**ORANGE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**STRATEGIES FOR QUALITY COMMUNITIES**

**ADOPTED APRIL 11 2003; UPDATED JUNE 2004 AND OCTOBER 2010**

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Adopted in 2003, the new Orange County Comprehensive Plan, *Strategies for Quality Communities*, was prepared by the Orange County Department of Planning for review and adoption by the County Executive and the County Legislature. The Plan builds on the 1987 County Comprehensive Development Plan and on the October 2001 draft County Comprehensive Plan, *Strategies for Quality Communities* prepared by the Orange County Planning Board. As a guidance document, it is intended for use by County, municipal, and other community leaders to provide a county-wide or regional context for decisions on how land might best be used, developed or preserved and how financial, technical and infrastructure resources might be effectively provided. The Plan should also be used to help define a common understanding about the primary trends, assets and challenges the County and its partner municipalities share in the 21st Century.

As written and amended, the Orange County Comprehensive Plan meets two requirements. First, consistent with Orange County Administrative Code §9.02(a), the Commissioner of Planning in consultation with the County Executive and the County Planning Board, must review and update the county comprehensive development plan every five years and submit that plan to the County Legislature for approval. Second, consistent with New York State General Municipal Law §239-d, the Plan meets the State requirements for a County Comprehensive Plan. As such, the plan has two effects upon adoption:

- All county land acquisitions and public improvements shall be in accordance with the County Comprehensive Plan
- All plans for capital projects of a municipality (including the County) or state governmental agency on land included in the County Comprehensive Plan must take this Plan into consideration.

The Orange County Comprehensive Plan has been amended twice since its adoption in 2003; first in 2004, to adopt the Open Space Plan recommended by the 2003 Plan. The Open Space Plan is included herein as Supplemental Chapter 1. In 2010, the Plan was amended to: 1) update the information in Section III, the Land Use Plan; 2) update the information in Section IV.D., the Housing and Neighborhood Preservation Strategy; and 3) include the Water Master Plan, included herein as Supplemental Chapter 2. These amendments are consistent with Orange County Administrative Code §9.02(a). The Orange County Comprehensive Plan is a living document, and as such, some sections of the Plan, particularly the Introduction, may need periodic updating. When updated information is available, the Plan will again be amended to be made as current as possible.
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I. INTRODUCTION
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As Orange County enters the 21st Century it is in an important phase of land development and evolution of a regional identity. A combination of features -- notably varied and attractive landscapes, ready accessibility to metropolitan New York and a four State region, relatively affordable housing prices, and high quality, safe communities -- have made the County a leader in growth and development in recent decades. Recently, the pace of new home and retail center construction seems to have never been quicker. Job growth, retail sales, and real estate values are strong. Several larger regional projects -- highway and commuter rail improvements, medical facilities and distribution centers, the prospect of nearby casinos -- all symbolize opportunity and prosperity.

Yet growth may be coming with real costs. Several of our historic cities and villages still struggle for a role in this prosperity, and six of these historic centers lost modest population in the last decade. Our relative affordability has stimulated significant in-migration, but has diminished housing affordability for those of lesser means. Economic realities force more and more farm families to consider the option of selling their farms. A growing number of people complain about traffic congestion, and the rising cost of providing education and other public services.

Orange County received its charter as one of the original counties in New York State in 1687. By 1798 there were nine towns in the County: Newburgh, New Windsor, Goshen, New Cornwall, Deerpark, Wallkill, Montgomery, Minisink and Warwick. Today, the County has 20 towns, 17 villages and 3 cities as the “home rule” leaders exercising full authority in land use and development review.

As shown in Figure 1, New York City is about 50 miles from the Village of Goshen (the County seat and approximate geographic center of the county. Proximity to the largest metropolitan center on the East Coast, as well as higher wage jobs and higher housing prices in areas in the more immediate New York metropolitan area, have fostered growth in Orange County’s population.
Orange County is unique. It is one of only three counties in New York State that shares its border with two other States. Three interstates I-87, I-84, and the future I-86 (formerly State Route 17) intersect here, giving the County unparalleled highway access to the Northeast, the Midwest and the South. Orange County’s mountains, lakes and streams are bounded by the Hudson River in the east, and the Delaware River in the west. The County is host to two of the top five tourism destinations (excluding New York City) in New York State… the United States Military Academy at West Point and the Woodbury Common Premium Outlet Center. Finally, in the south central part of the County, there are thousands of fertile acres of “black dirt” or “mucklands” (reclaimed glacial lake beds) that provide a strong and sustainable agricultural resource.

The County faces many challenges as it enters the 21st century. It is being challenged to offer an economically viable, attractive, safe haven for established and new residents while preserving a rural countryside that complements vital community centers. This is most apparent in the southeastern quadrant of the County, an area that has been highly attractive to the in-migration of families with at least one metro area commuter. Kiryas Joel, has been one of the fastest growing villages east of the Mississippi River and is located in this part of the County. A byproduct of the County’s interstate road access is a clustering of big box distribution and retail uses which together play an important economic role, but also remind us of the need to maintain economic diversity.

Preserving the valuable elements of the County’s historic and environmental character, defining the role of its agricultural industry, and fostering economic growth while accommodating continued population growth are among the many challenges which will need consideration as the new century proceeds.

The Orange County Comprehensive Plan, Strategies for Quality Communities provides an understanding of the factors that will shape the development of the County over the next decade and beyond. As guidance, this plan provides a strategy to move forward in a way that doesn’t simply replicate and extend the pattern of suburban sprawl that has occurred throughout the New York metropolitan region and the United States in recent decades. The Strategies for Quality Communities Plan provides templates for the County’s municipalities to assist them with planning in a county-wide context. Under the “home rule” provisions of the New York State Constitution, local municipalities, based on local comprehensive plans, have the primary authority to regulate land use through zoning and related regulations. Yet this County Plan should be considered when local decisions about land use are being made. County leaders should also use this Plan to help define capital improvements, infrastructure, and technical assistance to support quality local decisions.
The Strategies for Quality Communities Plan discusses desirable patterns of preservation and development, using the “urban/rural” concept of previous County Plans. This concept emphasizes the concentration of development in and around “centers” -- built-up areas such as cities, villages, hamlets and certain crossroads and interchanges -- in order to maintain the County’s rural countryside. This Plan also incorporates contemporary “smart growth” techniques, and outlines specific strategies focusing on open space, housing, economic development, transportation, and utilities.

A. Planning Efforts in the County

The last Comprehensive Plan, updated in 1987, attempted to address the challenge of maintaining a semi-rural county bordering on the ex-urban fringe of the New York metropolitan region. Increasingly, Orange County is being integrated into the larger New York metropolitan region. The continued expansion of regional transportation systems, coupled with the relative affordability of housing and the attractive, safe living environment, have encouraged the in-migration of a population that often works in Westchester and Rockland Counties, New York City, and northern New Jersey. These same transportation systems, notably three interstate highways, have also helped to attract businesses into the County seeking buildable, affordable sites with ready access to the largest market in the United States.

Since 1987, two regional shopping centers have been built at strategic locations along major highways: the Galleria at Crystal Run at the intersection of I-84 and NYS 17, and Woodbury Common Premium Outlet Center at the intersection of I-87 and NYS Route 17. “Big box” retailers in the Newburgh, Middletown, Monroe, Wallkill, and Woodbury areas have also altered shopping patterns, challenging efforts to reinvigorate the commercial centers of traditional downtowns and weakening older suburban shopping centers. Redevelopment efforts in the cities and older villages in Orange County are ongoing with notable success in Cornwall, Warwick, Goshen, Montgomery, and Washingtonville among others. New housing is being occupied as quickly as it can be built. Older housing is being rehabilitated. At the same time, many towns have experienced significant residential and commercial development, with development often encroaching on the surrounding countryside. Fortunately, past development patterns mostly extended historic patterns focusing on areas served by central water and sewer systems. This left significant undeveloped areas, including prime agricultural lands, undisturbed forests and other environmentally sensitive areas along with significant rolling, rural landscapes that have begun to become prime residential sites.
Orange County has a noteworthy history of comprehensive planning at the municipal and County levels. In 1976, the Orange County Department of Planning prepared a comprehensive development plan entitled “Growth Alternative: A Proposal For An Urban-Rural Concept of County Growth”. Adopted by the County Legislature in 1980, this Plan proposed an urban-rural growth strategy for the future of Orange County. The central idea was to develop a growth concept that welcomed “growth that comes as a natural course” but “stage and direct growth into areas where it can be supported efficiently and at least cost.” If growth were focused toward existing centers, the rural character of most of the County would be maintained by limiting growth in areas without pre-existing infrastructure. When the plan was updated in 1987 to reflect a quickening of development in the County during the economic boom of the early 1980s, the urban-rural concept remained the core theme of the plan.

Previous County Plans provided guidance for decision making at the local level. Other planning efforts have included studies and seminars conducted by Mid-Hudson Pattern for Progress, the Orange County Municipal Planning Federation, the Orange County Citizens Foundation and other civic and community organizations. A number of studies have addressed other critical issues, including the 1996 County...
Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan. In the past ten years County agencies have also produced plans addressing pedestrian and bicycle needs, transit improvements, park capital needs, tourism, and community development priorities. Concepts from these efforts along with background information from the Orange County Partnership (economic development), Orange County Water Authority (water resource issues) and the Orange County Housing Consortium (affordable and special housing needs) are all incorporated in this Plan.

Central to preparing this new Plan for Orange County was the participation of public agencies, community leaders, local organizations and citizens of Orange County. Over the past two years meetings were held with county and municipal leaders along with community organizations to obtain their perspective on the issues, concerns and ideas that were ultimately addressed in the Plan. A series of community forums were structured to allow focused discussion on environmental, housing, open space, agricultural, economic development and sustainable development issues. In addition, comments were solicited from regional and State agencies to provide regional perspectives on transportation, agricultural, recreational and utility systems. Reports and studies previously published by the County, municipalities and other sources were reviewed as background material.

Out of this effort, the Planning Board developed a series of technical memoranda covering areas of land use, demographics and housing, open space, parks and recreation, farmland, transportation, historic and cultural resources, economic development and environmental infrastructure. These technical memoranda are on file at the County Planning Department. Finally, the County Executive sponsored two community “summit” meetings in 2002, the first designed to identity actions to promote “smart growth” and the second focused on economic development priorities. Over 600 individuals attended the two summits providing important input towards priority actions.
B. Summary of Recommendations
   Strategies for Quality Communities

In developing a vision and guidance document for Orange County in the first decade of the 21st Century, the basic premise of previous comprehensive planning efforts will be retained as sound, fundamental policy. Growth will be encouraged in order to provide employment opportunities and enhanced living environments, but that growth should first be directed into the built-up areas of the County where it can be supported effectively and efficiently. Within existing built-up or “urban” areas, the Strategies for Qualities Communities Plan emphasizes the need for a diversity of housing types, a mix of uses, transportation options, and enhanced employment and business opportunities. The Quality Communities Plan seeks to preserve the environmentally sensitive and working lands and the historic resources that give Orange County its unique, desirable character.

An analysis of demographic and economic trends and of the environmental and physical conditions of the County (more fully discussed in Chapter 2, “Building Blocks”) defines a series of core issues of concern.

- **Declining Affordability** - the need to find ways to insure greater access to livable wages, affordable housing, and available community services for all of our diverse population.

- **Retaining and Attracting Our Youth** - to insure the diversity and quality of our communities and our workforce in the future.

- **Insuring A Lead Role for Our Central Places** - Cities, Villages, and Hamlets. The vitality of these places is a prime indicator of successful planning.

- **Better Managing Development Patterns** - Traffic congestion and increasing difficulty in finding adequate water supplies are some of the lead signs that land development location, pace, and design needs improved management.

- **The Future of Agriculture** - The need for direct efforts to help reduce the costs and provide incentives to help overcome market forces that encourage the conversion of farms to residential and commercial development.
Quality Communities Principles

The essence of “smart growth” is a set of guiding principles for decision-making. In implementing this County Comprehensive Plan, County leadership along with municipal, government and non-government partners should be guided by these principles:

- **BALANCE** - balancing the needs of the economy, the environment, and the community.
- **EQUITY** - insuring that all citizens share in a positive future.
- **AFFORDABILITY** - diversity and choice in housing – ideally with proximity to work, schools, transportation and commerce.
- **QUALITY OF DESIGN** - promotion of compact, efficient land development including a greater mix of land uses, density and diversity in housing, complementary land conservation, urban and village infill development, and connections among different modes of transportation.
- **CONCURRENCY** - defining a regional context for the County’s future by insuring that county, municipal, and private sector efforts communicate and share goals.
- **PARTNERSHIP** - working together among all levels of government and with all civic and community interests.
- **PREDICTABILITY** - providing support to projects and actions that are consistent with these principles.

The County’s Priority Growth Areas

The Strategies for Quality Communities Plan recognizes the importance of developing guidance, with a county-wide, regional perspective, for Orange County leaders, local municipal officials, and all citizens involved in land use decisions. The primary, guiding strategy builds from the Priority Growth Areas (PGAs) of the 2003 County Comprehensive Development Plan in anticipating future development trends and defining land use priorities. This Plan continues the recognition of the important role of our historic communities or “centers” - the cities, villages, and hamlets of the County - while placing added emphasis on the importance of transit facilities as opportunities for future growth. Together these land use elements are Orange County’s “Priority Growth Areas” as defined in the following text and in Chapter 3: The Land Use Plan.

The Priority Growth Concept

The County Comprehensive Plan is based on a land use concept that differentiates between a range of urban areas, where density and infrastructure investments are most appropriately focused, and rural areas, containing important agricultural land and open space or environmental resources. First introduced in the
1987 County Comprehensive Plan as the Urban-Rural Concept, this pre-1960 settlement pattern, coupled both with the more recent extent of the county’s “urbanized area” as defined by the 2000 US Census and with existing centralized water and sewer distribution, formed the basis for the PGAs in the 2003 Comprehensive Plan Update. The 2003 County PGA map included Growth Areas and Elements. The Growth Areas were represented by polygons that covered roughly the same geographic areas as the Urban areas in the 1987 Plan, while the Elements included six classes of points, ranging from Countywide Centers to Crossroads. Together, the Growth Areas and the Elements constituted the County’s PGAs.

