

# Town of Long Lake Comprehensive Plan

## *Inventory and Analysis*

November 18, 2019

### Introduction:

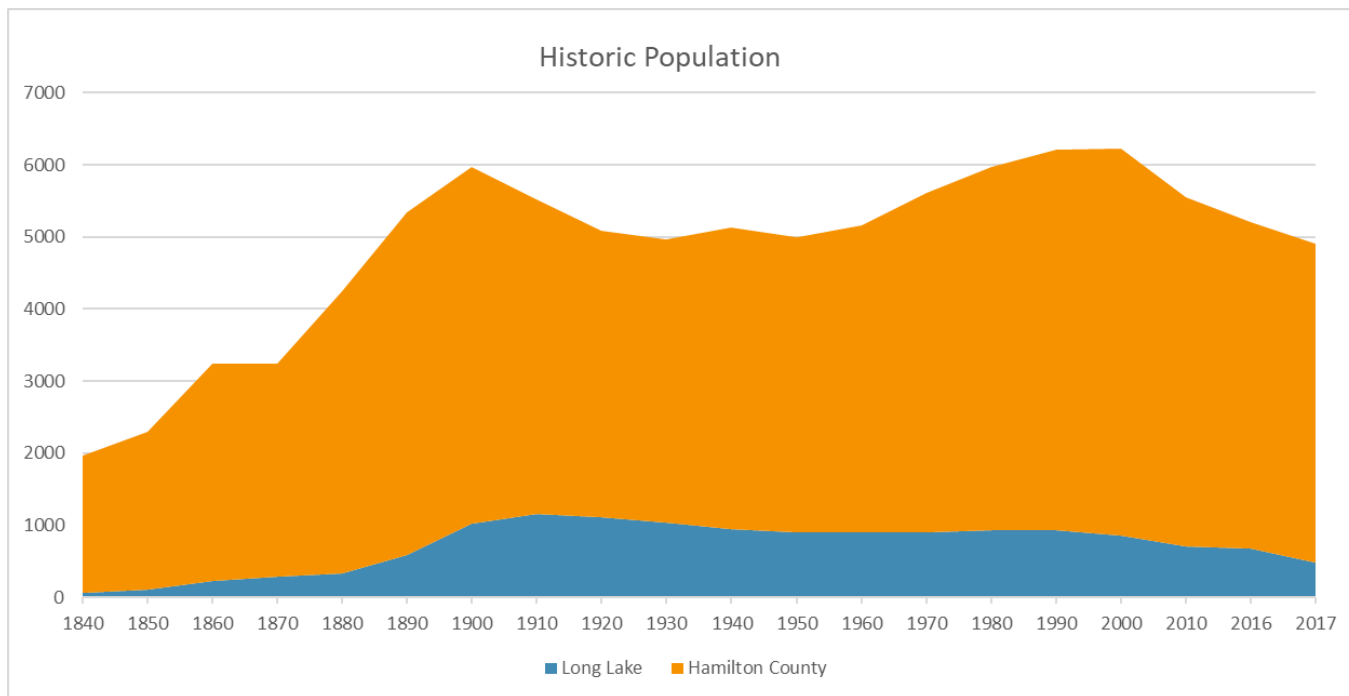
Centrally located in the Adirondacks, the Town of Long Lake is home to roughly 400 people. The population of the town peaked in the early 1900s, and the number of permanent residents and school enrollment has been in decline since 1990. However, the population fluctuates because of the region’s flourishing tourism and recreation-based economy. The town is a second home for nearly 2,000 seasonal residents. (U.S. Census, American Community Survey)

With over 75% of the Town comprised of forested land, five NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) campgrounds, and numerous lakes, the Town of Long Lake offers multiple opportunities for camping, hiking, paddling, mountain biking, snowmobiling, and more. The Town is an epicenter for multiple Adirondack attractions, including the Wild Center and the Adirondack Museum. It also has short drives to nearby Old Forge and Lake Placid.

### Population:

#### *Populations Trends:*

The population of Long Lake has been declining at an average rate of 8% since the early 1990s. The most recent Census, 2010, indicated a population of 711. Recent American Community Survey (ACS) estimates show the population of Long Lake to be down by nearly half at 473 as of 2017; the margin of error for the ACS estimate is 8.2%

