

TOWN & VILLAGE OF
MEXICO
AGRICULTURAL
& FARMLAND
PROTECTION PLAN



GROWING TOGETHER SINCE 1794

January 2026 Draft v.2

Contents

Acknowledgements	v
Executive Summary	7
Introduction & Purpose	10
The Planning Process.....	11
Goals and Uses of this Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan	13
Role of Agriculture in Mexico	17
Agricultural Conditions in Mexico	18
Agriculture in Oswego County	19
Agriculture in the Mexico Area	20
Town of Mexico Agriculture (Including Village)	23
Agricultural Inventory	24
Agricultural Assessments	24
Agricultural Uses	24
New York State Certified Agricultural Districts	25
Agricultural Soils.....	25
Land Cover	26
Agriculture in the Village of Mexico	28
Agricultural Inventory	32
New York State Agricultural District.....	32
Agricultural Assessment	33
Agricultural Use	33
Agricultural Soils.....	33
Land Cover	34
Data on Farmers and Farmland Owners from the Survey	39
Conversion Pressure	41
Year-Built Housing Analysis in the Town and Village of Mexico	43
Identification of Priority Farmlands	51
Parcel Rating Methodology.....	51
Results.....	54

Draft Plan January 2026

- Agricultural Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats 59**
- Vision and Goals 60**
 - Vision.....61
 - Goals63
- Recommended Actions 64**
 - A. Governance, Policy, Coordination, and Advocacy65
 - B. Farmland Protection and Land Use Planning.....68
 - C. Education and Workforce Development72
 - D. Marketing and Promotion74
 - E. Agricultural Economic Development and Technical Assistance76
- Implementing This Plan 79**
 - Priority Actions and Their Implementation80
 - Overall Implementation Responsibilities and Steps.....85
 - Measuring Success88
- Appendix 90**
 - 1. Audit of Town and Village Land Use Regulations.....91
 - 2. List of Mexico Farm Operations 108
 - 3. Draft Resolution to Form Plan Implementation Committee 109
 - 4. Public Involvement Record 111
 - Interviews..... 111
 - Summary of Survey Results 112
 - Open House and Farmers Meeting Results..... 113
 - Meeting with Amish Farmers 120
 - Detailed SWOT..... 120
 - 5. Marketing and Communications Plan 124

Abbreviations Used in This Plan

AFPB – Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board

Ag District – Agricultural District

AML – New York State Agriculture and Markets Law

CCE – Cornell Cooperative Extension

CSA – Community Supported Agriculture

FPIG – New York State Farmland Protection Implementation Grant

GIS – Geographic Information System

NYS – New York State

NYS Ag & Markets – New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets

PB – Planning Board

PDR – Purchase of Development Rights

SWCD – Oswego County Soil and Water Conservation District

SWOT – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

TDR – Transfer of Development Rights

USDA – United States Department of Agriculture

ZBA – Zoning Board of Appeals



Acknowledgements

Town Board

Eric Behling, Town Supervisor

Russell Partrick

Chad Bigelow

Hadwin Fravor

Jeanne Revette

Village Board

Terry Grimshaw, Mayor

James Emery

Robert Harter

James Hotchkiss

Susan Linerode

Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan Advisory Committee

Marcia DeLong, Chair

Eric Behling, Supervisor, Town of Mexico

Terry Grimshaw, Mayor, Village of Mexico

Joe Chairvolotti, Director, Oswego County Soil & Water Conservation District

Paul Forestiere, Director, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Oswego County

Jim Hotchkiss, Village of Mexico

Erica Schreiner, Oswego County Soil and Water Conservation District

Gary Toth, Town of Mexico

Joshua Vrooman, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Oswego County

Nancy Weber, Town of Mexico

Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan Partners

The following partners provided in-kind services to help develop this plan:

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Oswego County

Mexico Central School District - Donna Runner, Superintendent

Oswego County IDA, Operation Oswego County - Austin Wheelock

Oswego County Farm Bureau - Bruce Gibson

Oswego County Soil and Water Conservation District

Tug Hill Tomorrow - John Souva and Mark Pacilio

Village of Mexico

Other Supporters

Art Brooks - Brooks Forestry and Resources
Mary Chesbro - Oswego County Agriculture & Farmland Protection Board
Mark Lichtenstein - ESF Executive Operating and Chief Sustainability Officer
Tim Stahl, Director, Oswego County Community Development, Tourism and Planning
Allison Trudell - Town of Mexico

Consultant Team

Community Planning & Environmental Associates

Nan Stolzenburg, FAICP

Upstate GIS

Rick Lederer-Barnes

E.M. Pemrick and Company

Ellen Morosoff Pemrick

Jim Feldman Marketing



Funding Support

This Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan was developed with financial support from the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets through an Agricultural and Farmland Protection Planning Grant with support provided by the Town and Village of Mexico.



Photographs

Marcia DeLong
Ellen Pemrick

Thank you for the farm pictures shown in this Plan courtesy of Sage Creek Flowers, Stars and Sage Farm, Ashley Lynn Winery, Charlie Farmer Tallow, Apple Grove Farm, Audra and David Sixberry, Dream Acres Farm, Molly-Johns, Three Seasons Christmas Tree Farm, Appledale Farm, Pople Ridge Farm, and other Mexico Farms.



Executive Summary

Purpose and Context

Agriculture is a defining and highly valued component of life in the Town and Village of Mexico. Farms and farmland contribute to local food production, economic activity, environmental stewardship, and the rural character that residents consistently identify as central to the community's identity. Recognizing both the importance of agriculture and the pressures it faces, the Town and Village of Mexico jointly prepared this Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan to provide a coordinated, proactive framework for sustaining agriculture as a viable long-term land use and economic sector.

This Plan is intended to guide local decision-making, inform updates to land use regulations and policies, support farmland protection efforts, and strengthen the Town and Village's ability to compete for state and federal funding. When adopted, it will function as an addendum to the joint Comprehensive Plan, ensuring that agricultural protection and enhancement are fully integrated into broader land use and development decisions.

Planning Process

The Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan was developed through a collaborative, data-driven, and community-based process led by a joint Town and Village Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan Advisory Committee. The Committee included representatives from both municipalities, local and regional agricultural organizations, and agricultural support agencies. Technical assistance was provided by a multidisciplinary consultant team that supported data analysis, mapping, public engagement, and plan development.

The planning process unfolded between late 2024 and early 2026 and included multiple, interrelated components. These included compilation and analysis of agricultural census data, parcel-level land use and assessment information, and Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping to document agricultural conditions and identify priority farmlands. A parcel-based farmland prioritization methodology was developed to meet New York State requirements and to support future participation in the Farmland Protection Implementation Grant (FPIG) program.

Public engagement was a central element of the process. Input was gathered through an online survey with targeted question sets for



Draft Plan January 2026

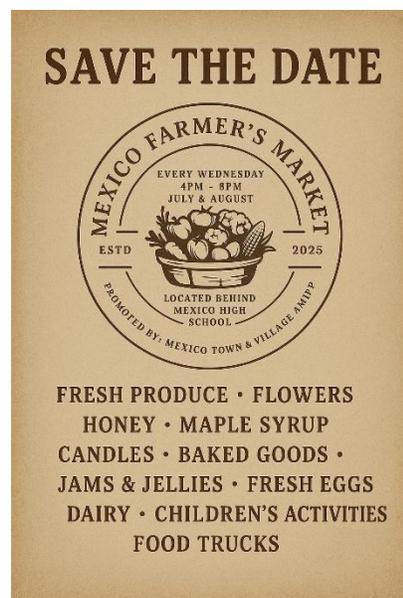
farmers, farmland owners, and the general public; interviews with farmers and agricultural service providers; a public open house; focused meetings with farmers; and a dedicated discussion with Amish farmers. In addition, a farm-friendly audit of Town and Village land use regulations was conducted to identify barriers to agriculture and opportunities for regulatory improvements. Together, these efforts ensured that the Plan reflects local conditions, farmer needs, and community priorities while aligning with state policy objectives.

Trends Facing Agriculture in Mexico

The analysis undertaken for this Plan shows that agriculture in the Town and Village of Mexico remains active and diverse, but increasingly vulnerable to a combination of economic, demographic, and land use pressures. The number of farms in the Mexico area has declined over time, particularly among smaller operations, reflecting broader regional and statewide trends.

While farmland acreage has remained relatively stable, indicating consolidation rather than wholesale loss, this stability masks underlying fragility within the agricultural sector. Most farms in the Mexico area are small- to mid-scale, with the majority reporting relatively low annual sales and many operators relying on off-farm income. Production costs, limited profitability, access to financing, and labor availability were consistently identified as challenges by local farmers. At the same time, farmers expressed interest in diversification, value-added production, agritourism, and succession planning, signaling both adaptability and a desire to remain in agriculture if supportive conditions are in place.

Land use patterns present additional pressures. Most recent residential development has occurred outside the Village, within historically agricultural areas of the Town. This dispersed, low-density development contributes to farmland fragmentation, rising land values, and the risk for increased



farm-residential conflicts. Infrastructure extensions (water) and non-farm land uses—including solar and other utility-scale projects also influence land markets and expectations, sometimes making agricultural use less competitive. Despite these pressures, community support for agriculture remains strong, providing a critical foundation for proactive policy and investment.

Strategy Framework and Plan Direction

The core of this Plan is a coordinated set of strategies and actions designed to protect farmland, strengthen farm viability, and reinforce agriculture's role in the community. These strategies are organized around governance and policy, farmland protection and land use planning, education and workforce development, marketing and promotion, and agricultural economic

Draft Plan January 2026

development. Collectively, they shift the Plan from a descriptive inventory of conditions to an actionable roadmap.

A central strategy is strengthening local governance and coordination related to agriculture. The Plan calls for establishing an Agricultural Advisory Committee to serve as an ongoing advocate for farming, provide input on development proposals affecting agricultural areas, and help guide implementation of Plan recommendations. Integrating this Plan into the Comprehensive Plan and using its maps and data to inform municipal decision-making are essential steps toward long-term consistency and accountability.

Farmland protection and land use planning strategies focus on maintaining a stable, contiguous agricultural land base. Priority farmland mapping provides a critical tool for guiding conservation efforts, supporting FPIG applications, and informing land use decisions. The Plan emphasizes minimizing land fragmentation, encouraging development patterns that direct growth toward the Village and other appropriate focus areas, and updating zoning and subdivision regulations to better accommodate modern agricultural practices while reducing conflicts with non-farm uses.

Supporting farm profitability and economic viability is another central theme. Strategies emphasize expanding direct-to-consumer sales, strengthening the Mexico Farmers' Market, encouraging value-added and agritourism enterprises, and improving access to technical assistance, grants, and business planning resources. Partnerships with Cornell Cooperative Extension, the Oswego County Soil and Water Conservation District, schools, and CiTi BOCES, and regional organizations are identified as critical to delivering these services effectively.

Education, outreach, and marketing strategies aim to reinforce positive perceptions of agriculture and connect residents more directly with local farms. These include implementing a coordinated marketing and branding effort for Mexico agriculture, expanding farm-to-school and farm-to-institution initiatives, and increasing opportunities for youth engagement and workforce development. Together, these actions support both immediate farm income opportunities and long-term succession and workforce needs. A detailed marketing and promotion plan is included in the Plan.

Implementation and Measuring Success

The Plan includes a clear implementation framework that assigns responsibilities, identifies partners, and establishes metrics to track progress over time. Implementation is envisioned as a shared responsibility among the Town and Village, the proposed Agricultural Advisory Committee, farmers, and regional partners. The Plan is designed to be a living document, used regularly in grant applications, policy updates, and program development.

Draft Plan January 2026

Success will be measured not only by acres protected or programs implemented, but also by improved coordination, increased visibility of agriculture, strengthened farm profitability, and greater public understanding of agriculture’s role in Mexico. By aligning land use planning, economic development, and community engagement around a shared vision, the Town and Village of Mexico position themselves to sustain agriculture as a vital and defining element of the community for generations to come.

Introduction & Purpose

The Town and Village of Mexico are located in northeastern Oswego County in central New York, about 35 miles north of the City of Syracuse. With a total area of 47 square miles, the Town of Mexico has approximately 5,300 residents. The Village of Mexico, once known as Mexicoville, is the only incorporated village in the Town and has a population of about 1,500.

In 2024, the Town and Village of Mexico applied for and received a grant from the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets to collaborate on a joint plan to protect and enhance agriculture. The Town and Village Boards established a volunteer Advisory Committee with members representing both the Town and the Village to develop the Plan. The Committee worked on the project from November 2024 through January 2026. The planning process, which is described in more detail below, allowed the Town and Village to learn more about agriculture in their communities, solicit input from farmers and the public, identify opportunities and challenges, and recommend strategies and actions that can be put to work to promote continued and expanded agricultural activities in both municipalities.

Oswego County adopted its Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan in 2003. At that time, the County was identified as being in “one of the largest fruit-growing regions of the state, with considerable [agricultural] diversity.” Livestock and dairy farming were the major money makers, however, bringing in \$20 million annually. The plan noted that while agricultural land was scattered throughout the County, there were large concentrations of farmland in several towns; one of them was the Town of Mexico.

Concurrent with this effort, the Town and Village of Mexico have also been working to develop a new, joint Comprehensive Plan. When complete, the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan is expected to be adopted as an addendum to the new Comprehensive Plan. Together, they will provide a vision and roadmap for both of the communities and offer goals, strategies, and actions needed to achieve Mexico’s vision.

The Planning Process

The development of this Plan was led by an Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan Advisory Committee. A consulting team was hired to assist the Advisory Committee; the consultants facilitated the process, created and implemented a public outreach and engagement strategy, drafted materials, and prepared the Plan document.

Funded by a Farmland Protection Planning Grant from the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets with a local match from the Town and Village, the planning process encompassed the following steps:

- **Project Initiation.** Established the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan Advisory Committee, with membership from both the Town and Village, which held monthly meetings in coordination with the project consultants.
- **Data Compilation and Analysis.** Compiled and analyzed data from the U.S. Agricultural Census, real property assessment records, and other sources to understand farm characteristics, land uses, and recent trends in the Town and Village of Mexico and Oswego County.
- **Mapping.** Created a Geographic Information System (GIS) database and maps to inventory and present information on farmland and agricultural land uses in both municipalities. This step included the development of a parcel-based methodology and maps to identify priority farmlands in Mexico.
- **Online Survey.** Developed and analyzed the results of an online survey, with separate banks of questions for farmers, property owners who lease land to farmers, and members of the public, with an additional distinction made for individuals who had a home garden and/or farm animals for personal use (as opposed to commercial sale), and whether the respondent was in the Town or the Village. The survey was designed to help uncover strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for enhancing agriculture in the Town and Village.



Draft Plan January 2026

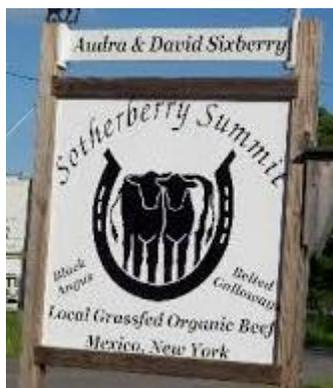
- **Interviews.** Conducted interviews with agricultural producers and representatives of agricultural support organizations in the town, village, and region.
- **Farm-Friendly Audit.** Conducted an audit of the comprehensive plans and land use regulations in both the Town and Village of Mexico to gauge their “farm-friendliness” and determine whether they place any unnecessary barriers on agricultural uses and practices. The audit concluded with a series of recommendations for each municipality aimed at making zoning and subdivision laws more supportive of agriculture.
- **SWOT Analysis.** Reviewed the data analysis, mapping, and community input received to identify a full listing of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats – the key factors affecting agriculture in Mexico. The SWOT serves as a foundation for the development of recommendations included in this Plan.
- **Vision and Goals.** Developed vision and goal statements to express the desired future of agriculture in the Town and Village of Mexico and to guide decision-making about the actions, strategies, and programs necessary to sustain and enhance agricultural activity in Mexico. This Plan establishes a unified vision and set of goals for both the Town and Village.
- **Strategies and Actions.** Recommended and prioritized strategies and actions to enhance and promote agriculture, address challenges, and protect farmland in Mexico. Some recommendations pertain to just the Town, some to the Village, and many to both, which will require ongoing collaboration.
- **Open House and Farmers Meeting.** Facilitated an Open House forum for the public and a separate meeting/focus group discussion for farmers and farmland owners where participants could review information about the Plan, maps, the draft vision and goals, and preliminary recommendations, and offer feedback. A subsequent meeting with Amish farmers offered the Town and Village the perspectives from this part of the area’s farming community.
- **Draft Plan.** Prepared a draft Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan containing all components completed as part of the planning process and released it to the public for review. The draft was also submitted to the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets for their initial evaluation. A joint Town and Village public hearing was held to solicit feedback, and refinements to the document were made as a result.
- **Online Story Map:** Developed an online, user-friendly summary of the Plan that provides maps and a narrative for ease of use and understanding of the Plan’s components.

Draft Plan January 2026

- **Adoption of Plan.** After the public hearing, the steps that both the Town and Village Boards undertook to adopt the final Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan included:
 - Town and Village Boards' consideration of the draft Plan
 - SEQR environmental review
 - Adoption by a resolution of the Boards that includes instructions to ensure this Plan is included as an addendum to the Joint Town and Village of Mexico Comprehensive Plan
 - Referral to the Oswego County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board for their review and approval;
 - Submittal to the Commissioner of the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets for their review and final approval.

Agriculture is the practice of cultivating soil, growing crops, and raising livestock for food, fiber, medicine, or other purposes. A **farm** is any land or facility used for agriculture. **Farmers**, whether large or small, operate with the intention of producing and selling crops, livestock, or other agricultural goods as a business. Types of farms include:

- Crop farms (growing commodity crops like corn, wheat, soybeans, etc.)
- Livestock operations (cattle, poultry, hogs, sheep, goats, etc.) and dairy farms
- Specialty crop farms (fruits, vegetables, nuts, herbs, flowers, etc.)
- Nurseries, greenhouses, and Christmas tree farms
- Apiaries (beekeeping operations) and maple syrup producers
- Equine farms (horses, ponies, donkeys, etc.)



Goals and Uses of this Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan

An Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan can provide municipalities with a clear, proactive strategy for protecting farmland, enhancing the economic viability of agricultural operations, and strengthening the regional food system. In so doing, implementation of this Plan will also promote preservation of rural character – a key goal of the Town and Village. By identifying strategies and actions that can be taken to safeguard farmland for future generations and support both traditional and niche agriculture in the Town and Village, this Plan will help ensure that agriculture remains a stable, long-term land use that contributes to the local tax base, food security, and community identity in both the Town and Village. It strengthens the ability of the Town and Village of Mexico to compete for State and federal funding, guides local policy and zoning updates, and fosters stronger partnerships among farmers, municipal leaders, and agricultural support organizations.



It strengthens the ability of the Town and Village of Mexico to compete for State and federal funding, guides local policy and zoning updates, and fosters stronger partnerships among farmers, municipal leaders, and agricultural support organizations.

The mission of this Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan is to:

- Evaluate and document the status of agriculture and characteristics of farm operations in the Town and Village of Mexico.
- Establish a vision for the long-term viability of agriculture and the protection of valuable farmland resources in the Town and Village.
- Establish goal statements to translate the vision statement into clear, policy-oriented intentions with measurable direction that define what the plan aims to accomplish.
- Identify specific strategies and actions necessary to help the Town and Village attain their vision and goals to support and enhance agriculture.
- Involve Mexico’s farming community along with municipal officials from both the Town and Village, agriculture-related agencies and organizations, and other stakeholders in the development of the Plan and empower them to assist in implementing it.

This Plan is intended to be used by a variety of stakeholders at both the Town and Village levels: e.g., farmers/producers, farmland owners, agriculture-related businesses, educators, agricultural support organizations, municipal decision-makers and staff, and even tourism promotion agencies. Enhancing agriculture is complex, and it requires a variety of efforts and initiatives in areas such as public policy, zoning, land protection, education, marketing and promotion, and economic

Draft Plan January 2026

development. Multiple stakeholders and partners need to be involved. Success will come when priority actions are implemented in coordination with the farm community, agricultural service agencies, support organizations, and the municipal, County, and New York State governments.

This Plan offers many components that can be used by different decision-makers, implementers, and stakeholders in different ways:



- **Detailed maps.** Town and Village elected and appointed officials along with agencies and organizations such as the Oswego County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) of Oswego County, and local land trusts, as well as the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and individual landowners, can use the maps to understand where farming is taking place and how it relates to other land uses in the community. The Priority Farmlands Map can be used to help guide planning and decision-making to minimize the conversion of critical farmland. This map is also essential to farmers who wish to protect their land through the New York State Farmland Protection Implementation Grants Program.
- **A Farm Friendly Audit** that can be used by the Town and the Village to enhance their zoning, subdivision, and other land use laws to ensure that barriers to agricultural land uses are minimized.
- **Up-to-date information.** The Plan includes supportive data, charts, tables, and statistics that provide information on agricultural conditions, trends, and issues in and around Mexico, and serve as the factual groundwork for future grant writing, marketing and promotion of agriculture and agricultural products, and planning, project review, and regulatory decisions.
- **A vision and a set of goals** that can be used continually by all as guideposts in decision-making.
- **Strategies and actions** are the most critical component of the Plan because they transform the Plan from a descriptive document into a practical roadmap for implementation. While the Plan outlines existing conditions, issues, and opportunities, strategies and actions identify the steps to be taken to help the Town and Village to protect their farmland, strengthen the area's agricultural economy, and respond to the needs of farmers/producers.

Draft Plan January 2026

- **Marketing Plan**, one of the priority recommendations, is fully fleshed out to support the community's goals by building brand reputation and recognition, with tailored messages and actionable tactics to reach and influence target audiences to enhance farm profitability by informing, engaging, and encouraging enhanced sales of local agricultural products.
- **Implementation plan.** Staff and officials from the Town and Village, with partners from other organizations, can use this section to help turn the recommended actions into a reality. The details offered describe what, how, and who should be involved in strategies to protect and enhance agriculture in Mexico.

Moving forward, it is anticipated that the Town and Village of Mexico, with assistance from a proposed Agricultural Advisory Committee and strong partnerships with local and regional agriculturally-related organizations, will take the lead in plan implementation, working in coordination with the stakeholders and partners identified in this Plan. The Plan will be essential in grant writing and will provide the foundational data, maps, and public input needed to fund future initiatives and programs successfully. When part of the Town and Village's Comprehensive Plan, the communities will have the legal foundation needed to ensure consistency between the Plan and any updated land use regulations.



Role of Agriculture in Mexico

Agriculture is a defining and highly valued component of the Town and Village of Mexico. Community sentiment expressed through the Town/Village survey demonstrates strong and broad-based support for farms, farming, and the preservation of farmland: 65% of respondents identified agriculture as “very important.” In comparison, an additional 30% characterized it as “somewhat important.”

Based on a review of the Town and Village of Mexico Agricultural Survey results and Insight summaries (see Appendix 4), residents consistently describe agriculture as playing the following roles in their community:

- **Provider of fresh, healthy local food**, with a strong appreciation for locally grown fruits, vegetables, eggs, and seasonal products, and interest in expanding access through farmstands and farmers’ markets (92%)
- **Contributor to the local economy and employment**, supporting farm families, related businesses, and indirect economic activity, even as many farms struggle with profitability (79%)

What is the economic impact of agriculture? According to Dr. Todd M. Schmit, Associate Professor at the Dyson School of Applied Economics & Management, Cornell University, agricultural production activity in New York State generated about \$5.2 billion in sales in 2019 and provided more than 52,000 jobs. These figures are *only* for on-farm production and do not include the economic contributions of the state’s food, beverage, and agricultural-based product manufacturers. When direct, indirect, and induced impacts on non-agricultural industries are considered, agricultural production was responsible for a total of \$8.4 billion in sales and 67,882 jobs. Dr. Schmit’s calculations show that for every dollar of output generated by farmers in the state, \$0.49 is generated in non-agricultural industries.

- **Like knowing where my food comes from** (71%)
- **Foundation of the Town’s rural character and identity**, helping maintain Mexico’s traditional landscape, open countryside, and sense of place (71%)
- **Protector of wildlife habitat and environmental resources**, with residents linking farming landscapes to habitat preservation, ecological balance, and environmental quality (68%)

Draft Plan January 2026

- **Steward of open space and farmland**, viewed as the preferred and most beneficial long-term use of large portions of land in the Town, especially compared to non-farm development (61%)
- **Opportunity to connect and interact with farmers** (53%)
- **Lower-cost land use for municipal services**, with some residents recognizing that agricultural lands require less public infrastructure and fewer community services than residential or commercial development (47%)



An illustration showing the small share of every dollar that farmers receive from each food dollar spent (~8 cents).

Agricultural Conditions in Mexico

This section examines agricultural conditions in and around the Town and Village of Mexico, providing information on the characteristics of farms, crops, and livestock produced, farm product sales, farm-based employment, and the presence of agricultural soils. It also describes properties receiving agricultural value assessments and/or located in an agricultural district.

Agriculture in Oswego County

In 2022, when the last Census of Agriculture was conducted, Oswego County had 86,696 acres of agricultural land on 592 farms, including livestock and crop farms, fruit orchards, nurseries, greenhouses, tree plantations, and maple syrup producers.¹ Average farm sizes across the country have been increasing due to farm consolidation. The average farm in Oswego County contained 145 acres, well below the State average of 212 acres. Compared to 2007, the County had 7% fewer farms and 15% fewer acres of farmland.

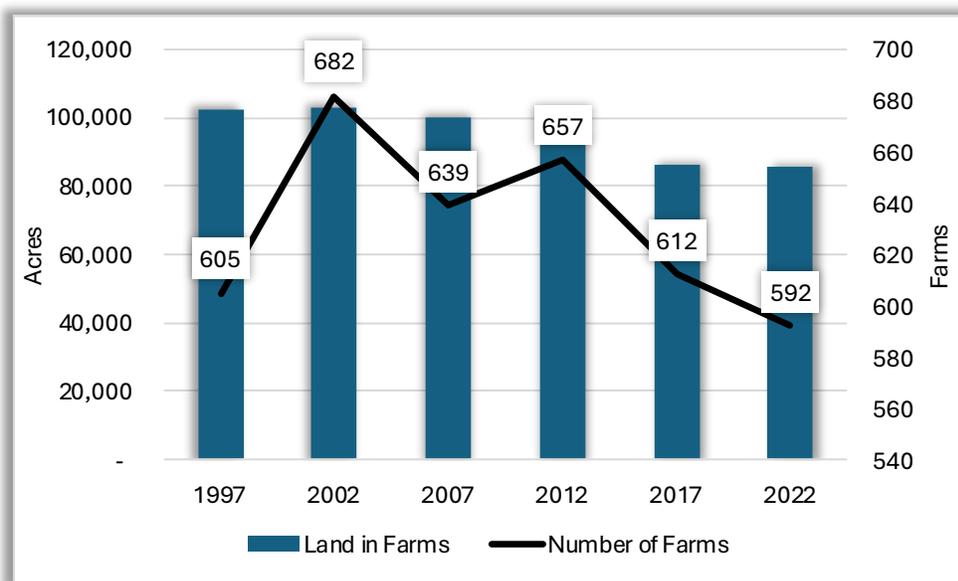


Figure 1: Farms and Farmland, Oswego County

Source: USDA, U.S. Census of Agriculture

¹ The Census of Agriculture is a complete count of farms conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) every five years. Data is available at the national, state, and county levels. For census purposes, the USDA defines a farm as a place that produces and sells or normally would sell at least \$1,000 of agricultural products.

Draft Plan January 2026

Other highlights from the Census of Agriculture on farms in Oswego County are listed below.

- The market value of agricultural products sold by Oswego County farms in 2022 was \$68.9 million. Livestock, poultry, and their products accounted for \$38.3 million (though there are far fewer dairy operations due to industry consolidation). Of crops sold, the highest sales were reported for vegetables, melons, potatoes, and sweet potatoes (\$14.1 million). Combined, milk from cows and vegetables made up almost 70% of total sales.
- More than 72% of the farms in the County had annual sales of less than \$25,000 in 2022, while 9% had sales of at least \$100,000 per year. The most lucrative products, as measured by average sales per farm, were milk from cows; vegetables, melons, potatoes, and sweet potatoes; and nursery and greenhouse products, floriculture, and sod.
- Oswego County ranked #36 of all New York counties in the total value of agricultural products sold, up from #42 in 2017. The County was #11 in the state in the sales of vegetables, melons, potatoes, and sweet potatoes, and #12 in the sales of cultivated Christmas trees and short rotation woody crops.
- Approximately 20% of farms in Oswego County (compared to 17% of farms statewide) sold agricultural products directly to consumers in 2022. This includes transactions at farmstands, on-farm markets, farmers' markets, and "pick-your-own" fruit operations.
- Farms in the County provided full- and part-time jobs for 712 workers in 2022, paying \$7.8 million in wages. About 28% of the farm workers worked at least 150 days per year. Agricultural operations also supported 475 operators/producers whose primary occupation is farming.
- The average age of farmers/producers is 57.4 in Oswego County, slightly higher than the statewide average of 56.7. Approximately 36% of farmers are aged 65 and older; 11% are under age 35.



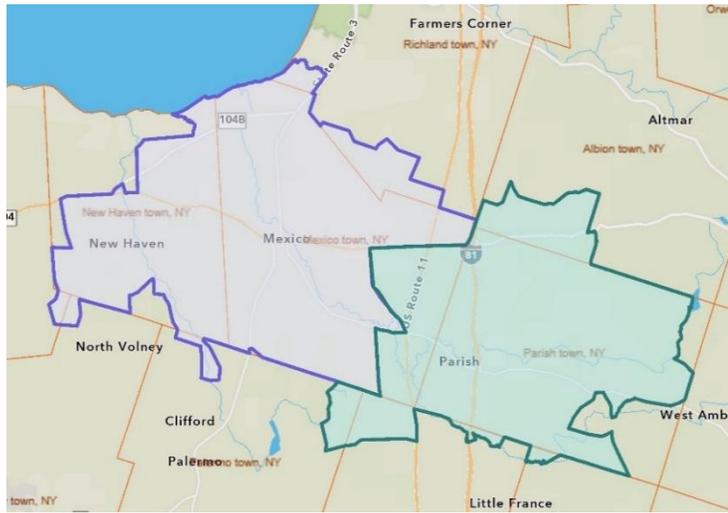
Agriculture in the Mexico Area

There are two ways to quantify agricultural uses and activity in the Town and Village of Mexico. The first relies on data from the Census of Agriculture. Although this data is not available at the municipal level, it *is* available, on a much more limited basis, by zip code. It is important to note

Draft Plan January 2026

that the zip code data is not nearly as detailed as the county-level data; it also uses some different terminology.

Two zip codes cover properties in the Town of Mexico: 13114 and 13131. The 13114 (Mexico) zip code – outlined in purple in the map at right – covers most of the Town of Mexico and about half of the Town of New Haven. The 13131 (Parish) zip code, outlined in green, covers the remaining area in the Town of Mexico. It also covers most of the Town of Parish, as well as small areas in the Towns of Albion, Hastings, and Palermo.



The information below presents data from the 2022 Census of Agriculture for the two zip codes in Mexico, with comparisons to 1997, 2007, and 2017 as appropriate (zip code tabulations were not conducted by the USDA in 2012 due to budgetary constraints).

As shown in Table 1, the Mexico area had a total of 86 farm operations in 2022, including four orchards. These figures reflect a substantial decline in the number of active farms, especially in the Parish zip code. From 2007 to 2022, the Mexico area, in total, lost 27% of its farms. In contrast,

Oswego County lost about 7% of its farm operations over the same period.

The zip code data does not provide the total market value of products sold by local farms, but it does classify farms by level of sales. As reflected in Table 2, 91% of farms in the Mexico area had annual sales of less than \$50,000 in 2022. Only 2 farms had sales of \$250,000 or more per year.

	13114 Mexico	13131 Parish	Total
1997	81	33	114
2007	83	35	118
% Change, 1997-2007	+2%	+6%	+4%
2017	75	26	101
% Change, 2007-17	-10%	-26%	-14%
2022	68	18	86
% Change, 2017-22	-9%	-31%	-15%

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture

	13114 Mexico	13131 Parish	Total
Less Than \$50,000	64 (94%)	14 (78%)	78 (91%)
\$50,000 to \$249,999	2 (3%)	4 (22%)	6 (7%)
\$250,000 or More	2 (3%)	-0-	2 (2%)
All Farm Operations	68 (100%)	18 (100%)	86 (100%)

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture

Draft Plan January 2026

About 24% of farms in the Mexico area sold their products directly to consumers in 2022, a higher proportion than in Oswego County as a whole (20%). Only 5% of the farms in the Mexico area sold their products wholesale to retail stores and institutions.

The zip code data produced in 1997 used different categories to classify farms by level of sales, making it difficult to conclude long-term trends. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that in 1997, 60% of local farms had annual sales of less than \$10,000, 33% had sales between \$10,000 and \$99,999, and 7% had sales of \$100,000 or more.

