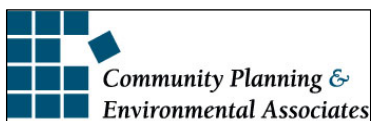


Town of Ghent



Comprehensive Plan Part II

Adopted July 16, 2009
By the
Town of Ghent Town Board



Final Plan Part II

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Appendix A – Reports and Analyses

1. Profile and Inventory of the Town of Ghent

Location and Regional Context

The Town of Ghent is one of eighteen towns in rural Columbia County, southeast of Albany, NY, along the east bank of the Hudson River. Ghent is located in the north-central portion of the County, and borders the Towns of Austerlitz and Hillsdale to the east, the Town of Claverack to the south, the Town of Stockport to the west, and the towns of Kinderhook and Chatham to the north. The incorporated Village of Chatham contains portions of both the Town of Chatham and the Town of Ghent.

The Town is approximately seven miles wide and eight miles long at its longest point north-to south, and contains about 45 square miles (approximately 28,873 acres) of land. Hamlets in the Town, in addition to the hamlet of Ghent, include West Ghent and Omi in the western portion and Buckleyville and Arnolds Mills in the northeastern corner. Other neighboring hamlets are Harlemville, just over the eastern boundary in Hillsdale, Moorehouse Corners to the northeast in Austerlitz, and Stottville, beyond the southwestern corner in Stockport. The Village of Philmont is located just south of the Ghent boundary in Claverack.

Ghent is primarily a rural town, but it is not isolated. It contains portions of the Taconic State Parkway and New York State Routes 9H and 66, as well as half of the Village of Chatham. A short drive will take the visitor or resident to the Villages of Kinderhook, Valatie, and Philmont. The City of Hudson, Columbia County's seat, is only four miles from the Ghent town line. Albany is 25 miles north, New York City is 115 miles south, and Boston is about 150 miles east of Ghent.

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Physical Environment

Water Resources

The Town of Ghent lies in the Mid-Hudson River watershed. Streams within the Town that ultimately carry water to the Hudson are the, Kline Kill, Widows Creek, Fitting Creek, North Creek, Mud Creek, Agawamuck Creek, and a small portion of Claverack Creek among others (See Water Features Map). These streams have also been designated classified streams by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC). The NYS DEC issues discharge permits to allow certain kinds and amounts of substances to be released into the streams based upon their classification. A Special Flood Hazard Area has been identified by the US government for federal insurance purposes. This area was incorporated into a Flood Overzone in earlier zoning ordinances in Ghent, but is no longer covered by the Zoning Law. There is currently a separate local law (Chapter 99 of the Ghent Code) covering flood damage prevention.

Many small and large wetlands are scattered throughout the Town, particularly in a wide north-south band covering the central and northwestern portions of the Town (See Water Features Map). Many are associated with the classified streams mentioned above. Those wetlands 12.4 acres or larger have been designated by the DEC as regulated wetlands, and state law requires a permit for any alteration or development in a wetland and requires a 100-foot buffer around the wetland boundary. Wetland systems are natural assets for many reasons, including their capacity for flood control, groundwater recharge, as temporary filters of pollution carried by streams, landscape and habitat diversity, education, research, and providing food and shelter for both rare species and economically important fish, birds, and animals. For example, the 35-acre Smith Pond adjacent to the Mary E. Dardess Elementary School and the Chatham High School grounds, and Starks Pond near the Fairgrounds, are both DEC-designated wetlands (CH2- and CH-3, respectively) that provide ecological education and recreational opportunities, among other benefits, to Ghent residents and others.

In the early days, settlers used water resources to power mills that ground grain, cut lumber, made paper, etc. Today, Ghent's streams, ponds, and wetlands remain important ecological, educational and recreational assets. Wetlands in Ghent represent a significant protected open space resource, and numerous and valuable as they are, also present a limitation for development.

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Topography/Land Forms

Topography is especially important in defining the character of the Town of Ghent. Rolling slopes and hilly areas in the Town command diverse scenic views, both from public highways and from interior lands and farm fields.

Approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of the Town contains moderate to steep slopes. Two relatively level valleys run on a north-south axis along State Route 9H to the west and County Route 9 to the east. In the portion of the Town with rolling topography, elevations vary from 150 feet above sea level to about 500 feet at the ridges. The eastern section of the Town is the steepest (with slopes in excess of 25%), where elevations range from 300 feet along County Route 9 to approximately 900 feet along the Town line.

See Table 1 which shows percentages of four slope categories, and indicates that 19% of the Town has relatively steep slopes (over 10%) that present potential constraints for development. Construction on slopes in excess of 15% presents potential erosion hazards and is generally more expensive and environmentally damaging than on gentler terrain. Also, septic system leach fields normally cannot be constructed on slopes exceeding 15%. Although beautiful views of wooded hills and farm fields can favorably affect real estate values, steeply sloped areas such as those found in Ghent (particularly the eastern portion) present severe limitations for development.

Table 1: Slopes*

Slope Category	Acres	Percent of Town Area
0 to 5%	19,514	68%
5 to 10%	3,935	14%
10 to 25%	4,710	16%
25% and over	714	3%

*Note: this table differs significantly from the Slope table found in the 1973 plan, and the 1994 draft plan. Those tables were probably derived from the County Soil Survey soils classifications. The table shown here was derived from digital elevation data obtained through the NYS GIS data sharing cooperative. This digital data is supplied at a finer scale, and is more suitable for this type of analysis than the soils data.

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Soil Conditions

The mosaic of soil types found in the Town of Ghent is complex. According to the 1985 Columbia County Soil Survey, more than 2/3 of the Town is made up of shallow, steep, and/or stony land, and therefore is very constrained for development. Large areas of rock outcrop occur in the hilly eastern portion of the Town. (Under poor soil conditions, septic tank systems are likely to be more expensive to install and require more engineering than might otherwise be the case.) As noted in Ghent's 1973 Comprehensive Plan, even in those areas where the largest areas of fertile soils, occur, there are substantial pockets of poor soils: the good soils occur in extremely irregular areas. To see where these limiting soils are located, refer to the map *Soil Limitations: Septic Tank Absorption Fields*. In addition to the physical constraints mentioned above, the amount of soils adequate for agricultural use is limited. The largest areas of agricultural soils in Ghent are found in the north-south valley near County Route 9 (the Mellenville Flats area, once called "Squampamock Flats").

Prime farmland soils represent significant regional resources, in that their capacity to produce food for the northeastern U.S. may need to be more heavily tapped in the future. Maintaining the agriculture-based economy and way of life contributes to Ghent's rural and scenic character, as well. Therefore, if prime agricultural soils (the easiest to develop) are permanently converted to non-farm uses, an important scenic and economic resource will have been lost. If readily developed farmland "grows" suburban subdivisions, the rural character that so many residents appreciate (as well as the capacity for food production) will be permanently lost. Although not a physical constraint, the presence of valuable prime agricultural soils can thus be considered to be another limitation on development – that is, if the community is serious in its commitment to keeping agriculture viable in Ghent.

Unlike the eastern valley, the western half of the Town contains only small patches of prime farmland soils, scattered among soil areas poorly to moderately suited for development. Physical constraints (rocky soils less than 40 inches deep, slopes over 15%) are the limiting factor on this side of Town, rather than preservation of prime farmland soils.

The natural constraints of wetland areas combined with the steep slopes and soil constraints – both shallow rocky soils and the prime agricultural soils – result in relatively little land in the Town appropriate for easy development. All of

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Ghent’s development constraints contribute to the pressure mentioned above to convert those scarce prime farmland soils to residential uses.

Wildlife Inventories

The New York State Breeding Bird Atlas recorded information on which bird species breed in the Town of Ghent. Two different atlas surveys were conducted; one between 1980 and 1985 and again repeated between 2000 and 2005. Four blocks encompassing most of the Town of Ghent were included in these surveys. The data for this work is included below. In general, the number of bird species inventoried in the second atlas was fewer than that found in the first atlas during the 1980’s. Block 6068A is found in the northwest corner of Town, 6068B is in the northeast corner, 6068C is in the southwest corner, and block 6068D is in the southeast corner.

New York State Breeding Bird Atlas Data for Ghent

Inventory Block Number	1980-1985 Atlas			2000- 2005 Atlas		
	Total # Bird Species Found	Species with Listed Status ¹	# Game Birds	Total # Bird Species Found	Species with Listed Status ²	# Game Birds
6068A	75	Red Headed Woodpecker (SC)	6	69	None	8
6068B	69	Pied Billed Grebe (T) Golden-Winged Warbler (SC)	9	59	Coopers Hawk (SC)	4
6068C	58	Vesper Sparrow (SC)	6	64	None	6
6068D	85	American Bittern (SC) Horned Lark (SC) Vesper Sparrow (SC) Grasshopper Sparrow (SC)	10	74	Sharp Shined Hawk (SC) Coopers Hawk (SC) Grass-hopper Sparrow (SC)	5

¹ SC indicates a species listed by New York State as one of Special Concern; T indicates a species listed by New York State as one that is Threatened.

² SC indicates a species listed by New York State as one of Special Concern; T indicates a species listed by New York State as one that is Threatened.

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The United States Fish and Wildlife Service sponsors an annual breeding bird survey throughout the United States. This survey is done through a uniform census along 25 mile routes. One Breeding Bird Survey Route passes through the Town and has had data recorded for many years. Although not the entire route is within the Town of Ghent, the bird species found along this route are characteristic of the area. One hundred twenty -two bird species have been identified through this census. Some of these species are different than those identified through the New York State Atlas.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation also conducts an atlas of reptiles and amphibians. Data collected for the Town include the following 28 identified species, of which the Eastern Box Turtle is classified as a species of special concern (any native species for which a welfare concern or risk of endangerment has been documented in New York State):

Spotted Salamander	Red-spotted Newt
Northern Dusky Salamander	Northern Redback Salamander
Northern Two-lined Salamander	Gray Treefrog
Northern Spring Peeper	Wood Frog
Common Snapping Turtle	Eastern Box Turtle
Eastern Painted Turtle	Northern Water Snake
Northern Brown Snake	Northern Ringneck Snake
Eastern Milk Snake	Spotted Salamander
Red-spotted Newt	Northern Dusky Salamander
Northern Slimy Salamander	Northern Two-lined Salamander
Eastern American Toad	Gray Treefrog
Northern Spring Peeper	Green Frog
Wood Frog	Pickerel Frog
Common Garter Snake	Eastern Milk Snake

The New York Natural Heritage Program (NYNHP) studies and inventories critical species and their habitats throughout the state. A report from the NYNHP prepared in December 2006 lists one bird and two plant species found in Ghent. The Pied-billed Grebe is listed as threatened, and ranked as rare or uncommon in the state. It was last reported during the first NYS Breeding Bird Atlas in 1984, confirmed as breeding in the northeastern portion of the town. There are two old reports of the threatened plant Golden Club, ranked as imperiled, and the endangered plant Narrow-leaved Sedge, ranked as critically imperiled. These were reported in the early 1900's, and have not been verified since. This report does not make any conclusions about whether or not these species still exist, or if

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there are other threatened or endangered species located in the town, but not listed in the database.

History and Economy

In about 1740, a family named Sharp made improvements on a large farm interest previously purchased from patent holders in Claverack by Johnnes Hogeboom. Hogeboom's inn became a well-known stopping place on the Albany-Boston road. Other early families in Ghent included the Groats, the Moulds, the Harders, the Ostrandors, the Stupplebeems, and the Holsapples. Settlers in the western part of Ghent were, among others, families by the names of Vosburgh, Kittle, Van Alstyne, Link, Leggett, and Van Valkenburgh. Although it was founded as an agricultural community in the mid-1700, Ghent's agricultural base may reach even further back as the land may have been cultivated by Native Americans.

Ghent was originally named Squampamock, a Native American word meaning "the meeting of the waters" (referring to the joining of two small branches of Claverack Creek). This name was later changed to Ghent by the State Legislature, commemorating the US – Great Britain Treaty which ended the War of 1812. Ghent held a prominent position in the area because of its agriculturally productive land. Early settlers owned large estates, some of which are still owned by their descendants. These estates were worked by slaves who were liberated in the 1820's.

The Town of Ghent was formed in 1818 from the then Townships of Kinderhook, Claverack, and Chatham in the County of Columbia. The first local election was held on

April 7th of that year. The first Town meeting was held in a private home, but a Town hall was subsequently built in the hamlet of Ghent.

Business thrived in Ghent due to the construction of the Boston and Albany Railroad (with a connection to the City of Hudson) and the Harlem Division of the New York Central Railroad. The principal industries of the Town were paper mills, grist mills, saw mills, and wool factories, located along the Kline Kill. Arnolds Mills, in the northeastern former of the Town, was named after these water-powered industries.

In 1869, the Village of Chatham was incorporated from portions of the Towns of Chatham and Ghent, becoming a separate municipality. However, the Village

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still overlaps each Town as before. (This frequently engenders confusion when residents and visitors alike are unaware that they may be in both the Village of Chatham and the Town of Ghent simultaneously. The fact that many call the hamlet of Ghent “the village” causes additional confusion.)

The first Protestant Church, built in a settlement called Old Ghent, was used by two denominations: the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Reformed Dutch Church. After a fire however, each denomination built its own church. In 1943, the West Ghent Protestant Reformed Church was dedicated. The German-speaking people of the Town erected a church of their own, St. John’s Church of Ghent, in 1855. Its cemetery survives and is maintained by the Town.

There were many one-room district schools located throughout the Town, and the original brick schoolhouse built in 1878 was still used by area schoolchildren into the 1980’s. It was then converted to the Ghent Town Hall. The previous Town Hall, near the post office in Ghent hamlet, was too small for Town offices and functions. That building dates from 1893, and was the first Town Hall in Columbia County erected for that specific purpose. It functioned as a meeting place for community events, as well as serving as a venue for local theater productions beginning in 1917. The Bartlett House (a prominent brick building, once a hotel/bar/restaurant) and the Navarra House opposite it on Route 66, provided additional focus for the busy hamlet. The Bartlett House is currently empty but has potential for other uses.

Another agriculture-based local industry was the famous Borden family’s dairy farm and bottling plant, located near the railway in the Buckleyville area of Ghent. This farm operation produced high quality milk and milk products for urban markets all over the northeast. Borden sent rail shipments to New York City from the 1920’s until the mid-1930’s, while the bottling plant was phased out over several years and finally closed. Unfortunately, fire consumed the Borden barns in the early 1960’s.

It is evident that Ghent’s economy was historically based on agriculture, with mills and plants processing local products and shipping them to markets via the railroads that passed through the town. Today, the Town of Ghent is still predominantly rural in nature, but agricultural land is gradually being converted to residential uses. The trains don’t stop in Ghent anymore; the economic base of the community depends much less on agricultural activities. Ghent provides a home for workers, most of who commute outside the Town and may even travel outside the County (or State) to their jobs. Most of the Town’s economic activity

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is currently concentrated along State highways (Routes 9H and 66) and in settlements (the hamlets of Ghent and West Ghent, the Village of Chatham). The number of households that depend upon farming for a livelihood has steadily decreased over the years. According to the 2000 Census, less than 1% of Ghent's population (over 16 years of age) had occupations in agriculture.

(Note: for more historical background, *Squampamock: A bicentennial history of Ghent, NY*, published by the Chatham Printing Company in 1977, includes historical essays, poems, and photographs, as well as documentation of Ghent's celebration of the nation's bicentennial.)

Land Use: Planning and Zoning

Although not a large employment factor in Town, agriculture in Ghent continues to be an important enterprise and one of the largest single land uses. 5,152 acres of the Town's land is in classified as being used for agriculture by the town assessor and another 5,678 has been identified by the comprehensive plan committee as being used for agricultural purposes. However, Ghent's proximity to Kinderhook and the Capital District exposes it to similar suburban development pressures seen there. The more physically constrained land in Ghent and its somewhat greater distance from the Capital District have thus far slowed the rate of change. However, as discussed elsewhere in this document, Ghent contains a significant number of open fields that have already been platted for suburban-style subdivisions. When land values once again increase to the point where it becomes financially feasible to construct these subdivisions, the face of Ghent may change drastically.

Besides residential, agricultural, and forest lands, other land uses in the Town include commercial, industrial, public and semi-public, institutional, recreational, and water resource lands. The more intensive land uses in the Town are concentrated along state highways such as the Route 9H and Route 66 corridors, in the hamlets of Ghent and West Ghent, and in Chatham Village. The Commerce Park is an expansion of the "strip" along Route 9H into a more substantial block. The remainder of the commercial land uses found in Ghent is dispersed widely throughout the rest of the Town.

Commercial

Older commercial areas are the established business centers in the Village of Chatham and hamlet of Ghent. These contain small retail businesses, shops and

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offices, with higher density residential uses mixed among the commercial ones. The Village of Chatham contains a pedestrian-oriented downtown (on the Town of Chatham side of the Village). Downtown parking is usually provided on the street or in small lots tucked behind buildings. People can often walk from their homes to their jobs or shopping, thereby reducing the number of cars necessary. Hamlets meet basic community needs, such as a small grocery, gas station, and post office adjacent to homes, as in the hamlet of Ghent. Traditional hamlets are also built in a clustered pattern that is conducive to pedestrian use.

Car-oriented shopping plazas can be found in Town mainly along Route 66 near the Village of Chatham and in the hamlet of Ghent. These are characterized by attached or detached stores and large off-street parking lots. Wide parking lots line the road and the stores are set back from the street. These plazas are not friendly to pedestrians, since the outdoor spaces are designed to serve the automobile. Car-oriented strip developments tend to pull vitality away from downtowns and reduce the amount of informal community interaction.

Columbia County Commerce Center

The Gerald R. Simon Commerce Park (Columbia County Commerce Center) consists of approximately 250 acres of rolling hillside. Formerly the Kitchie Farm, the land was purchased by the County and divided into three development phases. Phase 1 consists of about 140 acres and now houses 25 businesses. The Park is fully serviced with municipal infrastructure and public utilities. Assessments on this property should be in the \$25,000,000 range upon full build out and employment should exceed 400. Phase 2, located next to the Whittier facilities and across the street from Columbia County Soil and Water Conservation District is approximately 30 acres and is available for sale, but is yet to be developed into shovel-ready lots. Phase 3 located to the east of the Columbia County Airport is approximately 80 acres and is yet to be developed into shovel ready lots. The Commerce Park was originally conceived to significantly enhance economic development in the County by providing a full-service, central location for future commercial and business development. The County-owned area has been zoned business-commercial and business-industrial-commercial to allow a mix of uses including air service and support facilities and health-related, commercial and light industrial development. The original hope was that the project will attract businesses in the County that will increase Columbia County's tax base, while reducing the amount of haphazard industrial and commercial development.