The 2003 PGAs were refined and simplified for this 2010 Update. The Growth Areas were reassessed with respect to centralized water and sewer service areas, land use, local zoning districts, certain environmental constraints and protected open space. The Elements were redefined into just two categories: local centers and transit opportunities. This new PGA scheme is described in Chapter 3: The Land Use Plan.
Recommended Actions

Over the next five years, the following County actions are recommended towards implementation of the County Comprehensive Plan:

DEVELOP TWO SUPPLEMENTS TO THIS PLAN…

First, THE FIRST COUNTY OPEN SPACE PLAN - A primary challenge generated by the County’s dynamic real estate market is the loss of open spaces that define the uniqueness and environmental characteristics of the County. In cooperation with the Orange County Land Trust and other civic, environmental, and recreational organizations, the County Planning and Parks Departments should take the lead in inventorying current open spaces, defining future open space needs, and recommending County and municipal actions to protect key open spaces. Such a plan should also identify the financial role the County might play in open space protection.

Second, UPDATING THE COUNTY AGRICULTURAL PLAN – FARM ECONOMIC VITALITY. Orange County has been a leader in agricultural preservation efforts as shown by adoption of New York State’s first Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan, and active participation in purchase of development rights programs. Yet the continued viability of farming remains a challenge. Through the leadership of the County’s Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board, the County will move to update its Agriculture Plan to address ways to improve the economic vitality and diversity of agricultural pursuits in the County.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY - The County has taken important steps to improve the marketing of business and tourism opportunities,. Yet there is insufficient public understanding of economic development priorities for a sustainable future. Such a strategy needs to be more than marketing and matching real estate and business interests to sites that allow commercial uses. The Orange County Partnership and other government and non-governmental organizations should collaborate to publish a consensus-based strategy for economic development so that County, municipal, business, tourism, farming, and other interests can better appreciate their roles in strengthening the County’s economic future.

COUNTY OFFICIAL MAP - New York State General Municipal Law §239 allows counties to prepare an “official map” to help facilitate orderly growth and development. Orange County, through a cooperative effort of the County Departments of Planning, Public Works, and Parks, should prepare such
a map, identifying future needs for public facilities such as parks and public buildings, an efficient and adequate transportation system, and stormwater management to protect the public from future damage.

GUIDELINES FOR QUALITY DEVELOPMENT - Municipal, business and community interests consistently seek better guidance and documentation on how to promote quality development, and how facilitate predictable approval when such development is offered. The County should take the lead in the preparation and distribution of such guidance materials, based on the concepts in this new Comprehensive Plan. Technical materials, model codes and laws, and case studies are all needed. Workshops, conferences, printed materials, and Web-based information are also needed. County agencies with land development permit and review authority or with expertise, including the Departments of Health, Planning and Public Works as well as the County Soil & Water Conservation District, should initiate efforts to assist and to streamline the approval of development meeting the Plan’s guidelines.

EFFORTS TO CURB TRAFFIC CONGESTION. Traffic – the lament of many County residents. With significant influence over transportation improvements, and in partnership with NYS Department of Transportation and local municipalities, the County should take a more pro-active role to reduce congestion and to advance transportation options through the Newburgh-Orange County Transportation Council. Land use strategies should be promoted to help reduce demand for single occupancy vehicle use (SOV) and reduce demand for highway capacity increases. The County will also move to implement the 2001 County Transit Improvement Study, building intermodal transportation connections around key hubs serving the County and surrounding region.

MAIN STREET / DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT. The County Planning Department will initiate a Main Street/downtown redevelopment program designed to provide assistance to leaders and businesses in the historically important city, village and hamlet centers of the County.

LEADERSHIP AND ADVOCACY FOR FAIR HOUSING. A quality community provides access to affordable housing for all residents. To help overcome a trend of declining affordability, the County will define what “affordable” means, and what each municipality might do to provide additional affordable housing. The Orange County Housing Consortium, working with the Departments of Planning and Community Development, should prepare technical materials to help overcome the myths about affordable housing. The Planning Department should advance model plans, programs and codes for municipalities to meet housing needs. Lead County agencies should inventory surplus lands and tax sale

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1 Affordable housing is defined to encourage accessibility to housing for all residents of the County. This definition includes concepts of fair housing, workforce housing, and low- and moderate-income housing as well as special needs housing.
auctions, analyze options to streamline permit and filing requirements, and partner with localities or private sector interests to make a wider diversity of housing available. The County’s economic development strategy should continue to focus on creating good jobs to make the opportunity to earn livable wages available to all County residents.

DEFINING WATER AND SEWER CARRYING CAPACITIES - Land development patterns will continue to be shaped by available water supplies and sewage treatment capacity. To advance the principles of quality communities in this Plan, the County needs to foster cooperation with municipalities including inter-connections among local systems where possible. But first, the Orange County Water Authority and the County Planning and Health departments should assist municipalities in identifying the capacities and limits of their current systems with respect to future demands and potential system expansions. Watershed and wellhead protection, and best management practices, should continue to be promoted to conserve water and maximize efficiencies of sewage or septic systems. The County should also convene agency, municipal and development interests to assess new technologies, including community-based water supply and sewage treatment technologies, sometimes called “small flow” systems, which can contribute to quality development. Additionally, the Orange County Soil & Water Conservation District has important expertise and interest in water quality issues and should be an active partner in this recommendation.

MUNICIPAL PARTNERSHIPS. The essential partners to this Plan are the County’s 40 municipalities. Partnership opportunities are numerous. In particular, the County will advance:

1. CERTIFIED TRAINING OF PLANNING & ZONING OFFICIALS. Working with the Orange County Municipal Planning Federation and the County Association of Supervisors and Mayors, the County Planning Department will work to advance consistent, certified training of appointed officials and staff in a variety of core subjects needed to implement quality community planning.

2. DIRECT ASSISTANCE. County agencies, lead by the County Executive and the Planning Department, will coordinate direct technical and financial assistance to municipalities to help in the implementation of the County Plan and municipal comprehensive plans.
DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS. The chances of success are improved when lessons are learned by example. In 2003, the County will offer community planning and water resource assessment grants to municipalities. The Orange County Department of Planning and the Water Authority will partner to provide demonstration projects evaluating growth and development options using Community Viz software.

BENCHMARKS FOR QUALITY COMMUNITIES - The County Department of Planning, in cooperation with the other partners previously mentioned, should define a series of benchmarks to measure County and municipal progress in the application and effectiveness of this Plan. Such benchmarks will include the concept of “sustainability” - measuring the extent to which all county residents and future generations are able to share in a balance of economic, environmental, and community health.
II. BUILDING BLOCKS FOR QUALITY COMMUNITIES
II. BUILDING BLOCKS FOR THE QUALITY COMMUNITIES PLAN

A. Orange County’s Land: Its Use & Trends

Historically Orange County’s landscape has been dominated by agriculture with a variety of residential, commercial and industrial uses located primarily in the cities and villages. During the second half of the Twentieth Century, agriculture declined, replaced by commercial, industrial and residential land uses of suburban character. This trend has accelerated since the last Comprehensive Plan update in 1987. The Land Use Chart (Figure 2) verifies the increase in residential land use activity as this category experienced the most significant increase within these last fourteen years. Within this same time frame, the amount of agricultural land use declined by approximately 8%. The chart also reflects a decrease in the vacant land use category, which would be consistent with increasing development.

The growth in population, the increasing number of single family homes, and the commercial development outside urban areas have often required conversion of farmland and open space to other uses.

Agricultural Uses

Orange County’s heritage is three centuries of farming. Agriculture has been a key part of the County’s economy, providing incomes directly or indirectly for many county residents. Land use patterns and roads developed to serve farms. The more urbanized communities provided merchandise and services for farm operations. Development of transportation routes across the County, including the railroads and shipping on the Hudson River and the Delaware and Hudson Canals facilitated the movement of agricultural products to markets in metropolitan centers. These transportation routes contributed to the growth of villages and cities, and, in turn, transportation networks expanded to satisfy the needs of agriculture and growing urban populations.

At the opening of the Twentieth Century, approximately 75% of Orange County’s land was being farmed. Since that time however, with the exception of the decade of the Great Depression, there has been a steady decline in the amount of land in farms in the County. From 1950-1970, the decline in agriculture in
the county was rapid, the number of farms dropping from approximately 3,000 to 1,000 and the acres under cultivation from about 275,000 to 150,000.

While the rate of decline in farmland has slowed since 1970, the amount of farmland in Orange County continues to decrease. In 1997, the Census of Agriculture indicated that there were approximately 95,000 acres of farmland (approximately 19% of the total area of the county) distributed among only 624 farms. From 1987 to 1997 the county lost 165 farms and 20,000 acres of farmed land, resulting in approximately 94,771 acres of land in farming.

Agriculture remains an important feature of the County's economy and landscape. Today, the County’s farmlands are primarily concentrated in the Wallkill River Valley which runs southwest to northeast through the center of the County, including the towns of Crawford, Goshen, Hamptonburgh, Minisink, Montgomery, and Wawayanda. The County's most productive farming areas, largely within the Towns of Warwick, Wawayanda, Minisink and Goshen, encompass approximately 20,000 acres of ‘black dirt”, of which approximately 14,000 are farmed. Approximately 85 farms produce mostly vegetables and sod. Dairy farming, once a predominant type of farming is being replaced with less land consumptive types of farming. The County's 1996 Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan outlines lead issues for the future of this critical land use.

**Industrial Uses**

The County's three cities, Newburgh, Middletown and Port Jervis have been regionally important industrial communities due to their proximity to water and railroad transportation. Since the 1950’s the county has seen a major decline in many manufacturing uses. Industries, like textile manufacturers, either closed operations, or moved to other regions of the country. Some municipalities developed industrial zones and encouraged developers to create and market new business parks. More recently, industrial uses have again begun to increase. Distribution facilities and smaller manufacturing operations are a growing segment of the County’s economy today.

**Commercial Uses**

Historically the County's cities and villages have been the commercial centers. Lands devoted to commercial uses represented approximately 5% of the County’s acreage in 1999. During the second half of the Twentieth Century, as towns attracted commercial uses, the character of the County began to change. Commercial uses often expanded along the automobile transportation corridors leading out of the villages and cities. Facilities such as the Galleria Mall in the Town of Wallkill, Newburgh Mall and Woodbury Commons and other concentrated commercial uses indicate a business response to a growing,
automobile-oriented population. Site location continues to be largely based on automobile and truck accessibility.

**Parks and Recreation Uses**

Orange County has a large amount of acreage set aside for both passive and active recreation. In 1999, approximately 12% of the County’s land was designated for parks and recreation uses. Recreational land uses in the County have changed over the last few decades.

Large group camps that provided a summer experience for thousands of metropolitan youth and summer resorts for individuals and families declined dramatically, but active recreational parks, state management areas and parks, and preservation areas maintained by not-for-profit organizations have increased. Newer acquisitions such as Sterling Forest State Park, Kowawese Unique Area at Plum Point, the Mongaup Management Area and numerous properties protected by non-government organizations are examples of the trend toward increasing recreational land use.
Community Services and Public Services Uses
Community Services land use includes government and non-profit, institutionally-owned lands such as schools, colleges, libraries, houses of worship, hospitals, and prisons and jails. Within the last decade, community service facilities have been built or expanded to accommodate the growing need for senior services and local government operations. New municipal buildings and senior activity centers head the list of local projects. The County undertook the building of expanded Jail and Court facilities in the Goshen area.

Public service land uses include utility sub-stations, reservoirs, sewage treatment sites, and other utility facilities. Increasing demand for energy and other utility services has resulted in changed land use patterns, though the amount of acreage for these uses is relatively small.

Rapidly Growing Areas
The growth rate of the population and households has a direct impact on the County's land use patterns. Increasing numbers of single family homes and commercial developments outside urban areas has required conversion of farmland and open space into other uses. Though forecasts for the early decades of the 21st Century show a modest decrease in the rate of population growth, the County will continue to grow. Some areas will grow more rapidly than others. Areas where growth may be expected to be more rapid are those which are located in close proximity to Routes I-87, I-84 and NY 17. The Towns of Monroe, Montgomery, Newburgh, Wallkill and Warwick are among the more populated and are anticipated to see continued growth. Other areas, which according to the Census exceeded the County's population increase of 11% from 1990-2000 are the towns of Crawford, Chester, Wawayanda, Goshen, and Hamptonburgh. (See Urban-Rural Concept Map.)

B. Environmental Characteristics
A major objective of the Quality Communities Plan is to accommodate future development while preserving and enhancing the County's natural environment. Orange County’s natural environment is varied, with distinctive topographic features, which need to be preserved, or developed with care and limits.

Orange County uniquely fronts two of America's great rivers, the Hudson and the Delaware. The Hudson River Valley, with its dramatic landscapes, built-up communities along the shore, and historic sites, including the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, extends a distance of approximately 21.5 miles along the County’s eastern edge. This river valley was recently named a National Heritage Area. The Delaware River runs along the western boundaries of Deerpark and Port Jervis, a distance of 7.7 miles in Orange County. Here it is also part of a national recreation and scenic river corridor. Like the Hudson, the
Delaware River provides recreational opportunities for the County and the region. The navigable, tidal, Hudson River has deep water potential in the City of Newburgh and a number of shallow water industrial operations. The northward-flowing Wallkill River bisects the county as it extends for 33 miles from Sussex County, New Jersey to the Hudson River south of the City of Kingston in Ulster County. The Wallkill River is an important environmental resource, offering additional wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities among a varied mix of urban, suburban and agricultural land uses.

Throughout the County there are a number of smaller rivers and streams – like the Ramapo River, the Moodna Creek, and the Neversink River – as well as numerous ponds, lakes and reservoirs. Wetland areas, including Federal and State designated wetlands, are present in every community in the county. The rich “black dirt” soil, a highly valuable agricultural resource, is concentrated in the southern portions of the county, in the vicinity of the Wallkill River. Another productive pocket of ‘black dirt’ is adjacent to the northern border of the Village of Chester.