Most of the farms in the Mexico area in 2022 were fully owned by their operators: 87% were fully owned by the farmer, while 13% were a mix of owned and rented land (the percentages were 69% and 25%, respectively, in 1997). Nearly 90% of all farm operators maintained a residence on their farm.

The zip code data does not provide the total acreage or average size of farm operations, but it does include information on farms by area operated. In addition, farms producing hay and haylage are categorized by area harvested (in 2017 and 2022 only), while orchards are categorized by area bearing and non-bearing (i.e., the total planted area).

According to the Census of Agriculture, there were *no* farm operations in the Mexico area with 1,000 acres or more after 1997; Oswego County overall had very few farms of this size (6 in 2022, 5 in 2007). As shown in Table 3, the percentage of farms in the 13114 (Mexico) zip code operating on less than 50 acres has increased over time. The pattern is not as clear in the 13131 (Parish) zip code; the *number* of farms in both size categories dropped, but a higher percentage of farms operate on 50 to 999 acres.

Table 3: Farms by Area Operated, Mexico Area Zip Codes			
	13114 Mexico	13131 Parish	Total
1997			
1.0 to 49.9 Acres	24 (30%)	9 (27%)	33 (29%)
50 to 999 Acres	56 (69%)	24 (73%)	80 (70%)
1,000 Acres or More	1 (1%)	-0-	1 (1%)
2007			
1.0 to 49.9 Acres	24 (29%)	13 (37%)	37 (31%)
50 to 999 Acres	59 (71%)	22 (63%)	81 (69%)
2017			
1.0 to 49.9 Acres	23 (31%)	8 (31%)	31 (31%)
50 to 999 Acres	52 (69%)	18 (69%)	70 (69%)
2022			
1.0 to 49.9 Acres	29 (43%)	3 (17%)	32 (37%)
50 to 999 Acres	39 (57%)	15 (83%)	54 (63%)
<i>Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture</i>			

A bifurcation is occurring in the farm sector at the town and county levels. Increasingly, farms are either very small, operating on less than 50 acres, or very large, growing in size through consolidation (especially in the dairy industry). Many of the small farms are engaged in direct-to-

Draft Plan January 2026

consumer sales, while the large farms are able to pursue wholesale markets. The medium-sized farms are caught in between, and most of them have shut down.

Table 4 below presents information on farms by product type in 2022. Based on the zip code data, agricultural products in the Mexico area include hay, eggs, beef cattle, horses and ponies, vegetables, grain, and tree fruit.

Table 4: Farm Operations by Product Type, 2022, Town of Mexico Zip Codes			
	13114 Mexico	13131 Parish	Total
Hay/Haylage, Operations w/ Area Harvested	42	10	52
Chicken, Layers, Operations w/Inventory	22	9	31
Cattle & Calves, Operations w/ Sales	17	5	22
Equine, Operations w/Inventory	13	4	17
Hogs, Operations w/Sales	8	2	10
Vegetables, Operations w/ Sales	5	4	9
Grain, Operations w/Sales	3	4	7
Sheep, Goats, and Their Products, Operations w/Sales	3	3	6
Maple Syrup, Operations with Taps	3	3	6
Cut Christmas Trees and Woody Crops, Operations with Sales	5	0	5
Corn for Grain, Operations w/ Area Harvested	2	3	5
Orchards, Operations w/ Area Bearing and Non-Bearing Trees	4	0	4
<i>Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture. Farms may be in more than one category; not all categories are listed.</i>			

Table 4a illustrates the trends in New York State, showing that there is a decreasing number of mid-sized farms with both more small farms and very large farms. This illustrates the shift and pressures facing mid-sized farms.

Table 4a. Farms are Getting Really Big or Really Small...			
Farms by Size	NYS Farms		Difference
	1997	2022	
<50 Acres	10,825	11,534	709
50-999 Acres	26,549	17,872	-8,677
1,000 Acres or More	890	1,244	354
TOTAL	38,264	30,650	-7,614

Town of Mexico Agriculture (Including Village)

Agricultural Inventory

A second way to quantify agricultural uses in the Town and Village of Mexico is by using *parcel-based* information. The Agricultural Inventory map (Map 1) shows where agricultural activity is taking place in Mexico based on a combination of real property tax data, remote analysis, visual assessment, and local knowledge. Farms are located throughout the town and are not concentrated in one specific area. See also the list of farmers in Appendix 2.

Land in agriculture covers approximately 12,235 acres in Mexico, as indicated in Table 5. Of this amount, about 46% or 5,748 acres are used primarily for agriculture. The local assessor classifies these parcels as Agricultural (i.e., 100 property type classification codes in the assessment manual), Vacant Land with most of it in agricultural use, or Residential but receiving an agricultural assessment. Approximately 25% or 3,147 acres have a significant agricultural use but are coded in assessment records as something other than Agricultural, but receive an agricultural assessment, and/or have over 7 acres of land in production. Accessory agricultural use covers the remaining parcels determined to have some agricultural use.

Table 5: Agricultural Inventory, Town Including Village			
	Number of Parcels	Parcel Acres	Farmland Acres
Used Primarily for Agriculture	108	5,748.4	3,009.5
Includes Significant Agricultural Use	61	3,147.1	1,291.6
Accessory Agricultural Use	89	3,539.4	811.4
Total	258	12,435	5,112

Agricultural Assessments

Currently, 99 parcels in Mexico in agricultural use receive an Agricultural Assessment, as shown in Table 6 and Map 2. Most of these parcels (72) are used primarily for agriculture.

Table 6: Parcels Receiving an Agricultural Assessment, Town Including Village			
	Number of Parcels	Parcel Acres	Farmland Acres
Used Primarily for Agriculture	72	4,754	2,386
Includes Significant Agricultural Use	25	1,960	627
Accessory Agricultural Use	2	42	0
Total	99	6,756	3,013

Agricultural Uses

Draft Plan January 2026

As illustrated in Table 7 and on the Parcels in Agricultural Use Map (Map 3), hay accounts for 6,180 acres or about half of the land in agricultural use in Mexico. Field crops are grown on 2,282 acres, or 18% of the acreage, while dairy production covers 1,275 acres, or 10%. The Town of Mexico also has significant acreage covered by horse farms and fruit orchards.

Table 7: Parcels with Agricultural Use, Town Including Village			
	Number of Parcels	Parcel Acres	Farmland Acres
Acres for Livestock Agriculture	231 (90% of total)	11,041.7 (89% of total)	4,556.7 (89% of total)
Hay	145	6,179.6	2,354.8
Field Crops	39	2,281.6	1,040.4
Horses	23	731.7	182.3
Livestock	13	573.5	299.4
Dairy	11	1,275.3	679.8
Acres for Specialty Crop Agriculture	27	1393.3	555.7
Orchard	11	657.5	289.5
Christmas Trees	7	411.2	197.4
Produce	5	242.9	68.8
Other	4	81.7	0.0
Total	258	12,435	5,112

New York State Certified Agricultural Districts

Oswego County’s Agricultural District, known as Agricultural District 11, has approximately 80,600 acres across 1,651 parcels. Its last eight-year review, required by the state, was completed in 2023. In Mexico, the district covers 7,415 acres or about 25% of the town; 85% of the parcel acreage is classified as either Agricultural or Residential, with Agriculture, with an additional 2% of the acreage associated with accessory agricultural uses.

Table 8: Parcels in the Town of Mexico in Agricultural District 11, Town including Village			
Land Use	Number of Parcels	Parcel Acres	Farmland Acres
Agricultural	71	4,592.5	62%
Residential with Agricultural	25	1,699.0	23%
Residential*	35	700.3	9%
Vacant Land	25	423.2	6%
Total	156	7,415	100%
* Includes 13 parcels with accessory agricultural use			

Agricultural Soils

As shown on the Farmland Soils map (Map 4), agricultural soils are found throughout the Town of Mexico, covering more than 70% of its total land area. Soils classified as prime farmland account

Draft Plan January 2026

for 24% of the total land area, and 44% of the prime farmland is on agriculture-related parcels (i.e., those parcels that have the “100” property type classification codes in the assessment manual). Farmland soils of statewide importance account for 28% of the Town’s land area, with 42% of it on agriculture-related parcels. Approximately 19% of the Town is covered by prime farmland soils if drained.

Table 9: Agricultural Soil Classification, Town including Village		
	Percent of Total Land Area	Percent of Agriculture-Related Parcels
Prime Farmland Soils	24%	44%
Farmland of Statewide Importance	28%	42%
Prime Farmland Soils If Drained	19%	50%

Land Cover

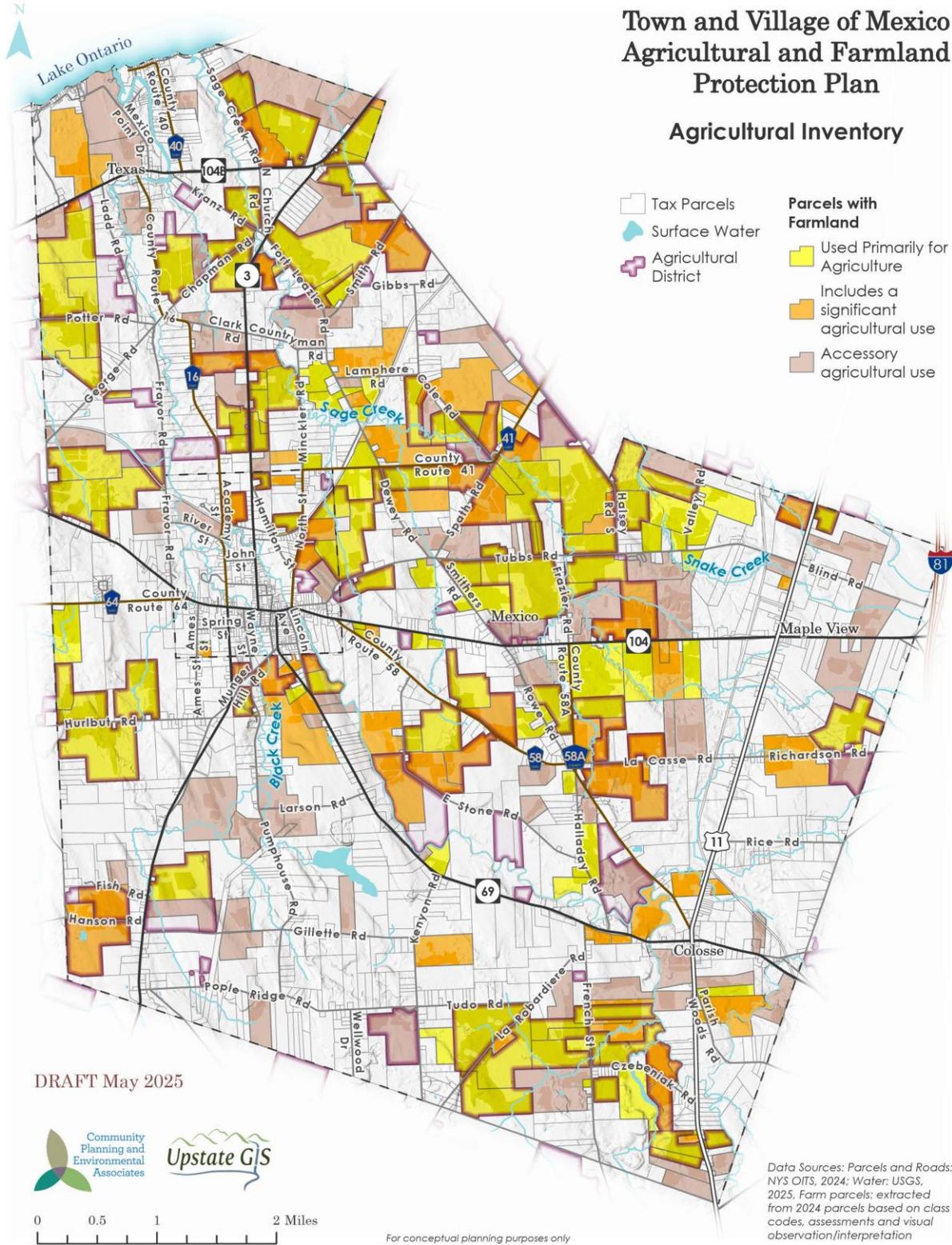
Across the Town (including the Village), the largest class of land cover is in forests (56.2%) (Map 5). Farmland covers 5,230 acres, or about 18% of the Town’s land surface.

Table 10. Land Cover Classes, 2024, Town and Village of Mexico			
Land Cover	Acres	Percent	Notes
Tree Canopy	16,677	56.2%	Land cover is determined by combining NOAA's high-resolution CCAP tree cover and impervious surface raster data with NYS building footprints, USGS NHD high-resolution surface water, and NYS DEC informational wetlands layer. Ag land was determined from manual digitizing of 2024 NAIP USDA imagery, as well as some refinements to other land cover types.
Farmland	5,230	17.6%	
Low Vegetation	3,213	10.8%	
Forested Wetland	1,480	5.0%	
Scrubland	1,210	4.1%	
Wetland	706	2.4%	
Impervious	670	2.3%	
Water	258	0.9%	
Structures	176	0.6%	
Barren	59	0.2%	



Town and Village of Mexico Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan

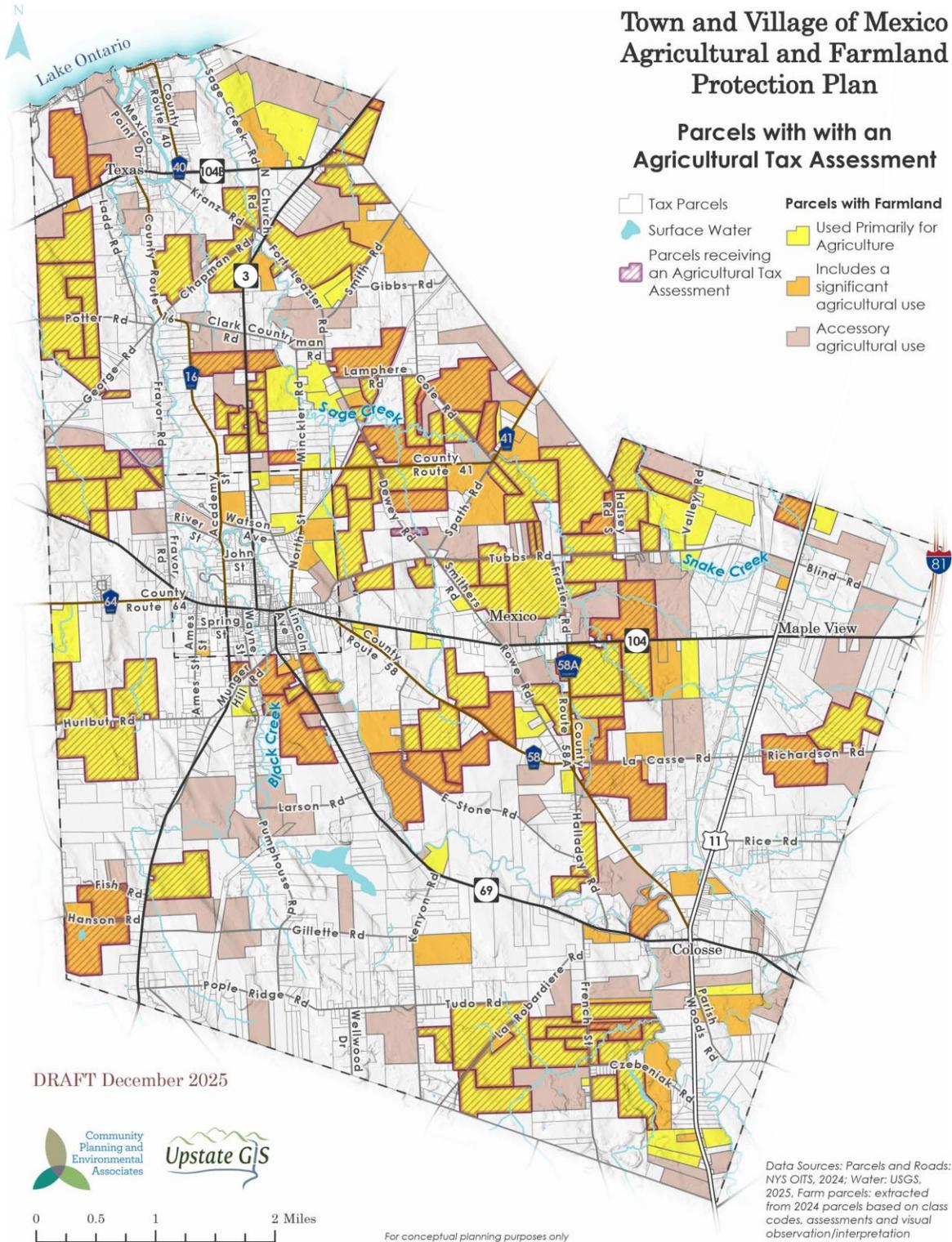
Agricultural Inventory



Map 1

Town and Village of Mexico Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan

Parcels with with an Agricultural Tax Assessment



DRAFT December 2025

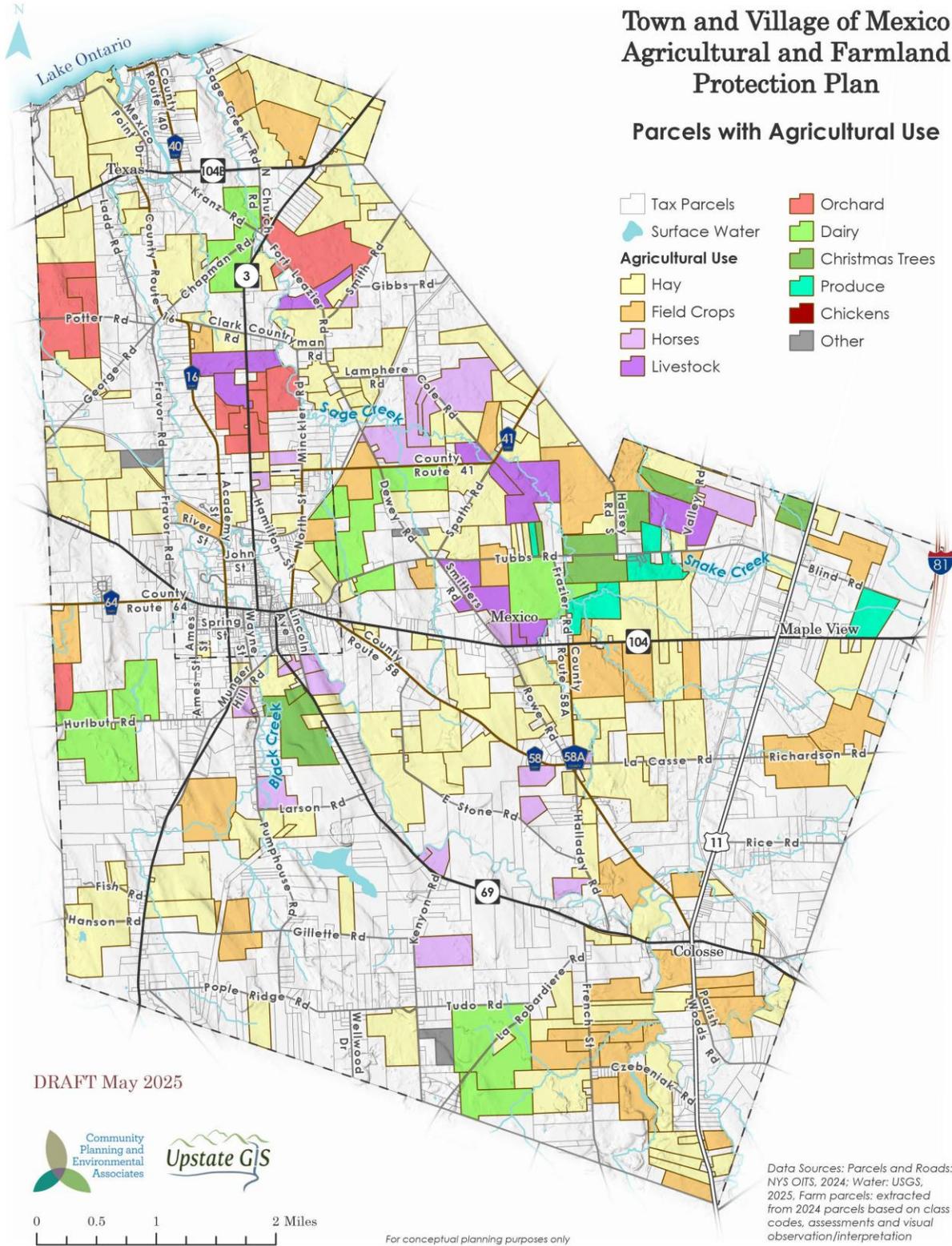


For conceptual planning purposes only

Map 2

Town and Village of Mexico Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan

Parcels with Agricultural Use



DRAFT May 2025



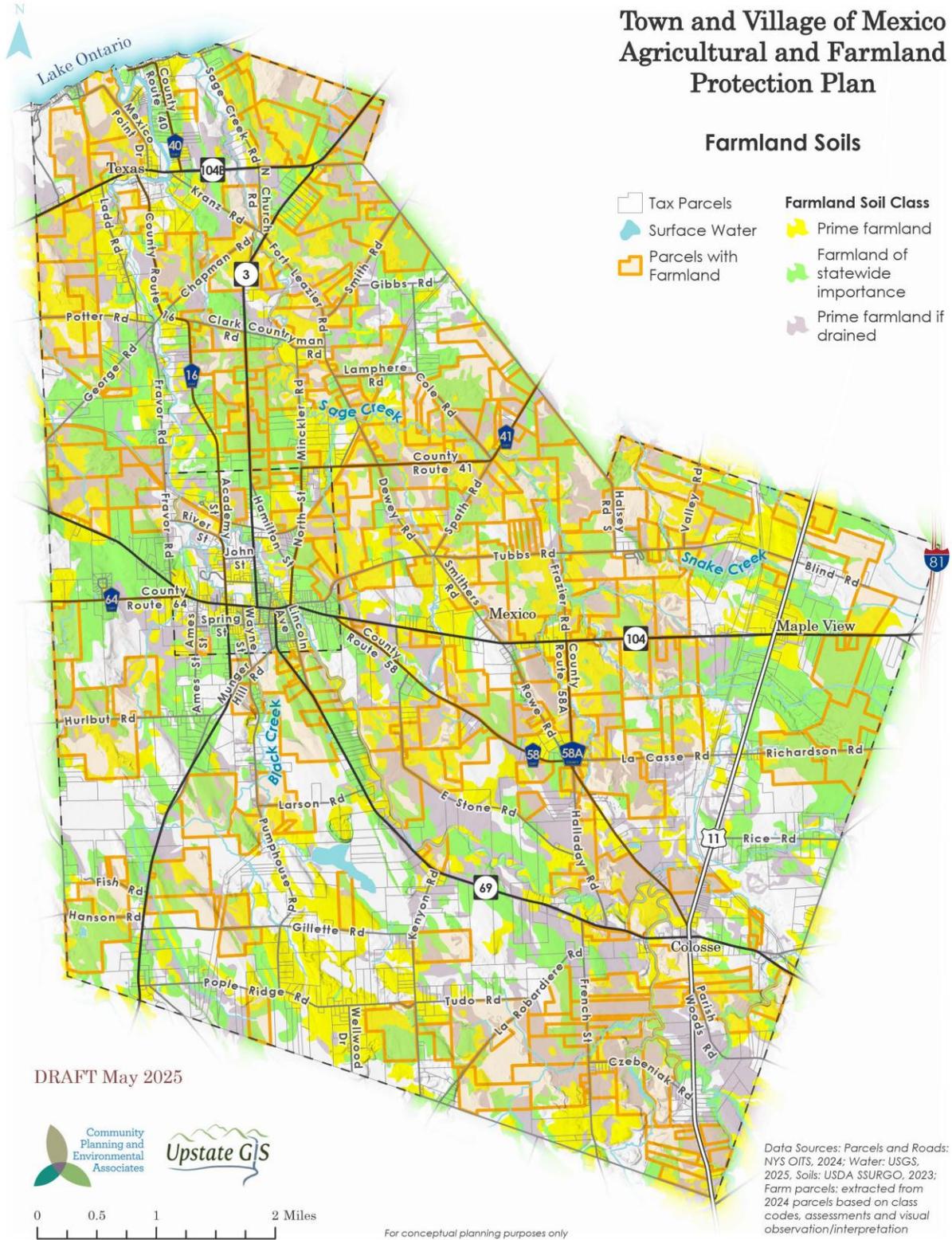
For conceptual planning purposes only

Map 3

Town and Village of Mexico Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan

Farmland Soils

-  Tax Parcels
-  Surface Water
-  Parcels with Farmland
-  Prime farmland
-  Farmland of statewide importance
-  Prime farmland if drained



DRAFT May 2025

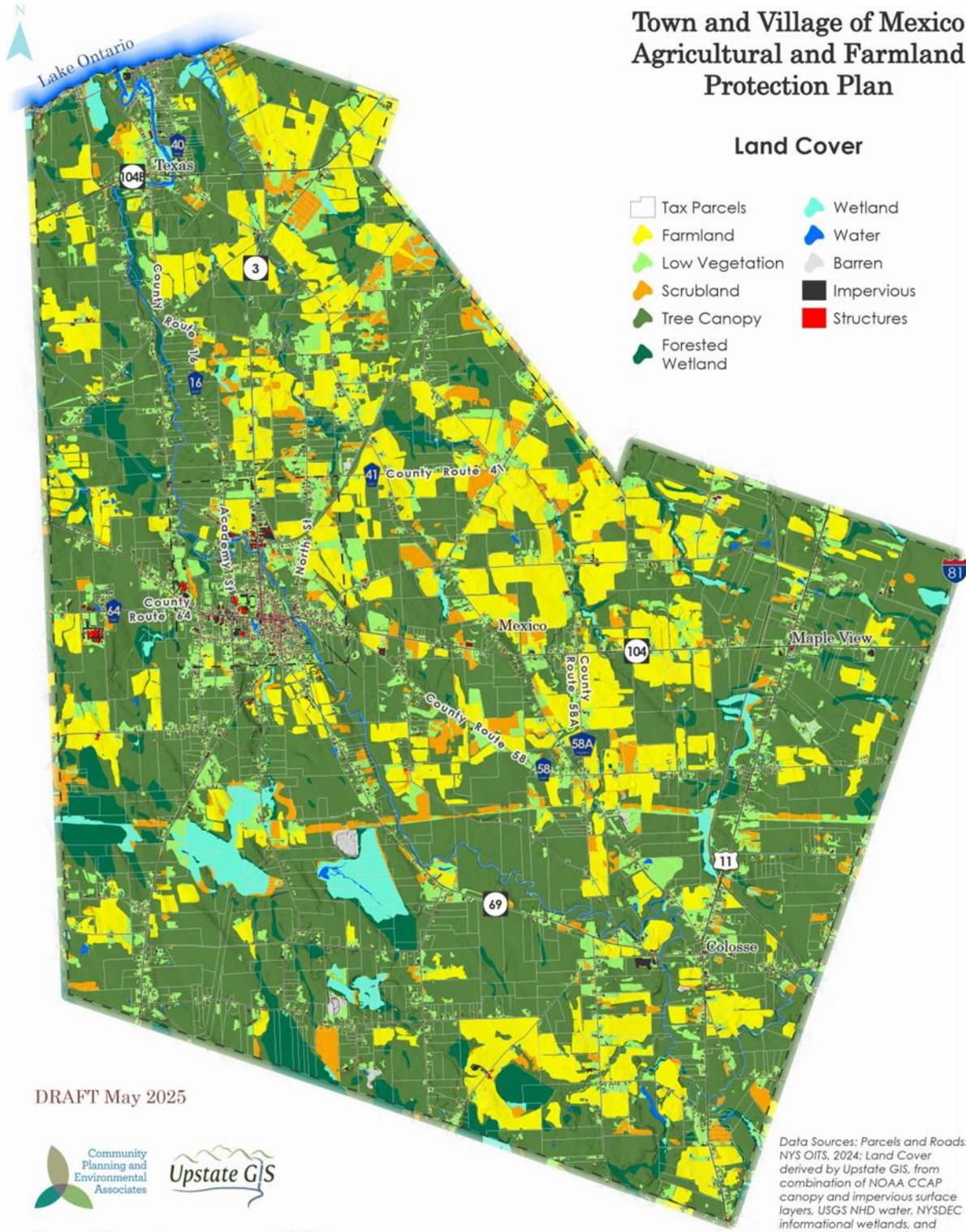


For conceptual planning purposes only

Data Sources: Parcels and Roads: NYS OITS, 2024; Water: USGS, 2025; Soils: USDA SSURGO, 2023; Farm parcels: extracted from 2024 parcels based on class codes, assessments and visual observation/interpretation

Map 4

Town and Village of Mexico Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan



DRAFT May 2025



For conceptual planning purposes only

Data Sources: Parcels and Roads: NYS OITS, 2024; Land Cover derived by Upstate GIS, from combination of NOAA CCAP canopy and impervious surface layers, USGS NHD water, NYSDEC informational wetlands, and interpretation from USDA NAIP imagery

Map 5

Agriculture in the Village of Mexico

Agricultural Inventory

The Agricultural Inventory map for the Village (Map 6) shows where agricultural activity is taking place in that municipality based on a combination of real property tax data, remote analysis, visual assessment, and local knowledge. Farms are concentrated in the north and northeastern sides of the Village.

Land in agriculture covers approximately 337 acres in the Village, as indicated in Table 10. Of this amount, about 100 acres are used primarily for agriculture. These parcels are classified by the local assessor as Agricultural (i.e., 100 property type classification codes in the assessment manual), Vacant Land with most of it in agricultural use, or Residential but receiving an agricultural assessment. Approximately 107 acres have a significant agricultural use but are coded in assessment records as something other than Agricultural, but receive an agricultural assessment, and/or have over 7 acres of land in production. Accessory agricultural use covers the remaining 129 acres (4 parcels) determined to have some agricultural use.

Table 11: Agricultural Inventory, Village			
	Number of Parcels	Parcel Acres	Farmland Acres
Used Primarily for Agriculture	6	99.6	71.7
Includes Significant Agricultural Use	5	107.3	77.6
Accessory Agricultural Use	4	129.6	41.4
Total	15	337	191

New York State Agricultural District

Oswego County’s Agricultural District 11 encompasses approximately 169.9 acres across 7 parcels in the Village. The district covers a total of 201 acres (11 parcels). About 85% of the parcels within Agricultural District 11 have agricultural activities taking place, covering about 13% of the total land base in the Village. Oswego District 11 covers 201 acres or 15% of the village.



Table 12: Village Parcels in County Agricultural District 11				
Land Uses of Parcels in the Agricultural District	Number of Parcels	Parcel Acres	Percent of District	Notes
Agricultural	4	80.0	40%	Oswego District 11 covers 201 acres or 15% of the village. 85% of the parcel acreage within the district is either Agricultural or Residential, with Agricultural parcels
Residential with Agricultural	3	89.9	45%	
Residential	2	15.0	7%	
Vacant	2	15.7	8%	
Total	11	201		

Agricultural Assessment

No parcels within the Village receive an agricultural assessment.

Agricultural Use

As illustrated in Table 13 and on the Parcels in Agricultural Use Map (Map 7), hay accounts for 157 acres or almost half of the land in agricultural use in the Village. Field crops are grown on 61 acres, or 40% of the farmed acreage, while dairy production covers 13 acres, or 11%. The Village of Mexico also has 3 parcels and 105 acres covered by horse farms.

Table 13: Parcels with Agricultural Use, Village			
	Number of Parcels	Parcel Acres	Farmland Acres
Hay	8	157.4	107.6
Field Crops	3	61.3	40.2
Horses	3	104.9	32.2
Dairy	1	12.9	10.8
Total	15	337	191

Agricultural Soils

As shown on the Farmland Soils map (Map 8), agricultural soils are found throughout the Village of Mexico, covering more than 80% of its total land area. Soils classified as prime farmland account for 31% of the total land area, and 26% of the prime farmland is on agriculture-related parcels. Farmland soils of statewide importance account for 32% of the Village’s land area, with 22% of it on agriculture-related parcels. Approximately 17% of the Village is covered by prime farmland soils if drained.

