

MISSION

Engaging Amenia is a comprehensive community outreach initiative designed to gather resident feedback for the Town's Comprehensive Plan update. This process empowers Amenia residents through inclusive engagement to shape the community's future development, preserve its rural character, and address key challenges in housing, business development, natural resource protection, and infrastructure needs.

This report summarizes feedback from over 100 community members who participated in a live workshop on June 9, 2025, providing insights into resident priorities across five key areas: Housing, Business, Natural Resources, Infrastructure & Municipal Services, and Sustainability & Recreation.

100+
COMMUNITY PARTICIPANTS

5
KEY TOPIC AREAS

200+
INDIVIDUAL COMMENTS

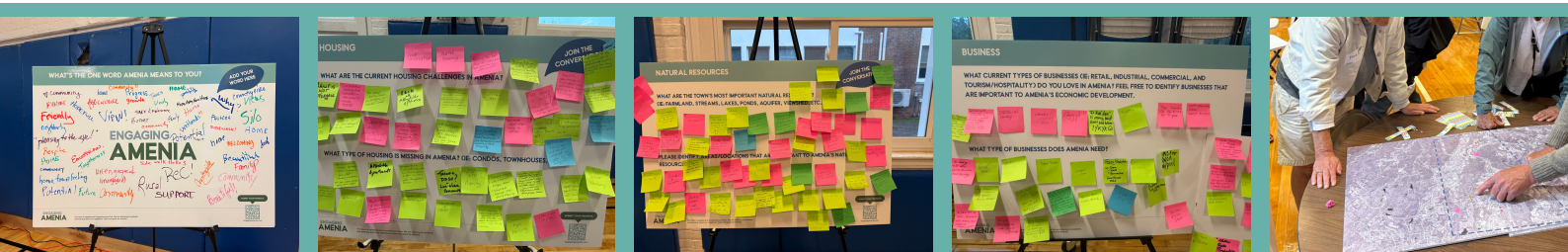
50+
COMMUNITY VALUES IDENTIFIED

PROCESS

The Engaging Amenia community workshop utilized a structured approach to gather comprehensive feedback from residents. Participants visited stations addressing five critical areas affecting Amenia's future development.

The engagement process included an opportunity for residents to identify current challenges, opportunities, priorities, and specific needs within each topic area. This approach ensured that all voices were heard and that feedback was systematically captured across all aspects of community development and preservation.

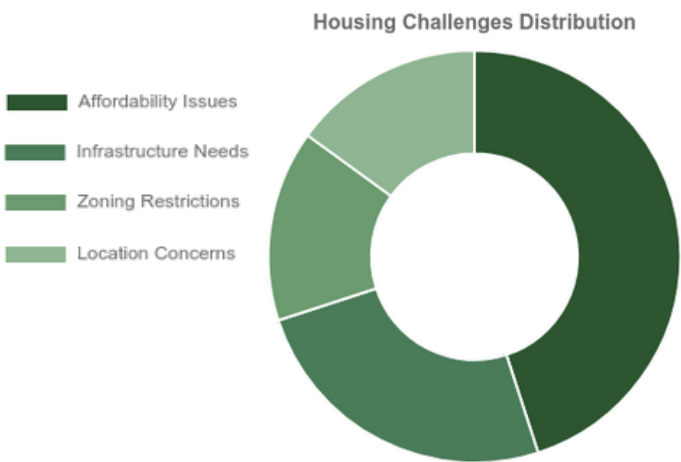
The workshop format encouraged both broad participation and detailed input, resulting in actionable insights that will inform the Comprehensive Plan update process. Community members were encouraged to share specific examples, locations, and priorities to ensure the feedback would translate into planning goals for the Comprehensive Plan.



CURRENT CHALLENGES + MISSING HOUSING TYPES

Housing affordability emerged as a primary concern in the topic of housing, with residents consistently highlighting the lack of affordable rental options and the need for middle-income housing. Residents identified a critical gap in affordable apartments, condos, and townhouses. There's particular demand for housing that serves seniors looking to downsize, young families, and essential workers including teachers, healthcare workers, and service industry employees.

The community identified significant infrastructure barriers, particularly the need for wastewater solutions to enable infill development in the town center. Infrastructure needs also included sidewalks and design guidelines.

