

Town of Alden Comprehensive Plan - Public Survey #3 Results

1. Where do you live?							
Town	75	Village	36	Other **	18	Total	129

2. If you live in the <u>Town</u>, how long have you live here?			
1 - 5 years	17	16 - 20 years	5
6 - 10 years	11	20 - 25 years	7
11 - 15 years	8	26+ years	26
Unknown	1		

- 3. What things in the Town would you like to see change?**
- Eliminate duplicative services between Town and Village - Merge Village and Town
 - Resurface/fix the trails behind the high school
 - Public water (water system is inadequate) - complete WD #5
 - Need a Walmart or similar type of store / Put a Wal-mart on Walden Avenue
 - Revitalize the Ames Plaza with small businesses
 - Have more smaller businesses
 - Need smaller stores (country stores - like Marilla and southern tier communities)
 - The Village needs a makeover with better maintained properties (fill vacancies)
 - Redevelop underutilized and unutilized properties and vacant businesses
 - Need more opportunities to spend money locally
 - Need Walmart, Tim Hortons, Mighty Taco - better shopping and restaurants
 - Need a Boys and Girls Club
 - Fix the potholes / roads / driveway at Ames plaza
 - Need fewer businesses
 - Need more businesses
 - Expand the tax base - be more business friendly and open to change
 - Cooperation between Town and Village (needs to be improved - merge to one gov.)
 - Plant more trees - need a planting program
 - Lower the school tax rate; lower taxes
 - Limit residential subdivision that requires more services and pays less taxes
 - Clean up litter on Broadway, around Firemen's Park and the viaduct
 - Less rentals and trailer parks and more single family homes
 - Restrict number of unlicensed vehicles on private property (1 per home max)
 - Need a different or another supermarket (Budway's, Aldi's, etc.)
 - Need one universal type of store that is equipped for all businesses/residents
 - Opportunities for jobs - need more for youth and seniors
 - The ZBA lets anything through - need more scrutiny and expertise with decisions
 - Need a youth center / Need more community events
 - Clean up the Town - unlicensed vehicles, property maintenance, etc.
 - Need more regulation over ATVs and other unregistered vehicles
 - Existing and new businesses in Town should be "good neighbors"
 - Need greater police presence in the housing developments
 - Make community more walkable - more walking and bike paths
 - Planning and development that respects the rural/agriculture nature of the Town
 - Centrally locate the Town Hall
 - Rejuvenate the Village core only - beautify the Village - replace trees in core
 - Bring in more light industry
 - Bring in more retail stores (competition) so prices go down (Tops is too expensive)
 - Stores are too far away
 - People who came here expecting big stores and public everything should leave
 - Less residential construction in agricultural districts
 - More restriction on residential subdivision
 - Change mentality of those who think open space is just area waiting to be developed
 - Sidewalks on Broadway to Three Rod Road
 - Need more use of farmland to feed Alden and employ local people
 - Pass a right-to-farm law
 - Need fewer rules that impair personal freedom (e.g., dog law)



4. What things in the Town would you like to see stay the same?

Maintain the festivals, programs and seasonal decorations
 The small town atmosphere (no huge commercial stores - maintain village feel)
 Rural setting - keep area quiet, safe, small and friendly - preserve rural character
 Bandstand area in the Village and band concerts / local events
 Town Park with the walking trails - parks in general
 Don't become Clarence or Lancaster - don't have a lot of new development
 Recreational facilities/amenities and programs for kids / team sports
 Farmland and greenspace - open land / keep these areas the same
 Joe Panza Nature Trail
 Local government (no downsizing)
 Keep the Village the center of the Town
 Stable population of friendly people
 Regardless of the monetary profit - don't turn farmland into prime real estate
 No more development - like the Town the way it is
 Schools - they are in good locations
 Farmers Market
 "Mom and Pop" stores / small businesses
 Alden Community Church
 Trees, fresh air, open space, country atmosphere
 Keep rural environment. We have enough building already. no more development
 The activities that bring the Town together
 Being able to find things to do in the winter
 Broadway - culture, it makes it a more interesting place to live
 Maintain the balance of rural/semi-rural with new development
 Rural characteristics, open spaces, fields, woods, farms, peace and quiet
 Alden has the right mix of settled area and farmland
 Outdoor recreation - hunting, fishing, hiking
 Keep farms and rural areas the same; have growth in the other parts of the Town
 Keep everything the way it is / If it ain't broke don't fix it
 Learn from the mistakes that have been made in other communities - stay rural
 Keep Reinhart Road open

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5. Are there enough programs for youth in the Town?