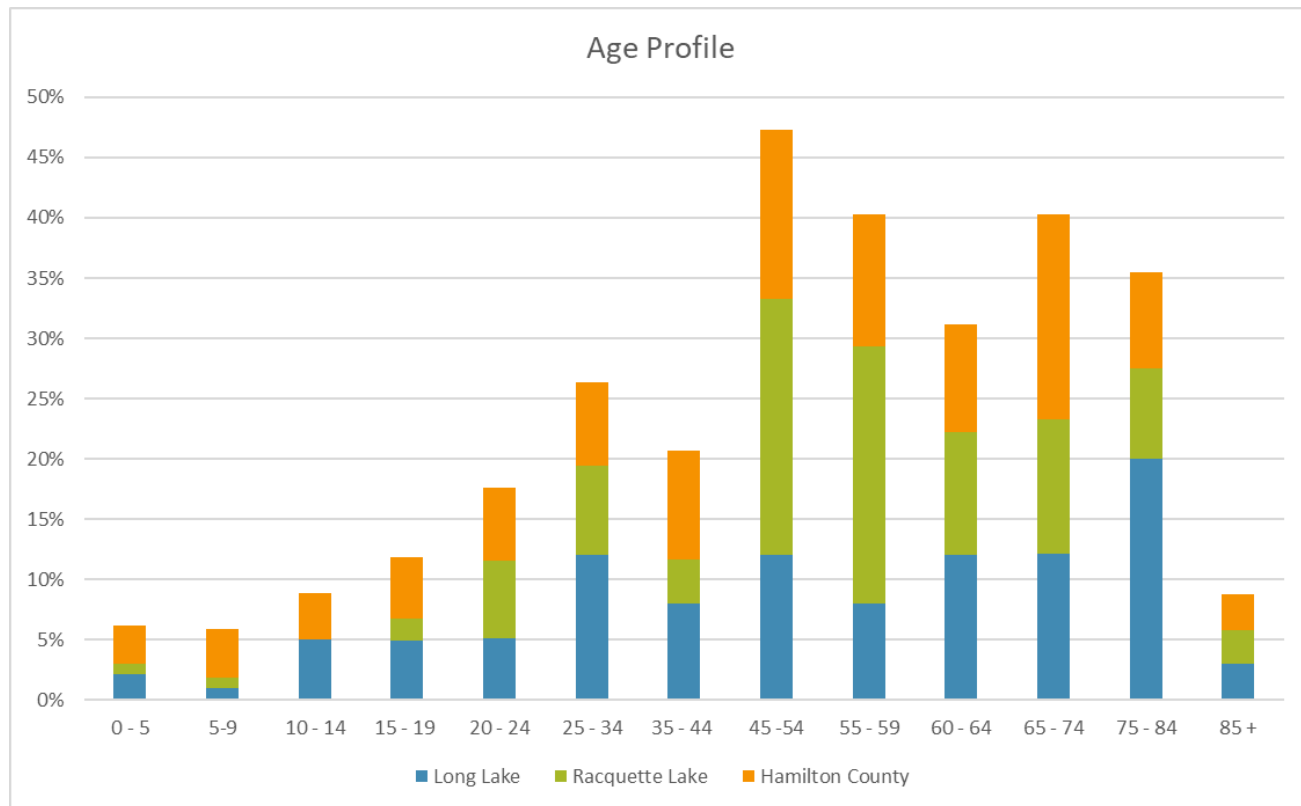


Hamilton County, within which Long Lake is located, has seen similar population decline trends. However, the trends have been less extreme, with an average rate of decrease of 2% from 1990 to 2017. Based on the Census, the population of Hamilton County was 4,836 in 2010. 2017 ACS estimates for the county were 4,434. Historic Population information is not available for Raquette Lake, a hamlet within the Town of Long Lake. However, using Tax Parcel data hamlet had an estimated population of 123 in 2000 and 108 in 2010.

*Population Age:*

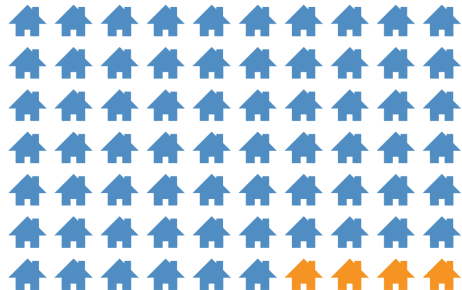
The “Aging in Place in the Tri-Lakes Region of the Adirondacks” study, by Mercy Care for the Adirondacks, cited the Lake Placid, Saranac Lake, and Tupper Lake communities as being older than the state and the national average. The study estimated that 17% of the Tri-Lakes Communities’ residents are 65 or older. The populations of Long Lake and Raquette Lake are similar, with Census data reflecting a larger number of residents in retirement age. According to Cornell University’s Program on Applied Demographics (PAD), the population of Hamilton County is projected to have a median age of 65 by 2030. An aging community often requires greater health care resources and may have implications on the local school district due to the decline of young families with children.

	Hamilton County	Town of Long Lake	Raquette Lake
Median Age	53	57	55



*Housing:*

In the West Central Adirondacks Housing Needs Assessment (2012) it was found that Hamilton County has the second-largest percentage of second homeowners in the nation. The estimated summer population is just under 5,000.

