

Town of Prattsville

Conceptual Plan



**NY RISING
COMMUNITY RECONSTRUCTION PROGRAM**

October 31, 2013

This document was developed by the Town of Prattsville Planning Committee as part of the NY Rising Community Reconstruction (NYRCR) Program within the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery. The NYRCR Program is supported by NYS Homes and Community Renewal, NYS Department of State, and NYS Department of Transportation. Assistance was provided by the following consulting firms: Parsons Transportation Group of New York, Inc.; River Street Planning & Development, LLC; M.J. Engineering and Land Surveying, PC; and Synthesis, LLP.

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FOREWORD

The New York Rising Community Reconstruction (NYRCR) program was established by Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to provide additional rebuilding and revitalization assistance to communities damaged by Superstorm Sandy, Hurricane Irene, and Tropical Storm Lee. This program empowers communities to prepare locally-driven recovery plans to identify innovative reconstruction projects and other needed actions to allow each community not only to survive, but also to thrive in an era when natural risks will become increasingly common.

The NYRCR program is managed by the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery in conjunction with New York State Homes and Community Renewal and the Department of State. The NYRCR program consists of both planning and implementation phases, to assist communities in making informed recovery decisions.

The development of this conceptual plan is the result of innumerable hours of effort from volunteer planning committee members, members of the public, municipal employees, elected officials, state employees, and planning consultants. Across the state, over 102 communities are working together to build back better and stronger.

This conceptual plan is a snapshot of the current thoughts of the community and planning committee. The plans will evolve as communities analyze the risk to their assets, their needs and opportunities, the potential costs and benefits of projects and actions, and their priorities. As projects are more fully defined, the potential impact on neighboring municipalities or the region as a whole may lead to further modifications.

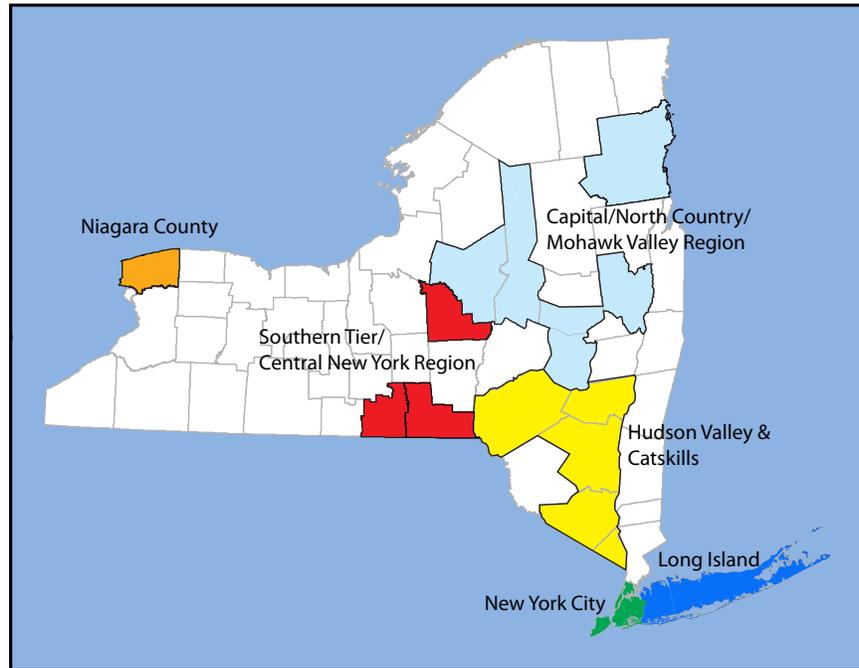
In the months ahead, communities will develop ways to implement additional strategies for economic revitalization, human services, housing, infrastructure, natural and cultural resources, and the community's capacity to implement changes.

Implementation of the proposed projects and actions found in this conceptual plan is subject to applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. Inclusion of a project or action in this conceptual plan does not guarantee that a particular project or action will be eligible for Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funding. Proposed projects or actions may be eligible for other state or federal funding, or could be accomplished with municipal, nonprofit or private investment.

Each NYRCR Community will continue to engage the public as they develop a final plan for community reconstruction. Events will be held to receive feedback on the conceptual plan, to provide an understanding of risk to assets, and to gather additional ideas for strategies, projects and actions.

October 31, 2013

NEW YORK RISING COMMUNITIES



Find out more at:

StormRecovery.ny.gov/Community-Reconstruction-Program

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Town of Prattville Community Reconstruction Snapshot

Building on its adopted regional vision and Long Term Community Recovery Plan, the Town of Prattville is moving forward to:

- **Give our residents answers** by leading a hazard mitigation/bridge replacement working group with local, city, and state agencies to advance projects that reduce flooding, including use of affordable and sustainable green infrastructure.
- **Make our seniors and vulnerable residents safe** by buying property outside the 100-year flood plain to provide a new flood-safe, mixed-use neighborhood that will serve the region.
- **Help our families rebuild their homes and businesses** using committed and future grant funding for housing rehabilitation and small business support.
- **Meet critical needs** by building an urgent care facility and regional community health and wellness center.
- **Save jobs** along our historic Main Street and at all companies, large and small, and build a green industry park to **attract new companies.**
- **Bring people back to the water's edge** by building a waterfront recreation and entertainment complex.
- **Think big** about new ideas for a district heating facility to generate affordable energy for homes, businesses, and community facilities.

Our dedicated volunteers have already secured \$2.3 million in grants that have reestablished many homeowners, reopened almost all local businesses, brought in new business, enhanced Main Street, and restored regional recreation facilities. Prattville has conducted multiple public meetings, two NYRCR Steering Committee meetings, dozens of LTRC Committee and subcommittee meetings, a four-day community design workshop, a one-day streetscape design workshop, and dozens of interviews and focus groups involving hundreds of residents. Prattville has mailed a survey and newsletter to every property owner and distributed materials at MudFest and the Gilboa-Conesville School's open house. More meetings, workshops, and public design activities are planned over the next three months as the NYRCR Plan is completed. **Bottom line** – Our team is driven to succeed. Prattville is ready now to capitalize on this great opportunity and move the community and region forward.

1 Overview

1.1 PURPOSE

The New York Rising Community Reconstruction (NYRCR) program – launched earlier this year by Governor Cuomo and funded by the federal recovery dollars – is designed to empower communities that suffered significant damage in recent storms to create and implement locally-oriented strategies to rebuild and better prepare for future extreme weather.

Representing 102 communities across the state, NYRCR program steering committees are comprised of community leaders, experts, and officials who incorporate their community's unique needs into their redevelopment strategies. Communities have eight months to prepare and submit their plans. The communities will be eligible to share in more than \$500 million of funding made available through the federal supplemental appropriation the Governor worked with Congress to obtain earlier this year. The State will also award at least \$250 million of the State's FEMA-funded Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) to New York Rising Communities to implement eligible projects contained in their recovery plans.

1.2 PROCESS

When Hurricane Sandy struck on October 30, 2012, the Town of Prattsville was over a year into its recovery from Tropical Storm Irene and Tropical Storm Lee. The Town's Long Term Community Recovery (LTCR) plan was developed with the help of a team of volunteer professional consultants and FEMA LTCR program staff and unanimously adopted in April 2012. Under the NYRCR Program, Prattsville is expanding the scope of its LTCR Plan to cover the planning process and required elements of the NYRCR Plan.



Governor Andrew Cuomo speaking at the NY Rising Storm Recovery Conference.



The NY Rising Community Reconstruction Program offers professional planning support and project implementation funding to targeted communities.

The process highlights the following areas of interest a NYRCR Plan must address:

- Economic development;
- Health and social services;
- Housing;
- Infrastructure systems;
- Natural and cultural systems;
- Socially vulnerable populations; and
- Other assets of community importance.

Tasks that Prattsville has completed to prepare its NYRCR Plan include:

- **Vulnerable Populations.** Evaluate those who are often underserved and displaced in storm recovery. Vulnerable populations include people with disabilities, low and very low-income people, the elderly, young children, the homeless, and people at risk of becoming homeless. The NYRCR Plan will enable planners to target outreach to these people and work with their advocates to develop a plan that is responsive to their needs.
- **Review Final Risk Assessment Maps.** Examine detailed floodplain mapping and past mapping by the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP) to prepare a risk map consistent with State guidance.
- **Geographic Scope.** Expand the geographic scope from the LTCR Plan's focus on the flood impact area to the entire Town of Prattsville.
- **Public Engagement Strategy.** Public meetings will be conducted to review assets and risk, develop a vision statement, and identify priority projects. (Note: These and other tasks involved in public engagement have been completed by Prattsville.)
- **Vision Statement.** Review and update the LTCR Plan's vision statement to ensure it addresses key issues, including capitalizing on assets, rebuilding in a resilient manner, and reducing future risk.

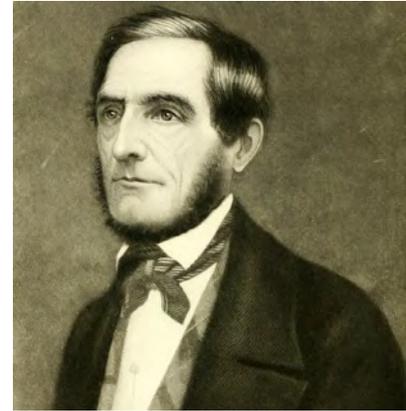
- **Community Asset Inventory.** Identify assets located within high risk areas (100-year floodplain) and moderate risk (500-year floodplain) using digital data sets provided by the State and NYCDEP. Record each asset’s information and attributes in the asset inventory spreadsheet provided the New York State Department of State (NYS-DOS).
- **Risk Assessment Framework.** Determine each asset’s risk score by building on existing data. The score will be based on three factors: hazard, vulnerability, and exposure using the riverine risk assessment spreadsheet tool prepared by the NYSDOS. A map will be prepared to illustrate the location of assets in high and moderate risk areas.
- **Needs and Opportunities Assessment.** Review and summarize the detailed needs and opportunities assessment completed for the LTCR Plan using the six FEMA recovery support functions: community planning and capacity building, economic development, health and social services, housing, infrastructure, and natural and cultural resources.
- **Identification of Reconstruction Strategies.** Review and update the strategies, projects, programs, and actions identified in the LTCR planning process and classify according to the six FEMA recovery support functions.
- **Regional Planning Strategy.** Develop a strategy to coordinate Prattsville’s efforts with surrounding communities, including others severely damaged by Tropical Storm Irene and Tropical Storm Lee.
- **Implementation Schedule and Matrix.** Update the LTCR Plan’s implementation steps, schedule, and relative priorities as necessary.

1.3 GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE

The geographic scope of the NYRCR Plan is the municipal boundary of the Town of Prattsville (see Figure 1.1).

1.4 COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

Modern day Prattsville began as the vision of one man, Colonel Zadock Pratt, who came to the settlement then known as “Schoharie Kill” in 1824 to site what would become known as the largest tannery in the world. An early “town planner,” Pratt designed and built one of the first planned communities in New York State, which officially became Prattsville, “Jewel of the Catskills,” on March 8, 1833. By then “The Colonel” had widened and re-routed the main street away from Schoharie Creek, laid out a village plan, and had over 100 houses and a number of stores built from native hemlock in the Greek Revival architectural style of the day. Many of those houses and stores were still standing at the time of the 2011 floods. Colonel Pratt had the streets lined with over one thousand elm, hickory, and maple trees and slate sidewalks laid along Main Street. By the mid-19th century, the Town of Prattsville was a thriving community of more than 1,500 residents. Today, Pratt’s influence is expressed in both the spirit of the community and in the many special qualities of the now historic landscape he originally envisioned.



