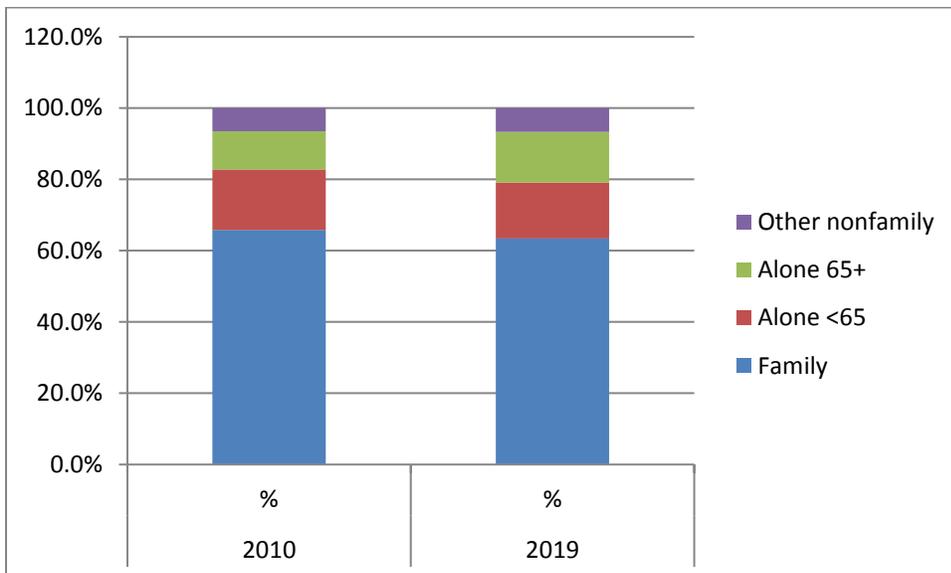
**Figure 6 Percent Households by Type 2010 and 2019
Town of Gorham**



Source: American Community Survey S1101 5 Year Estimates for 2010 and 2019

Ontario County as a whole added 1,835 households from 2010 to 2019 with the average household size estimated to have declined from 2.4 to 2.36. In contrast to Gorham, in Ontario County the percent of family households declined and the percent of single person households and non-family households increased. As in Gorham, the number and percent of those over age 65 living along grew rapidly with 1,764 additional such households recorded from 2010 to 2019.

**Figure 7 Percent Households by Type 2010 and 2019
Ontario County**



Source: American Community Survey S1101 5 Year Estimates for 2010 and 2019

Planning Implications

The following outlines key implications of conditions and trends in the natural and built environment for future land use planning.

- In contrast to other areas of Ontario County, NYS and the nation, the acreage in active agricultural operations is increasing and the Town of Gorham continues to have small 50 to 100 acre farms.
- Development activity over the last 10 years has been modest; residential building permits are primarily for individual homes or in small scale subdivisions.
- Several county roads in the Gorham (CR 18 and CR 29) carry more traffic than state highways in the Town.
- Since Gorham has not experienced mixed residential developments or larger subdivisions, efforts to preserve farmland, scenic views, and historic buildings or to provide affordable or senior housing in conjunction with such development have not transpired. The Town may want to consider additional implementation mechanism to achieve these goals. Contribution of public dollars to such activities should be based on clearly articulated community priorities.

This combination of demand for agricultural land and modest development pressure make it possible that continued agricultural use of much of the Town's valuable farmland for farming will occur. The land use pattern is valuable in terms of the Town and County agricultural economy, quality of life, and the tourism economy. Changes to infrastructure availability will significantly impact development pressure. Any change to the policy of not extending water lines within Ontario County Agricultural District #1, in place since 2009, should be undertaken with a deep knowledge of land ownership patterns.

While not apparent from the data reviewed, it is worth noting the committee perspective that lakefront home ownership is shifting from family seasonal or year round occupancy to investor own rentals.

The Town of Gorham is experiencing significant demographic shifts with implications for engaging community members and meeting their social, housing, and mobility needs.

- Over the last 10 years, the Town of Gorham reported 345 more retired residents with an increase of 150 people age 55 to 74 and 73 people age 75 and older. There was a corresponding decline of 227 people age 45 to 54.
- The Town of Gorham also reported 150 additional people age 65 and over who live alone.
- The rental housing stock in the Town of Gorham has declined while age segments and household type likely to want rental housing are increasing.
- Unlike Ontario County as a whole, the number of family households is increasing in the Town of Gorham. This may be due to the influx of Mennonite families as the estimated number of school age residents has increased while the MWSD enrollment (which includes some or all of 3 other towns) has declined.

These demographic shifts have potential implications with regard to use of print and digital media to inform and engage residents, resident social and recreational needs, and housing and mobility needs.