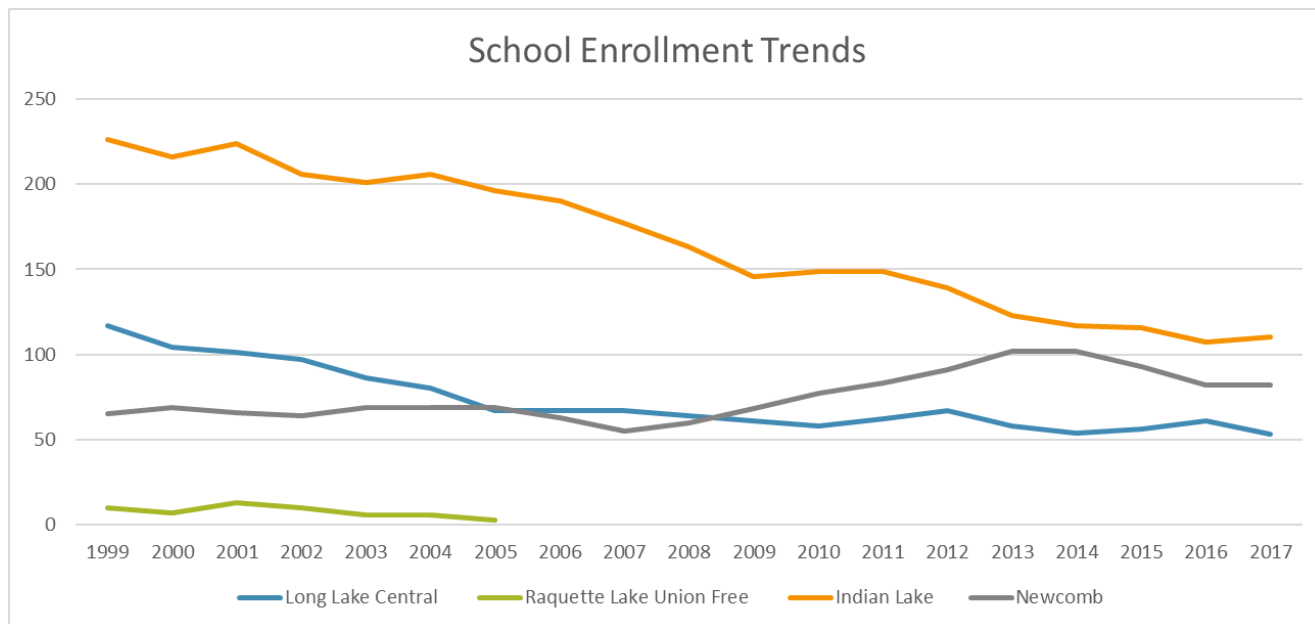


2010 US Census data indicates roughly 96% of housing units categorized to have “seasonal, recreational or occasional” uses. Raquette Lake was similar with 97% of housing units categorized as secondary homes. This percentage equates to 6,181 in Hamilton County, 1,453 in Long Lake and 509 in Raquette Lake. The remaining percentage of vacant housing was mostly “For Rent” or “For Sale” with a very small percentage of permanent, year-round housing.

Of the occupied housing more than half of the homes are inhabited by two or fewer people. Long Lake and Hamilton County had a greater percentage of two-person households while Raquette Lake had an even percentage of one- to two-person households. Less than 30% of all households in Hamilton County, Long Lake, and Raquette Lake had more than three people per household. These trends continue to show that a very small portion of the population is families with children and lends itself to that of a retirement community.

*School Enrollment and Educational Attainment:*

The Town of Long Lake contains two school districts, Long Lake Central School and Raquette Lake Union Free School. Long Lake Central School currently has 53 students enrolled in grades K through 12. The Raquette Lake School is no longer active as enrollment declined in the early 2000s. In 2005, Raquette Lake began paying tuition to send their students to other districts. There are currently four school-aged children, living in Raquette Lake, who attend schools in the neighboring towns. The school still exists with a board and three staff members under what the NYS DOE calls a “nonoperating district”.



