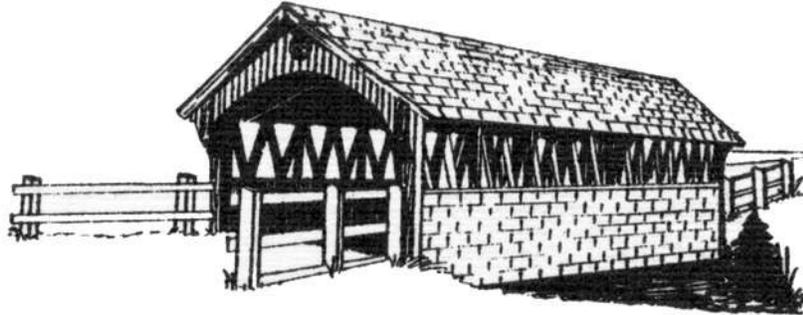


WEBB TODAY

(Reprinted with permission from the Town of Webb Comprehensive Plan, June 2002)

Introduction

The Town of Webb is located in the northernmost portion of Herkimer County, in the west-central Adirondack region of New York State. The Town is wholly within the boundaries of the



Adirondack Park. It is the largest township in New York State, with a total area of approximately 466 square miles. The town averages 14 miles in width (east to west) and is about 35 miles in length (north to south). Elevations range from approximately 1500 to 2500 feet above sea level. (See Map 1 - Location Map)

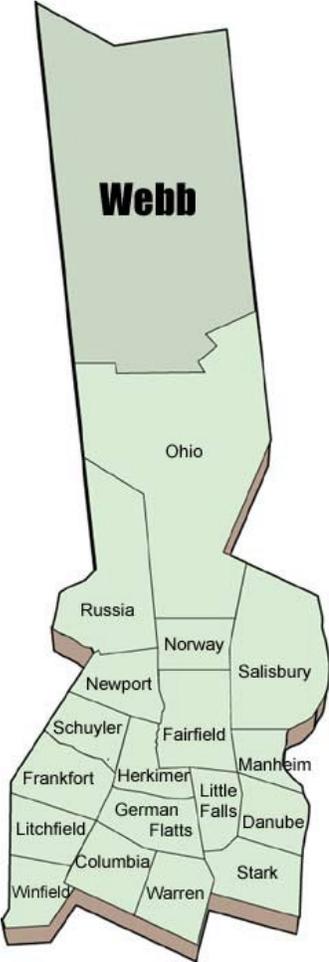
Virtually all developable land in Webb lies along the primary travel corridor, New York State Route 28 and the Fulton Chain of Lakes. The highway transects the central portion of the town from southwest to northeast and parallels the Middle Branch of the Moose River and Fulton Chain of Lakes. Road travel times range from 1 hour south and west to Utica, 2 hours north and east to Lake Placid, and 2½ hours east to Albany.

No incorporated villages are located within the township. Three of the town's hamlets, (Old Forge, Eagle Bay and Thendara), along the Route 28 corridor, are the areas of concentrated population and development. These hamlets are typical of the more than one hundred hamlets in the Adirondack Park containing retail establishments, a clustering of homes and, in most cases, a post office. They help define the unique landscape of the Adirondacks.

Smaller population and development areas (similar to village neighborhoods) include Big Moose Station, McKeever, Okara Lakes, Fulton Chain of Lakes, Rondaxe Lake, Big Moose Lake, Stillwater, and Beaver River.

Location Map

Town of Webb in Herkimer County
New York State
(line shows Adirondack Park)



Population

Webb has shown growth as a town in its region and county. The 1990 US Census indicated a year-round population of 1,637, a modest decline from the 1980 count of 1,701 resident population. The 2000 US Census¹ records a growth from 1990 of some 16.8 percent to 1,912 population. Given Webb's enormous land mass and relatively modest population, non-summer population density is one of the lowest in New York State at around 4.2 persons per square mile. Subtracting State lands from the density calculation yields about 17 persons per square mile, very close to an Adirondack region average of 19 persons per square mile.

Summer peak population counts can only be estimated, but are commonly cited at 25,000 to 30,000, at least on weekends. This seasonal influx can swell population density to nearly 55 persons per square mile on a peak summer weekend, although most of the population density is concentrated along the Route 28 corridor, in Old Forge and the other small hamlets of the Town, and along lake shorelines, notably the Fulton Chain of Lakes.

Putting this population density in perspective, the Adirondack Park is 5.8 million acres, making the Park similar in size to each of six northeastern states. However, its population is approximately 150,000 people, or less than a fourth of Vermont's and considerably less than the other states. The Adirondack Park covers 9,375 square miles or about 100 by 100 miles in area. Adirondack regional population density of 19 people per square mile is comparable to the rural states of the Great Plains and West – as compared to the average population density in upstate New York (at around 227 people per square mile.)²

² Data acquired February 2002 from www.esdc.state.ny.us

² "Upstate" is defined as New York State outside of the New York City metropolitan statistical area.