Table 14: Agricultural Soil Classification, Village		
	Percent of Total Land Area	Percent of Agriculture-Related Parcels
Prime Farmland Soils	30.6%	25.8%
Farmland of Statewide Importance	32.4%	22.1%
Prime Farmland Soils If Drained	16.7%	21.2%

Land Cover

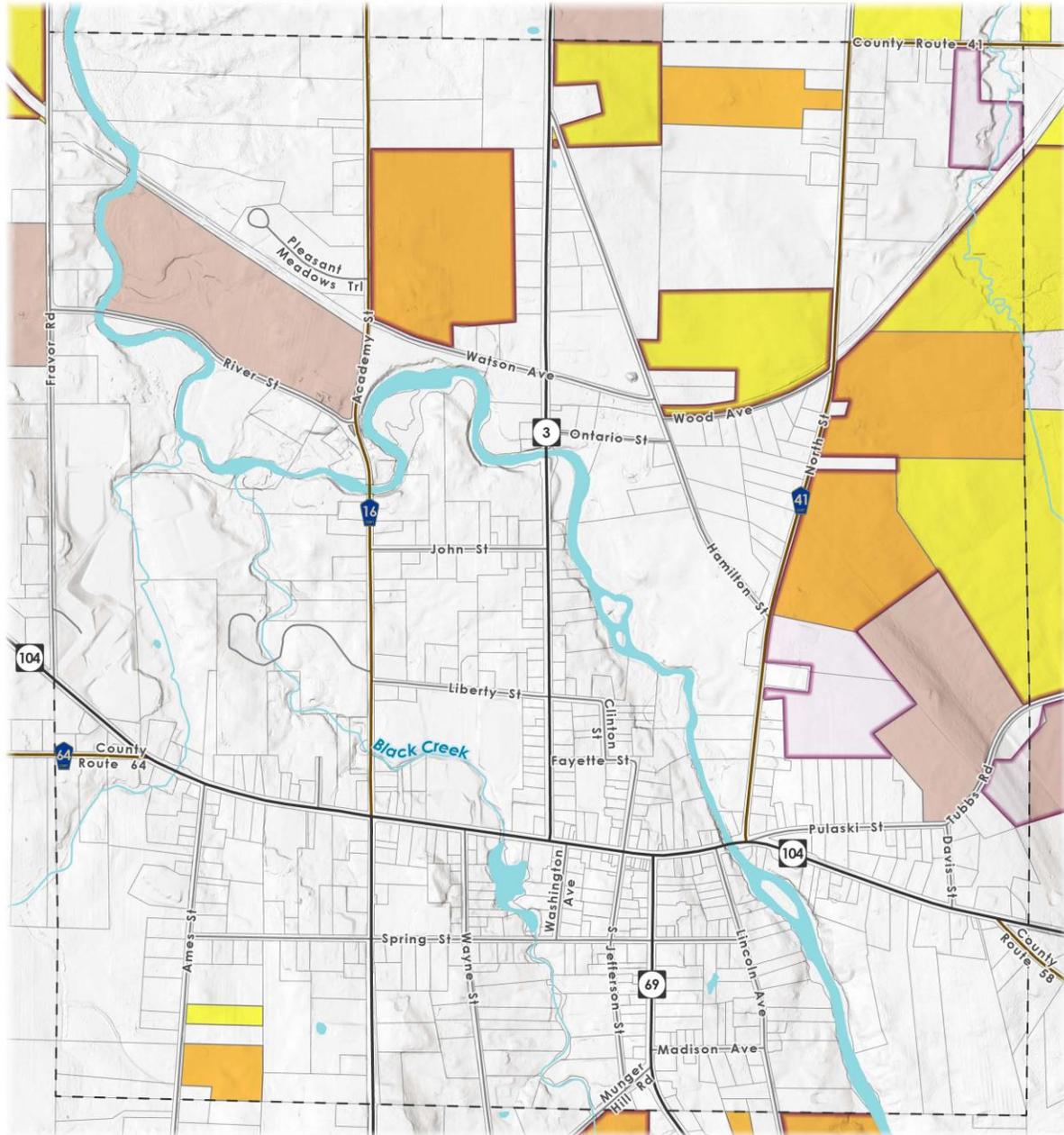
In the Village, residential parcels are the predominant land cover (41%), but agriculture (including residential parcels that have agriculture on them) comprises about 13% of the Village land - that is about the same amount as all other land uses in the Village combined. About 24% of the Village is vacant land (Map 9).

Table 15: Land Cover Classes, 2024, Village				
Land Use	Number of Parcels	Parcel Acres	Percent	Notes
Agricultural	5	82.0	6.0%	Land use is determined by assessment codes, with some refinement. Parcels determined to be primarily in agricultural use or vacant with significant ag use are included in the Agricultural category. Residential parcels with significant ag use are classified as Residential with Agriculture. Parcels with only accessory ag uses are classified by their assessment codes. Village-owned parks and playgrounds (500 class codes) are included in the Parks and Conservation class.
Residential with Agriculture	5	107.3	7.8%	
Residential	447	564.6	41.0%	
Commercial	56	42.6	3.1%	
Industrial	4	12.6	0.9%	
Community Services	31	119.2	8.6%	
Public Services	6	6.3	0.5%	
Recreation and Entertainment	1	3.0	0.2%	
Parks and Conservation	2	1.4	0.1%	
Private Forest	0	0.0	0.0%	
Vacant	82	335.0	24.3%	
Total	639	1,274	92%	

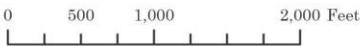


**Town and Village of Mexico
Agricultural and Farmland
Protection Plan**

**Village of Mexico
Agricultural Inventory**



For conceptual planning purposes only
Data Sources: See corresponding town-level map



- Tax Parcels
- Surface Water
- Agricultural District

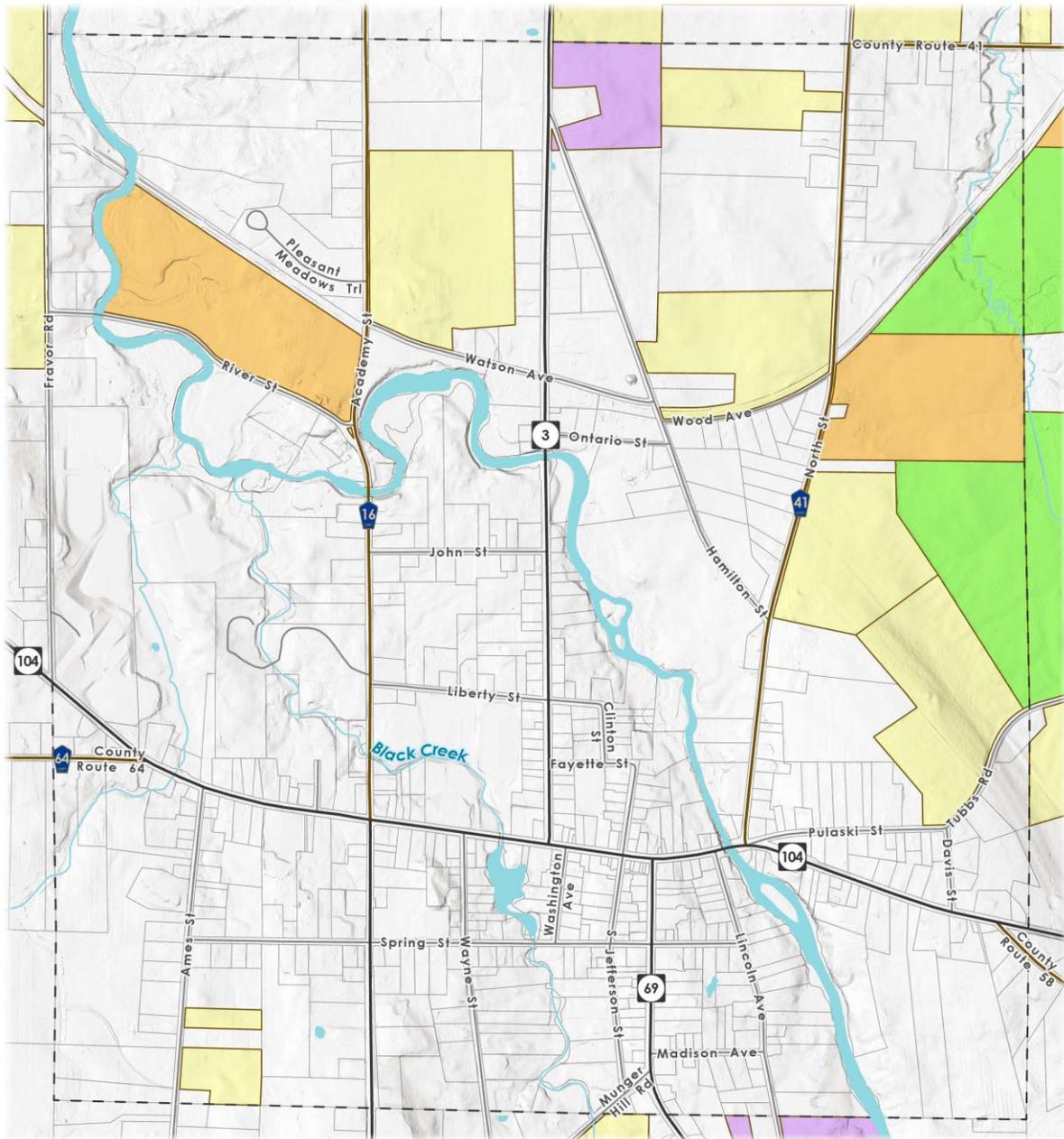
- Parcels with Farmland**
- Used Primarily for Agriculture
 - Includes a significant agricultural use
 - Accessory agricultural use

Map 6



Town and Village of Mexico Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan

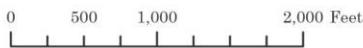
Village of Mexico Parcels with Agricultural Use



For conceptual planning purposes only
Data Sources: See corresponding town-level map



Upstate GIS



□ Tax Parcels
● Surface Water

Agricultural Use

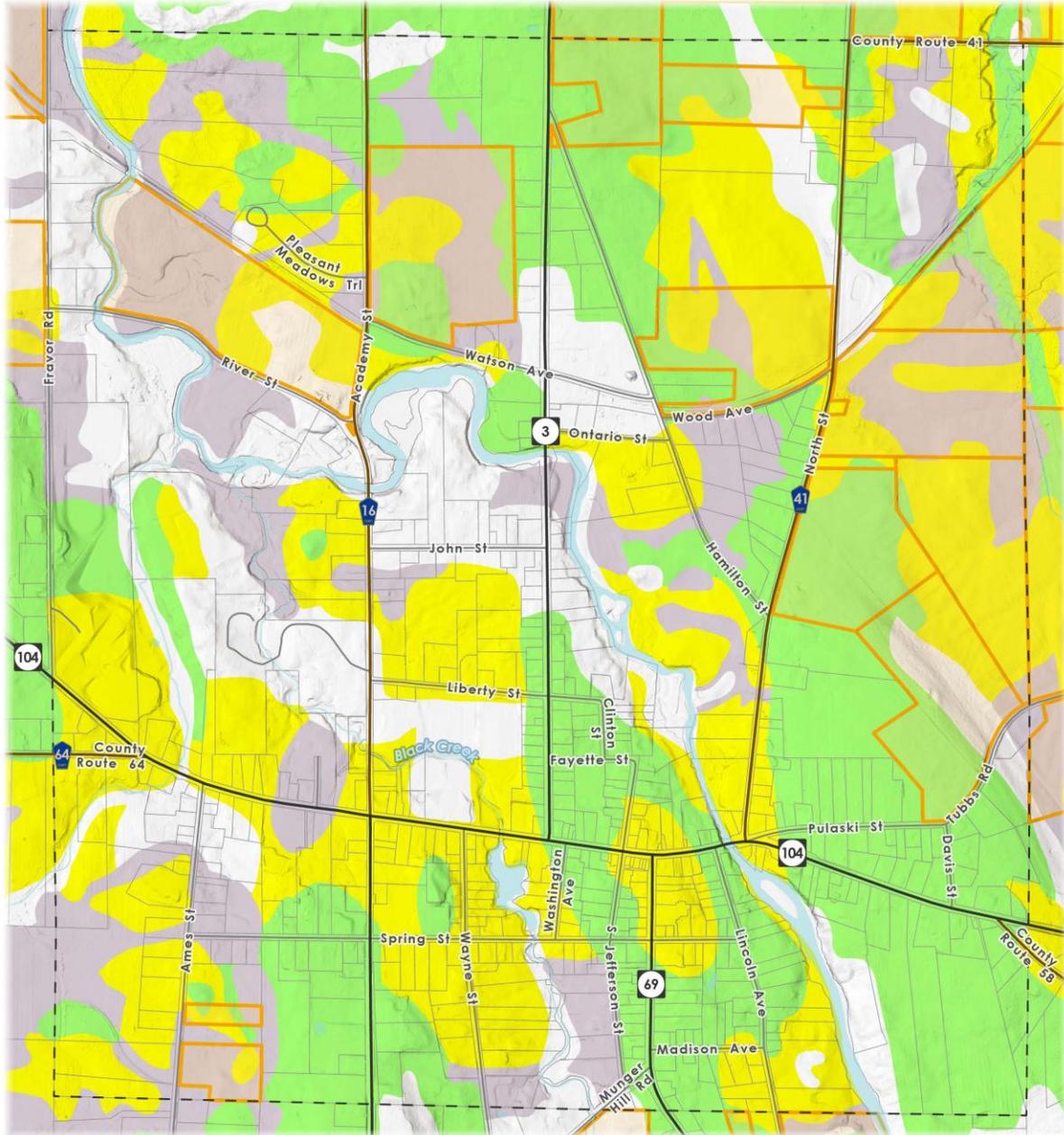
- Hay
- Field Crops
- Horses
- Dairy

Map 7



**Town and Village of Mexico
Agricultural and Farmland
Protection Plan**

**Village of Mexico
Farmland Soils**



For conceptual planning purposes only
Data Sources: See corresponding town-level map

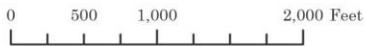


Upstate GIS

- Tax Parcels
- Surface Water
- Parcels with Farmland

Farmland Soil Class

- Prime farmland
- Farmland of statewide importance
- Prime farmland if drained

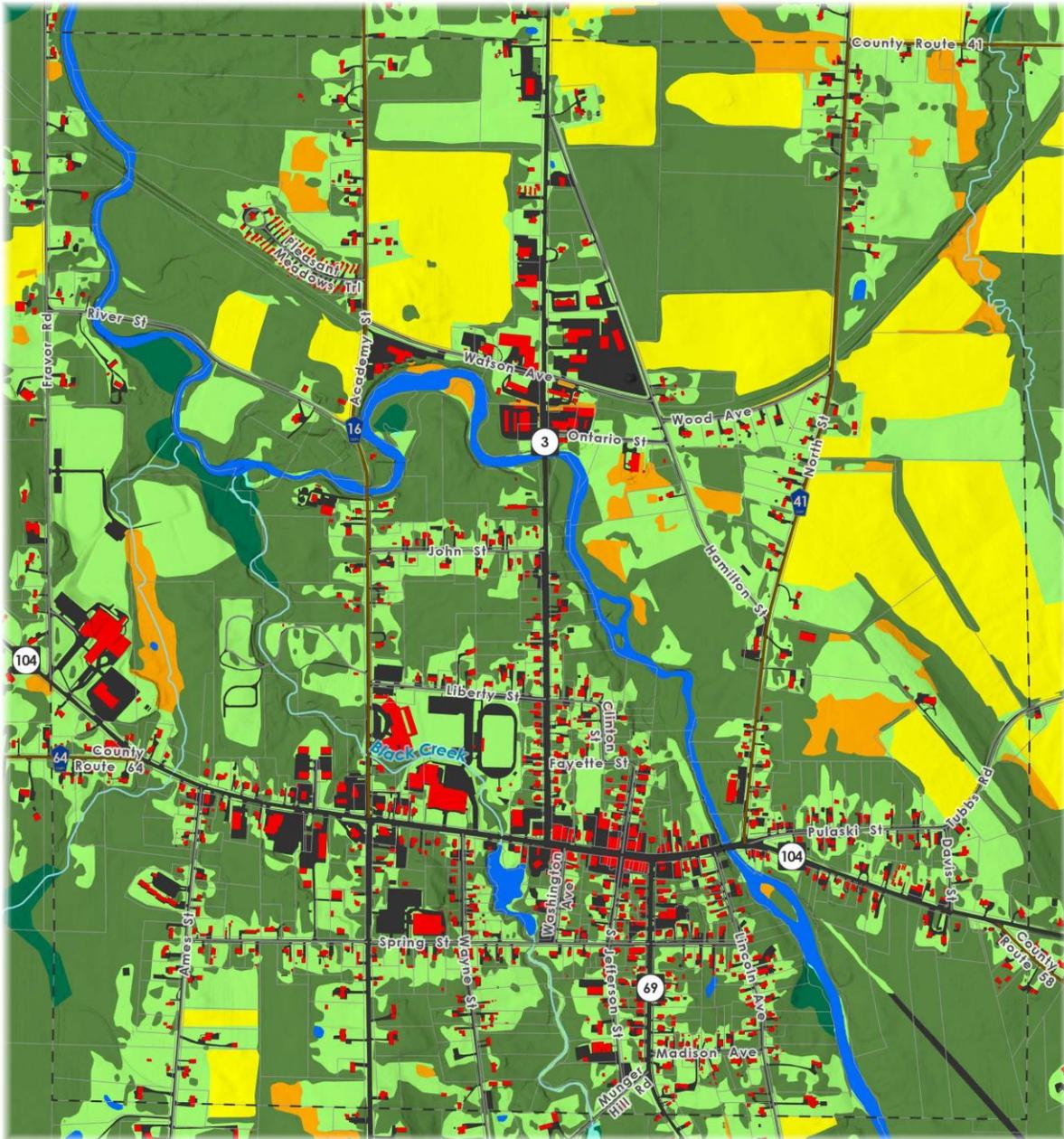


Map 8



**Town and Village of Mexico
Agricultural and Farmland
Protection Plan**

**Village of Mexico
Land Cover**

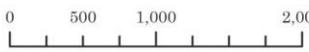


For conceptual planning purposes only
Data Sources: See corresponding town-level map



Upstate GIS

- Tax Parcels
- Farmland
- Low Vegetation
- Scrubland
- Tree Canopy
- Wetland
- Water
- Impervious
- Structures
- Barren



Map 9

Data on Farmers and Farmland Owners from the Survey

The results of the survey conducted as part of the public participation process provide additional information. Of the 146 survey responses received, 38 were from farmers and 10 were from property owners who lease land to farmers for the production and sale of agricultural products. The data offers information about farm characteristics, farm-related activities, and issues experienced by farmers in the Town and Village (results combined), as outlined below, but do not represent all farms in Mexico:

- Nearly half of the farmers, who are primarily residents of the Town of Mexico, said that they have operated their farm in Mexico for 20 years or more. Only 11% have operated their farm for 2 years or less.
- 50% of Mexico farmers own and use 100 or more acres of land for agriculture, while 14% own and use 50 to 99 acres; 11% do not own any of the land that they farm.
- About 52% of the farmers responding to the survey have farms that are wholly or partially located in a state-certified Agricultural District; 37% are not sure if they are in an Agricultural District.
- More than two-thirds of the farmers indicated that they do not rent any land from other property owners to support their farm operation; 14% of the farmers rent 50 acres or more from other landowners, and 11% rent between 5 and 9 acres. About 40% of respondents said that the land they rent is not in an Agricultural District.
- Almost 40% of the Mexico farmers operate a farmstand on site or raise grass-fed animals; 32% have a “pick-your-own” operation, and 26% said that they offer agritourism activities.
- The largest share of the farmers who participated in the survey (48%) characterized the income earned from their farm operation as a secondary source of household income. The remaining respondents were equally divided between those who consider the farm their primary source of income and those who do not rely on the farm at all for income.
- Half of the farmers reported that the estimated gross revenues of their farm (before taxes and expenses) in 2024 were less than \$25,000. About 19% had gross revenues of \$100,000 or more. Most farmers said that over the last five years, their farm operation has been somewhat profitable (48%) or broke even (41%).



Draft Plan January 2026

- Major issues identified most often by the farmers were production costs, low profitability, and changing weather patterns or weather extremes. Of the respondents who have livestock or horses, 30% reported that finding quality veterinary care for their animals was either difficult or very difficult. Obtaining financing was also identified as difficult or very difficult.
- Asked about actions they intend to take over the next five years, 68% of the respondents said it was *likely* or *very likely* that they would develop a succession plan; 65% said it was *likely* or *very likely* that they would diversify; and 46% said it was *likely* or *very likely* that they would develop agritourism or expand into a new market. Actions identified most often as *very unlikely* were solar energy production (85%) and selling their land for non-farm development (65%).
- Three-quarters of the Mexico farmers expect to transfer their land to another family member when they retire, and 14% said they will sell it to another farmer. Nearly 18% are unsure what they will do with their farmland.
- Most property owners who lease land to farmers in Mexico expect no changes over the next five to ten years in either the use of their land or in how many acres they rent out.



Conversion Pressure

Farmland in the Town of Mexico is facing increasing pressure from a range of forces, not just new housing construction. While residential growth plays a role, farmland is also being affected by economic challenges facing farmers, the aging of farm operators, land conversions tied to large regional projects, DEC wetland expansion, carbon credit markets, and growing interest in solar energy development. Together, these factors are increasing competition for land that has historically been used for agriculture.

Infrastructure investments also influence land use change. Extensions of public water lines, for instance, can make rural land more attractive for non-farm development. Even when that infrastructure supports agriculture, its presence can raise land values and create expectations of future development, making it harder for farmers to compete for land or justify long-term investments in their operations.

Local land use policies also play a role. Development patterns that allow homes to be spread across large rural areas, limited separation between farms and non-farm uses, and zoning that permits non-agricultural uses in farming areas can gradually reduce the amount of land that remains viable for agriculture.

Economic factors further add to conversion pressure. In many cases, land values driven by development potential are higher than what agriculture alone can support. This makes farm expansion and generational transfer more difficult and can lead to short-term land leasing or speculative ownership. While agricultural assessments help reduce tax burdens, they do not fully counter these market pressures.

Population and housing trends show that most new development in recent decades has occurred outside the Village, in rural parts of the Town where farming has traditionally taken place. Between 1990 and 2020, the Town's population grew modestly, but the number of housing units grew at a faster rate. In contrast, the Village experienced a slight population decline while housing units increased. This pattern reflects the spread of low-density development into rural areas, often referred to as rural sprawl, which can fragment farmland and make farming more difficult over time.

Fiscal Impacts of Farmland Conversion

As more housing moves into a rural area, the costs of providing municipal services for that residential development not only increase pressure to convert farmland to non-farm uses but also result in increased municipal budgets. Cost of Community Services (COCS) studies consistently demonstrate that farmland and open space are more fiscally responsible land uses than residential development because they generate more in local revenues than they require in public services. These studies show that farms, forests, and open lands typically demand minimal municipal services—such as schools, police, fire protection, road maintenance, and infrastructure—while still contributing property tax revenue. In contrast, residential development, particularly low-density rural housing, often generates less revenue than the cost of services needed to support it, with public education being the single largest fiscal driver. As a result, communities with significant farmland and open space tend to experience lower service costs, more stable municipal budgets, and reduced pressure to raise taxes or expand infrastructure, making the conservation of working lands and open space a sound long-term fiscal strategy as well as a land-use and environmental benefit.

At the same time, agriculture in the Town of Mexico remains an important and active part of the community. Farms continue to reflect the Town’s working-landscape character, with a mix of livestock, forage production, and small to mid-sized family farms. While the number of farms has declined over time, farmland acreage has remained relatively stable, indicating consolidation rather than widespread loss of farmland.

Taken together, these trends suggest that agriculture in the Town of Mexico remains viable but increasingly sensitive to land use decisions, infrastructure extension, and development patterns. Maintaining a stable agricultural land base, minimizing land fragmentation, and reinforcing farm-friendly policies will be critical to sustaining agriculture as a long-term land use and economic sector within the Town.

Table 16. Population and Housing Trends, Mexico, 1990-2020				
	Population		Housing Units	
1990		5,050		2,105
2000		5,181		2,211
2010		5,197		2,276
2020		5,259		2,316
Change, 1990-2020				
Number		+209		+211
Percent		4%		10%
<i>Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census</i>				

Table 17. Population and Housing Trends, Village of Mexico Only, 1990-2020		
	Population	Housing Units
1990	1,555	692
2000	1,572	721
2010	1,624	713
2020	1,531	722
Change, 1990-2020		
Number	-24	+30
Percent	-2%	4%
<i>Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census</i>		

Year-Built Housing Analysis in the Town and Village of Mexico

Town of Mexico Development Pattern

Within the Town of Mexico as a whole, nearly half of all buildings were constructed before 1965, reflecting early agricultural settlement, farmsteads, and village-oriented growth (Map 10). A significant wave of development occurred between 1966 and 1990, similar to other Upstate New York communities, corresponding with post-war suburbanization, road improvements, and increased automobile dependence. This period accounts for one of the largest shares of housing growth in the Town and marks the beginning of more dispersed residential patterns extending into agricultural areas.

Construction slowed somewhat between 1991 and 2010, with continued but more moderate outward expansion along rural roads and former farm parcels. Since 2011, new construction has been comparatively limited, indicating slower growth overall; however, the location of this newer development—often outside the Village core—has important implications for farmland fragmentation and land-use compatibility. Recent construction (2011–2024) is minimal in the Village but more evident in the Town outside the Village, indicating that new growth pressure is being absorbed primarily by rural areas rather than existing centers.

Table 18. Town of Mexico Year Built Data, Including Village	
Year Built	# Buildings
1800-1900	485
1901-1940	169
1941-1965	195
1966-1990	443
1991-2010	366
2011-2024	113



Village of Mexico Development Pattern

The Village of Mexico exhibits a markedly different development profile (Map 11). A substantial proportion of Village buildings were constructed before 1900, underscoring the Village’s historic role as the community’s compact center of population, commerce, and services. Additional growth occurred primarily before 1965, after which new construction declined sharply. Post-1990 development within the Village has been minimal, with very few buildings constructed after 2010.



Table 19. Village of Mexico Year-Built Data	
Year Built	# Buildings
1800-1900	248
1901-1940	57
1941-1965	64
1966-1990	52
1991-2010	42
2011-2024	7

Planning and Farmland Protection Implications

The development history described in this section has direct relevance to agricultural and farmland protection planning:

- Incremental, dispersed residential growth, rather than large subdivisions, represents the primary long-term conversion pressure on farmland in the Town of Mexico.
- Older farmsteads transitioning to residential use, combined with frontage development along rural roads, contribute to land fragmentation, reduced field sizes, and increased farm–residential conflicts.
- The Village’s limited recent growth suggests that existing infrastructure capacity is underutilized, while rural infrastructure demands continue to increase.

Draft Plan January 2026

- Encouraging reinvestment, infill, and adaptive reuse within the Village can help redirect future growth away from active farmland, reducing pressure on agricultural operations.
- Tracking the location—not just the number—of new buildings is critical for understanding conversion pressure, as even small numbers of new homes can have outsized impacts when placed within agricultural areas.

Land Uses in the Town and Village of Mexico

Reviewing land use classifications is a critical part of evaluating farmland conversion pressure in the Town and Village of Mexico because it shows how land is currently being used, how agriculture ‘fits’ in with those, and how those uses are distributed across the Town. The information and maps that follow in this section examine the locations of agricultural, residential, commercial, and undeveloped lands, allowing the Town and Village to identify areas where farming remains intact, where non-farm uses are encroaching, and where land use patterns are changing over time. This approach helps distinguish between permanent land conversion and early signs of pressure, such as scattered residential development within agricultural areas.

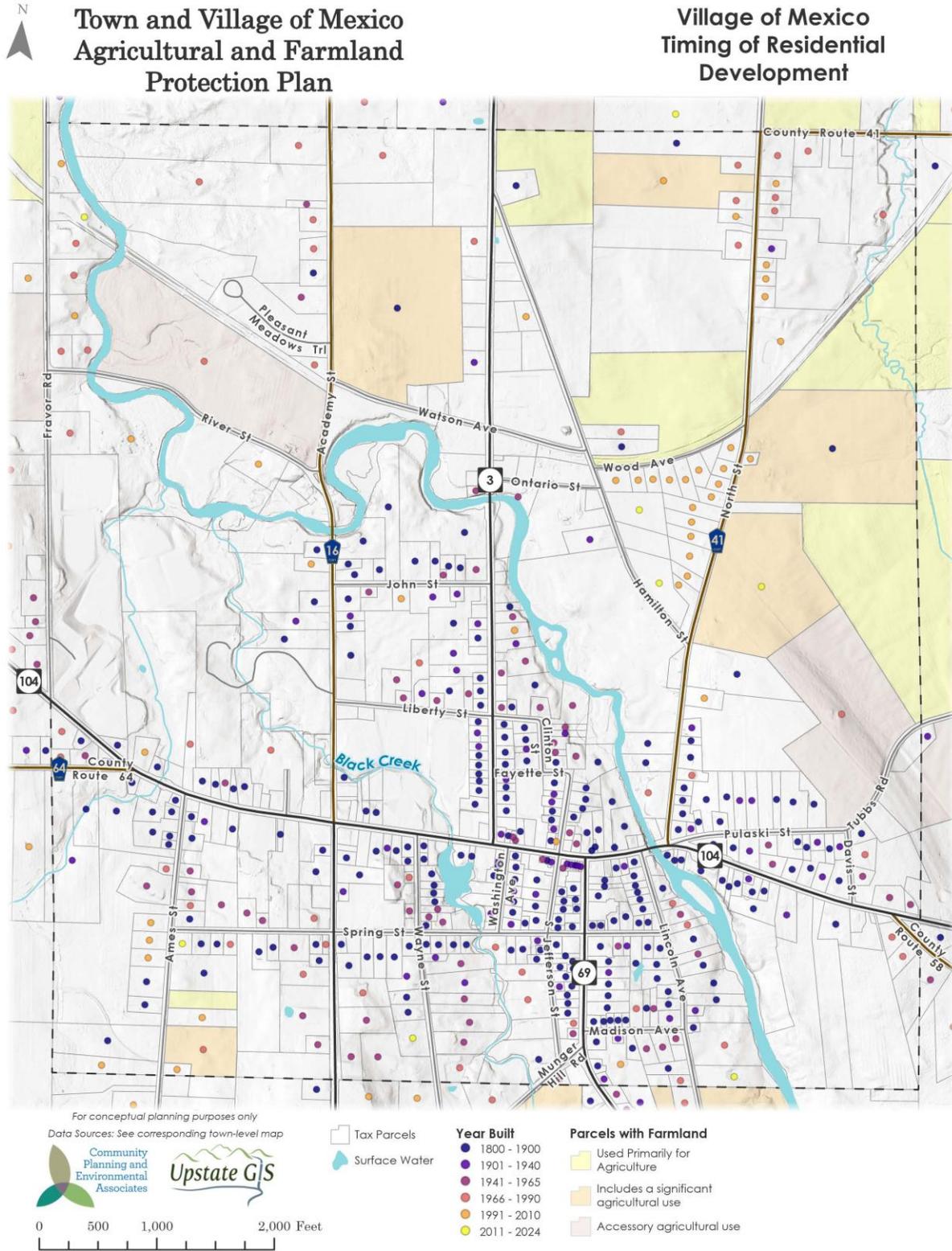
Table 20 and Map 12 show the land uses in the Town (including Village) that are determined by assessment codes and applied by the assessor. Parcels determined to be primarily in agricultural use or vacant with significant ag use are included in the Agricultural category. Residential parcels with significant ag use are classified as Residential with Agriculture. Parcels with only accessory ag uses are classified by their assessment codes. Town or village-owned private forest (920 class code) or parks and playgrounds (500 class codes) are included in the Parks and Conservation class. Table 20 shows that agriculture remains a significant land use in the Town with 168 parcels (8,884.9 acres or 30% of the land base) classified as having agricultural uses. Note that the only other significant land use is residential, which has significantly more parcels of land and 40% of the land base.