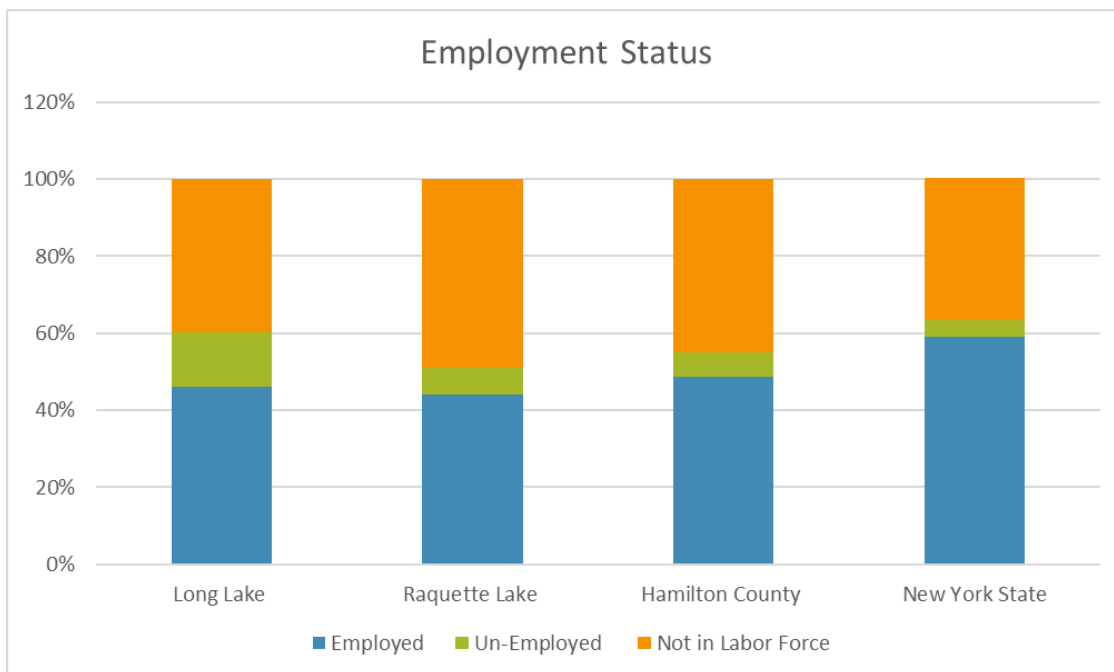
According to the New York State Department of Education (NYSDOE), student enrollment in the Long Lake Central School District has steadily declined since the 1990s. The decline in student enrollment is consistent in what is to be expected with an aging population. Schools in the surrounding area, such as Indian Lake Central School, are also experiencing declines in enrollment. Newcomb Central School District was experiencing declines but has managed to increase enrollment through the introduction of an International Student program in 2007.

**Economy:**

*Employment Status:*

Long Lake, Raquette Lake, and Hamilton County both have higher percentages of persons “Not in the Labor Force” when compared to New York State. These statistics continue to speak to the trends of a growing retirement age cohort. (U.S. Census, American Community Survey)

Compared to Raquette Lake and Hamilton County, Long Lake has a greater percentage of persons identified as unemployed at roughly 14%, 7% more than Raquette Lake and Hamilton County, and 10% more than the state average. The Collaborative Economic Plan of 2012 produced by the Central Adirondack Marketing Partnership (CAMP) notes that higher percentages of persons not employed and not in the labor force, such as these communities, is a signal of low income and an aging population. The plan also says that many full-time employed people in the Adirondack’s region may work two or even three part-time or seasonal low paying jobs to make a living. (U.S. Census, American Community Survey)




*Employment Trends and Industries:*

According to the Regional Office of Sustainable Tourism (ROOST) 2019 Marketing Plan, tourism in the Adirondacks is a 1.4 billion-dollar industry, supporting over 20,000 jobs. The plan also noted that in 2016, Essex, Franklin, and Hamilton counties generated over 600 million dollars from tourism. This includes lodging, dining, entertainment, and retail. In addition, a study done by Tourism Economics showed that 50% of all labor income in Hamilton County is generated by visitors. Out of all the counties in the Adirondack Park, Hamilton County is



the most dependent on tourism.

The table below shows what industries the Town of Long Lake, Raquette Lake and Hamilton County residents work in. Nearly 41% of employed residents in Raquette Lake work in tourism related industries, such as Accommodations and Food Services; Arts, Entertainment and Recreation; and Retail Trade. Long Lake is split roughly between Tourism-related Industries and Educational Services, with the Long Lake Central school being one of the largest employers. Employment trends in Hamilton County continued showing Tourism as the primary source of employment. (U.S. Census, American Community Survey)

 Industry	Town of Long Lake	Raquette Lake	Hamilton County
Accommodation and food services	13%	9%	5%
Administrative and support and waste management and remediation services	3%	2%	3%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	0%	0%	0%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	3%	9%	3%
Construction	0%	0%	20%
Educational services	32%	8%	11%
Finance and insurance	0%	0%	1%
Health Care and Social Services	4%	8%	14%
Information	3%	0%	1%
Manufacturing	12%	7%	7%
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	0%	0%	1%
Other services	3%	0%	3%
Professional, scientific, and technical services	5%	2%	2%
Real estate and rental and leasing	4%	0%	1%
Retail trade	14%	23%	10%
Transportation and warehousing	3%	2%	11%
Utilities	1%	0%	0%
Wholesale trade	0%	0%	5%

Further analysis of the Town of Long Lake showed that of the 309 residents who are employed only 59 residents work and live in Long Lake. 250 employed residents travel outside the Town of Long Lake for work. There are 176 people employed in the Town of Long Lake including 117 people who commute from outside of the Town. The average commute time for Hamilton County, Town of Long Lake and Raquette Lake residents is 24 minutes. (U.S. Census, On-The-Map Tool)

The chart above shows the industries employing within the Town of Long Lake. Again, the Long Lake Central School stands out as the largest employer while Tourism industries are a close second.