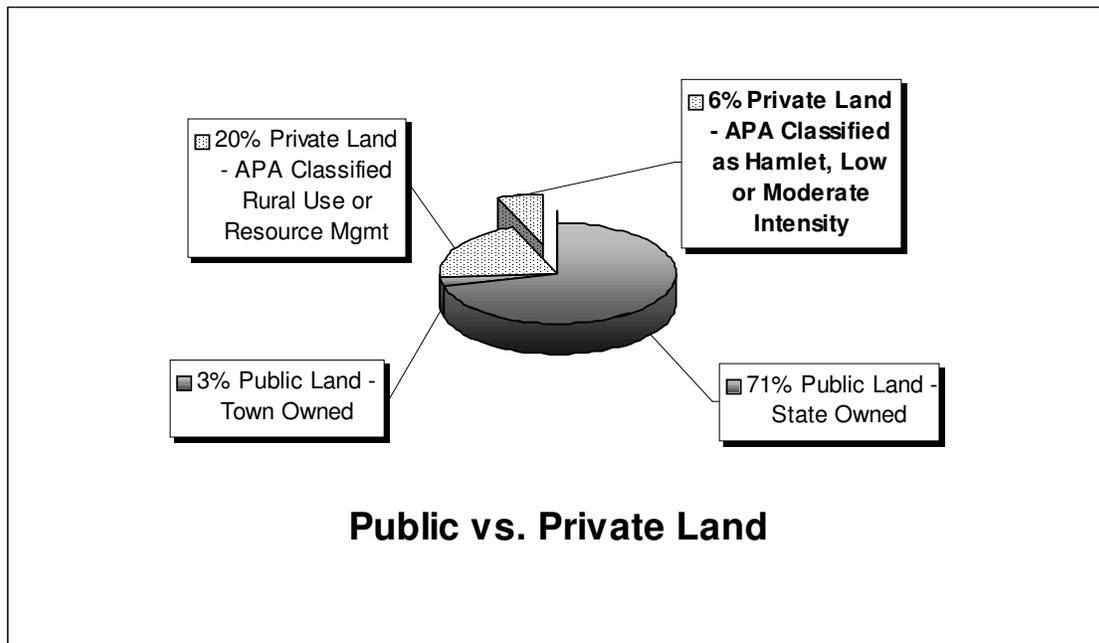
Total Population Change for Select Areas - 1990 to 2000

	1990 Population	2000 Population	Percent Change 1990-2000
Town of Webb	1,637	1,912	16.8%
Town of Inlet	343	406	18.4%
Town of Lake George	3,211	3,578	11.4%
Town of North Elba (Lake Placid area)	7,870	8,661	10.1%
Town of Indian Lake	1,481	1,471	-0.7%
Town of Long Lake	930	852	-8.4%
Town of Ohio	880	922	4.8%
Herkimer County	65,809	64,427	-2.1%
Hamilton County	5,279	5,379	1.9%
Essex County	37,152	38,851	4.6%

Voter registration was 1,483 in 1990 from the two voting districts in the town, yet in 2000 this registration exceeded the US Census population by more than 200 voters. One suggested theory is that more people are voting in Webb but report to the Census that they live outside the township. If this is true, then Webb, based on Census figures, is being shortchanged regarding both revenues and distribution of services.

Land Development

Three quarters of the land within the township is publicly owned, one quarter is privately owned. Three quarters of the privately owned lands are in Adirondack Park Agency (APA) land use classifications considered "back country" (Rural and Resource Management Land), where restrictions on land use preclude any large scale residential or commercial development.



Approximately one quarter of the privately held lands (less than six percent of the total land area of the town) is in APA land use classifications where development will likely occur as illustrated in the chart above. The APA classifications for private development are lands designated Hamlet, Moderate Intensity or Low Intensity.

LAND OWNERSHIP: TOWN OF WEBB CLASSIFICATION OF DEVELOPABLE PRIVATE LANDS³			
APA Land Use Classifications	Area (in acres)	Percent of total private land area	Percent of developable private lands
Resource Management	47,000	15.7%	68.0%
Rural	4,500	1.5%	6.6%
Low Intensity	4,200	1.4%	6.0%
Moderate Intensity	12,150	4.0%	17.5%
Hamlet	1,300	0.4%	0.9%
Total Developable Acreage	69,150	23.0%	100.0%

An important aspect to understanding future land development in the Town is the dominance of State land ownership, the management of those lands as wilderness or wild forest, and the limits on private land available or suitable for development.

The table above illustrates that less than 18,000 acres of privately held land in Webb is classified by the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) as Low Intensity, Moderate Intensity or Hamlet and thus available for potential development.