The County’s topography ranges in elevation from sea level at the Hudson to over 1,600 feet above sea level at the peak of Schunnemunk Mountain to the southwest of Newburgh. The steepest topography in the County is concentrated in two areas. In the west, the Shawangunk Mountains provide an eastern slope...
for the Neversink River and a boundary between Orange County and Sullivan County. The Shawangunk Ridge has been designated by The Nature Conservancy as one of fifty Great American Places. The City of Port Jervis and the Town of Deerpark are also separated from the rest of the County by this mountain ridge. In the east, the Highlands range, that extends from the New Jersey border northeastward toward Bear Mountain and the Hudson River, separates the Villages of Highland Falls and Tuxedo as well as West Point from the rest of the county.

Between these two mountain ranges, lies the Wallkill River Valley, an area of gently rolling terrain in the interior portions of the County. This valley is now designated as part of the Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge, managed by The US Fish & Wildlife Service. Within this less mountainous area, numerous areas of steep slope conditions occur, including large areas in the eastern and southeastern parts of the County. Orange County’s topography provides significant opportunities for panoramic vistas of agricultural areas, open spaces, ridgelines as well as more developed areas.

Other natural features in the County include large wooded areas, principally along the mountains and steep slopes and the north-south trending watershed and aquifer areas in the western, eastern and south-central portions of the county.

Theses environmental features have played a major role in shaping the county’s existing development pattern. Building quality communities requires both recognition of the importance of the County’s natural resources and their integration into the County’s future development pattern.

C. Orange County’s Transportation Systems

Located at the geographic center of the Boston to Washington corridor of 40 million people and the northern fringe of the 20-million New York-northern New Jersey-Long Island, NY-NJ-CT-PA Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area (CMSA), Orange County sits at the ‘crossroads’ of both regional and metropolitan transportation connections. Its transportation is deeply rooted in its history, beginning with Henry Hudson’s exploration of the river bearing his name and anchorage off Cornwall landing on the night of September 29, 1609. A progression of transportation systems has defined the county’s settlement pattern and, from an overall perspective, the framework for its continued evolution.

Orange County has what few counties and regions, and many states don't have, three intersecting interstate highways. The regional highway network consisting of the New York Thruway (Interstate 87), Interstate 84, and NY Route 17 (future Interstate 86), facilitates the movement of people and goods both within and throughout the County. The rail freight network provides freight service to the County,
affording connections throughout the United States and Canada. General aviation service is provided by three of the County's four airports. The largest, the recently privatized Stewart International Airport is a facility that serves both the County and the region facilitating the movement of both freight and people. Transit provides commuter rail and bus service within the County and to parts of northern New Jersey, Westchester County, and New York City.

The ground transportation network in Orange County includes more than 2,300 miles of roadway. The roads that comprise the network fall under the jurisdiction of the New York Thruway Authority, the State of New York Department of Transportation (DOT), the County, and its forty municipalities. Almost 70% of the roadway mileage in Orange County is under the jurisdiction of municipal governments.

Orange County is responsible for about 15% of the mileage. The remainder of the highway network is the responsibility of New York State.

Rail commuters in Orange County are served by Metro-North’s Port Jervis and Hudson Lines. The Port Jervis Line, which is operated by NJ TRANSIT under contract with Metro-North, operates from Port Jervis in Orange County to Hoboken, New Jersey where connecting PATH and ferry service is provided to New York City. NJ TRANSIT is in the process of constructing the Secaucus Transfer rail station, which will facilitate rail access to mid-town Manhattan. Metro-North's Hudson Line can be accessed across the Hudson River at Beacon. It provides direct service to Grand Central Station.

Rail freight service is shared between Norfolk Southern, which operates over Metro-North’s Port Jervis Line, and CSX, which operates along the western shore of the Hudson River. Clearly, the County’s proximity to the New York metropolitan area and its central location in the Boston-Washington, D.C. urban corridor make it a prime location for residential and commercial growth.
D. Demographic Overview

Historical trends indicate that Orange County has consistently experienced increases in its resident population. The rate of these increases varies from decade to decade. For example, Census figures from 1990 to 2000 reflect an 11% increase in the County's population, while the previous decade, 1980-1990,
the rate of change was closer to 19%. The population for 2000 was 341,367, which positioned the County as the 12th most populated county in New York State and the 4th highest in its rate of growth.

Although the County experienced periods of growth spurts, from 1950-1960 and in the subsequent 10-year period (1960-1970) the County's population increased approximately 21%, yet when analyzed over time, the average annual growth rate for the County is 1.24%.

Projections suggest the County’s population will continue to grow, but at a slower rate than in the 1990s. Projections also indicate that the county’s population will gradually grow older, but remain one of the youngest populations in the region. Racial and ethnic diversity is also expected to increase. Significant variation in population characteristics will continue in different areas of the county.

Proprietary data sources (Claritas Inc.) forecast a slower rate, about 0.7% annual for the five year period up to 2003. For the subsequent five year period 2003-2008, the growth rate projected by Claritas is even lower at 0.5%.

The graph below illustrates both Orange County's population growth outpacing its neighbor counties, especially in the 1980's, in addition to its place as the largest county in this group. Extending this region to include Sullivan and Putnam County, Orange still remains the most populated.

Comparing the 40 years spanning 1960-2000 (Table 1), Orange County's population growth far exceeded the Nation's and the State of New York. In this time span, Orange County's population increased 86%, while the State increase was 13%.

At the municipal level population and other demographic indices vary.
Reviewing municipal population changes for this same forty year span, excluding Kiryas Joel which was established in 1977, 60% of the towns saw an increase of 145% or greater; 41% of the villages exceeded 130%. Highland Falls was the only village to experience a decrease during this time frame. Middletown was the only city to encounter an increase (8%) in its population.

The villages, which experienced growth in this period, lie to the immediate west of I-87 (Thruway) and have substantial or growing commuter populations.

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<thead>
<tr>
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</table>

Table 1

Households, age structure, and racial diversity

Population increases affect land use, but the most direct effect on both home buying patterns and land use is caused by growth in the number of households. In 1980, the number of households in Orange County was 84,199. By 1990, the county had 101,506 households, reflecting a 20% increase during the 80s. In 2000, the number of households was 114,788, an increase of 11.57% during the 90s. Forecasts suggest that this slowing in the rate of increase will continue. Households are projected to grow at an annual rate of 1 percent or less through 2020. By 2018, the projected number of households is 124,000. While growth in the number of households may slow in the years ahead, it likely will still outpace population increases.

Orange County’s population is slowly growing older, but growth is expected in the youngest segment of the population. The age groups that are expected to grow the fastest in the next twenty years are children in the 0-15 age group and residents in the 45-54 and 55-64 age groups. There will also be growth in the over 65 age group.

With the exception of New York City, Orange County's age distribution mirrors that of the Mid Hudson Region, the State and the Nation. When considering age as life cycle related, the 2000 age distribution chart can be interpreted as patterns of moving through the school system, labor force participation, and retirement.
From 2000-2010, the absolute and relative numbers of those in the 25-44 age group are expected to decline. The 25-44 year old segment is anticipated to be 27% of the population by 2020. In 1990, this group was 33% of the population.

By comparison, for this same timeframe, projections suggest that by 2015, the 45-54 age group will be decreasing. The 55-64 age group will continue to increase, and is projected to grow to 14% of the population by 2020, doubling its 1990 percentage. By 2020, the 65-79 age group age is estimated to account for 11% of the population, a 3% increase from 1990. A modest increase in the number of those 85 and over is also projected for this period.

While the market for single family homes is likely to be adversely affected by these changes (particularly the decline in the 25-44 age group), the housing market for empty nesters, townhouses, assisted living, retirement communities, and continuing care retirement homes is likely to increase. These changes also imply an increase in the “dependency ratio” in the county (the ratio of non-working to working population) over the next two decades.

Even with the gradual “graying” of the population, in a regional context Orange is a relatively young county. The county’s median age of 34.7 years is the lowest in the region. Orange is the only county in the region in which half the population is under 35 years old.
Census figures show Orange is racially and ethnically diverse. The 2000 Census estimates that the County’s population was 84% white, 8% black, and 1.5% Asian/Pacific Islander. Hispanic, an ethnic category that may include all categories of race, was estimated to be 12%.

**Change in County Population By Race**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Census Enumeration</th>
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<th>Percentage of Total</th>
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<td>221,657</td>
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<td>By Race</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1,336</td>
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<td>5,157</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
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<td>11,181</td>
<td>21,535</td>
<td>39,738</td>
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</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Census figures indicate slower growth in the white population in Orange County relative to higher growth in other population segments. The increase in the Hispanic population is consistent with the growth of this segment in neighboring counties such as Westchester and Rockland.

The African-American population is largely urban. Despite recent immigration from Asia, the Asian population is less than 2%. Hispanics, 12% of the county’s population in 2000, are the largest segment of the minority population, and are also largely urban.

In the New York metropolitan region ethnic diversity varies inversely with proximity to New York City. Orange is less diverse than its southern neighbors, but more diverse than neighbors to the north. A similar pattern is found in the percentage of foreign-born residents, about 7% of Orange County’s population.

**Jobs, Incomes and Housing Prices**

More than 30% of Orange County’s workforce commutes to jobs outside the county, primarily in New York City, Westchester and Rockland Counties and northern New Jersey (refer to graphic on page 20). These workers often earn salaries above the County’s median income. The local economy employs about 70% of the resident workforce and also attracts about a third of its workers from outside the county. These workers often earn less than the median income.
Consistent with the County's commutation pattern, higher median household incomes tend to be concentrated in the south central and eastern parts of the County. The County's median household income in 1999 was $52,058, as indicated by the Median Income Map (below). The Town of Woodbury and the Village of Tuxedo Park both had median incomes exceeding $75,000. Tuxedo Park Village is the most affluent of the County’s villages. Although the median income in the majority of municipalities exceeded the County's median household income, there were a number in which this was not the case. Among these were the County’s three cities. The least affluent villages were Kiryas Joel and Unionville.

Also consistent with the pattern of commutation and household income, average housing prices are higher in eastern and central parts of the county, generally decreasing to the west. While more than a third of the county’s poor are located in the cities, job and income growth has been primarily occurring in areas outside of the cities.

In 1990, the per capita personal income for the County was $19,543 and ranked Orange County 15th in the State. Yet in 2000 the County ranked 20th in the State with an increased per capita personal income of $26,940 (Bureau of Economic Analysis). From 1990-2000 the average annual growth rate in per capita personal income was more than 3% (Bureau of Economic Analysis).

Housing affordability in Orange County is an important but relative, often misunderstood issue. A key reason many new residents move to Orange County is the relative “affordability” of the area compared to real estate closer to New York City. Such in-migration primarily includes families with above average
incomes. For many others, including current residents, notably senior citizens, younger adults and families, and people with more modest incomes, the County is increasingly “unaffordable”.

For this Plan, a shared definition of “affordable” is needed. What can you afford to pay when combining rent or mortgage payments plus utility costs? Borrowing from the National Association of Home Builders, AFFORDABLE HOUSING meets the needs of household residents making 80% or less of the median annual income in the area. This definition includes housing needs for the important categories of “low” (50% or less of area median household income) and “moderate” (80% or less of area median household income) income as provided by US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The definition also includes what can be referred to as WORKFORCE HOUSING, housing for teachers, police officers, nurses, service workers, clerks and the majority of our workforce. With late 2002 County-wide median, household incomes ranging from $41,100 for a single person household to $63,400 for a five person household - or looking more closely at the 3 person household median income of $52,800, anyone familiar with real estate knows the growing affordability gap between household incomes and the market prices for homes.

Based on the 2000 median household income, the affordability index graph below, prepared for this Plan by Marist College researchers, illustrates that Orange County is becoming less affordable. Assumptions made for this calculation included a 20% down payment and 25% of household income going towards mortgage payments.

Interpreting the graph begins at the 100 interval and the further below this demarcation the less affordable
the housing. For the month of October 2002, the median sales price for a home was $214,950. This represents a 32.7% increase from October 2000.

The affordability (housing wage) for rental housing market defined by the National Low Income Housing Coalition establishes the amount a full time worker has to earn to be able to afford a two-bedroom rental at fair market value while paying no more than 30% of their income towards rent. In Orange County, a full time (40 hour week) worker must earn $15.83 an hour.

**Housing and Land Use**

A major objective of the Quality Communities Plan is to develop a pattern of land use over the next 20 years that accommodates population and housing growth while fostering economic development and maintaining the open space and rural character of the County. A comparison of the residential development pattern with the urban-rural growth concept of the 1987 Comprehensive Plan Update shows that much of the residential development has taken place outside of the core urban areas defined in that Plan. In 2000, approximately 18% of the County’s population reside in the cities, while 61% live in the towns, and the remaining 21% reside in the villages.

**Housing Unit Trends**

New housing construction is one of the most important determinants of future land use patterns. An estimated total of 15,322 building permits were issued for the period 1990-2000, resulting in an annual average of about 1,392 building permits. Assuming permits continue to be issued at this rate, about 27,840 permits will be issued over the next twenty years. If construction occurs at this rate, it is estimated that 28,000 acres (about 5%) of the County’s 522,000 acres of remaining developable acreage would be needed to support residential construction over the next 20 years. The anticipated lower growth in the number of households over this period, however, suggests that residential construction may also occur at a lower rate.
If current trends continue much of the residential development in the next twenty years will occur in Monroe, Chester, Warwick, Blooming Grove, Woodbury, Montgomery and New Windsor areas. Other areas like Deerpark, Greenville, Wawayanda, Minisink and Mount Hope are also likely to experience growth in residential development, though as the existing population base is relatively small these increases will not represent as many new residents as in the larger towns. Large-scale residential developments in the southeastern part of the County could further skew the geographic distribution of growth over the next decade. Since housing construction in the County’s villages and cities is generally in-fill or redevelopment, units in these areas don’t represent large-scale conversion of vacant or agricultural land.

**Non-Residential Growth**

Orange County offers excellent Interstate highway access, rivaling many States, as well as relative land affordability when compared to the metropolitan areas to the south and east. If current market trends persist, growth in commercial, industrial and institutional land uses is anticipated over the next five years and beyond. The location of these uses, whether along corridors, at interchanges or downtown centers will place demands on existing vacant or agricultural land. Business parks, a priority site location marketed by Empire State Development Corporation and the Orange County Partnership, will remain priorities, but may quickly get built out.