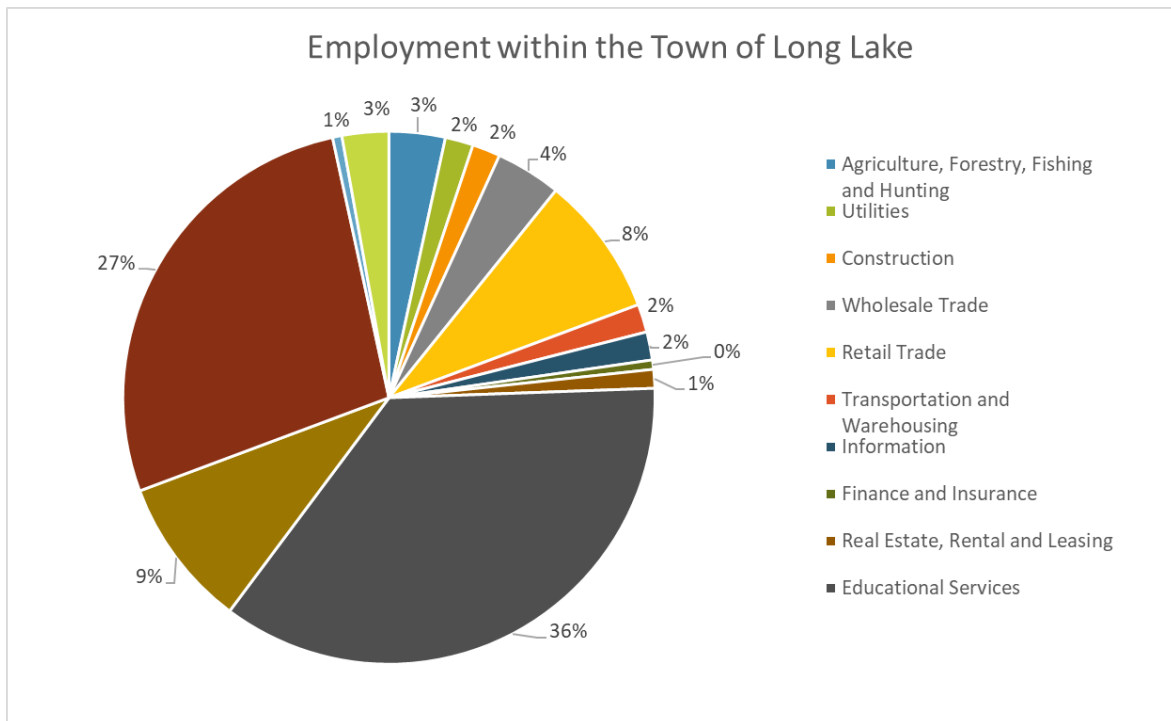
- The North County Regional Economic Development Council (NCREDC) 2013 Strategy identified a 5% increase in the number of small businesses, number of small business employees, and their average

wage from 2010 to 2012.

- The average income in Long Lake, Raquette Lake, and Hamilton County is \$55,800.00. (U.S. Census, American Community Survey)

The following table was generated by information from the Town of Long Lake and from the business directory on mylonglake.com.

Local Info - Long Lake/Raquette Lake Business Inventory	
Accommodations - LL	19
Accommodations - RL	12
Aero Service & Seaplanes	1
Animal Care	1
Artisan, Craftsman, Gallery	7
Attractions	2
Automotive	4
Bank	1
Beauty, Health and Wellness	7
Boat Builders, Rentals, Sales and Marinas	9
Logging and Lumber	3
Real Estate	3
Restaurants	9
Retail & Shopping	9



### *Recreation:*

Recreation is a driving force behind Long Lake's and Hamilton County's tourism industry. The Adirondack Council estimates that the Adirondack Park receives nearly seven to ten million visitors annually. Of those visitors, 200,000 are seasonal residents.

Many Adirondack towns partake in partnerships or collaborations to support their tourism economies. Long Lake is identified by ROOST as part of the "5 Towns" that make up the Upper Hudson Recreation Hub.

Both Long Lake and the hamlet of Raquette Lake boast a wide range of recreational activities for all four seasons. The list includes, but is not limited to:

- Birding
- Boating
- Camping
- Cycling
- Fish & Game
- Golf
- Hiking
- Mountain Biking
- Paddling
- Rafting
- Seaplane Rides
- Snowmobiling

Within the Long Lake area, there are five DEC campgrounds; Lake Eaton, Forked Lake, Tioga Point, Golden Beach, and Brown Tract Pond. The five DEC campgrounds in the area estimate having around 4,000 day-visitors per year. Paul Smith's college also has a campground in Long Lake known as "John Dillon Park".


The area is host to numerous summer camps and retreat centers, including the Boy Scout's Sabattis Reservation and the famous "Great Sagamore Camp". Also, Long Lake sits between multiple area attractions such as the Adirondack Museum and the Wild Center.

The 2018 Leisure Travel Study by ROOST noted that 87% of Hamilton County visitors visit for hiking. The study also noted that, compared to other areas of the Adirondack Park, Hamilton County had the highest percentage of visitors who are drawn to the area for snowmobiling.