	Town	Village	Other	Total
Yes	36	17	8	61
No	23	14	6	43
No comment	16	5	4	25

Comments:

Need Boy and Girls Club and/or a YMCA facility
 Need programs for teens (summer programs at community center too)
 Need a youth center (put in Ames Plaza)
 Need more places for kids to hang out (to keep them out of trouble)
 Need more organized sports / need more sports in general
 Need more non-team recreation activities / need more in general
 Need/expand summer recreation programs (swimming lessons)
 Need YMCA programs (afterschool program and sports programs)
 Need facility for ice/roller skating (like Depew)
 Need to better advertise events for youth (use Town website)
 Need a place to ice skate in winter
 Use Ames Plaza for a hockey/roller skating arena
 Need better playground equipment in Town parks
 Need something other than sports related activities (evening/summer events)
 Social programs (Scouts, etc.) should be operated by churches, etc.
 Have more use of gym in Town Hall (hockey and basketball)
 Put lights in the parks

6. Are there enough programs for seniors in the Town?

	Town	Village	Other	Total
Yes	22	15	2	39
No	4	3	3	10
No comment	49	18	13	80

Comments:

- Need more senior housing
- Need the senior van to help shut ins
- Need meals on wheels all the time (expand service)
- Need more evening recreation events (card clubs, meet & greet, etc.)
- Need cheap or free activities

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- Expand services of senior van - shopping opportunities (other areas)
- Senior center should offer more day programs run by seniors & volunteers
- Need a YMCA for all ages
- Social programs should be organized/operated by churches, etc.

7. Where should residential development occur?

	Town	Village	Other	Total
In/Around the Village of Alden	23	12	3	38
In and around the hamlets	27	7	8	42
Anywhere in the Town	22	15	10	47
Want no more development	12	4	0	16

(some respondents checked more than 1 box)

Comments:

- One Town resident wants residential development to only occur in the Village
- If anywhere in Town, keep limited and well planned.
- Nice homes on big lots with as much green space as possible.
- Keep it in the Village only
- Do not put residential develop in areas with prime farmland
- Anywhere in the Towns of Lancaster, Cheektowaga, etc.

8. What type of housing is needed in Alden?

	Town	Village	Other	Total
Traditional single-family homes	47	17	15	79
Two or three-family homes	6	2	2	10
Apartments (3 or more units)	10	4	2	16
Condos / Townhouses	14	11	4	29

(some respondents checked more than 1 box)

Comments:

- Need more senior housing - keep in and near village (walkable)
- Need assisted living
- No more rentals
- Need more housing alternatives for seniors who want to stay in Alden
- No low income housing
- Condos, townhouses, etc. only in the Village
- Focus on resale of existing homes in Town
- Don't become another Lancaster - keep new single-family residential limited
- Need more apartments in the Village
- Keep single family housing on small lots, preferably in the Village
- Keep new housing out of agricultural districts

9. Where, and at what scale, should commercial development occur in the Town?

Scale:	small	medium	large
Near Village	33 (T), 15 (V), 7 (O)	17 (T), 11 (V), 5 (O)	6 (T), 1 (V), 1 (O)
Along Broadway	22 (T), 11 (V), 0 (O)	27 (T), 12 (V), 8 (O)	13 (T), 7 (V), 4 (O)
Walden Avenue	18 (T), 5 (V), 2 (O)	26 (T), 10 (V), 6 (O)	23 (T), 15 (V), 5 (O)
Genesee Street	16 (T), 7 (V), 1 (O)	24 (T), 9 (V), 7 (O)	21 (T), 14 (V), 4 (O)