Historic and future growth patterns for such uses are expected, and are encouraged to mirror the availability of public infrastructure and services. The primary elements of this infrastructure are roads and centralized sewer and water. This Plan seeks to encourage appropriate locations for such uses to allow efficient access for employees, maximizing the use of the current road capacity as well as the provision of transit services, primarily bus but including train and aviation services. Connections from such locations to transportation hubs and centers are critical. Ideally, new or expanding commercial, industrial or institutional land uses first seek options in immediate proximity to population centers with adequate public services. Where this is not possible, corridor, interchange or crossroad locations may work as long as environmental and transportation impacts are mitigated, and key open spaces or prime agricultural lands are avoided.
III. The Land Use Plan
III. THE LAND USE PLAN

The Strategies for Quality Communities Plan recognizes the importance of developing guidance, with a county-wide, regional perspective, for Orange County leaders, local municipal officials, and all citizens involved in land use decisions. The primary, guiding strategy builds from the Priority Growth Areas (PGAs) of the 2003 County Comprehensive Development Plan Update in anticipating future development trends and defining land use priorities. This Plan continues the recognition of the important role of our historic communities or “centers” - the cities, villages, and hamlets of the County - while placing added emphasis on the importance of transit facilities as opportunities for future growth. Together these land use elements are Orange County’s “Priority Growth Areas” as defined in the following text.

The Priority Growth Concept

The County Comprehensive Plan is based on a land use concept that differentiates between a range of urban areas, where density and infrastructure investments are most appropriately focused, and rural areas, containing important agricultural land and open space or environmental resources. First introduced in the 1987 County Comprehensive Plan as the Urban-Rural Concept, this pre-1960 settlement pattern, coupled both with the more recent extent of the county’s “urbanized area” as defined by the 2000 US Census and with existing centralized water and sewer distribution, formed the basis for the PGAs in the 2003 Comprehensive Plan Update. The 2003 County PGA map included Growth Areas and Elements. The Growth Areas were represented by polygons that covered roughly the same geographic areas as the Urban areas in the 1987 Plan, while the Elements included six classes of points, ranging from Countywide Centers to Crossroads. Together, the Growth Areas and the Elements constituted the County’s PGAs.

The 2003 PGAs were refined and simplified for this 2010 Update. The Growth Areas were reassessed with respect to centralized water and sewer service areas, land use, local zoning districts, certain environmental constraints and protected open space. The Elements were redefined into just two categories: local centers and transit opportunities. It is important to note that the Growth Areas were created at a broad-scale and represent generalized areas of the County where growth should reasonably be focused; therefore, not all land within the proposed Areas are developable or necessarily appropriate for development. Any development project should seek to preserve important natural and cultural resources, regardless of location. This new PGA scheme is described below.
County’s Priority Growth Areas

Growth Areas
As noted, the Growth Areas include the historic cities and villages of the County where growth has historically occurred, with some outlying areas for logical projected growth. They are particularly significant in a region with a largely rural history and character because they provide a sense of place and a focus of services amid larger areas of open space, agriculture, forest lands and rural residential neighborhoods. Most include a prominent central business district, the presence of regional civic and employment sites, a mix of land use types and intensities, pedestrian oriented neighborhoods, access to major transportation systems, and a diversity of housing, community and commercial activities. It is within the boundaries of the Growth Areas that the County encourages additional urban/village growth, such as higher density residential, commercial and certain industrial uses, and other community services. The use of infill construction as a method of revitalization is especially appropriate in these areas. Priority should be given to the Growth Areas, and specifically the Villages and Cities within them, for County support, incentives, and investment in water and sewer infrastructure improvements/extensions, sidewalk construction, transportation infrastructure, opportunities for transit-oriented development, housing, and commercial development.

Transit Opportunities
Additional focus for growth within the Growth Areas should be given to areas of existing transit service. Priority consideration should be given to providing options for travelers seeking intermodal connections between transit, motor vehicle, and pedestrian or bicycle transportation. The County strongly endorses the transit-oriented development concept that offers pedestrian-scaled projects and an appropriate mix of residential and commercial development at densities and scales sited to take advantage of transit connections.

Local Centers
Another component of the refined PGA concept is the Local Center, which includes many of the County’s more established hamlets, some of which may provide limited services to surrounding residents. They may include some community or civic facilities and modest retail or professional services. Centralized public services are not currently common in these centers, but may be needed to accommodate added growth. Local centers also include some crossroads and major road intersections that serve or could serve as future community or neighborhood centers but are not reliant on immediate arterial or interstate highway access. County investment in these locations should be focused on addressing preexisting water
and sewer infrastructure needs, improving transit and transportation, the enhancement of amenities (such as parks, trail development and tourist attractions), and small business development.

Areas Outside Priority Growth Areas
As described under “The Priority Growth Concept” section, the County Plan’s PGA concept is fundamentally based on a differentiation between urban and rural areas. While the County’s goals for the urban areas are described above, following is a description of the County’s objectives for the rural areas - those areas outside of the PGAs.

The County’s highest priority for rural areas is the protection of open space, which includes both working landscapes and natural resources. The many values of open space are outlined in the County’s 2004 Open Space Plan, which identifies five major resource areas: Water Resources, Agriculture, Recreation, Landforms and Landmarks, and Biological Diversity. Protection of these resources, while a priority in all regions of the County, is especially crucial in rural areas in order to avoid fragmentation of the natural landscape.

Orange County created an open space fund soon after that Plan’s completion, in recognition of the need to help preserve precious natural resources. The fund was set up to provide up to 50% funding, thus leveraging County funds with outside funding to create a larger impact than the County could have had alone. Since 2005, the County has helped to protect 2,995 acres of significant natural areas and working landscapes in the form of conservation easements and acquisitions, all in partnership with municipalities, New York State, and/or non-profit conservation organizations. Twenty three projects have been awarded funding to date, ranging from small municipal wellhead protection areas, to public parks and nature preserves, to working farms. Because maintaining active farmland is one of the most critical objectives in the Open Space Plan and because the response from farmers was so strong, 18 of the 23 projects awarded County open space funds are active farms, totaling 2,687 acres of productive agricultural land.

This open space fund has helped to preserve important open spaces and will continue to do so in the future, but other programs and policies are needed in order to maintain the County’s important rural character and natural integrity. In regions not designated as priority growth areas, County programs and investments should strongly encourage the continuation of agriculture, conservation of important biological habitats, preservation of wildlife corridors, and protection of scenic vistas.
Priority Growth Areas

- Growth Areas
- Commuter Rail Stations
- Local Centers
- MTA/NJ Transit Rail
- Interstates, Route 17
- Municipal Boundaries

0 1.5 3 6 9 12 Miles
Corridors
Corridors are linear organizing elements that act as linkages between the other structural land use elements connecting traditional downtown centers, hubs, activity nodes, natural areas and residential areas. Due to their linear character, corridors also act to divide and separate different areas of the County, defining communities, neighborhoods and other areas. Corridors relate directly to modes of transportation.

Corridors can be divided into the following categories:

**Roadway Corridors**
- **Natural Feature and Scenic Roadway Corridors**
  These corridors are (1) currently dominated by relatively undeveloped, natural or scenic settings that include significant public open spaces or environmental features that severely limit development or (2) designated or being actively considered for designation as New York State Scenic Byways.
- **Agricultural Area Corridors**
  These corridors are currently and should remain dominated by active agricultural activity with minor elements of residential or commercial development. Any new development should complement the agricultural, open space character of the corridors
- **Residential / Agricultural Corridors**
  These corridors include a mix of land uses lead by single family, detached housing and agriculture. Growth in residential activities is expected with physical constraints and current municipal zoning limiting the scale and location for added commercial activity. Well designed, new development should support these uses while recognizing limits and corridor transportation capacities. Such development should also avoid conflict with farm operations.
- **Mixed Use Corridors**
  Currently identified by a mix and range of land uses, these corridors have the potential for an additional mix of development as well as in-fill development. While additional development is anticipated, quality of design is important in addressing road access, corridor transportation capacity, and roadside appearance as well as in avoiding conflict with current land uses.
- **Intensive Business Corridors**
  These corridors include most of the primary or larger scale retail, service and related business activity in the County. Here road capacity needs to provide access and mobility for a large number of travelers while improvements may be needed for pedestrian accessibility, streetscape design, and access management.
Other important corridors within the County include:

**Rail Corridors - providing key transportation links and services**

- Commuter and Freight - Port Jervis Metro-North Line, Norfolk Southern line
- Freight only - CSX
- Inactive and abandoned rail corridors – where policies, including conversion to recreation uses, should insure that corridors stay intact for possible, future transportation uses.

**Pedestrian/Bike Corridors - the County has an important network of recreation corridors including:**

- Shawangunk Ridge Trail, - generally following the ridgeline of the Shawangunk Ridge to the west.
- Long Path - criss-crossing the center of the County from southeast to northwest.
- Highland Trail - a continuous route from Connecticut to Pennsylvania designed to traverse the Hudson Highlands area of eastern and southeastern Orange County.
- Appalachian Trail - a segment of the famous hiking trail crossing the County from the Hudson River / Bear Mountain Bridge southwest through the Town of Warwick
- Orange Heritage Trail - following the original Erie Main Line railroad in Goshen, Chester and Monroe
- Hudson River Trail System - various elements of pedestrian and waterway trails along the Hudson River Valley currently supported by the Hudson River Valley Greenway.
- Bike Routes - including the County’s one official NYS Bike Route 17 following of variety of public roadways from Broadway in Newburgh west through the Village of Goshen to Port Jervis and up the Delaware River Valley along Route 97. Also include is a short route along Route 17M in the Village of Monroe.

In defining the future land use functions of areas along corridors, the Plan and future design and guidance materials will provide guidance to local communities on quality design, the control of intensive development and the use of open space and lower density development to limit sprawl.
CORRIDORS

ORANGE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Strategies for Quality Communities in the 21st Century

SOURCE: Orange County Water Authority
IV. THE VISION FOR QUALITY COMMUNITIES
IV. THE VISION FOR QUALITY COMMUNITIES

Introduction

Quality communities maintain the traditional elements of community building - commercial and institutional centers surrounded by concentrated residential development patterns with access to local services. A quality community provides for economic development and job creation, and areas of open space and recreation. Quality communities emphasize design forms which accommodate the automobile while creating pedestrian scale environments and green buffers as an alternative to a completely paved environment.

At the County level, supporting quality communities requires linking open space resources and low density development areas, and connecting them to built-up village and city centers.

Quality communities accommodate the development needs of the present without sacrificing the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

To build and maintain quality communities the County and its municipalities have choices to make with regard to the utilization of land and natural resources…choices that will impact transportation systems, housing, economic development, and the environment. In each of these areas, this Plan will present strategies to create and sustain quality communities.

Quality communities are not an inevitable outcome of development. There are a variety of alternative futures. Chapter V, the Implementation Tools section of the Plan, identifies techniques and approaches to manage residential development, urban development and revitalization, and commercial development that will help build quality communities. The approaches and strategies which follow are presented to assist the County and municipalities in making choices which will result in the desired outcome from among alternative futures.

A. ALLOCATION OF LAND RESOURCES

Background and Issues

While Orange County remains a place with many rural areas and a rich natural environment, as well as suburban and urban areas, the recent pattern of development in many areas has raised concerns about rapid suburbanization. The loss of more than 25% of the County’s active farmland over the past twenty years, and residential construction often occurring on large lots at lower densities contributes to this impression.
Continuing population growth impacts the need for parks, and the preservation of open space and farmland. A range of specific needs have been identified including: insuring a high level of maintenance standards at current parks facilities; increasing public access to water bodies; protecting farmland; protecting environmentally sensitive areas located near existing parks, enhancing open space and waterfront resources; expanding the trail network and linking with existing trails such as the Orange Heritage Trail; promoting historical and cultural resources; and providing additional golf facilities.

A Parks Master Planning Committee in conjunction with the County Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation recently prepared a Parks Master Plan to help guide the County in responding to these needs.

**Parks and Recreation**

Parks, open space, natural areas and farms form what can be described as the **Open Space Environment** of the County. This Natural Environment has been achieved through outright acquisition, conservation easements and assistance in purchase of lands by private and nonprofit organizations. These actions have resulted in approximately 60,000 acres of publicly preserved open space in the County. Of this total, approximately 13,000 acres are Federally-owned lands. New York State owns and manages more than 42,000 acres of lands encompassing parks, historic sites, and wildlife management areas. Orange County owns approximately 2,800 acres of land including 10 County Parks. Towns and Villages operate a total of 2,811 acres of parks and associated recreational facilities. The cities of Middletown, Newburgh, and Port Jervis own 492 acres of parks and recreational facilities. Non-profit organizations including environmental, educational, and religious groups also have large land holdings that contribute to the County’s open space network.

**OPEN SPACE ENVIRONMENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Goal</th>
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<tr>
<td>Conserve the County’s natural land resources in a sustainable, linked combination of parks, open space, agricultural lands and waterfront.</td>
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At the other end of the land resource spectrum, **Built Environment** areas—characterized by city, town and village centers, residential areas, and built-up corridors—are also part of the County’s land resources, and should be a primary focus of planning efforts. Implementing strategies that
enhance the quality of the built environment will provide the complement to protected, natural environments.

The County and its municipalities have choices to make with regard to the utilization of its land and natural resources that impact transportation systems, housing, economic development, and natural resources. For each of these focus areas, there are strategies and actions which can be articulated and undertaken which support maintenance of a quality community.

**Strategies and Priorities:**

1. Encourage the development of active and passive recreational facilities that enhance the County’s quality of life and act as an economic development tool.

2. Strategically acquire appropriate additional parkland.

3. Ensure adequate funding for the provision of maintenance of existing parks and recreation programs and expanded funding to provide for unmet needs.

4. Develop facilities and programs that serve the special needs of youth, elderly, disabled, mobility impaired and economically challenged segments of the population.