The Town of Long Lake sponsors multiple events to bolster its tourism economy, including a quilting camp, birding festival, multiple fishing derbies, a winter carnival and more.

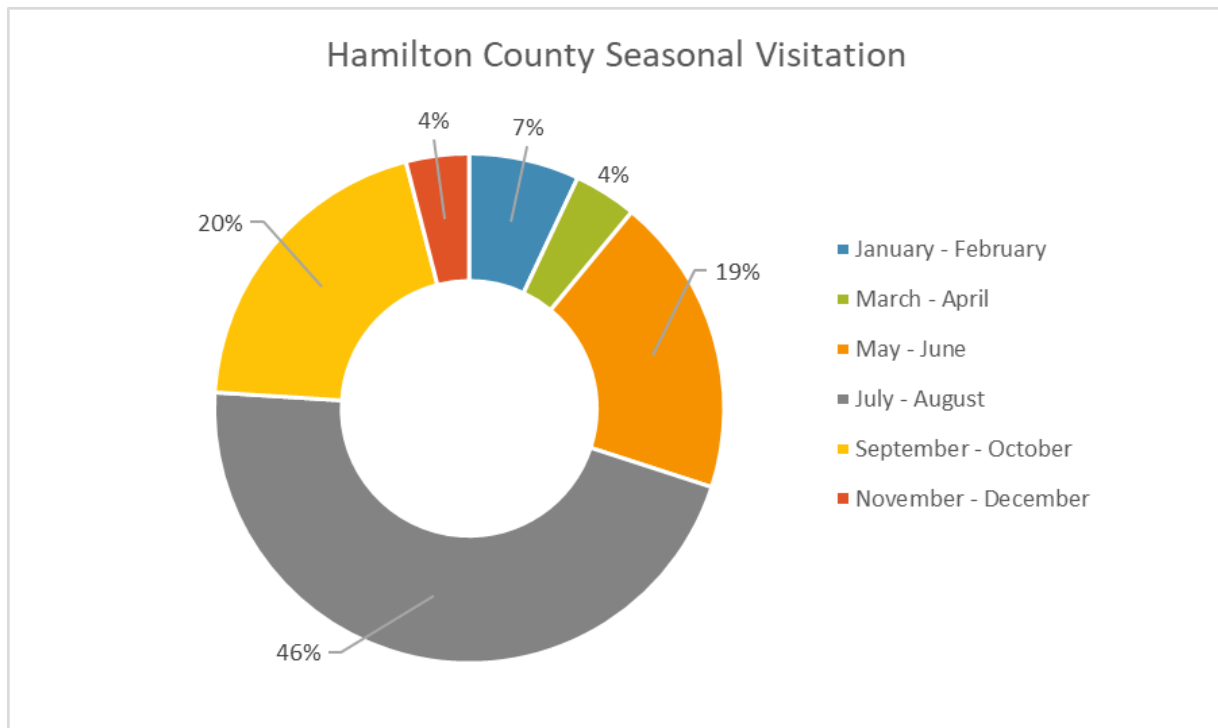
- If all the lodging options in Long Lake were to be at capacity the town could hold roughly 4, 880 guests. Lodging options include hotels, motels, cabins, cottages, resorts, campgrounds, and vacation rental homes. There are currently 19 accommodations in Long Lake and 12 in Raquette Lake.



 Hamilton County Average Traveler Profile, 2018	
Age:	56
Party Size:	4.3 persons (3.2 adults, 1.1 child)
Length of Stay:	3 nights
Spending per Day:	\$312 per day, mostly lodging and meals
Lodging:	31% Hotel, 28% Camping, 16% Rental, 12% Second Home, 11% Family/Friends
Key Attraction:	Outdoor Activities

According to ROOST’s 2019 Leisure Travel Study, the average traveler in Hamilton County has the characteristics listed above. Visitor surveys collected by ROOST show visitation to Hamilton County is greatest during the Summer. The study determined that the average visitor typically has an income in the range of \$80,000 to \$100,000 and is primarily coming from Southern and Western New York. The income of visitors is nearly \$25,000 more than the income of Long Lake residents.

The following chart was created in accordance to data from ROOST’s 2019 Leisure Travel Study.



