

# **Town and Village of Seneca Falls**

## **Visioning Workshop Summary**

The development of a shared vision statement is an important element of the comprehensive planning process. It will help to ensure the long-term success of Seneca Falls. The vision statement is used to judge future policies, programs, and actions, and also acts as a “consistency test” for decisions made at the local level. Visioning is a strategic tool that will help Seneca Falls:

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

The Town and Village of Seneca Falls hosted two visioning workshops on September 27, 2004. Participants worked through a brainstorming process to develop a vision statement for the future of the community. The first step was to identify both negative and positive elements of the Town. These elements, or factors, were recorded, and then ranked by the individual groups by placing a "priority" sticker next to the one factor each group member felt was the most significant. The group then developed ways the community could attempt to build on the strong factors, and overcome the weak factors.

The ideas generated through the visioning process were organized into similar categories by each group, and a short summary, or sentence was written regarding that group. These sentences were then combined into a vision statement describing what Seneca Falls would look like twenty years from now.

## Negative and Positive Elements

The following tables categorize all of the negative and positive factors identified along with the number of priority stickers each category received at this first stage of the visioning process and the number of times each element was mentioned. The category totals are in the left column, while totals for sub-groups within each major category are identified in the two columns on the right.

On the Negative side, by far the most often mentioned, and most highly prioritized factors had to do with business and industry, and its effect on current and future employment. This was followed by factors regarding Aesthetics, People and Community, Government, and Taxes. The least mentioned negative factors had to do with Youth and Schools, Senior Services, Police, Infrastructure, and Planning and Zoning.

On the positive side, History was most often mentioned, and given the highest number of priority stickers, followed by Quality of Life, Location, and Culture. Rural Character and Safety also rated high on the list of positive features to protect and build on. The least mentioned positive factors were Infrastructure, Emergency Services, Planning and Zoning, and Agriculture.

### ***Negative Factors Identified by the Workshop Participants:***

Category	Negative Factors Identified	Priority Stickers	Total Responses
<b>Business and Industry</b> 22 priority stickers, mentioned 61 times	Town and Village: Loss of jobs, Inability to retain & attract industry, Lack of industry & employment, Lack of employment opportunity, Lack of quality jobs, Loss of industry, Gould's – feeling of insecurity, Need to work with Gould's to keep jobs, Lack of use – industrial park, Unable to retain young people Just Village: No employment for next generation	11	15
	Town and Village: Lack of marketing, Lack of publicity, Apathy for revitalization effort, Lack of economic development, More advertising – Women's Rights, Living in the past economically, Long term economic forecast, Capitalize Empire Farm Days, Docking issues – no advertisement, Lack of amenities for tourists, Tourism support, Not attracting major retailers, Not enough small businesses, Stores need to be clean & inviting, Better collaboration with economic development and county Just Village: No small business vibrancy, Stores closed nights & weekends, Tourism, Women's Hall of Fame location not known Just Town: Need to have more attractions	8	22
	Town and Village: Better presence of wineries, Capitalize on wineries/ restaurants, Diversity of restaurants, Lack of chain restaurants, Empty storefronts, Need Movie Theater, Lack of overnight accommodation, No dry cleaners, Lack of full service health care, Lack of hospice facility, No public restrooms available Just Village : Lack of business on Sunday, Visitor Center hours, Visitor Center location, Loss of retail,	2	19
	Town and Village: Indian gas stations, Wal-Mart expansion Just Village: No local emergency health care, Smelly bars, Tear down Luigi's old store	1	5