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Due to the creation of a Generic Environmental Impact Statement, specific projects within the Park are subject to limited environmental review. The environmental impact statement for the project estimated that 1000 jobs would be created. The most recent analysis indicates 400 jobs could be expected.

The Commerce Center, served by a central water and sewer system, obtains water from outside Ghent, and discharges tertiary-treated effluent from a package wastewater treatment plant into Mud Creek, a Class C stream on the site which flows through state-designated regulated wetland ST-39. Disturbance of protected wetlands ST-39 and ST-30 was mitigated by a four-acre constructed wetland elsewhere on the County-owned site.

In 1992, the initial construction phase of the Commerce Center development, the 120-bed, 83,500 square foot Whittier Rehabilitation and Skilled Nursing Center (Green Manor Nursing Home), was completed on 25 acres south of Route 66. This facility provides long term, rehabilitation and ventilator care to residents of Columbia County and the greater Albany area. Located adjacent and behind the Nursing Home, the Adult Home portion of the Center opened in 1995 and the dialysis center opened in 1996. A total of 80 beds are located in the adult care facility and 40 of those rooms are dedicated to the Assisted Living Program.

Columbia County's Empire Zone includes the Columbia County Commerce Park lands. The Empire Zone is a New York State program established to encourage businesses to locate in targeted areas, to revitalize economically distressed areas by stimulating private investment, to provide jobs, and reduce poverty, unemployment, public assistance and blighted conditions. The program gives companies a variety of incentives and benefits including sales tax exemptions, credits for real property taxes, utility rate savings, technical assistance, and other refunds and credits. The Empire Zone extends beyond the Town of Ghent into Claverack and Livingston.

Art Omi

Art Omi is a non-profit cultural center located off County Route 22 and Letter "S" Road. Indoor and outdoor facilities are provided for visual artists, writers, dancers and musicians. The 90-acre Fields Sculpture Park displays more than 80 contemporary works. The large rolling fields of this "park" are open for walking and picnicking from dawn to dusk year round. A new building off County Route 22 will formally open to the public in the spring 2008. It will include an art

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gallery, museum gift shop, a café, information center and restrooms. From time to time, readings, lectures and concerts will be presented within.

Property Class Tables and Charts

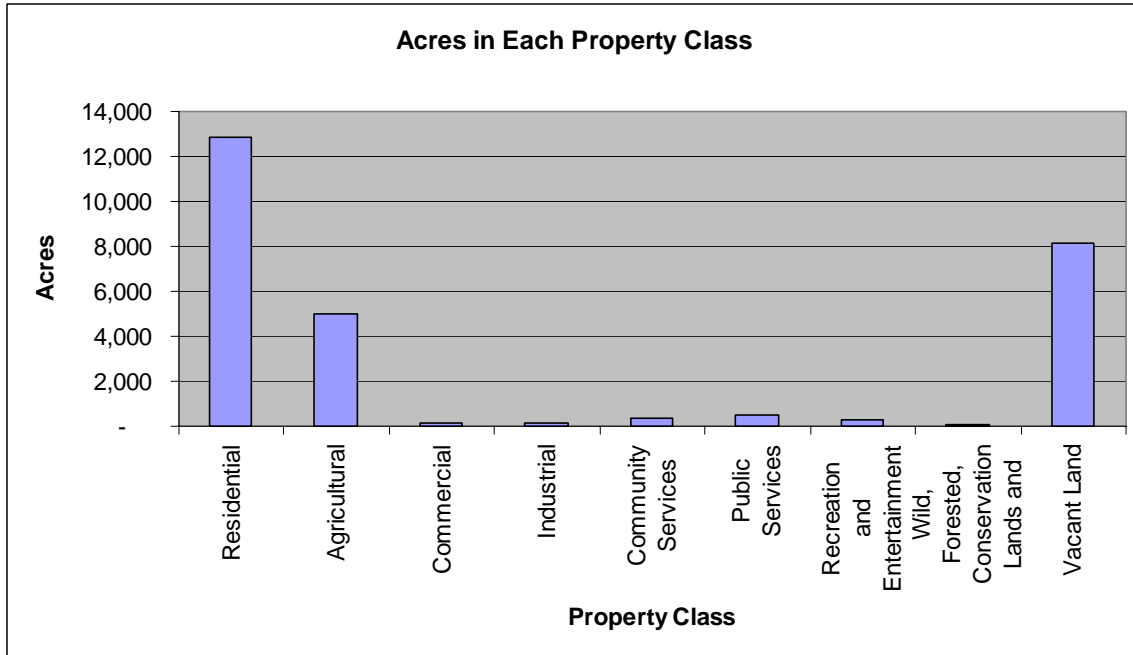
The tables on the following pages show the various types of land uses in Ghent, the amount of land in each type, and the percentage of the total that are in the different land use categories.

The first table and chart in this series outlines the general land use classifications given by the local assessor. Subsequent tables and charts describe those general classifications broken down into sub-classes. The percentages in each table are based on the entire land area of the town. This total land area does not include the area devoted to public roads and streets, which are not assigned a property class by the local assessor. These public rights of way (ROWs) account for approximately 1,369 acres, or 4.75% of the land area of the town.

General Property Classes

Property Class	Number of Parcels	Acres	Percent of Land Area
Residential	1,482	12,846	46.7%
Agricultural	55	5,011	18.2%
Commercial	51	157	0.6%
Industrial	7	160	0.6%
Community Services	25	332	1.2%
Public Services	14	524	1.9%
Recreation and Entertainment	13	278	1.0%
Wild, Forested, Conservation Lands and Public Parks	2	37	0.14%
Vacant Land	463	8,159	29.7%
Grand Total	2,112	27,504	100.0%

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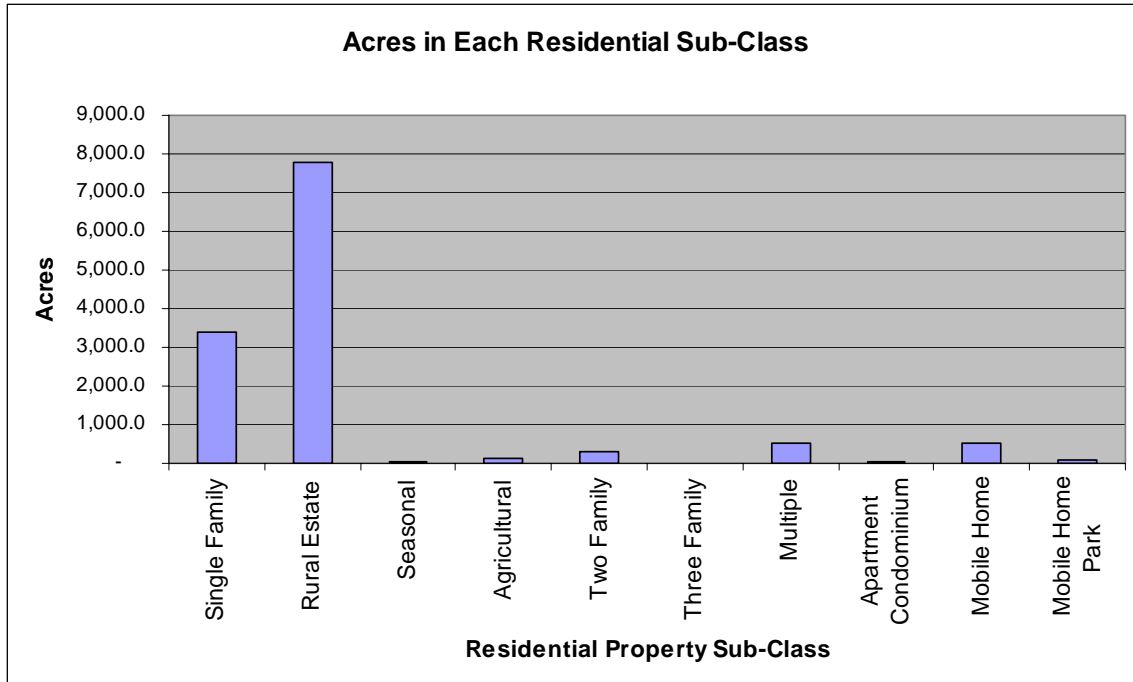


The most predominant property classes found in the town, both in number and in area, are those devoted to residential land uses. Nearly half of the area of Ghent is classified as residential, with nearly another third being classified as vacant. Over 18% is classified as agricultural in use. A field survey completed by some members of the comprehensive plan committee shows a number of parcels classified as residential or vacant also hold a significant amount of agricultural activity.

Residential Sub-Classes

Residential sub-class	Number of Parcels	Acres	Percent of Land Area
Single Family	1,110	3,411.4	12.4%
Rural Estate	201	7,770.5	28.3%
Seasonal	8	49.5	0.2%
Agricultural	2	139.0	0.5%
Two Family	32	305.0	1.1%
Three Family	4	5.0	0.02%
Multiple	21	532.6	1.9%
Apartment/Condominium	5	36.1	0.1%
Mobile Home	93	504.2	1.8%
Mobile Home Park	6	92.4	0.3%
Residential Total	1,482	12,845.8	46.7%

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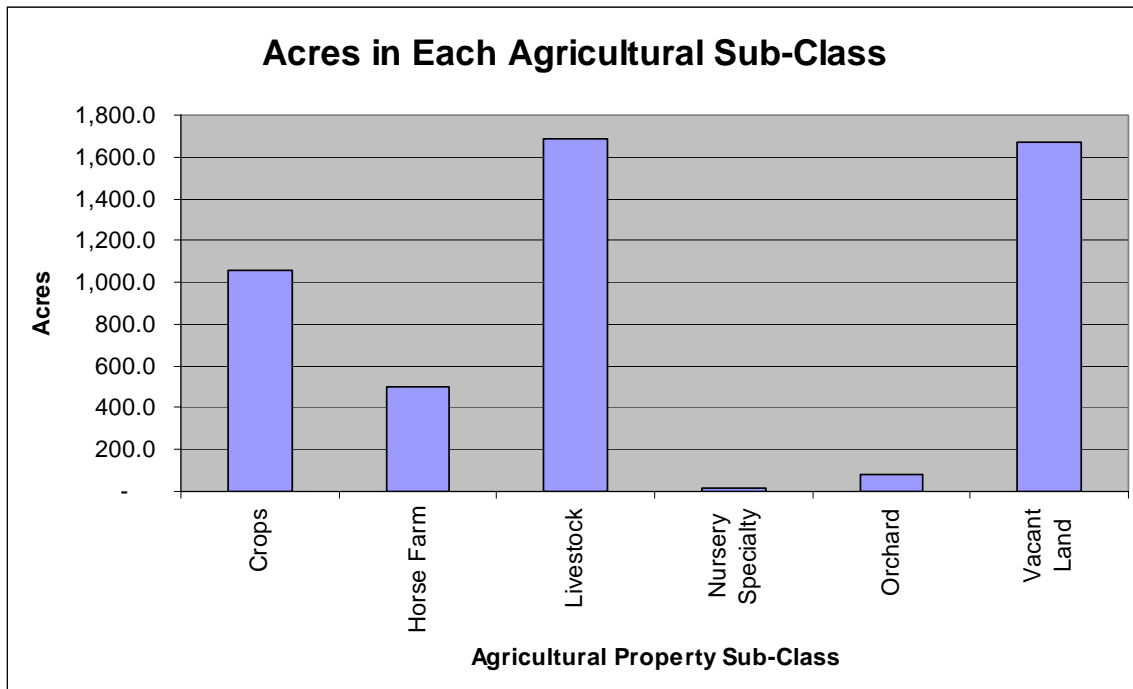


The majority of the residential class properties are single family, or rural estates (which are essentially single family homes on very large lots). The 201 parcels classified as rural estates occupy over 28% of the land area of the town, while the 1,110 parcels classified as single family homes occupy less than half of that area.

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Agriculture Sub-Classes

Agricultural sub-class	Number of Parcels	Acres	Percent of Land Area
Crops	9	1,055.1	3.8%
Horse Farm	4	503.5	1.8%
Livestock	11	1,686.3	6.1%
Nursery Specialty	1	16.2	0.1%
Orchard	1	77.4	0.3%
Vacant Land	29	1,672.7	6.1%
Agricultural Total	55	5,011.2	18.2%



Agricultural class parcels in Ghent are primarily devoted to Livestock or are vacant. In this case the term vacant refers to productive vacant lands devoted to an agricultural use. Usually this implies a parcel that is mowed for hay, which is in turn supplied to or used by another agricultural use such as dairy or horse farms.

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The remaining land area of the town is divided into the following property sub-classes by the local assessor:

Commercial

Commercial sub-class	Number of Parcels	Acres	Percent of Land Area
Auto	8	16.3	0.1%
Bar	1	5.6	0.02%
Dining	6	9.5	0.03%
Junkyard	1	4.1	0.02%
Kennel	2	6.1	0.02%
Multipurpose	14	25.1	0.1%
Office	5	12.1	0.04%
Parking	4	5.5	0.02%
Retail	2	2.4	0.01%
Storage and Distribution	8	70.4	0.3%
Commercial Total	51	156.9	0.6%

Industrial

Industrial sub-class	Number of Parcels	Acres	Percent of Land Area
Manufacturing	7	160.3	0.6%
Industrial Total	7	160.3	0.6%

Community Services

Community Services sub-class	Number of Parcels	Acres	Percent of Land Area
Cemetery	5	34.8	0.1%
Cultural and Recreational	1	6.5	0.02%
Educational	6	236.5	0.9%
Government	4	23.4	0.1%
Health	1	11.8	0.04%
Other	1	14.2	0.1%
Protection	3	2.0	0.01%
Religious	3	2.2	0.01%
Transportation	1	0.4	0.00%
Community Services Total	25	332.0	1.2%

Public Services

Public Services sub-class	Number of Parcels	Acres	Percent of Land Area
Communication	2	16.3	0.1%
Electric and Gas	3	161.6	0.6%

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Transportation	3	327.2	1.2%
Water	6	18.7	0.1%
Public Services Total	14	523.8	1.9%

Recreation and Entertainment

Recreation and Entertainment sub-class	Number of Parcels	Acres	Percent of Land Area
Amusements	1	25.2	0.1%
Camp Resort	1	56.2	0.2%
Park	5	81.6	0.3%
Social	2	19.1	0.1%
Sports	2	89.5	0.3%
Theater and Exhibit	2	6.6	0.02%
Recreation and Entertainment Total	13	278.1	1.0%

Wild, Forested, Conservation Lands and Public Parks

Wild, Forested, Conservation Lands and Public Parks sub-class	Number of Parcels	Acres	Percent of Land Area
Private	2	37.3	0.1%
Wild, Forested, Conservation Lands and Public Parks Total	2	37.3	0.1%

Vacant

Vacant Land sub-class	Number of Parcels	Acres	Percent of Land Area
Commercial	21	270.8	1.0%
Residential	442	7,888.2	28.7%
Vacant Land Total	463	8,159.1	29.7%

Planning and Zoning Regulations and Administration

Predated only a year or two by subdivision regulations, the first zoning ordinance in Ghent was passed in 1972. The following year, in response to some unpopular development plans, the 1973 Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Ghent was completed by the Columbia County Planning Department. Other land use-related regulations in the Town include:

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Chapter 40: Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals
Chapter 71: Animals
Chapter 93: Farming
Chapter 99: Flood Damage Prevention
Chapter 123: Littering
Chapter 136: Rental Property
Chapter 144: Solid Waste
Chapter 150: Streets and Sidewalks
Chapter 156: Subdivision of Land
Chapter 185: Wireless Telecommunication Facilities
Chapter 190: Zoning
Chapter A193: Road Specifications

The five-member Town Board, chaired by the Town Supervisor, is the elected legislative body. The Planning Board is a seven member board and has been given the authority to review and approve site plans, approve special use permits, and approve preliminary and final subdivision plats. Additionally, the Planning Board may review and make recommendations on a proposed Town Comprehensive Plan or amendment thereto.

A seven-member Zoning Board of Appeals responds to requests for use and area variances and matters of interpretation. The Building Inspector and Zoning Officer enforces the New York State Building Code and the Zoning Law respectively. The Board of Appeals is authorized to hear matters related to interpretations, variances, and appeals from permit denial by the Building Inspector/Zoning Officer. It also can review applications involving a change in use where original use was “pre-existing, non-conforming”.

The Zoning law establishes 12 different zoning districts. These are:

RA-1 Residential Agricultural-1
RA-2 Residential Agricultural-2
SR Suburban Residential
VR Village Residential
VB Village Business
CI Commercial Industrial
CI-2 Commercial Industrial-2*
PCID Planned Commercial-Industrial District
PRD Planned Residential District

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BIC Business Industrial Complex
BC Business Commercial
LC/B Limited Commercial/Business

The most recent revisions to Chapter 156: Subdivision of Land were made with the adoption of local law #3-2005, commonly referred to as the Mining Law. This law added a mining overzone map, showing where mining is permitted by special permit. The most recent revisions to Chapter 190: Zoning were made with the adoption of local law #2-2006, commonly referred to as the Conservation Law. This law allows the planning board to require conservation subdivisions within the RA-1 and RA-2 zoning districts.

Agriculture

Ghent's roots are in agriculture. The prime farmland soils of Squampamock (later Mellenville Flats) may have been cultivated by Native Americans for crops and orchards, but it was permanently settled by farmers of European descent. There are currently 34 different owners of agriculture class properties in the Town of Ghent, comprising 18% of Ghent's land area. There are an additional 59 farmland owners in the Town. This includes support lands, farms which may be operated by a neighboring farmer, "gentlemen farmers" which are run by a farm manager for a non-farming owner, and recently abandoned farm properties. These agricultural support lands make up another 20% of the Town. In fact over 10,759 acres of land in Ghent can be classified as being used for agricultural purposes. This is a significant component of the Town's land resources. On the other hand, the farm population is a very small component of Town residents. In 1980, 3% of employed persons were in farming, forestry, or fishing (1980 census). By 1990, this was down by nearly half, to 1.54%, and in 2000 it was less than 1%. (Actual experience leads us to believe there are more residents employed in farming than indicated in the 2000 census.)

Most of the farms in active agricultural use in Ghent are located within Agricultural District 10. Portions of Agricultural District 8 and Agricultural District 3 are also located within the Town. Overall, 15,500 acres of land are included in one of these three County Agricultural Districts. This is more than 54% of the land area of the town. There are significant portions of these Agricultural Districts that do not include parcels identified as agricultural uses by the local assessor, or by the comprehensive plan committee. Most of these areas are found in the western half of the town, along Route 9H and the southern

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Route 66 corridor; and also in the northeastern corner of the town, near the village of Chatham.