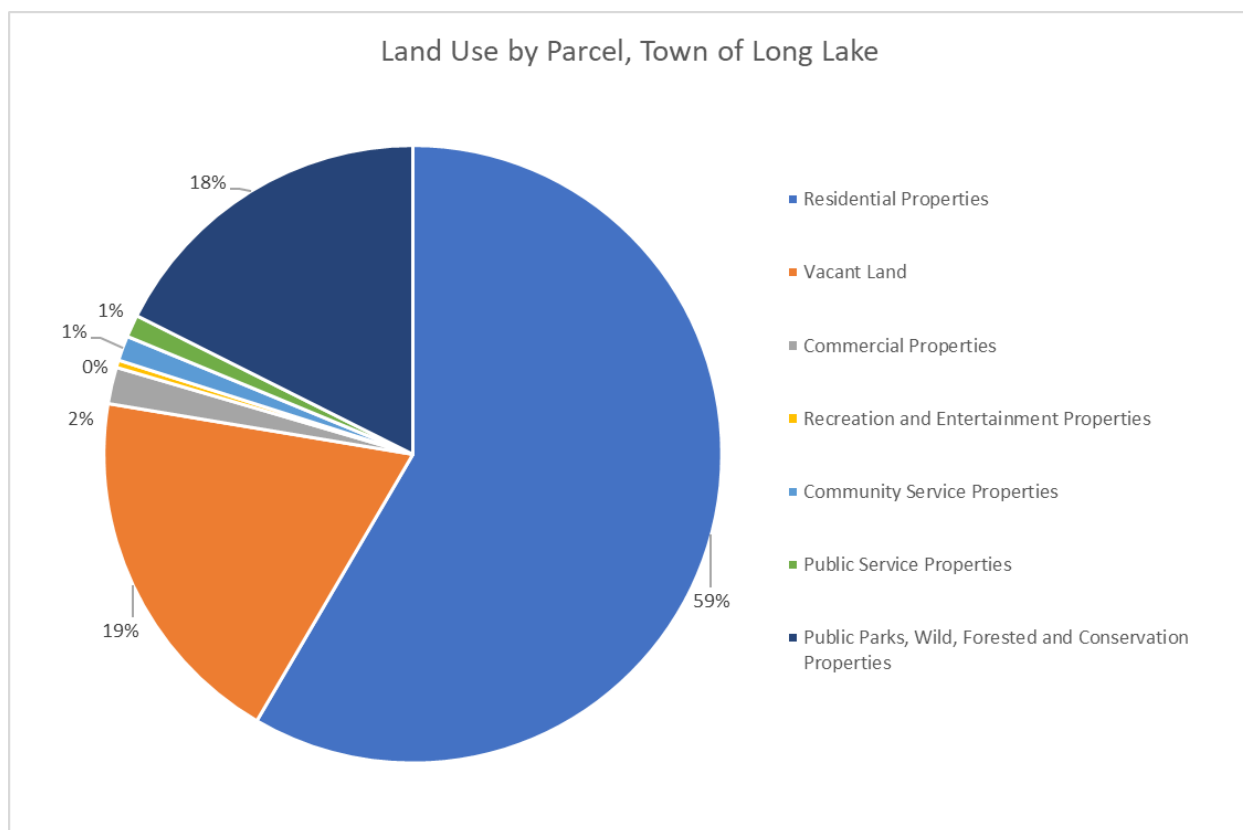


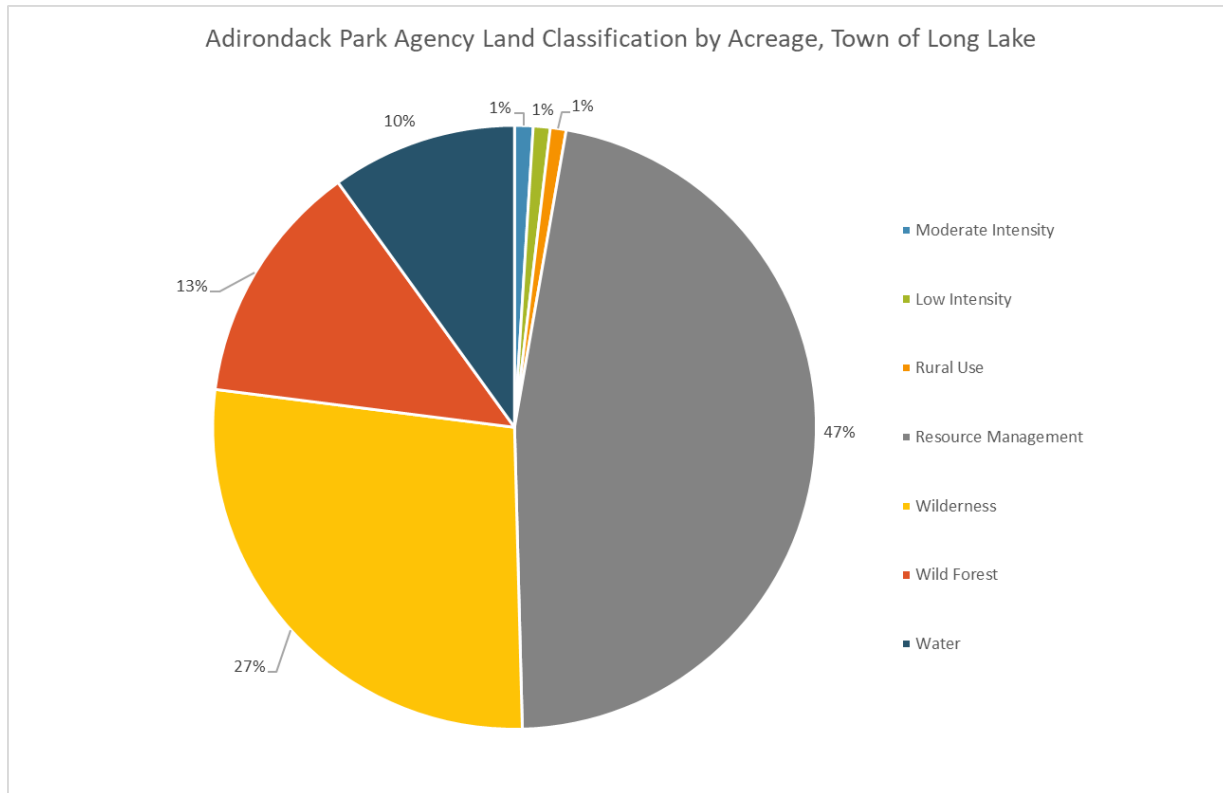
**Land Use & Ecological Features:**

*Land Use:*

The Town of Long Lake encompasses 287,897 acres, with 260,672 acres of land and 27,392 acres of water. Most of the parcels in Long Lake are categorized as Residential Properties. However, the Adirondack Park Agency’s (APA) Land Classification shows the greatest uses of land, by acre, in the Town of Long Lake are Resource Management, Wilderness, and Wild Forest. According to the Hamilton County Tax Assessment, New York State owns 46% of the land in Hamilton County.

The Town of Long Lake is also unique in that it is one of the 26 municipalities in the Adirondack Park and one of four in Hamilton County that does not have land use controls such as zoning, site plan review, subdivision regulations, or an APA-Approved Local Land Use Program.






*Water:*

The Town of Long Lake has multiple bodies of water within its boundaries, including but not limited to Long Lake, Raquette Lake, Lake Eaton, Forked Lake, Lake Lila, and Little Tupper Lake. The Town is also home to numerous ponds and rivers.

Most notably, the Town of Long Lake contains the headwaters of the Raquette Watershed, a sub-watershed of the St. Lawrence Watershed. The Raquette Watershed flows north from the Adirondack mountains into the St. Lawrence River. Much of the watershed is forest except for Long Lake and Raquette Lake. With the greatest population density, the Town of Long Lake is the most populated area in the watershed. Therefore, water pollution is known to be higher in this region of the watershed compared to others.

According to the Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District, Long Lake is classified for swimming and recreation but not drinking water. Both Raquette Lake and Lake Eaton have AA classifications and could be used as a source of drinking water. Lake Eaton may also support a trout population (AA(T)).

	Water Quality Classification	Surface Area (Acres)	Watershed Area (Acres)
Long Lake	B	4,077	301,467
Lake Eaton	AA (T)	556	3,157
Raquette Lake	AA	5,263	80,691



## Community Services and Utilities:

### *Emergency Services:*

The Town of Long Lake has two emergency squads, the Long Lake Rescue Squad and the Raquette Lake Rescue Squad. Both squads are composed of volunteer and non-volunteer NY State Certified EMT's. Also, both Raquette Lake and Long Lake have volunteer fire departments serving each hamlet.