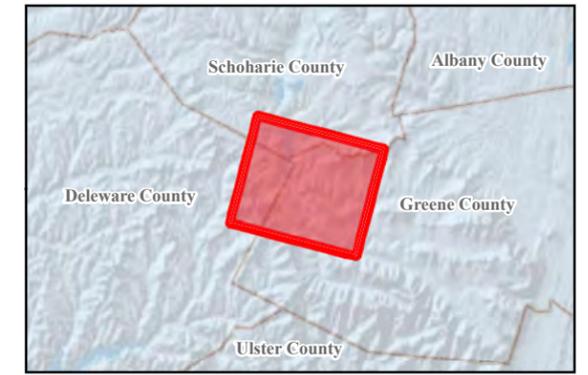
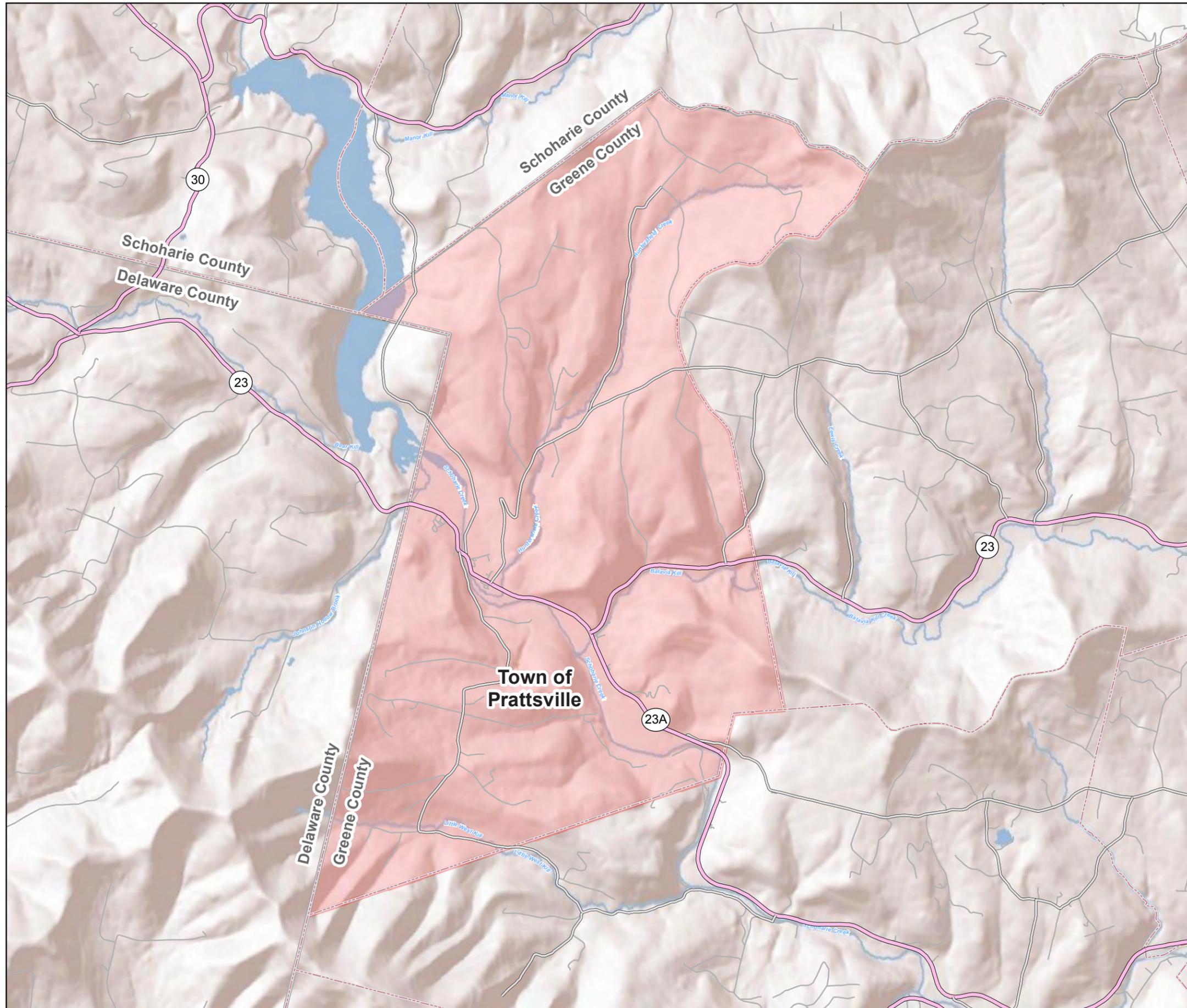
Colonel Zadock Pratt.

Prattsville lies at the northwestern edge of Catskill Park, a designation created by the State of New York in 1904. According to the New York State Constitution, all lands acquired by the State shall be become part of the forest preserve and “shall be forever kept as wild forest lands.” Prattsville shares the landscape character of the Catskill Mountain Region, illustrated by its compact, historic, walkable hamlet with varying types of locally owned and operated businesses. This community core is surrounded by open spaces – both forests and farmlands – and clean mountain waterways. These qualities contribute to the health of the community and are a draw for tourists and new residents, who seek a high quality of life in a scenic environment.

The Town is strategically situated 15 minutes apart from two of New York’s biggest ski areas, Windham Mountain and Hunter Mountain; themselves only two hours from NYC and as such a major entertainment attraction. The Town is also at the cross roads in between Oneonta, Kingston, and Catskill with over 2,300 cars a day passing through Town.



An 1844 lithograph of Prattsville.



Key Map

Legend

 CR Plan Study Area

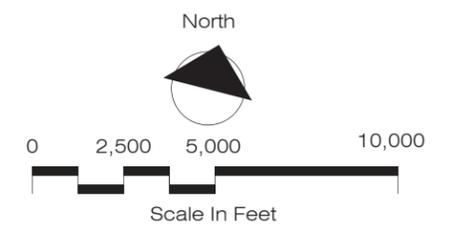


Figure 1.1
Geographic Area

Prattsville, like many small communities in the Catskill Region, faces both challenges and opportunities. Although the Town’s recovery plan focuses on the communities’ economic development, housing, infrastructure, recreation sites, and the Main Street landscape, it should not exist in isolation from other key components and features of a healthy community. Working in cooperation with neighboring communities, coordinating events and building a regional experience that is complementary rather than competitive, and developing positive relationships with the local government, will bring renewed strength and future success to Prattsville.

1.5 VISION AND GOALS

Building on its successful community engagement strategy, the public’s input, and the Steering Committee’s feedback, the Town prepared a vision statement, goals, and actions to guide implementation of the NYRCR Plan. The community vision was generated by a process of extensive and ongoing community engagement, including public visioning sessions, design workshops, a community survey, and sub-committee meetings. Prattsville’s vision for a resilient future is:

“Prattsville – From the middle of nowhere to the center of everything.”

The cornerstone of Prattsville’s vision is to:

- Always remain compassionate, faithful, and caring toward our neighbors;
- Rebuild in a manner that improves economic prosperity of our Town and region;
- Remember our 180 year history of growth and survival; and
- Design a town for future generations.

Prattsville NYRCR Plan Vision Statement

Prattsville focuses on a holistic approach to planning, capacity building, providing health, social services, infrastructure, and jobs that serve all residents and keep them safe. We work to reduce risk and damage from flooding and ensure that our homeowners and businesses can recover quickly. Our seniors, families, and children have many opportunities to enjoy nature, history, art, and culture. Prattsville is a mainstay of our strong, resilient and creative mountaintop region where people choose to live, work, and play.

The purpose of the actions outlined in this NYRCR Plan is to improve safety for all residents and quality of life throughout the Town. Tax base generation and job creation are central goals. The plan focuses on multiple strategies essential to economic development, including business retention, expansion, recruitment, and tourism industry development. Taken as an integrated series of actions, including new business development, business restoration, and Main Street revitalization, the potential for job creation and tax base enhancement is high. Its real nature tourism strategy can also begin to attract a visitor base with additional discretionary spending potential. The LTCR Plan identifies the following goals:

- Bringing home displaced residents and developing diverse housing choices that meet needs of current residents (especially senior citizens) and attracting new community members, especially young families.
- Restoring and expanding the Town's tax base.
- Bringing back existing businesses, attracting new companies, and establishing new economic drivers for Prattsville, including green industry and green energy.
- Revitalizing Main Street.
- Developing and implementing programs and projects that preserve and enhance the cultural, historic, and environmental aspects of the community.
- Creating amenities that enhance the quality of life for residents that are attractive throughout the region including enhancing health, recreation, fitness, and athletic facilities.

1.6 SUMMARY OF STORM IMPACTS

On the morning of August 28, 2011, Hurricane Irene had been downgraded to a tropical storm with sustained winds at 65 miles per hour, as its center made its way across the State of New York. Though it lacked the force that had been feared, the driving rain brought flooding and destruction to the southeast quadrant of the State. The rains caused record flooding of Schoharie Creek, which rose more than 16 feet, as well as its tributaries, Huntersfield Creek and Batavia Kill. Rain and flooding occurred so quickly that the river was running through Main Street and measured at over 80,000 cubic feet per second, a flow rate comparable to that of Niagara Falls. Ten days later, Tropical Storm Lee hit the area, dumping more rain on the vulnerable and water-logged Prattsville community.

The resulting floods destroyed more than 100 homes, tearing houses from their foundations and stripping families of their belongings. Of the affected homes, 63 were primary residences; the remainder were either second homes or rentals. Thirty-seven of the primary residences suffered 50 percent or less damage, which will allow them to be repaired without being elevated above the base flood elevation. All of these homes were identified as needing exterior structure and interior repairs.



Floodwater from Schoharie Creek surges through Prattsville.

Before the flood, many senior residents of Prattsville lived in homes that had been in their families for generations. Most of these homes were at least temporarily uninhabitable after the flood. Other seniors lived in mobile homes that were swept away by the flood. Fourteen homes floated out of the mobile home park and homeowners were stranded on rooftops waiting hours to be rescued. Those homes not swept away were left with over 5 feet of water on the main floor.

The floods wiped out all 21 businesses within the hamlet. They also damaged a bridge on one end of Main Street and destroyed a second bridge on the other end. Since both bridges were impassable and unsafe for traffic, the Town was virtually landlocked for more than a week, accessible only by foot or all-terrain vehicles. If residents needed medical care, and were able to travel to a hospital, the nearest facility was 45 minutes away by car. Sidewalks were destroyed, power poles were knocked down causing loss of electricity for weeks, historic trees were ripped from the ground, and drains were filled to capacity. The firehouse, located adjacent to the creek, took a direct hit from the storms, trapping fire fighters and emergency crews on the second floor of the building and severely limiting their ability to respond to the crisis.

The flooding severely damaged recreational resources/infrastructure as well, namely Conine Baseball Field and the Prattsville Town Green. Conine Baseball Field, the gateway into the Town of Prattsville from the communities of Windham, Hunter, Ashland, Jewett, and Lexington, was the Town's only organized recreational resource. The field was used for softball games between local and visiting teams from throughout the region, regional tournaments, and other events that enhanced Prattsville's social life and economy. Floodwaters washed away the lawn and damaged playground equipment and memorials at the entrance to the Town Green, which had been the primary gathering place for community events.

The local grocery store became the command center for the community as recovery efforts began. From August 28 through September 7, Prattsville was cut off from the outside world, its main roads covered with water, as public works crews tried to dredge the creeks and alleviate the flooding. The waterlogged ground gave the new rain nowhere to drain other than directly into streams and creeks, exacerbating relief efforts.



Flooding destroyed more than 100 homes in Prattsville.