Draft Plan January 2026

Table 20: Land Use Categories in the Town and Village of Mexico				
Land Use	Number of Parcels	Parcel Acres	Percent	Notes
Agricultural	111	5,923.7	20.0%	Rights-of-Way and water account for the remaining 8%
Residential with Agriculture	57	2,961.2	10.0%	
Residential	1,864	11,895.1	40.1%	
Commercial	77	3,76.0	1.3%	
Industrial	14	286.2	1.0%	
Community Services	47	302.4	1.0%	
Public Services	18	115.0	0.4%	
Recreation and Entertainment	11	227.5	0.8%	
Parks and Conservation	8	258.0	0.9%	
Private Forest	4	129.6	0.4%	
Vacant	548	6,319.8	21.3%	
Total	2,759	2,8795	97%	

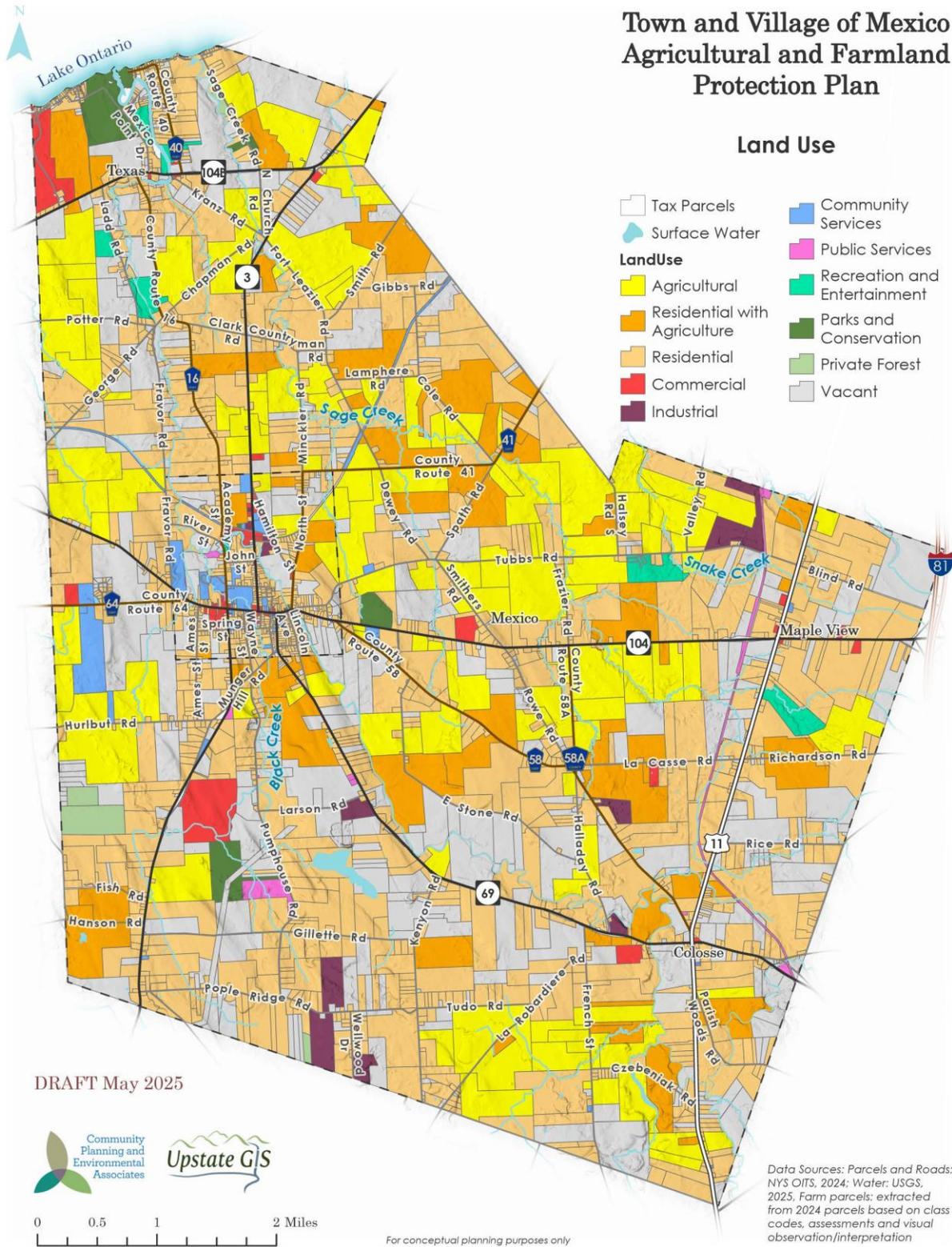
Table 21 and Map 13 show the land uses in the Village that are determined by assessment codes and applied by the assessor. Parcels determined to be primarily in agricultural use or vacant with significant ag use are included in the Agricultural category. Residential parcels with significant ag use are classified as Residential with Agriculture. Parcels with only accessory ag uses are classified by their assessment codes. Village-owned parks and playgrounds (500 class codes) are included in the Parks and Conservation class. Table 21 shows that agriculture remains a significant land use in the Village although it takes place on a few, but large parcels.

Table 21: Land Use Categories in the Village of Mexico			
Land Use	Number of Parcels	Parcel Acres	Percent
Agricultural	5	82.0	6.0%
Residential with Agriculture	5	107.3	7.8%
Residential	447	564.7	41.0%
Commercial	56	42.6	3.1%
Industrial	4	12.6	0.9%
Community Services	31	119.2	8.6%
Public Services	6	6.3	0.5%
Recreation and Entertainment	1	3.0	0.2%
Parks and Conservation	2	1.4	0.1%
Private Forest	0	0.0	0.0%
Vacant	82	335.0	24.3%
Total	639	1,274	92%



Map 11.

Town and Village of Mexico Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan

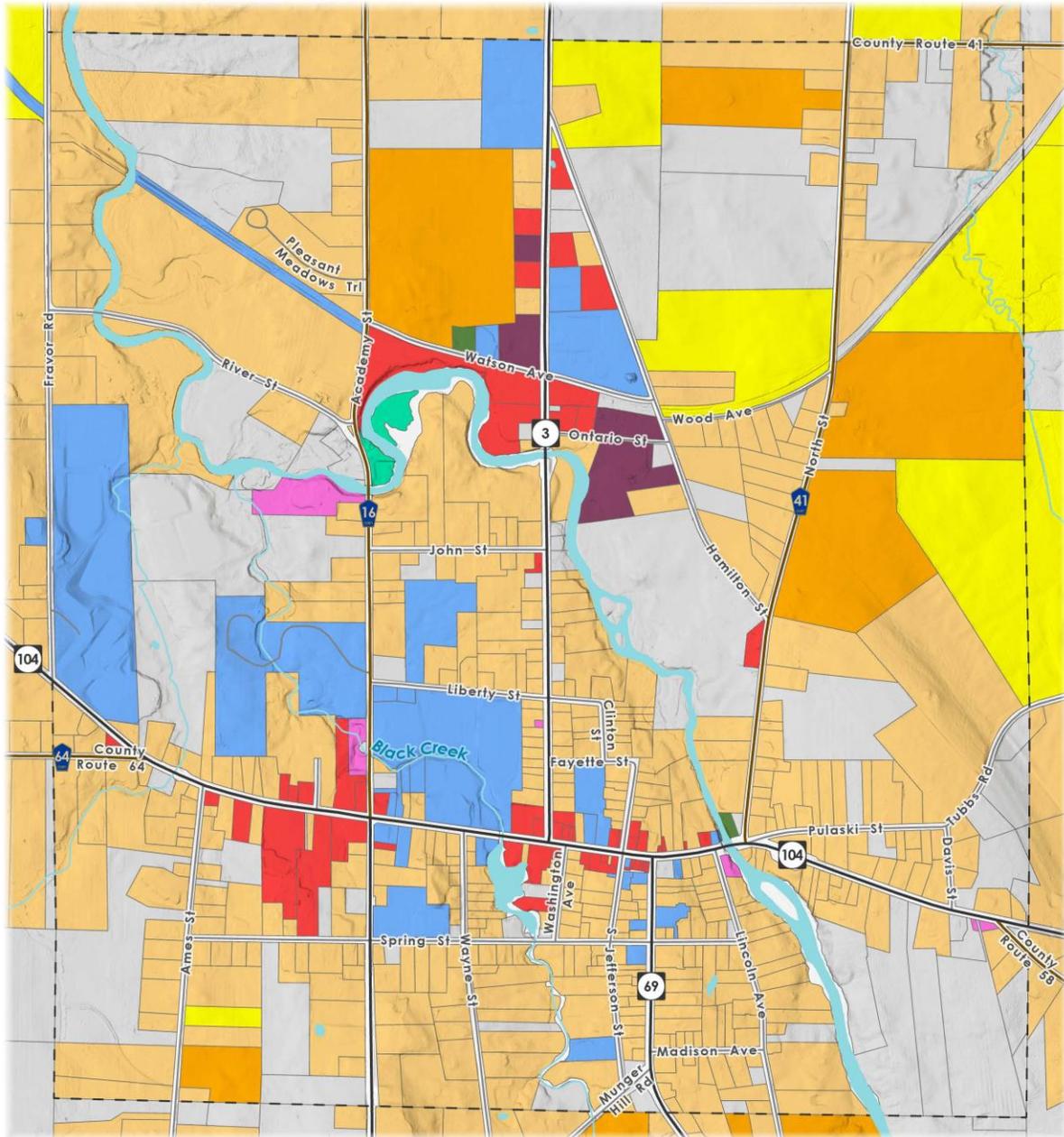


Map 12.

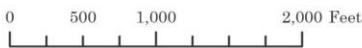


**Town and Village of Mexico
Agricultural and Farmland
Protection Plan**

**Village of Mexico
Land Use**



For conceptual planning purposes only
Data Sources: See corresponding town-level map



- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Surface Water | Industrial |
| Land Use | Community Services |
| Agricultural | Public Services |
| Residential with Agriculture | Recreation and Entertainment |
| Residential | Parks and Conservation |
| Commercial | Vacant |

Map 13.

Identification of Priority Farmlands

This section outlines Mexico’s effort to define and locate priority farmlands that are key to long-term agricultural viability in the Town. New York State-funded agricultural and farmland protection plans require that the Town work to identify important farmlands. It is not only a requirement; it is critical information needed by landowners who elect to participate in New York’s Farmland Protection Implementation Grant (FPIG) program.

Through FPIG, landowners voluntarily sell development rights, resulting in a permanent conservation easement held by a qualified land trust or public entity. The FPIG application must show that the farmland is identified in the Town and Village’s Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan (Plan) as a priority. Knowing where priority farmlands are located can also be important for comprehensive plans, open space plans, regulatory updates, and other similar efforts.

Parcel Rating Methodology

To effectively identify and prioritize the thousands of acres of land potentially available for agricultural conservation in Mexico, a Geographic Information System (GIS)-based parcel rating system was created using local criteria developed by the Town and Village in collaboration with project consultants (see Table 22 below). The rating system first includes criteria that define the level of farmland use and then gives points to each criterion depending on the conditions of the specific farm. Each farm is evaluated and scored this way. Mexico values all farmland but recognizes that some farmlands have more important farmland criteria than others.

The farm priority scoring was based on nearly a dozen criteria, as detailed below and in the table. Parcels included in the analysis met at least one of the following criteria:

- coded as agricultural use in the tax assessment records;
- currently receiving an agriculture value assessment, regardless of coded use, such as abandoned agriculture;
- residential with agricultural use;
- or other uses that were determined to include agriculture, based on a review of recent ortho imagery

Vacant land (assessor codes 311-330) of seven or more acres, and properties of seven or more acres coded as rural residential, residential with agriculture, or residential with recreation (which

Draft Plan January 2026

are sometimes horse farms) were also included in the analysis, as these parcels could potentially support agriculture in the future.

Table 22: Town of Mexico Farmland Prioritization Criteria			
Criteria	Scoring Criteria		
	7 - <45 Acres	45-90 Acres	> 90 Acres
Parcel with agriculture as the primary use	3 points	4 points	6 points
Parcel with agriculture as a secondary use	2 points	3 points	4 points
Parcel with accessory agricultural use	1 point	2 points	3 points
Small parcel (2 - <7 acres) used for farming, other than hay	2 points		
Percent of parcel with active farmland	20 - <40% 1 Point	40-70% 3 Points	>70% 5 points
Acres of additional land potentially available for farming	7 - <14 acres 1 Point	14-28 acres 2 points	>28 acres 3 points
Parcels in an Agricultural District	2 points		
Percent of high-quality soils (Prime or State Importance)*	20 - <40% 1 Point	40-70% 3 Points	>70% 5 points
Percent of mineral soils (Group 2-4)	20 - <40% 1 Point	40-70% 3 Points	>70% 5 points
Parcels within 100' of a water resource (stream, lake, or wetland)	>10 acres water resource buffer = 3 Points 1-10 acres = 1 Point		
Adjacent to active farms (primary or secondary)	2 points		
Farms that receive an agricultural value assessment	2 points		
Parcel is part of a contiguous block under the same ownership	1 point		
<i>*Includes Prime if Drained for areas of active farmland</i>			
<i>Parcels included are those identified as having an agricultural use (100s) and/or coded as vacant (311-330) and 7+ acres, or coded as rural residential, residential with agriculture, or residential with recreation (sometimes these are horse farms) and 7+ acres.</i>			

The criteria used in the identification of priority farmlands are explained as follows:

- Parcels used primarily for agriculture (or at least a portion of a farm made up of several parcels), identified in the assessment data as active agriculture, or identified as vacant but receiving an agricultural tax exemption, and that are larger in size, were given more points.
- Parcels with agriculture as a secondary use were those identified in the assessment data as something *other* than agricultural use but were either receiving an agricultural assessment or were determined to have active farmland on the parcel. More points were assigned for larger parcels, as the size of the parcel can impact farm viability and value.
- Of active farm parcels, those with accessory agricultural uses were given the fewest points, as the amount of farmland is limited. Small parcels (from two to less than seven acres), with

Draft Plan January 2026

a known agricultural use other than a hayfield, were included as a separate category so as not to lose these small farms that contribute to the community.

- Farms with a higher percentage of their land in active farming were given more points. More land available on a farm means it is more likely to stay in farming. Acres of active farmland are also a scoring criterion for state farmland protection funding. Additional acres of non-farmland that are clear of development, forests, and wetlands were included as a scoring criterion, as this land could theoretically easily be converted or returned to farmland in the future. The area of farmland and open land was determined from an analysis of summer 2024 USDA-acquired imagery and windshield surveys.
- Protection of water resources is important for farm viability throughout the Town and Village. A 100-foot buffer layer was created for streams, surface waters, and mapped wetlands. The buffer area that each parcel encompasses was then calculated. Parcels that contain over 10 acres of water buffer area have the potential to have a significant positive impact on water quality, depending on how those areas are managed.
- Farms that were adjacent to lands already conserved were given more points. Being adjacent to other lands that will remain undeveloped or farmed has a higher chance of remaining in agriculture and can create core areas of critical farmland.
- High-quality soils (Prime or Statewide Importance) are important to many viable, sustained farm operations. The percentage of high-quality soils on a farm is also a scoring criterion for state farmland protection funding. In addition, the percentage of mineral soils, group 2-4, was included as these are the highest valued soils for farmland in New York State (there are no group 1 soils in Mexico).
- When farms are adjacent to other farms, there is less fragmentation, fewer nuisance complaints, and higher chances that the land will stay in farming. Parcels in close proximity to other active farmlands receive higher points than those that are farther apart.
- Parcels receiving an agricultural value assessment show a commitment by the landowner to maintain farming on the parcel. Parcels that receive an agricultural value assessment received additional points in this analysis.
- Finally, parcels that are part of a contiguous block of common ownership received an additional point, as there can be advantages to packaging multiple parcels in a single conservation effort.

Results

A total of 580 parcels were included in the analysis. The average total score was 8.1 points, with a range of 0 to 27 points.

The scoring results were broken into tiers, using an approximate standard deviation curve that groups more farms in the middle categories and highlights the outliers (both positive and negative). The scoring breakdown for categories is:

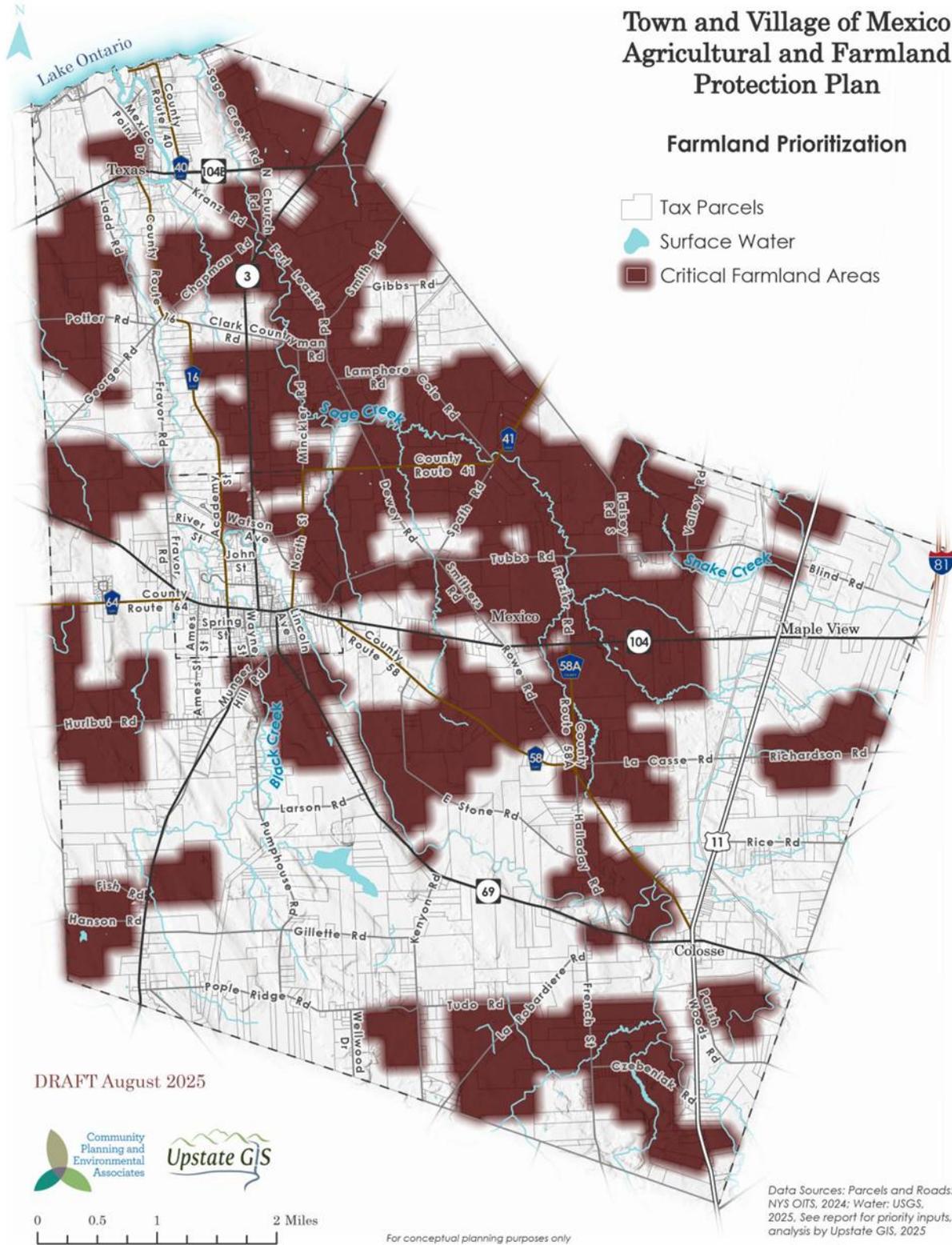
- Below Average = 1-5 points (241 parcels)
- Average = 6-10 points (177 parcels)
- Above Average = 11-16 points (95 parcels)
- Far Above Average = 17-27 points (67 parcels)

The scoring results can be seen on the Farmland Prioritization map (Maps 14 and 15). As the maps show, high-priority farmland parcels are spread throughout the Town and Village. While it is helpful to know which individual parcels have the highest farmland value, it is also important to view the overall areas important for farmland viability in the community. Thus, a second set of maps, Maps 16 and 17, was created showing the top two tiers of priority farmland parcels, buffered and merged to identify the most critical farmland areas in the Town and Village. In addition to aiding individual landowners who wish to participate in the New York State FPIG program, these maps show areas that could be the focus of future conservation, education, and regulatory efforts to help keep agriculture sustainable in Mexico.

Town and Village of Mexico Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan

Farmland Prioritization

-  Tax Parcels
-  Surface Water
-  Critical Farmland Areas

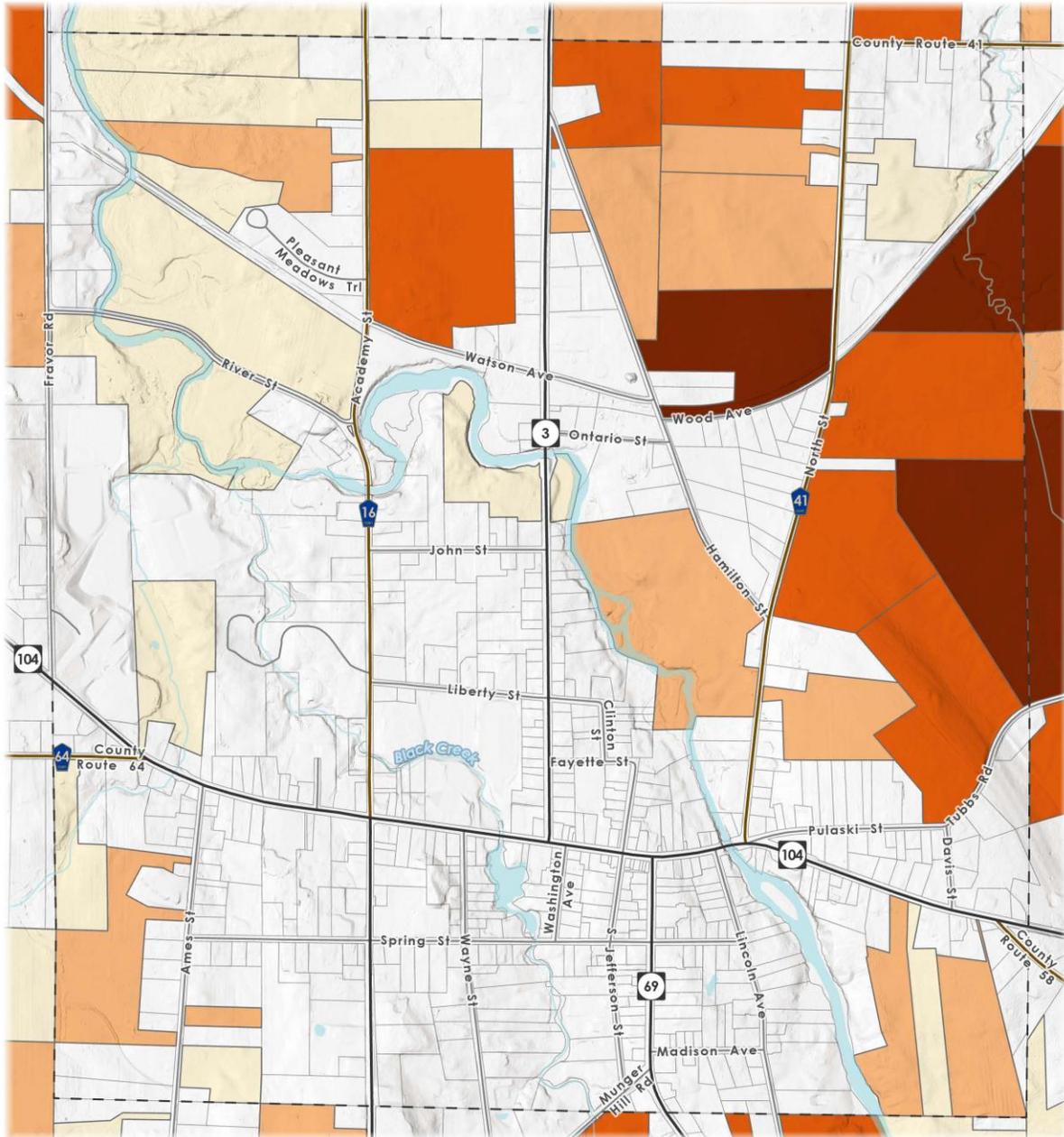


Map 15.



Town and Village of Mexico Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan

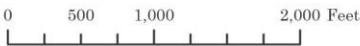
Village of Mexico Farmland Prioritization



For conceptual planning purposes only
Data Sources: See corresponding town-level map



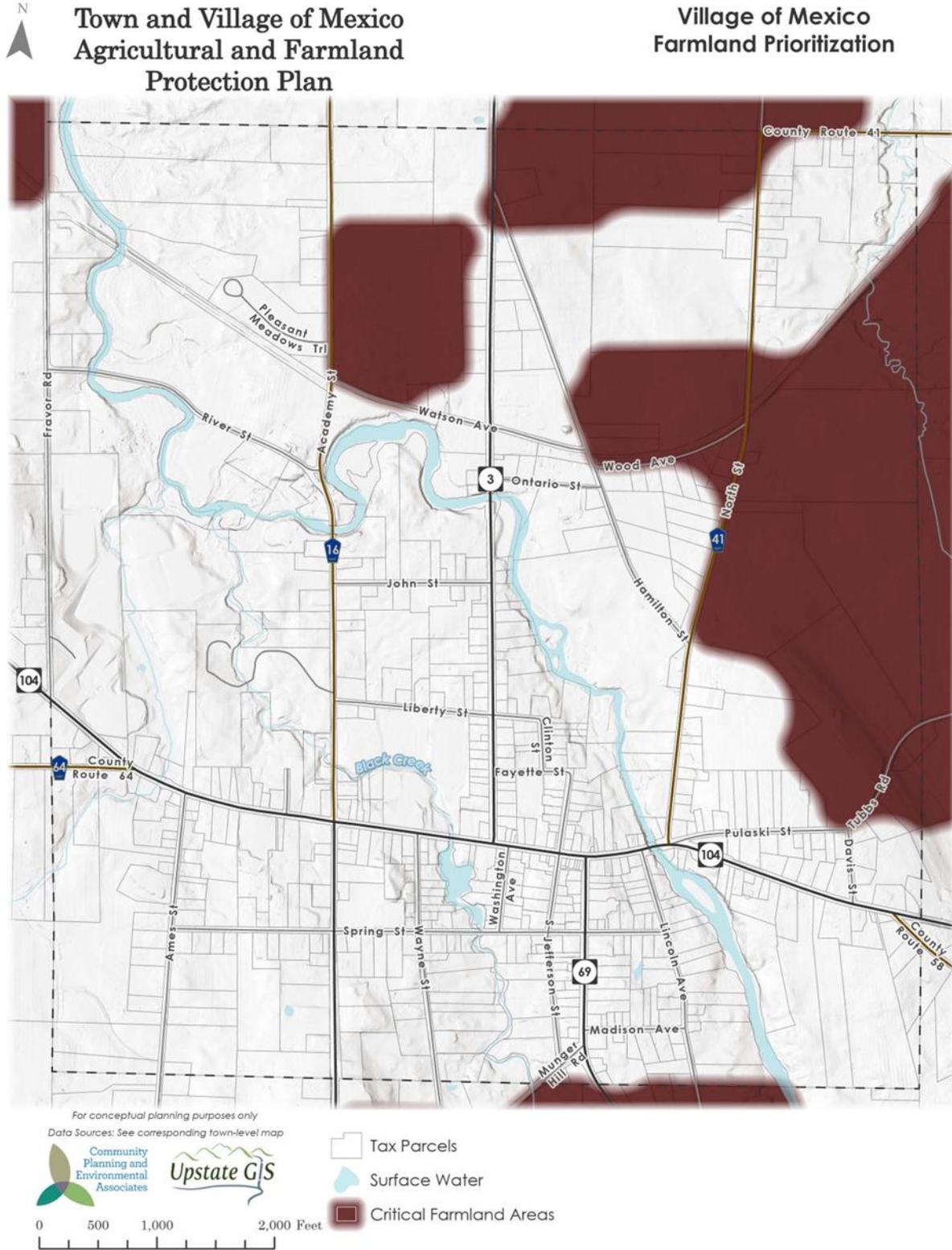
Upstate GIS



□ Tax Parcels
■ Surface Water

Farmland Priority Score
■ Far Above Average
■ Above Average
■ Average
■ Below Average

Map 16.



Map 17.

Agricultural Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) facing agriculture in the Town and Village of Mexico were identified throughout the planning process. This was based on the data collected, as well as the stakeholder interviews, surveys, and meetings. The “SWOT” provides a way to distill the information collected, and it serves as a foundation for proposed strategies and actions in this Plan.

The diagram below summarizes the SWOT. See Appendix 4 for more details.

<p>STRENGTHS: WHAT WE BUILD ON</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access to markets from Syracuse to Watertown/Fort Drum ▪ Active farm organizations and informal support network ▪ Agriculture helps preserve rural character and open space and provides healthy local foods ▪ Agritourism activities on some farms ▪ Direct-to-consumer sales at farmstands and farmers’ markets ▪ Diverse farms and products (dairy, crops, livestock) ▪ Good soils and water access ▪ Low land costs compared to other regions ▪ Strong community identity and support for agriculture 	<p>WEAKNESSES: WHAT WE MUST OVERCOME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aging farmers and limited succession planning ▪ Difficulty accessing financing and technical assistance ▪ High costs (taxes, fuel, labor, fertilizer) ▪ Lack of marketing and promotion of local products ▪ Limited processing facilities (meat, poultry, value-added) ▪ Low profitability ▪ The public is uncertain whether there is municipal support for farming ▪ Shortage of farm labor and skilled workers ▪ Some zoning and building regulations are seen as restrictive for agriculture
<p>OPPORTUNITIES: WHAT INSPIRES US</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop value-added products and shared processing facilities ▪ Expand agritourism and direct farm sales ▪ Leverage CiTi BOCES Agriculture Program and Cornell Cooperative Extension ▪ More farm-to-school and farm-to-institution programs ▪ Promote local agriculture through branding and marketing ▪ Provide business planning, technical help, and grants ▪ Support succession planning for new farmers ▪ Use underutilized farmland for new farms 	<p>THREATS: WHAT COULD AFFECT US</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Climate change and extreme weather events ▪ Development pressure (from housing, solar, utilities) ▪ High operational costs with low returns ▪ Invasive species and soil/water quality risks ▪ Limited financial support for agriculture ▪ Rising land costs due to non-farm uses ▪ State and federal regulations are a challenge for small farms

TOWN AND VILLAGE OF
MEXICO
NEW YORK
**GROWING
TOGETHER**
SINCE 1794



Vision and Goals

Vision

What is a vision statement? It is a statement that is a clear and inspiring description of the community's desired future that is forward-thinking, reflects long-term aspirations, aligns with the priorities and identity of the community, establishes a foundation for shared goals, and provides direction without getting into the details of how it will be achieved.

Vision elements identified by the Committee based on community input include:

- Agritourism
- Business partners between agricultural businesses and food processing
- Creating jobs
- Diversity of crops
- Environmental stewardship
- Enhanced perceptions and improved perceptions of farmers and farming
- Farming remains our identity
- Feeling of connection with the environment
- Have a local community-based food system that increases local markets
- Increased number of profitable farms that show a healthy range of markets, farm sizes and scale, and farmer demographics (more women and age ranges)
- Knowledgeable people about farming to mentor and carry on
- More diversity
- More partnerships – community willing to partner with farmers, local policy makers – all working towards a common vision
- Multiple and increased sources of income from the farm, including value-added products and tourism
- Neat, well-maintained properties that positively characterize the Town and Village
- Next generation is here to farm
- Nurturing natural resources
- Open spaces, crops, nurturing natural resources
- Open spaces that protect rural character
- Opportunities to sustain farmers/farms and enhance food systems
- Peace and quiet
- Profitable
- Protecting soil and water quality
- Recognize that there is a greater, regional agricultural effort

Draft Plan January 2026

- Sense of community
- Strengthening community ties and teaching young people about agriculture and natural resources
- Sustainable
- Thriving agricultural community
- Tillable land is increased
- Well-promoted and marketed agriculture
- Young people involved in agriculture

The Town and Village of Mexico's vision statement is as follows:

The Town and Village of Mexico envision a thriving, resilient, and diverse agricultural future – one where farming remains a proud cornerstone of our identity and a shared source of community pride, economic vitality, and environmental care. Agriculture here is not only profitable and sustainable but also reflective of our deep-rooted connection to the land and to one another.

Our landscapes remain open, scenic, and productive, safeguarding the peace, rural character, and natural beauty that define our community. Farmland is open spaces that are nurtured through responsible land stewardship, where healthy soils and clean water are protected for generations to come. A variety of crops, animals, and farm types – from traditional operations to small-scale and specialty producers – thrives alongside agritourism, value-added ventures, and on-farm enterprises that strengthen farm incomes and create meaningful jobs.

Farms are well-maintained and inviting, contributing to the visual character of our countryside and village outskirts, and drawing visitors and residents alike into a deeper appreciation of the agricultural way of life. Farming in Mexico is well-promoted, visible, and respected. It is celebrated through markets, events, school programs, and partnerships that build public understanding and support.

Young people see a future in agriculture. Experienced farm operators and supportive networks mentor young farmers to help the next generation succeed. Farmers work with local government, community organizations, institutions, processors, and other entities to expand local food systems, promote environmental stewardship, and invest in agricultural infrastructure and innovation.

Above all, we believe in working together to keep farming viable, visible, and vital – creating a Mexico where the land is productive, the people are connected, and agriculture continues to shape our landscape, livelihoods, and legacy.

Goals

Goal statements are broad, strategic declarations that describe what the Town and Village need to achieve to meet their vision. They are general, but actionable, aligned with the vision, and measurable over time. They establish topics of importance, clarify community priorities, ensure consistency, and provide structure for the more detailed recommendations that follow.

The Town and Village of Mexico's goals are as follows (not in any priority order):

Goal 1: Protect and Enhance Agricultural Land and Natural Resources

Ensure that farmland remains available, affordable, and productive, and that open space and natural resources are protected.

Goal 2: Support Farm Profitability and Viability for Farms of All Types and Scales

Expand opportunities for farmers to diversify income, reduce costs, and access new markets.

Goal 3: Foster a Strong, Resilient Local and Regional Food System

Work to enhance connections of farms to local and regional markets to strengthen the farm-to-table economy.