- The Raquette Lake Ambulance Squad is thought to provide one of the long ambulance transports in the state with a 76-mile ride to Utica, NY.

### *Food Access:*

The Town of Long Lake's business directory list five stores that provide groceries and nine restaurants. In the Hamlets 3 study, some public comments were made that the availability of groceries is seasonal, and residents sometimes must go out of town to do their shopping.

### *Health Care:*

The Town of Long Lake has one health center known as the Long Lake Medical Center. The Medical Center has one doctor who is affiliated with other local area hospitals including Adirondack Medical Center and Glens Falls Hospital.

In the Hamlet 3 study, residents commented that they often go to Tupper Lake or even Warren County for medical care and services indicating that services they need aren't available locally.

### *Recreation and Entertainment:*

The Long Lake Parks and Recreation Department services the community by promoting tourism through numerous year-round events and recreation facilities. On their webpage, the department advertises facilities such as the Long Lake pavilion, a ball field, tennis and basketball courts, the Geiger Ice Skating Rink, the Mt. Sabattis Sledding Hill, and over 70 miles of snowmobile trails.

Long Lake and Raquette Lake both have town docks available for the public to use. Long Lake also has public docks that are available for a maximum of six hours. Additional water access is available through the Town beach on Long Lake. The beach features a rope swing, a trampoline, and a slide and offers free swimming lessons during the summer.

The Town also has two libraries with one in each hamlet; The Long Lake Public Library and the Raquette Lake Library.

### *Town Amenities:*

The Town of Long Lake provides residents in both hamlets with a public water supply. According to the Water District's annual report, the system serves over 800 permanent residents and a seasonal population of about 2,000 people. The system has 813 service connections in the hamlet of Long Lake and 72 service connections in the hamlet of Raquette Lake.

The Town also has two transfer station facilities with one in the hamlet of Long Lake and the other in Raquette Lake. Residents may use the facilities by obtaining a permit from the Town Clerk. The transfer stations also follow a local Hamilton County law that mandates a recycling program.