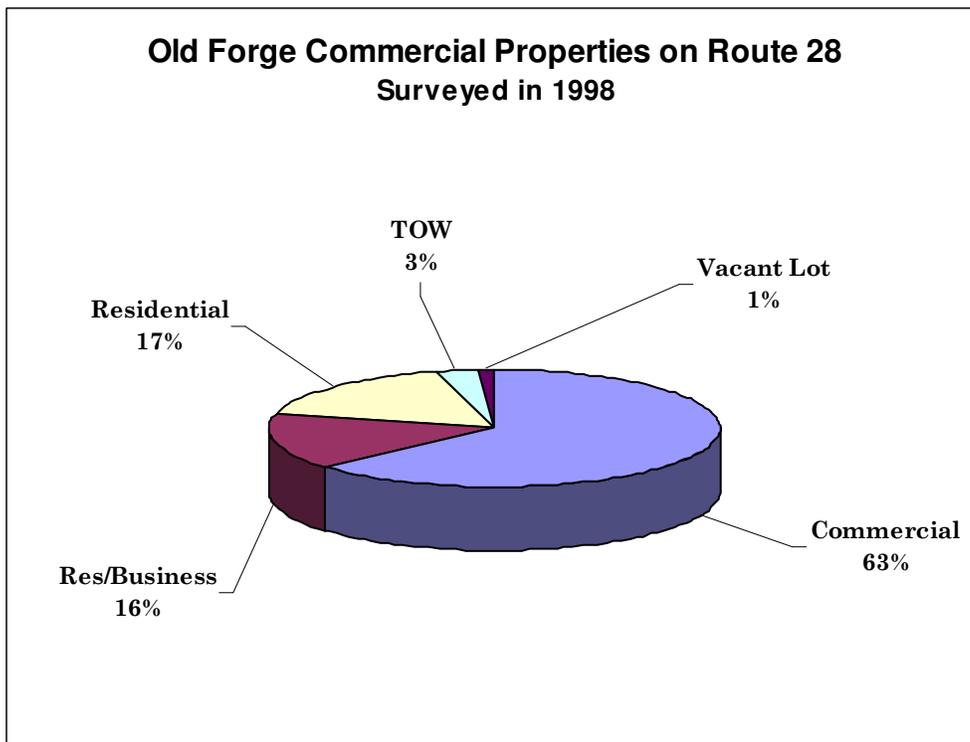
Development over the past two decades has consisted chiefly of in-fill residential development along the Route 28 and Fulton Chain of Lakes corridor, where the majority of private lands are located. Ninety percent (90%) of the residential development since 1980 has occurred in Hamlet (17%), Moderate Intensity (61%), and Low Intensity (12%) use areas. Given existing local and APA land use regulations, these trends are expected to continue.

Old Forge, centrally located within the town along New York State Route 28, continues to provide the location for the majority of commercial activity within Webb. The commercially zoned areas in the town are located in a narrow band

³ From Development Patterns in the Town of Webb, prepared by Don Kelly, MPAC member and former Webb Code Enforcement Officer and revised April 2000 and January, 2002.

along Route 28, averaging less than two village blocks in width. This fact and the lack of alternative commercial areas have resulted in a concentration of activity within this corridor, leading to conflicts among commercial uses and between residential and commercial uses.

Two recent surveys indicate trends in the conversion of existing residential properties to commercial uses (Old Forge-Thendara Commercial District Study, 1990; C2000 Sub-committee on Architecture, 1998). Both surveys indicate that the residential nature of portions of this corridor is changing due to the growth of commercial activity. The chart below, based upon the 1998 survey, shows the frequency of various uses.⁴



Conversion from residential to commercial uses has followed two basic patterns: adaptive reuse of existing residential structures for commercial uses or for combination residential/commercial uses (chiefly small gift shops and offices), and removal of residences and their replacement by larger commercial structures. Given the location and limited extent of commercial properties and the continuation of demand for new commercial uses, it is likely that these patterns will continue.

⁴ Chart of data prepared by C2000 Subcommittee on Architecture. Survey conducted from the Bridge on Rt. 28 at the Old Mill Restaurant to the Bridge on Rt. 28 at the dam next to the Old Forge Pond.

Education

Accessibility to a quality education is seen throughout the world as a strong indicator of quality of life. Except for a small and remote portion of the Town in the southernmost portion of Webb, the Town of Webb Union Free School District serves the Town. This district also serves portions of the Towns of Inlet in Hamilton County and Forestport in Oneida County, with consolidated K-12 facilities on Route 28 in Old Forge. As reported in the February 2001 Overview of Academic Performance, published by the University of the State of New York and the State Department of Education⁴, a number of indicators show that Webb children have access to quality educational experience. Students at all levels also consistently scored better than peers statewide in performance on various standardized tests.

⁴ also known as the School District Report Card, dated February 2001 and available on line at www.emsc.nysed.gov.