1.7 SUMMARY OF RELEVANT PLANS AND STUDIES

Beginning shortly after the devastating storms, the Town has been working hard on their recovery. Through the work of many dedicated residents, local experts and professional Town Planners, the Town has already engaged in a number of studies to further its analysis of the situation and explore feasibilities of their LTR Plan. As part of the planning process, the team reviewed existing plans and studies, including:

- Town of Prattsville Community Identity and Preservation Project. Deborah Mayor Dewan. 1993.
- Development Plan Summary for the Town of Prattsville. Greene County Planning Department. 1976.
- West of Hudson Economic Development Study for the Catskill Watershed Corporation: Final Economic Study for the Catskill Fund for the Future. Hamilton, Rabinovitz & Alschuler, Inc. July 1999.
- Schoharie Creek Management Plan: Schoharie Creek Management Unit 17 and 18. New York City Department of Environmental Protection.
- The Economic Impact of Tourism in New York State: Hudson Valley Focus. Tourism Economics. April 2009.
- Town of Prattsville Site Plan Review Law.
- Town of Prattsville Comprehensive Land Use Plan. 2000.
- Greene County Housing Action Plan. 2008.
- Prattsville Parks Master Plan. 2008.
- Greene County All Hazard Mitigation Plan. 2009.

New studies were also undertaken to generate a fuller understanding of Prattsville's context and opportunities:

- Commercial Sales Leakage Report. Alison Bates, Lisa Nagel, and Margaret Irwin, River Street Planning & Development. November 2011.

- Demographic Study. Margaret Irwin and Leila Jabour. River Street Planning & Development. October 2011.
- Housing Market Analysis. GAR Associates and River Street Planning & Development. January 2012.
- Nature Tourism Report. Alison Bates and Margaret Irwin, River Street Planning & Development. December 2011.
- Planning Studio Project. State University of New York at Albany. Recreate Prattsville: Master Trails and Recreation Plan. June 2012.
- Final Draft Local Flood Hazard Mitigation Analysis Schoharie Creek Watershed. Milone & MacBroom, Inc. for New York City Department of Environmental Protection. September, 2013.

2

Assessment of Risk and Need

2.1 DESCRIPTION OF ASSETS

2.1.1 Description of Assets

One purpose of the NYRCR Plan is to ensure that Prattsville's existing assets and new construction are more resilient in the face of future flooding. To address this objective, an inventory of Prattsville assets affected by flooding and those assets that could be affected was prepared by the planning team for consideration by the NYRCR Steering Committee. As shown on Figure 2.1, many of these assets are located within either the 100-year floodplain (high risk area) or 500-year floodplain (moderate risk area). Depending on its function, each asset was placed in one of six categories:

- **Economic.** Although Prattsville is a very small community, it does have several economic assets, including Jim's Great American Super Market, A.J. Young and Son Hardware and Feed Store, Moore's Homes (manufactured home sales), Mobile Home Park and Motel, O'Hara's Trading Post, three restaurants/cafes, and two small hotels, among other businesses. Since the flooding, a new commercial plaza was constructed that includes a clothing store, liquor store, insurance agency, and several other tenants. These businesses are instrumental in attracting visitors and additional business to the community.
- **Health and Social Services.** The Town Hall, Post Office, Fire Station, and County Sheriff regional substation are located on Main Street and comprise the extent of Prattsville's health and social services assets. A Head Start day care program that was operating from the Reformed Church of Prattsville did not reopen after the flood.
- **Housing.** Housing assets include private residences, one and two-family rental units, and Moore's Manufactured Home Park.
- **Infrastructure.** Prattsville's infrastructure assets include the Prattsville Highway Garage, a wastewater treatment plant, a water tower, and the Verizon/ATT telecommu-

nications building. In addition, the Town has four bridges that cross Batavia Kill, Huntersfield Creek, Schoharie Creek, and Johnson Hollow Brook.

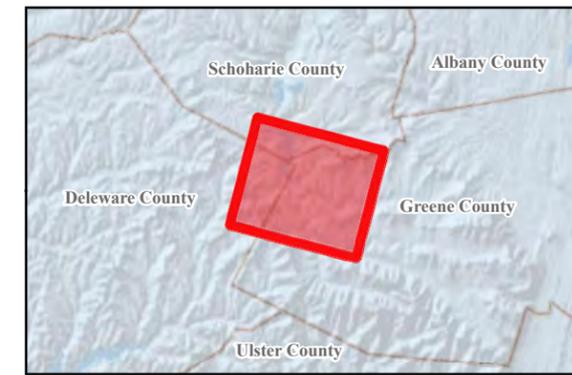
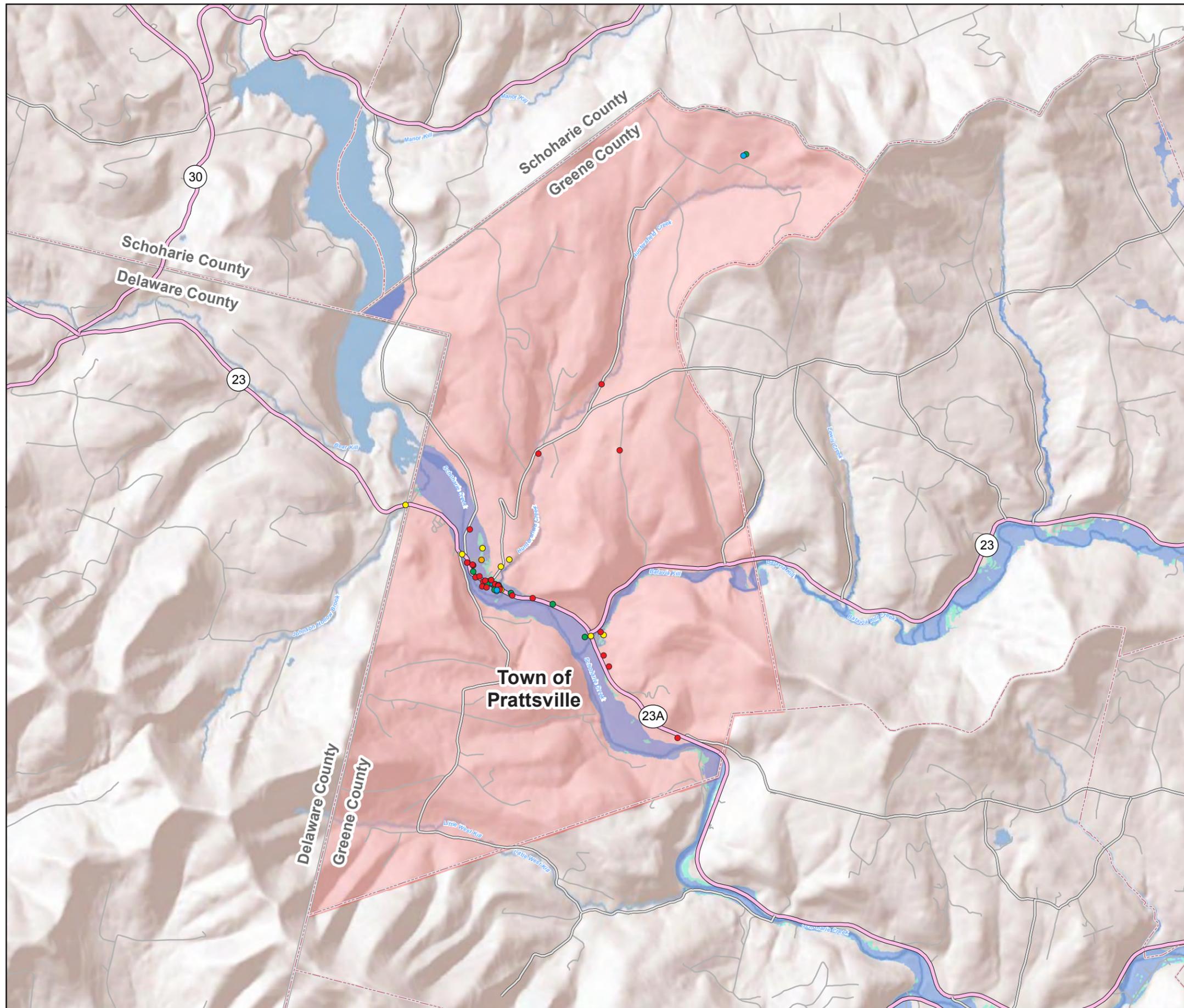
- **Natural and Cultural Resources.** Prattsville’s assets include Conine Field, a local ballfield and recreation site; Pratt Rock Park, a 20-acre hillside park on the cliffs above town; the Zadock Pratt Museum, historic home of the Town’s founder and a museum of regional history, both of which are on national and state registers of historic places; the historic Prattsville Town Green; an American Legion Hall; the Prattsville Art Center; and two churches, the Prattsville Community Church and the Reformed Church of Prattsville. Huntersfield Christian Training Center served both as an emergency shelter and as a focal point for housing rehabilitation and case management support for affected property owners.
- **Socially Vulnerable Populations.** Prattsville’s socially vulnerable populations include its seniors, young children and its low and very low income populations. Additionally, given the number of families in mobile homes, there exists a risk of people becoming homeless as a result of a disaster.

2.1.2 Assessment of Risks to Assets

NYCDEP Local Flood Hazard Mitigation Analysis. In September 2011, the Town of Prattsville requested assistance from the NYCDEP to analyze the FEMA Flood Insurance Study’s hydraulic model, characterize the 2011 flood, and assess Schoharie Creek and its floodplain. The goal of this evaluation was two-fold: identify potential flood mitigation measures and test the feasibility of emerging community visions for long term recovery.

NYCDEP hired the consulting engineering firm, Milone & MacBroom, Inc. (MMI) to prepare a local flood hazard mitigation analysis. MMI used the Corps of Engineers’ Hydrologic Engineering Center-River Assessment System (HEC-RAS) software to analyze the FEMA model and gain a better understanding of what contributes to or exacerbates flooding in Prattsville. The analysis evaluated existing flood vulnerabilities and focused on flood mitigation alternatives for larger floods (i.e., the 50-year and greater events).

The Final Draft Local Flood Hazard Mitigation Analysis (LFHMA) study was completed in September 2013, and is currently under review by the Town of Prattsville and the community. Working together with the NYCDEP, Greene County Soil and Water Conservation District, FEMA, and the Greene County Economic Development, Tourism and Planning Department, Prattsville can use the LFHMA study when it applies for hazard mitigation grants and directs future modeling to design and build these projects and further protect its residents.



Key Map

Legend

- Economic
- Health and Social Services
- Housing
- Infrastructure
- Natural and Cultural Resources
- Socially Vulnerable Populations
- High Risk (100-Year Flood Plain)
- Moderate Risk (500-Year Flood Plain)

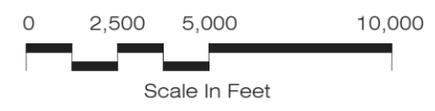


Figure 2.1
Assets and Risk

Flood Hazard Risk from Schoharie Creek. Schoharie Creek approaches Prattsville from Lexington, NY in a narrow confined valley with long, straight reaches and narrow floodplains that support agricultural fields. Two nearly 90 degree bends are located 1.6 and 2.8 miles upstream of the Batavia Kill confluence (just before town), separated by slightly sinuous reaches. The floodplain widens on the right side as the channel reaches the Batavia Kill, where large gravel bars of sediment are present. Schoharie Creek then flows northwesterly from the Batavia Kill confluence for 0.7 mile to a concrete fish migration barrier weir at the upstream end of Main Street. The channel is initially on the left side of the valley with a broad floodplain, and Route 23 and the center of town on the right. Then the channel crosses the valley bottom diagonally to the right side at Pratt Rock, a natural outcrop and well-known landmark. Downstream of the fish barrier weir, the channel quickly crosses back to the left side of the narrowing valley bottom. The river then stays along the left bank past the Route 23 bridge towards the end of town. The right side of the valley bottom has an alluvial terrace, possibly of a delta or alluvial fan origin, and a narrow active floodplain. Prattsville and its Main Street are located on this terrace. The floodplain narrows toward the Route 23 bridge. Main and Washington streets are on a terrace deposit, influenced by Huntersfield Creek deposits, about 10 feet higher than the river's more active floodplain, which narrows at Prattsville.