Goal 4: Promote Agricultural Awareness and Education Within the Community, and Enhance Youth Engagement

Create a positive perception of agriculture that inspires future generations and increases agricultural literacy and career exposure.

Goal 5: Strengthen Community Partnerships and Agricultural Perception

Foster collaboration among farmers, residents, businesses, agencies and organizations, and local leaders, and enhance marketing and promotion of the role agriculture plays in Mexico.

Goal 6: Increase Diversity in the Agricultural Sector

Encourage participation from a broad range of individuals in farming and food systems.

Goal 7: Maintain Mexico's Rural Character While Encouraging Smart Growth that is Compatible with Agriculture

Ensure that growth and development are compatible with agricultural landscapes and community values.

TOWN AND VILLAGE OF
MEXICO
NEW YORK

**GROWING
TOGETHER**

SINCE 1794



Recommended Actions

Recommended actions were developed in coordination with the Plan Advisory Committee based on the analysis of agricultural conditions in Mexico, mapping, and feedback received from residents, farmers/producers, agricultural support organizations, and other stakeholders throughout the public engagement process. Preliminary recommendations – along with the draft vision and goals – were presented to the public for review and comment at the Open House that took place on October 16, 2025. They were also shared with farmers for discussion at a meeting that immediately followed the Open House. Based on the input provided by participants in these events, the recommended actions were fine-tuned and are presented below.

The recommendations are not in any priority order; however, items in green highlight have been identified as priority actions.

As a joint plan oriented towards both the Town and the Village, most of the recommendations are oriented to both the Town and the Village and encourage both to work together to implement those actions that would benefit both communities. However, some recommendations apply to either the Town or the Village. In those instances, these icons are used to indicate which community the recommendation applies to.



A. Governance, Policy, Coordination, and Advocacy

1. Establish a Town of Mexico Agricultural Advisory Committee to aid in the implementation of this Plan, with an emphasis on rural community development and food systems planning. Advisory Committee members should not have any conflicts of interest. More specifically, suggested roles for this Committee are to:
 - a. Work with the Town Board and other partners to implement or oversee the recommendations made in this plan;
 - b. Serve as an advocate for agriculture and farmland protection;
 - c. Review proposed development projects in the Agricultural District and provide written advisory comments to the Planning Board;
 - d. Communicate with and educate municipal leaders, farmers, and the public at large about agricultural practices and the importance of agriculture to the community; and
 - e. Encourage and promote agricultural economic opportunities and agritourism events.

Draft Plan January 2026

2. Ensure that the updated Town and Village Comprehensive Plan is incorporated and is consistent with this Plan. Consider including this entire Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan as an integral part of the new Comprehensive Plan.
3. Provide maps and data resources from this Plan to farmers, municipal decision makers, agencies, and organizations.
4. Distribute fact sheets and maps to farmland property owners about the agricultural assessment program and the benefits of being in an agricultural district. Work to include all active farmlands in the agricultural district and encourage farmers to seek agricultural assessments if they meet State criteria.
5. Ensure that assessors use agricultural assessment values when taxing farmland. Require assessors to receive training on the real value of agricultural buildings and structures. Work with SWCD and CCE, and other organizations to include in training.
6. Continue training programs for assessors in agricultural land and farm building assessment, and for code enforcement officers to better understand agriculture.
 - a. Consider exempting agricultural structures from requiring a building permit. Spell out that Mexico is a pro-agricultural community.
 - b. Continue to assess the required penalty fees when parcels that have received agricultural assessments are removed from active agriculture.
7. Ensure the success and sustainability of the recently launched Mexico Farmers' Market. Continue to create partnerships to grow the farmers market into a three-season and possibly year-round market if the public supports it. As the Farmers' Market expands, consider the following:
 - a. What processes and procedures should be put in place so that the subcommittee appointed by the Town and Village of Mexico to manage the market is appropriately monitored but not overly restricted from operating the market and making decisions promptly?
 - b. What metrics – such as vendor sales, attendance, vendor satisfaction, and foot traffic - should be used to evaluate the success of the market? How will this data be collected?
 - c. Are there any unnecessary restrictions that hinder or harm the growth of the market?
 - d. How much funding should the Town and Village allocate towards this local food initiative?
 - e. Should it remain only a summer market (July to August) or should it become a three-season market (June to October)?

Draft Plan January 2026

- f. If it gets expanded to three seasons, will the high school allow the use of the school for the market? If not on Wednesday evenings during the school semester, could it be moved to Saturday evening at the school?
- g. Are the current rules and regulations, application process, and onboarding of new vendors streamlined and easy for farmers, or are they cumbersome, confusing, and unnecessarily difficult?
8. Consider working with other municipalities in Oswego County to have a shared grant writer to support agriculture.
9. Advocate for Oswego County to update its 1998 Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan. As part of the plan, determine the need for an aggregation and distribution facility, or a food hub, to help small farms access higher-volume markets.
10. Support the development of a shared-use commercial kitchen for small-scale food processing and value-added products in Oswego County to expand the market for local agricultural products, diversify production, and provide new economic opportunities. Advocate for Oswego County to conduct a study exploring the feasibility of developing a meat processing facility and a separate feasibility study for a shared-use commercial kitchen. The study would assess local and regional market demand, evaluate existing processing capacity, identify the requirements (including financing) for a new facility and the level of service to be provided, and outline potential development scenarios.
11. Encourage Operation Oswego County to recognize agriculture's importance to the local economy and establish financial assistance programs targeted at agricultural operations in the County. To signify the organization's commitment, appoint a member of the Board who can advocate for agriculture and food systems planning.
12. Urge the state to:
- Reduce the base values used for agricultural assessment.
 - Eliminate or reduce the seven-acre minimum required for an agricultural assessment.
 - Extend the agricultural assessment eligibility to complete parcels of both rental and owned land.
 - Allow property owners who rent land to farmers to participate in NYS' Farmer School Tax Credit.

In 2025, seasonal farmers' markets held weekly in Fulton, Oswego, Pulaski, and Richland were joined by a new farmers' market in Mexico.

B. Farmland Protection and Land Use Planning

1. Update the Town of Mexico's land use laws to optimize their farm-friendliness (see Farm Friendly Audit for specific details and background, Appendix 1):
 - a. Update purpose statements.
 - b. Clarify if site plan review procedures are needed for certain agricultural uses, and if so, consider establishing a modified site plan review process for them.
 - c. Evaluate allowable lot sizes and density and consider lowering density (not increasing lot size) so that there is less non-farm development in core farming areas.
 - d. Consider using the priority farmlands map from this plan in establishing an agricultural overlay district to promote agricultural uses and protect farms to ensure they can continue as development occurs.
 - e. Expand definitions and the use table to clearly articulate a wide variety of agricultural uses that are allowed, including agritourism, direct sales, on-farm food processing, breweries/cideries, on-farm solar or wind, farm markets, etc.
 - f. Require a buffer between any non-farm development and active farming operations. The non-farm user provides the buffer.
 - g. Ensure that needed farm structures are included in the Use Table and definitions – barns, greenhouses, storage sheds, solar, wind, etc., for farm use.
 - h. Zoning should allow for on-farm solar to power farm operations up to 110% of farm use as allowed for by NYS and the Town's Local Law 2 of 2017.
 - i. Consider updating the regulations for large-scale renewable facilities (solar and wind) on farms to be more prescriptive about the protection of prime farmlands, mitigation of impacts on active farms, and to encourage or require agrivoltaics when large-scale solar facilities are proposed. Some other elements that could be strengthened include:
 - i. Adding a requirement in the preliminary report about existing agricultural activities on or adjacent to the site, prime or statewide importance farmland soils, and mitigations to be included to protect farmlands.
 - ii. Add a requirement that the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets Guidance for Solar Development on Farmlands be followed.
 - iii. Add standards for large-scale systems regarding impacts on agriculture. Consider establishing standards that limit the use of prime farmland soils for solar arrays. The Town and Village may also want to consider the use of solar overlay districts that are established to prevent large-scale solar and wind projects on priority/critical farmlands.
 - iv. Include a new section on battery energy storage systems, both within a solar facility and as a standalone use.



Draft Plan January 2026

- j. Update site plan and special use permit submission requirements to include identification of whether the project is in a NYS Ag District, whether an active farm is taking place on or near the project, and require filling out the Ag Data Statement.
 - k. Consider requiring the Ag Disclosure Notice to be placed on all subdivision plats and site plans as a plan note to alert all future buyers that the project is within a New York State Agricultural District.
 - l. Add language into the regulations that the Planning Board and ZBA should use the maps from this Plan as a tool in decision-making.
 - m. Update the subdivision law to add more focus on placement and review of building envelopes so that they can be optimally placed to minimize adverse interactions with nearby farms.
 - n. Exempt all farm-related structures from height requirements and most setbacks. (Note that setbacks from wetlands, water bodies, streams, and water supplies are an acceptable regulation within the NYS Agricultural District.)
 - o. Use language consistent with the Conservation Subdivision design technique instead of the generic 'clustering.' Conservation Subdivision is a specific technique well-articulated across many municipalities to promote both conservation and farming when mixed with housing development. Consider requiring conservation subdivisions for all major subdivisions (5 or more new lots). Expand the designation of preserved open spaces within a conservation subdivision and allow for these open spaces to be used for agriculture. Identify that 50% of the parcel should be preserved and include this as a lot layout technique that doesn't affect the density of housing. Protected land often is owned by the developer or a homeowner's association, or by the original landowner, but it can also be leased to a farmer. This technique is most effective when open space requirements are mandatory, and the open land is also protected by a conservation easement, adding another layer of protection.
2. Update the Village of Mexico's land use laws to optimize their farm-friendliness (see Farm Friendly Audit for specific details and background, Appendix 1):
- a. Many of the recommendations identified above for the Town could be equally useful in the Village.
 - b. Zoning could be greatly improved by recognizing the role agriculture plays or could play in the Village. That includes adding such language to the purpose statements.
 - c. Similar to the comments above for the Town, the definitions section would benefit greatly by including a diversity of farm-related terms to clarify what these uses are.
 - d. The Use Table should clearly show what specific farm activities are allowed in the Village. Preferably, all these farm-related activities would be permitted by right.



Draft Plan January 2026

However, within Village limits, there should be recognition that farming and many residences intermix, so not all agricultural activities may be appropriate.

- e. The Village may benefit from including an agricultural overlay district that is designed to promote, expand ag uses, and buffer those from non-farm uses.
 - f. Clarify that farm uses in the NYS Agricultural District should be permitted by right, or if some review is needed, create a modified site plan review process that narrows and abbreviates the review so as not to put a burden on farmers.
 - g. Adopt a subdivision law and require the use of conservation subdivisions for major subdivisions taking place on lands within the R District. This is useful for both farming and maintenance of the environment and Village character in the R District.
 - h. Require buffers between farm and non-farm uses.
 - i. Update submission requirements to include farm-related information related to NYS Ag District, farmland soils, farm activities, etc. Require the Ag Data Statement and use the disclosure notice on plats for new non-farm uses in the NYS Ag District within the Village.
 - j. Address solar and wind use (both on-farm and grid-connected) development in the Village.
 - k. Update development standards in the R district to better reflect the zoning's goal to harmonize housing with farming. This includes siting standards, review of building envelopes, buffers, use of conservation subdivision, etc.
 - l. Village zoning should be consistent with Town zoning, especially where agriculture takes place that crosses or is adjacent to both municipalities.
3. Adopt a Right to Farm Law for the Town of Mexico and one for the Village.
 4. Consider implementing a term easement tax abatement program to provide incentives for farmland preservation.
 5. Seek funding and work with land conservation organizations such as Tug Hill Tomorrow to secure affordable farmland for new and existing farmers. All conservation easements are voluntary and negotiated with willing landowners, consistent with State and federal program requirements. While conservation easements can reduce development pressure and help stabilize land values, additional tools are often needed to ensure long-term affordability for farmers.
 6. Seek funding for conducting appraisals of farmland to develop a base assessment of land and farm values in Mexico. This would aid in the development of farmland protection grant applications. Partner with area land trusts on this task.

Draft Plan January 2026

7. Advocate for Oswego County to work with all the towns in the county to explore ways to establish matching grant funds to leverage state agricultural and farmland protection grants.
8. Encourage local landowners to participate in lease-to-own initiatives that gradually transfer land ownership to young farmers.
9. Research programs and funding opportunities to assist start-up farms and promote leasing property from existing farm owners. This would improve access to land and equipment so new and young farmers can get started. Encourage landowners to participate. This can be achieved through word of mouth, through communications with local realtors, and/or by listing the farm on the American Farmland Trust's New York Farmland Finder (<https://nyfarmlandfinder.org/>), an online tool that helps to match landowners who have available farmland with farmers looking for land to lease or buy.
10. Support landowners who wish to participate in the New York State Farmland Protection Implementation Grants (FPIG) program.
11. Consider conducting a build-out analysis to predict future development in Town. 
12. Review bridge, road, and wire specifications to ensure compliance with requirements for farm vehicles. 
13. Consider preparing and adopting a town-wide GEIS, including the Village, which helps mitigate impacts on agricultural resources. The primary purpose of a town-wide GEIS could be to identify the potential impacts that projected growth and development may have on the community's resources and the appropriate mitigation measures that are necessary to minimize those impacts. Because the SEQR process allows the collection of fees in lieu of mitigation, it can be used as a tool to fund a wide variety of initiatives, including capital improvements (water and sewer), transportation infrastructure (intersection improvements, trails, etc.), and conservation initiatives (land acquisition). Mitigation fees can be calculated for specific types of development projects (residential, commercial, etc.). As the Town or Village collects these fees, they are allocated to a dedicated account that is then used to fund a local Purchase of



Development Rights (PDR) program that targets priority agricultural resources that are identified in the Plan.

C. Education and Workforce Development

1. Facilitate the development of [or establish] an educational pipeline to introduce students in the Mexico Central School District to local agriculture and food production. This educational pipeline should be based on a strong partnership between our formal educational institutions (i.e., school districts) and our informal educational institutions (e.g., CCE). Both are part of New York State's educational apparatus, and they need to work together on agricultural education. Informal educational institutions (e.g., CCE 4-H Program, CCE Master Gardener Program, CCE Nutrition Program, CCE Ag Program) have worked for decades in food and agricultural education, but their funding has been reduced, and they have minimal or limited access to students after school.

The Town and Village should advocate that every student in the school system should head in one of three directions:

1. Some become new farmers
2. Some become new value-added producers
3. Everyone else becomes an educated citizen regarding food and agriculture

Educational strategies include:

- a. Advocate for incorporating food education in the community and in district schools. Develop relationships with the school district.
- b. Introduce the program and invite educators to participate in Agriculture in the Classroom curriculum training.
- c. Introduce standards-based lesson plans that use agriculture as a lens for teaching science, social studies, career and technical education, and nutrition (available on the NY Agriculture in the Classroom website, <https://newyork.agclassroom.org/>).
- d. Start in elementary schools with community gardens, to give students an appreciation for and understanding of agriculture.
- e. Coordinate with local farms and orchards to provide tours for students.
- f. Introduce elementary students to agriculture through CCE Oswego programs and continue through middle school and high school.
- g. Advocate for the creation of active 4-H Clubs and FFA chapters to involve middle school and high school students in agriculture.
- h. Promote the sale of agricultural products raised in school community gardens at the Mexico Farmers' Market.

Draft Plan January 2026

- i. Provide opportunities for high school students to explore careers related to agriculture through the CiTi BOCES Agricultural Studies Program and Culinary Arts Program.
2. Develop a shared-use commercial kitchen that could be used by culinary students and graduates to start value-added food businesses without the high upfront cost of owning or leasing a private facility. The kitchen would be owned and operated by CCE Oswego and leased to others, and the CiTi BOCES Agricultural Studies and Culinary Arts Programs.² It could be housed on the same property as the farm business incubator. (Note: The food processing industry is one of Oswego County's target industries, although the County lost its largest food manufacturing employer, Birds Eye, some time ago. The County's 2017 Economic Advancement Plan calls for supporting specialty food entrepreneurial development, which this action would do.)
3. Provide additional funding to CCE Oswego to operate the shared-use commercial kitchen and farm mentorship program. Establish an agricultural business start-up farm where beginning farmers can rent small sections of land and receive mentoring.
4. Enhance the CiTi BOCES Agricultural Studies and Culinary Arts Programs.
 - a. Acquire land near the BOCES Mexico campus to build out a school farm that would provide hands-on learning opportunities for students.
 - b. Build local food initiatives by promoting the establishment of value-added food businesses through the Culinary Arts program.
 - c. Encourage CiTi BOCES to utilize the proposed shared commercial kitchen in their programs.
 - d. Market the products grown at the school farm to the nine school districts in Oswego County, an internal school CSA at the BOCES campus, the CiTi BOCES Culinary Arts Program, and local food banks. These markets would not compete with local farmers trying to make a living.
 - e. Incorporate agricultural business management, marketing, and sales into the program curriculum.
5. Establish a mentoring program or shared apprenticeship/internship program for new and young farmers. Students in both the CiTi BOCES Agricultural Studies Program (farmers) and the Culinary Arts Program (value-added producers) need opportunities for apprenticeships and internships within the County to encourage them to stay. This should be part of the educational pipeline that extends into adulthood after high school graduation.

² The rationale for having CCE own and operate this facility is that commercial kitchens owned by public schools, including CiTi BOCES, cannot be rented to for-profit businesses, including start-up value-added food ventures. CCE would offer access to the kitchen as part of its educational mission.

6. Explore the use of shared labor among farm businesses.
7. Create a “Neighbor Relations” packet for farmers to give their neighbors, including a sample outreach letter, a fact sheet on the benefits of local farms, and a fact sheet describing typical farming practices.



D. Marketing and Promotion

1. Develop a multifaceted marketing and communications plan for agriculture in Mexico. See Appendix 5 for more details on the Marketing Plan. It will:
 - a. Set specific objectives for marketing and communications.
 - b. Identify prospective target audiences – which include local residents, regional direct sale consumers, tourists, institutional and business buyers, farmers/producers, and new farmer prospects – and articulate the desired outcomes for each of them.
 - c. Develop potential logos and tag lines for the effort.
 - d. Identify marketing tactics and messages to be communicated to each of the audiences.
 - e. Draft sample press releases, brochures, website recommendations, etc.
 - f. Develop outreach to farmers in Mexico to enlist their participation and support in the marketing program.
 - g. Identify Mexico’s competitive advantages and unique value proposition.
 - h. Provide a timeline for the initial marketing campaign, outlining the actions to be taken.

Draft Plan January 2026

2. As part of the marketing and communications plan cited above, create a campaign to promote Mexico as an attractive place where people can “experience” agriculture and purchase high-quality agricultural products, including:

- a. A directory and map of farms, orchards, nurseries and greenhouses, and other agricultural operations open to the public (on the Town’s website as a searchable tool and in a print brochure or printed map). The Town and Village should work cooperatively to create a digital platform where local farmers can list products, promote direct sales, and inform the community about agritourism events.
- b. Signage directing visitors to farms and other locations where agricultural products are sold.
- c. Marketing materials for the new farmers’ market.
- d. Listing the new farmers’ market on various websites, including <https://agriculture.ny.gov/farmers-markets-county>.



2. Continue to maintain an inventory of farms in the Town and Village, especially identifying all farms with direct sales. This inventory should be shared with Oswego County so that Town and Village farms can benefit from any county-wide marketing and programming.
3. Develop a Town and Village of Mexico “Farms with Direct Sales” Map and keep it up to date.
4. Encourage County and regional tourism agencies and organizations to promote farms and other agricultural operations in existing tourism/recreational marketing efforts.
5. Create annual events and activities that celebrate local agriculture. In planning events, consider partnership opportunities with neighboring communities (e.g., the seven other towns served by the Mexico CSD).
6. Offer educational opportunities to local farm and food businesses on marketing, with training to help participants promote themselves, differentiate their products, and develop stronger connections with their customers.
7. Promote greater awareness among residents about agriculture and its challenges and opportunities. Activities could include watching educational documentaries on the theme of food and agriculture or launching a book club where residents can review and discuss books about local food systems. Offering programs oriented towards local residents would help to expand the public’s knowledge about farming in Mexico.



E. Agricultural Economic Development and Technical Assistance

1. Advocate for increased funding for CCE Oswego and other organizations to enhance their capacity to provide needed programs. These include:
 - a. Providing more services related to farm succession planning.
 - b. Grant and funding navigator to help farmers finance farm operations.
 - c. Training and support for value-added processing.
 - d. Diversification of crops and inclusion of agritourism.
 - e. Promoting opportunities for farmers in niche and emerging markets, such as pawpaws, honeyberries, kiwi berries, etc.
 - f. Farm business planning and marketing assistance.
 - g. Coordinating adult education opportunities.
2. Partner with organizations such as CCE Oswego, SWCD, and Oswego County Farm Bureau to connect young and beginning farmers with farm opportunities in Mexico and promote the Town and Village of Mexico as a great place to farm.

Draft Plan January 2026

3. Encourage Mexico farms and orchards to become certified in various state and federal programs such as GAP³, NOFA organic, and the NYS Grown & Certified program. Participants in the state program gain access to marketing support and can use the New York State Grown & Certified logo.
4. Support agricultural businesses in Mexico in pursuing funding for capital improvements, machinery and equipment, and facility expansion.
5. The Village and Town could participate in New York State's Climate Smart Community (CSC) Program. This is a New York State program that helps local governments take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate. Specifically related to agriculture, the CSC includes policies for local food systems. Local governments can implement policies for local food systems to address food insecurity, promote public health, support economic and community development, and improve the rural environment. Increasing the availability of local foods is also an important strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the long-distance transport of food into a region. Specific actions taken locally earn points – the higher the score the community gets, the greater the technical and funding assistance. The program offers grants, rebates for electric vehicles, and free technical assistance. The launch of the Mexico Farmers' Market is an action that could already earn points in the program.
6. Work with NRCS, CCE Oswego, and Oswego County SWCD to promote climate-smart farming practices like cover cropping and diversified planning to manage late frosts, wet springs, and extreme weather. Help farmers improve drainage and reduce the impact of excessive rainfall. Continue to support climate-smart farming workshops and programming offered by CCE (see also Cornell's Climate Smart Farming website: <https://climatesmartfarming.org/>).
7. Support the development of an Oswego County Agriculture and Food Summit. The event, which could be held annually, would bring together farmers, farm support organizations, economic development professionals, educators, business leaders, and public health advocates to explore opportunities for developing a local, community-based food system.
8. Develop a directory of existing agricultural and non-agricultural technical assistance providers for Oswego County farmers. It should include local, regional, state, federal, and private sources of assistance.

³ The GAP (Good Agricultural Practices) farm program, primarily run by the USDA, offers voluntary guidelines and third-party audits for farms to minimize microbial food safety risks in fresh produce, covering areas like water, worker hygiene, manure, and sanitation, helping farmers meet buyer demands from supermarkets to schools and expanding market access through certification.

Draft Plan January 2026

9. Develop a network of support service providers, such as mechanics, welders, tire companies, etc., that can provide services within the County.
10. Encourage farmers to join existing local and regional producer organizations to share best practices, initiate collaborative marketing ideas, and support common challenges. Examples include beekeepers' clubs, Oswego County beef producers, Christmas tree associations, the Farm Bureau, and fruit and vegetable growers' associations.
11. Seek new funding sources to support the initiatives identified in this Plan. Opportunities include the following:
 - a. Create a Dedicated Agricultural and Farmland Protection Capital Fund for specific funding for farmland protection.
 - b. Create a new fee associated with updated Subdivision and Zoning codes to be applied to development, where the fees are placed in the Farmland Protection Capital Fund.
 - c. Explore financial assistance available through the New York State 30x30 program for the protection of open space and farmland (e.g., purchase of development rights from farmers).
 - d. Promote American Farmland Trust's New York Farmland Access Fund and its innovative Buy-Protect-Sell-plus (BPS+) approach, in which AFT purchases "at-risk" farmland, protects the land with a conservation easement, and then sells it back to farmers at a reduced price. This prevents farmland from being sold to the highest bidder.
 - e. Explore a Municipal Bond for Farmland and Open Space Protection for 5 years.
 - f. Initiate a tax savings incentive program for farmers and farmland owners whereby they gain a further reduction in taxes when they agree to a term or permanent easement on their farmlands.
 - g. Create a mitigation fee in critical farmland areas for non-farm development to allow for additional funds earmarked for farmland conservation.
 - h. Develop host community agreements and fees for solar facilities.
 - i. In a parallel path, or as an alternative to a municipal bond approach, establish a Community Preservation Fund (CPF) through a real estate transfer tax, for a specific period of time, for Mexico farms as a crucial funding mechanism for land preservation. Establishing such a fund through a 2% real estate transfer tax would require state legislative approval. Seek the ability from NYS to utilize revenue from a 2% real estate transfer tax at the Town level. Through the CPF, the Town can purchase land or development rights at fair market value from willing landowners, preserving farmland and open space.
 - j. Allocate a percentage of new tax revenue from solar energy projects to go towards farmland protection and local food and agriculture development.

TOWN AND VILLAGE OF
MEXICO
NEW YORK

**GROWING
TOGETHER**

SINCE 1794



Implementing This Plan

Priority Actions and Their Implementation

The following chart identifies the priority policies, and details implementation timelines, responsibility, partners, and category in the areas of Policy, Funding, Education, Partnerships, Infrastructure, and Farmland Protection.

Immediate = Year 1, Short = 1–2 years, Medium = 2–4 years, Long = 5+ years, Ongoing = continuous

LC = Low Cost, NC = No Cost, G= Grant Dependent (external funding needed), LC/G= Low Cost to start, but then scaling likely requires grants or other external funding

Goal	Priority Action	Responsible Party	Potential Partners	Timeline	Funding (1)
A2	Ensure that the updated Town and Village Comprehensive Plan is incorporated and is consistent with this Plan. Consider including this entire Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan as an integral part of the new Comprehensive Plan.	Town Board; Village Board; Comprehensive Plan Committee	None Needed	Immediate	LC/NC
A5	Ensure that assessors use agricultural assessment values when taxing farmland. Require assessors to receive training on the real value of agricultural buildings and structures.	Town and Village Boards, Town & Village Assessors	Oswego County; CCE Oswego; NYS Office of Real Property Tax Services	Ongoing (annual training)	LC/NC
A7	Ensure the success and sustainability of the recently launched Mexico Farmers’ Market.	Village of Mexico; Market Manager, Farmers Market Committee	Farmers, CCE Oswego, Oswego County Tourism; local sponsors; school; community organizations	Short	LC/G

Draft Plan January 2026

Goal	Priority Action	Responsible Party	Potential Partners	Timeline	Funding (1)
A12	Urge the state to pursue agricultural assessment reforms.	Town Board; Village Board	All local and county farm-related organizations; local legislators	Ongoing	LC/NC
B1	Update zoning and other land use regulations to optimize their farm-friendliness.	Town Board; Village Board; Planning Board	Agricultural Advisory Committee; County Planning Dept.; NYS Dept. of Agriculture & Markets; legal counsel	Mid-term	LC
B5	Seek funding and work with land conservation organizations to secure affordable farmland.	Town Board; Village Board; Agricultural Advisory Committee	Tug Hill Tomorrow; other land trusts; NYS Dept. of Agriculture & Markets; USDA NRCS	Mid- to Long-term	G
B8	Encourage landowners to participate in lease-to-own initiatives for young farmers.	Agricultural Advisory Committee	CCE Oswego; land trusts; Farm Credit East; USDA Farm Service Agency	Mid-term)	LC/G
C1	Facilitate the development of an educational pipeline introducing students to agriculture.	Agricultural Advisory Committee; Mexico Central School District	Local farmers; CCE Oswego, Workforce Development; CiTi BOCES	Immediate to Short-term	LC/G
C5	Establish a mentoring or shared apprenticeship/internship program for new and young farmers.	CCE Oswego	Local farms; CiTi BOCES; Oswego County Workforce Development	Mid-term	LC/G
D2	Create a campaign to promote Mexico as a place to “experience” agriculture.	Town & Village Boards, Agricultural Advisory Committee	Oswego County Tourism; Mexico Chamber of Commerce; farmers; local businesses	Short-term to Mid-term	LC/G

Draft Plan January 2026

Goal	Priority Action	Responsible Party	Potential Partners	Timeline	Funding (1)
D4	Encourage County and regional tourism agencies to promote agriculture.	Town & Village Boards, Agricultural Advisory Committee	Oswego County Tourism; Tug Hill Commission; regional tourism organizations	Immediate and ongoing	LC/NC
D5	Create annual events celebrating local agriculture, including regional partnerships.	Town and Village of Mexico; Agricultural Advisory Committee	Neighboring towns; Mexico CSD; community organizations; farmers	Ongoing (annual)	LC/G
E4	Support agricultural businesses in pursuing funding for capital improvements.	Town & Village Boards, Agricultural Advisory Committee	CCE Oswego; Oswego County IDA; USDA programs; NYS grant programs	Ongoing	G
E9	Develop a directory of agricultural and non-agricultural technical assistance providers.	Agricultural Advisory Committee	CCE Oswego; Oswego County Planning Dept.; NYS agencies	Short-term	LC
E9	Develop a network of farm support service providers.	Agricultural Advisory Committee	Local trades; Chambers of Commerce; all farm organizations	Mid-term	LC
E10	Encourage farmers to join producer organizations and collaborative networks.	Agricultural Advisory Committee	CCE Oswego; regional producer groups; marketing cooperatives	Ongoing	LC/NC
E11	Update the County-level Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan	Oswego County	All partners, but especially Towns, NYS Ag and Markets, SWCD, CCE, Farm Bureau, Tourism entities, producer and farmer groups.	Short-term	G

(1) Funding profile reflects anticipated primary implementation costs. Many actions may be initiated with minimal local expense and then expanded as funding opportunities become available over time.

Draft Plan January 2026

Potential Funding Sources

Implementation of this Plan relies on a combination of location coordination and targeted external funding. Many actions may be initiated with minimal municipal cost, while others are dependent on grants and programs commonly used for farmland protection, agricultural economic development, and workforce initiatives. The Town and Village can consider the following funding sources:

Action ID	Priority Action (Abbreviated)	Funding Profile	Potential Primary NYS Funding Programs	Potential Secondary / Matching Sources	Typical Applicant	Strategic Notes
A7	Expand and sustain Mexico Farmers' Market	LC/G	NYS Dept. of Ag & Markets – Farmers' Market Program; NY Forward / DOS	USDA Farmers Market Promotion Program; sponsorships	Village / Non-profit partner	Begin with low-cost coordination; grants support infrastructure, and extending the season
B5	Secure affordable farmland through conservation	G	NYS Dept. of Ag & Markets – FPIG (PDR)	USDA NRCS – ACEP-ALE; EPF via land trusts	Land trust / County / Town and Village	Core farmland protection action; high FPIG scoring alignment
B8	Lease-to-own land access for young farmers	LC/G	NYS Dept. of Ag & Markets – Beginning Farmer Loan Program	USDA FSA Beginning Farmer Programs; foundations	Farmer / Land trust	Town role is facilitative; funding supports ownership transition
C1	Agricultural education pipeline (Mexico CSD)	LC/G	NYS Education Dept. – CTE Aid; School can sign CoSer agreements with CCE Oswego	USDA Farm to School; NYS Dept of Labor workforce grants	School District	Builds long-term workforce; scalable over time
C5	Apprenticeships and internships	LC/G	NYS Dept. of Labor – Apprenticeship Expansion	USDA; Ag & Markets workforce initiatives	BOCES / Non-profit	Strong retention strategy for young farmers

Draft Plan January 2026

Action ID	Priority Action (Abbreviated)	Funding Profile	Potential Primary NYS Funding Programs	Potential Secondary / Matching Sources	Typical Applicant	Strategic Notes
D2	Agricultural marketing & branding campaign	LC/G	Empire State Development – Market NY	NY Grown & Certified; USDA VAPG (marketing)	Town / Village / Partner org	Low-cost launch; grants expand reach
D5	Annual agricultural events and celebrations	LC/G	NYS Council on the Arts – Community Arts	ESD tourism grants; sponsorships	Village / Community group	Builds agritourism and public support
E4	Capital improvements for farm businesses	G	NYS Dept. of Ag & Markets – Resilient Food Systems / Dairy Modernization	NYSERDA Ag Energy; USDA REAP	Individual farms	Town supports outreach, not direct funding
E9	Technical assistance directory	LC/NC	—	—	Agricultural Advisory Committee	Staff/volunteer effort; no grants required
E10	Producer organization participation	LC/NC	—	—	Agricultural Advisory Committee	Education and outreach function



Overall Implementation Responsibilities and Steps

The successful implementation of this Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan depends on clear roles, coordinated action, and sustained commitment by both the Town of Mexico and the Village of Mexico. While many recommendations require collaboration, others fall primarily within the authority of one municipality. This section outlines how the Town and Village can work together—while also acting independently where appropriate—to carry out the Plan’s recommendations.

Implementation should be viewed as an ongoing, adaptive process, supported by farmers, residents, County and State agencies, and agricultural service organizations.