Category	Negative Factors Identified	Priority Stickers	Total Responses
<b>Aesthetics</b> 9 priority stickers mentioned 36 times	Town and Village: Properties that should be condemned (unkempt), Canal front, Sidewalks in disrepair Just Village: Addressing neglected properties/ facades, Property repair, Fund to fix up homes, Clean up Ferras Rumsey Street, Building backs downtown, Rear of stores on canal, Lack sidewalks, Sidewalks in disrepair, Tear down Irish Rooming house, Not a crowd pleaser, Abandoned properties	9	26
	Town and Village: Lack of landscape beautification, Replacing removed trees, Sculpture trail needs, Town entries into village, Put mufflers on loud motorcycles, Barking dogs, Planting of sugar maples Just Village: Fencing at bridge, Take signs down when space vacates, Trash pickup, public lax	0	10
<b>People and Community</b> 8 priority stickers mentioned 22 times	Town and Village: Attitude, Unsubstantiated prejudices, Indian land claim, Not a diversity of people Just Village: Community apathy, Lack of community spirit/Volunteerism, Rumors	7	13
	Town and Village: Small parades, Just Village: Community doesn't support downtown	1	2
	Town and Village: Connection of NYC to village/ town, Heighten recognition of women's rights, Need community calendar, No "Falls" history, Summer in flux	0	5
	Town and Village: Loitering Just Village: Bad neighborhood	0	2
<b>Government</b> 6 priority stickers mentioned 14 times	Town and Village: Village in town board initiative, No networking with other towns/villages	3	3
	Town and Village: Too much government Just Village: Problem in Albany	2	2
	Town and Village: Better communication with public, No info office, Lack of open communication between city and town, Bad political history, Political squabbling Just Town: Board members don't always do jobs	1	6
	Just Village: Inconsistent trash & recycling schedule, Laws – tree cutting - blocking stop signs, Roaming pets	0	3
<b>Taxes/Tax Base</b> 6 priority stickers mentioned 10 times	Town and Village: High taxes Just Town: High taxes Just Village: Village taxes too high	6	8
	Town and Village: Perception we are highly subsidized, Sharing of county sales tax	0	2
<b>Environment</b> 5 priority stickers Mentioned 6 times	Town and Village: Landfill	5	3
	Town and Village: Pollution Just Village: Mosquitoes, Salt from snow melts at canal	0	3
<b>Recreation</b> 4 priority stickers mentioned 13 times	Town and Village: No entertainment for young, Lack of activities for teens, Lack of recreation, Lack of outdoor music Just Town: Unorganized community center programs	2	5
	Town and Village: Not enough use of canal, Underutilization of waterfront, Lack of boater facilities Just Town: Comfort station on canal Just Village: Lack of harbormaster	1	5

Category	Negative Factors Identified	Priority Stickers	Total Responses
	Town and Village: No cohesion between State Park town and village, Park doesn't engage community as well as it should	1	2
	Just Village: Poor park downtown	0	1
<b>Traffic/Transportation</b> 2 priority stickers mentioned 14 times	Town and Village: Heavy truck traffic downtown, Heavy traffic Just Village: Downtown traffic	2	5
	Town and Village: Lack of streetlights Just Town: Street sign Just Village: Lack of directional signs, Parking, should have widened fixed streets	0	5
	Town and Village: Lack of public transportation	0	2
	Town and Village: Drive from Thruway, Speeding	0	2
<b>Planning/Zoning</b> 1 priority sticker Mentioned 10 times	Just Village: Consistency on historic district decisions, Historic preservation guideline management different approach (funding)	1	2
	Town and Village: Low income housing, Need more diverse housing Just Village: Lack of upscale apartments, Too much low rentals	0	4
	Town and Village: Better development of corridors, Too eager for any type of development	0	2
	Lack of regional planning, Focus too narrow (confined to SF)	0	2
<b>Infrastructure</b> 1 priority stickers mentioned 9 times	Town and Village: Antiquated infrastructures, Sewer & water downsizing budget, Sewer on 318, Replace drain ditches with curbs Just Town : Canal cleaning Just Village: Obsolete sewer system, Odor from sewer treatment	1	7
	Town and Village: Just Village: Municipal electric company	0	2
<b>Police</b> 1 priority sticker Mentioned 4 times	Town and Village: Open drug dealing Just Village: Lack of police presence downtown, Fear of losing village police	1	4
<b>Senior Services</b> 1 priority sticker Mentioned 3 times	Town and Village: Assisted living Just Village: Lack of senior citizen housing	1	3
<b>Youth and schools</b> No priority stickers Mentioned 10 times	Town and Village: School consolidation, School merger Lack of control by school system, Underutilization of school system, School district auxiliary services	0	4
	Town and Village: Brain drain of youth, Don't involve college enough	0	2
	Town and Village: Lack of youth activities. Just Village: Kids in road – bikes, boards, Roller blades & bicycling on Fall St	0	4

### ***Positive Factors Identified by the Workshop Participants***

Category	Positive Factors Identified	Priority Stickers	Total Responses
<b>History</b> 13 priority stickers mentioned 30 times	Town and Village: History, Historical significance	7	7
	Town and Village: Historic district, Architecture Just Village: Historic structures, Trinity Church	3	9