The LFHMA report summarizes the following key issues regarding Schoharie Creek flooding in Prattsville:

- The entire length of Prattsville's Main Street is built in what is the Schoharie Creek's one percent annual chance (100-year floodplain) – and many sites flood more frequently in 25- and 50-year events.
- Bank erosion is common along the outside of bends in Schoharie Creek.
- Two “major floods” that predate the modern Schoharie Creek U.S. Geological Survey's stream gauge program were reported in 1839 and 1849. Four “large floods” were reported in 1854 and 1869, 1901, and 1902. A great flood occurred in 1903 with 10 inches of rain in 24 hours and caused significant damage.
- Median values for peak flood flow rates at Schoharie Creek in Prattsville are increasing, from 15,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) in the early 1900s to around 21,000 cfs today. Annual peak floods of under 10,000 cfs were very common prior to 1970, but are now less common as flood flows increase. Annual precipitation trends are also rising.

- Annual peak flow data from USGS from 1903 to 2011 show 12 major flooding events of Schoharie Creek in 1927, 1933, 1936, 1938, 1951, 1956, 1960, 1980, 1987, 1996, 1999, and 2005, with flow rates ranging from 38,500 cfs to 52,800 cfs.
- The peak flow rate in Schoharie Creek during Tropical Storm Irene was reported as 120,000 cfs, which is 24 percent larger than the FEMA predicted 500-year frequency (0.2 percent annual chance) flood and 2.2 times larger than the previously recorded high flow in 1996.
- The flood study indicates that a contributing problem in Prattsville is the narrow channel compared to upstream and downstream reaches and the narrow to non-existent floodplain. Modeling of potential channel widening and deepening demonstrated an anticipated drop in water surface elevations from 2 to almost 7 feet during a 100-year event.
- The floodplain of Schoharie Creek narrows at the Route 23 bridge. A fifty year old bridge owned and maintained by New York State, the structure further constricts the stream channel and cuts off a portion of the floodplain, especially on the east (Main Street) side of the creek. This causes a bottleneck for stream flows and caused a rise in the flood elevation in parts of the town upward of 4 feet during the 2011 flood. According to the LFHMA study, the width approaching the Route 23 bridge is only 192 feet, without a floodplain, suggesting it is too narrow and entrenched. The channel reach near the bridge is undersized for routine floods, resulting in greater floodwater depths and flood hazards upstream. Removing the bridge and replacing it with a wider structure designed to convey flood level flows would lead to a 4-foot water elevation reduction near and upstream of the bridge, declining to 2.65 feet at the Dutch Church, and decreasing to 0.13 feet near the end of town at the Huntersfield Creek bridge for the 100-year event (1 percent annual chance). The narrow channel would need to be widened at the crossing location. Bridge replacement in combination with widening and deepening the channel would decrease the limit of the 100-year floodplain by several hundred feet in some places.
- There are numerous floodplain encroachments on Schoharie Creek in and around the hamlet. Encroachments include expansions and modifications of the terrace on which Main Street is located, buildings and other structures, and upstream encroachments. The LFHMA study determined that removal of the vestiges of a large berm along the left bank of the creek would have modest benefits, reducing water levels during both the 10-year (10 percent annual chance) and 100-year (1 percent annual chance) frequency floods by approximately one foot. Other encroachments

include a concrete fish migration barrier weir upstream of Prattsville. During Tropical Storm Irene, Schoharie Creek overtopped its banks near the weir and flowed through the business district at a reported depth of six to eight feet in some locations. Removing the weir was predicted to reduce inundation of three homes, but could also benefit other properties as well. Alternatively, a high flow bypass might be feasible to provide a pathway for water to move around the weir and back into the channel during high flows.

Flood Hazard Risk from Tributaries. The three primary tributaries to Schoharie Creek upstream of Prattsville – West Kill, East Kill, and Batavia Kill – all carried significant discharges leading to high flows at Prattsville. Runoff from Tropical Storm Irene first entered the town along Huntersfield Creek, a small, steep tributary of the much larger Schoharie Creek. Batavia Kill originates in the Town of Windham, dropping approximately 2,000 feet in elevation to reach its confluence with Schoharie Creek near Prattsville. Batavia Kill deposits sediment into Schoharie Creek as a result of this topography change. The LFHMA study summarizes the following key issues regarding tributary flooding in Prattsville:

- Huntersfield Creek is a minor tributary whose watershed drains from Huntersfield Mountain through Prattsville into Schoharie Creek. During Tropical Storm Irene, the creek became blocked due to debris. Flood water left Huntersfield Creek’s channel at the Main Street bridge and flowed along Main Street from south to north. This flooding was a separate event from the later peak flows of Schoharie Creek.
- The FEMA HEC-RAS model indicated there is an irregular convex shape to the creek bed between the concrete weir and the Route 23 bed, which might be attributed to sediment inflow from Huntersfield Creek.
- The current alignment of Huntersfield Creek directs an erosive force downstream of the Main Street Bridge, toward the left bank of the creek.
- The Main Street bridge over Huntersfield Creek is at risk for debris blockage during a 50-year storm. The LFHMA study evaluated the alternatives of replacing the bridge and widening the crossing and realigning Huntersfield Creek to provide a direct discharge into Schoharie Creek rather than using the separate channel that parallels the creek through most of the village.

Community Facilities and Infrastructure. The following bullets summarize the risks to community facilities and infrastructure.

- Prattsville Hose Company. A new location for a replacement fire station has been identified, although there is still a need to secure secondary egress. The Town is currently working with FEMA which has committed to provide approximately \$2 million in funding for the new fire station.
- Greene County Sheriff's regional substation on Main Street will need to be relocated; options are currently being evaluated.
- Prattsville Town Hall on Main Street holds critical Town documents and provides space for Town meetings.
- Prattsville Town Green provides space for outdoor community gatherings and events.
- Wide range of Main Street businesses.
- Utilities, including Prattsville's wastewater treatment plant and municipal wells.

Communications. Issues related to communications systems include the following.

- Need for enhanced direct communication, including possible audible warning and reverse 911 systems.
- Back-up generators to supply power to recharge cell phones and supply wi-fi to residents.

Power Supply. Risks to power supplies include the following.

- Critical municipal facilities requiring a back-up power supply include the sheriff substation, fire station, town offices, treatment plant.
- Critical community facilities requiring a back-up power supply include the supermarket, HTCT shelter, and the church kitchen.

Other Hazards. The following bullets summarize other hazards.

- Lack of sheltering capacity for people and pets.
- Backup water supply for the Town.

- Ice storms that pose a risk of seasonal flooding.

2.2. ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

2.2.1 Community Demographics

Resilience in the face of natural disasters is largely the result of the physical scale of the disaster and the socioeconomic conditions of the affected community. Understanding Prattsville's demographics, especially issues related to vulnerable populations, is central to rebuilding in a resilient way. Demographic issues facing Prattsville are summarized as follows:

- **Population.** Before Tropical Storm Irene and Tropical Storm Lee, the 2010 census data showed that the Town's population had increased by 5.3 percent. In 2010, the County's population was 49,221 persons, an increase of 2.1 percent from 2000. The Town of Prattsville accounted for 1.4 percent of the County's overall population. Although new data are not available, the Town believes it has suffered a population loss since Tropical Storm Irene and Tropical Storm Lee hit, possibly due to delays in homeowners' rebuilding due to a lack of financial resources.

The median age of Prattsville residents was 46.1 years in 2010, compared to 36.5 years in 2000, indicating the Town's population is aging much faster as the county and state as a whole. The growing numbers of seniors, some of whom have physical or mental impairments and may lack private transportation, are especially vulnerable and require a higher level of care during recovery.

- **Housing.** While housing is inexpensive relative to other parts of the nation, the housing stock is older and may require upgrades to meet current needs, as well as needing maintenance and repairs. The value, quality, density, and age of Prattsville's residential construction affect potential losses, recovery, and likelihood that owners will rebuild.

Some of the Town's most affordable housing, including Moore's Manufactured Home Park, a large portion of which is located in the 100-year floodplain. This makes these lower income residents more at risk for personal and financial loss and isolation from community services and health care during immediate relief efforts.

Many of the older homes have been in families for generations. While this is positive from the standpoint that the homeowner does not usually carry a mortgage on the property, the downside is that the homes are older, requiring more maintenance, and most do not carry flood insurance as there is no mortgage requiring such. Another interesting aspect of the housing in Prattsville is that almost one third of

the homes are owner by non-residents and used as seasonal or weekend homes. A clear majority of these non-residents are from down state, affluent areas. While this clearly benefits the economic potential of the Town, it also makes it harder for these nonresidents to obtain any rebuilding assistance as most programs make such homeowners ineligible for assistance (including FEMA and CDBG).

A high percentage of the Town's renters who are cost burdened may lack access to information about financial aid during recovery. In some cases, renters may lack sufficient shelter options when housing becomes uninhabitable or too costly to afford, forcing them to look for temporary shelter outside of Town and increasing the likelihood that existing multi-family structures will remain vacant and underutilized.

Out of 506 housing units in Prattsville, 59.5 percent are occupied. Of these, 82.1 percent are owner occupied, and 17.9 percent are renter occupied. Of the 205 vacant units, 76.6 percent are seasonal. The high percentage of seasonal residences can be challenging during recovery since little or no state or federal assistance is available to owners of vacation or second homes, and damage to these properties can remain unaddressed for a significant period of time.

- **Income.** Half of Prattsville's residents earn a low or moderate income. Over 14 percent of families and 10 percent of individuals are living below poverty level. Nearly 30 percent of households were very low income, earning 50 percent or less of Greene County's median family income. This limits the Town's ability to absorb losses and enhance resilience to hazards. Wealth makes communities more resilient and speeds recovery due to insurance, savings, and social safety nets. In some measure, this is because many households are living on retirement and Social Security incomes. These low incomes make it difficult to attract additional retail outlets to the town, given the limited spending potential and may make it more difficult for existing businesses to snap back after disasters. Recovery from Tropical Storm Irene and Tropical Storm Lee also clarified that the partnerships that emerged between second homeowners and year-round residents helped bring additional resources to bear on recovery.

The Town's considerable percentage of female heads of households can challenge recovery, since these women often earn lower wages and have family care responsibilities. These households are vulnerable to losing time and money caring for children when day care facilities are affected. Large families, an increasing population group in Prattsville, often have limited finances to outsource care for dependents of various ages, including elderly and disabled family members.

In 2010 before the floods, 11 percent of Prattsville's residents were living in poverty. Persons receiving social services are already economically and socially marginalized and can require additional support in the post-disaster period. Special needs populations (e.g., infirm, mentally or physically disabled, homeless), are disproportionately affected during disasters.

- **Employment.** Prattsville's labor force participation rate was 68 percent in 2009. Unemployment was estimated at 13.4 percent. Industries employing the most residents were construction (24.6 percent), followed by education, health care and social services assistance industries (19.5 percent), and arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services (13.8 percent). The high unemployment rate further limits residents' financial capacity to recover. Many industries employing local residents (arts, entertainment and recreation, and other tourism-related industries) can be slow to recover, while others, like construction, play a critical role in recovery, which could result in stable employment.

- **Land Use.** Prattsville contains approximately 14,650 acres of land, of which 512 acres are in the flood area boundary. The flood area boundary accounts for 3.5 percent of the Town's total acreage and 20 percent of the Town's total assessed value. The majority of parcels and acreage is in residential use. A range of land uses exists in the Town, with over 50 percent of the land vacant or forest, one-third in a residential use, nearly 5 percent agricultural, and 7.5 percent conserved. All other categories total less than 1 percent of the land.