5. Develop a comprehensive multi-purpose trail network that serves a primarily recreation function and links with recreational, scenic, cultural, and historic places of significance as well as serving as an alternative transportation network to increase recreational and economic development opportunities countywide.

**Recommended Actions**

- Encourage the acquisition and development of new parks and recreation facilities consistent with the Parks Master Plan.

- Complete development of D&H Canal Park and partner with the Neversink Area Museum.

- Assign responsibility to the County Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation for identifying facilities most appropriately provided at the county level and plan to provide these at the countywide level.

- Utilize the County Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation to assist municipalities in providing and maintaining recreational facilities that best serve local needs.
• Through the County Planning Department, encourage and assist municipalities to identify locations for neighborhood and pocket parks or urban greens as a means for enhancing downtowns, village centers and neighborhood development and redevelopment.

• Encourage municipalities to create partnerships with local school districts to identify available school owned facilities (e.g., athletic fields, playgrounds) as possible additional recreational facilities to be available to the community at large.
• Utilize the County Planning Department’s development review process to suggest open space and recreational resources in those portions of new developments which link to other private and public open spaces acting as links in a Countywide open space network.

• Through the County Planning Department and the Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation, in cooperation with Orange County Tourism and assistance of other County departments, agencies and municipalities, implement recommendations of the 1998 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and the 1999 Strategic Tourism Plan; coordinate the development of local trail networks that link tourist sites, downtowns, local institutions, parks, historical resources, farm stands and other popular visitor destinations.

• Investigate the feasibility of using abandoned railroad rights-of-way for potential conversion to multi-use trails.

• Coordinate a trail network program.

• Encourage the development of a variety of trails for different users including pedestrians, bicyclists, equestrian riders, paddlers, and the physically challenged.

• Coordinate the promotion of parks and recreational facilities as tourist destinations within the County and the region.

• Recognize and support the role of private and non-profit organizations in providing semipublic and private commercial recreational facilities.

• Consider developing partnerships with the private and non-profit sectors to develop and operate recreational facilities to minimize capital operating costs.

• Provide long-term leases, to enhance the ability of park facility operators to be eligible for loans and grants.

• Identify additional funding and structuring mechanisms, including funding sources available to address the needs of the population with special needs and dedicated facilities appropriate for the institution and expansion of user fees.
• Research the demand for educational, natural, cultural, and historic programs and plan to meet these needs.

• Research the demand and timing of countywide special needs so as to locate facilities that can be readily accessed by special needs populations.

_Open Space and Farmland_

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<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify undeveloped areas of the County as appropriate for permanent open space, establish acquisition priorities and conserve farmland to enhance the open space character of the County as well as to diversify its economic base.</td>
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_Agricultural Land Strategies and Priorities_

1. Preserve vital agricultural lands.

2. Identify and utilize a range of mechanisms for preserving farms and promoting agriculture-related development that helps to keep farmers on the land.

3. Work in partnership with the Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board to create a plan evaluating potential programs to preserve farmland and support farmers.

4. Attempt to link green areas through the central portion of the County, by identifying and preserving the County’s most endangered farmland and linking these lands with other open space areas.

_Recommended Actions_

• Utilize the County Planning Department’s development review process to identify strategically located areas of agricultural lands.

• Expand the agricultural land inventory utilizing the County’s Geographic Information System through coordination of the efforts of the Orange County Water Authority, Soil and Water Conservation Service, and Orange County departments of Real Property and Planning.

• Through the County Planning Department and the Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board, identify endangered agricultural lands and prioritize these tracts for preservation.

• Through the Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board, the County Planning Department, and the Orange County Water Authority, identify during future development reviews any large clusters of existing farmland for linkage as agricultural land corridors.

• Acquire key agricultural lands or development rights on those lands and support municipalities and non-profit entities to do the same.
• Through the County Planning Department and the Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board, develop model zoning techniques to enhance agricultural viability.

• Through the County Planning Department, create model special zoning district and overlay zones whose purpose it is to preserve agricultural lands. Encourage municipalities to incorporate these model regulations into their own zoning codes.

• Encourage municipalities to identify viable areas for higher density housing and designate those as areas eligible for transfer of agricultural development rights.

• Support the Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board’s efforts to educate municipalities and residents on farmland protection mechanisms.

• Through the County Planning Department and the Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board, review local ordinances and encourage municipalities to implement farmland preservation policies.

• Support and endorse municipal efforts to develop farmland preservation programs.

• Through the County Planning Department, develop model guidelines with regard to conservation easements concerning target areas and priorities for acquisition; restrictions to be placed on land;
guidelines on level of acquisition payments; how to raise funds; and mechanisms for enforcing and monitoring easements.
• Assign responsibility to and provide funding for the County Planning Department to adequately review development proposals.
• Assign responsibility to the County Planning Department and Orange County Tourism, and recommend to the Orange County Cooperative Extension and the Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board, the development of programs enhancing economic vitality of farms, such as promoting agribusiness economic development.

Open Space Strategies and Priorities
1. Preserve vital open space lands including environmentally sensitive lands.
2. Identify and utilize a range of mechanisms for preserving open space.
3. Attempt to link green areas through the central portion of the County, by identifying and preserving the County’s most endangered open space areas.

Recommended Actions
• Utilize the County Planning Department’s development review process to identify strategically located areas of open space.
• Expand the natural resource inventory utilizing the County’s Geographic Information System through coordination of the efforts of the Orange County Water Authority and Planning Department.
• Identify environmentally sensitive areas that interconnect with or have the potential to connect to existing open space resources.
• Acquire key open space lands.
• Purchase conservation easements where appropriate and encourage non-profit entities to do the same.
• Through the County Planning Department, create model special zoning district and overlay zones whose purpose it is to preserve open space and protect existing environmental features. Encourage municipalities to incorporate these model regulations into their own zoning codes.
• Encourage municipalities to identify viable areas for higher density housing and designate those as areas eligible for transfer of development rights.
• Through the County Planning Department, develop model guidelines with regard to conservation easements concerning target areas and priorities for acquisition; restrictions to be placed on land; guidelines on level of acquisition payments; how to raise funds; and mechanisms for enforcing and monitoring easements.
• Assign responsibility to and provide funding for the County Planning Department to adequately review development proposals.

• Encourage municipalities and County agencies to protect scenic areas and views along with views that complement areas with historic and cultural significance.

**Waterfronts**

**Strategies and Priorities**

1. Create intermunicipal partnerships supported by private and non-profit institutions to protect, restore, and enhance multi-jurisdictional waterway corridors and sensitive natural habitats.

2. Provide water-dependent and water-enhanced uses including public access along the County’s waterways.

3. Preserve strategic view corridors of the County’s waterways.

4. Revitalize obsolete or underutilized waterfront sites.

5. Protect the water quality of the County’s waterways, especially the Hudson River, Delaware River, Wallkill River, Neversink River, Waywayanda Creek, and Quassaick Creek, Moodna Creek and Ramapo River.

**Recommended Actions**

• Provide more public boat launches and other public access opportunities along waterways.

• Through the County Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation and with the assistance of other County departments, coordinate with the State Department of Transportation, Metro North and private companies such as New York Waterways, to provide alternative transportation modes such as ferries.

• Examine the interim use of lands preserved for future County reservoirs as parks for water-related and water-enhanced recreation and develop appropriate funding sources and partnerships to implement such development.

• Encourage municipalities to utilize existing reservoirs as recreational resources consistent with their primary water source function.

• Encourage municipalities to provide public esplanades along rivers and streams in urban areas like Newburgh. Include support for the Hudson River Water Trail.

• Encourage municipalities to enter into public/private partnerships to diversify and maximize waterfront use and offset capital and operating costs.
• Utilize the County Planning Department and the Orange County Water Authority to coordinate regional efforts to produce watershed protection plans.
• Encourage public, non-profit and private entities to play an active role in preserving, acquiring, and maintaining open space lands.
• Continue to support the efforts of the Wallkill River Task Force.
• Encourage municipalities to preserve the County’s valleys and provide connections between already protected wetlands and highlands within the watersheds.
• Encourage municipalities to investigate and initiate protection measures such as institution of 100 foot buffer areas along watercourses through acquisition, easements, legislation, zoning, or development review.
• Educate municipal officials and volunteers about the requirements of the State Environmental Quality Review Act and promote their adherence to Best Management Practices during development.
• Through the County Planning Department with assistance of the Orange County Municipal Planning Federation, educate municipal officials and volunteers regarding mechanisms to control land uses along waterways and utilize the Department’s general municipal reviews to advise on such uses and controls.
• Encourage municipalities to develop and adopt Local Waterfront Revitalization Programs* to protect, enhance and plan for the orderly preservation and development of their waterfronts, as is being done in the City of Newburgh and Village of Cornwall-on-Hudson.
• Through the County Planning Department with the assistance of the Industrial Development Agency, encourage and support municipal redevelopment initiatives of obsolete waterfront industrial sites and brownfields.
• Encourage municipalities to identify potential waterfront brownfield redevelopment sites in their Comprehensive and Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans and to utilize and apply for County revolving loan funds available for cleaning up and recycling sites for economic development.
• Encourage municipalities to establish local regulations to identify and protect significant views.

* The New York State Coastal Management program was established in 1982 to address New York’s coastal problems and opportunities by developing a series of policies governing actions along the shoreline. Preparation of a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program gives coastal communities the opportunities to adapt a State program to meet local needs and objectives.
Residential Environments

Strategies and Priorities

Encourage the development of housing of all types that serve different age and income segments of the population.

Recommended Actions

• Encourage municipalities to utilize neo-traditional design of communities which provide parallel, interconnected streets and central open spaces, such as central greens which act as community organizing elements.

• Through the County Planning Department develop alternative model street designs for new construction or adaptation of existing streets which utilize traffic calming techniques including reduced roadways widths, necking down of intersections, provision of clearly articulated crossways and placing of planting islands within oversized cul-de-sacs.

• Encourage municipalities to provide or require street systems which connect or have the opportunity to connect to adjacent development.

• Encourage municipalities to strategically locate required open spaces in subdivisions or cluster developments to link to existing area open spaces and advance creation of a Countywide greenway system.

• Encourage municipalities to undertake street tree planting initiatives under the Tree City USA program.

• Encourage municipalities to support zoning alternatives to single family conventional subdivisions which promote differing housing types.

• Encourage municipalities to provide zoning incentives for provision of special needs housing.

Commercial Areas

Strategies and Priorities

1. In downtowns and centers encourage a mix of uses that establishes itself as an identifiable node of community activity.

2. Formulate programs which pursue planning grants and design services to improve the physical environment of the County’s downtowns.

3. At hubs, strip developments, shopping centers or crossroads, develop or redevelop projects that create a sense of place with sufficient landscaped areas and parking.
Recommended Actions

• Encourage municipalities to seek infill development of undeveloped or vacant sites.
• Encourage municipalities to provide readily accessible off street parking areas.
• Encourage municipalities to extend existing street patterns to undeveloped portions of village or hamlet centers.
• Encourage municipalities to undertake and implement plans which link disparate elements such as transportation nodes, retail centers, civic facilities, and public spaces to provide more well-defined pedestrian accessible hubs.
• Encourage municipalities to overlay or incorporate design elements that connect rather than separate otherwise auto-oriented uses at major intersections of activity.
• Encourage municipalities to provide zoning mechanisms that permit mixed uses including apartments above stores.
• Encourage municipalities to institute zoning techniques under existing highway business, or other zones that require landscaped setbacks, limited parking in front of buildings, limited length of building facades, landscaping in parking lots, and provide design guidelines that enhance the local aesthetic.
• Through the County Planning Department, create model legislation for a new zoning district which could be known as “Country Commercial” that promotes limited, commercial uses and provides design guidelines that permits the introduction of limited commercial uses into rural and suburban residential settings. Encourage municipalities to adopt such zoning.

**Industrial/Office Parks**

**Strategies and Priorities**

1. Encourage property owners to make their lands ready for economic development projects by conducting environmental reviews leading to generic environmental approval.
2. Promote well planned economic development projects in local municipalities in order to create job opportunities.
3. Encourage the development of well-designed industrial and office parks that provide an attractive setting for business
4. Encourage municipalities to support coordinated economic development through preparation of overall business park plans that can be implemented incrementally.

**Recommended Actions**

• Encourage municipalities to institute zoning techniques that require landscaped setbacks from exterior roads and interior roads, that establish through zoning lot and bulk standards that allow for maximum use of the land and maximize the development potential of a range of uses and accessory facilities.
• Encourage municipalities to permit office and business parks in locations accessible to highways and other transportation centers such as Stewart Airport.
• With the aid of the County Planning Department and the Orange County Municipal Planning Federation, encourage municipalities to adopt streamlined approval guidelines that facilitate projects through the approval process.

**Institutional Areas**

**Strategies and Priorities**

1. Select sites for new municipal uses that provide a central pedestrian civic focus and create a center of activity.
2. Locate schools and other facilities as integral parts of surrounding communities.
3. Provide opportunities for connection of existing educational, health related and governmental complexes to other community uses providing pedestrian oriented opportunities for students, staff and visitors.
Recommended Actions

- In the case of existing roadside municipal uses, encourage redesign that creates civic centers connected to other surrounding institutional and business uses.

**CORRIDORS**

The treatment of the County’s corridors is a critical component of any land use resource strategy and is directly related to the character of the Natural and Built Environments. The County’s established corridors relate either to the major modes of transportation that they convey, the development patterns that surround them or the natural features that define them.

**Overall Goal**

*Secure the rural ambiance and community aesthetic of the County through control of land use along its multipurpose corridors.*

In addition to their function as transportation conduits and organizers of land use, corridors also provide significant viewsheds that establish both overall and local community character throughout the County. Preservation methods may be required for some of these viewsheds in the face of development pressure.

While some viewsheds may be preserved due to their location within designated parkland, many are in areas subject to change that may require policies to ensure preservation of the visual significance of the landscape. In some cases, this can be achieved through development techniques. In other instances, preservation techniques such as conservation easements or outright purchase might be required.