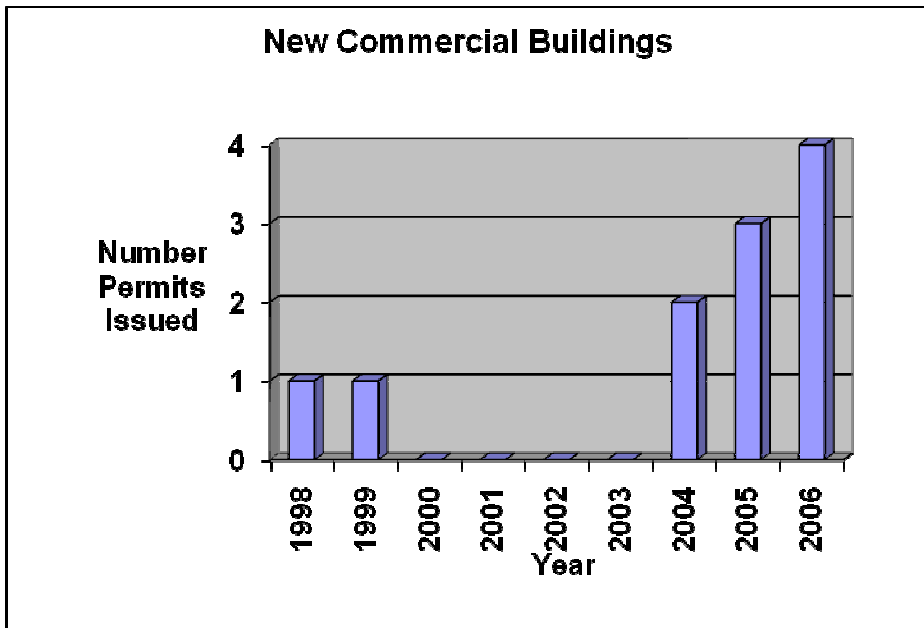
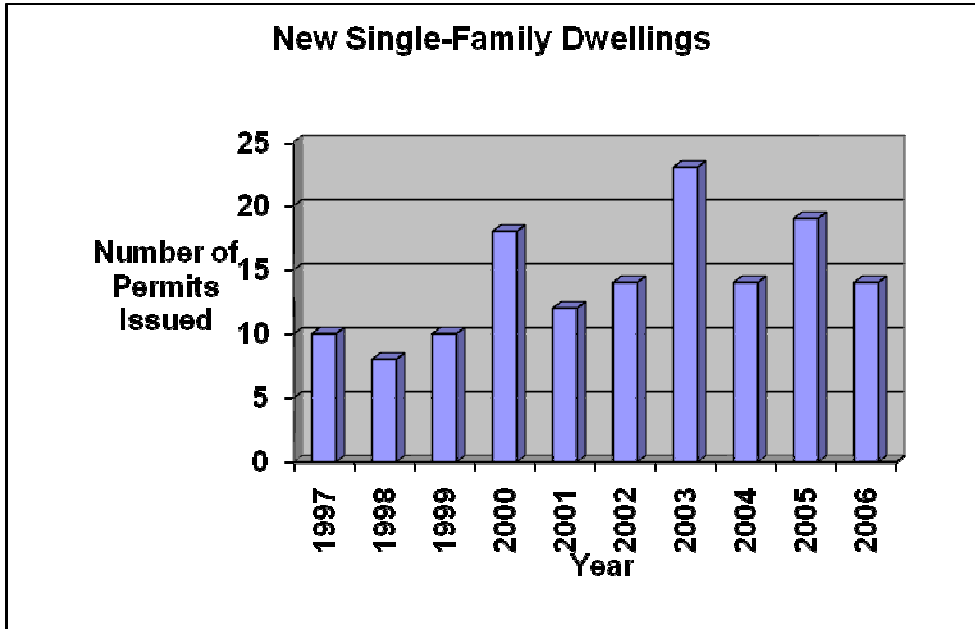
The New York State agricultural assessment program offers a lower tax assessment, under certain conditions, for land that is in active agricultural use. In 2006, 149 parcels owned by 79 different farmers/farm landowners received agricultural assessments.

Agricultural activities in Ghent include dairy, beef, sheep, and horse farms, farms producing field crops and hay, an orchard, and two plant nurseries and greenhouses. Some farm operations conduct multiple activities. Besides providing milk, grain, meat, wool, and vegetables for local and regional tables, farms and farmers benefit Ghent's citizens and the region by providing open space, scenic landscapes, wildlife habitat, and recreation areas. These amenities and rural character contribute to increased property values, and can bring new business, tourists, and second-home dollars to the Town. Diversifying products and serving new markets appear to be the wave of the future; these are vital steps if Ghent is to maintain its agricultural base.

Building and Subdivision Activity in Ghent

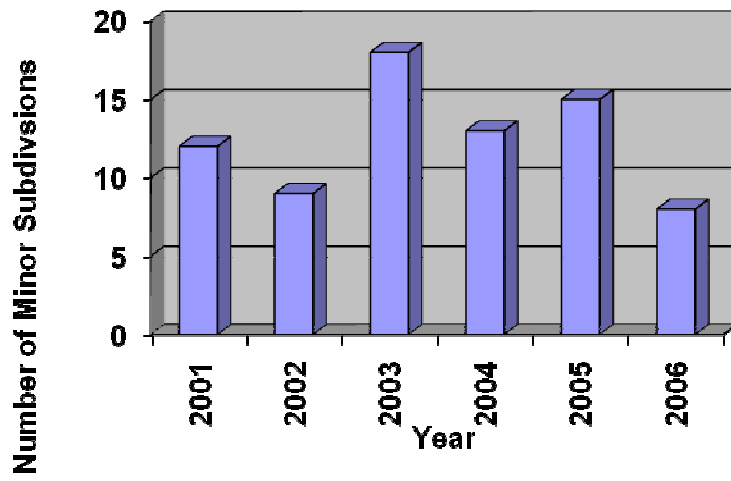
The following charts show growth in new single-family dwellings, commercial development and major/minor subdivision activity between 1997 and 2006. For single-family dwellings, the overall trend has been upward, although the number of new dwellings varies year to year. The number of new commercial buildings has also shown increasing trends, but the number is still small (only four in 2006). There has not been much major subdivision activity in the last few years in Ghent. However, there has been a relatively high level of minor subdivision activity: 91 minor subdivisions have been approved between 2000 and 2006.

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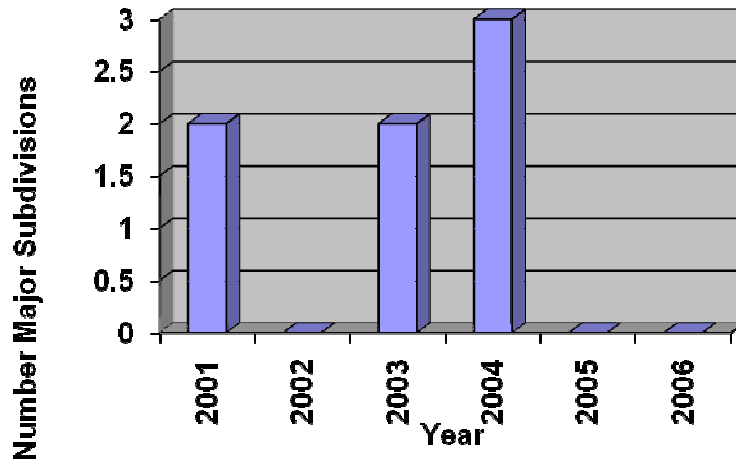


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Minor Subdivisions Approved



New Major Subdivisions



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Land Trust Properties

The Columbia Land Conservancy, located in Chatham, owns or holds easements on the following lands within the Town of Ghent:

Borden's Pond Preserve: 64 ½ acres along the eastern border with Chatham Village, almost all in Ghent, accessed from Route 203. It includes parking area, trails, and a pond. This is now open to the public.

County Route 21 Property: 54.6 acres of land fronting on County Route 21 not far from the Ghent hamlet. This was acquired by the Columbia Land Conservancy in December of 2006 and is not yet open to the public. This area features rolling meadows and good frontage on the Kline Kill Creek.

Other Properties: Conservation Easements are held by the Columbia Land Conservancy for a total of 1,466 acres in Ghent as of January 25, 2007. A total of 12 landowners and 14 parcels are involved. The Conservancy publishes an annual map that shows where these properties are located in Ghent, and throughout the County.

Other Public Lands

The Town of Ghent owns two recreational properties. The West Ghent Recreational Facility is located on County Route 22, near the intersection with Route 9H, and next to the West Ghent Reformed Church. This 17 acre property includes tennis courts, a basketball court, and a building for indoor recreational activities. The Town Park and Playground is located between Water Street and Maple Ave to the east of Route 66. This 5.5 acre property includes two ball fields, and tennis courts.

Tax Exempt Properties

According to tax information in the Town, 31 different organizations/agencies have properties in Ghent with tax exempt status. These range from fire company parcels of land to Town-owned parcels. A list of tax exempt properties is show in the table below.

Tax Exempt Properties in Ghent, 2007

Art Omi, Inc. (5 parcels)

Bible Baptist Church of Kinderhook (4 parcels)

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Chatham Cemetery, Route 203
Chatham School District, High School
Christ's Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage
Columbia Civic Players Theater
Columbia County (highway garage, airport, Ghent Flats railroad ROW, Former Kitchie farm on Route 66, and on Talerico Road)
Columbia County Agricultural Society Fairgrounds
Columbia County IDA (Community Service, of Route 66, Health Building 1049 Route 66)
Columbia Development Leasing Corp., Govt. Building 1024 Route 66
Columbia Economic Development Corp. (vacant industrial land)
Columbia Land Conservancy (Vacant land on Dinnegar Ext., Route 203 park, Vacant land on County Route 61)
Evam Institute
German Cemetery, German Church Road
Ghent Union Cemetery Association, County Route 9
Ghent Volunteer Fire Co. (2 parcels)
Greenburger Memorial Field (Payne Ave.)
Harlem Valley Rail Trail Association (Tice Hill Road)
High Point Senior Housing project
Hudson Valley Care Center, Aged Home and Health Bldg (Whittier Rehabilitation & Skilled Nursing Center)
MacHayden Theater, Route 66 theater
Maranatha Evangelical Mission, Route 203
Rudolph Steiner Educational and Farming Association (4 parcels, 2 rural)
Saint James Cemetery
Special Needs Program, Route 66
The Nature Institute, Inc., May Hill Road
Town of Ghent (Garage Place Road, Route 22 Recreation Facility, Town Hall, Park and Playground, Maple Ave. Playground, Water supply land, Water Street Cemetery)
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Village of Chatham (5 water supply, and 1 vacant commercial – Starks Park)
West Ghent Cemetery
West Ghent Reformed Church, Route 22
West Ghent Volunteer Fire Company, Bender Blvd.

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Historic Resources

According to records published by the New York State Historic Preservation Office, two locations are listed as being on the State and National Historic Registers: the Van Valkenerg – Isbister Farm and the Taconic State Parkway. Other locations included in the data base have the potential to be added to these historic registers but would need more evaluation first:

Arnold's Mills Babcock Farm Mammy Doodle Tavern

Arch Bridge North Creek Bridge Bartlett House (Hotel)

Metal Truss Bridge on Old Post Road Philip Engel Mill Ruins at Fitting Creek

Various locations on Route 66 including Breadstairs at Snyder Road, Brookside Flour and feed mill on Kline Kill opposite Pach Road, Almshouse at Junction of CR 9, Country Folk Gift Shop south of Nelson Ave.

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Demographics, Housing, and Labor

Population

According to the Squampamock history mentioned earlier, the Census of 1820 showed that there were 460 males over the age of 21 in the newly formed Town. By 1875, women were also included and figures indicated that 1,543 males, 1,514 females, and 432 “foreigners” resided in Ghent (if no overlap, a total of 3,489). In 1900, the population of Ghent (not including the Village of Chatham portion) was 1,745 persons. It declined to a low of 1,314 in 1920 and steadily increased as shown in Table 1, below. The population increase between 1980 and 1990 (for the total town including the Village), was 38%. The population increase between 1990 and 2000 increased 9.7%. Between 1990 and 2000, that portion of the Village of Chatham in Ghent decreased in population by 2.7%.

Similarly, the number of households decreased slightly between 1980 and 1990 but then increased 8.3% between 1990 and 2000. The Village of Chatham portion of the Town lost households (3.1% loss) in the previous decade. Considering growth outside the Village, the Town of Ghent increased population by 13.1% and increased households by 12%. Notice that the persons per family have decreased substantially over the years. The Village has even smaller persons per family than the Town as a whole.³

Table 1: Population

	1970	1980	1990 Total Town	1990 Town Outside Village	1990 Village Portion Only	2000 Total Town	2000 Village Portion Only	2000 Town Outside Village
Persons	3729	4636	4812	3750	1062	5276	1033	4243
Households	1683	1875	1865	1412	453	2020	439	1581
Persons Per Family			3.018			2.98	2.32	

³ Census information on population is gathered at the place of primary residence. Therefore, weekenders and second-home owners have probably been substantially “under-counted”. Since at least some of the residential construction has been for second homes, census data do not give the entire picture of the current population trends. The increases and changes noted in this section do not include those related to second homes and thus the housing stock and average household size figures, especially may be artificially low.

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Housing

While populations were increasing, so was the number of housing units. Between 1980 and 1990, the number of housing units increased 12.8%. The growth in housing units slowed a small amount between 1990 and 2000 but still increased 9%. While the Village portion of Ghent lost population, the number of housing units in that part of Town increased 1.1%. Outside the Village, the number of housing units increased 11.3%. This is about equal to the population growth.

About 90% of all housing units are occupied. Of those that are vacant, about half are considered seasonal units and that pattern has not changed between 1990 and 2000. Most of the vacant houses in Ghent are located outside of the Village of Chatham portion of Town. The median value of an owner-occupied home has increased 7.42% to \$114,140 in 2000. While values of owner-occupied housing has increased, rents charged in Ghent has decreased (15.7%) from \$400 per month to \$337 per month.

Most of the occupied units are owner occupied (1510 out of 2020 units or 75%. In 2000 there were 510 rental units in Ghent, up from 395 in 1990 (a 29% increase). The number of vacant units has remained steady over the years.

Census information indicates that Ghent's housing stock is relatively new overall: 46% of all houses have been built in the past 30 years. Between 1990 and March of 2000, 13% of all units were built. 32% of all units were built before 1939. Many of the older homes can be found within the Village of Chatham portion of Ghent.

Table 2: Household and Housing Costs

	1980	1990 Total Town	2000 Total Town	1990 Town Outside Village	2000 Town Outside Village	1990 Village Portion Only	2000 Village Portion Only
Housing Units	1825	2059	2244	1596	1776	463	468
Occupied Housing Units	1656	1834	2020	1399	1581	435	439
Vacant Housing Units	169	225	224	197	195	28	29
Seasonal Vacant		130	135				

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	1980	1990 Total Town	2000 Total Town	1990 Town Outside Village	2000 Town Outside Village	1990 Village Portion Only	2000 Village Portion Only
Units							
Median Value Owner-Occupied House		106,260	114,140				
Median Gross Rent		400.60	337.60				

Housing Affordability (2000 US Census Data)

There are several ways to determine if housing is generally affordable in a community. One method is to determine the “rental index”. This index shows the maximum gross rent a given household can afford. Affordable rental housing is generally considered to be no more than 30% of a household’s monthly income. The average monthly rental rate in the Town of Ghent in 2000 was \$337.00. The median household income is \$43,431. This is about \$3,619 of income per month. Thirty percent of this is \$1,086, which means that the average household could afford \$1,086 per month in rent. This figure is higher than the average monthly rent. Thus, rentals are affordable in Ghent for the average households. However, there are many households that earn below the median income level and it is these households that would have more difficulty affording the \$337 rent.

Another method to determine affordability is to look at the ratio between the median value of a single-family house and median household income. Nationally, a ratio of 2 or less is considered to be affordable. The affordability ratio for Ghent is \$114,140 (median value of homes) divided by \$43,431 (median household income), or 2.63. This figure is above the desired ratio of “2” and indicates that some families would spend more than twice their annual income on a home. This figure indicates that affordability of homes is an issue in Ghent.

Finally, the purchase price multiplier also gives an indication of affordability. This looks at the maximum mortgage approval amount likely to be given to potential homebuyers. This is usually about 2.25 times annual income. The figure below shows this multiplier plus a 10% down payment. This is the amount of

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money that would be able to be afforded for a mortgage by the median household.

$$2.25 \times \$43,431 = \$97,720 + 9772 = \$107,491$$

Thus, median households (and those households who earn more than the median income) would be able to afford at least a \$107,491 dollar house (using 2000 Census data figures). With the median value of a house in the area (in 2000) at \$114,140, it would indicate that many households have some difficulty affording the average house. As the average price of homes has increased substantially since 2000, even more households would have difficulty affording the average priced house.

County Housing Affordability (Using City Data.com Estimated 2005 Data for Columbia County)

It is very difficult to get specific data on housing values and incomes for the Town outside of the 2000 census. This analysis used estimated data for Columbia County. This 2005 estimated data showed a median household income of \$47,795, a median value of owner-occupied house at \$196,104, and an average monthly rent of \$553. Using these figures, the housing affordability information is as follows:

Rental Index = \$1195 per month: rentals are generally affordable

Affordability Index = 4.1: housing values have increased disproportionately from income and this shows an acute problem related to housing affordability.

Purchase Price Multiplier = \$118,293: Thus many households would not be able to afford a mortgage for the average priced house.

Housing Units

About 65% of all housing units are one family units. The number of two-family units has increased about 3.3% and the number of multi-family units has increased from 162 to 183, or a 13% increase. The number of mobile homes in Town has increased more than all other types of housing units with 428 units (19.1% of all units). This is a 27% increase in mobile homes between 1990 and 2000.

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Table 3: Units in Housing Structure

Units in Structure	1990 Total Town	2000 Total Town
1-family	1393	1473
Two-family	151	156
3 to 20 units	162	183
Mobile Homes	337	428

Residential Patterns

Table 4 illustrates trends related to the movement of the population. The majority of Town residents aged over 5 years have lived in the same house between 1995 and 2000 (65%) but this is slightly less than in 1990 when 70% of those aged 5 and older lived in the same house for the previous five years. The number of people living in Columbia County has been relatively stable between 1990 and 2000 and there has been an increase in people moving into Ghent from areas outside of Columbia County. Neighboring town statistics are included for comparison.

