

Village of Ovid Public Workshop

July 9, 2026

The public workshop was held at the Ovid Fire Department Community Room on Thursday, July 9, 2026. This workshop provided an opportunity for residents and stakeholders to learn about the comprehensive plan and provide feedback on the draft themes. Participants engaged with three boards- a Strength, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis; a priority theme identification; and a vision board.

Over 50 participants emphasized the need to strengthen the Village by expanding job opportunities, enhancing quality of life, and ensuring that the Village continues to be the heart and the hub of the Finger Lakes.

Key Takeaways

- Economic development was the dominant priority. Residents want a stronger downtown with more local businesses, a grocery store, additional restaurants, and investment that fills vacant buildings while supporting existing businesses.
- Growth should be thoughtful and preserve community character. Participants consistently supported economic growth but emphasized maintaining Ovid's rural identity, historic character, and small-town charm. Many noted that growth should benefit local residents first.
- Community pride is a major asset. Residents value Ovid's strong sense of community, scenic beauty, agricultural heritage, historic resources, library, and location in the Finger Lakes, viewing these as the foundation for future success.
- Quality-of-life improvements are needed to retain residents. Participants identified a need for community gathering spaces, recreation, youth programming, housing options, and activities that appeal to families and residents of all ages. There is a strong desire for there to be a central hub in the Village for people to gather.
- Infrastructure and safety remain ongoing concerns. Water and sewer capacity, pedestrian improvements, traffic calming, speeding, housing rehabilitation, and property maintenance were viewed as critical issues that need to be addressed to support future growth.
- Residents see significant opportunity in Ovid's location. Participants believe the Village can capitalize on its position as a gateway to the Finger Lakes by attracting visitors, remote workers, and new businesses while expanding year-round economic activity.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths: • A strong sense of community and generosity of the people • The Village's rural setting, scenic beauty, and quiet life • Historic resources (the library, three bears) • Work ethic and ambition of the community • Tourism • The location- we are the Heart of the Finger Lakes	Weaknesses: • Limited employment opportunities • Insufficient retail services (grocery store, restaurants, stores) • Housing affordability • Water and sewer infrastructure • Code enforcement and declining properties • Post high school educational opportunities • Lack of transportation options
Opportunities: • Leveraging Ovid's location as a gateway and destination within the Finger Lakes • Attracting remote workers, entrepreneurs, and additional small businesses • Strengthening Main Street • Increasing tourism while encouraging year-round economic activity • Building stronger connections with nearby communities and institutions • Empowering residents to play a larger role in economic development	Threats: • No one knows where Ovid is • Declining and aging population • Roadway safety, especially speeding • Loss of local tax base • Lack of zoning and land use regulations • We need reasons for people to come to Ovid and want to stay- younger folks don't see a future here.

Priorities

- Revitalize downtown and strengthen the local economy- Participants consistently emphasized attracting new businesses, filling vacant storefronts, supporting existing small businesses, encouraging investment, and increasing dining and shopping opportunities. A grocery store was the number one top priority. Vacant and deteriorating buildings on Main Street were viewed as a significant concern that affects first impressions of the Village and loss in tax base.
- Maintain Ovid's small-town character while managing growth- Residents generally supported economic growth but stressed that it should be gradual and preserve the Village's rural identity, historic character, and community charm. Many noted that growth should primarily benefit existing residents rather than tourism alone.

Participants are most interested in small business development, rather than attracting large corporations.

- Invest in community amenities and opportunities for all ages- Participants identified a need for additional gathering spaces, including a community center, expanded recreation opportunities, youth programming, activities for teenagers, arts and cultural offerings, and amenities that improve quality of life for residents.
- Expand housing and improve infrastructure- Affordable housing, rehabilitation of older housing stock, water and sewer expansion, road maintenance, pedestrian improvements, and transportation were frequently cited as necessary to support future growth and redevelopment.
- Improve safety and walkability- Residents expressed concerns about speeding traffic, truck traffic, pedestrian safety, traffic calming, and law enforcement. Improving walkability and creating a safer environment for residents were recurring themes.

Draft Vision Statement

Overall, participants were supportive of the draft vision statement but suggested several refinements:

- Place greater emphasis on Ovid's identity as the Gateway or Heart of the Finger Lakes.
- Highlight the importance of creating jobs, supporting year-round businesses, and strengthening the local economy.
- Reinforce preserving rural character while encouraging steady, manageable growth
- Ensuring growth benefits local residents as well as visitors.
- Some participants suggested replacing or removing the word "inclusive," while others felt the vision accurately reflected their aspirations.