Corridors are categorized based on their differing land uses, development patterns, geographic resources, and community character. There are roadway corridors, rail corridors, and pedestrian corridors. Examination of the network of important roadway corridors that cross the County suggests a set of seven roadway corridors based on the land uses they traverse, including natural features corridors, agricultural area corridors, rural residential corridors, suburban residential corridors, mixed use corridors, intensive business corridors and limited access highway corridors. Specific roadways may exhibit the characteristics of different corridor types for separate segments along their route. Poor transitions between different segments along the same corridor weakens the character of the corridor. Strategies for enhancing community character could focus on these transition points.

At the community level, municipalities can examine the zoning districts that line each of the seven corridor types within their borders to determine if that zoning will support the continuation of corridor
character. Zoning regulations can incorporate buffering provisions for agricultural or residential uses at the ends of these land use corridors as they change to mixed or business uses. Such buffering requirements will reduce pressure for the spread of more intensive uses from one corridor segment to others characterized by less intensive uses.

The types and locations of the important corridors are identified on the corridor map. Natural feature corridors not linked to transportation networks are discussed elsewhere.

**Roadway Corridors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Roadway Corridors Strategies and Priorities:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintain the separate and distinct character of different segments of roadway corridors.</td>
<td>1. Encourage municipalities to identify those corridor segments most in need of attention within their communities.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Through the County Planning Department, promote regulations that separate land uses into segments along corridors and provide model design guidelines that can be implemented to define edges of corridor segments.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Promote the incorporation of elements built-up corridors that enhance their visual image and functional cohesiveness.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. Coordinate land use and transportation functions to improve or maintain transportation function in built up corridor segments.</td>
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**Recommended Actions**

- Encourage municipalities, through zoning regulations, to intensify uses within already existing business corridors to establish concentrated use segments rather than long sprawled strips.
- Preserve significant viewsheds from corridor roadways.
- Utilize techniques such as conservation easements, that preserve undeveloped residential corridor frontages and promote interior lot residential development.
Rail Corridors
Historically, the development of railway lines for both freight and passenger use was a major factor in the growth pattern of the County. While many of the traditional downtown centers grew from rail stops in a typical development pattern, industrial development clusters often developed to take advantage of rail access. While portions of historic rail routes through the County may no longer be in use - particularly the old Erie Railroad Main Line that paralleled Route 17 from Monroe to Goshen - conversion to pedestrian trails and bike trails has preserved the connecting corridor land use function of these routes.

Strategy and Priority
1. Preserve railway options for both passenger and freight services.

Recommended Action
• Promote transit oriented development in downtowns.

Pedestrian Corridors
Orange County contains pedestrian trails that form yet another network of corridor and land uses. Some of these trails are also utilized for bicycles and horse riding.

Strategies and Priorities
1. Preserve options along former rail corridors for development into trails.
2. Preserve the multi-use function of trails to accommodate a variety of uses.

Recommended Action
• Through the County Department of Parks, expand the Orange Heritage Trail from Harriman to Middletown and extend the D&H canal trail and other linear parks.
B. TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY

Background and Issues

Orange County has an extensive transportation system that provides a framework for existing and future development in the County.

From an overall perspective, the existing highway network, highlighted by the “golden triangle” formed by the New York Thruway (Interstate 87), Interstate 84, and NY Route 17 (future Interstate 86), facilitates movement of people and goods both within and through the County. The existing rail network provides freight service to the County, affording connections to points throughout the United States and Canada. Air service is provided by Stewart International Airport, which will be a major area for future development, as well as by the County’s three smaller airports. Bus and rail transit service is available.
within the County and to northern New Jersey and New York City, as well as to adjacent counties and other upstate New York communities.

The County’s proximity to New York City and its accessibility to the northeastern United States via highways and railroads have contributed to its residential and commercial growth in recent decades. The transportation network is a strength of Orange County and has the potential to support additional economic growth if properly utilized.

This Plan has established the following overall transportation goal:

**Overall Goal**

Promote a multi-modal transportation network that meets the needs of all segments of the County’s current and future population for intra- and inter-County travel, and that adequately supports anticipated economic development.

The County and its municipalities should coordinate local planning efforts with their neighbors, and work closely with regional agencies, such as the State Department of Transportation (DOT), the New York Thruway Authority and NJ TRANSIT, as they plan for transportation facilities that affect local conditions.

**Transportation Systems**  
**Roadway System Strategies and Priorities:**

1. Support the 2020 Vision Plan as a guide to encourage provision of roadway improvements that both shape and respond to patterns of growth and employment, recognizing the County’s unique position at the confluence of three major limited access roadways.

2. Participate in regional discussions with the New York State DOT, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the commuter rail agencies, and the freight railroads, regarding potential strategies for dealing with capacity constraints on the regional railroad and highway systems, particularly as they relate to the movement of goods within and through the county.

3. Participate in the Thruway Authority’s Master Plan process, providing input on major interchange projects and traffic management issues that respond to and reduce congestion.

4. Continue cooperation with the Newburgh-Orange County Transportation Council (NOCTC) and local municipalities to develop the 5-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
5. Identify and resolve issues relating to transportation, economic development and environmental preservation, among others.

6. Pursue a traffic management strategy along the I-84 corridor from Maybrook to the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge which serves a mix of local commuter traffic and regional truck traffic moving within and through the County.

Roadway Systems

Recommended Actions

• Through the County Planning Department work with municipalities affected by highway projects with regional significance, including the designation of Route 17 as Interstate 86, and the development of new highway interchanges such as I-84/Drury Lane and Thruway Exit 15B in Tuxedo.

• Through the County Planning Department coordinate with New York State Department of Transportation to develop a plan for accommodating the growth in traffic volumes on the north-south roadways that currently access I-84 east of Stewart Airport, including US Route 9W and NY Routes 32, 52, and 300.

• Pursue potential direct rail access to Stewart Airport in the future.

• Encourage municipalities to identify needed road improvement projects as part of their comprehensive plans.

• Encourage municipalities to minimize curb cuts along major roadway corridors. Utilize interconnected and shared driveways for adjacent uses through retrofitting or site plan approval for new projects to reduce traffic movements along major roads.

• Encourage municipalities to implement measures to reduce conflicts between pedestrian and vehicular circulation, known as traffic calming, particularly in hamlet centers and downtown areas. Traffic calming measures could include specially designed pedestrian crosswalks, enhanced sidewalk designs, including intersection neck-downs, coordinated signage programs and creative on-street and off-street parking solutions.

• Encourage municipalities to adopt zoning ordinance parking standards that provide attractively designed and landscaped offstreet parking lots that address circulation, aesthetic and parking facility needs.

Transit Strategies and Priorities

1. Plan local transit needs within the context of regional future transit needs including adjoining areas such as Dutchess and Sullivan Counties in New York, northern New Jersey, and the area of Pennsylvania adjacent to Port Jervis.
2. Utilize any additional rail service west of the Hudson River that results from either the West Shore Major Investment Study DEIS process or possible future agreements between Metro-North and Norfolk Southern for the Port Jervis Line.

3. Through the County Planning Department, participate in planning of any Cross-Hudson rail proposals, including those connecting to Metro North’s Hudson Line, those potentially resulting from Tappan Zee Bridge improvement alternatives and use of the median of the New York State Thruway. Understand the implications of each such connection and the different local markets they would serve.

4. As the level of activity in the vicinity of Stewart Airport increases, support the implementation of rail alternatives that provide connections from the existing rail system to the Airport and the adjacent area.

5. Develop a transit plan for the Stewart Airport area that provides efficient bus connections to existing rail service on the Hudson and Port Jervis Lines.

6. Consider implementation of direct rail access to Stewart Airport when passenger volumes so warrant.

7. Develop transit hubs at a limited number of key transit facilities with coordinated schedules between bus and rail lines to provide efficient transfers between modes.

8. Implement additional bus service between population centers and employment areas as County employment grows and road capacity becomes constrained.

9. Provide shuttle bus service between proposed station sites and local tourist destinations, if passenger rail service to the Catskills is implemented.

**Recommended Actions**

- Encourage municipalities to promote transit oriented development that results in employment and residential densities conducive to competitive transit service.
- Encourage municipalities to provide for development that allows for the preservation of rights-of-way for future recreational or transit use.
- Develop park-and-ride lots at transit hubs either through reservation of sites for stand alone facilities or through incorporation into privately-owned developments (particularly retail centers) through coordination with municipalities during the site plan approval process.
- Provide efficient bus service to stations on Metro-North’s Hudson Line that can compete with single-occupancy autos.
- Implement feeder bus service between stations and appropriate population centers that can be served by each station.
- Provide attractive travel times and other service characteristics to make service competitive with single-occupancy vehicles.
• Form public/private partnerships with major employers to offset the cost of non-traditional bus service that is intended to provide service to specific employment areas aiding both rural and urban areas.
• Support the implementation of rail alternatives that provide connections from the existing rail system to the airport and the adjacent areas as the level of activity in the vicinity of Stewart Airport increases.
• Develop interim bus service between Stewart Airport and future transit centers if passenger boardings and employment at the Airport grow significantly.
C. Economic Development Strategy

Background and Issues

The economy of Orange County must be understood within the context of international, national and regional trends. In this post industrial era marked by the internet and vastly declining communication costs, growth will be driven by services and industries and individuals will be increasingly mobile.

While familiar economic issues such as “operating costs” or the “cost of living” will continue to be important, a premium will accrue to locations which can provide: (1) an educated workforce, (2) a well developed transportation and communications infrastructure, and (3) a high ‘quality of life,’ which encompasses issues such as the preservation of open space and the natural environment, the quality and diversity of the housing stock, and the level of cultural and recreational institutions.

Located at the fringe of the New York metropolitan region business community, Orange County faces the same economic challenge faced throughout the region: adapting to rapid technological change in a shrinking global economy driven by communication and technological advances. The County’s overall low-density, dispersed development pattern was built on an array of roadways and rail lines that distributed workers and products throughout the County and the region. New technologies have created a new network which could potentially further support the existing dispersed pattern of development.

Orange County’s location between city and country presents unique opportunities and challenges. Over the next twenty years one of the key challenges facing the County will be to strike an appropriate balance between leveraging its proximity to New York City and preserving its unique character.

Strategies and Priorities

1. Maximize the position of the County as a gateway to the urbanized metropolitan region as well as to the region’s more rural countryside to its north and west.
2. Build on the County’s traditional strengths in commerce and distribution.
3. Support linkages between regional economic centers that capitalize on the unique strengths of each center.

Overall Goal

Strengthen the economy in Orange County by attracting and supporting businesses that will enhance the County’s economic base and provide jobs, tax revenues, and an orderly and sustainable land use pattern that accommodates the best of the County’s old economy while providing the attributes necessary to build the new economy.
4. **Build on the physical infrastructure of the County - its land, location in the region, utilities, transportation system, and waterways to enhance existing and attract new businesses.**

5. **Encourage the regionalization of utilities like sewer and water.**

6. **Encourage the links between the County's environmental and agricultural heritage and the promotion of sustainable agricultural and economic development.**

**Recommended Actions**

- Utilize the county’s land resources appropriate for economic development to provide strategically located sites for new businesses. Keep an updated inventory of countywide sites in approved business parks that are available for differing types of development. Continue to encourage organizations such as the Orange County Partnership and the Orange County Industrial Development Agency to expand the inventory of land that is pre-approved for development through utilization of programs such as Build Now New York.

- Preserve existing County owned reservoir land with appropriate interim uses treating these lands as a land banked resource available to meet potential future water needs that will support business and housing growth.

- Provide for a range of types of office and business parks.

- Encourage municipalities to create a land bank of wetland areas to be used to trade for wetland areas on sites which are well suited for business development.

- Establish wetland banks which can be utilized for wetland mitigation when business development impacts existing wetlands.

- Work with the Federal Highway Administration to keep existing entrances and exits to Route 17/I 86.

- Support an enhanced and well maintained interstate, State and County roadway system as the underpinning of the County’s transportation systems.

- Anticipate and develop plans for growth corridors in proximity to Stewart Airport. Encourage cooperation between the Towns of New Windsor, Newburgh and Montgomery for coordinated corridor plans for Routes 207, 300, 9W and 17K which are likely to experience spin off development as a result of Stewart Airport growth.

- Recognize the County’s unique position relative to the metropolitan area and plan for added economic development and housing pressures in and around the main access points to the County from the east and the south.

- Enhance the County’s distribution advantages by supporting the freight rail services through the County provided by large carriers such as CSX on the West Shore Line and the Norfolk Southern on the Port Jervis Line. Balance the needs of increased passenger service with freight trackage usage and identify
potential locations of rail and surface transportation conflicts which could be caused by long freight trains of increasing frequency.

• Maximize and support the potential of Stewart Airport as a unique economic development opportunity in the County.
• Promote Stewart Airport as an alternative regional transportation hub to the other three metro area regional air traffic centers.
  - Develop Stewart as the regional center for low cost carriers for both domestic and international travel.
  - Build on the adjacency of a Foreign Trade Zone, World Trade Center, inventory of adjacent land and good road and rail access to New York City and the Hudson Valley to make Stewart a hub for domestic and international cargo operations.
• Support rail alternatives that will connect the County and Stewart Airport more efficiently with New York City and Westchester County. This includes consideration of a Tappan Zee Bridge rail alternative and extension of the Graham rail line to Stewart Airport.
• Capitalize on the pass through traffic to Sullivan and Ulster Counties currently existing and likely to expand as a result of tourism initiatives in those counties.
• Encourage continued and new transportation links such as the bus between Woodbury Common and the Galleria Mall.
• Support the transportation advantages of the Hudson River both as a potential deep water port, commuter ferry resource and cross-Hudson tourism generator while ensuring that waterfront uses are clean, non-polluting and preferably water dependent and are compatible with municipal waterfront revitalization efforts.
• Through the County Tourism Office consider linking individual historic and cultural attractions located in different sections of the County to strengthen the regions in which they are located.
• Recognize Woodbury Common as both a regional and international center that acts as a catalyst for a more comprehensive mixed use hub that could include a convention center, hotel, additional retail trade and recreational uses. Existing and proposed land uses at the Thruway Toll Plaza could be better coordinated and linked.
• Link industrial development and the environment through the planning, fostering and development of planned or in-place eco industrial parks. Link industries that benefit from the byproducts of each where the waste of one industry is available to be used as the raw material of another industry. This is a “greenfield” approach to economic development well-suited to the environmental setting of Orange County. Whereas industries can be planned to co-locate, existing industries in close proximity to other industries can organize to share by-products even if they are not in close physical proximity to each other.
• At areas of activity that are developed in a strip suburban or segregated shopping mode, overlay a more pedestrian friendly town center type design to create coordinated activity hubs.