Category	Positive Factors Identified	Priority Stickers	Total Responses
	Town and Village: national reputation, National historical landmark, National birthplace of Women's rights, Women's rights trail	3	7
	Town and Village: Historical society, Preservation Just Village: Historical society, Excellent preservation guidelines	0	5
	Just Village: Wonderful Life connection	0	2
<b>Quality of Life</b> 10 priority stickers mentioned 19 times	Town and Village: Quality of Life, Good place to raise family, Great place to live entire life, Relaxed atmosphere, Comfortable, Low cost of living, Property/ real estate reasonable	8	9
	Town and Village: Beautiful downtown, Good neighborhoods, Amenities to attract newcomers Just Village: Attractive downtown, Clean village	2	6
	Town and Village: Climate, Christmas, Technology Just Village: Infrastructure getting better	0	4
<b>Location</b> 6 priority stickers mentioned 22 times	Town and Village: Statewide & regional location, Location, Finger Lakes location, Central location, Access to upstate cities	6	11
	Town and Village: Proximity of Thruway, Airport access	0	5
	Town and Village: Proximity to wineries, Access to Montezuma,	0	2
	Town and Village: Proximity to Watkins Glen, Proximity to Auburn	0	2
	Town and Village: Access shopping, Proximity to outlet	0	2
<b>Culture</b> 6 priority stickers mentioned 21 times	Town and Village: Library Just Village: Library	3	8
	Town and Village: Community center Just Village: Community center	2	5
	Town and Village: Museums Just Village: Waterways Museum	1	5
	Town and Village: Sculpture trail, Festivals	0	3
<b>Rural Character</b> 6 priority stickers mentioned 7 times	Town and Village: Small town atmosphere, Small town life, Small town ideals	6	7
<b>Safety</b> 6 priority stickers mentioned 7 times	Town and Village: Safety, Lack of crime Just Village: SF police force	6	7
<b>Natural Resources</b> 4 priority stickers mentioned 13 times	Town and Village: Canal, Seneca/ Cayuga waterway, NYCC, Just Village: Canal	3	10
	Town and Village: Good water supply	1	1
	Town and Village: Lakes, Water	0	2
<b>People/Sense of Community</b> 3 priority stickers mentioned 33 times	Town and Village: Still has sense of place, Civic pride, Community bonding, Churches – all denominations	2	8
	Town and Village: Skilled people, Diverse population, Musical talent, Artisans local, Talented trades people, Amish population, Excellent pool of volunteers, Political diversity, Residential & VIP visitors	1	12
	Town and Village: Community warmth, Accepting & friendly people, Neighborly atmosphere, Positive residents, Elitist, Old timer's move back, People on the streets, Eclectic mix of people	0	10
	Special events potential, Beautification assets – flowers Christmas lights, Walk to meetings	0	3
<b>Recreation</b> 3 priority stickers mentioned 24 times	Town and Village: Water supply & for recreation, Access to lake, Water recreation/lakes, Van Cleef Lake, Riverfront/ water activities, Canal – waterway accessibility, Canal system and boating	3	8

Category	Positive Factors Identified	Priority Stickers	Total Responses
	Town and Village: National & State parks Just Town: Wildlife refuge Just Village: Vince Park	0	10
	Town and Village: Recreational diversity, Community Center, Snow activities, Ludeico trail, Playgrounds Just Village: College athletic center	0	6
<b>Environment</b> 3 priority stickers mentioned 17 times	Town and Village: Season diversity, Great geography, Beautiful landscape, Beautiful area, Scenery, Trees, Natural resources, Lakes hills natural beauty	2	13
	Town and Village: Beautiful lake, Cayuga Lake, Wildlife refuge	0	3
	Town and Village: No natural disasters	1	1
<b>Business</b> 2 priority stickers mentioned 24 times	Town and Village: Tourist attractions, Tourism, Wineries, Good restaurants, Connie's Diner, Henry B's	2	14
	Town and Village: Seneca Meadows generates jobs, Stable companies, Gould's Pumps	2	3
	Town and Village: Business district, Handy shopping, Outlet mall	0	4
	Town and Village: Access to medical care, Mental health support, Nursing homes	0	3
	Available resources (Knitting Mill)	0	1
<b>Schools</b> 2 priority stickers mentioned 18 times	Town and Village: Good school district, School system Just Village: School system	1	9
	Town and Village: Chiropractic College	1	5
	Town and Village: Great universities/ education, Access to higher education	0	4
<b>Government</b> 1 priority sticker mentioned 3 times	Just Village: Good village government, Uncorrupt policies	1	2
<b>Growth</b> 1 priority sticker mentioned 2 times	Town and Village: Growth potential, Room for growth	1	2
<b>Transportation</b> No priority stickers mentioned 11 times	Town and Village: Transit system, Bus service	0	5
	Town and Village: Proximity to Interstate & airports, Easy street access	0	3
	Town and Village: Road maintenance, parking control	0	2
	Just Village: Rerouting truck traffic	0	1
<b>Agriculture</b> No priority stickers mentioned 2 times	Empire farm days, Agriculture	0	2
<b>Planning/Zoning</b> no priority stickers mentioned 2 times	Town and Village: Bedroom community, Comprehensive planning	0	2
<b>Emergency Services</b> No priority stickers Mentioned 1 time	Town and Village: Fire & police services	0	1
	Town and Village: Visionary leaders	0	1
<b>Infrastructure</b> No priority stickers mentioned 1 time	Just Village: Good water	0	1