Table 4: Residential Patterns

	Ghent 1990 (Total Town)	Ghent 2000 (Total Town)	Austerlitz 2000	Chatham 2000	Claverack 2000	Greenport 2000	Hillsdale 2000	Kinderhook 2000	Stockport 2000	Stuyvesant 2000
Lived in Same house for past 5 years	3,112 (70%)	3,260 (65%)	937 (67%)	2,621 (65%)	4,031 (66%)	2,656 (67%)	1,027 (62%)	4,859 (62%)	1,985 (72%)	1,391 (68%)
Lived in different house, but same County for past 5 years	987 (22%)	1,152 (23%)	222 (16%)	814 (20%)	1,289 (21%)	989 (25%)	293 (18%)	1,674 (21%)	590 (22%)	435 (21%)
Lived in different County, but same State for past 5 years	288 (6.4%)	405 (8.1%)	109 (8%)	426 (11%)	505 (8%)	210 (5%)	132 (8%)	937 (12%)	132 (5%)	142 (7%)

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Employment and Labor

Table 5, below, shows that for the past 10 years, the majority of those aged 16 years and older worked in Columbia County (72%). This is only slightly lower than that in 1990. A smaller number of people work outside of Columbia County (about 24%) but an increasing number of Ghent residents work outside of New York State (4.5%). There has been a large increase in the number of people working from home, up to 130 people from 52 in 1990. That represents about 5.3% of the workforce and a 150% increase over the level of home occupations in 1990. Of those employed, fewer people are living closer to home and more are traveling over 20 minutes to get to work. In 2000, 47.3% of workers traveled more than 20 minutes compared to 41.5% in 1990.

The employment rate has been fairly constant between 1990 and 2000 (about 1.8% unemployed). About 62% of residents aged 16 and older are employed and this figure is not very different from that in 1990. The number of people not in the labor force has increased however and in 2000 38.4% are not in the labor force. This compares to 35% not in the labor force in 1990. This probably reflects an aging population with more retirees.

Table 5: Employment Patterns

	1980 Total Town	1990 Total Town	2000 Total Town
Worked in County of Residence	1401	1721	1762
Worked outside of County of Residence	323	536	583
Worked outside of State	11	70	110
Worked 5 to 19 minutes away from home		1308	1167
Worked over 20 minutes from home		967	1158
Worked at home		52	130
Unemployed	156	75	73
Employed	2077	2379	2565
Not in Labor Force	1392	1318	1598

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Educational Attainment

The table below shows a moderate increase in the number of people attaining some college degree. This went from 28% of the population aged 25 and older in 1990 to 35% in 2000. Those with less than a high school education have dropped in the past decade. An interesting trend according to the 2000 census data is a decrease in the number of people earning a high school degree. In 1990, 33% of those aged 25 and older had received a high school diploma and in 2000, this had fallen to 29%.

Table 6: Educational Attainment

	1990 Total Town	2000 Total Town
Less than 9 th grade education	281	254
9 th to 12 th grade education	451	509
High School Diploma	1061	1100
Some college	537	594
College Degrees	924	1294

Incomes

Median household income and per capita income levels have risen between 1990 and 2000. Median household income has risen 37% and the per capita income has increased 47% between 1990 and 2000. At the same time, the number of people aged 64 years or younger living below the poverty level has increased. Note that the number of households with public assistance has decreased substantially (down 66.7%) between 1990 and 2000, but this probably reflects a change in the federal assistance programs that made fewer people eligible. A more important figure is the increase in the number of people living below the poverty level. In Ghent, about 4.4% of all residents lived below the poverty level in 2000 and about 3.4% lived below the poverty level in 1990.

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Table 7: Incomes

	1990 Total Town	2000 Total Town
Median Household Income	31,693	43,431
Households with public assistance	81	27
Per Capita Income	14,377	21,083
# people under poverty level aged < 18 years	28	50
# people under poverty level aged 18 to 64 years	69	117
# people under poverty level aged 64+	61	63

Industries and Occupations

The workforce contains a balance between professional, managerial, and technical workers and those engaged in blue-collar occupations. In 1980, private business provided jobs for 1,248 or 65% of Ghent workers over 16 years of age, while 450 (23%) were government employees. Almost 12% (223) were self-employed or worked for no pay in a family business. In 1990, 68% of the workforce was employed in private enterprise (1,412 in for-profit and 191 in not-for-profit businesses). Over 21% of Ghent workers were in government, and almost 11% (257) were self-employed or worked in unpaid family businesses in 1990.

In 2000, these figures were:

57% of all wage and salary workers were in private for-profit businesses.

9% were in non-for-profit businesses.

21% were government workers:

12% were local government workers

9% were state government workers

<1% was federal government workers

10% were self-employed workers

Table 8, below, shows occupations of Ghent workers. The executive, administrative, and managerial occupations were the most prevalent occupations

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for Ghent workers. The general pattern of occupations is similar to that of 1990 with the exception of those employed in agriculture. In 1990, 64 persons were listed as having agricultural related occupations. By 2000, that had fallen to 12.

Table 8. Occupation of employed persons 16 years and older in 2000

Executive, administrative, managerial	905 (36%)
Professional specialty	554 (22%)
Sales	575 (23%)
Service	356 (14%)
Farming*, Forestry, Fishing	6 (less than 1%)
Transportation	352 (14%)
Construction, extraction, maintenance	287 (12%)

* Actual experience leads us to believe there are more residents employed in farming than indicated here.

The following industries showed decreased numbers of people aged 16 and over employed:

Agriculture, forestry, fisheries, mining
Manufacturing
Transportation
Wholesale Trade
Retail Trade
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate
Other professional and related services
Public Administration

The following industries showed increased numbers of people aged 16 and over employed:

Construction
Communications and Information
Entertainment and Recreation
Professional Health and Related Services
Professional Educational and Related Services

The industry with the most Ghent workers is health related services, followed by education, retail trade, manufacturing, and entertainment/recreation. Again, agriculture, forestry, fisheries and mining has shown a decrease from 5.4% of the

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workforce in 1980, to 3.2% of the workforce in 1990 and with only 1.9% of the workforce in 2000.

School Districts

Four public school districts serve students in Ghent; Chatham Central School District, Ichabod Crane (Kinderhook) Central School District, Hudson City School District, and the Taconic Hills Central School District. These school districts have undergone demographic changes over the past several years as follows:

Chatham Central School District

Measurement	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006
# students	1501	1422	1423
# teachers	111	124	124
Annual Attendance Rate	92%	94%	94%
Avg. Class Size (Grade 8 Math)	15	18	15
Graduation Rate			85%
Eligibility Rate for Free Lunch	13%	13%	13%
Overall Accountability Status as Determined by NYS			In Good Standing
Student/Teacher Ratio	13.52	11.46	11.47

Ichabod Crane Central School District

Measurement	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006
# students	2285	2276	2214
# teachers	172	178	173
Annual Attendance Rate	95%	96%	95%
Avg. Class Size (Grade 8 Math)	17	20	17
Graduation Rate			85%
Eligibility Rate for Free Lunch	12%	14%	13%
Overall Accountability Status as Determined by NYS			In Good Standing
Student/Teacher Ratio	13.28	12.78	12.79

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Taconic Hills Central School District

Measurement	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006
# students	1871	1833	1762
# teachers	149	148	156
Annual Attendance Rate	93%	93%	94%
Avg. Class Size (Grade 8 Math)	17	22	17
Graduation Rate			82
Eligibility Rate for Free Lunch	19%	21%	20%
Overall Accountability Status as Determined by NYS			In Good Standing
Student/Teacher Ratio	12.55	12.39	11.29

A closer look at the three schools that make up the Taconic Hills School District (elementary, middle and high schools), shows that the elementary and middle school enrollment has been relatively steady over the past 3 years, and the high school has risen 7% between 2002 and 2005 from 614 students to 657 students. Dropout rate has decreased slightly and suspension rate has remained steady. The student teacher ratio has changed from 11.97 students per teacher in 2001-2002 to 12.39 students per teacher in 2004-2005.

Hudson City School District

Measurement	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006
# students	2215	2193	2076
# teachers	208	203	195
Annual Attendance Rate	92	93	94
Avg. Class Size (Grade 8 Math)	18	15	15
Graduation Rate			68
Eligibility Rate for Free Lunch	38	42	39
Overall Accountability Status as Determined by NYS			In Good Standing
Student/Teacher Ratio	10.65	10.8	10.65

The Hudson City High School has seen a 5.8% increase in the student enrollment between 1998 and 2005. At the same time, the suspension rate has increased, but the student teacher ratio has decreased. The Middle School, John Edwards School, and Greenport School have all seen decreased student enrollments (13.5%, 19.8%, and 22.3% respectively). While the student population has decreased, the number of teachers has remained steady or increased, and thus has

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resulted in a lower student/teacher ratio in these three schools.

Transportation

An important factor in the growth and development of a community is the transportation infrastructure that connects it to the rest of the world. As mentioned previously, Ghent is not an isolated community. The network of public roadways built and maintained by New York State, Columbia County, and the Town of Ghent, provides the primary method of transportation available to residents of Ghent. New York State Routed 9H and 66, once called the “post road” and the “Union Turnpike” respectively, are the key features of the regional transportation network. Trucks comprise a significant portion of the traffic through the Town, particularly along Route 9H.

The highways in Ghent can be categorized as follows:

New York State roads: 42.76 miles of hard surface “highway lane” road pass through the Town of Ghent, including sections of the Taconic State Parkway and State Routes 9H, 66, 203, and 217.

Columbia County roads: 18.75 miles of hard surface roads, including portions of County Routes 9, 21, 21-C, and 22.

Town of Ghent roads: 70 miles of hard surface road and 10 miles of gravel road.

Private roads: The town contains between 7 and 8 miles of privately owned road.

In Ghent, Town roads are maintained by the Town of Ghent Highway Department through state and local tax revenues: in 2007, appropriated for the Highway Department was over \$1 million and is the largest expenditure of tax dollars in Ghent. The Highway Department is located on a parcel off of Garage Place Road where buildings include a new salt shed (shared with Columbia County), a large main building built in the 1920’s as well as three smaller machinery sheds. The town has also approved construction of a new highway garage to be built over the next year (2009). The Town has formal or informal agreements to share services with Columbia County, Town of Austerlitz, Town of Stockport, Town of Canaan, Town of Kinderhook, and Town of Chatham.

In 2007, the Department had eight full time employees (not including the Superintendent) and five or six part-time employees. Equipment includes seven large trucks with plows, two medium trucks with plows, three one-ton trucks (2

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with plows) and one bucket truck with no plow. Other equipment includes two loaders, one grader, one mowing tractor, one backhoe, one track excavator and one roller.

Areas of concern to the Highway Department are the need for some dirt roads to be widened and the need for a new highway garage. Problems with flooding and drainage occur and are addressed as required.

As in most rural towns, the highway maintenance budget is one of the largest expenses for taxpayers to bear. As development occurs and population increases, the cost of maintaining roads grows quickly. Demands from newcomers often bring political pressure to pave more Town roads, requiring more specialized heavy equipment. Guiding settlement patterns to avoid sprawl can be helpful in avoiding skyrocketing road improvement and maintenance costs.

Traffic volumes on state roads are shown in the table below. The table shows the traffic volume measured as the annual average daily traffic for both directions of the route segment. Overall, most road segments measured over the past decade have shown increased traffic volumes. The road segment with the largest increase in traffic volume is on the Taconic State Parkway as it travels through Town. Other non-parkway highway segments showed traffic volume increases ranging from 8% to 26%. In 1995/1996 the traffic volume was approximately 45,930 traveling state highways in Ghent on average per day. In 2000 that figure was 50,810 or an 11% increase in annual average daily traffic.

There is no traffic count information for County or local highways.

Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) for State Highways in Ghent by Year of Traffic Count

Route	Segment Description	AADT (Year)	AADT (Year)	AADT (Year)	AADT (Year)	Overall Traffic Count Trend§
203	Taconic State Parkway to Route 66 Chatham	2818(01)	2950 (00)	2400(95)	2600(92)	+ 8%

§ + Shows a general increasing trend in traffic volume and (+/-) shows a variable traffic volume trend over the years.

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Route	Segment Description	AADT (Year)	AADT (Year)	AADT (Year)	AADT (Year)	Overall Traffic Count Trends
203	Route 66 to CR 26	3700(00)	3400(95)	3200(92)	3600(89)	+/-
217	Taconic State Parkway to end of Route 217	860(00)	846(99)	780(96)	680(95)	+ 26%
217	CR 6 Martindale Road to Taconic State Parkway	1150(00)	1234(01)	1050(95)	1100(92)	+/-
Taconic State Parkway	Route 217 to Route 203	5330(02)	3350(00)	4200(95)	4050(92)	+ 32%
66	Route 9H to CR 53 South of Ghent	4751(02)	4700(00)	4000(95)	3950(92)	+ 20%
66	CR 53 South of Ghent to Route 203 Chatham	6552(02)	7450(00)	7350(99)	5800(95)	+ 13%
9H	Valatie Route 9 to Route 9 at end Route 9H	8323(99)	8450(00)	7100(95)	6700(91)	+ 24%
9H	Route 66 to Route 9 Valatie	6588(02)	8600(00)	6700(94)	5700(89)	+ 16%
9H	Route 66	5553(02)	5050(00)	4850(96)	4500(93)	+ 23%
9H	Route 9 and Route 82 and Start of Route 23 to Route 23B	4353(02)	4550(00)	5750(96)	5000(92)	+/-

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Route	Segment Description	AADT (Year)	AADT (Year)	AADT (Year)	AADT (Year)	Overall Traffic Count Trends
	and end of Route 23					

Municipal and Emergency Services

In addition to maintaining highways, Town government oversees additional services to taxpayers including emergency services such as fire, police, rescue, etc. Limited water and sewer infrastructure (in certain areas of the Town) is provided by the Village of Chatham. Among other things, the Town government also handles building inspection and zoning enforcement, provides stipends for municipal officials, pays salaries to administrative staff, contracts with consultants (attorney, engineer, etc.) as necessary, and contributes to veterans' services, programs for the aging, the council on the arts, band concerts, community celebrations, and cemetery maintenance.

Water and Sewer

Most residential, commercial, and industrial facilities in the Town of Ghent are served by on-site wells and septic systems. The Commerce Park development on Route 9H is served by County water and sewer facilities.

Three water lines from the Village of Chatham serve portions of the Town of Ghent. One serves the Edgewood Acres mobile home park (about 160 units) located west of the Chatham Fairgrounds off Route 203. This line also serves residences on Houseman Avenue and Roxbury Road. In addition, the Village of Chatham also provides sewer service to Edgewood Acres and to two residences on Houseman Avenue.

The second water line is located on the west side of State Route 66 from the Village and terminates at the Taconic Telephone property. A third water line meanders back and forth across Route 66 to the hamlet of Ghent, where it serves much of the hamlet's residential development, the White Stone Café, the Dairy Queen, and the X-tra Mart.

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The Village's hook-up fee for water delivery to parcels outside the Village boundary is \$1550. The Village is not required to connect water or sewer services to properties in Ghent through which lines pass, although such residents can apply for water delivery services. Extension of water and sewer lines by the Village into the Town and provision of services is purely discretionary. By contrast, the Village has legal responsibilities to provide service to Village residents.

Solid Waste

The Town of Ghent does not provide trash collection services for residents; individuals can contract with private haulers to remove garbage and recyclables. A County recycling facility, run by Resource Recovery System, has been established at the Commerce Center, and receives many types of recyclables collected at transfer stations County-wide.

The County provides transfer stations and recycling centers at various locations. Depending on their location in the town, the closest for Ghent residents are on Newman Road off of NYS route 23B in the Town of Greenport, Route 295 north of the Village of Chatham, or Route 9h in the town of Kinderhook. From these transfer stations, waste is delivered to a regional landfill in Seneca Falls, NY. The County sponsors an annual collection day for tires and hazardous materials at the Greenport transfer station. Disposal costs are \$125 per ton for truck loads, \$0.50 per 7 gallon bag, \$2.00 per 15 gallon bag, \$3.00 per 30 gallon bag, \$4.00 per 40 gallon bag, and \$5.50 per 55 gallon bag. Capacity of the solid waste system is adequate, and able to handle more.

Columbia County Airport

The Columbia County Airport is a 308 acre publicly owned public-use transport facility. It serves the aviation needs of Columbia County and the Upper Hudson Region of NY. The County of Columbia owns the airport and its operation is the responsibility of the Department of Public Works.

Direct access to the airport is provided by Route 9H and the airport is about 20 minutes from the NYS Thruway. The aircraft at the airport include a mix of propeller driven aircraft and large aircraft including 3 jets owned and operated by the fixed base operator Richmor Aviation. Transient aircraft consists of many similar to the types presently based at the airport. Many private jets use the airport regularly, especially in the summer. The airport also accommodates

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several helicopters. The airport is not serviced by a precision instrument landing aid but this upgrade is being considered in 2011. The airport fuel facilities consist of two 8000 gallon jet fuel and 2 6000 gallon AVGAS tanks. The fuel facility is owned by the County and operated by Richmor Aviation.

Airport estimates its maximum annual volume at 230,000 landing and takeoffs. At present, the volume is about 50,000 thus indicating that capacity will not restrain the growth of the airport. The Columbia County Airport generates a regional economic impact annually of 220 jobs, \$6.6 million in income, and \$12.2 million in total economic impact.

Police Protection

The Town of Ghent hires local residents to act as “constables” during events or activities which may require police protection. At the Town Supervisor’s discretion, police can also be hired through a “rent-a-Deputy” program for special events in the Town. The services of a part-time officer or deputy, from the Columbia County Sheriff’s Department can be subcontracted on an as-needed basis.

The Sheriff’s Department, based in the City of Hudson, is on call whenever events occur in Ghent that require immediate police action. The Sheriff’s Department patrols every town in Columbia County; generally a patrol passes through Ghent at least every eight hours.

Those Ghent residents that live within the Village of Chatham boundary are also in the jurisdiction of the Chatham Police Department.

Fire Protection and Rescue Services

Two fire companies provide fire protection in Ghent: Ghent Volunteer Fire Company No. 1 and the West Ghent Volunteer Fire Company. Ambulance services are provided through Chatham Rescue, Valatie Rescue, and Greenport Rescue. There are also automatic mutual aid agreements with Chatham and Philmont for coverage at various times of the day and in certain parts of the Town. Rescue squads are dispatched depending on location of call and also availability of squads. Rescue squads are automatically dispatched with all fire calls. All Ghent emergency service organizations rely on Albany Medical Center and the NY State Police for med-flights in cases where critical care is required. The Greenport Rescue has paid employees and numerous volunteers.

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The Ghent Volunteer Fire Company has 30 active members. Equipment includes a 2006 Central States pumper with 1500 gpm pump, 750 gallon tank and compressed air/foam system; a 1997 Central States pumper with 1500 gpm pump and 1000 gallon tank; a 1998 GMC 4x4 brush truck with 150 gpm pump and 250 gallon tank; a 1983 international Tanker with 3500 gallon tank and 50 gpm pump and the fire company's original attack pumper, a 1928 American LaFrance.