• Support intermunicipal cooperation and sharing of water and sewer resources and services as an efficient means to accommodate economic development.

• Support and promote the County’s agri-business as a critical economic development tool. Approach agriculture as an important sector of the economy to be measured not just by job creation or taxes generated but as a unique element of the county’s quality of life which protects its inventory of open space against increasing development.

• Expand the definitions of agriculture to include value added products and services that agriculture encompasses vegetable crops, dairy products, ornamental horticulture, orchard products, aquaponics, equine products and services as well as “U-Pick” operations, hay rides and seasonal events along with farm stores. Expand the agri-tourism aspects of the agricultural industry to enhance farmer income and attract tourism dollars to the industry and the County.

• Through the Orange County Partnership, encourage packaging and processing of agricultural products as a spin-off of the agricultural industry.

• Encourage municipalities to amend local zoning regulations to provide higher densities and higher coverage ratios for business uses to increase the competitive advantage of the County as a place to do business.

• Encourage municipalities to employ zoning and land use regulations that discourage development of the County as the next ring sprawl suburb in metropolitan area development.

• Accommodate the need for additional hotel and golf courses.

Quality of Life
Strategies and Priorities

1. Enhance urban and village centers as compact economic centers that provide a sense of place and build on the unique strengths of each center.

2. Maximize the potential of the County’s waterfronts as a direct source of economic development as well as a resource to provide the backdrop to development.

3. Promote tourism of the County as a whole and its historic, cultural, educational and natural resources as vital economic development tools.

4. Continue efforts to streamline the regulatory process to facilitate business development.
Recommended Actions

• Support efforts to educate the public and local and county officials regarding the attributes of quality communities and the importance of strong local and regional centers that provide both a sense of place and an important and distinct link in the economic framework of the county’s infrastructure.

• Conduct workshops on land use functions and responsibilities for members of local planning and zoning boards.

• Encourage local appointed Board members to take advantage of educational opportunities to enhance the understanding and effectiveness of local Boards involved in the development approval process.

• Through the County Office of Community Development, provide funds for and encourage municipalities to plan for improved physical design including street, facade, lighting and sign improvements to enhance the competitive advantage of downtowns.

• Provide redevelopment support to the three cities of the County including assistance with their physical and human capital to help overcome the obstacles of neighborhood abandonment and deterioration.

• Encourage municipalities to support additional mixed uses in downtowns including housing for various age groups, housing of various densities, and office and commercial uses.

• Encourage municipalities to update land use techniques to accommodate diverse demographic, employment and economic development trends.

• Provide one stop shops at the local level to facilitate business development approvals where appropriate.

• Through Orange County Tourism, link disparate resources and areas both within the County and between other counties to strengthen the attractiveness of the county as an integral part of the Hudson Valley tourism region.

• Support the program of Orange County Tourism and utilize the unique, rich historic and cultural resources of the County to strengthen and expand related businesses.

• Encourage municipalities to seek appropriate water dependent and water enhanced uses of the coastal Hudson River and Delaware River shorelines.
• Encourage waterfront communities to develop local waterfront revitalization programs and to coordinate local policies with those of neighboring communities to have an integrated approach along common shorelines. The County could facilitate such coordination.
• Expand the use of the Hudson River as a transportation resource.
• Through the County Planning Department and Hudson Valley Greenway, develop interior riverfront corridor model development guidelines that preserve public rights of way, setbacks and buffers along river corridors.
• Provide additional public access opportunities to the County’s waterways.

Workforce and Technology
Strategies and Priorities
1. Build on the skill base of the County workforce and strengthen the knowledge-based sector of the County’s economy.
2. Provide the basis for expanding the technological sector of the County’s economy.
3. Provide incentives to channel economic development into desirable sectors and locations.
4. Maximize the impact of ongoing public and private initiatives in the County’s cities.

Recommended Actions
• Promote development of higher wage jobs.
• Actively recruit and foster the establishment of technology business incubators as a means for facilitating the growth and success of local technology companies.
• Link incubator industries with existing and newly established university links in the county or as linchpins for development of technology parks.
• Provide subsidies to incubators that provide qualified start up firms with shared workspaces and services under flexible terms and support services to grow businesses through development of business plans or acquisition of financing.
• Attract new businesses in telecommunications, new media, trade, distribution and other strategic industries.
• Strengthen the curriculum of existing public and private colleges within the County to meet the needs of the county’s economy in the 21st Century.
• Continue to augment efforts to better integrate West Point Military Academy into the County’s economy.
• Review previous initiatives to induce universities such as Columbia or Cornell to establish affiliated institutions in the County and undertake new initiatives.
The Vision for Quality Communities

- Through appropriate County and not for profit agencies, provide the institutional support such as day care centers and transportation links that enhance the availability and productivity of the County’s labor force, and support a workforce that will attract new industry to the County.
- Support the Build Now-Orange Program which, by providing development ready sites, absorbs the direct and indirect costs of approvals and environmental processing which often act as a barrier to economic development.
- Encourage, promote and coordinate regional applications for economic development loans and grants.

D. Housing and Neighborhood Preservation Strategy

Background and Issues
The County is geographically located within relatively easy commuting distance of major employment centers, including New York City. This location resulted in continuous population and household growth until 2006. The substantial rate of growth in the early part of this decade placed significant pressure on the housing supply, particularly affordable housing. Since 1990, more than 10,000 new housing units have been approved in the County; with much of this growth taking place in the northeastern and the southern parts of the County, particularly in the towns of Monroe and Warwick.

Residential development in Orange County consists primarily of detached single-family homes on multiple-acre private lots. Although the existing housing stock throughout the County does include multifamily buildings, mobile home parks and both old and new single family homes on lots both large and small, the housing boom that took place in the County between the late 1990s and 2006 resulted primarily in the construction of market-rate condominiums and large market-rate single-family homes on moderate to large parcels. Following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Orange County became the fastest-growing county in New York State, due in part to in-migration from New York City. Also during that timeframe, housing prices increased at average rates of 10% per year, while median household income grew at an average rate of less than 4% per year. This has created substantial pressure on the affordable housing supply. Several factors, including escalating land costs, zoning complications, difficulty in financing, as well as local opposition to alternative density/moderately priced housing initiatives, have reduced developer profit margins and severely curtailed the willingness to construct moderately priced homes. The collapse of the national housing market beginning in 2007 and record-high fuel prices in 2008 further curtailed the construction of moderately priced housing. Zoning practices as well as the other factors mentioned above discourage moderately priced, workforce housing, resulting in single family units on larger, multi-acre lots and/or housing incentives restricted solely to seniors. The combined effects of these factors have come to exclude a large percentage of working families from the
regional housing market.
In 2007, the Counties of Dutchess, Orange and Ulster initiated a joint housing needs assessment, due to the strong regional economic linkages among the counties, their similar housing affordability challenges, and their linkages to the New York City Metropolitan area. This study represents an effort to develop a regional mindset in addressing housing affordability issues in the three Counties, encouraging elevated and more informed discussion, and joint planning where commonalities make coordination logical. However, recognizing that differences between the counties exist, such as geography, planning priorities and local regulations, it is also important to note that each of the Counties will likely find that solutions work with different degrees of success, and no single approach to address housing affordability issues is recommended in this study. Instead, an array of housing options should be provided throughout the County.

**Estimated 2006 Affordability Gap in Units**
**By County and Tenure Category**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Owner Units</th>
<th>Renter Units</th>
<th>Total Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dutchess County</td>
<td>17,913</td>
<td>6,900</td>
<td>24,813</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange County</td>
<td>21,921</td>
<td>9,351</td>
<td>31,272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ulster</td>
<td>10,696</td>
<td>5,257</td>
<td>15,953</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prepared By Economic & Policy Resources, Inc

The study estimated that in 2006, Orange County had a gap of 21,921 affordable owner-occupied units and 9,351 affordable rental units, for a total affordability gap of 31,272 units. While the construction of affordable units in Orange County would represent a strong initial step, it is just one way to help alleviate affordable housing pressures. The construction of additional units is a supply side approach, but likely needs to be part of a broader strategic effort to make housing more affordable for the region’s residents. Such a strategy should include demand side initiatives as well. A demand side approach could include facilitating the creation of good-paying jobs as a way to assist the region’s households to be able to afford housing. A singular approach would not likely garner the type of consensus needed for Orange County to take significant action and effectively meet the estimated affordable housing need of their residents, either the estimated current need or the projected need in the near future. There is, of course, the counter argument that, as job growth and development is facilitated, population from surrounding areas will find Orange County more attractive, and the housing situation will be exacerbated. The County is not a closed system, and if serious improvement in the imbalance described above is desired, supply must lead
development.

**Housing is a Key Ingredient of Livable Communities**

Offering an array of housing options that are affordable to a range of household incomes is an important component for achieving sustainable communities. Factors that support this contention are many. A healthy and sustainable housing mix provides for an increase in local commercial-retail vitality as reduced housing costs allow for more disposable income. A full range of housing options stabilizes demographic shifts providing a more stable foundation of regular customers-patrons for a community’s businesses who feel connected and more deeply committed to the quality of life and services that are offered in the community, and a more stable and predictable base of population (for municipal services) and students (for schools). The first assists in building a more predictable business environment in a community, and the latter helps to provide a demand climate of stability-predictability for the provision of essential municipal and educational services in a community.

In addition, a full range of housing options configured properly in an appropriately scaled, community-friendly manner also has been shown to: (a) reduce vehicle trips, (b) encourage biking and walking, and (c) provide “critical population mass” that is needed to support commercial businesses and services that are part of vibrant, livable communities. A full range of housing options also allows for diversity in a community, and the inherent strength that a broad range of opinion adds to community dialogue on important issues and for shaping the community’s future. It also encourages citizens to take more active roles in the many issues of importance to communities (e.g. safety, education, etc.). Where this housing is located (i.e., zoning and infrastructure decisions which encourage or discourage housing in given areas, such as over shops or close to shopping) can greatly aid or hinder these desirable features. Finally, a full range of housing options allows for life long residents to continue living through their retirement years, regardless of their ability level, and young families to begin their lives in the same communities where they were raised.

**What Is Needed**

The following tables show the Unit Affordability Gap for towns and cities in Orange County; the first table shows the affordability gap for owner-occupied units, the second table shows the gap for renter-occupied units. The numbers for the towns include the shares of affordable housing units that would be distributed to any villages within their borders; Orange County Planning is working on a “fair share” allocation of affordable housing units for villages. This table further shows the “total unit demand” for towns and cities in Orange County; this is the total number of housing units required in the municipality, not just the number of affordable units.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Table 1. Forecast of Owner Affordability Gap and Total Demand, By Municipality in Orange County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blooming Grove, Town of</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chester, Town of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornwall, Town of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crawford, Town of</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deerpark, Town of</td>
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<td>Goshen, Town of</td>
</tr>
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<td>Greeneville, Town of</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hamptonburgh, Town of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highlands, Town of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middletown, City of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minisink, Town of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monroe, Town of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montgomery, Town of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Hope, Town of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newburgh, City of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newburgh, Town of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Windsor, Town of</td>
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<tr>
<td>Port Jervis, City of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuxedo, Town of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walkill, Town of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warwick, Town of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wawayanda, Town of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodbury, Town of</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| | 21,921 | 20,865 | 25,381 | 28,903 | 89,661 | 90,947 | 95,829 | 100,008 |

Prepared By Economic & Policy Resources, Inc
## Table 2: Forecast of Rentor Affordability Gap and Total Demand, By Municipality in Orange County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>Total Unit Demand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall, Town of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Concord, Town of</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>416</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>1,149</td>
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<tr>
<td>North, Town of</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>862</td>
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<tr>
<td>South, Town of</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>1,379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West, Town of</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East, Town of</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North, Town of</td>
<td>443</td>
<td>563</td>
<td>621</td>
<td>827</td>
<td>2,683</td>
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<tr>
<td>South, Town of</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East, Town of</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West, Town of</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>1,122</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midkirk, City of</td>
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<td>1,720</td>
<td>1,909</td>
<td>2,277</td>
<td>5,839</td>
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<tr>
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<td>73</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North, Town of</td>
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<td>1,225</td>
<td>1,605</td>
<td>1,717</td>
<td>5,046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South, Town of</td>
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<td>1,448</td>
<td>1,515</td>
<td>1,581</td>
<td>5,124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West, Town of</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highwood, City of</td>
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<td>2,044</td>
<td>2,047</td>
<td>2,707</td>
<td>5,904</td>
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<td>749</td>
<td>833</td>
<td>2,921</td>
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<tr>
<td>West, Town of</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>399</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midkirk, Town of</td>
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<td>1,118</td>
<td>1,291</td>
<td>3,856</td>
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<tr>
<td>North, Town of</td>
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<td>648</td>
<td>717</td>
<td>822</td>
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<tr>
<td>South, Town of</td>
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<td>144</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>530</td>
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<tr>
<td>West, Town of</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>663</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total                       | 11,566 | 14,741 | 14,741 | 14,741 | 44,721 |

The provision of an adequate supply of housing to meet the needs of all segments of the County’s present and future populations requires the construction of new housing of various types as well as the continued rehabilitation of existing housing stock. The County will face increasing demands for smaller units for senior citizens over the next 15 to 20 years as the Baby Boom generation ages into retirement. Given the geographic location of the County, the demand for single-family homes for commuters can be expected to continue, but additional demands for owner-occupied and rental housing affordable to seniors, young singles and families will also need to be addressed.

The County’s ability to meet the affordable housing targets set forth in Housing Table 1 is led by direct actions that the Office of Community Development can undertake through the federal financing programs that it administers. HOME funds or CDBG funds can be used for housing rehabilitation, new construction, and infrastructure improvements to support housing for low and moderate income families, senior citizens, and people with special needs. Indirect actions can be taken by the County Planning Department or others by providing technical information and support to local communities to help them address their housing needs, as well as prioritizing affordable housing provisions in actions referred to the County under New York State General Municipal Law 239.