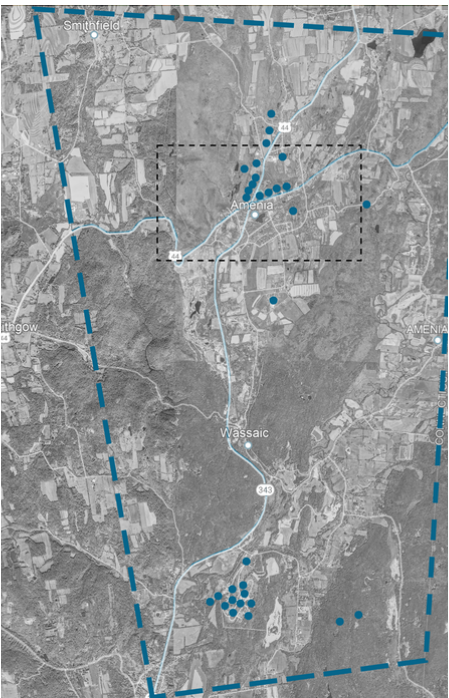
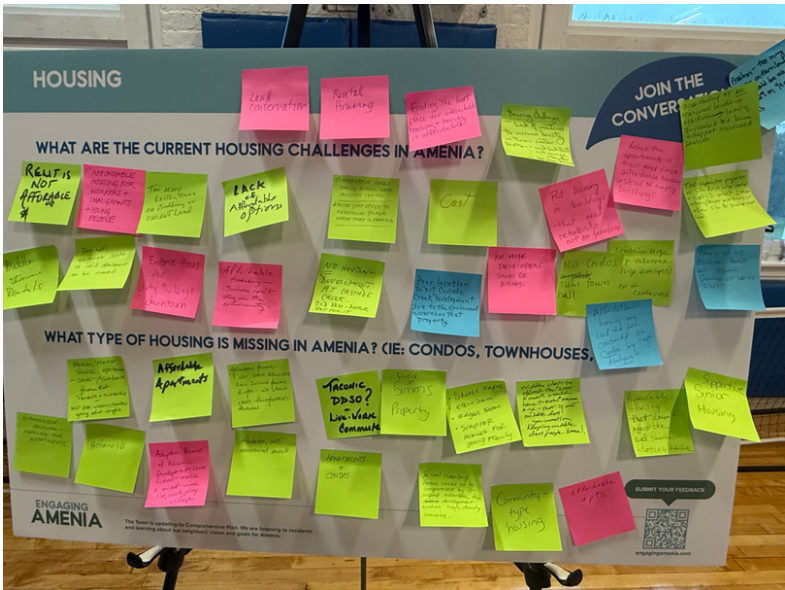


TOP HOUSING TYPES:

- Affordable rental apartments and condos
- Senior housing options
- Workforce housing for teachers/healthcare workers
- Mixed-income housing developments
- Housing above retail on Main Street
- Affordable homeownership

LOCATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Community members emphasized the importance of strategic location for new housing, with preferences for development near existing services and transportation. They strongly advocated for rehabilitation of existing buildings rather than development on farmland, and called for wastewater infrastructure as a prerequisite for any significant housing development. Participants also called attention to ensuring that housing doesn't impact the rural nature and environmental assets found in Amenia.