The West Ghent Volunteer Fire Company is an independent corporation that contracts to protect the western third of the Town as well as the northern portion of the Town of Claverack. It has 14 active members. The Company has a new firehouse with six bays for equipment as well as a meeting and banquet hall to accommodate 150 people. It is located in the Columbia County Commerce Park.

The equipment consists of a diesel pumper with 1,250 gallon water capacity and a 1500 gpm pump, a second pumper with 1500 gpm pump as well as a 1000 gallon tank. They also have a diesel powered 10-wheel tanker with 3500 gallon capacity, a brush truck with winch and 250 gpm pump, a utility box van with extra equipment and clothing, and a rescue mini-pumper with 750 gpm pump and 500 gallon tank. This last truck has accident extrication equipment (jaws and spreaders and generator). The West Ghent District includes the coverage of the Columbia County Airport, BAC Sales, Ginsberg's Food Warehouse, a waste recycling plant, a truss manufacturing plant among others.

A major issue related to these fire companies is loss of volunteer staff, and the lack of affordable housing.

Medical Services

The nearest hospital is Columbia Memorial Hospital (CMH) in Hudson, about ten miles from the center of the Town of Ghent. Rescue squad ambulances can generally reach the hospital within 12 to 15 minutes of leaving an emergency call in Ghent. CMH can refer patients requiring specialty cancer care, open heart surgery, and in-patient rehabilitation to St. Peter's Hospital in Albany. In addition, Albany Medical Center, a teaching hospital, is available for transfers of patients requiring more sophisticated care. The nearby Valatie Medical Arts Building, opened in 1993, serves Ghent residents as well. Some residents in the eastern portion of the town travel into Massachusetts for hospital services at the Berkshire Medical Center in Pittsfield. The Medi-Vac out of Albany Medical Center and State Police helicopters are also available for an emergency. CMH

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maintains a dozen Family Care Centers in Columbia, Greene, and northern Dutchess Counties. Two of these are located in Ghent. The Chatham Family Care Center is located at 31 Dardess Drive in the village, and the Ghent Family Care Center is located at 60 Garage Place Road. Hudson Valley Orthopedic Associates, P. C. also has an office on Fish and Game Road near Route 66 in Claverack.

Public Transportation

Columbia County Public Transportation provides bus service with stops in Germantown, Hudson, Greenport, Kinderhook, Valatie, Columbiaville, to various locations in Albany. Other public transportation options include:

C.A.R.T.S. – a program designed to provide medical transportation to low-income individuals who lack any other means of transportation. It operates weekdays from 8 AM to 4 PM year round.

Coxsackie Transport is a private company that provides ambulance service, airport transport, taxi service, pay-as-you-go service and contract transportation services. Other taxi services are provided by Hudson City Taxi, Folmsbee Transportation, Green Bee Errand Service, and Johns Taxi (Chatham area).

Columbia Transport with service from Hudson to Ghent, Chatham, Valatie, and the route 9H-66 area.

RIDE – for senior citizen trips for medical appointments only.

Mini Bus Transportation Service – for the elderly and disable featuring wheelchair tie downs.

Veterans Administration Van – owned by the County and operated by volunteers.

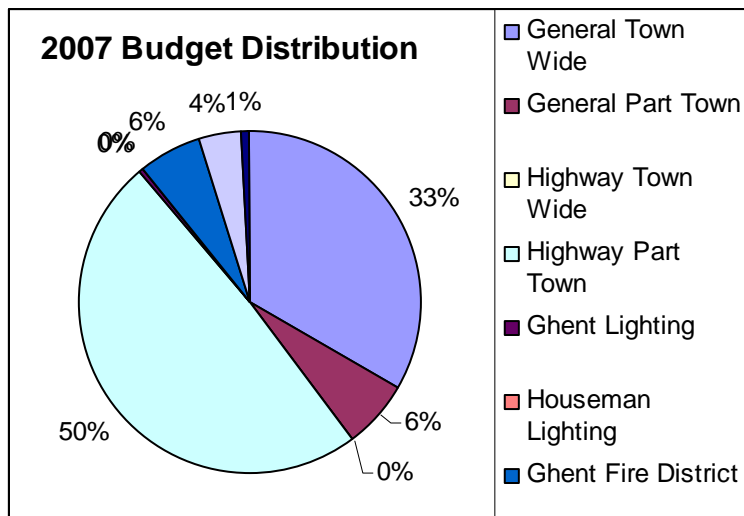
Charities and other Health and Human Service agencies serving Ghent residents

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Columbia Children’s Center
 Columbia Opportunities, Inc.
 Catholic Charities, Inc.
 Common Ground Dispute Resolution, Inc.
 Crellin Morris Association
 Family Resource Centers of Columbia County
 Family of Woodstock, Inc.
 Mental Health Association of Columbia and Greene Counties, Inc.
 Operation Unite Education and Cultural Arts Center
 The REACH Center
 The Salvation Army of Hudson
 Time and Space Limited
 The Healthcare Consortium

Town Budget

In 2007, the Town budget can be summarized as follows:



The town budget funds over the last three years

Fund	2005	2006	2,007
General Town Wide	\$ 531,245	\$ 653,870	\$ 694,440
General Part Town	\$ 74,459	\$ 124,990	\$ 132,975
Highway Town Wide		\$ 2,160	\$ 2,153

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Highway Part Town	\$ 1,183,372	\$ 1,424,410	\$ 1,022,400
Ghent Lighting	\$ 9,350	\$ 10,400	\$ 9,900
Houseman Lighting	\$ 425	\$ 425	\$ 300
Ghent Fire District	\$ 115,000	\$ 120,000	\$ 125,000
West Ghent Fire	\$ 70,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 80,000
Chatham Fire	\$ 17,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 19,250

Other Columbia County Town Budgets

The following table shows the various tax levies and tax rates for all Columbia County towns in 2006. The equalization rate is the state's measure of a municipality's level of assessment. This is the ratio of total assessed value (determined by the town) to the municipality's total market value (determined by the state).

Municipality	Municipal Tax Levy	Municipal Tax Rate Per \$1000 Assessed Value	State Equalization Rate
Town of New Lebanon	563,360	3.15	71.00
Town of Greenport	966,246	3.11	100.00
Town of Taghkanic	528,088	2.67	100.00
Town of Stockport	255,791	2.65	80.09
Town of Ancram	476,550	2.55	63.93
Town of Germantown	404,000	2.34	79.60
Town of Hillsdale	692,085	2.29	78.00
Town of Chatham	951,046	2.12	75.00
Town of Copake	727,996	1.98	75.33
Town of Gallatin	348,650	1.70	100.00
Town of Livingston	341,840	1.65	85.00
Town of Ghent	468,980	1.64	63.79
Town of Stuyvesant	245,063	1.62	90.00
Town of Austerlitz	443,649	1.41	80.00
Town of Claverack	460,796	1.25	74.55
Town of Kinderhook	440,967	0.84	100.00
Town of Canaan	163,809	0.49	94.19
Town of Clermont	62,700	0.39	80.18

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The following table shows the various tax levies and tax rates in 2005, for the four school districts serving the town of Ghent.

School District	School Tax Levy for the area of the town being served	School Tax Rate Per \$1000 AV
Chatham	4,065,028	18.74
Taconic Hills	864,222	15.43
Hudson	275,980	21.29
Ichabod Crane	666,867	19.80

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2. Public Visioning Workshop

The Town of Ghent hosted 2 visioning workshops in April and May 2007. The development of a shared vision statement is important for the long-term success of Ghent's Comprehensive Plan. A vision statement is necessary to judge future policies, programs, and actions. It also acts as a “consistency test” for decisions made at the local level. Visioning is a strategic tool that will help Ghent:

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

At the workshops held in April and May of 2007, 45 participants worked through a visioning process to develop a vision for the future of the town. Small groups worked together to identify specific elements of their vision and to devise a statement that characterizes that vision. The first step was to identify both negative and positive elements of the Town. These elements, or factors, were recorded, and then ranked by the individual groups by placing a "priority" sticker next to the factor each group member felt was the most significant. The following two tables categorize all of the negative and positive factors identified along with the number of priority stickers each category received at this first stage of the visioning process.

Negative Factors Identified by the Workshop Participants:

Category	Number of Responses in Category	Number of Priority Stickers for this category	Negative Factors Identified
Planning & Zoning	20	21	
			Lack of control of development – present laws allow too much Development: increase population Haphazard development/subdivisions
			5 acre zoning too large Average density zoning not prevalent enough Lot sizes too large Cluster development 5/3 acres too large to care for

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Category	Number of Responses in Category	Number of Priority Stickers for this category	Negative Factors Identified
			Not proactive enough on open space planning and preservation including encouraging agriculture No environmental plan No mechanism for saving open space
			Enforcement of site plans for commercial, certificate of occupancy Failure to enforce zoning code
			Sub-development layout haphazard Site plans in the hamlet of Ghent and entire Town – no architectural standards Zoning: lack of direction for signage, lighting, 1 acre, aesthetics
			9-H needs restrictions – becoming too much of a commercial zone, zoning of looks Too much commercially zoned land
			Would like to establish historic district – loss of historic structures
			Choice of doing with land that you own is what you want to
Housing & Land Prices	13	14	
			Lack of housing on smaller parcels of land – smaller lots Lack of affordable housing Inability for young to afford land/housing Land price affordability for next generation Affordability of housing Lack of senior housing No housing for young Lack of quality apartments for rentals Affordable living (assessments)
			Housing Development?? Land speculation
			Cluster housing
			Septic costs for new houses
Taxes/Tax Base	13	9	

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Category	Number of Responses in Category	Number of Priority Stickers for this category	Negative Factors Identified
			High taxes Accelerating taxes High taxes Disparity in taxation Property and School tax Property taxes Inconsistent tax rate, lopsided Higher assessments for improvements Inequitable tax system No notion of what is getting taxed
			Commerce Park no helping tax base Lack of \$ return on Commerce Park – too many tax breaks, not enough return on development
			Too much tax \$ to Highway Dept.- Water St & W. Ghent Rec need attention
Rail Trail & Recreation	13	9	
			More recreational land use such as Rail Trail Not enough walking trails available to the public Lack of biking/walking trail
			Against Rail Trail, divides property, road turns into tourist attraction No Rail Trails wanted
			No public land in the Town for recreation No Community Events Board Lack of recreational opportunities Recreation areas lacking in equipment and upkeep Water St. parking for rec field Upgrade recreational facilities Lack of nature-based recreation Snowmobiles
Community Appearance	14	7	
			View shed protected, National historic sites should be sacred Turning to suburbia Hill topping

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Category	Number of Responses in Category	Number of Priority Stickers for this category	Negative Factors Identified
			Ridge-line housing is undesirable Houses on hills – hill topping Clear cutting on top of hills View shed housing on top of hills
			Dairy Queen too modern Town Garage and downtown areas ugly Ugly center of town (Xtra Mart, car wash) Ugly Hamlet – Water St. & Rt. 66/Stone Store Rd. Noise from Dairy Queen White lighting Vacant buildings
Agriculture	5	7	
			Decline of farming Lack of farms Distressed by decline of agriculture Lack of farming, agriculture Decrease in farmed land
Business	9	5	
			Locate business in business district Location of new businesses in the town is very difficult or impossible Additional Industrial Park needed – lack of land for commercial development,
			Too many similar businesses – bank, auto No commercial base
			Cleanliness of Commerce Park businesses
			Developers that don't invest in the community Anti-business attitude Encourage farmers/landholders to sell development rights to the State
Speed Enforcement	10	4	
			Speed on 21C Speeding on roads Road speed, maintenance – Fowler (sp?) Lake Road Speed limit enforcement Speed limits unmarked, assumed to be 55

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Category	Number of Responses in Category	Number of Priority Stickers for this category	Negative Factors Identified
Roads & Traffic	12	3	Enforcement of Town speed limit (safety) Town should have control of speed and load limits on Town Roads Speed/weather related accidents (4) on 21C CR 9 speed 55 to 45 Local road speed enforcement
			Road maintenance – Ostrander, Carpenter Rd Road maintenance, speed Road maintenance
			Arnold Mills Road traffic Route 66 traffic Traffic on Arch Bridge Road, urbanization of area causing problem quantity Traffic issue on CR 22 Too much traffic on Route 66 and 9H Large truck traffic
			Flooding in tunnel of Arch Bridge causing inability to gain access or egress Non-road road behind Xtra Mart & car wash On state highway, but no barriers, sidewalk cleaning (clearing?)
Water & Sewer	6	3	Water supply, sewage in Hamlet insufficient Old water lines in Hamlet Lack of public water system Sewer system No water/sewage in Village Public water & sewer around Hamlet & perhaps extending border
Jobs	3	3	Lack of employment for young people No job opportunities Lack of jobs

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Category	Number of Responses in Category	Number of Priority Stickers for this category	Negative Factors Identified
Services	14	2	
			Public transportation Lack of public transportation
			Service, trash, recycling
			Snow removal on sidewalks in the hamlet
			Fire coverage in West Ghent (Philmont covers) Volunteers – Fire Co., Rescue Squad, Little League
			Lack of infrastructure Noise Ordinance (truck traffic increase) Services for seniors Loss of electrical service Better policing of land Stronger library system (no library in Ghent), but better coordination of programming Lack of County involvement in Town
Environment	4	1	
			Increased tick population Columbia Co. Extension – ticks, Lyme disease education
			Mining of land Gravel Mine off Rt 9 – safety on bridge
Community	3	1	
			Too many city people who take over No identity of Town Foster more community involvement
Government	8	0	
			No adult entertainment law No laws regarding adult entertainment Not allowed to put land into conservancy
Town Center	4	0	Town Hall is not identifiable More transparency in local government: website Televised Town meetings Stronger Town leadership Weak leadership No Town center, trees for buffer, colors don't blend in

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Category	Number of Responses in Category	Number of Priority Stickers for this category	Negative Factors Identified
			No clearly identified center Lack of central Town, no place for social interaction No identifiable Town center
Internet	4	0	No Internet service High speed internet No high speed internet in rural areas Internet access poor
Airport	2	0	Not an asset to Town – touch and go
			No restriction on airport
Posted Signs	1	0	
			Posted signs

Positive Factors Identified by the Workshop Participants:

Category	Number of Responses in Category	Number of Priority Stickers for this category	Positive Factors Identified
Rural & Community Character	26	32	
			Rural Setting
			Rural Character (smart growth)
			Rural character without being distant from services
			Rural feel east of Village towards open fields
			Rural aspects
			Rural feeling in Town
			Rural nature – sights, sounds, & smells
			Rural character & farmland that is active
			Quiet, peaceful area
			Quiet overall, rural living but near to essentials,

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Category	Number of Responses in Category	Number of Priority Stickers for this category	Positive Factors Identified
			peaceful
			Small town nature
			Small town feeling
			Not crowded
			Rural area, space, local services good
			Good Community organizations, churches
			Character of community – charm
			Community character
			Diversity
			People
			Greek Revival Houses – architectural beauty
			Beautiful barns, buildings & residences which are part of rural nature
			Distinct residential use
			Lack of crime
			Safeness, feel safe
			Hawthorne Valley atmosphere
			Simplistic lifestyle
Scenic Beauty	19	24	
			Rural look and open spaces
			Open space, open land
			Large amount of open space, non-developed land
			Openness, rolling hills, beautiful landscape
			Open space, diversity
			Beautiful open and unspoiled land
			Open land, views
			Lots of nice open space, fields, and forests
			Open space
			Maintain rural land, open space
			Rural quality, Beautiful
			Scenic beauty, rural setting
			Woods/undeveloped land are common, views
			Scenic overview on the Taconic

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Category	Number of Responses in Category	Number of Priority Stickers for this category	Positive Factors Identified
			View sheds of the Town
			Scenic beauty
			Still have good number of nice back roads
			Homes along Route 66
			Physical features
People & Sense of Community	22	13	
			Small town feel and sense of community
			Small community
			People, sense of community
			Know your neighbor
			People
			Diverse population demographics & cultural mix
			Wholesomeness of the people
			People that live here
			Neighborliness, small town feeling
			Friendliness of people
			Neighborly
			Community support – “Ghent takes care of its own”
			Solid Town – Ghent takes care of its own
			Civic Pride
			Steadiness of the Town
			Town spirit
			Level of volunteerism
			Feeling of community
			Quality of life
			Nature of community
			Community
			Diverse smaller communities (need cohesion)
Infrastructure	11	5	
			Emergency fire services
			Volunteer Fire Company

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Category	Number of Responses in Category	Number of Priority Stickers for this category	Positive Factors Identified
			Ghent Volunteer Fire Co.
			Fire Co., VFW, Ghent Band
			Strong community organization – Fire Co., VFW, Ghent Band, Ghent R & G
			Fire Co., VFW, Churches
			Public School System – all 3
			Churches
			Judges
			Security
			Food Pantry
Location	9	3	
			Location
			Regional location
			Close in proximity to other areas that offer commercial establishments so no need to bring them to Ghent
			Close proximity to needs
			Presence of Taconic Parkway – convenient access to more urban areas
			Central to train and major shopping areas – Hudson, Albany, Poughkeepsie, and Berkshires
			Centrally positioned to cultural and historical venues
			Central location
			Accessibility to other metro and recreation
Business	5	3	
			Receptive to small business owners
			Local businesses
			Commerce Park
			Wally the Welder
			Lack of strip mall
Historic Sites	5	3	
			Recognize and maintain historic sites
			Kept most of Town’s history
			Historic buildings
			Bartlett House

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Category	Number of Responses in Category	Number of Priority Stickers for this category	Positive Factors Identified
			History
Environment	7	2	
			Wildlife and wetlands
			Wetland areas
			Cricket and foliage
			View sheds
			Clean air
			Climate
			Posted areas
Zoning	2	2	
			Prevent development on lots under 5 acres
			Lack of subdivisions
Agriculture	9	1	
			Existing agriculture
			Agricultural exemptions
			Farms
			Some up tick in agriculture
			Smell of cow manure
			Love hearing cattle lowing at Gallagher's
			Horse farms
			Active farms
			Agriculture
Taxes	3	1	
			Reasonable taxes
			Relatively low tax rate because of farms and limited number of residents
			Reasonably low taxes
Government	2	1	
			Good, solid Town leadership over last 30 years
			Open forum/meetings (such as this workshop), open gov't.
Recreation & Cultural	12	0	
			Cultural Institutions - Art Omi, MacHayden
			Art Omi

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Category	Number of Responses in Category	Number of Priority Stickers for this category	Positive Factors Identified
			Art Omi
			Art Omi
			Summer rec. program good and could be better
			Ghent Playhouse
			Ghent Band
			Community Day
			Arts
			Cultural Assets
Roads & Transportation	8	0	
			Highway Dept.
			Job of road crews
			Good Highway Dept.
			Lack of traffic lights
			Snow removal on Town roads
			Public transportation
			Lack of traffic
			Good snow removal

Solutions to Negatives

- Decline of farming:
Owners should avail themselves of Ag District Tax reductions
Encourage CSA farms/organic
- More control over development:
Town should tend to zone for larger lot sizes – keeps more open space and reduces septic and well problems. Reduce strain on School/Fire/Police/Roads, etc.
- Town needs to post speed limits on unposted roads and enforce. No petition. Apply logic as 1 year is too long
- Lot size issue needs addressing!
- Move toward smaller lots based on affordability of housing.
- Expand SR Zone – identify needs: Public Water, Public Sewers
- Work with other communities to fill gaps in identified needs that are too expensive or unable to be accommodated on the identified lands.
- Preclude mining from being allowed in Town. The depreciation of property values outweighs the benefits of getting the gravel.

