

Updates to Comprehensive Plan 2023

1. **Added** photograph of Town sign to cover.
2. **Better** colors used for compatibility with grayscale printing.
3. **Added** foreword how past formal and informal plans worked for the benefit of the Town.
4. **Moved** goal statement to beginning.
5. **Updated 39 tables and 10 charts** with 2020-2022 data; amended analysis of this new data. We found some portions of the 2020 Census incomplete. Other sources were used to gather missing data; those sources are identified throughout the Plan.
6. **Key changes to analysis**
 - a. **Population**
 - i. 2022 population: 527. The Town saw the greatest influx of residents 2020-2022 (pandemic) since 1980. This was put into a line chart for better understanding and helps determine if it is a short-lived trend. Forbes called this trend "*unprecedented unpredictability*"¹.
 - ii. Believing this population growth was short-lived, the Plan shows the Town should have about 538 residents by 2030 (553 by 2040).
 - iii. However, if this upward trend continues unchecked, the Town should prepare for as many as 605 residents by 2040.
 - b. **Housing:** 2020 Census stated there were 344 houses in Town of Willard, representing a loss of 20 homes in 10 years. Town of Willard's most current real estate data was used which showed 404 houses. 2020 Census shows only 215 of the homes are occupied year-round.
 - c. **Land use.**
 - i. Using data from Rusk County land classification in the tax list, the 2009 Existing Land Use Map (Map 7, Appendix D) has been updated to display 2022 land use.
 - ii. Since 2009, Forests (MFL and productive) has decreased by 22%, Agriculture has increased by 4%.
2. **Added** Technology section under Utilities. Quality of Internet and cellphone service is vital for emergency response, general communication, education, and remote work.

¹ Learn The Top Moving Statistics And Trends Continuing Into 2023, Forbes, Published: Feb 9, 2023