## Solutions

After identifying these negative and positive elements the participants were asked to think of ways to overcome the negative aspects, and ways to protect and build on the positive aspects of Seneca Falls. These ideas will be used later in the planning process after the committee has identified the goals, and begins outlining the strategies to be used in reaching the goals of the comprehensive plan.

### **Negatives:**

No info office – kiosk

No “Falls” history – Visitor’s Center

Inconsistent trash and recycling schedule – Fehr Trash

No small business vibrancy – IDA

Rear of stores on canal – Rehab loans and tax incentives

Odor from sewer treatment – Is better

Lack of senior citizen housing – Developers

No walkable sidewalks – Require builder to supply sidewalks

Village should have widened, refined streets – Town add where needed

Cut down on drug dealers – Police enforce laws

Consistency on historical district decisions – Training for commission members

Repair broken sidewalks – More aide for fixing sidewalks/ Laws requiring fixing

Gould’s – Can the community help? Leadership/ Tax benefits & credits

Economic development – outside sources/ Need enticement – need to draw/ Research and development now, future business/ The village is a part of the outer community – if you bring in higher tech industry, are the citizens of the community able to fill the job requirements, if not, is training provided/ Grant writers/ Clean up behind stores

Leadership – Change leadership in Albany/ Civic involvement to change local leadership

Jobs – Draw new businesses/ Use Mill Dr. Depot property for business incubators/ Make town user friendly to business openings: zone; signs; make process easier

Town - Street sign – Program to help replace signage

Canal cleaning – State for canal drainage

B – Unkempt properties – Strong ordinance; zoning enforcement officer consistency crucial; fines or clean up cost deferred to owner

Not a diverse population – Marketing to attract people

Lack of employment opportunity – Provide employment by encouraging business to come to this area

Downtown trucking – Reroute trucks; enforce pre-existing laws

Town - Lack of open communication between community & town – Rules passed by the town; reviewed by people in town

Landfill – DEC inspection; education

Declining industry – More incentives to draw business & making them stay; taxes

Downtown building facades – Grants; low interest loans

Business health – Planning assistance

Indian issue – Legalize gambling; term limitation; equalize the Indian taxation

Community apathy – Publicity; communication; more events for area

Taxes – More businesses; consolidate government services; hire economic developer to promote; seek ways to defray costs; influence state decision that trickle down; attract new families; higher quality jobs; decrease social services dependency

Wal-Mart – Cost benefit analysis on expansion; institute good neighbor policy; more attractive facility, historically aesthetic; return to the community

Indian gas station – Collect taxes; level playing field; force distributors to collect taxes

Heavy traffic – Enforce 318 law; car free streets or areas; enforce speed limits; no passing on right

Duplication of services – One political body

High taxes, duplication – One political body; community awareness; involvement; education

No jobs – Promotion of new business; tax breaks; job training

No marketing sophistication – Website; committee for outreach

Public communication – People need to feel their voices will be heard & implemented; education on public services

Attitude – May be able to be fixed by addressing other issues

Boater facilities – Showers, laundry; charge for parking and electrical

No networking with other towns & villages – make presentations in other locations (like Seneca County); ask other towns & villages to come and tell us what they are doing that works

Indian land claim – Additional pressure on federal representatives

Village taxes – Cut expenses; find new revenue

Inability to retain & attract industry – Hire individual(s) to help recruit new business; economic incentives