2.2.2 Community Planning and Capacity Building

The disruption of business and commerce in Prattsville is financially compounded by the loss of infrastructure and buildings and devastation of the Town's employment base. The need for jobs, commercial tax base, new and rehabilitated housing, and community services is even greater than before the flood. The Town's organizational resources are stretched thin, and Prattsville needs organizational partners to help oversee residential and economic revitalization. Opportunities to address this need have been taken advantage of by the following means:

- **The Prattsville Local Development Corporation.** Shortly after the flood, the Prattsville Local Development Corporation (PDC) was formed to help address this need and facilitate the future economic and community development of the town. The PDC has been working closely with the Town to implement a 2012 CDBG-funded Small Business Recovery Program and with NYCDEP to acquire land suitable for priority projects. The opportunity to partner with NYCDEP to acquire property, some of which is conserved land resources and other land will be made available for carefully planned compatible development.

- **Community Recovery Manager.** Fifty thousand dollars of funding from the NYSDOS enabled Prattsville to continue working with River Street Planning & Development. In this role, they provide recovery support, technical assistance, support for CDBG program implementation and grant writing and program development support.

2.2.3 Economic Development

As a result of the flood, 21 businesses that employed over 130 people suffered significant damage. While Prattsville is a very small community, it does have several economic engines that are instrumental in attracting visitors and business to the community. Prattsville is the center of the surrounding Mountaintop community – the place where the thoroughfares from Oneonta, Catskill, and Kingston all cross at the center of Town with over 2,300 cars passing through per day. The Town has served as a local and regional commercial hub since the mid-1800s and still functions as a small economic center, attracting people from the neighboring towns of Lexington, Ashland, Grand Gorge, and Gilboa.

Before the flood, Prattsville was a trade center, with more retail dollars coming into the Town from neighboring communities than were lost by local residents shopping elsewhere. In general, the retail businesses that exist in Prattsville serve local customers within 35 miles of the town. A Sales Leakage and Surplus Data Study prepared by the LTCR planning team identified a leakage of \$2.4 million from the Washington Street area in Prattsville and a sales surplus of \$6.3 million. The Town must now encourage residents to shop where they live while attracting new residents and non-residents to the community for services, products, recreation, and amenities. By understanding what goods and services residents purchase elsewhere, the Town has identified opportunities for business expansion and new development. Promising targets include a limited-service restaurant, automotive dealers, department/clothing/health care stores, pharmacy, and gas station. Currently, strong industries include manufactured home sales, hardware supplies, restaurants, auto parts and accessories, lawn and garden equipment and supplies, grocery stores, general merchandise stores and drinking establishments that enjoy just over \$6 million in retail surplus. Prattsville also has important manufacturers, including Dimensional Hardwoods and Fuch's Woodworking Furniture, that have plans for expansion and new product lines. The Town is a center for contractors due in part to the amount of work on second homes in nearby towns and other workers who service the ski communities of Windham and Hunter. Along with restoration of commercial space and equipment, efforts to restore housing and bring the town population back to pre-flood levels are critical to ensure levels of commerce in Prattsville return to pre-flood levels.

Prattsville has many distinctive assets that can provide a basis for economic development activities. Natural resources like the mountains, rivers, forests, wildlife, and open space are appealing and present unique opportunities for tourism development. Like other rural communities, Prattsville enjoys a high rate of self-employment, increasing opportunities for entrepreneurs.

The Town believes it can capitalize on providing goods and services to its non-residents, entice visitors and residents from Windham and Hunter, and cause the 2,300 cars that each day travel through Town to stop and enjoy all that Prattsville has to offer. The economic development committee identified a range of opportunities to retain current businesses and attract new businesses to Prattsville, revitalize Main Street, and establish new economic drivers, including green industry and green energy.

- **Business Development Funds Program.** Four funds will create financing options for existing businesses to recover from the floor up or to expand operations: Hurricane Irene Businesses Retention Fund, Business Expansion Fund, Business Attraction Fund, and Land Acquisition Fund. In August 2012, Prattsville was awarded \$1,000,000 in CDBG funding, \$500,000 of which was allocated to a business recovery program that the PDC will manage. The remaining \$500,000 was allocated to homeowners.

- **Town Business Recruitment Strategy.** Opportunities exist for expansion and new business development. Development of a recruitment campaign for Prattsville will focus on attracting new businesses and encouraging home-based businesses to expand. The Prattsville business recruitment team will identify high potential business sectors, compile information on business prospects, and market to those prospects, with the objective of creating a more resilient, diverse, and stable tax base. The Sales Leakage and Surplus Data Study identified industries that are currently not satisfying local demand, such as department, clothing, health care stores, automotive dealers, and limited-service eating places, and thus have strong potential as a new business niche. The Town is already working with a pharmacist and filmmaker to set up their businesses in town.

Other business targets identified in Prattsville include:

- Real nature and heritage tourism related business;
- Arts-oriented business, including photography, filmmaking, and web design;
- Value-added agricultural business such as a farmers market;
- Consumer/retail businesses, including jewelry, clothing, and handbags;
- Value-added wood product business; and
- Motocross facility development.

- **Town Marketing Plan/Heritage and Nature Tourism Strategy.** The Town needs an identifiable brand to differentiate it from other communities and to convey the message that it is a premier place for people to live, work, and play in the region and the state. Nestled between Windham and Hunter, both high tourist areas, the Town has the ability to provide services to complement the other regional offerings. A well-thought out and executed marketing plan will bring positive exposure to the Town. Marketing the area for new business, tourists, and future residents is essential to expand Prattsville's economic vitality and population. Managing natural and scenic resources to maximize "real nature" tourism trends and developing green energy businesses can put Prattsville back on the map (see Section 3.2).
- **Eco-Commerce and Professional Office Park.** Prattsville currently lacks a commercial and industrial park that will promote tax base growth. As a result, the Town considers it a high priority to develop an eco-commerce park and professional park to fill these businesses needs (see Section 3.2).

2.2.4 Health and Social Services

Quality of life is important to everyone, but in Prattsville, community spirit and a simple, quality life are a way of life. The people of the Town have learned to live with only basic services. It is not uncommon to drive over an hour to go to school, shopping, or to a doctor's appointment. Immediate medical attention in an emergency, social gathering spots, and recreational amenities have been viewed as luxuries in the past. Since Tropical Storm Irene, they have been proven to be necessities for the region. The Community Enhancement sub-committee developed projects that will address these emerging needs as a result of the storms. The community requires a certified emergency shelter, a community/health/wellness center, more accessible medical treatment, and a safe, convenient, multi-functional place to gather. Opportunities to address these needs and to create amenities that enhance the quality of life for residents and are attractive throughout the region include:

- **Certified Emergency Shelter.** Prattsville has no certified emergency shelter. When the floodwaters receded, few places were safe to gather and there was no place large enough to accommodate the number of residents looking for a safe haven. The Huntersfield Christian Training Center (HCTC), a faith-based not-for-profit organization and a long-time presence in the Town of Prattsville, located 6 miles outside the flood-damaged area, assumed a great deal of post-flood responsibilities. Although the center served as the impromptu emergency shelter for the Town during the flood, this relationship needs to be formalized and the center prepared and supplied for future floods.

- **Fire Department Relocation.** There is a critical need to support the Town’s Fire Department as they consider the feasibility of and options for relocating the fire station. They have the desire and opportunity to include a FEMA-certified safety center as part of future plans. The Fire Department is currently working with FEMA and a property owner to develop a site for relocation.
- **Community, Health, and Wellness Center & Outdoor Recreation Program.** Since Prattsville has no indoor gathering space, this center would provide a multi-functional gathering place for residents and organizations with a focus on cultural, technological, and community events for all residents. Prattsville is currently seeking funding for a feasibility and pro forma financial analysis and conceptual designs (see Section 3.2).
- **Urgent Care Facility.** An urgent care facility is needed to support the health and welfare of the Town. Prattsville is currently seeking funding for a feasibility and pro forma analysis (see Section 3.2). The Town has already approached two major healthcare providers about this project and both expressed interest.

2.2.5 Housing

The flooding devastated the town’s housing stock. Of the affected homes, 63 were primary residences and the remaining 39 units were either second homes (19), rentals (10), or currently unoccupied (10). Before the flood, many senior residents of Prattsville lived in homes that had been in their families for generations. Most of these homes were at least temporarily uninhabitable after the flood. Other seniors lived in mobile homes that were swept away by the flood. Where some residents began to rebuild as soon as the floodwaters receded, most were unprepared, financially and mentally, to oversee the significant amount of contracting and renovation required.

Prattsville must find ways to assist and retain current homeowners, support rebuilding efforts, and create new housing opportunities to serve a diverse population and attract new homeowners. A number of new housing options are being explored in order to replace destroyed housing, accommodate the needs of those displaced, and plan for moderate growth in the future. A preliminary housing market analysis by GAR Associates and River Street Planning and Development showed Prattsville has a need for single-family, multi-family, affordable, rental, senior, and special needs housing. The study also found a significant funding gap for landlords of rental units damaged by the flood, since various funding initiatives exclude residential and commercial rental properties.

Prattsville also sees an opportunity to create model sustainable neighborhoods, by establishing programs to create new neighborhoods that incorporate best practices in sustainable growth,

energy conservation, and the strengthening of fabric of the community. This is an appropriate time to explore all realistic options which include:

- **Rehabilitation, Repair, and Resource Management.** This program addresses the critical issue of ensuring displaced residents are able to remain in the community in rehabilitated housing. The program will also address rental property and secondary homeowners whose needs currently fall into a funding gap in the rebuilding process. A project to assist with demolition is also being evaluated.

To date, \$500,000 of CDBG funding has been allocated to the homeowner rehabilitation program to put displaced eligible homeowners back into their homes. Currently, four housing applications totaling approximately \$190,000 have been accepted, and 15 more are in progress. The “Choose Prattsville” Homeowner Assistance Program was awarded a \$200,000 grant in December 2012 from the NYS Office of Community Renewal’s Rural Area Revitalization Program to develop a homebuyer assistance program for low and moderate-income home buyers to purchase new manufactured or modular homes. The program was structured to give priority to families being displaced from FEMA trailers, former residents of the local manufactured home park, seniors and veterans, and finally other low and moderate-income families. To date, two awards have been made totaling approximately \$80,000.

Prattsville has the opportunity to take advantage of the presence of the HCTC, which housed residents who lost their homes, coordinated the removal of debris through the efforts of hundreds of volunteers, and assemble volunteers to rebuild homes, gather information, and establish records for the housing program efforts. Thousands of hours of volunteer labor and monetary contributions, equipment, and building supplies were donated by a variety of individuals and organizations.

- **New Housing Options and Opportunities.** The rebuilding effort provides an opportunity for homeowners and Town officials to consider new housing options and promote housing types that reflect the unique character of this area. This project focuses on developing an information guide to support the efforts of the Housing Resource Center and building initiatives developed by the Economic Development and Community Enhancement Committees; expanding the housing market study, and developing housing models. A walkable, age-friendly, American Association of Retired Persons-certified community is preferred, and all housing models being developed will address that goal.

The housing market analysis examined the potential for increasing home ownership in Prattsville, through newly constructed single-family homes, and concluded that: that there is a significant renter population in the expanded market area that can afford a new home at levels outlined in the market analysis. The housing market analysis also suggested there were opportunities in Prattsville for housing development of “intentional communities,” such as co-housing, elder cottages, and eco-villages, in which a specific housing development is based on shared needs and values.

All new housing would be developed using flood mitigation techniques to help mitigate future flooding and provide more resiliency to the homeowner.

- **Senior Housing.** Prattsville wants to accommodate those senior residents who can no longer remain in their homes, yet want to remain in Town. Senior housing must include a diversity of options to meet the range of needs, and continuum of care that seniors may require over the years (see Section 3.2). The Town has already identified potential property to acquire and develop for a senior housing complex.