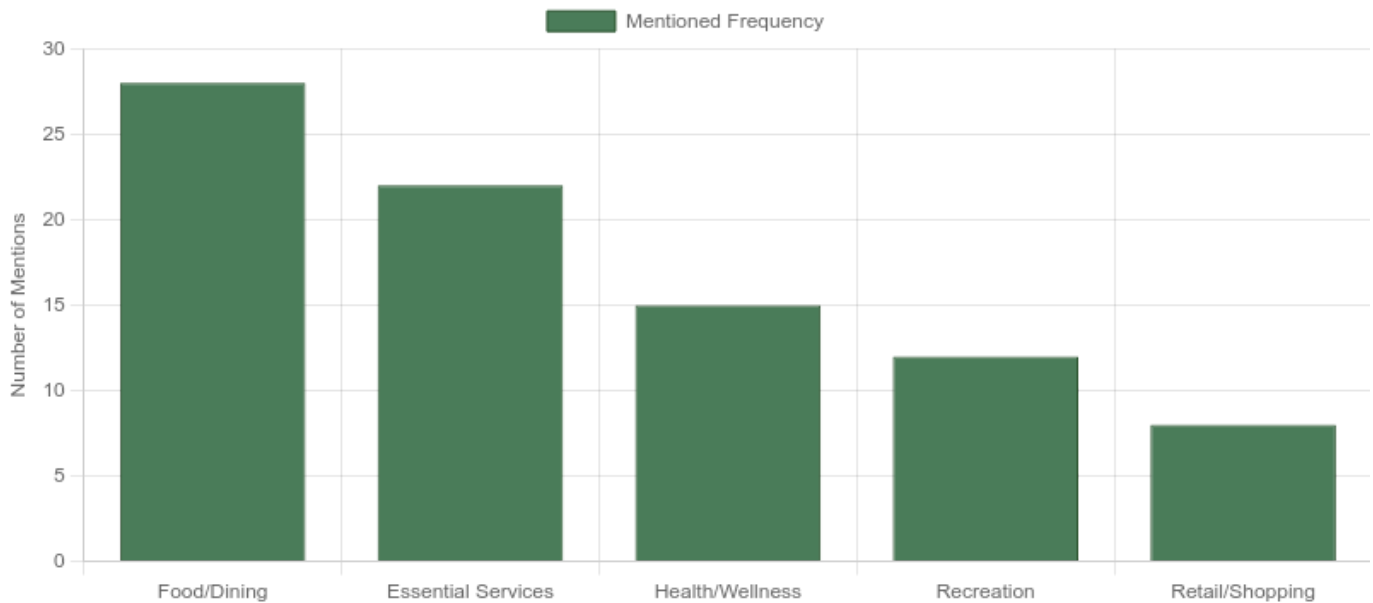


The dots placed by residents were directly transcribed onto the main map.

VALUED EXISTING BUSINESSES

Residents expressed strong appreciation for the town's restaurant scene, including establishments like Four Brothers, Le Jardin, Panacea, Isabella, and the Lantern. Local services such as Freshtown, Tractor Supply, the library, and Vitsky's are highly valued, along with the drive-in theater and Farmer's market.

Most Requested Business Types

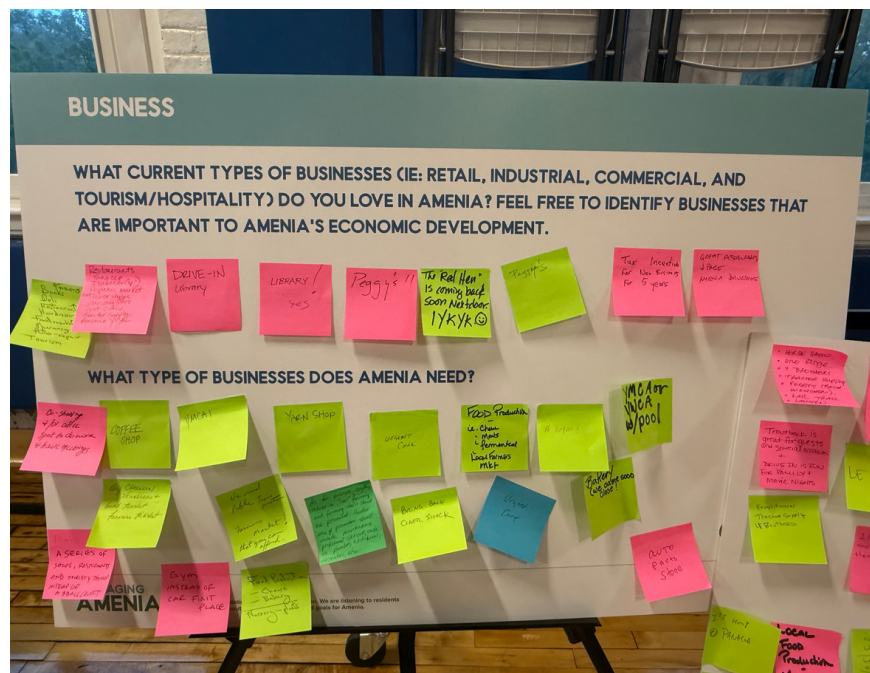


BUSINESS NEEDS

The community identified significant gaps in daily services and amenities. The community expressed a desire for more everyday services and amenities, especially food and beverage options, personal services, fitness, and healthcare.