Step 1: Establish a Joint but Clearly Defined Implementation Structure

Have Shared Town–Village Responsibility

The Town and Village should jointly establish an Agricultural Advisory Committee to oversee the implementation of this Plan (See Recommendation A1). See Appendix 3 for a model resolution to form this committee.

The Advisory Committee should serve in an advisory role, meet regularly, and report annually to both the Town and Village boards. The Committee should:

- Include representatives from Town and Village leadership.
- Include active farmers, farmland owners, and agricultural support organizations, including value-added producers.
- Include residents within the Town and Village who are passionate about food, agriculture, and food systems.

Roles for the Town of Mexico

- Take the lead role in agricultural implementation, given that most farmland and farm operations are located in the Town.
- Provide administrative support where feasible.



Roles for the Village of Mexico

- Participate in joint implementation where agriculture overlaps with Village land use, services, and infrastructure.
- Ensure Village policies and regulations are aligned with agricultural objectives.



Step 2: Embed the Plan into Town and Village Decision-Making

Town and Village of Mexico Responsibilities

- Incorporate this Plan as an addendum to the Joint Comprehensive Plan
- Direct both the Planning Boards and ZBAs to use:
 - Priority Farmland Maps
 - Farm-Friendly Audit findings
 - NYS Agricultural District considerations
 - Apply Plan guidance when reviewing:
 - Subdivisions
 - Solar and infrastructure projects
 - Rezoning and overlay districts
- Recognize agriculture as a legitimate and valued land use within Village policy.
- Integrate agricultural considerations into:
 - Development review
 - Infrastructure planning
 - Coordinate with each other where actions may affect nearby farms

Step 3: Prioritize and Phase Actions by Municipality

Agricultural needs are slightly different in each municipality. At the town level, focus on

- Farmland protection and conservation
- Agricultural zoning and subdivision reforms
- Agricultural District participation
- Solar siting and farmland mitigation
- Farm viability and economic development

At the Village level, focus on

- Compatibility between residential development and agriculture
- Buffering, siting, and disclosure standards
- Support for direct sales, markets, and food access
- Infrastructure coordination (water, roads, emergency access)



Joint Priorities

- Farmers' Market success and expansion
- Agricultural education and outreach
- Marketing and promotion of local agriculture
- Workforce development and youth engagement

Draft Plan January 2026

- Expanding access to local foods at local stores and restaurants in the Village

Step 4: Assign Clear Responsibilities for Implementation

The Town and Village Board should clearly outline expectations for the Agricultural Advisory Committee (See Recommendation A1). Once formed, the Committee should organize itself and build its capacity to carry out its tasks, including identifying funding and other assistance that may be needed to accomplish its tasks. The Committee should reach out, when needed, to other agencies and organizations for assistance and/or to build partnerships.

Step 5: Funding and Resource Development

The Joint Agricultural Advisory Committee should, along with the Town and Village Boards, work to identify funding needs and opportunities to raise that funding. Steps to do this include:

- Use this Plan as the primary supporting document for grants
- Coordinate with Oswego County on regional initiatives
- Explore shared services such as grant writing or technical assistance
- Take the lead on farmland protection grants and planning studies
- Support funding efforts tied to:
 - Markets
 - Food access
 - Infrastructure improvements benefiting farm operations

Step 6: Farmer and Community Engagement

Community engagement has been identified as a critical and ongoing task to promote farms, farming, and to enhance buy-local in the Town and Village. Some of the major tasks to accomplish this include:

- Implement the Marketing Plan included in this Plan
- Maintain direct and ongoing communication with farmers and landowners
- Provide information on agricultural assessments, districts, and programs
- Support farmer-focused meetings and workshops
- Promote agricultural awareness among residents
- Support visibility of agriculture through events and signage
- Encourage positive neighbor-farmer relationships
- Coordinate education and outreach programs
- Partner with schools, CCE, and BOCES

- Celebrate agriculture through community events

Step 7: Monitoring, Evaluation, and Updates

The Agricultural Advisory Committee should prepare an annual implementation summary for both Boards. Consider using the table below to evaluate progress made on implementation and its concrete results. This should look at actions completed, actions underway, barriers encountered, and recommended adjustments. These results can be summarized in a brief “Annual Agricultural Implementation Report” that can help motivate and keep all parties on track.

To ensure there is a long-term commitment to agriculture in the Town and Village, the Boards should jointly review and update, where needed, this Plan every 5–10 years. Updates should reflect changes in:

- Agricultural conditions
- Development pressure
- State and County policy
- Community priorities

Measuring Success

As implementation efforts move forward, there are many reasons why it is important to measure success on an ongoing basis. The implementation metrics included in this Plan are not simply administrative tracking tools. They are essential indicators of farmland importance, municipal commitment, and implementation readiness, which are core considerations of the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets when evaluating Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plans and FPIG applications.

Collectively, these metrics allow the Town and Village of Mexico to demonstrate that agricultural protection is being actively implemented, measured, and reinforced through local policy and practice, rather than remaining aspirational.

The following table could be used to monitor and measure the various implementation efforts recommended in this Plan.

<i>Plan Goal and Performance Measurement</i>
Goal 1: Protect and Enhance Agricultural Land and Natural Resources
Acres of farmland formally identified as Priority Farmland in this Plan
Acres of Priority Farmland enrolled in a NYS Certified Agricultural District
Acres receiving Agricultural Value Assessment
Acres of farmland permanently protected through conservation easements or PDR
Number of FPIG-eligible parcels actively pursued for protection

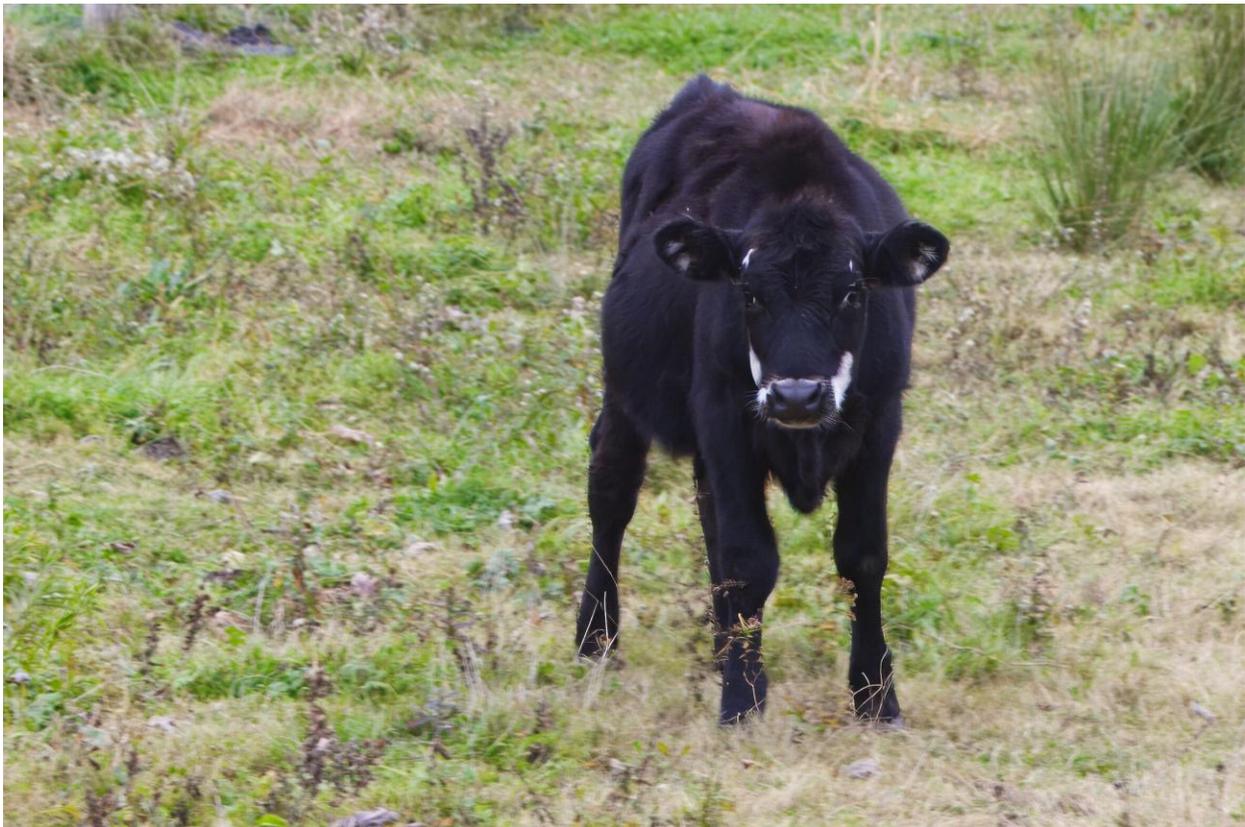
Draft Plan January 2026

<i>Plan Goal and Performance Measurement</i>
Goal 2: Support Farm Profitability and Viability
Number of active farm operations retained over time
Number of farms diversifying their products and markets
Number of farms receiving business, financial, or technical assistance
Number of farms making capital improvements with public or leveraged funding
Number of farms participating in State-recognized certification programs (e.g., NYS Grown & Certified, GAP, organic)
Goal 3: Foster a Strong Local and Regional Food System
Number of farms engaged in direct-to-consumer or institutional markets
Number of new direct-to-consumer markets (e.g., farm stops)
Number of value-added producers
Number of community members actively supporting direct-to-consumer sales
Number of vendors participating in the Mexico Farmers' Market
Duration and frequency of farmers' market operations
Number of farm-to-school or farm-to-institution partnerships
Goal 4: Promote Agricultural Awareness, Education, and Workforce Development
Number of agriculture-related educational programs implemented annually
Number of students participating in agricultural education or hands-on farm experiences
Number of apprenticeships, internships, or mentorships supported
Goal 5: Strengthen Community Partnerships and Agricultural Perception
Number of formal partnerships with agricultural support organizations
Number of public outreach initiatives promoting food, agriculture, and community-based food initiatives
Number of agriculture-focused events supported annually
Goal 6: Increase Diversity and Succession in Agriculture
Number of beginning or next-generation farmers assisted
Number of beginning or next-generation farmers starting their own small farm enterprise
Number of beginning or next-generation farmers working on established farms
Number of land access or transition opportunities facilitated
Goal 7: Maintain Rural Character While Encouraging Smart Growth
Number of zoning or subdivision amendments adopted to reduce farmland conversion pressure
Number of development applications reviewed using Priority Farmland Maps and Ag Data Statements
Number of developments incorporating buffers, disclosures, or agricultural mitigation
Implementation Capacity (Cross-Cutting)
Agricultural Advisory Committee formally established and active
Number of Advisory Committee meetings held annually
Annual Agricultural Implementation Report completed

Appendix

The following resource materials are included in this Plan:

1. Audit of Town and Village Land Use Regulations
2. List of Mexico Farm Operations
3. Draft Resolution to Form Plan Implementation Committee
4. Public Involvement Record
5. Marketing Plan



1. Audit of Town and Village Land Use Regulations

Farm Friendly Audits Town and Village of Mexico, NY

Prepared by Nan Stolzenburg FAICP CEP June 24, 2025

See Also the Associated Summary Chart

Why an Audit? An audit of the comprehensive plans, zoning, and subdivision laws in the Town and Village of Mexico was completed as part of the development of the Town and Village Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan. This audit was designed to help gauge the “farm-friendliness” of representative local plans and land use laws to help identify if local regulations place any barriers to agricultural uses, diversification, or expansion, and identify areas that could be improved locally, in the future. Specifically, this Audit reviewed the farm-friendliness of local plans and regulations to identify elements that are both working to support agriculture and where improvements could be made to enhance agriculture in the County.

Role of Comprehensive Plans. A comprehensive plan is an important community document because it is the foundation for local land use regulations. Land use regulations need to be consistent with a community's plan because regulations should be designed to meet community needs and objectives, which are usually outlined in a comprehensive plan. The plan establishes the vision a community has for itself, which is then translated into land use regulations, such as zoning and subdivision. It is recognized that the Town and Village are currently developing a new comprehensive plan and that process overlaps the agricultural and farmland protection planning process. It is anticipated, however, that the new comprehensive plan will incorporate, refer to, and be consistent with the agricultural plan.

NYS Certified Agricultural Districts and Land Use Regulations. Understanding the relationship between local land use regulations and NYS Certified Agricultural Districts is very important. New York State Agriculture and Markets Law 25-AA is a state law that establishes agricultural districts where farmers receive protection against local laws that unreasonably restrict farm operations. 25-AA also offers right-to-farm protection from private nuisance claims. New York State Agricultural Districts (Ag Districts) are designed to support a favorable operating environment for farms. This Audit was also conducted to identify consistency between local regulations and requirements imposed by NYS AML 25-AA.

Role of Zoning Laws. Zoning can create opportunities for agriculture but can also place barriers to farming or certain farming practices. Zoning identifies whether a farm use is permitted, whether a municipal review process, such as a site plan or special use permit approval, is required, or

Draft Plan January 2026

whether setbacks, height, or acreage requirements are needed. When some of these regulations exist, they are potential barriers to or challenges facing farmers and agricultural operations.

One of the prime reasons for the existence of the NYS Agricultural District program pursuant to NYS AML 25-AA is to prevent over-regulation of farms. Farm uses within a NYS certified Agricultural District are considered to be the primary and desirable land use in those areas. The Districts (which are voluntarily established) serve to reduce or prevent regulatory hurdles to conduct accepted agricultural practices. This Audit is, in part, designed to identify whether local zoning or other land use laws create any inconsistencies between the NYS Agricultural Districts law and local land use laws, and that would serve to discourage agriculture instead of encouraging it within those NY Ag Districts.

Zoning laws, which would be considered not farm-friendly, sometimes regulate where and how farms can operate, and whether Planning Board review is required before a farmer can undertake some agricultural practice or component of their business. Land use regulations can define and allow certain farm activities or can explicitly prohibit others. Sometimes, land use regulations introduce confusion when certain uses are not adequately defined, so the Audit evaluates what and how terms are defined.

Even when zoning is not explicitly farm-unfriendly, vague zoning (meaning those that do not really address agriculture) can introduce uncertainty for farmers, especially new farmers and farmers who wish to diversify or add direct sales or other farm-related businesses. This can also lead to unnecessary or lengthy permit reviews – all of which the NYS AML 25-aa seeks to avoid. These issues are especially poignant given trends for farm diversification, addition of value-added processing or activities on the farm, and modern farming techniques.

Role of Subdivision Laws. Subdivision laws regulate how land is divided. Although subdivision laws do not regulate land use like a zoning law does, they have a great deal of influence on how non-farm development takes place and whether it is done in a manner compatible with farm neighbors.

Consequences of Local Plans and Laws That are Not Farm-friendly. Choices made by local communities in their local land use regulations can have many consequences, including affecting land values; making farm expansion or start-ups difficult, contributing to land use conflicts, and even hastening the conversion of farmland to other uses. When local laws restrict agricultural uses, a sense of impermanence for farming can develop as farmers begin to feel that non-farm uses will ultimately take over in the area.

That feeling of impermanence can, in turn, foster disinvestment in farm operations and ultimately lead to the sale of land for non-farm development. With low profitability and economic stress, selling land for non-farm development may be a necessity or at least very appealing to some farms

Draft Plan January 2026

or farmland owners. Understanding the local regulatory climate is the first step towards improving an area's farm-friendliness.

The Audit

To accomplish the audit, comprehensive plans, subdivision laws, and zoning regulations were evaluated for both the Town and Village. Comprehensive plans, zoning, and subdivision laws were evaluated against a series of questions designed to explore the level of farm-friendliness in each municipality. The audit is not a criticism of any local law or plan but simply points out ways local land use regulations work with, or present challenges to, farming activities. Results of the Audit help inform the Plan's recommendations for strategies and actions.

The audit is also informed by guidance offered by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets through their "Guidelines for Review of Local Zoning and Planning Laws" (<http://www.agriculture.ny.gov/AP/agsservices/guidancedocuments/305-aZoningGuidelines.pdf>) and "Local Laws and Agricultural Districts: Guidance for Local Governments and Farmers" (<http://www.agriculture.ny.gov/AP/agsservices/new305/guidance.pdf>).

Farm-Friendly Criteria Used in the Review

The following questions are those used in these audits to explore farm-friendliness. The answers offer insight into the level of farm-friendliness in plans and adopted laws in a community. A highly farm-friendly plan or land use regulation would positively address most of these criteria.

Comprehensive Plan-Related Questions

- Does the Town have a Comprehensive Plan?
- Is the Plan up-to-date (less than 10 years old?)
- Does the Plan have a specific section addressing agriculture?
- Does the Plan include any maps of agricultural lands, important farmland soils, agricultural districts, etc.?
- Does the Plan explore the role of agriculture in the community? I.e., did a survey include questions about agriculture? Was there anything in the workshops about it?
- Does the Plan have a vision statement or goals that address agriculture in any way? Is there any visible demonstration of the value of agriculture to the community in the plan?
- Does the Plan recognize agriculture as an important resource in Town?
- Does the Plan recognize or reference a local or County agriculture and farmland protection plan?
- Does the Plan include any data on farms and farmland? Acreage? Income or occupations from farming or other Agricultural Census data?
- Does the Plan establish policies towards farmland and farming?

Draft Plan January 2026

- Does the Plan identify the value of farmland and farms to the community in some way?
- Does the Plan offer any recommended actions or strategies related to farming or farmland or ways to preserve or enhance farming?
- Does the Plan establish a policy and/or future actions related to conservation subdivision or clustering, ag overlay districts or other methods?
- Does the Plan discuss NYS agricultural districts and ag assessments?
- Does the Plan consider farmland an important resource, recognize prime or soils of statewide importance, and encourage easements or other protections of that land?
- Is there a policy discussed for PDR, LDR or TDR?
- Is agriculture a consideration of where growth does or does not take place?

Regulatory-Related Questions (Subdivision and Zoning)

- Does Subdivision Law address agriculture in any way?
- Does subdivision application ask for any submissions related to agriculture?
- Are conservation subdivisions allowed? Voluntarily? Mandatory? Does it address agriculture?
- Does subdivision include siting of non-farm development in a manner that preserves farm use?
- Does the zoning regulation's purpose statement include a discussion of agriculture, or promote preserving agriculture specifically?
- Does zoning allow agriculture as a permitted use by right?
- Does zoning prohibit agriculture in any district other than hamlet centers or commercial areas?
- Are site plan reviews required in one or more districts for agriculture or ag-related uses?
- Are special use permits for agriculture or ag-related uses required in one or more districts?
- Is residential, higher density or commercial growth allowed in core farm areas or where a NYS Ag District exists so that conflicts may arise?
- Does the zoning specifically establish a local agricultural zoning district designed for agriculture, ag overlay district, or special use district for agriculture?
- Does the zoning allow farms to have more than one business or offer flexibility to accommodate the needs of agricultural businesses?
- Are buffer zones between farmland and residential uses required for new non-farm construction or subdivision?
- Are innovative development patterns specifically designed to preserve farmland encouraged, allowed, or mandated (conservation subdivision, clustering, TDR)?
- Are off-site or on-site signs allowed to attract and direct people to farmstands and on-farm businesses?
- Are farmstands, farm retail markets, agritourism businesses, breweries, etc. allowed?
- Are farm processing facilities such as community kitchens, slaughterhouses, etc. allowed?
- Are farmstands limited to selling just products from that one farm or is that flexible?

Draft Plan January 2026

- Do farmstands and other on-farm retail need a site plan review or special use permit?
- Does zoning allow for accessory uses such as greenhouses, barns, garages, equipment storage etc. permitted as of right?
- Do application requirements for non-farm uses include asking for submittal of information or maps about farming that might be taking place on or near the project parcel? Whether it is in a NYS certified Ag District? What farming activities take place on or near the site? Whether prime farmland soils are present?
- Do standards exist beyond SEQR that require the PB or ZBA to evaluate impacts of a project on agriculture?
- Do any design standards exist to direct building envelopes of non-farm development to areas on a parcel that would still allow farming to occur on remaining open spaces?
- Does the zoning define agriculture, agricultural structure, farm worker housing, agritourism, agri-business, and other ag-related terms?
- Are farm uses that are defined included in the Use Table?
- Are farm-related definitions broad and flexible and not confined to a certain number of acres or income earned?
- Are non-traditional or retail-based farm businesses allowed in a district or ag zoned district? For example, can a farmer set up a brewery on site and sell products onsite?
- Is an agricultural data statement as per AML 25-aa required as part of an application for site plan, subdivision, special use or other zoning?
- Is ag disclosure statement on plans or plats required when development takes place in a NY certified ag district or otherwise recognize this?
- Does the regulation define and allow for farm worker housing? Are mobile homes allowed as farm worker housing?
- Are silos and other farm structures exempt from height requirements?
- Does Town have regulations for solar and wind?
- Does solar regulations address development on farmed parcels or address development on farmland soils?
- Are personal windmills and solar panels allowed for farm use? With permits or permitted as of right?
- Does zoning establish any rules for manure storage or spreading or other water quality related rules on farms?

Town of Mexico Farm Friendly Audit Results

As noted above, the Town of Mexico's Comprehensive Plan is currently being developed (as a joint Town/Village Plan). It is the expectation that the comprehensive plan and this agricultural and farmland protection plan will include, refer and be consistent with each other. Since the draft comprehensive plan has not yet been developed as of the date of this Audit, a review was not possible. However, the consultants for both projects have communicated, and the farm-friendly comprehensive plan criteria have been conveyed so that the comprehensive plan addresses agriculture adequately.

Evaluation of the farm-friendliness of the Town's subdivision regulations:

The Town subdivision law does not address agriculture except authorizing the Planning Board to require buffers between farms and new, proposed subdivisions. While this is an excellent provision, it is not mandatory, and it is unclear whether this actually gets applied at the time of a subdivision. The subdivision law has no definitions related to agriculture. There is no mention of submissions providing information on adjacent agricultural activities near a proposed subdivision, nor does it recognize land that is being subdivided as within a NYS Ag District. The Law also allows for clustering pursuant to NYS Town Law 278, which is a land use technique that can result in preserved open space when subdivision takes place, but no details, criteria, or emphasis on including active agricultural lands in that open space are provided for.

Evaluation of the farm-friendliness of Mexico's zoning regulations includes the following observations:

- The law's purpose statements do not mention providing for, enhancing, or maintaining farms, farm-related businesses, or farmland.
- Agriculture is allowed as a permitted-by-right use in all zoning districts, except in the R and AP districts, where it recognizes the NYS Ag District in the R and AP areas by allowing for farms in those areas as a permitted use if in the NYS Ag District. When not in a NYS Ag District in the R and AP areas, a special use permit is needed for agriculture.
- It is unclear whether any agricultural uses or businesses would require site plan review, as it is not articulated. In practice, the Town may not require this, but a strict evaluation does not clarify this.
- The Town allows for both residential and commercial growth in the agricultural areas so long-term, this likely promotes more non-farm uses in core farm areas.
- The zoning does not directly address whether farms are allowed to have multiple businesses or on-farm uses such as sales, tasting rooms, direct sales, etc. Perhaps in practice, the Town allows it, but the zoning is moot on this point.
- The zoning does not require buffers between farm and non-farm uses, but during subdivision, the Planning Board is authorized to require them.

Draft Plan January 2026

- Clustering of new houses is allowed on a voluntary basis. The clustering section does not specifically seek preservation of open spaces for farmlands and protecting core or important farmlands, though, and this is not stated as an objective of this technique. No other ag-related zoning techniques are included elsewhere in Town.
- Zoning is unclear as to whether signs for farms, farmstands, direct sales, etc., are allowed. Signs for such uses are not articulated one way or another. Again, in practice, it may be allowed, but it is not specifically stated in the zoning.
- Seasonal produce stands are allowed as a permitted use, but the zoning does not address other on-farm retail, direct sales, agritourist activities, etc. Allowed farmstands are not limited in any way as to what they sell, whether from the farm, or several farms, or other products.
- While slaughterhouses are prohibited in the text of the zoning, a more recent amendment to the zoning (local law 1 of 2017) allows for slaughterhouses (but has not been included in the zoning text). The newer local law has definitions and regulations, with slaughterhouses allowed via a special use permit. However, even though this new law does not really address on-farm slaughterhouses or food processing so does not answer the question as to whether non-USDA facilities on-farm can be developed.
- It is unclear whether the zoning allows farm accessory uses such as greenhouses, barns, garages, equipment storage, food processing, storage, or for non-traditional and retail-based farm businesses, etc., as permitted by right. While it may be that the Town considers all parts of an agricultural use in practice, the zoning does not articulate this and thus makes it harder for all parties to know whether something is allowed or not, and how.
- No site plan or special use permit application submission list includes requirements to provide any information oriented to agriculture. Thus, the Town has no easy information as to whether the project is in a NYS Ag District, whether there are any prime farmland soils present that may need protection, or whether it is on or adjacent to an active farm. In order to promote or even maintain agriculture in the face of development, all this information should be considered. Zoning also does not mention the NYS AML 25-aa requirement to submit an Ag Data Statement - used to notify adjacent farmers in the Ag District when a project comes before the Board. There is no mention of the use of an ag disclosure notice so that future landowners know their land is in an area farmed.
- There are no criteria or conditions of approval for a non-farm project in the zoning district or in the NYS Ag District designed to minimize impacts of non-farm development on nearby farming operations.
- There are no development standards (beyond the buffer authorized in subdivision) to direct building envelopes to specific locations on a parcel to minimize adverse impacts on farm operations.
- Agricultural tenant residences, agricultural use, and seasonal produce stands are included in the definitions. However, terms often included in farm-friendly regulations, such as agritourism, direct sales, u-pick operation, on-farm food processing, etc., are not included

Draft Plan January 2026

in definitions or the use table. The definitions are not broad, although the agricultural use definition is likely flexible to allow for a variety of ag uses – it is vague. The definition for agricultural uses is different from those in NYS AML 25-aa, however, so that can cause confusion when definitions are different.

- Farmworker housing is allowed (called Agricultural Tenant Residences), and mobile homes would be allowed to be used as mobile homes are allowed in the district. However, they are allowed only by a special use permit. This may be a challenge for a farmer and may not be consistent with NYS Ag and Markets Guidance, which frowns upon any special use permit requirement for farm uses, including farm worker housing.
- Silos are exempt from height regulations, but this section does not mention other agricultural structures that might need to be exempt from height requirements, such as large barns.
- The Town does not have solar or wind facility regulations in zoning but does have a separate local law (2 of 2017) that does a good job in regulating energy systems (including both wind and solar, or other systems used for the collection, inversion, storage, and/or distribution of energy) for the Town. It is an excellent and comprehensive law. The definitions in this law could be interpreted to include battery energy storage systems (BESS), but it is not specifically identified. It does exempt energy systems used solely for on-site agricultural operations and is consistent with NYS 25-aa in that regard. The law also allows small, roof-mounted solar with just a building permit in all districts.
- There are no specific rules for manure storage or spreading, and even in the Aquifer Protection district, there appears to be no impediments to manure and manure management methods.

Recommendations to Enhance Farm-Friendliness of Town's Land Use Regulations

1. Ensure that the new comprehensive plan is incorporated and is consistent with this Ag Plan.
2. Update the clustering section in both Subdivision and Zoning to:
 - a. Use language consistent with the Conservation Subdivision design technique instead of the generic 'clustering.' Conservation Subdivisions is a specific technique well-articulated across many municipalities to promote both conservation and farming when mixed with housing development.
 - b. Require conservation subdivisions for all major subdivisions (5 or more new lots).
 - c. Expand designation of preserved open spaces within a conservation subdivision and allow for these open spaces to be used for agriculture. Identify that 50% of the parcel should be preserved and include this as a lot layout technique that doesn't affect the density of housing.
3. Update the purpose statements to mention the importance of agriculture, active farming, and farmland protection.
4. Update site plan review to clarify that it is not required for agricultural uses. As an alternative, if the Town feels that some review of certain agricultural uses is necessary,

Draft Plan January 2026

create a modified site plan review process for those agricultural operations to allow for a shortened, more limited review. This is consistent with NYS Ag and Markets guidance.

5. Evaluate allowable lot sizes and density and consider lowering density (not increasing lot size) so that there is less non-farm development in core farming areas. Note that the topic of housing density, location, and mixing in with agriculture is an important topic and will be expanded further in other recommendations and discussions with the Committee. The Committee should discuss the differences between lot size and density.
 - a. After the priority farmland evaluation and map is completed for this plan, consider establishing an agricultural overlay district to promote agricultural uses and protect farms to ensure that farms can continue as development occurs.
6. Expand definitions and the use table to clearly articulate a wide variety of agricultural uses that are allowed, including agritourism, direct sales, on-farm food processing, breweries/cideries, on-farm solar or wind, farm markets, etc. The zoning should at least reference the renewable energy law, if not incorporate it into the text and Use Table. The NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets Guidelines on direct sales should be used to assist in the development of regulations for these uses.
7. Require a buffer between any non-farm development and active farming operations. The buffer is provided by the non-farm user.
8. Amend the sign section to clarify whether on-site and off-site signs (directional only) can be used for farms and farm activities.
9. Ensure that needed farm structures are included in the Use Table and definitions – barns, greenhouses, storage sheds, solar, wind, etc., for farm use.
10. My recommendations to improve the renewable energy law include:
 - a. Update the definitions to ensure that energy systems include all components, such as access roads, fencing, landscaping, stormwater features, battery storage facilities, soil storage areas, etc. Require site plans to clearly show all these features.
 - b. I recommend more detail for screening as this is often the most contentious element. Applicants usually have minimal screening, and having more specific recommendations on screening will enable the Town to be more effective in this crucial area.
 - c. Consider adding a requirement that facilities proposed on farms (within the New York State Agricultural District) must follow the NYS Department of Agriculture’s Guidelines on Solar Development on Farms.
 - d. Consider limiting the amount of prime farmland that may be used for large-scale energy facilities.
 - e. Add a requirement that seeding under panels or wind turbines be with native, pollinator-friendly seed mixes.
 - f. Add a section that regulates battery storage facilities, both as part of a renewable system, and as a standalone use.

Draft Plan January 2026

- g. Add in a requirement for an operations and maintenance plan to be submitted showing how the facility will be maintained during the life of the project.
11. Update site plan and special use permit submission requirements to include identification of whether the project is in a NYS Ag District, whether an active farm is taking place on or near the project, and require filling out the Ag Data Statement.
12. Consider requiring the Ag Disclosure Notice to be placed on all subdivision plats and site plans as a plan note to alert all future buyers that the project is within a New York State Ag District.
13. Add language into the regulations that the Planning Board and ZBA should use the maps from this Plan as a tool in decision-making. That will bring agriculture into focus when the Boards are reviewing and approving projects. Remember that SEQR asks the question whether the project is in a NYS Ag District, and the zoning and subdivision should offer rural development standards or guidelines to help ensure new uses can be compatible with farming uses.
14. Update the subdivision law to add more focus on placement and review of building envelopes so that they can be optimally placed to minimize adverse interactions with nearby farms. Current subdivision focuses on boundary lines, where the actual building site is what impacts farms the most.
15. Consider a modified site plan review process to allow farmworker housing instead of a special use permit.
16. Exempt all farm-related structures from height requirements and most setbacks. (Note that setbacks from wetlands, water bodies, streams, and water supplies are an acceptable regulation within the NYS Ag District.)
17. Zoning should be consistent with Town zoning, especially where agriculture takes place that crosses or is adjacent to both municipalities.

Village of Mexico Farm-Friendly Audit Results

As noted above, the Town of Mexico's Comprehensive Plan is currently being developed (as a joint Town/Village Plan). It is the expectation that the comprehensive plan and this agricultural and farmland protection plan will include, refer and be consistent with each other. Since the draft comprehensive plan has not yet been developed, a review for this audit was not possible. However, the consultants for both projects have communicated, and the farm-friendly comprehensive plan criteria conveyed so that the comprehensive plan addresses agriculture adequately.

Evaluation of the Village of Mexico Subdivision Law. The Village has not adopted a subdivision law.

Evaluation of the farm-friendliness of the Village of Mexico's zoning regulations

Draft Plan January 2026

- Village zoning purpose statements do not mention the desire to maintain or promote agricultural uses within the Village.
- Customary agricultural uses are allowed in the R district (where the farming takes place now), but no definition for that is included.
- It is unclear if zoning requires a site plan for agricultural activities. In one place for the R district, it says that customary agricultural uses are permitted, but in another, it says all uses other than single and two-family dwellings must have site plan review. There is no mention of agriculture in the Use Table.
- Where farming currently occurs, those parcels are also included in the NYS Ag District. Residential uses are allowed in all R locations.
- There are no special overlays or other provisions specifically for agriculture within the village, even though agriculture does take place on several parcels.
- Zoning does not address whether a variety of agricultural activities can take place as part of customary agricultural use.
- No buffers between non-farm and farm uses are required, but it is noted that the purpose statement for the R district is to promote harmony between residential uses and agriculture. However, there are very few provisions that will help this take place.
- The zoning does not include any innovative uses, districts, or methods to promote farming.
- It is unclear if signs are allowed on farms within the Village in the R district. If allowed, they would be required to get approval from the zoning board for it.
- It is not unclear whether any farm retail would be allowed, as no retail is allowed at all in the R district.
- No farmstands, on-farm processing, farm structures like greenhouses, etc., are mentioned. It is unclear whether these would be considered “customary agricultural use.”
- In general, the Village’s zoning does not address agriculture. Application requirements do not address information needs related to farm operations or farmland, do not require the ag data statement when a project occurs in the NYS Ag District parcels, or require a disclosure notice. There is no ability to address building envelope placement that may impact farm operations, exempt farm structures from height requirements, address on-farm wind or solar, or address different farm uses that might be feasible within the Village limits.