2.2.6 Infrastructure

Prattsville’s infrastructure suffered great damage as a result of the storm. Damage to roads, sidewalks, utility infrastructure, and critical resources like Town Hall and the firehouse left the community vulnerable immediately following the flooding. Damage to bridges isolated the Town for days. Undersized infrastructure and accumulated debris from spring rain events cause bottlenecks that increased flood levels and property damage. While the destruction was profound, it also created an opportunity to revitalize the streetscape and infrastructure using best practices in design and construction for future development.

- **Prattsville Main Street Revitalization Program – Streetscape Component.** This program, which is already underway, provides the opportunity to enhance the Main Street streetscape, beautifying the area in an effort to support tourism and business. Prattsville’s residents identified the Main Street Route 23 corridor as an important civic space, since it is the historical heart of the Town, a place of commerce, and a residential neighborhood. Residents want a revitalized Route 23 that enhances the environment for those living along the street, for those using the street for walking or bicycling, for those patronizing retail establishments, and for the 2,300 cars per day that travel through the Town. The streetscape program will integrate public art with elements such as benches, streetlights, and sidewalk paving. Through this innovative approach, the streetscape program will become a physical improvement, an economic development tool, an expression of local history, a display of locally produced materials, and an element of community pride.

Phase 1 of this program, to design the streetscape at the intersection of County Road 10 and Route 23, was awarded \$200,000 from NYSDOS. Design was completed and pre-construction reviews are under way. As part of the planning, a well-attended community charrette was conducted to develop alternatives and select the preferred approach. Prattsville has applied for funding to complete Phase 2 of the streetscape program, which will continue streetscape improvements from the intersection of County Road 10 and Route 23 to Pratt Rock.

- **Route 23 Bridge Replacement.** Removing the Route 23 bridge and replacing it with one designed to convey flood level flows will provide flood mitigation in Prattsville. The Town will meet with NYS DOT, DEP, and DEC in October 2013 to discuss the feasibility of replacing the bridge over Schoharie Creek on Route 23 as part of an initiative to reduce the base flood elevation, reduce damage from flooding, and increase resiliency.

2.2.7 Natural and Cultural Resources

Floodwaters from Tropical Storm Irene damaged natural and cultural resources such as the Prattsville Town Green, including its lawn, playground, gazebo, and memorials, and Conine Field. The Town Green had been the primary gathering place for Town events and a community asset developed over the years by residents of the community. The flood left the residents of Prattsville in need of a safe, convenient, multi-functional place to gather. Restoration and development of community gathering spaces are important to community recovery and long-term quality of life in Prattsville. While these two gathering areas have been restored to pre-flood conditions, the community has opportunities to further enhance its recreation, fitness, and athletic facilities and to implement projects and programs that preserve and enhance the cultural, historic, and environmental aspects of the Town. The concept of enhancing active and passive recreation was developed to leverage the Town's natural beauty and attract tourism and new business.

- **Restore the Town Green.** The Prattsville Town Green was restored to pre-flood condition under FEMA's Public Assistance Program. This program reestablished a civic anchor and provided a public open space for community gatherings that highlights the Town's history and unique culture. The Town Green will become the centerpiece of a revitalized Main Street that will be available daily for gathering and relaxing and for use during community events such as farmers' markets, craft fairs, and festivals, which will encourage and support individuals and businesses to sell goods and services. It is envisioned that the historic "Love Gardens" of the 1800's, where young people were allowed to hold hands in public, would be brought back to restore some of the historic culture of the Town. The Town Green will also become a major stop along the hiking and biking trails that are envisioned for Prattsville. It is feasible that new land development techniques could protect the

area and enable it to contribute to flood protection for surrounding properties. The use of rainwater conservation could be used to collect water for the gardens and maintain the water level in features such as a koi pond or splash pool.

- **Restore Conine Field.** Conine Field was restored to pre-flood condition under FEMA's Public Assistance Program. The restored amenity gives townspeople a gathering place they need while providing open ground that can help mitigate impacts from any future flooding. Prattsville received a grant for \$250,000 from New York State Parks Recreation & Historic Preservation (NYSOPRHP) to enhance the restoration efforts underway at Conine Field and the Town Green. The Town is seeking approval from NYSOPRHP to accomplish the following tasks: create a soccer field, basketball court and small playground at Conine Field, and construct a full playground, court basketball area, and enhance the gazebo and landscaping on the Town Green and add a playground to the Town Green.
- **Construct a Riverfront Trail.** Prattsville has the opportunity to protect the floodplain while using it to enhance recreational resources. The passive recreation aspect of the Conine Field project, yet to be undertaken, incorporates the design and construction of a gravel or asphalt trail system that will connect the field to other historic areas in Prattsville, including the town and Pratt Rock (see Section 3.2).
- **Prattsville Art Center.** Prattsville is establishing an Artist in Residency program to bring urban artists to work corroboratively on public art projects in the community. The Art Center is already providing programming for children and adults, including art classes for children, clothing design for adults, sculpture design classes and a Haunted House designed by children for Halloween. Over the coming year other programs will include web design and photography.

A severely damaged 1840s building on Main Street is being rehabilitated into a contemporary artist residency, design studio, and stage/screening/entertainment building as part of the Art Center campus. This unique opportunity to establish a new cultural resource in Prattsville also aligns with the need for physical improvements to the streetscape along Main Street, which were envisioned to integrate public art with elements such as benches, streetlights, and sidewalk paving. The Art Center received \$200,000 in initial funding from ARTPlace America for its creative place-making program focused on flood recovery—one of 40 initiatives funded nationwide and one of only four rural programs selected nationally. Prattsville was also awarded \$25,000 from the New York State Council on the Arts for the Artist in Residency program at the Art Center. Other grants to fund new construction and the program have been submitted to the National Endowment for the Arts and to the

NYS Office of Community Renewal's Rural Area Revitalization Program. These grants have enabled the Art Center to hire local teenagers as art interns to work with the artists.

3

Reconstruction Strategies & Implementation Actions

3.1 INTRODUCTION

3.1.1 Strategies

Reconstruction strategies are the overarching means by which a community will achieve rebuilding, resilience, and economic growth. The strategies are based on an inventory of community assets, risk assessment, and evaluation of needs and opportunities. Each strategy is implemented through community projects, programs, and actions to restore and protect assets. Strategies are aligned with the six FEMA recovery support functions as follows:

- **Community Planning and Capacity Building.** Strategies that present ways to restore or enhance its ability to organize, plan, manage, and implement recovery.
- **Economic Strategies.** Strategies that present ways to return economic and business activities to a state of health, and to develop new economic opportunities.
- **Health and Social Services Strategies.** Strategies that address the restoration and improvement of essential health and social services, particularly those that serve vulnerable populations and address flood mitigation and resiliency.
- **Housing Strategies.** Strategies that promote and address affordable housing, increase access of non-CDBG programs to public and private housing providers, and advocate disaster-resistant housing for all income groups.
- **Infrastructure Strategies.** Strategies that enhance restoration, reparation, and management of essential local government services.
- **Natural and Cultural Resource Strategies.** Strategies that address management of natural and cultural resources from a risk reduction and economic development perspective.

3.1.2 Management Measures

The programs, plans, and actions used to implement each strategy are organized into six classes of management measures. The six classes of management measures include:

- **Class 1. Conserve, Restore, and Enhance Natural Protective Features.** Measures that use the landscape to promote safety and livability while reducing disaster recovery costs.
- **Class 2. Resilient Construction.** Measures designed to provide an adequate level of safety for structures. Measures may include elevating buildings, dry flood-proofing, constructing watertight structures, wet flood-proofing, relocating facilities, and incorporating levees and floodwalls into site design.
- **Class 3. Structural Defenses.** Measures that employ engineered or non-engineered construction techniques designed to resist flooding.
- **Class 4. Land Use Planning and Regulation.** Create new regulatory measures for municipal and site planning, zoning, and subdivision regulation to reduce impacts of storm events on existing and future infrastructure.
- **Class 5. Market-Based Methods.** Measures that reduce vulnerability by incorporating the cost of risk into the carrying cost of land.
- **Class 6. Increased Awareness and Information.** Measures that provide sound information on storms and erosion, environmental services, risk to development, and community costs designed to help decision makers in both the public and private sectors.

3.2 TOWN OF PRATTSVILLE RECONSTRUCTION STRATEGIES

Prattsville developed its LTCR Plan in the months immediately following Tropical Storm Irene and Tropical Storm Lee and has identified the most important actions it can take to recover from past storm damage to plan a more resilient future. As a result, the Town has identified the following seven reconstruction strategies:

- **Strategy 1.** Rehabilitate and restore every residence and business that was directly impacted by Tropical Storm Irene and Tropical Storm Lee to pre flood level or better to the greatest degree possible.
- **Strategy 2.** Explore and implement all feasible hazard mitigation measures identified in the NYCDEP's Local Flood Hazard Mitigation Analysis and other sustain-



Strategies support the vision “Prattsville – From the middle of nowhere to the center of everything”

able green infrastructure practices identified in the LTCR or NYRCR planning programs.

- **Strategy 3.** Acquire property outside the 100-year floodplain and develop a new mixed-use and mixed-income development, including senior and family housing and community facilities, including a community center.
- **Strategy 4.** Be a healthy and creative community that meets the social needs of local residents and offers wellness and lifelong recreation.
- **Strategy 5.** Expand the commercial and industrial tax base including a focus on green industry and green energy.
- **Strategy 6.** Maintain and market a Main Street district with diverse and successful commercial, arts, cultural, entertainment and recreational resources.
- **Strategy 7.** Develop high quality and cost effective municipal services that educate, alert, and protect the public from hazards and oversee implementation of the LTCR and NYRCR plans.

3.3 POTENTIAL KEY PROJECTS

The Prattsville NYRCR Steering Committee has identified several key projects that are summarized below:

Senior Housing. Before the flood, many of Prattsville’s senior residents lived in older homes that were not designed to accommodate persons with limited strength and mobility. Most of these homes were at least temporarily uninhabitable after the flood. Other seniors lived in mobile homes that were swept away by the flood. The need of seniors for more adequate housing options became immediately evident and solutions had to be found, especially since the Town has a higher percentage of seniors than surrounding communities. The Housing Study revealed a market demand for mixed income senior rental housing in Prattsville and, since the flood, an actual need for such housing may surpass what the previous census-based market data indicated.

Prattsville’s residents expressed a desire to blend seniors into all aspects of community life. They are particularly concerned that many older residents have been displaced from the Town because of the flood. Senior housing must include a diversity of options to meet the range of needs, and continuum of care, that seniors may require over the years. Various forms of what are called “intentional communities” are becoming increasingly popular across the country and around the world for seniors and others, and may provide one model for new senior housing in Prattsville. To the degree possible, senior housing should be located near the Town’s core so seniors can continue to play an active role in social and economic life. The Town has already identified a potential property out of the flood plain that would be able to be readily developed for senior/mixed use property and are in current discussions with the property owner.

Community, Health, and Wellness Center and Outdoor Recreation Program. The Town has no indoor gathering space; this center would provide a multi-functional gathering place for residents and organizations with a focus on cultural, technological, and community events for all residents throughout the region.

Because of its experience during the flooding, residents identified a community center as essential to rebuilding and revitalization. A community center would provide a safe location for residents to gather and provide amenities for regional and Town activities. Regional health and wellness facilities, open space and recreation amenities would bring many opportunities to Prattsville and the surrounding areas. Such a facility would contribute positively to the Town’s economy by adding jobs, increasing the value of nearby properties, and improvements would help attract and retain sought-after companies and residents. In community workshops, residents repeatedly called for a strategy to keep and attract young families. Developing a system of high quality amenities is particularly important to achieving that goal.

Urgent Care Facility. An urgent care facility is needed to support the health and welfare of the Town and the region since the nearest medical facility is more than 40 miles away. The Town has already engaged with very preliminary discussions with two regional hospitals about the need for an urgent care facility and both have expressed interest. Additionally, a new resident in Town, and a licensed pharmacist, has expressed an interest in opening a pharmacy in Town; the Town

and Greene County are currently working with this individual to assist him in opening a pharmacy.