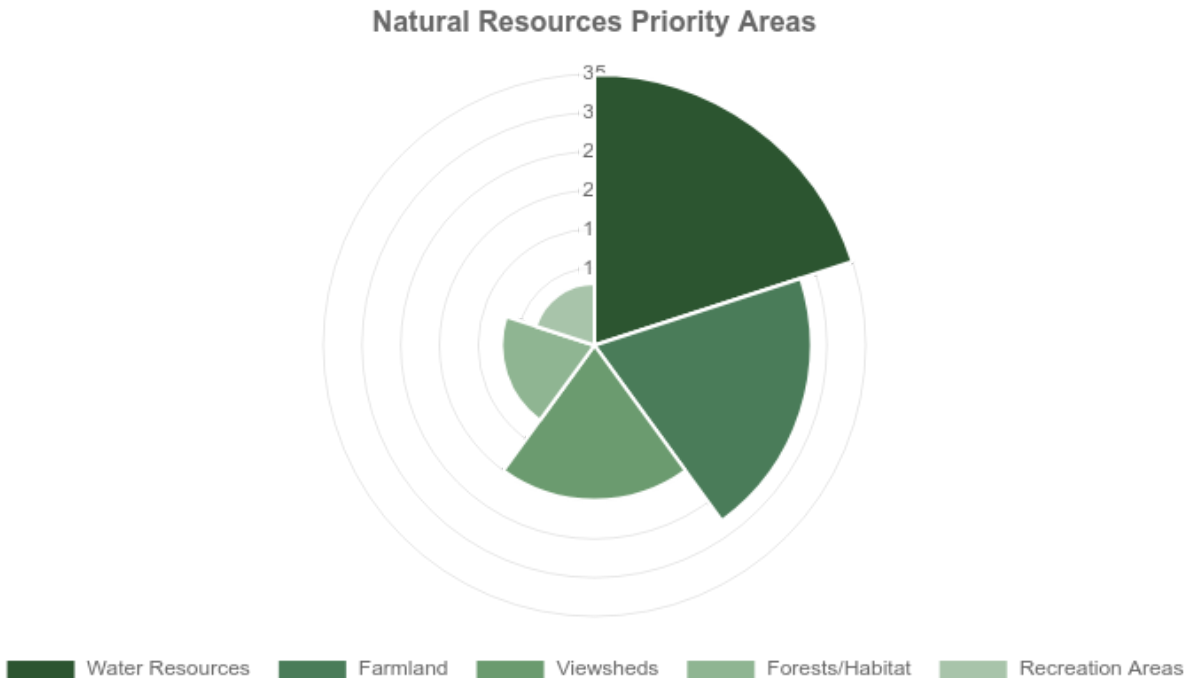
MOST REQUESTED BUSINESSES

- Coffee shop/Café
- Bagel shop
- Farmer's market
- Gym/Recreation center
- Bakery
- Dry cleaners
- Urgent care facility
- Local Food Production



CRITICAL RESOURCE AREAS

Residents identified water resources as one of the most critical natural assets of Amenia, including Amenia’s aquifer, streams, lakes, and wetlands. Farmland preservation and viewshed protection, particularly the view from De La Verne Hill, were consistently mentioned as high priorities.

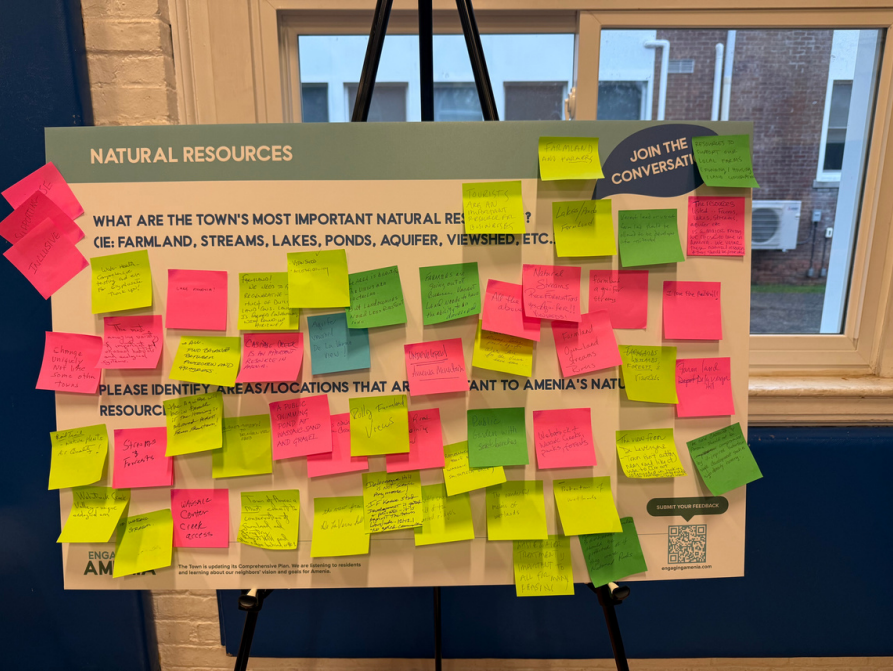


BALANCE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Community members emphasized the need to balance conservation with appropriate development, focusing on protecting high-value agricultural soils and critical habitats while allowing for thoughtful growth that supports the local economy.