Recommendations to Enhance Farm-Friendliness of the Village’s Land Use Regulations

1. Ensure that the new comprehensive plan is incorporated and is consistent with this Ag Plan.
2. Many of the recommendations identified above for the Town could be equally useful in the Village.
3. Zoning could be greatly improved by recognizing the role agriculture plays or could play in the Village. That includes adding such language to the purpose statements.
4. Similar to the comments above for the Town, the definitions section would benefit greatly by including a diversity of farm-related terms to clarify what these uses are.

Draft Plan January 2026

5. The Use Table should clearly show what specific farm activities are allowed in the Village. Preferably, all these farm-related activities would be permitted by right. However, within Village limits, there should be recognition that farming and many residences intermix, so not all agricultural activities may be appropriate. The Committee should discuss this further and make more solid recommendations for inclusion in the Plan.
6. The Village may benefit from including an agricultural overlay district that is designed to promote, expand ag uses and buffer those from non-farm uses.
7. Clarify that farm uses in the NYS Ag District should be permitted by right, or if some review is needed, create a modified site plan review process that narrows and abbreviates the review so as not to put a burden on farmers.
8. When developing updated zoning, use NYS Guidelines to assist – especially related to direct sales.
9. Adopt a subdivision law and require the use of conservation subdivisions for major subdivisions taking place on lands within the R District. This is useful for both farming and maintenance of the environment and Village character in the R District.
10. Require buffers between farm and non-farm uses.
11. Update submission requirements to include farm-related information related to NYS Ag District, farmland soils, farm activities, etc. Require the Ag Data Statement, and use the disclosure notice on plats for new non-farm uses in the NYS Ag District within the Village.
12. Address solar and wind use (both on-farm and grid-connected) development in the Village. The Village could use the Town's law as a model.
13. Update development standards in the R district to better reflect the zoning's goal to harmonize housing with farming. This includes siting standards, review of building envelopes, buffers, use of conservation subdivision, etc.
14. Zoning should be consistent with Town zoning, especially where agriculture takes place that crosses or is adjacent to both municipalities.

The following chart summarizes the audit results

Draft Plan January 2026

1	Farm-Friendly Criteria	Town of Mexico	Village of Mexico
2	Comprehensive Plan and Other Related Plans		
3	Does the Town have a Comprehensive Plan?	In process	in process
4	Is the Plan up-to-date (less than 10 years old)?	NA	NA
5	Does the plan have a specific section addressing agriculture?		
6	Does the plan include any maps of agricultural lands, important farmland soils, agricultural districts, etc.?		
7	Does the Plan explore the role of agriculture in the community? I.e., did a survey include questions about agriculture? Was there anything in workshops about it?		
8	Does the Plan have a vision statement or goals that address agriculture in any way? Is there any visible demonstration of the value of agriculture to the community in the plan?		
9	Does the plan recognize agriculture as an important resource in Town?		
10	Does the plan recognize or reference a local or County agriculture and farmland protection plan?		
11	Does the plan include any data on farms and farmland? Acreage? Income or occupations from farming or other ag-census data?		
12	Does the plan establish policies towards farmland and farming?		
13	Does the plan identify the value of farmland and farms to the community in some way?		
14	Does the Plan offer any recommended actions or strategies related to farming or farmland or ways to preserve or enhance farming?		
15	Does the Plan establish a policy and/or future actions related to conservation subdivision or clustering, ag overlay districts or other methods?		
16	Does the plan discuss NYS agricultural districts and ag assessments?		
17	Does the Plan consider farmland an important resource, recognize prime or soils of statewide importance, and encourage easements or other protections of that land?		
18	Is there a policy discussed for PDR, LDR or TDR?		
19	Is agriculture a consideration of where growth does or does not take place?		
20	Regulations (Subdivision)		
21	Does Subdivision Law address agriculture in any way?	Only in that it authorizes the Planning Board to require a buffer between agriculture and any new subdivision.	No Subdivision Law in Village
22	Does subdivision application ask for any submissions related to agriculture?	No	NA

Draft Plan January 2026

1	Farm-Friendly Criteria	Town of Mexico	Village of Mexico
23	Are conservation subdivisions allowed? Voluntarily? Mandatory? Does it address agriculture?	Yes, it allows for cluster development for 4 or more dwelling units. Open space does not specifically address preservation of farm land though. Clusters are not required though.	Na
24	Does subdivision include siting of non-farm development in a manner that preserves farm use?	No	NA
25	Regulations (Zoning)		
26	Does the zoning regulation's purpose statement include a discussion of agriculture, or promote preserving agriculture specifically?	No, not mentioned	No, agriculture in the village is not mentioned
27	Does zoning allow agriculture as a permitted use by right?	Yes, in all districts except in R and AP districts if not in the NYS Ag District.	Yes, customary agricultural uses are allowed provided there is no storage of manure, or odor, or dust within 100 feet of any property line. This is in the Text, but not in the Use Table. Note that the
28	Does zoning prohibit agriculture in any district other than hamlet centers or commercial areas?	No.	Customary agricultural uses allowed only in the R district.
29	Are site plan reviews required in one or more districts for agriculture or ag-related uses?	Not sure if they require them for Ag in practice, but Section 335 says that all uses shall require site plan with some exceptions but agriculture is not specifically excepted. This needs to be clarified.	Site plan does not specifically address agricultural uses, but Article IV says that site plan review is required for any land use other than a 1 or 2 family dwelling in the I District. Also For the R district, where all land used for agriculture in the Village is located, says that all uses need site plan approval. It is unclear if this actually refers to Section 403.4 (which does not include agriculture as requiring site plan, but 403/3 does.
30	Are special use permits for agriculture or ag-related uses required in one or more districts?	Yes,, when in the R1 and R2 and AP districts when NOT in a NYS Ag District.	No, special use permits are not required.
31	Is residential, higher density or commercial growth allowed in core farm areas or where a NYS Ag District exists so that conflicts may arise?	Yes	Note that all the farming in the Village is also within the NYS Ag District. Yes, residential development is allowed in all these farmed areas in the Village.

Draft Plan January 2026

1	Farm-Friendly Criteria	Town of Mexico	Village of Mexico
32	Does the zoning specifically establish a local agricultural zoning district designed for agriculture, ag overlay district, or special use district for agriculture?	Not really. The three agricultural districts A1, A2 and A3 allow all sorts of other uses within them. There is nothing specifically for agriculture.	No. All the farmlands are within the Residential zoning district.
33	Does the zoning allow farms to have more than one business or offer flexibility to accommodate the needs of agricultural businesses?	Unclear. This is not addressed in text, map or definition. Maybe in practice it is, but the zoning does not articulate this.	Unclear. The term "customary agricultural use" is used in the text but is not defined.
34	Are buffer zones between farmland and residential uses required for new non-farm construction or subdivision?	Not in zoning so some uses would not require buffers. But in the subdivision law, buffers can be required by the Planning Board, recommended at 100 feet.	No. Zoning does not address this but the purpose of the R district is to ensure harmony between residential and agricultural uses.
35	Are innovative development patterns specifically designed to preserve farmland encouraged, allowed, or mandated (conservation subdivision, clustering, TDR)?	Clustering is allowed but not required. The section on clustering does allow for the preserved open space to be farmland.	No
36	Are off-site or on-site signs allowed to attract and direct people to farm stands and on-farm businesses?	Maybe. Signs for farms, farm stands, or off-site seasonal produce stands are not articulated.	Unclear. The sign section does not prohibit signs in the R district where farms are, does not address farm stands or farm businesses. It is likely that such signs would need approval from the zoning board however. It is not really articulated.
37	Are farm stands, farm retail markets, agri-tourist businesses, breweries, etc. allowed?	Just seasonal produce stand. It does not address other on-farm retail, direct sales, agritourist activities, etc.	It is possible that such things could be considered a retail business as per the definition, but no retail operations are allowed in the R district. So unlikely.
38	Are farm processing facilities such as community kitchens, slaughterhouse, etc. allowed?	zoning text, but then via Local Law 1 of 2017, this was repealed, and there is a new section allowing slaughterhouses, This has its own set of definitions and	No, none are allowed. None are mentioned at all.

Draft Plan January 2026

1	Farm-Friendly Criteria	Town of Mexico	Village of Mexico
39	Are farm stands limited to selling just products from that one farm or is that flexible?	Not limited. Definition includes produce from on and off farm.	No farm stands mentioned so unlikely they are allowed
40	Do farm stands and other on-farm retail need a site plan review or special use permit?	No, they are permitted uses.	Not allowed at all.
41	Does zoning allow for accessory uses such as greenhouses, barns, garages, equipment storage etc. permitted as of right?	Unclear. These are not articulated in definitions, or use table.	Unsure - while customary agricultural operations are mentioned as permitted, we don't know what that includes. Some of these may be allowed if they produce no odor or noise, or storage of manure.
42	Do application requirements for non-farm uses include asking for submittal of information or maps about farming that might be taking place on or near the project parcel? Whether it is in an ag district? What farming activities take place on or near the site? Whether prime farmland soils are present?	No, applications do not ask for ag-related information, farmland soils, use of ag data statement, etc. Not included.	No
43	Do standards exist beyond SEQR that require the PB or ZBA to evaluate impacts of a project on agriculture?	No, this is not included.	No
44	Do any design standards exist to direct building envelopes of non-farm development to areas on a parcel that would still allow farming to occur on remaining open spaces?	No, this is not included.	No
45	Does the zoning define agriculture, agricultural structure, farm worker housing, agri-tourism, agri-business and other ag-related terms?	Minimum. Agricultural tenant residence and agricultural use, and seasonal produce stand are included. No other ag-related terms such as farm operation, horse boarding, direct sale, on-farm slaughterhouse, agritourism, etc. are included	No
46	Are farm uses that are defined included in the Use Table?	Yes, Ag tenant residence requires a special use permit in A1, A2, A3. Agricultural Uses permitted in all districts, except as a SUP in R1, R2 and AP when not in a NYS Ag District	No
47	Are farm-related definitions broad and flexible and not confined to a certain number of acres or income earned?	No. The law does not include or define specific ag uses or address agritourism, direct sales, processing, etc.	No - none exist

Draft Plan January 2026

1	Farm-Friendly Criteria	Town of Mexico	Village of Mexico
48	Are non-traditional or retail based farm businesses allowed in a district or ag zoned district. For example, can a farmer set up a brewery on site and sell products onsite?	Maybe. It is not discussed and unclear. Definitions do not exist to help. Agricultural Use definition does not address.	No
49	Is an agricultural data statement as per AML 25-aa required as part of an application for site plan, subdivision, special use or other zoning?	No. The law does not mention the data statement.	No
50	Is ag disclosure statement on plans or plats required when development takes place in a NY certified ag district or otherwise recognize this?	No, there is no mention of a disclosure notice.	No
51	Does the regulation define and allow for farm worker housing? Are mobile homes allowed as farm worker housing?	Yes, they are allowed via a special use permit, and mobile homes are allowed for farmworker housing.	Not specifically. Residential uses are allowed in the district so presumably any one or two family dwelling would be allowed.
52	Are silos and other farm structures exempt from height requirements?	Silos are exempt from height limitations, but there is no mention of exemptions for other agricultural uses.	There is no section on height exemptions. All other heights are limited to 35'.
53	Does Town have regulations for solar and wind?	Not in zoning.	No
54	Does solar regulations address development on farmed parcels or address development on farmland soils?	No, there are no solar or wind regulations.	No
55	Are personal wind mills and solar panels allowed for farm use? With permits or permitted as of right?	Unclear. This is not addressed in the zoning law.	No
56	Does zoning establish any rules for manure storage or spreading or other water quality related rules on farms?	No, there are no specific rules for manure storage or spreading. It has an Aquifer Protection District, but other than allowed uses and changes in dimensions, there is nothing in the AP district that prohibits or limits manure management methods.	Maybe. The only mention of this is for the R district, that says that there shall be no storage of manure, odor or dust. Unclear whether this prohibits spreading of manure.

2. List of Mexico Farm Operations

As of December 2025, the following farms in Mexico have been identified:

6 Acres Farm Brewery
412 Fort Leazier Road

Appledale Orchards/Simpelaar Fruit Farm
5987 State Route 3

Ashley Lynn Winery & Leon’s Farm Market
4142 State Route 104

Behling Orchards
114 Potter Road

Bitter Sweet Apple & Blueberry Orchards
139 Minckler Road

Charlie Farmer
23 Kranz Road

Comley's Country Creamery
103 Frasier Road

D&R Greenhouses
3868 State Route 104

Dawn Gilbert Show Horses
66 Newcomb Road

Granger's Christmas Tree Farm
380 Tubbs Road

Hurlbut Orchards
Hurlbut Road

Lazy Dirt Flower Farm
340 Drybridge Road

Maple Help Stock Farms
207 Hurlbut Road

Mexican Pride Dairy Farm
795 Tubbs Road

Polchlopek Farms
French Street

Popler Ridge Farm
559-561 Pumphouse Road

Sage Creek Flower Farm
U.S. Route 11

Schenck Show Horses
50 Smith Road

Serenity Creek Stables
89 Halladay Road

Walthert Farms
Kranz Road

Wilkholm Farm
105 Larobardiere Road

3. Draft Resolution to Form Plan Implementation Committee

RESOLUTION NO. ___ OF 2026

A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING THE TOWN (VILLAGE) OF MEXICO AGRICULTURAL AND FARMLAND PROTECTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

WHEREAS, the Town (Village) of Mexico recognizes the importance of agriculture to its economy, community character, environmental health, and quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the Town (Village) has recently completed and adopted the *Town and Village of Mexico Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan*, which outlines goals, strategies, and actions to support the long-term viability of farming and farmland within the Town and Village;

WHEREAS, the Town Board (Village Board) desires to establish a committee that will assist in the implementation of this Plan, provide ongoing guidance on agricultural matters, and help ensure agriculture remains a valued and protected component of the community; and

WHEREAS, the Town and Village of Mexico have worked collaboratively to develop and adopt both a comprehensive plan and an agricultural and farmland protection plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board (Village Board) of the Town (Village) of Mexico hereby establishes the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Advisory Committee (“the Committee”), agrees to continue to work jointly, and adopts the following purpose, structure, and scope of work for this joint committee:

Section 1. Purpose

The purpose of the Committee shall be to advise and assist the Town Board, Village Board, and their Planning Boards, Zoning Board of Appeals, and other Town and Village departments in promoting, protecting, and enhancing agriculture and farmland in accordance with the goals and recommendations of the adopted Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan.

Section 2. Composition

The Committee shall consist of ___ members appointed by the Town Board and ___ members appointed by the Village Board, representing a diversity of agricultural interests and community perspectives, including but not limited to: active farmers, farmland owners, agri-business representatives, members of relevant Town and Village boards and committees, and residents with

Draft Plan January 2026

expertise or interest in agriculture and farmland protection.

The Town Board and Village Board jointly shall designate a Chair.

Section 3. Scope of Work

The Committee shall have the following responsibilities:

- a. Inform the Town and Village Boards, the Planning Boards, and Zoning Board of Appeals about agricultural issues and make recommendations to address such issues.
- b. When asked by the Planning Board, review proposed development projects located within 500 feet of a certified Agricultural District to assess potential impacts on agriculture and provide written comments during the review process.
- c. Serve as an advocate for the agricultural community by educating and communicating with Town and Village officials, residents, and property owners; and by partnering with organizations and agencies to support the goals of the Town and Village's Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan.
- d. Maintain and periodically update mapping and inventories of farms, farmland, and agricultural resources.
- e. Monitor agricultural and development trends to identify emerging issues and provide early guidance to Town officials.
- f. Assist in updating and implementing the Town's Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan.
- g. Provide policy guidance to Town and Village officials on matters affecting agriculture.
- h. Promote the integration of agriculture into regional and countywide planning and economic development initiatives.
- i. Serve as a liaison between farmers, the community, and the Town and Village governments to enhance communication and understanding.
- j. Assist with public outreach, education, and awareness campaigns related to agriculture and farmland protection.
- k. Encourage, assist, and support applications to farmland preservation programs, including but not limited to the New York State Farmland Protection Implementation Grant Program (FPIG).

Section 4. Reporting Requirements

The Committee shall provide a bi-annual report to the Town Board and Village Board summarizing its activities, findings, and recommendations, along with any updates to mapping or inventories and progress toward implementing the Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan.

Section 5. Effective Date

This resolution shall take effect immediately.

4. Public Involvement Record

Our goals for public participation were multifaceted and included:

1. Involving the farm community in the development of the plan.
2. Learning what farmers believe are assets and challenges to agricultural production, and future improvements needed.
3. Compiling specific information about farming operations and farmland in Mexico.
4. Involving the general public, understanding their perspectives about the role agriculture plays in the Town and Village, and building support both for farming and the planning process.
5. Keeping the community up to date and making the process transparent.
6. Providing information to the Advisory Committee for use in the plan.

Toward this end, methods used for public participation encompassed a webpage on the Town and Village website; outreach at events to inform community members about the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan and the planning process; stakeholder interviews; surveys of the general public, farmers, and farmland owners; and an open house forum followed by a meeting with farmers to present draft recommendations for review, comment, and discussion. A separate meeting without the use of technology was held to accommodate Amish farmers in Mexico.



Interviews

Participants in one-on-one interviews included the following:

- Darren Adsit, Wilkholm Farm
- Jodi Barck, Sage Creek Flowers
- Melanie Cutillo, Lazy Dirt Flower Farm
- Gary Hurlbut, Maple Help Stock Farms
- Steve Simpelaar, Simpelaar Fruit Farm / Appledale Orchards
- Joshua Vrooman, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Oswego County

Summary of Survey Results

- **146 responses received** from Mexico residents, farmers, and farmland property owners.
- 75% of residents said that **local agriculture and actively farmed lands** in Mexico are “very important” to them, and 81% said it was “very important” for farmland in Mexico to be **protected**.
- Residents value agriculture because it provides **fresh, healthy local food**; supports the **local economy**; helps to maintain **Mexico’s rural character**, and preserves **open space**. They also like knowing **where their food comes from**.
- 65% of residents believe that agriculture is **important to their neighbors**, while 26% are not sure.
- 46% believe that agriculture is **important to municipal leaders**, while 40% are not sure.
- Most residents regularly purchase food at grocery stores, but 62% also **buy food at farmers’ markets** in season and 60% **buy food at on-farm stores and farmstands** (this was before the Mexico Farmers’ Market was launched).
- Among respondents who rarely or never purchase local farm products, barriers include **inconvenience**, a **lack of marketing**, and **limited awareness** of where to buy them.
- Although some residents grow vegetables, flowers, plants, and other items for their own personal use, few expressed an interest in **starting a farm** as a commercial, for-profit venture or expanding into **small-scale food and beverage processing** and developing value-added products to be sold.
- Asked for their ideas to keep agriculture viable in Mexico, residents suggested **farmers’ markets**, **tax reductions** on agricultural land, **education and training** for farmers, year-round **marketing of local agricultural products**, and restrictions on **solar farms**.
- Two-thirds of the farmers responding to the survey have been farming in Mexico **for at least 10 years**.
- 37% of farmers are uncertain whether their farm is in an **agricultural district**.
- 48% reported that the income earned by their farm is a **secondary source of income**, meaning that they **rely on income from other sources**, such as outside employment.

Draft Plan January 2026

- Among farmers who responded to the survey, the **top agricultural products** were hay, beef, berries, Christmas trees, “other livestock” (e.g., pigs, goats, sheep), horses, and vegetables and sweet corn.
- The advantages of farming in Mexico include **proximity to markets** and major transportation routes, the presence of **agricultural support organizations** (e.g., Cornell Cooperative Extension), **soil and water** quality, and a strong **sense of community**.
- The challenges of farming in Mexico include **high property taxes** and production costs, lack of **marketing and promotion** of local agricultural products, changing **weather patterns**, **competition** for land from **solar farms**, limited agricultural **infrastructure** (e.g., meat processing facilities), and **finding employees** to work on the farm.
- Asked to identify actions they are likely to take over the next 5-10 years, farmers cited developing a **succession plan**, **diversifying**, expanding into **new markets**, and **developing agritourism** most often.

Open House and Farmers Meeting Results

DRAFT VISION FOR THE TOWN AND VILLAGE OF MEXICO		
	Place Sticker Here if You Agree	Place Sticker Here if You Disagree
The Town and Village of Mexico envision a thriving, resilient, and diverse agricultural future—one where farming remains a proud cornerstone of our identity and a shared source of community pride, economic vitality, and environmental care. Agriculture here is not only profitable and sustainable but also reflective of our deep-rooted connection to the land and to one another.	20 stickers; 9 public, 11 farmers	
Our landscapes remain open, scenic, and productive—safeguarding the peace, rural character, and natural beauty that define our community. Farmland is open spaces that are nurtured through responsible land stewardship, where healthy soils and clean water are protected for generations to come. A rich diversity of crops, animals, and farm types—from traditional operations to small-scale and specialty producers—thrives alongside agritourism, value-added ventures, and on-farm enterprises that strengthen farm incomes and create meaningful jobs.	17 stickers; 5 public, 12 farmers	
Farms are well-maintained and inviting, contributing to the visual character of our countryside and village outskirts, and drawing visitors and residents alike into a deeper appreciation of the agricultural way	16 stickers; 4 public, 12 farmers	

Draft Plan January 2026

DRAFT STRATEGY	Identify Your Top 3 Strategies by Placing Stickers Here
Establish a Town of Mexico Agricultural Advisory Committee to implement the recommendations of this plan.	5: 2 public, 3 farmers
Ensure that the new Town and Village Comprehensive Plan incorporates and is consistent with the Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan.	11: 4 public, 7 farmers
Provide maps and data from the Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan to farmers, municipal decision makers, agencies and organizations.	1 farmer
Distribute information to farmland property owners about the agricultural assessment program and the benefits of being in an agricultural district.	2 public
Ensure that assessors use agricultural assessment values when taxing farmland.	7: 1 public, 6 farmers
Continue training programs for assessors and code enforcement officers.	None
Evaluate the success and sustainability of the recently launched Mexico Farmers' Market and consider its expansion beyond the summer months.	6: 4 public, 2 farmers
Establish a mediation committee comprised of farmers and non-farmers to mediate problems and address disputes between farms and neighbors.	2: 1 public, 1 farmer
Consider working with other Oswego County towns to hire a shared grant writer that would pursue funding to support agriculture.	2 farmers
Advocate for Oswego County to update its 1998 Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan.	4: 2 public, 2 farmers
Encourage Operation Oswego County to recognize agriculture's importance to the local economy and develop an Oswego County Agriculture and Food Summit.	3: 2 public, 1 farmer
Urge the state to reduce the base values used for agricultural assessment and extend agricultural assessment eligibility to both rented and owned land.	13: 4 public, 9 farmers

Draft Plan January 2026

DRAFT STRATEGY	Identify Your Top 3 Strategies by Placing Stickers Here
Allow property owners who rent land to farmers to participate in the NYS Farmer School Tax Credit.	1 public
Update the Town of Mexico's land use laws to optimize their farm-friendliness by, for example, allowing for conservation subdivisions, expanding permitted agricultural uses, minimizing non-farm conversion pressures with siting and density, requiring buffers when non-farm development occurs, and exempting farm structures from height and setback requirements.	3 farmers
Create a term easement tax abatement program to provide incentives for farmland preservation.	5: 4 public, 1 farmer
Update the Village of Mexico's land use laws to optimize their farm-friendliness by, for example, updating definitions, expanding the Use Table to allow for more agricultural uses in certain areas, considering an ag overlay district, recognizing NYS Certified Ag District guidelines, adopting a subdivision law, and updating development standards in the R District to better harmonize housing with farming.	None
Adopt a Right to Farm Law for the Town of Mexico.	4 farmers
Work with land conservation organizations to establish a Community Land Trust to secure affordable farmland for new and existing farmers, and seek funding for area land trusts to appraise farmland and develop a base assessment of land and farm values.	12: 6 public, 6 farmers
Advocate for Oswego County to establish a matching grants program to leverage state farmland protection grants.	1 farmer
Encourage local landowners to participate in lease-to-own initiatives that gradually transfer ownership to young farmers.	7: 3 public, 4 farmers
Support landowners who want to participate in the New York State Farmland Protection Implementation Grants program.	3: 1 public, 2 farmers
Review bridge, road and wire specifications to ensure compliance with requirements for farm vehicles.	3 farmers

Draft Plan January 2026

DRAFT STRATEGY	Identify Your Top 3 Strategies by Placing Stickers Here
Prepare a townwide Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) to help mitigate the impact of projected growth and development on agriculture.	2 public
Establish an educational pipeline to introduce students in the Mexico Central School District to local agriculture and food production.	15: 5 public, 10 farmers
Enhance the CiTi BOCES Agricultural Studies program in Mexico.	18: 7 public, 11 farmers
Establish a new farmer mentoring program and agricultural training programs for young people with internships and apprenticeships.	8: 4 public, 4 farmers
Explore the use of shared labor among farm businesses.	2: 1 public, 1 farmer
Create a “Neighbor Relations” packet for farmers to share with their neighbors, with fact sheets on farming practices and the benefits of farms.	1 farmer
Create a campaign to promote Mexico as an attractive place where people can “experience” agriculture and purchase high-quality agricultural products.	11: 5 public, 6 farmers
Encourage County and regional tourism agencies to promote farms and other agricultural operations in existing tourism/recreational marketing efforts.	6: 3 public, 3 farmers
Create annual events and activities that celebrate local agriculture.	6: 2 public, 4 farmers
Advocate for increased funding for Cornell Cooperative Extension and other organizations to enhance their capacity to serve farmers.	2 farmers
Partner with agricultural support organizations to connect young and beginning farmers with farming opportunities in Mexico.	11: 5 public, 6 farmers
Encourage Mexico farms and orchards to become New York State Grown & Certified producers.	1 public

Draft Plan January 2026

DRAFT STRATEGY	Identify Your Top 3 Strategies by Placing Stickers Here
Support the development of a shared-use incubator kitchen for small-scale food processing to expand the market for local agricultural products.	3: 2 public, 1 farmer
Support agricultural businesses in pursuing funding for capital improvements, machinery and equipment, and facility expansion.	13: 4 public, 9 farmers
Consider participating in New York State’s Climate Smart Community Program.	1 public
Work with NRCS and Oswego County SWCD to promote climate-smart practices like cover cropping to manage late frosts, wet springs, and extreme weather.	2 farmers
Develop a directory of existing agricultural and non-agricultural technical assistance providers for farmers.	7: 3 public, 4 farmers
Develop a network of support service providers, such as mechanics, welders, tire companies, etc. that can provide services within the County.	10: 4 public, 6 farmers
Organize regular farmer meet-ups to share best practices, collaborative marketing ideas, and support common challenges.	6: 2 public, 4 farmers

What Other Ideas Do You Have to Strengthen Agriculture in Mexico?

- Harvest Guide to connect farmers to direct sales. There used to be one issued by CCE! Bring it back
- Keep solar out. Land used for solar may never be reconciled back into farmland
- Solar should not be sited on prime farmland
- Please consider % of ag farmlands – establishing amounts to be maintained in the land class. We do this for landscape forest planting. A. Brooks.
- Solar must be considered! Solar farms can support small livestock and bees. Reduce taxes!
- Land should not be drained. It has been a large environmental disaster over the past 150 years.

What Other Comments on Goals Do You Have?

- FFA and other ag programs available that are open to homeschoolers as well.

Draft Plan January 2026

- What is a right-to-farm law?
- What is residential with agriculture on Land Use Map?
- More access to leasable or purchasable land (postings of land on community boards).
- Will this plan put potential restrictions on what farmers do with their land?

SWOT Comments

- If solar is rejected, farmers should be compensated for differences in earnings.
- Farms before solar.
- Solar farms on non-productive land and use land under panels for root vegetable growth.
- Solar must be an option. Pays 10x what farming pays.
- Overhead costs are too much.
- Taxes are too high.
- No solar – toxic and raises everyone’s taxes.
- Keep solar off class 1 and 2 soils.
- Solar only on non-productive land.
- There is need to promote 4-H clubs.
- Keep solar off of land zoned for agriculture.
- Harvest Guide to connect residents to small farms.
- Allow Village residents to have farm animals. If needed, rules like needing X amount of land before they are able to have animals other than chickens would be appreciated.
- No more solar in Mexico.
- Ag education in K-12, besides BOCES.
- Many small farms and homesteads willing to sell products but not ‘able’ to sell at farmers markets – must connect direct to consumers.
- Have a town/community garden.
- No solar.

Meeting with Amish Farmers

The Committee desired to engage the Town's Amish community in the review and development of this Plan. As such, an October 22, 2025, meeting with Amish farmers took place and focused on reviewing the goals of the Town of Mexico Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan and discussing on-the-ground farming conditions and their future concerns. Participants expressed unanimous support for Goals 1–3 of this Plan and had strong agreement with goals related to youth education, positive neighbor relationships, crop and livestock diversity, and growth that remains compatible with agriculture. Discussion highlighted the importance of diversified farm enterprises to remain profitable, challenges posed by rising taxes and input costs, and generally positive experiences with local permitting, with some questions raised about requirements for sawmills. Farmers shared practical insights on crop profitability, disease pressures, roadside stands, transportation safety, and limitations related to insurance that affect options such as U-Pick operations and farmers' markets. The group also explored alternative marketing ideas, including auctions and a possible shared storefront, and briefly discussed emerging crop opportunities such as honey berries and kiwi berries.

Detailed SWOT

Strengths: What Do We Preserve and Build On?

- Access to markets from Fort Drum/Watertown to Syracuse; great area for agritourism
- Access to water for irrigation
- Ag protections
- Agritourism activities on some farms
- Availability of agricultural land
- CiTi BOCES Ag Program
- Contribution of agriculture to wildlife habitat and open space preservation
- Desire for more local farmstands and farmers' markets
- Direct-to-consumer sales of agricultural products, especially apples, berries, and fresh vegetables, at farmstands and farmers' markets
- Economic impact
- Informal supportive network of farms
- Involved community
- Farm and crop diversity; a diverse range of agricultural products, including dairy, vegetables, fruit, and livestock, among many others
- Farmstands and "pick-your-own" operations
- Good soils
- Good transportation
- Growing availability of fresh, healthy local foods
- High importance of agriculture to residents

Draft Plan January 2026

- Infrastructure exists to support agriculture
- Interest among local farmers in diversifying, expanding into new markets, and/or developing agritourism
- Location and presence of CCE
- Land costs are still low compared to other places; land diversity
- Location in County makes it a hub; Mexico is in close proximity to markets and major transportation routes (I-81 and Route 104, Route 11, and Route 3 and Route 69); many vacationers come here because of Lake Ontario
- Maintains the community's rural character
- Many farm associations and organizations such as SWCD, farm associations (Farm Bureau, Oswego Beef Producers, Bee Keeping Club, Christmas Tree group, Tug Hill, as well as USDA, FSA)
- Migration to Mexico because of climate changes (Great Lakes basin)
- Residents interested in buying local agricultural products
- Rural lifestyle
- Strong community identity and support for agriculture as part of rural character, open space and habitat
- Supports local jobs and the economy
- Some small-scale food and beverage processing (exists but needs more)
- Unique Mexico microclimate

Weaknesses: What Must We Overcome?

- A lack of clear marketing and promotional efforts for local agricultural products; people do not always know where to buy them
- Aging farm population and retiring farmers with no one to replace them
- Agricultural careers are less attractive to younger people
- Challenges in finding quality veterinary care for farm animals
- Competition from solar farm development; "Ground Zero" target of large-scale solar and mega power lines
- Difficulty accessing wholesale and institutional markets
- Difficulty obtaining financing
- Farmers not sure whether they are in the NYS Agricultural District
- Federal H2A program: politics, costs, and process are difficult
- High production costs: labor, fuel, fertilizer, etc.
- High property and school taxes
- Lack of animal processing facilities, value-added processing and shared-use facilities, and 20-C kitchen
- Lack of critical information on lands for development
- Lack of industries supportive of agriculture

Draft Plan January 2026

- Lack of labor availability; shortage of skilled and/or available agricultural labor, and challenges in finding reliable seasonal and year-round labor
- Lack of knowledge of land values to be used in grants and easements
- Lack of succession planning
- Limited direct sales of meat and poultry raised in Mexico
- Low farm profitability
- Most farms have annual sales of less than \$50,000 per year
- No mentoring program for new farmers
- Oswego County CCE is understaffed, and can only do so much
- Some difficulty in accessing financing and technical assistance
- Unclear whether municipal leaders support agriculture
- USDA local office is appointment only, so not as accessible
- Zoning and building regulations are perceived by some as restrictive for agricultural expansion

Opportunities: What Future Direction Inspires Us?