In the aftermath of Irene, both bridges to the Town were impassable and unsafe for traffic. For more than a week, the Town was virtually landlocked, accessible only by foot or all-terrain vehicle. If residents needed medical care, and were able to travel to a hospital, the nearest facility was 45 minutes away by car under ideal conditions. The community improvised by creating a command center in the parking lot of the local grocery store and provided survivors medical assistance, food, water, and supplies. As a result, residents reevaluated the quality of medical services for disaster response, as well as for their day-to-day needs. Urgent care facilities are increasingly filling the need for health care in rural areas, and have become one of the fastest growing segments of the nation's health care system. The centers have grown rapidly to fill gaps caused by a lack of timely access to medical appointments, a shortage of primary care doctors, and long waits in hospital emergency rooms. In some communities, physicians have formed urgent care centers to expand their practices, and some hospitals and health care systems have created them to ease pressure on their expensive emergency departments.

Town Marketing Plan/Heritage and Nature Tourism Strategy. The Town needs an identifiable brand to differentiate it from other communities and to convey the message that it is a premier place for people to live, work, and play in the region and the state. A well-designed and executed marketing plan will bring positive exposure for the Town and the region. Marketing the area for new business, tourists, and future residents is essential for any community wishing to expand its economic vitality and population. New opportunities, including taking advantage of “real nature” tourism trends and major business developments focused in production of green energy, can put Prattsville back on the map. Opportunities for heritage tourism are also strong and the Pratt Museum is poised to move forward with major programs and investments in Prattsville's historic buildings and places.

During the community visioning and planning process, many participants identified the opportunity to share the Town's natural resources and scenic and historic characteristics with visitors. The significant amount of state park land and the publicly accessible land owned by the NYCDEP create a huge opportunity for the Town to accommodate various types of year round outdoor activities on land and water. Historically, the Town has not promoted itself as a destination in the tourism industry, however it does have potential to be an eco-tourism and heritage tourism destination. Prattsville is located within 150 miles of the New York metropolitan area. It has an active historical museum regionally important Pratt Rock (known as the “Mount Rushmore of the Northeast”) and other natural attractions such as Red Falls, extensive hiking trails on New York State lands, and the peaks of Catskill Park. Outdoor activities such as fishing, hiking, and hunting – which exist in abundance – have not been actively promoted. This opportunity is further supported by the fact that almost one third of the homeowners are second homeowners

from the NYC area looking for a place to relax and enjoy the great outdoors that Prattsville has to offer.

Nature tourism is a good fit for Prattsville because it can improve quality of life and retain the beauty of its natural resources, while providing and/or creating jobs and increased local revenues. The “real nature” tourism concept will go hand-in-hand with the current heritage tourism niche anchored by the Pratt Museum and Pratt Rock. A Nature Tourism Study by the planning team examined the economic impact of real nature tourism, consisting of outdoor activities such as bicycling, camping, fishing, hunting, and snow sports in rural communities. The study indicated that real nature tourism generated an estimated annual total of 367, 258 jobs in the Mid-Atlantic region and provided data on which nature activities have the greatest impact in terms of jobs and usage. The top three activities in terms of economic contribution and job creation were camp-based recreation, trail-based recreation, and bicycle-based recreation. Real nature tourism presents the opportunity to promote regional cooperation and growth as well, via trail connections to different communities that offer lodging, food, events, supplies, and options for further recreation (e.g., all-terrain vehicles, golf, motorcycles).

Accordingly, redevelopment efforts in Prattsville might focus on increasing lodging amenities attractive to ‘real nature’ tourists (hikers, bikers, hunters, wildlife viewers), including camp-based options. Development of a motorized trail system for all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles, mountain biking, and kayaking on the Schoharie Creek and Reservoir, can be key economic drivers for attracting tourists. The trail system could be linked to the existing trail system in nearby Stamford providing riders with miles of trails within the region.

Eco-Commerce and Professional Office Park. Prattsville currently lacks access to sites for commercial and industrial use that will promote tax base growth. Accordingly, it places a high priority on the development of an Eco-Commerce Park and Professional Park to fill these businesses needs. The main goal of an Eco-Commerce Park is to attract business investment, create jobs, revitalize neighborhoods, and strengthen local and regional economies. The Aloterra Bio-fuels facility is a potential anchor for the Eco-Commerce Park and represents one of the green industries that Prattsville hopes to encourage as a key local economic driver.

Construct a Riverfront Trail. Prattsville has the opportunity to protect the floodplain while using it to enhance recreational resources. The passive recreation aspect of the Conine Field project, yet to be undertaken, incorporates the design and construction of a gravel or asphalt trail system that will connect Conine Field to other historic areas in Prattsville, including the town and Pratt Rock. It will also feature a historic walking trail linking key Town landmarks, with the potential for kayaking, tubing, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, and recreation-oriented rental business. The walking trail will begin or end at the baseball field, will follow Schoharie Creek through the town, and will tie in the trails from the other end of Town to Pratt Rock. Historic

signs and seating will be provided throughout the walking trail. The trail system will provide pedestrian access to the entire Town and will promote new business opportunities, tourism, and healthy exercise.

Creation of a River Trail as part of the modified floodplain and reconfigured Huntersfield Creek alluvial area will protect the floodplain by restricting future development and installing vegetation and materials that will strengthen the floodplain while enhancing recreational resources and understanding of the importance of floodplain protection. Prattsville has applied for a grant for the design and construction of the first phase of the riverfront trail between Deva-sago Park and the Town Green totaling \$192,000 in NYSDOS finds and matched by \$200,000 in matching grants, value of easements, and other local support.

Innovative Alternative Fuel Project. The Town operates a publicly-owned wastewater treatment plant that is located off County Route 7 on land that is outside the 100-year flood plain. During the 2011 floods, the treatment plant was not damaged; however, some collection lines were disturbed and some pump stations located on the creekside of Main Street were washed away. The plant has redundant electrical power.

The Town would like to evaluate two options that could make the plant more resilient and potentially provide an alternate energy source. The first option would use gases from the wastewater treatment plant's digester to power turbines or heat pumps that would generate electricity and heat for the plant—thereby making it independent of the electrical grid and able to operate during extreme storms. The second option would be a modified approach to geothermal energy production. Under this option, the treated wastewater generated by the treatment plant could be a cost-effective alternative energy source, since it is ten degrees warmer than the groundwater that is used in a traditional geothermal system. Using this warmer water would reduce the time and cost to generate geothermal energy.

3.4 IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

Table 3.1 lists programs, projects, and policies that serve to implement the Town's seven reconstruction strategies. The table is organized by FEMA recovery area and lists each implementation action, its corresponding class of management measure, and the strategy it supports. Once the assessment of risk to assets is completed, the Town may amend its action plan or change an action's priority or schedules.

Table 3.1
Town of Prattsville Reconstruction Strategies and Implementation Actions

Strategy	Description	Mgmt Measures	Cost	Risk Area	Timing	Community Support
Community Planning and Capacity Building						
3,7	Program: Support the Prattsville Local Development Corporation as it guides implementation of the LTCR and NYRCR Plans.	5,6	Moderate	High	Completed	High
2,3	Policy: Partner with NYCDEP to co-purchase property suitable for priority projects identified in the LTCR and NYRCR Plans.	1,3,4	Moderate	High	In Process	High
7	Project: Develop a Town Website with disaster preparation and recovery education components	6	Low	High	In Process	Moderate
7	Project: Develop an Emergency Preparedness Plan including pre-positioning supplies and assessing need for redundant power supplies.	6	Low	High	In Process	High
Economic Development						
3,5,6	Program: Expand Business Restoration and Development Grant/Loan Fund to assist business recovery, expand operation and assist new businesses interested in opening operations in the Town.	2,5	High	High	Short	High
5,6	Policy: Create a Town Business Recruitment Strategy that will focus on attracting new businesses and encourage home-based businesses to expand.	5	Low	High	Moderate	Moderate
4,5,6,7	Program: Create a Town Marketing Program that will benefit commercial, arts, cultural and service programs in establishing Prattsville as a desirable place to live, work and play, and as a heritage and real nature tourism destination with regional connections.	5,6	Moderate	High	Moderate	Moderate
5	Project: Create an Eco-Commerce Park and a Professional Office Park focused on green industry and green energy to create local jobs.	2,3,5,6	High	High	Moderate	High
Health and Social Services						
3,4,6,7	Project: Develop an Urgent Care Facility that will provide general medical services to the immediate and surrounding community, having the capacity to provide medical services in an emergency.	2,5	High	High	Moderate	High
3,4,6,7	Program: Develop a Community Health & Wellness Center to provide a multi-functional gathering place with a focus on cultural, technological, and community events for all residents. Potentially collocate daycare or other services for vulnerable populations at the Center.	2,5	High	High	Moderate	High
Housing						
1,3,4,6	Policy: Create new housing options to ensure that the diverse housing needs of Prattsville's current and future residents are met including homebuyer assistance.	2,5,6	High	High	Moderate	Moderate
1,6	Project: Complete housing rehabilitation for all owner occupied housing damaged in Tropical Storm Irene and Tropical Storm Lee.	2,4,5	High	High	Moderate	High
3,4,6	Project: Develop senior housing through new independent apartment or townhouses for active seniors. Consider development of assisted living center.	2,4,5	High	High	Moderate	High
1,3,4	Program: Provide assistance for rental rehabilitation and development of affordable rental housing in town.	2,4,5	Moderate	High	Moderate	Moderate
Infrastructure						
2,7	Project: Implement hazard mitigation measures identified in the NYCDEP Local Flood Mitigation Plan and complete green infrastructure study.	1,2,3	High	High	Short/Moderate	High
2,6	Program: Main Street Revitalization Program – Streetscape Component. Implement streetscape design that helps create a walkable, attractive, hamlet environment where infrastructure, building design, and public art combine to reflect local culture.	2,3,4,5	High	High	High	High
3,7	Project: Support the development of a new fire station to replace the current station that was significantly damaged during Tropical Storm Irene.	2,3,6	High	High	Short	High

Table 3.1

Town of Prattsville Reconstruction Strategies and Implementation Actions

Strategy	Description	Mgmt Measures	Cost	Risk Area	Timing	Community Support
5,6,7	Project: Explore feasibility of developing a district heating plant for hamlet residences and businesses	1,5,6	High	High	Long	Moderate
5,6	Project: Determine the feasibility of alternate energy production from wastewater geothermal or biogas conversion to power the wastewater treatment plant or fuel a district heating utility.	1,3,4	Moderate	High	Long	Moderate
Natural and Cultural Resources						
4,6	Project: Expand amenities available at Conine Field including pavilion, basketball court, soccer fields, canoe and kayak launch and interconnections to trail system.	1,3,4	High	High	Moderate	High
4,6	Project: Create a passive recreation trail system that will connect Conine Field to other historic areas in Prattsville, including the hamlet and Pratt Rock.	1,3,4	Moderate/High	High	Short	Moderate
4,6,7	Project: Continue to enhance the Town Green to maintain a civic anchor for Prattsville and provide a public open space for community gatherings that highlights the Town's history and culture.	1,3,4	Moderate	High	Short	High
4,6,	Program: Support development of the Prattsville Art Center to rehabilitate a devastated commercial building in the heart of the hamlet for an art center and construct a modern flood-resistant residency structure.	2,5,6	High	High	Short	High
4,6	Program: Support the Pratt Museum in projects to improve the museum facilities, restore historic structures, market the Town's cultural resources for tourism and continue to improve the Pratt Rock historic site and related amenities and accessibility improvements.	2,5,6	Moderate	High	Moderate	High
4,6	Project: Create a motorized trail system for ATV and snowmobile use that will link to other regional multi-purpose trail networks.	1,3,4	Moderate	High	Long	Moderate

3.5 RELATIONSHIP TO REGIONAL PLANS

The Town of Prattsville has been working closely with Greene County and Schoharie County to coordinate its recovery from Tropical Storm Irene and Tropical Storm Lee. For example, working with Schoharie Area Long Term Recovery, Inc., it secured a three-year commitment from AmeriCorps to place a volunteer in the community. This staff person has been instrumental in supporting the work of the Town and the Prattsville LDC to oversee implementation of the LTCR Plan. A strong opportunity exists to develop joint plans and projects with nearby Blenheim in Schoharie County as they implement their LTCR plan.