Inability to retain young people – Create new jobs; sell quality of life in SF

No cohesion between state park, town & village – Include in PR; shuttle between SF and park

Loss of industry – Job creation entities; village & town giving the small guy some incentives on taxes, water, and sewer

Loss of retail – same as above

Not enough small business – Incentives to attract

Too much government – Consolidation or shared services; overlapping jurisdiction

Taxes – Increase in sales tax; putting all Indian facilities on taxes

Reroute truck traffic – to Route 318; enforcement; fines are not big enough

Education – Look how other communities are doing it; communication; leadership that wants to get it done; look at opportunities to reinforce resources; changing identity

FL Times story on area communities; gain information from other areas; education community; education of children

Marketing – Strong, lead group to market new business; economic incentives for new business

Loss of jobs – More active campaign information about bringing business here; market community; promote location

Town - Unorganized community center – Train volunteers; manage volunteers

Community doesn't support downtown – Advertise; promote

Properties that need to be condemned – Enforce zoning; fund for zoning enforcement; providing support for homeowners

***Positives:***

Recreation center – Use it

Library – Use it

Canal traffic – Make area conducive to shopping

Sculpture trail – Finish it

Wineries – Use them/ buy wine

NYCC – Be friendly, housing

Bus service – Use it

Finger Lakes location – Publicize advantage

New library – Establish reliable funding

Good water supply – Keep fixing up water plan/ extend water lines to outlying areas

Attractive downtown – Keep fixing up storefronts – Replace trees

No natural disasters – Publicize advantage

History – Marketing to promote/ Women's rights – not just a feminist movement – broader association of Women's rights/ introduce into schools, balanced presentation, central view, quotes from famous women, but education

Beautiful area – Work of mouth

Great place to live entire life – Committee

People – well trained employees; courteous, customer oriented, tourist friendly, retaining good folk here & attracting more

Schools – Excellent teachers: state has to help, late budgets got to go/ community leadership in school spirit

Museums & park – Promote more: marketing for whole area; better volunteer recruitment plan

Small town atmosphere – Zoning/ historic district/ Amish keeping farmland

Scenery – Zoning

Birthplace of Women’s rights – Expand; market and advertise

Location – Marketing the whole area; industry & community development

Safety – Maintain & support police; education & jobs; quality of people respect other’s property

History – Marketing Women’s rights a lot more; have business’ support the marketing; instill pride in residents

Growth potential – Continue good education; market natural environment; advertise cheapness of land; offer historical renovation assistance; pilots; incentives, empire zone

Good place to raise a family – Continue good education; emphasize safety; jobs; community involvement; utilize community center and library

ITT/ Gould’s – Political involvement; tax breaks; concessions

Bonadent – Tax breaks; concessions

Town - Smallness of community – Know everyone; safe place

Lack of crime – Strong law enforcement; proactive in analyzing roots of crime; enforce laws; keep children off streets; consolidate services; eliminate drug dealers

Canal – Fix back of stores; improve access to lake; showers, bathroom, laundry, walking trails; canal corridor issue; encourage canal usage; strict EPA controls for dumping

Good village government – Open, non-secretive

Change of seasons – Global warming; landscaping; incentives for environmental concur; growth should enhance not detract

Signage – In and out of community; highlight location of community on website

Boardwalk on trail – signage

Marketing – National, international; good programming, events series

Special events coordination – community calendar

Proximity to outlets - One stop shopping

Proximity to Thruway - Airport at depot

Abundant water supply – Spend \$ to keep up infrastructure; keep pollution out; promote water events

Beautiful downtown – State and federal \$ to improve; seek volunteers to help spruce up downtown

Historic district – Make more user friendly; publicize all grants already received

Gould's pumps – Amen! What can we do?

Canal – Demonstrate to canal corp. expansion of canal harbor; maintain the work that has been done; address maintenance of banks of canal

VanCleaf Lake – Trail between locks from Waterloo & SF; develop park; Ovid Street overlook with information

Architecture – Encourage owner to fix up property; market as attraction

People -Well trained employees; courteous, customer oriented, tourist friendly; retain and attract good people

Excellent teachers – State has to help; community leadership; school spirit

Promote more; marketing for whole area; better volunteer recruitment plan

## Post-it Summaries

The next step on the way to developing a Vision Statement for Seneca Falls, was to have the participants write down short statements on a series of Post-It notes. These statements identified things that Seneca Falls should have, or what Seneca Falls should be like in the future. The notes were then organized into similar categories by each group, and are summarized here.