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- Study the areas in the Town, particularly around the hamlets where these smaller lots would be applicable.
- Create senior housing.
- Study and identify specific areas in the Town that deserve protection from significant development.
- Consider higher zoning density requirements in some areas.
- Provision for smaller lots in certain areas/apartments/cluster housing/smaller units.
- Move school tax from property to other taxes – sales/income
- Average density zoning.
- Taxes: Share services with others, broader tax base, support services for small business.
- Affordable housing: opportunity for smaller parcels in denser parts of the Town.
- More cohesive approach to steering subdivision/density.
- Tax advantages to areas being used for agriculture and disadvantage if open, unused.
- Expand program to encourage economic incentives for agriculture.
- Map open space as part of master plan and consider which most valuable and how to protect and preserve.
- More tasteful design – incentives to get existing businesses to tone it down/bring business owners in to hear discussion.
- Noise ordinance.
- Revert back to old zoning – infill (?) Ghent/Hurleyville.
- Keep hurdles for large developments; allow smaller parcels for modest houses.
- Allow smaller parcels.
- Rail Trail: only use Harlem Valley Rail Trail; No motorized vehicles, strictly enforced; Do not advance B & A.
- Create buffers on roads, etc. as solution to haphazard development.
- Tie compliance with Site Plan to certificate of occupancy.

Solutions to Positives:

- Historic Sites:
 - Town intervention – purchase surrounding lands..
 - Offer lands to conservation groups or other interested conservation parties.
- Affordable housing for all.
- Updated infrastructure to meet greater population..
- Allow and encourage small business, larger confined to Commerce Park.
- Increased recreational facilities for greater population for everyone.
- Not let residential and commercial areas merge...sprawl??
- Zoning requirements for commercial setbacks/ landscape/no junkiness.
- Maintain economic diversity.
- Keep the Town available for attracting agricultural enterprises such as the new winery.
- Continue good government, common sense planning and active involvement of

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Ghent's citizenry!

- Planning Board to address variable density to maintain rural character.
- Look to other communities for ideas of community development.
- Provide incentives for agriculture.
- Zoning ordinance/site plan reviews.
- Conscious effort to maintain open space in larger developments.
- Work to maintain agriculture through continuing ag exemptions.
- Larger development bonus for developers who work within the conservation subdivision.
- Fashion master plan and positive zoning code that helps protect, preserve and encourage smart/compatible growth.
- Same vehicle for connecting all the community/volunteer organizations in Town. Community bulletin board for events/organization activities, churches, fire co.
- Effective zoning.
- Zoning enforcement.
- Government grants.
- All more land conservancy.
- Research similar townships and how they've done it.
- Encourage farming and forestry by whatever Town can do.
- Rampant subdivision can be controlled by Town Zoning Regs.
- Small town feeling will continue if population growth is limited by Town Regs.
- Average density/cluster zoning.
- Establish/purchase park land.
- Zone agriculture for agriculture (v. residential)
- Scenic easements (purchase).
- Real estate transfer tax to buy open space.

Visioning Elements

Community character
Quality of life
Commercial
Rural character
Hamlet
Open lands
Farming
Housing
Affordable
Public transportation
Government
Land use
Natural resources
Medical care

Small town atmosphere
Population diversity
Local business
Rural setting
Recreation
Agriculture
Town leadership
Visual assets
Transportation and traffic
Economic development
Values
Organizations
Infrastructure
Town center

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Community
Business development
New planning and development modes
Taxes
Diversity
Environment
Historic preservation
Low density
Law enforcement

Sustainability
Cultural Resources
Social services
Schools
Youth opportunities
Employment
Conservation
Zoning
Jobs

Post-it Summaries

Rural Character/Community

- Maintain rural character, friendly population
- No sidewalks, no street lamps, no outdoor advertising
- Small town feeling, caring close-knit community that helps each other
- Limited light and noise pollution
- A place where young people want to come or stay and seniors want to retire
- Quaint town with an attractive main street, maintain small community charm but offer attractions to bring new people to the community.
- Moderate growth of population in 15 years
- Quality of life favored over growth and expansion, long-term over short-term
- Safe place to live, safe to leave doors open
- Nice rural roads and landscapes
- Diverse and harmonious population
- Rural roads remain dirt, town streets have sidewalks, trees, gardens

Business

- “Downtown” (Hamlet) with nice blend of small business and residential
- Encourage small businesses – local businesses owned/operated by people who have a vested interest in the community
- No retail business in Hamlet except for boutiques, restaurants and convenience stores, coffee shop, book store, pub
- X-mart becomes country store, Hamlet strip redesigned to evoke old-style Main Street

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- Support local business and encourage new business and home occupied business
- No big franchise businesses such as Walmart, etc., but variety of small to big businesses
- Designated commercial area. No shopping malls, no fast food chains or box stores
- Sufficient number of businesses within close proximity to satisfy daily needs, self-sustaining
- Jobs for residents from businesses in Commerce Park and commercial zones
- “Attractive” looking commercial areas and buildings, appropriate set backs
- Farmer’s Market - Opportunities for selling agricultural products locally while developing markets outside of area
- Designate a “true economic development area” away from rural areas
- Stores promoting local artists, small clean businesses, promotion of consultation

Housing

- Affordable housing for all, including young and seniors
- An area for Senior housing condo’s
- Senior housing in center of town with access to shopping, doctors, etc.
- Mostly single family housing, limited multi-family for seniors
- Some small, affordable lots but not overcrowding – need to maintain scenic views
- Designated areas for smaller affordable houses/rental units
- No major housing developments, or houses built one on top of another
- Homeowners should keep their property attractive or add upkeep to their taxes

Open Space/Agriculture

- Maintain its farmland and open space and rural nature, open fields, cattle
- Encourage new agriculture, more successful active farms
- Agricultural opportunities still exist, although not necessarily doing farming

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- A town that supports organic agriculture promoting ecologically clean environment
- Ghent has Greenway that connects to other towns

Natural Resources/Environment

- Abundant wildlife, unspoiled character, unpolluted, good air and water quality
- Beautiful area, peaceful/serene, beautiful rolling hills and landscapes, viewsheds, trees
- Fishing is still good, hunting, fishing, trapping
- Conservation areas, encourage conservation easements
- Strict adherence to conservation and conservative land use, Rural is key

Roads/Transportation

- Better roads for greater traffic
- Low traffic volume, limit truck traffic
- Well-maintained roads and sidewalks
- Limited traffic congestion
- Close airport of limit size of planes, airport doesn't allow large planes
- Pedestrian friendly
- No traffic light at 66 and Garage Place Rd.
- No more fast traffic on Town roads, traffic should be manageable
- Reduce traffic by offering public transportation for those who commute to work
- No painted lines on town roads
- Public transportation between Chatham and Hudson, Easy access to transportation

Recreation

- Parks, bike and walking paths, horse trails, ball field, park with swimming pool, place for RV's to ride
- Recreational Center building for family use. Young family community activities
- Omi

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- Community activities: concert/film series for the summer, Square dancing on “the green”, Band community day
- Recreational activities available year-round for all age groups and interests – indoors and out.
- Good recreational facilities in Rail Trail, Conservancy public areas
- Strong arts community, public library, theatres, community events
- No discussion of a Rail Trail
- One Sunday a year have a “Ghent no machine use day”
- Education to encourage passive recreation – hiking, etc.

Infrastructure

- Strong support services for seniors, a caring community for the elderly
- Increased public services without a substantial increase in taxation
- Improved infrastructure for the Hamlet of Ghent
- Public water and sewer
- High-speed internet access, brings high tech access to rural surroundings
- Better technology services to support business growth
- Quality medical care
- Good schools. Local, not ‘district’ schools. Active places of worship
- Safe place to live, little to no crime
- Better communication between all residents, business owners and government
- Enforcement of speeding on roads
- Public transportation – a transportation-friendly town for children and seniors. Some access/ride services could be provided by volunteers – younger seniors or teens.

Youth

- Youth involvement in community
- Safe and friendly place for children to grow up
- Summer job bank for teens
- More job opportunities for young adults so they can remain in Ghent

Final Plan Part II

Government

- Small government
- Fiscally responsible town spending
- Friendly and helpful town employees
- Vote where you live. Inhabitants participate in town governance
- Town Board with a balanced view between newcomers and native residents
- A town that cares for its citizens as individuals, respects their opinions, receptive to their needs and concerns
- Active Town Board supporting environmental issues

Zoning

- Planned commercial industrial development zones
- Zoning to protect rural character and aesthetics
- Well designed development and zoning
- 5 to 10 acre zoning, no building on top of hills
- Appearance guidelines for tax-paying businesses
- Create a subdivision plan protecting rural character of town

Taxes

- Low school and property taxes
- Reasonable and affordable
- Tax credits to homeowners to encourage solar power/energy-efficient homes
- Land taxed according to use of services: residences – higher taxes, open land or woodland – lower taxes
- Fair and even tax assessments

Historical Heritage

- Historical structures are identified, restored and supported
- Historic (classic) homes remain historic
- Historical designation of farms

Final Plan Part II

Vision Statements

After identifying, categorizing, and prioritizing these negative and positive factors, the groups turned the factors into short phrase and statements about the direction Ghent should be headed in. These were then further developed into more complete sentences and descriptions resulting in the following 8 statements describing what the Town of Ghent should be like in the future.

Group #1

Vibrant, walkable downtown with coffee shop, farmers market, pub, and residences. Choice of cultural activities.

Multiple recreational opportunities for non-motorized/motorized vehicles for children and adults of all ages.

Senior friendly with transportation and housing opportunities.

Abundant open space and agriculture outside of town.

Group #2

We want and expect Ghent to be affordable to a diverse population supported and encouraged by good local government and intelligent development that provides local commercial and business opportunities, good schools, and recreational areas with low taxes in a rural setting.

Group #3

The Town has encouraged non-polluting sustainable businesses, orderly growth, and simple public transportation. We have maintained the rural character of the town in the following: viewsheds have been protected, recreational opportunities have been developed, rural roads. The Town has diverse housing available for all ages and incomes. There are many strong community organizations with many opportunities for interaction between community organizations and residents. There are diverse active farms that produce products for local use as well as export. The Town Center is active and attractive, with pedestrian-oriented downtown Main Street.

Group #4

Create a town where everyone can live and be safe. Promote housing, services, and jobs for all ages and income levels. Create diverse commercial districts of limited size that reflect the rural character of our town. Maintain open space and rural character

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Group #5

Ghent is beautiful – keep it that way. Select areas for business development. Provide housing necessary to make the County and Town sustain solid but responsible growth. The Hamlet moves forward and maintains its charm. Provide recreation to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Group #6

Diverse businesses that provide good jobs and contribute to a sense of community. Preserve and protect the rural character and encourage agriculture. Preserve rural characteristics of roads and provide opportunities for alternative transit. A good mix of cluster-style housing including moderate/affordable priced houses/units. Want a vibrant close-knit community

Group #7

Good governance with active participation of Ghent residents with progressive ideas.
Open space is protected and local farms are supported and encouraged.
Modest increase in environmentally safe business.
Modest controlled increase in housing is needed as well as some public transportation.
Create a system of non-motorized trails and recreational areas.

Group #8

Retain rural character. Affordable housing, multi-use buildings, aesthetically pleasing. Quality recreation. Encourage farming and small business. Hamlet Town Center. Infrastructure – roads, water, sewer. Emphasize historic.

3. Build-Out Analysis

A general explanation of the process

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

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

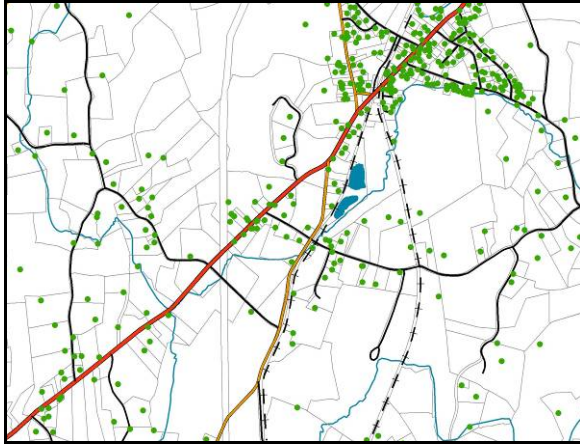
Specific Steps:

The specific steps, as they were applied to Ghent, are outlined here. The graphics following some of the steps show the results of that operation on an area just south of the Ghent Hamlet. The full size maps show the results for the entire town.

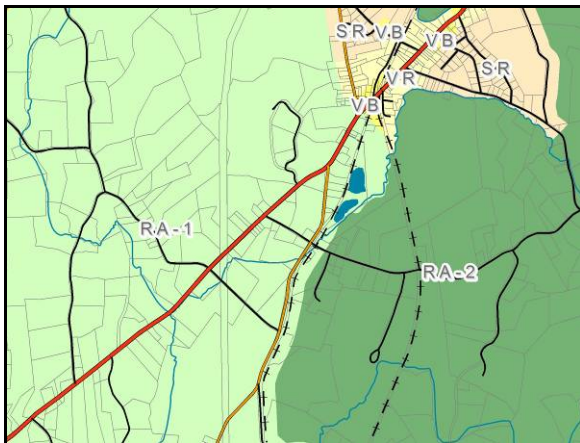
1. Assemble town, village, and parcel boundaries, and edit them so they are coincident. Join the latest assessment information to the parcel boundaries, which includes ownership information, and property class.
2. Clean up the parcel layer by identifying missing information, and updating by comparing it with aerial photos where possible.
3. Add a field to the parcel layer that identifies existing residential uses for each parcel.

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(Map 1: showing existing residences as small green dots)



4. Assemble zoning district boundaries and edit them so they coincide with the parcels to the extent possible.
5. Add minimum lot sizes/density requirements to the zoning layer.
(Map 2: showing zoning districts. See the full map for minimum lot sizes/allowed density)



6. Union the parcel layer and the zoning district layer. Unioning is a GIS process that combines two layers together, resulting in a new layer that has all of the properties of the two original layers.
7. Identify fully built parcels by comparing existing building status with each parcels' zoning requirements.
 - A. Parcels with existing residences that cannot be further subdivided
 - B. Commercial/Public uses that are not likely to be developed
 - C. Properties with conservation easements that restrict further

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development

- D. Properties owned by government agencies that are not likely to be developed

(Map 3: showing fully built parcels)



- 8. Identify buildable parcels remaining, essentially, the opposite of the fully built parcel map.

(Map 4: showing remaining buildable parcels)

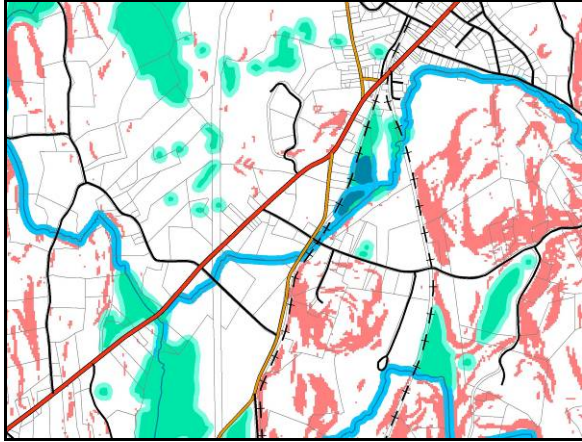


- 9. Assemble and clip all of the constraint layers to the municipality's border.
 - A. Water and streams
 - B. 100 foot buffer of water and streams
 - C. Wetlands (DEC, Federal, and/or hydric soils)
 - D. 100 foot buffer of wetlands
 - E. Flood Hazards
 - F. Steep Slopes

(Map 5: showing environmental constraints. Blues are water, and water

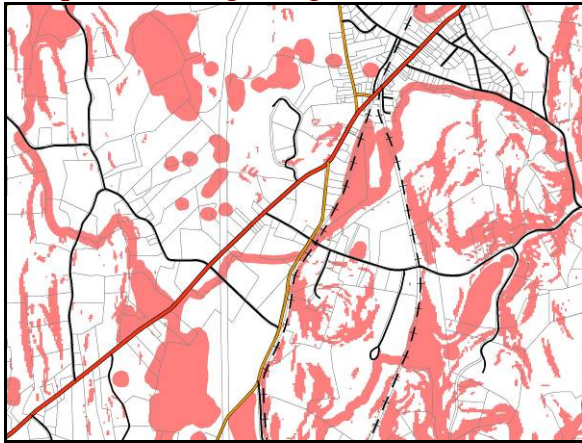
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buffers. Greens are wetlands and wetland buffers. Red is steep slopes.)



10. Merge all of the constraints into a single “cookie-cutter layer.

(Map 6: showing merged constraints)



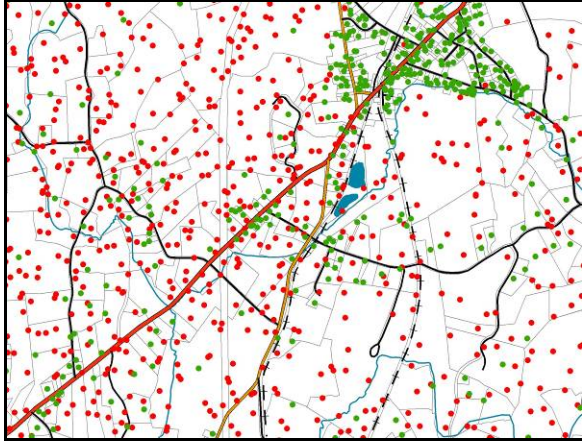
11. Remove the constraints layer from the Buildable Parcel layer to produce a Buildable Area layer

(Map 7: showing remaining buildable area within the buildable parcels, in green)



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12. Perform the buildout calculations on the Buildable Area layer
(Map 8: showing the total potential new residential uses at full buildout.
Each small red dot represents one potential new residential use.)