Prattsville is working closely with NYCDEP to model its Local Flood Mitigation Analysis initiative that will be replicated throughout the Catskill watershed. The Town expects to participate in future regional planning for resiliency in Catskill watershed communities.

Many of the projects proposed by the Town have significant regional impact. For example, it is widely known that senior housing facilities on the Greene County mountaintop and larger multi-county region have long waiting lists. A planned senior housing project will meeting the needs of Prattsville seniors and attract others. The community health and wellness center fills a need for the region, since residents of many communities drive up to an hour for entertainment and classes like dance or gymnastics, especially for youth. The planned urgent care center also meeting a broad need in the region, with the nearest basic medical care over forty-five minutes

away, creating great vulnerability in extreme weather events, specifically for vulnerable populations. The Prattsville Art Center and Residency has a statewide and national presence, as reflected in its selection for a prestigious ArtPlace America award, which helps the center to attract artists with international reputations and attract the visitors interested in following their work. The Center also establishes the Town as a creative place and a model that demonstrates the role the arts can play in community recovery.

Real and near-term opportunities exist for the Town to capture spin off impact of major economic development programs planed in the region, especially Destination Windham, a multi-million dollar program that would expand Windham Mountain, adding an indoor skating facility, enhanced ski lodge, new day care center, expanded ski trails, and storm water management systems. The initiative also calls for expanding year round events at the mountain. Prattsville strategically positioned its marketing strategy to complement, not compete with these plans, focusing on events and themes like real nature tourism and arts and cultural and historic preservation events that can attract day trippers or offer add-on components to planned vacations. Prattsville is also working closely with the Capital Region Regional Economic Development Council to gain support and implementation funding for key projects.

Prattsville also sees the need to celebrate recovery and the community it is rebuilding. Five months following Tropical Storm Irene and Tropical Storm Lee, the community began planning “Mudfest” which has been held for the last two years. The two-day event offers competitions like mud volleyball and tug of war, food, music, and entertainment for people of all ages and abilities. Organizers estimate attendance at over 2,000 people each year.

3.6 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Because of the devastating effects of Tropical Storm Irene and Tropical Storm Lee, Prattsville was described by Governor Andrew Cuomo as “the worst hit community” of all the affected towns, hamlets, and cities in the State of New York. In the early days, as the community, State, and federal representatives carried out intensive response activity, residents gathered at the local grocery store, which had become a makeshift command center for safety and supplies.

While residents were being attended to, businesspeople in Town addressed their own special needs. Shortly after the flooding several local businesspeople joined together to form an Economic Development Committee to begin the process of identifying needs, communicating with county and State government, coordinating relief efforts, and begin the process of rebuilding the economic base of the community. Weeks after the devastation, businesspeople of the Town began looking forward and envisioning even greater things for the Town. Working with Greene County Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Planning, the Economic Development Committee began to develop the blueprint for rebuilding existing businesses and developing a plan for growth.

After bringing the businesses together, it became apparent that work would also need to be done to provide support and direction for homeowners and the community-at-large. At that time, the Economic Development Committee asked the Town Supervisor to request FEMA's LTRC group be activated for the recovery effort in Prattsville. The FEMA LTRC group responded with a multi-person team and brought considerable experience and creative ideas to the planning process. The team was soon enhanced with the town planning expertise of members of River Street Planning & Development of Troy NY, who volunteered their time to the efforts. They created a 15 firm volunteer planning team that grew to include architects, engineers, and designers from Synthesis Architects in Schenectady, PLACE Alliance, LLC, a Florida firm, Behan Planning from Saratoga, and many others. The Rebuild Prattsville Steering Committee, involving over 60 committee and sub-committee members, which evolved from the Economic Development Committee, emerged as the group to lead the long-term recovery planning effort.



Community members gather at the fire station to discuss post-flood reconstruction plans.

The community decided to “hit the ground running” to rebuild Prattsville better than ever. They decided to start immediately, despite the enormous amount of work many residents had to do, the Town felt that focusing on the future would help residents maintain hope that full recovery was possible. To create a vision for the future of Prattsville, a community survey was developed and conducted in early November 2011. Respondents felt it was essential to preserve Prattsville as a historic, close-knit, friendly, rebuilt, and clean community. They felt it was most important to rebuild as a friendly, flood-proof community that embraces residents, businesses, and visitors. Support for current businesses was very strong, as was the desire to attract new companies, including a gas station, restaurants, a bank, a laundromat, and a drug store. Main Street beautification, followed by sidewalk improvement, a strong community center, a recreation complex, broadband service, walking paths, and bike paths were high priority projects for the future. People quickly embraced the opportunity to capitalize on the natural resources of the Town – its beauty, hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation, to



Prattsville residents provided input to priority reconstruction projects.

catapult the effort to retain and attract young families, encourage economic development, and bring the Town back better than ever.

From Friday, November 4, 2011, through the following Sunday, over 100 community members gathered together with community planners and designers at a community visioning and design workshop. The crowd was energetic and engaged, sharing ideas for rebuilding and improving the community. Subjects ranged from a river walk, a bowling alley, a micro-brewery, senior services, and a cultural center. Each idea was recorded and the Rebuild Prattsville Steering Committee assured the community that each would receive equal consideration as they proceeded to map out the recovery plan. That workshop resulted in a concept plan for the rebuilding of Prattsville and the identification of key goals including:

- Restoration and expansion of the Town tax base;
- Bringing back existing businesses and attracting new companies;
- Bringing home displaced residents and attracting new community members, especially young families; and
- Restoring and improving the quality of life.

After the workshop, the Rebuild Prattsville Steering Committee came together to form, three sub-committees:

- Community Enhancement;
- Economic Development; and
- Housing.

Each sub-committee was given direction to guide their work, including:

- **Community Enhancement.**
 - Retain and enhance the Town's recreation, fitness, and athletic facilities;
 - Develop and implement projects and programs that preserve and enhance the cultural, historic, and environmental aspects of Town life; and

- Create other amenities that enhance the quality of life for residents and that are attractive throughout the region.

■ **Economic Development.**

- Retain current businesses and attract new businesses to Prattsville;
- Revitalize Main Street; and
- Establish new economic drivers for Prattsville, including green industry and green energy.

■ **Housing.**

- Establish programs to retain current homeowners and attract new residents;
- Establish programs to research and create the appropriate mix of housing in Prattsville including single family homes, rental units, living options for seniors and for individuals with special needs; and
- Establish programs to create new neighborhoods in Prattsville that incorporate best practices in sustainable growth, energy conservation, while strengthening the fabric of the community.

The sub-committees, including over 60 residents, agreed to meet weekly or twice weekly as necessary until the plan was finalized. During those meetings, the sub-committee members – with guidance, assistance and facilitation from the planners, architects, Greene County Economic Development, Tourism and Planning, and FEMA LTCR – wrote Project Development Guides that became living documents to move forward during the recovery process. Research and market studies were conducted to determine needs, scope of work, demographics, funding sources, and community interest. The guides were then used as a basis to develop the priority projects outlined in this plan.

Through active Town Board involvement, timely updates were provided through open Town Hall meetings, meetings of the steering committee, weekly sub-committee meetings, and periodic meetings with senior members of the State and federal recovery agencies lead by Congressman Chris Gibson with Assemblyperson Peter Lopez, and State Senator James Seward.

Multiple sub-committee meetings continued through 2012 as they polished and finalized the Project Development Guides that formed the basis for the LTCR Plan. Then, Steering Committee

members, sub-committee chairpersons, and the planning team, met with the Town Board and the Town at large and received resounding support and approval for the plan. This plan, along with the commitment, tenacity, and dedication of the community, was unanimously adopted in April 2012 and forms the basis for the Town's successful recovery to date.

The Town views the NYRCR planning process as an opportunity to do a check-up of the LTCR Plan and to confirm future priorities with residents. Their community engagement approach includes multiple efforts. A steering committee that includes many members who are active in implementation of the LTCR and hazard mitigation planning, was formed. Two sub-committees have been formed to focus on public engagement, and on the development of an emergency preparedness plan for the Town. Two committee meetings and two public events were held to engage the public. A booth educating the public about the program was staffed by the NY Rising Regional Lead during Mudfest 2013. Using resources from the LTCR grant, which the community was awarded in 2011 by NYS DOS, a community newsletter was distributed to every resident (both year round and seasonal), renter, and business owner updating residents on Prattsville's progress in implementing the LTCR Plan, introducing the NYRCR program, and asking for confirmation of scope for the plan, vision statement, and priority projects. An online and paper community survey was distributed to solicit broader input. The survey and newsletter were distributed at the fall Parents Open House at Gilboa Conesville School. Two public meetings reviewed the Conceptual Plan and sought community input that is reflected in this document.

3.7 IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCAL ACTIONS

The Town of Prattsville works cooperatively with numerous organizations and agencies to implement its plans. A key partner in monitoring progress and facilitating project implementation is the Prattsville LDC. The LTCR Plan recommended development of this organization and it has been very successful in accomplishing projects identified in the plan and finding strategic opportunities and partnerships to make the Town more resilient. The LDC will continue to be the Town's partner in plan implementation. Other partners in the implementation structure include:

- Greene County Department of Economic Development Tourism and Planning;
- Greene County Soil and Water Conservation District;
- Greene County Industrial Development Agency;
- Greene County Council on the Arts;
- New York City Department of Environmental Protection;
- The Prattsville Art Center;

- The Zadock Pratt Museum;
- River Street Planning & Development;
- Catskill Mountain Housing; and
- The Hunter Foundation.

3.8 NEXT STEPS

The Town of Prattsville, New York City Department of Environmental Protection, New York State Department of State, New York State Department of Transportation, and other partners, have formed a Prattsville Flood Mitigation/Bridge Reconstruction Working Group to evaluate flood hazard mitigation projects, including potentially relocating and rebuilding the Route 23 bridge. The group is evaluating the LTCR Plan, NYRCR Conceptual Plan, and NYCDEP Local Flood Hazard Mitigation Analysis; reviewing available modeling; identifying additional scenarios that should be evaluated; making preliminary feasibility assessments; and identifying potential funding sources. The working group will conduct meetings in the community and identify specific, feasible, and implementable projects to advance hazard mitigation projects as part of the NYRCR process.

The NYRCR Steering Committee has formed a subcommittee to develop an emergency preparedness plan for the Town. The subcommittee will review model plans and identify components related to public education, repositioning of supplies and materials, evacuation planning, and development of multi-media alerts and notifications including reverse 9-1-1. The plan will place special attention on the needs of vulnerable populations.

In the upcoming months the Town of Prattsville will complete all required NYRCR steps including risk assessment and cost-benefit evaluation. The planning team will also complete a series of “value added” components to advance key initiatives. These components will include:

- market study for new senior housing development at site to be selected (funded with NYSDOS LTCR funds);
- program plan and developer-ready package for urgent care center (funded with NYSDOS LTCR funds);
- site evaluation and selection, advanced concept plans, feasibility/market assessment and program plans for priority projects (senior housing, community center and eco-industrial park); and

- feasibility evaluation of hazard mitigation measures and waterfront green infrastructure system.

These components will be developed in a real-time, public charrette process and include multiple opportunities for community involvement. The completion of these tasks will speed implementation of Prattsville's core priorities to make vulnerable families safe, businesses prosperous, and the Town resilient.