### Planning & zoning

Expand parking downtown/ Develop the circle from one bridge to other, with walking trail/ Thriving downtown with a variety of businesses/ Design guidelines reflect 19<sup>th</sup> century history/ More attractive development of lake property/ Both village and town experiencing moderate growth/ Many government buildings and businesses have renewable energy technology/ Growth village to city/ Businesses center beyond Fall Street/ Parking on other side of canal with pedestrian walkway to main street/ Trucks re-routed from Fall Street/ Retirement community/ Maintain small town character/ Town cooperation to promote regional growth patterns/ Controlled growth

### Downtown

Downtown pedestrian mall/ Downtown rejuvenated/ Bicycle paths and sidewalks throughout village/ On-going tree planting program/ Easier parking for south side of Fall Street/ Second stories of downtown buildings developed into housing/

### Town/ Village Services

Consolidate – only one government agency for the county/ Town and village working together/ Progressive leadership/ Senior services available/ Full book shelves in library/ Insurance for firefighters/ Better advertising to market location/ Joint village and town hall

### Business

Jobs for college graduates/ Industrial park with new businesses/ Industry that generates employment & tax base/ Industrial park used to capacity/ Many job opportunities/ Outstanding health care/ Small & numerous shops & boutiques/ Chick's diner in downtown Seneca Falls/ Thriving downtown business district that maintains small town individuality/ Establish an economic duty free zone/ Food service outside, especially along canal/ No vacant buildings downtown/ Jobs for all levels, all skills/ Influx of clean, hi-tech business/ Several small manufacturers/ Mix of small and medium businesses, industry, retail and hi-tech and a thriving mill project/ ITT Gould's expansion has attracted people/ Variety of restaurants/ 1,000 new jobs, half are hi-tech/ World class health care/ Non-polluting industry/ More food markets/ Business incubators/ Hospital/ Bookstores/ Marina/ Farm markets/ Craft shops/ Coffee shops/ Furniture store

### Community

Well-kept community, clean/ Thriving community/ Magical town, scenic, with lights/ Great tourism/ All ages active in village life/ Community involvement/ Organize year round activities for youth and adults/ Hub of activity with radius of business & cultural opportunities/ Community pride & spirit/ Safe, friendly community/ Community supporting local businesses/ People who live here work here/ Young people are staying/ Diverse community/ Activities and holiday events/ Expanded community programs for youth/ Professional and well educated citizens/ Churches cooperating with youth, senior and women's services/ Community center with more room/ Community kiosks/ Artists community/ Community theater

### Housing

New housing developments/ Good mix of housing/ Bedroom community/ Senior assisted living housing/ Apartments and condos/ Housing expanded into countryside/ Nice looking low income housing/ New townhouses and condos along south side of canal, near downtown/ Diverse housing/ No pre-fab homes

### Economy

Economy equal to late '60's through 70's/ Booming retail business/ Gould's pumps/ Depot airport utilized – commercial, corporate/ Obtain grants and low interest loans/ Robust economy/ Expand downtown business district/ Economically vital downtown/ Average family income of \$50,000/ Population increase/ 2% unemployment/ Flourishing economic development, industrial parks/ Route 318 to SF is developed into an economic development zone

### Aesthetics

Tree lined streets with flowers/ Attractive entrances to streets and at gateways/ Beautifully landscaped town and village/ Landmarks are well marked/ Village ambiance day and night – maybe add gaslight/ No abandoned buildings/ Homes and properties are well maintained/ Pollution free/ No power lines visible/ No loiterers

### Recreation and Entertainment

Recreational opportunities/ Activity on lakes and canal/ Lower canal water in winter for skating/ Public ice skating rink/ Nature trails along the lake/ Music, plays and theater/ Village park with picnic, swimming pool and playground/ More walking tours/ Activities for young people/ On-going activities for seniors/ Disneyland of the north/ Large, scenic resorts around the lake offering tours/ Cayuga Lake State Park bustling with tourists and campers/ Railroad passenger service to Syracuse and Rochester has been re-started/ Canal busily used with lots of boats and user facilities/ Movie theater/ Activities geared toward families/ Addition of cultural activities for all ages/ International bass tournament/ Major summer festivals/ Continue Farm Days/ State Park offers youth activities/ Wonderful life in Seneca Falls favorite Christmas train visit/ Museum of village history/ People's park, gathering place/ Dog park/ More "Wegman's playgrounds in neighborhoods/ Multi-functional recreation center with gym/ Concerts in the park/ Jazz club/ Blues club/ Drive-in theater/ Quaint street vendors/ Bowling alley/ Theme park