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The following table shows the results of the buildout calculations for the entire town. It compares the current conservation subdivision zoning regulations, with the previous minimum lot size requirements.

Ghent Buildout Results

Using the new Conservation Subdivision Requirements					
Zoning District	RA-1 Residential Agricultural 1	RA-2 Residential Agricultural 2	VR Village Residence	SR Suburban Residence	Total
Existing Residences	981	562	96	322	2,013
Density	One dwelling unit per 3 acres	One dwelling unit per 5 acres	One dwelling unit per 20,000	One dwelling unit per 20,000	
Potential New Residences (No environmental constraints considered	3,746	1,121	26	252	5,145
Potential New Residences (Open water constraints considered	3,746	1,121	25	245	5,137
Potential New Residences (All environmental constraints considered	3,746	1,121	18	215	5,100

Final Plan Part II

Using the old minimum lot size criteria					
Density	One dwelling per 1 acre	One dwelling per 2 acres	One dwelling unit per 20,000	One dwelling unit per 20,000	Total
Potential New Residences (No environmental constraints considered)	12,154	2,808	26	252	15,240
Potential New Residences (Open water constraints considered)	10,651	2,709	25	245	13,630
Potential New Residences (All environmental constraints considered)	9,572	2,034	18	215	11,839

4. Greenway Criteria

The Hudson River Valley Greenway Act describes the "Greenway criteria" as "the basis for attaining the goal of a Hudson River Valley Greenway". The criteria - natural and cultural resource protection, regional planning, economic development, public access and heritage and environmental education - provide the overall vision for voluntary local Greenway programs and projects. The general nature of the Greenway criteria allows communities to develop locally-based projects which address community concerns while contributing to the overall framework of the Hudson River Valley Greenway.

Natural and Cultural Resource Protection

Protect, preserve and enhance natural resources including natural communities, open spaces and scenic areas as well as cultural resources including historic places and scenic roads.

Regional Planning

Communities can work together to develop mutually beneficial regional strategies for natural and cultural resource protection, economic development (including necessary public facilities and infrastructure), public access and heritage and environmental education.

Economic Development

Encourage economic development that is compatible with the preservation and enhancement of natural and cultural resources including agriculture, tourism and the revitalization of established community centers and waterfronts.

Public Access








Promote increased public access to the Hudson River through the creation of riverside parks and the development of the Hudson River Valley Greenway Trail System.

Heritage and Environmental Education










Promote awareness among residents and visitors about the Valley's natural, cultural, scenic and historic resources.

Final Plan Part II

The following chart shows how this plan helps the Town of Ghent reach these Greenway Criteria.

Goals that Support Greenway Principals*		Greenway Criteria				
Goal **	Topic of Goal	Protect Natural and Cultural Resources	Regional Planning	Enhance Economic Development	Enhance Public Access to Hudson River	Heritage and Environmental Education
1	Protect natural beauty and rural character					
2	Protect natural environmental features, wildlife, outdoor recreation					
5	Provide for new modes of transportation including pedestrian opportunities					
6	Provide for small business development that is consistent with rural character and environment					

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Goals that Support Greenway Principals*		Greenway Criteria				
Goal **	Topic of Goal	Protect Natural and Cultural Resources	Regional Planning	Enhance Economic Development	Enhance Public Access to Hudson River	Heritage and Environmental Education
8	Preserve historic heritage, structures, views and landscapes					
9	Promote agriculture					
11	Promote recreational and cultural opportunities					
14	Promote education and non-traditional educational opportunities					

* Not all goals included in the Town of Ghent Comprehensive Plan address Greenway Criteria. This chart includes only those that directly address topics related to the Greenway Criteria.

Appendix B – Survey Detailed Results

Ghent Survey Results

Surveys delivered
1,843

Surveys returned
544

Return rate
30%

1. Where in the Town of Ghent do you live?	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3	Area 4	Area 5		Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
Number of Responses	49	80	12	44	10		500	92%
Percent of Completed Answers	9.8%	16.0%	2.4%	8.8%	2.0%			
	Area 6	Area 7	Area 8	Area 9	Area 10			
Number of Responses	50	98	38	100	16			
Percent of Completed Answers	10.0%	19.6%	7.6%	20.0%	3.2%			

1. Summary: Survey participants came from all areas of town. However, the Route 66 corridor and County Route 22/21 areas were where most participants live (40%). Many participants (16%) also live in the Chatham village area. The least number of participants live East of the Taconics and along County Route 9 North. About 3% own land but do not live in Ghent.

2. How many years have you lived or owned land in the Town of Ghent?	5 or less	6 to 10	11 to 15	16 to 20	21 to 25	26 to 30	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
Number of Responses	84	77	66	52	41	38	530	97%
Percent of Completed	15.8%	14.5%	12.5%	9.8%	7.7%	7.2%		

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Answers						
	31 to 35	36 to 40	40 to 45	45 to 50	51 to 55	56 to 60
Number of Responses	31	38	21	23	13	13
Percent of Completed Answers	5.8%	7.2%	4.0%	4.3%	2.5%	2.5%
	61 to 65	66 to 70	71 to 75	76 to 80	81 to 85	More than 85
Number of Responses	12	6	7	1	1	2
Percent of Completed Answers	2.3%	1.1%	1.3%	0.2%	0.2%	0.4%

2. Summary: About 16% of survey participants are relative newcomers to Town (16% 5 or less years). 27% have lived in Ghent 6 to 15 years. About 25% have lived here 16 to 30 years. 32% have lived in Town more than 30 years.

3. Are you a part-time or full-time resident?	Part-time	Full-time	I am not a resident, but own land	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
Number of Responses	80	416	40	537	99%
Percent of Completed Answers	14.9%	77.5%	7.4%		

3. Summary: The majority of participants are full-time residents. About 15% are part-time residents.

4. How old are you? (Average age is 57.7)	25 or under	26 to 30	31 to 35	36 to 40	41 to 45	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
Number of Responses	2	1	1	35	44	525	97%
Percent of Completed Answers	0.4%	0.2%	0.2%	6.7%	8.4%		
	46 to 50	51 to 55	56 to 60	61 to 65	66 to 70		
Number of Responses	58	90	77	64	62		
Percent of Completed Answers	11.0%	17.1%	14.7%	12.2%	11.8%		

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	71 to 75	76 to 80	81 to 85	More than 85
Number of Responses	29	22	12	12
Percent of Completed Answers	5.5%	4.2%	2.3%	2.3%

4. Summary: There were not many young people who filled out the survey (less than 1% were less than 35 years old). 26% were between 36 and 50 years old. 44% were between 50 and 65 years old. 26% were older than 65 years.

5. If you work, is it a home based job, a job outside the home but in Ghent, or elsewhere?	Number of Responses	Percent of Completed Answers	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
a. Home-based	72	13.5%	534	98%
b. Not home, but within Ghent	39	7.3%		
c. Outside Town, but within Columbia County	131	24.5%		
d. In the Capital District	62	11.6%		
e. At another location	101	18.9%		
f. Agriculture-based in town	11	2.1%		
g. I do not work	146	27.3%		

5. Summary: The highest percentage of participants do not work (27% - reflecting the older age of participants). For those that do work, most (25%) worked outside of Ghent but in Columbia County. 12% work in the Capital District and 14% are home based. 7% work in Ghent outside the home.

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6. How many children of high school age or younger are there in your household?	Zero	One	Two	Three	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
Number of Responses	354	52	46	9	472	87%
Percent of Completed Answers	75.0%	11.0%	9.7%	1.9%		
	Four	Five	Six	Seven (or more)		
Number of Responses	7	0	1	0		
Percent of Completed Answers	1.5%	0.0%	0.2%	0%		

6. Summary: A large majority of participants do not have children living at home (75%). For those that did, 11% had one child at home, 10% had two, and 3% had three or more children living at home.

7. Looking to the future, and comparing it to the present, how much attention should the Town of Ghent give to each of the following?	More attention	Neither more nor less attention	Less attention	Don't know	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
a. Encourage a supply of houses affordable to first-time home buyers and workers.	248	161	68	59	536	99%
Percent of Completed Answers	46.3%	30.0%	12.7%	11.0%		
b. Encourage a supply of housing affordable to renters.	136	174	159	61	530	97%
Percent of Completed Answers	25.7%	32.8%	30.0%	11.5%		

Final Plan Part II

Answers						
c. Encourage a supply of housing affordable to senior citizens.	308	147	41	39	535	98%
Percent of Completed Answers	57.6%	27.5%	7.7%	7.3%		

7. Summary: Related to housing needs, the majority (58%) wanted to see the Town give more attention to encouraging affordable housing for seniors. About half (46%) wanted more attention given to encouraging more affordable homes for first time buyers and workers. Fewer people wanted more attention given to supplying rental housing (26%) while 30% said less attention and 33% said neither more nor less attention should be given to providing affordable rental housing.

8. Indicate which affordable housing type listed below should be encouraged in the Town of Ghent?	Number of Responses	Percent of Completed Answers	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
a. Apartment Buildings	63	12.4%	509	94%
b. Condominiums/Town Houses	164	32.2%		
c. Duplex Residences (2-family)	124	24.4%		
d. Group Homes	28	5.5%		
e. In-Law Accessory Apartments on your parcel or in your home	192	37.7%		
f. Mobile Home Parks	24	4.7%		
g. Individual Mobile Homes on	53	10.4%		

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separate lots		
h. Modular homes	130	25.5%
i. Senior Housing such as assisted living centers	259	50.9%
j. Subsidized Housing	45	8.8%
k. Other	66	13.0%

8. Summary: Senior housing was the affordable housing type desired to be encouraged in Ghent by the most people (51%). 38% wanted to encourage in-law accessory apartments and 32% wanted condominiums/townhouses. Modular homes and duplex homes were desired to be encouraged by about 25% of the participants. Mobile homes, mobile home parks, and subsidized housing were not favored.

9. How affordable do you feel the homes in Ghent are?	Very affordable	Somewhat affordable	Not affordable	Don't know	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
Number of Responses	35	283	148	71	537	99%
Percent of Completed Answers	6.5%	52.7%	27.6%	13.2%		

9. Summary: Just over half of the participants feel that housing in Ghent is somewhat affordable (53%). 28% said it is not affordable and 7% said it is very affordable.

10. What are the most important actions the Town of Ghent should take related to housing?	Number of Responses	Percent of Completed Answers	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
a. Encourage the reuse of vacant, abandoned, or tax-delinquent properties	333	62.9%	529	97%

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for affordable home sites		
b. Change zoning districts within existing or new hamlets to make more land available for higher density residential growth	70	13.2%
c. Ensure that zoning policies support a diversity of housing types	192	36.3%
d. Offer incentives to developers to create affordable homes	100	18.9%
e. Establish zoning code that requires developers of major residential projects (5 lots or more) to have a percentage of their units/lots dedicated as moderately-priced	145	27.4%
f. Create a housing trust fund	24	4.5%
g. Generate other funds such as through grants or housing tax credit programs	74	14.0%
h. Other:	63	11.9%
j. Don't know	47	8.9%

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10. Summary: When asked what the most important actions Ghent should take related to housing, participants selected encouraging the reuse of vacant, abandoned or tax delinquent properties for affordable home sites (63%) followed by ensuring zoning allows for a diversity of housing types (36%) and then establishing zoning that requires developers of large residential projects to dedicate a percentage of their units as moderately-priced units (27%). Other options given were favored by less than 20%. Creating a housing trust fund was not favored.

11. Would you be in favor of spending funds to meet the housing needs you identified in #10, above?	No	Yes, but using only private money	Yes, but using a mix of public and private funds	Yes, using public money even if no private funds were available	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
Number of Responses	164	118	183	42	507	93%
Percent of Completed Answers	32.3%	23.3%	36.1%	8.3%		

11. Summary: 36% of participants said they would favor using a mix of public and private funds to meet housing needs identified in the previous question while 32% said they would not favor spending funds. 23% said only if private money was used.

12. Looking to the future, and comparing it to the present, how much attention should the Town of Ghent give to each of the following?	More attention	Neither more nor less attention	Less attention	Don't know	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
a. Encouraging development in or near existing hamlets or in new hamlets	183	165	105	69	519	95%
Percent of Completed	35.3%	31.8%	20.2%	13.3%		

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Answers						
b. Promoting development that maintains the Town's rural character?	381	112	20	18	532	98%
Percent of Completed Answers	71.6%	21.1%	3.8%	3.4%		

12. Summary: Slightly more people (35%) said that they want more attention given to encouraging development in or near existing or new hamlets. This compares to 32% saying they want neither more nor less attention to that. 20% said less attention should be given to directing growth to hamlets. 72% said that more attention should be given to promoting development that maintains the Town's rural character. 4% said give this less attention and 21% said give this neither more nor less attention.

13. What are the important actions that the Town of Ghent should take related to land use?	Number of Responses	Percent of Completed Answers	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
a. Have building design standards for commercial uses	92	17.1%	538	99%
b. Have strong site plan standards for commercial uses that relate to layout, landscaping, signage, lighting, parking lots	194	36.1%		
c. Have smaller residential lot sizes	82	15.2%		
d. Have larger residential lot sizes	99	18.4%		
e. Continue using average density instead	130	24.2%		

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of emphasizing lot sizes		
f. No actions needed, let the market decide	37	6.9%
g. Provide incentives to land owners to provide desired Town amenities	48	8.9%
h. Mandate that development include desired Town amenities	67	12.5%
i. Protect scenic views	241	44.8%
j. Protect ridgelines	136	25.3%
k. Have residential siting and layout standards that serve to protect rural character	253	47.0%
l. Other:	24	4.5%
n. Don't know	22	4.1%

13. Summary: 47% said that Ghent should have residential siting and layout standards that serve to protect rural character. 45% said the Town should protect scenic views. 36% said that the Town should have strong site plan standards for commercial uses. 24% said the Town should continue using average density. 25% said that the Town should protect ridgelines. Less than 18% supported the other actions listed. There was not much support for simply letting the market decide (7%), or providing incentives (9%) to gain important amenities.

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14. Are existing town zoning and subdivision laws adequate to address growth and development in the town	Yes	No	Somewhat	Don't know	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
Number of Responses	85	102	102	246	535	98%
Percent of Completed Answers	15.9%	19.1%	19.1%	46.0%		

14. Summary: Most participants did not know if the existing zoning and subdivision laws are adequate to address growth and development (46%). 16% said they are adequate and 19% said they are not adequate.

15. Would you be in favor of spending funds to meet the actions you chose in #14 above?	No	Yes, but using only private money	Yes, but using a mix of public and private funds	Yes, using public money even if no private funds were available	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
Number of Responses	157	64	138	69	428	79%
Percent of Completed Answers	36.7%	15.0%	32.2%	16.1%		

15. Summary: 37% said they would not favor spending funds to accomplish the various actions listed above, but 32% said yes if there was a mix of public and private funds. 16% said public money is OK and 15% said only if private monies were used. NOTE: THERE WAS AN ERROR IN THIS QUESTION AS IT REFERRED TO #14 INSTEAD OF #13 SO THE RESULTS ARE QUESTIONABLE.

16. Would you favor requiring a licensed engineer to inspect, at landowner expense, and approve every building site prior to issuance of	Yes	No	Don't know	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)

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a building permit for new construction					
Number of Responses	193	250	82	528	97%
Percent of Completed Answers	36.6%	47.3%	15.5%		

16. Summary: 47% were not in favor of requiring a licensed engineer to inspect buildings prior to issuance of a new building permit. 37% were in favor and 16% did not know.

17. How satisfied are you with the following types of Town functions and services?	Satisfied	Not satisfied	No opinion	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered(out of 544)
a. Accessibility of town records	245	31	219	496	91%
Percent of Completed Answers	49.4%	6.3%	44.2%		
b. Ambulance/Rescue Squad	339	20	145	505	93%
Percent of Completed Answers	67.1%	4.0%	28.7%		
c. Tax Assessor	205	108	180	494	91%
Percent of Completed Answers	41.5%	21.9%	36.4%		
d. Code enforcement/Inspection	206	75	205	486	89%
Percent of Completed Answers	42.4%	15.4%	42.2%		
e. Fire protection	385	13	102	500	92%
Percent of Completed Answers	77.0%	2.6%	20.4%		

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f. Hours of operation (town hall)	343	55	107	506	93%
Percent of Completed Answers	67.8%	10.9%	21.1%		
g. Library services	173	56	243	472	87%
Percent of Completed Answers	36.7%	11.9%	51.5%		
h. Overall road maintenance	368	98	42	508	93%
Percent of Completed Answers	72.4%	19.3%	8.3%		
i. Responsiveness of town to residents concerns	188	92	206	486	89%
Percent of Completed Answers	38.7%	18.9%	42.4%		
j. Speed limits and enforcement	272	152	82	507	93%
Percent of Completed Answers	53.6%	30.0%	16.2%		
k. Town board	239	43	204	486	89%
Percent of Completed Answers	49.2%	8.8%	42.0%		
l. Town hall facility	343	19	136	498	92%
Percent of Completed Answers	68.9%	3.8%	27.3%		
m. Town planning board	191	59	235	485	89%
Percent of Completed Answers	39.4%	12.2%	48.5%		
n. Town zoning board of appeals	143	55	286	484	89%

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Percent of Completed Answers	29.5%	11.4%	59.1%		
o. Youth programs	155	69	261	485	89%
Percent of Completed Answers	32.0%	14.2%	53.8%		
p. Other:	27	3	150	180	33%
Percent of Completed Answers	15.0%	1.7%	83.3%		

17. Summary: Overall, there were more people satisfied with the various town functions and services. There was a lot of satisfaction with fire protection, ambulance and rescue squads, hours of town hall operation, overall road maintenance, town hall facility, and speed limit enforcement. All these had well over half of participants indicating satisfaction. Many people had no opinion about accessibility of town records, code enforcement, library services, responsiveness to residents concerns, town board, town planning, ZBA, and youth programs. Each of these items had more than half of participants with no opinion. The service that had the most people not satisfied were speed limit enforcement (30% not satisfied), tax assessor (22%), road maintenance (20%), responsiveness to resident concerns (19%), and library services (12%).

18. What are the most important actions that the Town of Ghent should take related to infrastructure and community services?	Number of Responses	Percent of Completed Answers	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
a. Decreasing traffic congestion on major routes through town	29	5.4%	539	99%
b. Placing slower speed limits on town roads	103	19.1%		
d. Providing water and sewer service	57	10.6%		

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in hamlets		
f. Maintaining roads	239	44.3%
g. Providing services for senior citizens	65	12.1%
i. Providing mechanisms for the town government to communicate with citizens	70	13.0%
k. Providing for safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian travel	168	31.2%
l. Improving public transportation options	80	14.8%
m. Lowering taxes	314	58.3%
n. Improving trash and recycling programs	85	15.8%
o. Providing high speed internet/cell service	140	26.0%
p. Providing childcare services	12	2.2%
r. Regulating wind power facilities	41	7.6%
s. Other:	39	7.2%
u. Don't know	16	3.0%

18. Summary: The three most important actions Ghent can take related to infrastructure and community services were to lower taxes, maintain roads, and provide for safe and convenient bike and pedestrian travel.