- Build potential to invite new agribusinesses to Town
- Capitalize on CiTi Agricultural Studies Program
- Collaborate with schools and institutions to source local farm products (Farm to Institution program)
- Create partnerships for winter markets and year-round agricultural retail and farmers market(s).
- Develop partners to open up communications and work with landowners (grants and programs)
- Develop programs to help farmers develop succession plans to maintain generational farming
- Develop value-added agricultural products (e.g., baked goods, sauces)
- Encourage diversified crops and small-scale food processing
- Expand agritourism as a way to diversify farm income
- Explore cooperative models for shared processing and marketing facilities
- Explore facilities that support agriculture
- Explore tax relief programs and grants specifically aimed at active farms
- Implement farmland protection plans and zoning adjustments to support farming
- Increase public awareness and education on the value of local agriculture.
- More marketing and promotion of direct sales and agritourism opportunities; promote local farm products through branding
- Provide maps and data resources to farmers, municipal decision makers, agencies, and organizations.
- Provide more technical and business planning assistance
- Use underutilized existing farmland for new farms

Threats: What Could Affect Us?

- Climate variability and extreme weather events that could impact crops
- Development pressure because of Micron

Draft Plan January 2026

- High cost of land driven by non-farm development interests
- High operational costs, including taxes, utilities, and equipment, and low return for products
- Invasive species (as the climate warms, there will be more)
- Lack of financial support for agriculture; lack of municipal funds
- Micron and wetland mitigation that uses ag lands in Mexico
- Non-farm growth and development that interferes with and doesn't support agriculture; solar farms and residential development that reduce available agricultural land
- Soil degradation and water quality
- State and federal regulations are perceived as overly restrictive for small farms

5. Marketing and Communications Plan



Situation

For well over 200 years, the Town and Village of Mexico (T&VM) have been a farming community. Mexico has extensive farmland, lakefront, an attractive village, and is internationally known by birders for an annual raptor migration. Mexico farms produce a wide variety of agricultural products, including dairy, fruit, vegetables, and livestock.

T&VM is well-positioned for access to and market growth in significant markets such as Syracuse, Oswego, and Watertown. On the other hand, it is faced with competing land uses such as solar farm developers, loss of farmland to mitigate the proposed Micron microchip plant in Clay and increased non-farm development. Another impact could be its close proximity to the Nine Mile nuclear power facility, which is visible from some of its lakefront viewshed.

The Town and Village are aligned and are forward-looking communities that have overarching goals of supporting viability and profitability for farms of all types, and enhancing the local food system, while protecting agricultural land and natural resources. Working together, the Town and Village are adopting a comprehensive Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan and are now ready to implement a marketing and communications campaign to help them meet their goals.

Campaign Description

The marketing and communications campaign will support the community's goals by building brand reputation and recognition, with tailored messages and actionable tactics to reach and influence target audiences to enhance farm profitability by informing, engaging, and encouraging:

- local residents to learn about the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan and about Mexico's agricultural heritage;
- local and regional consumers to become customers and advocates for the Town and Village of Mexico's direct-to-consumer agricultural products and agritourism experiences;
- institutional and business buyers about the scope, quality, and availability of T&VM agricultural products;
- prospective new farmers about quality farmland opportunities, government and other support programs, and Mexico's welcoming community, clean air, and water; and
- all audiences to participate in enhancing and growing the T&VM food system.

Campaign Position: Growing Together

The Town and Village of Mexico together are an up-and-coming farm-fresh food destination that is gaining recognition for the quality and variety of its agricultural products, grown and raised in good soil, fresh air, and clean water.

For well over two hundred years, the Town and Village of Mexico have been growing together, a striking example of alignment and cooperation. To honor its history and plan for an abundant future, the forward-looking community is committed to keeping farming “viable, visible, and vital, creating a Mexico where the land is productive, the people are connected, and agriculture continues to shape our landscape, livelihoods, and legacy.”

It is well located to expand into significant markets such as Syracuse, Oswego, and Watertown.

In addition to the wide variety of quality agricultural products, the Town and Village of Mexico has it all: scenic farmland, natural beauty, Lake Ontario for swimming, boating, fishing, and camping, ecotourism, equine, and agritourism opportunities, an attractive village, and a welcoming community.

Who are the prospective campaign target audiences?

The campaign is tailored to the communities of the Town and Village of Mexico, consumers, tourists, business and institutional buyers, and prospective new farmers. The campaign position “Growing Together” encapsulates the long history of agriculture and cooperation between Town and Village.

“Growing Together” can be tailored to apply to the following groups:

Local Residents

Main Messages:

- The campaign position “Growing Together” encapsulates the long history of cooperation between Town and Village working together to support agriculture and farmers.
- The new Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan demonstrates the commitment to farming as integral to future growth.
- Chart your own course: our new interactive, searchable “Growing Together for You” map invites local residents to explore where they can find specific items, enjoy agritourism, and plan their shopping. A static version is also available.

Draft Plan January 2026

- Rely on your local farmers for the freshest, most delicious farm products.
- Local pride: We have centuries of practice: The historic Town and Village of Mexico has been growing together for well over two hundred years. Taste and enjoy the benefits of our experience at our new farmers' market.
- Here are opportunities to participate as a farmer and/or community member.

Village & Town of Mexico Farmers and Agritourism Owners

Main Messages:

- The Town and Village are here to help.
- The new Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan demonstrates the commitment to farming as integral to future growth.
- Our new marketing plan aims to enhance farm viability and income.
- Our new interactive, searchable “Growing Together for You” map invites consumers and businesses to explore where they can find specific items, enjoy agritourism, and plan their visit. A static version is also available.
- We are promoting our agricultural products and agritourism to consumers, businesses, and institutional buyers.
- New York State agencies are required to purchase 30% of their food product from New York State producers by the end of 2027, and 25% in 2026. We can help connect you.
- Here are opportunities to participate as a farmer and/or agritourism owner.

Regional Direct Sale Consumers

Main Messages:

- The Town and Village of Mexico is an up-and-coming fresh food destination that is gaining recognition for the quality and variety of its agricultural products grown and raised in good soil, fresh air, and clean water.
- Fresh for you. Just up the road from Syracuse, Oswego, Watertown, etc., the Town and Village of Mexico has it all: farm-fresh food, farmland, and attractive towns, set in natural beauty on the shores of Lake Ontario.
- One Stop Shopping: Come to our farmers' market for a wide selection of farm-fresh delights.
- Chart your own course: our new interactive, searchable “Growing Together for You” map invites you to explore where you can find specific items, enjoy agritourism, and plan your visit. A static version is also available.
- The historic Town and Village of Mexico has been growing together for well over two hundred years. Taste and enjoy the benefits of our experience.

Tourists and Agritourism Farms Visitors

- Whether you are visiting us for swimming, boating, fishing, camping, ecotourism, agritourism, or our welcoming communities, we have something delicious for you.
- The Town and Village of Mexico is an up-and-coming fresh food destination that is gaining recognition for the quality and variety of its agricultural products grown and raised in good soil, fresh air, and clean water.
- Chart your own course: our new interactive, searchable “Growing Together for You” map invites you to explore where you can find specific items, enjoy agritourism, and plan your visit. A static version is also available.
- We have centuries of practice: The historic Town and Village of Mexico has been growing together for well over two hundred years. Taste and enjoy the benefits of our experience.

Institutional and Business Buyers

- The Town and Village of Mexico is fulfilling: We are the perfect source to help New York State agencies fulfill their requirement to purchase 30% of their food product from New York State producers by the end of 2027, and 25% in 2026.
- Get Fresh – our local farms are the best resource for the freshest, most delicious produce, meats, and dairy products for restaurants and other food businesses.
- We have developed a comprehensive list of farms available for wholesale purchase, their products, harvest dates, and contact information.
- Our new interactive, searchable “Growing Together for You” map invites you to explore where you can find specific items and plan your visit. A static version is also available.
- Contact us, and we will introduce you to the sources you need.
- We will support businesses using local farm products with a robust social media presence, attractive signage stating that your business proudly uses agricultural products grown, raised, or made in the Town and Village of Mexico.

What advantages does the Town and Village of Mexico have compared to other nearby areas?

Working together, the Town and Village are adopting a comprehensive Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan.

The new Farmers Market provides a firm foundation on which to build programs and experience with consumers and farmers alike.

Draft Plan January 2026

Agricultural products grown and raised in good soil, fresh air, and clean water in the township present consumers with a wide variety of options available at a single convenient location, as well as at individual farms.

Mexico is well located to expand into significant markets in nearby towns and cities.

The Town and Village of Mexico has a dedicated brand and marketing plan that will promote agricultural products and the proud community that produces them.

The historic Town and Village of Mexico has been growing together for well over two hundred years. Taste and enjoy the benefits of our experience.

What does the campaign offer, and what sets it apart from the competition?

The campaign offers engaging experiences developed specifically for prospective customers as they plan and access farm-fresh foods and agritourism opportunities in beautiful surroundings. The campaign is presented in a modern, innovative, and engaging way to help farms become more sustainable and enhance their economic viability.

Those experiences include:

- Interactive, searchable “Growing Together for You” map inviting consumers to explore where they can find specific items, enjoy agritourism, and plan their visit, and a static version that can be included in brochures and other materials.
- Your perfect day in Mexico, New York, brochure and website page, with shopping for farm products as the focus, also outlining cool and fun things to do and see along the way. This could also potentially include restaurants using locally grown or raised ingredients. Website visitors can select destinations to create their own itinerary or choose suggested itineraries.
- Robust online presence including a dedicated YouTube channel, with recipes and pro tips from the farmers themselves, and local chefs.
- Brand ambassador gear
- Opportunities for customers to add their farm photos to an online gallery.

What impressions do we want these consumers to come away with?

Did you taste those blueberries? Wow!

Everything tastes so much better when picked ripe.

The short drive to Mexico/the Farmers’ Market/ the individual farm was time well spent.

What a beautiful area, farmland and majestic Lake Ontario

Great quality and variety at every stop we made.

I can’t wait to tell my friends.

Draft Plan January 2026

Our kids loved visiting the farms and meeting the farmers.

Everyone was friendly and welcoming.

We'll be back.

I love my new tote bag.

I love farmer's markets and really love that I can use my SNAP benefits.

I can't wait to cook with these great ingredients.

Yum!

How do we make consumers into brand ambassadors?

New fans are the best brand ambassadors because they can tell their peers that they “discovered” a product, service, or location. It's the same concept as being the first in your group to travel to some below-the-radar spot. Brand Ambassadors become the expert voice in their group.

Shopping bags and totes are emblems that early fans are proud to carry

Brand Ambassador Gear

- Distribute branded Shopping Totes to participating farmers to offer to consumers free with purchase of \$50 or more. Social media can include a list of farms where the totes are available as a “gift with purchase” while supplies last, encouraging shopping.
- Paper shopping bags distributed free with purchase while supply lasts, as appropriate.
- Peel-and-stick labels applied to merchandise as appropriate., approximately 2.5” x 2.5.”
- Signage for farmstands: 9” x 12” laminated easel-backed for counter display, with alternate hook for hanging.
- Additional gear: bumper stickers, decals.



Draft Plan January 2026

Initial Tactics

- Involve, engage, and inspire area direct-sale farmers, producers, and agritourism operators to support and participate in the marketing campaign.
- Know your products. Request farmers to provide anticipated harvest or production dates, anticipated quantities for use with institutional and business buyers, as well as social media. See Farmers' Intro Packet and Questionnaire below.
- Build an interactive, searchable "Growing Together for You" map inviting consumers and business buyers to explore where they can find specific items, enjoy agritourism, and plan their visit. A static version that can be included in brochures and other materials.
- Develop and staff volunteer or intern opportunities, such as Social Media Specialist, to involve local youth and students.
- Consider expanding the Farmers' Market to include Saturdays, or shift to Saturdays when people are free to shop
- Consider starting a CSA (Consumer Supported Agriculture). This could start small and locally and evolve to include drop-off points in Syracuse, Oswego, and Watertown.
- Consider starting a Farm Stop, a year-round market that supports local farmers and strengthens community-based local food systems. Farm Stops typically offer a wide variety of primarily local products year-round. This allows farmers to deliver products on their schedule and offers consumers variety and convenience. See the attached article.
- Sponsor one large event, or a series of smaller events, to introduce the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan to the community and introduce farmers to their neighbors. Events could be a town-wide block party, blind tastings, and the best recipe with local products. Invite local media to broadcast or live stream from the event.
- Create a robust online presence:
 - Involve students and local youth as volunteer or intern Social Media Specialists. This is their turf.
 - Add a separate website URL that can be reached directly as well as through mexicony.org, for searchability, focused on the Growing Together position.
 - Coordinate/update content on the website with social media.
 - Engage your online audience by adding live streaming events, farm visits, interviews with farmers, etc.

Draft Plan January 2026

- Meet the Farmers – Add personality to the campaign with photos, short videos and quotes from featured farmers about their products, their farms, and the Growing Together campaign.

Target Audiences and Messages

Group 1: Local Residents

Why would local consumers want to visit and shop Town and Village of Mexico farms?

- Flavor, quality, freshness, nutrition, convenience, variety, SNAP benefit, supporting local agriculture, local pride

Tactics

Town and Village farms are “right next door” but may not be a local consumer’s first choice. Influencing them to buy directly from local farms and participate in other agritourism activities can come from numerous directions, including personal contact with farmers through schools and local organizations, outreach to local media, out-of-home advertising (mall advertising and billboards), robust social media presence, campaign signage, and local print advertising.

- Introduce local residents to neighboring farmers through “Meet Your Farmer” programs and events for public schools, colleges, and adults, including a sampling of farmers’ products. Focus programs on flavor with tastings of local fresh products. Encourage local media to attend tastings.
- Link local schools, 4-H Clubs, Girl Scouts, and Boy Scouts to Junior Cook-Off and farm visit programs using local ingredients, with media coverage.
- Plan social media around the theme “My Hometown is Delicious” and promote individual farms, farmers, and their products, with short video clips or photos, linking to the new interactive map.
- Through social media, promote the interactive, searchable “Growing Together for You” map, inviting local consumers to explore where they can find specific items, enjoy discounts, and plan their shopping.
- Lean into local pride with testimonials from residents to appear on social media, such as “I buy fresh local food from Town and Village of Mexico farmers because...”

Draft Plan January 2026

- Plan out-of-home advertising such as mall ads and billboards, with the message “Get Fresh just up the road! Shop the farms of Mexico, NY.”
- Offer attractive totes to shoppers spending \$50 or more per farm. Also provide participating farmers with shopping bags, peel-and-stick labels to add to purchases, decals, and bumper stickers, proudly displaying the Village & Town of Mexico logo and tag line “Growing Together.”
- Provide farmers with “SNAP Accepted Here” signage where appropriate. 9” x 12” laminated easel-backed for counter display, with alternate hook for hanging. Include SNAP info in interactive map.
- Build a YouTube channel dedicated to the Village & Town of Mexico farms and farmers with video categories such as Meet Your Farmer, farm tours, school activities, cooking, and expert advice from the farmers.
- Pitch interviews and stories in local and regional media outlets highlighting farm specialties, history, and pro tips from farmers.
- Place ads in select local and regional print and online publications.

Media Outreach

- Announce the marketing program along with the adoption of the Agriculture and Farmland Protection plan, via a press release to local and regional outlets, detailing the initiative and how the Town and Village of Mexico farmers are being supported.
- Offer media opportunities to interview participating farmers about the importance of this program to help increase agricultural income while expanding recognition of their farm and its products.

Group 2: Regional Direct-Sale Consumers

- Through social media, promote the interactive, searchable “Growing Together for You” map, inviting regional consumers to explore where they can find specific items, enjoy discounts, and plan their shopping, with the message “Get Fresh just up the road! Shop the farms of Mexico, NY.”
- Consider starting a CSA initially to deliver to one drop-off point in Syracuse that can be expanded to additional locations as it grows. Build the customer base through social media.

Draft Plan January 2026

- If Mexico farms participate in other regional farmers markets, provide them with signage indicating that they are proud Mexico farmers, pitching customers to visit the Town and Village farmers market and “Growing Together” website.
- Provide the farmers with logo T-shirts and a supply of totes, shopping bags, etc.
- Consider paid media on Facebook and Instagram targeting specific consumer groups, with a short video of the busy new farmers market and bountiful products, with the message “The short drive to the farmers market was time well spent.” Posts link to the “Growing Together” website and interactive map.
- Plan out-of-home advertising such as mall ads and billboards, with the message “Get Fresh just up the road! Shop the farms of Mexico, NY.”
- Offer attractive totes to shoppers spending \$50 or more per farm. Also provide participating farmers with shopping bags, peel-and-stick labels to add to purchases, decals, and bumper stickers, proudly displaying the Village & Town of Mexico logo and tag line “Growing Together.”
- Promote the tote “gift with purchase” on social media.
- Pitch interviews and stories in local and regional media outlets highlighting farm specialties, history, and pro tips from farmers.
- Cross-promote with restaurants and chefs using local farm products, share recipes.
- Place ads in select local and regional print and online publications.

Group 3: Institutional and Business Customers

- Research target institutions and business buyers in easy reach of the township. This includes New York State Agencies, SUNY campuses, restaurants, and food businesses.
- Know your product: Prepare and provide Institutional and business customers with a comprehensive list of farms available for wholesale, their products, harvest dates, anticipated volume, and contact information.
- Contact prospective buyers at State agencies to outline the possibilities of buying from Mexico farms. The Town and Village of Mexico is the perfect source to help New York State agencies fulfill their requirement to purchase 30% of their food product from New York State producers by the end of 2027, and 25% in 2026.

Draft Plan January 2026

- Contact other potential business customers with the message: Get Fresh – our local farms are the best resource for the freshest, most delicious produce, meats, and dairy products for restaurants and other food businesses.
- Include participating businesses in the new interactive, searchable “Growing Together for You” map.
- Support participating businesses with a robust social media presence, attractive signage stating that the business proudly uses agricultural products grown, raised, or made in the Town and Village of Mexico.
- Cross-promote with restaurants and chefs using local farm products, share recipes, and stage tasting events.

Group 4: Farmers, Producers, Agritourism Operators

- Reach out to farmers, producers, and agritourism owners to engage and promote participation in the campaign. Contact this group ahead of all other groups to outline the campaign and its benefits to participating agricultural operations.
- Include participating farms, their products, and tourist activities on our Interactive map that consumers can access from multiple websites. A static print version will be available as well.
- Clearly state that the aligned, forward-looking communities of both the town and village have overarching goals of supporting viability and profitability for farms of all types, and enhancing the local food system, while protecting agricultural land and natural resources. Working together, the Town and Village are adopting a comprehensive Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan and are now ready to implement a marketing and communications campaign.
- To build enthusiasm, provide farmers, producers, and agritourism owners with a “sneak peek” of the campaign. This could be done in person as a meeting or online.
- Request farmers, producers, and agritourism owners to complete a questionnaire with information about their products, anticipated harvest dates, anticipated volume, and availability for “grow to order” business.
- Inform farmers and business owners that to draw customers to farms and businesses, the Town and Village will provide marketing material, brochures, social media, websites,

Draft Plan January 2026

advertising, and brand gear, including “Growing Together” tee shirts, caps, shopping bags, totes, and peel-and-stick labels, at no cost to participate.

Group 5: New Farmer Prospects

- Build a clear, concise description of why farmers should consider Mexico, New York, including the benefits the Town and Village can provide to new farms in the township.
- Research and list local, state, and regional programs that support the establishment of new farms to share with prospects.
- Reach out to Ag schools and Ag Programs (SUNY Cobleskill, Cornell, etc.), requesting an online or in-person meeting to outline the opportunity and discuss potential candidates.
- Provide a list of currently available farmland properties to provide as examples.
- Prepare an info packet for new farmer candidates, including an overview of the marketing campaign developed specifically to support and enhance the income of agricultural businesses in the Town and Village, and information on the Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan.
- Plan and purchase spots on Ag Radio broadcasting in surrounding counties.

Social Media Themes

- “Growing Together for You”: The historic Town and Village of Mexico have been growing together for well over two hundred years. Taste and enjoy the benefits of our experience.
- The Town and Village of Mexico is an up-and-coming fresh food destination that is gaining recognition for the quality and variety of its agricultural products grown and raised in good soil, fresh air, and clean water.
- Promote the interactive, searchable “Growing Together for You” map, inviting regional consumers to explore where they can plan a perfect day in Mexico, NY,” find specific items, enjoy discounts, and plan their shopping, with the message “Get Fresh just up the road! Shop the farms of Mexico, NY, and “Your Guide to Delicious in Mexico, New York.”
- “Chart Your Own Course”: our new interactive, searchable “Growing Together for You” map invites consumers to plan a perfect day in Mexico, NY, explore where they can find specific items, and enjoy agritourism.

Draft Plan January 2026

- “Fresh For You”: Just up the road from Syracuse, Oswego, Watertown, the Town and Village of Mexico has it all: farm-fresh food, farmland, and attractive towns, set in natural beauty on the shores of Lake Ontario.
- Whether you are visiting us for swimming, boating, fishing, camping, ecotourism, agritourism, or our welcoming communities, we have something delicious for you.
- Promote the tote “gift with purchase” and other brand ambassador gear.
- “Meet the Farmers” Add personality to the campaign with photos, short videos, and quotes from featured farmers about their products, their farms, and the Growing Together campaign.
- “My Hometown is Delicious”: Lean into local pride with testimonials from residents to appear on social media, such as “I buy fresh local food from Town and Village of Mexico farmers because...” promote individual farms, farmers, and their products, with short video clips or photos, linking to the new interactive map.
- Consumer Farm Photo Gallery: encourage consumers to send photos of their visit to area farms and post them to their social media.
- Harvest Calendar: inside scoop on the best times and locations for your favorites
- Are You Picky: pick-your-own farms and dates for the savvy shopper
- What’s Cooking: Recipes or testimonials from area chefs using local ingredients
- Recipes from the Farm: provided by the farmers. These could be the basis of a “Meet Your Farmer” event with a cook-off.

Farm and Agritourism Campaign Introduction Letter and Response Request

The information below is intended to be sent in letter format on Town and Village letterhead with a postage-paid return envelope, as well as by email, when possible, with a link to complete the questionnaire online.

The campaign logo should be featured prominently on the first page of the letter.

Draft Plan January 2026

Dear (Farmer or Producer Name Here):

The Town and Village of Mexico is committed to helping agriculture grow and flourish. Together, we are adopting an agricultural and farmland protection plan that prioritizes support for farms and agritourism. As part of the plan, we are excited to introduce the Growing Together campaign, developed to assist you in increasing your direct-to-consumer sales to enhance farm profitability, and we hope you will want to participate.

For well over 200 years, the Town and Village of Mexico has had a strong farming community and is now well-positioned for market growth in significant markets such as Syracuse, Oswego, and Watertown. The Town and Village of Mexico have overarching goals of supporting viability and profitability for farms of all types, and enhancing the local food system, while protecting agricultural land and natural resources. Working together, the Town and Village are adopting a comprehensive Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan and are now ready to implement a marketing and communications campaign.

Growing Together focuses on promoting the farms, producing a broad array of edible products, and the agritourism and equine opportunities offered throughout our township. We are getting the word out to folks near and far to help draw customers to your products or agritourism activity. In addition to helping build your consumer business, we are opening doors to institutional and business buyers. Did you know that New York State agencies, including SUNY schools, are required to purchase 30% of their food product from New York State producers by the end of 2027, and 25% in 2026. We can help connect you.

To plan for an abundant future, we are committed to keeping farming viable, visible, and vital, creating a Mexico where the land is productive, the people are connected, and agriculture continues to shape our landscape, livelihoods, and legacy.

And the best news: there is no cost to participate in the program!

What participation can do for your farm.

To draw customers to your farm and farmers' market, Growing Together will include your farm in marketing material, brochures, social media, websites, and advertising. We'll provide you with Growing Together tee shirts, signs, shopping bags, totes, and peel-and-stick labels at no cost to you.

Your farm, its products, and tourist activities will be included in our **Interactive map** that consumers can access from multiple websites.

Draft Plan January 2026

If you are seeking institutional and business clients, we are here to help. Your products can open the door to other agritourism opportunities, including farm tours, hayrides, glamping, farm stays, pick-your-own days, and so much more. The possibilities are endless. Tell us about your agritourism ventures so we can help promote your farm.

How to participate

Participation is simple, and there is no cost to you. Please answer a few quick questions below, or online at mexicony/farmers.org, or call (XXX) XXX XXXX for more information. We'll take it from there and keep you updated on progress.

Your name _____

Your email address _____

Name of farm _____

Farm mailing address _____

Farm website _____

Contact phone number _____

Farm product sales address if different _____

What do you grow, make, or raise? _____

What do you consider your specialty? _____

Do you currently sell direct to consumers? _____

At your address? _____ At a farmer's market? _____ Location _____ Other? _____

Are you interested in developing institutional and business sales? _____

If yes, for what products, anticipated harvest date, anticipated quantities?

Draft Plan January 2026

Are you currently selling to institutional and business customers, products, and approximate quantities?

Has your farm won any awards, blue ribbons, local baking or cooking competitions, or best-in-show recognition? Don't be shy, brag a little. We are building an Award Winners Shopping Trail that you can be part of.

Do you offer agritourist activities, such as corn mazes, petting animals, or others? Please tell us more.

What days, locations, and hours can customers purchase or participate in tourist activities?

Do you have photos of your farm or farm-based selfies that you would like to share in our marketing materials? Please let us know, and we'll contact you.

Thank you very much.

Contact information

Consumer Brochure

The content outline below is intended to be presented as a brochure in a four-panel format to fit a #10 envelope. The static map described below will appear on the interior face of the brochure as the main feature. Other images can appear on both the interior and the exterior faces.

Brochure Cover

Headline: Get Fresh: Delicious is Just Up The Road

Sub-head with logo: Village & Town of Mexico: Growing Together For You Since 1794

Visit Mexicony/delicious.org

Copy direction:

The historic Town and Village of Mexico has been growing together for well over two hundred years. Taste and enjoy the benefits of our experience.

Visual Direction:

Farmers market photo or produce photo.

Inset: Visit mexicony/delicious

Interior copy direction:

- The Town and Village of Mexico is an up-and-coming fresh food destination that is yours to discover. Our outstanding array of delicious edibles are grown and raised in good soil, fresh air, and clean water.
- Get Fresh. Just up the road, we have it all for you: farm-fresh food, farmland, and attractive towns, set in natural beauty on the shores of Lake Ontario.
- One Stop Shopping: Come to our farmers' market for a wide selection of farm-fresh delights.
- Chart your own course: our new interactive, searchable "Growing Together for You" map invites you to explore where you can find specific items, enjoy agritourism, and plan your visit.
- We have centuries of practice: The historic Town and Village of Mexico has been growing together for well over two hundred years. Taste and enjoy the benefits of our experience.
- Whether you are visiting us for swimming, boating, fishing, camping, ecotourism, agritourism, or our welcoming communities, we have something delicious for you.

Interior visual direction:

Abundant produce, farm, and farmer photo, tote bag overflowing with produce.

Draft Plan January 2026

Map page copy direction:

Chart your own course: our new interactive, searchable “Growing Together for You” map invites you to explore where you can find specific items, enjoy agritourism, and plan your visit. This map will get you started.

List of participating agricultural businesses.

Map visual direction:

Static map

Inset: Visit mexicony/delicious

Back cover copy direction:

About the Town and Village of Mexico, New York

The Town and Village of Mexico together are an up-and-coming farm-fresh food destination that offers quality and variety of its agricultural products, grown and raised in good soil, fresh air, and clean water. For well over two hundred years, the Town and Village of Mexico have been growing together, a striking example of alignment and cooperation.

Whether you are visiting us for swimming, boating, fishing, camping, ecotourism, agritourism, or our welcoming communities, we have something delicious for you.

To honor our history and plan for an abundant future, our forward-looking community is committed to keeping farming “viable, visible, and vital, creating a Mexico where the land is productive, the people are connected, and agriculture continues to shape our landscape, livelihoods, and legacy.”

Contact information

Inset: Visit mexicony/delicious

Back cover visual direction:

Abundant produce, farm, and farmer photo, tote bag overflowing with produce.

Campaign Website

The content outline below is intended to be presented as a freestanding website, accessible via its own URL mexicony/delicious.org or mexicony.org

Home page

Headline: Get Fresh: Delicious is Just Up The Road

Sub-head with logo: Village & Town of Mexico: Growing Together For You Since 1794

Copy direction:

- The historic Town and Village of Mexico has been growing together for well over two hundred years. Taste and enjoy the benefits of our experience.
- The Town and Village of Mexico is an up-and-coming fresh food destination that is yours to discover. Our outstanding array of delicious edibles are grown and raised in good soil, fresh air, and clean water.
- Get Fresh. Just up the road, we have it all for you: farm-fresh food, farmland, and attractive towns, set in natural beauty on the shores of Lake Ontario.
- One Stop Shopping: Come to our farmers' market for a wide selection of farm-fresh delights.
- Chart your own course: our new interactive, searchable "Growing Together for You" map invites you to explore where you can find specific items, enjoy agritourism, and plan your visit.
- We have centuries of practice: The historic Town and Village of Mexico has been growing together for well over two hundred years. Taste and enjoy the benefits of our experience.
- Whether you are visiting us for swimming, boating, fishing, camping, ecotourism, agritourism, or our welcoming communities, we have something delicious for you.

Visual Direction:

Farmers market, abundant produce, farm, and farmer photo, tote bag overflowing with produce.

Social Media:

Social media feeds on page

Map page copy direction:

Chart your own course: our new interactive, searchable "Growing Together for You" map invites you to explore where you can find specific items, enjoy agritourism, and plan your visit. This map will get you started.

List of participating agricultural businesses.

Draft Plan January 2026

Map page visual direction:

Photos of Mexico, NY farms, and farmers, abundant produce, a tote bag overflowing with produce.

Social Media:

Social media feeds on page

About page copy direction:

About the Town and Village of Mexico, New York

The Town and Village of Mexico together are an up-and-coming farm-fresh food destination that offers quality and variety of its agricultural products, grown and raised in good soil, fresh air, and clean water. For well over two hundred years, the Town and Village of Mexico have been growing together, a striking example of alignment and cooperation.

Whether you are visiting us for swimming, boating, fishing, camping, ecotourism, agritourism, or our welcoming communities, we have something delicious for you.

To honor our history and plan for an abundant future, our forward-looking community is committed to keeping farming “viable, visible, and vital, creating a Mexico where the land is productive, the people are connected, and agriculture continues to shape our landscape, livelihoods, and legacy.”

Contact information

Social Media:

Social media feeds on page

Campaign Timeline

Start date TBD based on when marketing materials are produced and ready for distribution. The timeline below is based on a target launch date of April 2026.

Pre-Launch

- Determine which elements the campaign will include in its first year.
- Distribute farmer’s intro packet and questionnaire, compile responses.
- Produce interactive map, website, consumer brochure, and selected campaign elements for the first year, including advertising, brand gear (shopping bags, totes, labels, signs).

Draft Plan January 2026

Campaign Month 1

- Launch and promote campaign website with interactive map.
- Press release to announce campaign to local and regional media outlets. Send a tote to each media outlet.
- Distribute signage, shopping bags, totes, and peel-and-stick labels to participating farms.
- Distribute consumer brochure at farmer's markets, to farmers to give to shoppers, at community events, and other high traffic venues.
- Launch social media campaign.
- Launch print and digital ad campaign in local and regional outlets.
- Launch Out-of-Home advertising, including billboards and malls.

Campaign Month 2

- Launch "Meet Your Farmer" program at local schools, with one or two appearances.
- Expand social media.
- Continue out-of-home advertising, including billboards and mall ads.
- Continue print and digital campaign.
- Launch the YouTube channel with videos including Meet Your Farmer selfies, farm tours, school activities, cooking, expert advice from the farmers, testimonials from consumers, etc.

Campaign Month 3

- Expand the "Meet Your Farmer" program at local schools, senior centers, and SUNY students
- Expand social media topics to include "What's Cooking," "Recipes from the Farm," and "Pro Tips"
- Continue out-of-home advertising, including billboards and mall ads.

Draft Plan January 2026

- Continue print and digital campaign.

Campaign Month 4 – 6

- Based on an April 2026 campaign commencement, continue all initiatives into early October and adjust for seasonality.
- Based on an April 2026 campaign commencement, in late October, pause media advertising, public relations, and events

Campaign Month 7 – 8

- Survey and analyze results from farmers.
- Review consumer comments
- Adjust campaign as needed

Campaign Month 9 – 12

- Prepare for the launch of the second year of the campaign