## Educational opportunity

Excellent schools/ Educational opportunity/ Outstanding schools/ Progressive school system/ Continuing educational opportunity for all ages/ Community involvement/ Top school in state/ Modernized school and grounds/ Cultural enrichment year round for students/ State champion football team/ A community college/ All high school graduates attend college/ Larger schools/ Consolidated schools/ Local trade school

## Infrastructure

Well-regulated traffic patterns/ Canal fully developed on both sides/ Bridge over Cayuga Lake to Cayuga/ Water and sewage on all roads/ Boardwalk over canal, on both sides of footbridge/ Train running from Geneva to Auburn, through Seneca Falls/ Manageable traffic patterns/ Widen Cayuga Street and Auburn Road for development/ Put center island back on Lower Fall Street

## Safety

Vehicles follow speed limits/ Safe neighborhoods/ Low crime rate/ Educated law enforcement/ Neighborhood watch program

## History

Museum about Indian tribes located in Finger Lakes/ Historical preservation/ A town that people come from all over to learn about/ More museums and attractions/ Tours of VanCleaf Lake House/ Churches well cared for/ Famous for Women's rights/ Historical markers

## Tourism

Wine capital of the world/ Full service town/ Women's center has large tourist impact/ International women's conference/ Adaptable to all 4 seasons/ Tourism increases/ Ride the trolley to the lake/ Pedestrians move freely/ Recreational facilities to accommodate tourism/ Conference center/ Theme – tagline carried throughout community (I love NY)/ Establish institutes for peace studies, women's studies and arts & crafts/ Establish a telecommunicating center/ Bring back the Aqua festival

## Taxes

Constant reassessment of the use of tax dollars/ Tax resources used wisely and efficiently, making it affordable to live in village and town/ Low taxes/ Tax reduction for businesses & homeowners

## **Vision Statements**

After identifying and prioritizing the negative and positive factors, and organizing the short descriptions about the future needs of Seneca Falls, the groups turned their statements into short phrases about the direction Seneca Falls should be headed in. These were then further developed into more complete sentences resulting in the following 13 statements describing what the town and village of Seneca Falls should be like in the future. These statements will be used by the committee to develop a single, unified vision statement. This vision statement will then be used to identify a set of goals Seneca Falls will strive for, and various strategies to achieve those goals.

### **Group #1**

We will have an appropriate mix of housing and pedestrians as well as vehicles will safely circulate throughout the community. Our community will have a healthy, well-developed business district serving visitors, and the local community. We will focus on preserving the historic nature on which this community was founded. Our community will have a well-developed canal and lakefront, offering tours; with an attractive village entrance including well maintained tree-lined streets. Our community will honor its heritage by promoting its history and preserving its resources. The lifestyle of our community will embrace all efforts to support outstanding schools; outstanding health care and we will support numerous opportunities for youth and community members to participate in positive activities to help facilitate a healthy community with a low crime rate.

### **Group #2**

In 2015 the Town and Village of Seneca Falls will be a culturally rich community with a thriving downtown and an industrial area offering great employment opportunities. Citizens will be involved in their community and will enjoy entertainment as well as the preservation of our history, which will encourage tourism. Our community will enjoy a good quality of life.

### **Group #3**

The Seneca Falls climate will recognize development of property and housing without comprising the character of our community. We will recognize the value of this beautiful location. A modern local transportation system will have connections to state and regional as well as international routes. We will have an airport system that links us to the cities and to local transportation. Seneca Falls will offer progressive programs servicing schools and students. There will be a favorable business climate with plentiful job and shopping opportunities.

### **Group #4**

Seneca Falls will see a renaissance within the village and town, resulting in a diverse economic foundation of retail and commercial opportunities, granting residents needed products, services, and employment opportunities. Seneca Falls respects and preserves its historic structures and neighborhoods. Seneca Falls realizes its significant role in the evolution of women's rights and welcomes people from around the world to visit its educational, cultural, and historic sites and events. Seneca Falls is a focal point in the state for cultural and recreational events, which attract participants and spectators from across the northeast and beyond. Seneca Falls develops and takes care of its natural resources and welcomes all to enjoy them. The town and village of Seneca Falls work together to provide a safe, affordable, and livable environment by using

revenue resources wisely. Seneca Falls provides high quality educational opportunity to citizens of all ages through schools, libraries, and museums. Seneca Falls provides a variety of housing options to meet the diverse needs of the population. Seneca Falls is diverse, welcoming all groups and new ideas.