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19. Would you be in favor of spending funds to meet the actions you chose in #18, above?	No	Yes, but using only private money	Yes, but using a mix of public and private funds	Yes, using public money even if no private funds were available	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
Number of Responses	76	45	248	144	513	94%
Percent of Completed Answers	14.8%	8.8%	48.3%	28.1%		

19. Summary: Almost half (48%) said they would favor using a mix of public and private funds to provide actions listed in #18 and 28% said they would favor using all public money if no other funds were available. 15% said they would not favor spending any funds and 9% said only if it were using private funds.

20. Looking to the future, and comparing it to the present, how much attention should the Town of Ghent give to protecting agriculture in the Town?	More attention	Neither more nor less attention	Less attention	Don't know	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
Number of Responses	370	114	12	28	524	96%
Percent of Completed Answers	70.6%	21.8%	2.3%	5.3%		

20. Summary: 71% of participants said that the town should give more attention to protecting agriculture in Ghent. 22% said neither more nor less attention is needed and 2% said less attention.

21. What is the most important role the Town of Ghent can play in promoting agriculture within Town?	Number of Responses	Percent of Completed Answers	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)

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a. Provide better technical assistance to farmers	42	8.0%	527	97%
b. Marketing of Ghent agricultural products	132	25.0%		
c. Steer new housing development away from farm areas and more towards hamlets or new hamlets	216	41.0%		
d. Limit non-farm development in productive farm areas	170	32.3%		
e. Provide incentives to farmers to stay in farming	243	46.1%		
f. Provide incentives for farmland to be preserved	201	38.1%		
g. Actively participate in agricultural economic development programs	84	15.9%		
h. Actively participate in setting up co-ops, processing facilities or distribution networks	70	13.3%		
i. Buy farmland or development rights from willing sellers	50	9.5%		
j. Amend zoning to ensure that it is farm-friendly	160	30.4%		

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k. Other	20	3.8%
m. Don't know	42	8.0%

21. Summary: The three most favored agricultural protection tools were provide incentives to farmers to stay in farming (46%), steer new housing development away from farms and towards hamlets (41%) and provide incentives to preserve farmland (38%). Other tools that were favored by many people were to limit non-farm development in productive farm areas (32%), and to amend zoning to ensure it is farm-friendly (30%). Buying farmland or development rights from willing sellers was the least favored tool (10% in favor).

22. Would you be in favor of spending funds to maintain agriculture in Ghent?	No	Yes, but using only private money	Yes, but using a mix of public and private funds	Yes, using public money even if no private funds were available	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
Number of Responses	90	79	238	98	507	93%
Percent of Completed Answers	17.8%	15.6%	46.9%	19.3%		

22. Summary: 47% favored spending a mix of private and public funds to protect farmland while 19% said they favored spending all public money to accomplish that. 18% said they did not favor spending money to protect farmlands and 16% said only if it were private money.

23. Which of the following open space or natural resource areas do you support being protected by additional regulations or standards that would control development occurring within them?	Yes	No	Percent Yes	Percent No	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
a. Floodplains	345	81	81.0%	19.0%	426	78%

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b. Groundwater/aquifers	398	41	90.7%	9.3%	439	81%
c. Streams, wetlands, ponds	427	44	90.7%	9.3%	471	87%
d. Forested areas	367	76	82.8%	17.2%	443	81%
e. Agricultural areas	406	48	89.4%	10.6%	454	83%
f. Ridge tops	302	109	73.5%	26.5%	411	76%
g. Steep slopes	246	141	63.6%	36.4%	387	71%
h. Other:	33	30	52.4%	47.6%	63	12%
k. Don't know	26				26	5%

23. Summary: Overall, the majority of participants favored having additional regulations or standards to control development from occurring on these important environmental areas. Groundwater aquifers, streams, wetlands, and ponds had over 90% of all participants supporting additional standards to protect these areas. Between 80% and 89% were in favor of using regulations to protect floodplains, forested areas, and agricultural areas. 74% said they favored regulations for protecting ridgetops and 64% said they favored regulations for steep slopes.

24. Please select the most important environmental and natural resource issues in the Town of Ghent	Number of Responses	Percent of Completed Answers	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
a. Loss of open space	213	41.0%	519	95%
b. Flooding	29	5.6%		
c. Groundwater quality/water pollution	148	28.5%		
d. Soil erosion	22	4.2%		
e. Wildlif habitat loss	177	34.1%		
f. Development on ridge tops	79	15.2%		

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g. Mining	71	13.7%
h. Septic system failures	43	8.3%
i. Surface water quality/water pollution	64	12.3%
j. Loss of scenic landscapes	160	30.8%
k. Loss of agriculture	271	52.2%
l. Other	10	1.9%
n. Don't know	43	8.3%

24. Summary: The three most important environmental and natural resource issues in Ghent were loss of agriculture (52%), loss of open space (41%), and loss of wildlife habitats (34%). Loss of scenic landscapes and groundwater pollution were other issues felt to be important by about 30% of participants. Flooding, soil erosion, and septic system failures were not considered to be important issues by more than 5% of participants (about 30 people).

25. Which of the resource areas listed above in question 23 is your highest priority?	A - Floodplains	B - Groundwater/aquifers	C - Streams, wetlands, ponds	D - Forested areas	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered(out of 544)
Number of Responses	59	94	87	53	447	82%
Percent of Completed Answers	13.2%	21.0%	19.5%	11.9%		
	E - Agricultural areas	F - Ridge tops	G - Steep slopes	H - Other		
Number of Responses	109	28	9	5		
Percent of Completed Answers	24.4%	6.3%	2.0%	1.1%		

25. Summary: When asked which resource area in question 23 was the highest priority, loss of agricultural areas was ranked the highest by the most people, followed by groundwater/aquifers, and then streams, wetlands and ponds.

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26. What is the most important role the Town of Ghent could play in promoting protection and effective management of the resources listed in #24	Number of Responses	Percent of Completed Answers	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
a. Steer development away from those resources towards less sensitive areas	350	67.3%	520	96%
b. Provide education about these resources to the public	176	33.8%		
c. Provide incentives to landowners or businesses to adopt best management practices or voluntarily protect these resources	279	53.7%		
d. Buy lands or development rights to protect resources using public money (includes grants)	151	29.0%		
e. No role – let the market decide	39	7.5%		
f. Other:	13	2.5%		
h. Don't know	37	7.1%		

26. Summary: When asked what role Ghent should play in promoting protection of these resources, 67% said to steer development away from sensitive areas, 54% said to provide incentives for adoption of best management practices or

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voluntary protection of resources, and 34% said provide education about these resources. About 29% said they felt Ghent should buy lands or development rights to protect resources. Letting the market decide was not a favored role (8%).

27. Would you be in favor of spending funds to protect resources from question #24 in Ghent?	No	Yes, but using only private money	Yes, but using a mix of public and private funds	Yes, using public money even if no private funds were available	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
Number of Responses	85	62	250	103	500	92%
Percent of Completed Answers	17.0%	12.4%	50.0%	20.6%		

27. Summary: 50% of participants said they favored using a mix of private and public monies to protect important resources and 21% said they favored using all public money. 17% said no funding should be spent, and 12% said only if private monies were used.

28. Is the source of your drinking water from a private well or public water supply?	Private Well	Public Water Supply	Don't know	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
Number of Responses	428	98	5	533	98%
Percent of Completed Answers	80.3%	18.4%	0.9%		

28. (a) Do you have any issues with that water supply	Yes	No	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
Number of Responses	96	427	523	96%
Percent of Completed Answers	18.4%	81.6%		

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28. Summary: 80% of participants have private wells supply their drinking water. 18% were on public water. 96 people, or 18% said they have issues with that water supply. 82% said they had no issues. NOTE: THIS QUESTION SHOULD BE ANALYZED TO SEE IF THOSE WITH ISSUES ARE WITH PUBLIC OR PRIVATE WELLS.

29. Should the Town encourage commercial uses in the Town of Ghent?			Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered(out of 544)
	Yes	No		
Number of Responses	271	206	478	88%
Percent of Completed Answers	56.7%	43.1%		

29. Summary: 57% said that the Town should encourage commercial uses and 43% said Ghent should not.

30. SEE WRITTEN RESPONSES FOR THIS QUESTION.

31. Where would you prefer to see commercial development in Ghent located?	In or near hamlets	In or near the commercial industrial park	Only in currently existing commercial zones	Other location	Don't know	No further commercial development desired	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
Percent of Completed Answers	17.2%	36.8%	28.1%	4.1%	4.8%	8.9%		

31. Summary: The most favored location for commercial development was in or near the commercial industrial park (37%), in current commercial zones (28%) or in or near hamlets (17%). 9% said they wanted no further commercial development.

32. What are the most important roles that the Town of Ghent should play related to economic development?			Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
	Number of Responses	Percent of Completed Answers		

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a. Assisting with new employment and business ownership opportunities in Ghent	176	34.2%	514	94%
b. Developing favorable land use regulations for business development	135	26.3%		
c. Assisting established businesses and industries to stay in Ghent	238	46.3%		
d. Making sure that new commercial development is consistent with the aesthetics, scale and character of Ghent	324	63.0%		
e. Offering incentives to businesses and industries	86	16.7%		
f. Providing technical assistance for businesses	44	8.6%		
g. Investing public money in economic development programs	22	4.3%		
h. Other:	31	6.0%		
j. Don't know	29	10.1%		

32. Summary: The most important role that the Town should play related to economic development is to ensure that new commercial uses are consistent with the aesthetics, scale and character of Ghent (63%). Other important roles are to assist established businesses stay in Ghent (46%) and assist with new business opportunities (34%). Developing favorable land

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use regulations for business development was favored by 26% of participants. Offering incentives was favored by about 17%. Providing technical assistance, or investing public money in economic development programs were not favored.

34. Looking to the future and comparing it to the present, how much attention should the Town give to promoting the following cultural uses in Ghent?	More attention	Neither more nor less attention	Less attention	Don't know	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
Number of Responses	248	201	29	36	514	94%
Percent of Completed Answers	48.2%	39.1%	5.6%	7.0%		

34. Summary: More people (48%) felt that the Town should give more attention to promoting cultural uses and 39% said that neither more nor less attention should be given. 6% said less attention should be given.

35. (a, b, and c) Of the list of cultural uses above, which are most important to you?	Theater/film	Art	Antique shows	Libraries	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 1,632)
Number of Responses	133	79	55	162	991	61%
Percent of Completed Answers	13.4%	8.0%	5.5%	16.3%		
	Music Concerts	Fairs and Festivals	Museums	Community Day	Other	
Number of Responses	163	149	72	144	34	
Percent of Completed Answers	16.4%	15.0%	7.3%	14.5%	3.4%	

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35. Summary: Cultural uses most important were: music concerts (16%), library (16%), fairs and festivals (15%), community day (15%), and theater/film (13%). Art, antique shows, and museums were the least favored cultural events.

36. SEE WRITTEN RESPONSES FOR ANSWERS TO THIS QUESTION.

37. How much attention should the Town give to the following recreational land uses in Ghent?	More attention	Neither more nor less attention	Less attention	Don't know	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
a. Senior citizen activities	239	153	15	66	474	87%
Percent of Completed Answers	50.4%	32.3%	3.2%	13.9%		
b. Activities for teens	294	118	16	52	481	88%
Percent of Completed Answers	61.1%	24.5%	3.3%	10.8%		
c. Athletic fields	195	215	27	36	474	87%
Percent of Completed Answers	41.1%	45.4%	5.7%	7.6%		
d. ATV and off-road vehicles/snowmobiles	72	101	271	36	481	88%
Percent of Completed Answers	15.0%	21.0%	56.3%	7.5%		
e. Cross country skiing	193	192	48	30	464	85%
Percent of Completed Answers	41.6%	41.4%	10.3%	6.5%		
f. Fishing access	242	162	22	45	472	87%
Percent of Completed Answers	51.3%	34.3%	4.7%	9.5%		

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g. Horse trails	158	197	52	54	462	85%
Percent of Completed Answers	34.2%	42.6%	11.3%	11.7%		
h. Hunting	127	189	112	38	467	86%
Percent of Completed Answers	27.2%	40.5%	24.0%	8.1%		
i. Ice skating	192	184	38	49	464	85%
Percent of Completed Answers	41.4%	39.7%	8.2%	10.6%		
j. Public picnic areas	222	173	35	35	466	86%
Percent of Completed Answers	47.6%	37.1%	7.5%	7.5%		
k. Skateboarding	73	152	177	51	454	83%
Percent of Completed Answers	16.1%	33.5%	39.0%	11.2%		
l. Swimming pools (public)	197	112	118	41	469	86%
Percent of Completed Answers	42.0%	23.9%	25.2%	8.7%		
m. Hiking, biking, walking, running path, rail trail	330	99	47	13	490	90%
Percent of Completed Answers	67.3%	20.2%	9.6%	2.7%		
n. Other	8	16	1	26	51	9%
Percent of Completed Answers	15.7%	31.4%	2.0%	51.0%		

37. Summary: More participants felt the Town should give less attention to ATV and off-road vehicles/snowmobiles, and skateboarding. Horse trails and hunting were activities participants felt should receive neither more nor less attention (42% and 41% respectively). Athletic fields, cross country skiing, and ice skating had about equal numbers of participants indicate they felt it needed more attention compared to those who felt they should have neither more nor less attention (about 40% each). Senior citizen activities, activities for teens, fishing access, public picnic areas, swimming pools, and

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hiking/biking trails were favored by more participants as activities that needed more attention. Of those, the most people said they felt more attention should be given to hiking/biking/walking/running path/rail trail activities, followed closely by the need for activities for teens.

38. Would you favor a recreation fee assessed on new subdivisions to fund recreational opportunities in the Town?	Yes	No	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
Number of Responses	325	180	508	93%
Percent of Completed Answers	64.0%	35.4%		

38. Summary: 64% favored assessing a recreation fee on new subdivisions while 35% did not.

39. Would you be in favor of spending other public funding to accomplish the recreational uses you feel need more attention from #37 (above)?	No	Yes, but using only private money	Yes, but using a mix of public and private funds	Yes, using public money even if no private funds were available	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered(out of 544)
Number of Responses	96	62	262	91	511	94%
Percent of Completed Answers	18.8%	12.1%	51.3%	17.8%		

39. Summary: 51% said they would favor using a mix of public and private monies to provide recreational activities listed in #37 and 18% said they favored using all public money for those activities. 19% said no money should be spent and 12% said only if private monies were used.

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40. We recognize that there is some controversy over the potential for a new rail trail being located in certain areas of Town. Are you in favor of developing new rail trails?	Yes	No	Number of Answered Questions	Percent Answered (out of 544)
Number of Responses	300	134	434	80%
Percent of Completed Answers	69.1%	30.9%		

40. Summary: 69% favored development of new rail trails and 31% were not in favor.

Appendix C – Comparison of 1973 Comprehensive Plan Survey Results with 2007 Survey Results

1973 Survey	2007 Survey
16% return rate; 850 mailed	29% returned; 1850 mailed
87% said Ghent is a good place to live	Not directly asked
70% said they receive needed services	Not directly asked. There were more people satisfied with the various town functions and services than not.
Medical services, new businesses, industry, recreational facilities were indicated as being needed in Town.	This survey explored this in great depth and indicates a variety of needs. However, this survey also shows that the public feels new businesses (variety) and recreational facilities were needed. Medical services were not a priority.
51% said that there should NOT be a town center for town government and recreation purposes.	There was much support for the current town hall, much support for promoting the hamlet of Ghent, and support for encouraging a center – especially for recreation.
This survey explored where people wanted different land uses to go, but it was not included in the printed plan that I have.	This survey had about 1/3 indicate that the town should encourage development in or near the existing hamlets or new hamlets; 41% favored steering housing development away from farm areas and towards hamlets or new hamlets; 67% favored steering new development away from environmentally sensitive areas; 37% to have commercial development in or near the industrial park and 28% in existing commercial areas and 17% in

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1973 Survey	2007 Survey
45% wanted slow population growth, 34% wanted moderate growth and very few wanted it to be rapid or remain the same.	hamlets. This was not directly asked but there was about 1/3 who directly supported tools that would serve to reduce development potential in town.
64% preferred single family housing, followed by 20% who felt there was need for more mobile home parks, and 7% for apartments	Mobile home parks were not favored. Modulares, condos, duplex houses, in-law apartments, and most especially senior citizen housing were important types to be considered.
61% said they wanted Ghent to remain the same; 21% said suburban, and less than 10% said urban or a combination	This was explored in many different ways and in many different questions. Maintaining rural character was extremely important to the vast majority of residents.
35% said they wanted the town to acquire land for recreation, 43% said the town should not.	This was not asked directly. There were a variety of recreational activities and facilities favored by participants. 64% favored having a recreation fee assessed on new subdivisions for funding. 51% said they would support public funding if it was a mix of private and public funds.
Most people said they would not want to live next to a garage, mobile home or park, or junkyard. Almost all felt that development should be controlled by the Town. 71% said that zoning is the best way to control this.	This was explored in a variety of ways through many questions. A strengthening of zoning was favored for some goals, and not for others. For example, 63% said the town should make sure that new commercial development is consistent with the aesthetics, scale and character of Ghent. 37% wanted to steer development away from environmental areas.

Final Plan Part II

1973 Survey	2007 Survey
	<p>30% said amend zoning to be more farm friendly. Other zoning topics did not have more than 1/3 indicating zoning changes were favored. For example, 27% favored major developers to dedicate moderately priced units in their development, and 36% favored zoning policies that support a diversity of housing types.</p>
<p>There was not a consensus on size of lot that should be required in the hamlet. Answers ranged from 1/3 acre to 3 acres. Most seemed to be ½ acre to 1 acre. For outside the hamlet, there was a wide variety of answers, but the common ones were 1 acre and 2 acres.</p>	<p>This was not explored specifically for the hamlet alone. There was not overwhelming support for either having smaller residential lot sizes (town-wide) or larger lot sizes compared to what exists (about 15 to 18%). It seems to imply that lot sizes set in the zoning now were acceptable.</p>
<p>41% said to restrict mobile homes to certain areas and 33% said allow them anywhere.</p>	<p>There was little support for mobile homes or mobile home parks.</p>