LOCATIONS REQUIRING PROTECTION

- Rattlesnake Mountain
- Wassaic Creek
- Webutuck Creek Valley
- Various wetland systems
- The Rail Trail



VALUED CURRENT SERVICES

The Rail Trail dominated responses as the most appreciated municipal asset, mentioned consistently. The nearby Metro North train service, the town hall facilities, and the playgrounds were also frequently cited as important existing assets.

TOP INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITIES

Wastewater treatment emerged as the overwhelming priority, with residents recognizing it as essential for any future development. Sidewalk connectivity, particularly to Freshtown Plaza, was the second most mentioned need. Town-wide trash pick-up, parking, and need for more recreational programming was also noted.

INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITIES (BY FREQUENCY MENTIONED):

1. Wastewater Treatment - Essential for development
2. Sidewalks to Freshtown - Critical pedestrian safety and connectivity
3. Road Improvements - Speed limits and traffic moderation
4. Parking Improvements - Downtown and Wassaic

CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Residents showed strong awareness of climate challenges, particularly flooding along Wassaic and Webutuck Creeks. They emphasized the need for improved drainage systems and floodplain protection, while also supporting agricultural land conservation as a sustainability measure.

RECREATION NEEDS

The community identified significant gaps in recreational facilities and programming. A municipal swimming pool or pond was frequently requested, along with better maintenance and improvements (ie: water fountain and bathroom) of existing facilities like the town hall field and Beekman Park.

RECREATION PRIORITIES:

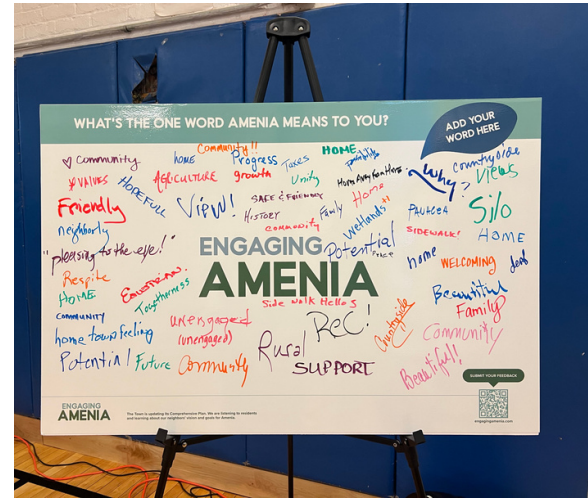
- Municipal swimming pool/pond
- Improved connectivity including rail trail connections and sidewalks
- Dog parks
- Community garden

FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS:

- Town hall field drainage
- Lake Amenia cleanup

Residents were asked to contribute words that define Amenia. The responses reveal a community that values connection, natural beauty, and small-town character while looking toward future possibilities.

The word "Community" appeared most frequently, followed by "Home," reflecting residents' deep connection to Amenias as both a place of belonging and a foundation for family life. Words like "Potential," "Future," and "Progress" indicate optimism about planned improvements, while "Rural," "Agriculture," and "Views" emphasize the importance of preserving Amenias's natural character.



COMMUNITY RURAL POTENTIAL
BEAUTIFUL FAMILY SUPPORT NEIGHBORLY
WELCOMING FRIENDLY PEACE GROWTH
VIEWS AGRICULTURE COUNTRYSIDE
EQUESTRIAN HISTORY FUTURE HOPEFUL
PROGRESS SAFE UNITY HOME
POSSIBILITY WETLANDS TOGETHERNESS

Five overarching needs emerged from the in-person community engagement workshop:

1. **Infrastructure:** Wastewater treatment is essential before significant development can occur
2. **Balanced Growth:** Support for housing and business development that respects rural character
3. **Connectivity Matters:** Strong demand for sidewalks and pedestrian safety improvements
4. **Resource Protection:** Commitment to preserving farmland, viewsheds, and water resources
5. **Community Amenities:** Need for recreation facilities and gathering spaces