(T = Town, V = Village, O = Other ; some respondents checked more than 1 box)

Scale:	small	medium	large
TOTAL			
Near Village	55	33	8
Along Broadway	33	47	24
Walden Avenue	35	42	43
Genesee Street	24	40	39
Total	147	162	114

(some respondents checked more than 1 box)

Comments:

- Reuse vacant buildings and existing properties
- Keep at small scale to preserve open space
- Keep development limited along Walden and put in industrial park
- No more commercial development
- Redevelop Ames Plaza

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- Use areas where infrastructure is already in place (Walden industrial park)
- No Wal-Mart type store - keep commercial development small scale
- There is plenty of room on Walden Avenue for the large stores that we need
- Keep small scale commercial in areas that have roads, parking and services

10. Should the Town strive to protect/preserve agricultural use?

	Town	Village	Other	Total
Yes	61	30	16	107
No	6	1	0	7
No comment	8	5	2	15

If yes, why?

	Town	Village	Other	Total
Important industry / jobs	32	18	6	56
Way to preserve open space	51	23	9	83
Source of local food supply	42	23	10	75
Preserves important farm soils	39	21	7	67
Important part of rural character	50	23	14	87

(some respondents checked more than 1 box)

Comments:

- It depends on where it occurs / we can have it but continue to grow
- Preserving agriculture makes economic sense - no farms / no food
- Agriculture provides an environmental buffer and provides biodiversity
- Preserve it for the future - keep a local supply of fresh food available always
- Farms only need basic Town services (roads and waste disposal)
- Farms help balance the tax base (requires less services than residential)

Other Comments: (many were grateful for the survey and the request for public opinion)

#1 comment was that people LOVE the rural, small town atmosphere of the Town
We are against Walmart
Keep growth managed and slow (what's the big rush?)
Encourage and welcome farming activities in the community
Alden is a great and safe place to raise kids - keep it small and rural
Bring back the New Year's Eve ball drop!
Need small businesses not large corporations (keep village atmosphere in Town)
Need to support the farmers market, Alden Art Show and church events
Need to maintain the agricultural tradition - don't let it disappear
Agriculture should evolve on it's own - farmers don't want gov't to tell them what to do
Put farming first
Moved to Alden to escape suburban sprawl and excessive commercial development
If people want stores and development they can move to Lancaster
Control residential development
It is NOT the Town's job to entertain my children
Willing to drive to Transit Rd. to save rural atmosphere of the Town
Too much housing - coyotes and deer have no where to go
There is too much non-taxable land in Alden - need jobs and tax base increases
Need to find creative ways to develop "backlands".
Alden needs a movie theater
Local officials need better understanding of State and Fed. regulations (soil, water, etc.)
Put the reins on developers who are drooling over our open lands
Small businesses need to exist for proper competitive balance
Please help to save the character of our wonderful Town!
Do not develop in the proposed extended village area
Comments from the survey indicate that
The Town should do more to support the rural
State policy should be to revive business and industry in urban areas (preserve rural)
What happened to the bike path along old rail line - this is a good amenity for Town
Improve drainage and water flow on Greenfield Drive
A department store is much needed; will help other businesses if located near village
If you don't like Alden the way it is, don't move here (go to Lancaster or Cheektowaga)
Need more vocal and legislative support from Town government to keep Alden rural
Encourage commercial enterprises as home-based or on-farm businesses
Keep small farms operating
We need to be good, responsible stewards of our land - preserve for next generations
You should not consider any surveys that are received anonymously
Town Board members should live in the Town, not the Village
Impose a fee or tax on buildings that sit vacant for more than one year (prevent blight)
Village needs clearly marked pedestrian crosswalks
Taxpayers are not school children in need of control

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In an effort to be more concise, duplicate comments or comments of a highly similar nature were not added to a comment list if the gist of their concerns or ideas was already included.

** Other = residents from communities outside of the Town (e.g., Marilla, Akron, Darien, etc.)

*** Identified at least one "repeat" questionnaire