#### **Group #5**

Seneca Falls will be a friendly, safe community with affordable housing for every age group and opportunities for housing at all income levels. Educational opportunities will be available for diversified groups. There will be a unified governmental body to oversee the entire county. Different aspects of tourism will be encouraged, drawing families to our area.

#### **Group #6**

In 2015 Seneca Falls will be a community with world class activities including festivals, and park utilization with a fully developed canal corridor that houses on its banks a state of the art community center and scenic hiking trails, with kid friendly parks. The community will have consolidated services through working together to provide multi education opportunity with 95% of high school graduates attending colleges and 10 to 20% at Ivy League schools. The tax burden will have been reduced by 50% through consolidation of services and greater fiscal responsibility and by building a reserve fund. Seneca Falls will offer a great variety of ethnic restaurants, jazz clubs, and dinner theater and general cinema films. We will have attracted many new businesses. Our entries to the village are festooned with historical signage, and flowers as well as a marina, townhouses and plenty of green walking trails. We'll have more restaurants, theaters, and chains such as Nordstrom's and a weekly farmers market.

#### **Group #7**

Seneca Falls will be an enhanced community, working harmoniously for preservation through strong leadership, as a result of the participation of its residents. Seneca Falls will market the area as a whole, inviting industry and community development as well as marketing women's rights more. We will maintain and support the police force, education and jobs. Downtown building facades will be improved with the help of grants and low interest loans.

#### **Group #8**

Seneca Falls will demonstrate the entrepreneurial spirit of our forefathers to venture out (capital) in business incubators, thriving on new ideas in positive people – building with more dollars and highly motivated people. We will be user friendly with regard to new businesses through our zoning, signage and by making the process easier. The town will be successful and admired in the future. Seneca Falls will be well landscaped and well maintained. The historic district is in harmony with modern businesses and housing. Seneca Falls will display community leadership and school spirit.

#### **Group #9**

Perfectville! Welcome to the greater Seneca Falls community in the year 2015. As our history of the birthplace of Women's rights is accentuated, enjoy our central location to the heart of the Finger Lakes where you can step back in time and relax with a fine wine, family and friends. Enjoy the scenic waterways with quick access from the Thruway. Pass through our economic development area and enjoy a variety of events and programs such as theater, art, music, and festivals, which will provide a place for community members and tourists to gather and enjoy themselves.

### **Group #10**

Seneca Falls will be a low population community of mixed ages, races, and backgrounds, sited in a safe and environmentally tolerant sound location. Taxes will have been reduced as new sources of revenue have been discovered. New businesses have been recruited with the help of economic incentives and new jobs have been created. All residents will enjoy the high quality of life in Seneca Falls.

### **Group #11**

The high quality of life in Seneca Falls will be promoted and encouraged while suburban sprawl and other topics that would detract from such a quality of life are discouraged. We will have a self-sustaining economy through tourism and a variety of homegrown businesses. The government of Seneca Falls works together, displaying strong communication and accessibility to all, a positive force overall. Our small town atmosphere, scenic beauty and history have been preserved, accenting our status as the birthplace of women's rights. Our diverse population will be gainfully employed.

### **Group #12**

In the year 2015 Seneca Falls will boast an aesthetically pleasing downtown that is safe and pedestrian friendly. Our history will be intact via the historic district and the emphasis on our significance as the birthplace of women's rights. Culturally, Seneca Falls will offer an arts and crafts center and a peace center as well as a women's center. Water recreation will be readily available and tolls have been removed from the canal. The industrial and commercial center offers a wide variety of employment opportunity. Affordable housing is available for the young as well as for retirees and expansion of water lines into outlying areas has encouraged development.

### **Group #13**

Seneca Falls will meet the housing needs of mature adults. There will be recognition of educational opportunities and skills for all ages. Employment opportunities include manufacturing, various commercial ventures and an office park filled with small businesses. Every storefront on Main Street is full. Seneca Falls will be aesthetically pleasing and planned growth is evident. Recreational opportunities focus on the waterfront with canal tours between Cayuga and Seneca Lakes, featuring a large resort on Seneca Lake. Cafes, pubs, and unique stores are available on the waterfront.