Recommendations
The research and findings from the Regional Housing Needs Assessment forward several key recommendations to be considered as Orange County continues to address housing affordability. These recommendations, identified as “strategies,” are as follows:

**Strategy 1: Public Information**

Orange County will create a public information and educational campaign to raise awareness among public officials and citizens about the importance of housing choice to both the County’s economy and to livable communities.

1. Municipal Outreach
   - Design and deliver an educational campaign to municipal, planning, and zoning boards and other interested municipal officials. Said campaign shall at minimum include discussion of why *all* communities need affordable housing, and shall explain the “fair share” program developed by the County.
   - Develop materials to help municipalities encourage redevelopment, infill development, and new development including affordable housing units. Techniques such as clustering, mixed use, and supporting zoning can be legitimized and explained by County support.
2. Public Information and Education

- Design and deliver a separate educational campaign for “town hall”-style public meetings regarding the necessity of affordable housing and explaining the “fair share” program.
- Develop a seminar for real estate agents that explains sale and purchase of affordable housing units, funding opportunities for development of affordable housing, and marketing strategies for affordable housing.
- Create written and Internet-based materials to be made available to the public. These materials should provide an overview of affordable housing in lay terms and should provide resources for further education on subjects such as purchasing foreclosed homes from the County, individual municipalities, or lending institutions; federal, and state funding programs that provide financial incentives to first-time homebuyers, seniors, and others; and rehabilitation of existing structures. These materials should be made available to the public at lending institutions, real estate offices, libraries, and municipal offices, as well as any other organization involved with property transfer, and should be updated regularly.
- Reach out to developers through seminars and online guides which provide information on the profitable development of affordable housing units.

3. Affordable Housing Advocacy Group

- Reach out to existing advocates for affordable housing throughout the County; the County should either facilitate the creation of a new affordable housing advocacy group or coordinate the efforts of the existing advocates. This should be an ongoing effort.
- Advocate the need for affordable housing to the County’s major employers and to business leaders on the County and municipal level. This should also be an ongoing effort.
Table 17. Distribution of Orange County “To be Built” Targets (Cumulative Through the Study Period)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>OWNERS</th>
<th>RENTERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Current 2006</td>
<td>Cumulative Prospective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>By 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blooming Grove, Town of</td>
<td>258</td>
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<td>Chester, Town of</td>
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<td>Cornwall, Town of</td>
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<td>Deep Rock, Town of</td>
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<td>Goshen, Town of</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greeneville, Town of</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamptonburgh, Town of</td>
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<td>Highlands, Town of</td>
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<tr>
<td>Middletown, City of</td>
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<td>Minisink, Town of</td>
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<tr>
<td>Montgomery, Town of</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mount Hope, Town of</td>
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<tr>
<td>Newburgh, Town of</td>
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<tr>
<td>Woodbury, Town of</td>
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<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4,305</td>
<td>4,541</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Prepared by Economic & Policy Resources, Inc.
Strategy 2: Municipal Housing Targets

The results from the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) in 2006 indicated a large affordable housing gap of approximately 31,272 units for Orange County in 2006 and that this gap would increase well into 2020 paralleling the increase in Total Unit Demand. Housing Table 17, on the previous page, shows the Housing Affordability Gap broken down by town and city (fair share allocations for the villages have not yet been determined).

However, the exact definition of housing affordability can vary over time and is influenced by fluctuations in various aspects of the housing market. This segment of the plan outlines a set of affordable housing targets for the municipalities of Orange County, the parameters of obtaining these targets, as well as several guidelines for municipal use as the County strives to create a housing stock that is accessible and affordable to every segment of the market. Some municipalities are already considering affordable housing in their plans and codes; good examples of adopted affordable housing policies in the County are the Town of New Windsor affordable housing law and the Town of Goshen inclusionary zoning code.

Definitions: Actions to address affordable housing have been detrimentally impacted by confusion and conflict over key terms. A consensus on terms is essential.

“Affordable Housing” is defined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development as housing that costs no more than 30% of a household’s gross income. This number for owner-occupied housing includes the mortgage payment, utilities, taxes assessed on the property, and insurance; for renter-occupied housing, this number includes the rent and basic utilities.

“Extremely Low Income Housing” is defined as housing that is affordable to households that earn 30% or less of the gross median income of Orange County.

“Very Low Income Housing” is defined as housing that is affordable to households that earn between 30% and 50% of the gross median income of Orange County.

“Low Income Housing” is defined as housing that is affordable to households that earn between 50% and 80% of the gross median income of Orange County.

“Workforce Housing” is defined as housing that is affordable to households that earn between 80% and 120% of the County’s gross median income.

1. Feasibility Analysis and Assessments—these assessments and analysis will be conducted by the County once shortly after the adoption of this update, and thereafter on an as-needed basis.

- Provide each municipality with estimates, contained in the RHNA and described hereafter as the “fair share allocation,” of how many affordable owner-occupied units and affordable rental units they will need to provide by 2020.
THE VISION FOR QUALITY COMMUNITIES

• Work with municipalities to develop a plan for achieving their affordable housing units in a timely fashion.
• Determine a “fair share allocation” for villages within towns, using formulas to be determined by Economic and Policy Resources, Incorporated.

2. Municipal Integration of Affordable Housing Goals

• Evaluate each municipality’s Comprehensive Plan and relevant codes (including but not limited to the municipal zoning code, subdivision code, street and road design manual, building code, and any environmental policies) to determine their existing provisions for affordable housing. This shall be done once by the County following the adoption of this update.
• Develop multiple model codes and model plan language for municipalities to incorporate into their existing documents. This shall be done by the County following the adoption of this update, and the model codes developed in this step shall be updated as needed. These model codes shall minimally include the following:

  **Building Code:** provisions for density bonuses and other forms of development incentives to create affordable housing. Affordable housing provisions in the building code shall include provisions for accessible housing for people with disabilities. Additional incentives may be provided for the use of green building techniques such as green roof technologies, solar and wind power collection, and gray water reuse.

  **Zoning Code:** provisions for inclusionary zoning, mixed-use developments, traditional neighborhood developments, street and road design standards, parkland and open space provisions, and wastewater management options such as Low Impact Development techniques.

  **Subdivision Code:** provisions for cluster subdivisions and efficient land development patterns may be granted to a builder who includes accessory buildings, smaller lot sizes, or smaller-sized affordable homes within an affordability plan.

  **Comprehensive Plan Language:** provisions for infrastructure expansion, including extension of utilities and services; also, provisions for affordable housing targets to be met should include terms and conditions that allow affordable housing to be perpetuated or phased out, and should include replacement plans for phased-out affordable units.

• Help municipalities concentrate new units and infrastructure into the County’s Priority Growth Areas through the plan review process.

**Strategy 3: Financial and Policy Incentives to Provide Affordable Housing**

Orange County must facilitate the creation of affordable housing units, as well as housing for special needs populations through several channels in an outlined support structure (such as halfway houses, assisted living facilities, or group homes). While very few public entities have the ability to individually
construct housing units, various approaches towards incentive-driven development and alternative funding sources should be considered as municipalities plan to accommodate the development of affordable housing. It is estimated that in order to begin meeting the need for affordable housing in Orange County, 4,305 owner-occupied units and 3,541 renter-occupied units will need to be constructed, for a County-wide total of 7,846 new-construction affordable housing units. Options for meeting the remaining affordable housing need could include the rehabilitation of existing unsafe housing stock, or the sale of properties that are currently owned by local governments at prices below market rate.

1. Funding Information

- Develop a list (updated periodically) of public and private financing programs that support affordable housing and its related infrastructure, including funds available through federal and state governments as well as from private entities, nongovernmental organizations, and nonprofit organizations, complete with contact persons and their phone number and physical and e-mail addresses.
- Create a similar list of financing programs that support special needs populations.
- Assist municipalities in preparing grant applications for creation of affordable or special needs housing.

2. Actions Supportive of Affordable Housing

- Assist municipalities in crafting incentive programs for developers that provide affordable housing.

Strategy 4: Monitoring

Orange County must develop a monitoring strategy to ensure that affordable housing target numbers are accurate and distributed fairly among municipalities, that affordable housing targets are being met by municipalities, and that sufficient numbers of affordable housing units are provided to meet the ongoing affordable housing need.

1. Components of Monitoring Strategy

- Define in general terms action to be taken by each municipality (e.g.: Town of Wallkill needs to develop 1,925 affordable housing units by 2020)
- Assist municipalities in developing an affordable housing management plan that will determine how this goal will be achieved and who will be responsible for completing the work. Involve the municipal Planning Boards in this goal, and publish progress reports for the legislature and local media.
- Assist municipalities in creating a list of properties that are intended as affordable housing. This list should be maintained by the municipality and should be reviewed periodically to ensure that properties either continue to meet the definition of affordable housing or are removed from the list and replaced by new affordable housing units.
E. Environmental Infrastructure Strategy

Orange County has extensive infrastructure systems in place to address local utility needs for water supply and treatment and wastewater treatment and disposal. In order to support existing and anticipated growth, the County and its communities need to upgrade and improve existing facilities and construct new facilities when needed to meet demands and protect environmental resources. The areas in which the County government can have the broadest impact on County-wide planning and development are in provision of the sewer, water and transportation infrastructure which it can directly fund and implement. Within this context, the Plan has established the following goal:

**Overall Goal**

Encourage the provision of adequate utility systems that meet the needs of Orange County residents and businesses while balancing the preservation and quality of the County’s natural resources.

Water Supply

Strategies and Priorities

1. Maintain ownership of reservoir sites for potential future water needs of the County.
2. Give priority to regionalizing water resources by interconnecting water systems.
3. Explore various levels of private sector involvement in regional treatment and distribution systems with County agencies and private firms.
4. Bolster voluntary compliance with guidelines of the well head protection program promulgated by the Orange County Water Authority by enlisting support of municipalities, citizens and the business community through ongoing education and community outreach.

Recommended Actions

- Continue County funding of water conservation education programs.
- Encourage municipalities and private providers to appropriately price water resources to accomplish conservation of existing resources and provide an incentive for availability of future water supplies.
- Encourage municipalities and private water providers to protect their water resources through adherence to policies and enforcement of regulations that control non-point source pollution.
• Investigate the interest in and feasibility of engaging private participation in the development of new water systems.
• Pursue the creation of wellhead protection and wellhead separation criteria.
• Monitor the need for the development of additional water supplies.
• Continue to assist municipalities with technical analysis regarding feasibility of regional interconnection of water systems.

**Sewage Treatment**  
**Strategy and Priority**

1. Facilitate the regional approach to provision of sewage treatment as outlined in the 1991 County-wide sewage study in areas where the recommendations are still viable.

**Recommended Actions**

- Work to resolve issues to maximize receiving water capacity of any receiving body for the Harriman Wastewater Treatment Plant to permit expansion of the plant by 2 MGD and potentially beyond.
- Encourage wastewater management techniques through education and outreach that include water conservation measures, industrial pretreatment programs, and reductions in infiltration and inflow within existing systems and incorporate these techniques in operation of the Harriman Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- Investigate innovative technology, particularly natural treatment systems such as wetlands as alternatives to conventional sewage treatment plants. Seek input from and establish potential pilot programs in partnership with agencies such as the New York Energy and Resource Development Authority, appropriate divisions of the State University system, the State Department of Health and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation as well as other agencies or institutions.
- Explore the option of privatizing ownership and operation of any newly proposed sewage treatment facilities.
- Encourage regional interconnection of sewer systems.

**F. Historic and Cultural Resources Strategy**  
**Background and Issues**

**Goal**

Ensure the availability of environmentally sound sewage treatment systems and disposal techniques appropriate for different land development patterns which serve existing development and provide sufficient capacity to accommodate anticipated residential and business growth.

**Overall Goal**

Identify, protect and promote the County’s historical and cultural resources ensuring their ability to enhance the sense of place and quality of life of county residents while providing an important component of overall county economic development.
Within a setting of natural and scenic beauty and a still strong rural, agricultural heritage, Orange County offers a rich array of historic and cultural resources that enhance the quality of life of Orange County residents and provide a strong base for development of the tourism.

There are numerous historic sites and places, some listed on the State and National Registers, and some of local interest and importance. Many sites derive their importance from the County’s locational advantage along the Hudson River and the importance of the river for troop movements during the Revolutionary War. Other areas of historic interest are: examples of historic family life in the Hudson Valley region during the 18th and 19th century; sites depicting the role of agriculture, industry and commerce in history; public buildings and institutions such as libraries and schoolhouses, and historic districts in downtown centers.

The County has a number of important cultural institutions ranging from those of largely local importance to national prominence. Cultural resources include museums, performing arts facilities, institutions of higher learning and other destinations of special interest such as New Hope Farms, Storm King Art Center and the Sugar Loaf Arts and Craft Village. In addition to the historic sites and cultural institutions in the county are additional special attractions including Army football games at West Point and the Woodbury Common Premium Outlet Center, estimated to attract over 12 million visitors per year.

**Historical Resources and Cultural Institutions**

**Strategies and Priorities**

1. **Promote the county’s historical and cultural resources to upgrade community quality of life, maintain the county’s rich heritage, promote downtown centers and serve as an economic development tool.**

2. **Ensure cultural resources and higher educational resources are provided for current county residents and to attract future residents.**

**Recommended Actions**

- Implement relevant recommendations in the 1998 Strategic Tourism Plan.
- Continue strong marketing partnerships between Orange County Tourism, Chambers of Commerce, the Orange County Partnership and the historic preservation community, to identify and expand upon existing
tourist sites. For example, uniform visitation days and hours for sites would encourage greater number of visitors.

- Through Orange County Tourism, work with the U.S. Military Academy to attract West Point visitors to related historic sites such as Washington’s Headquarters.
- Through Orange County Tourism, increase tourism and economic revitalization of downtowns by encouraging localities to restore historic downtowns and by providing them with technical assistance.
- Develop trail themes or categories such as a “historic and cultural trail” focusing on the Revolutionary War, agricultural or industrial eras or other cultural, educational or geographic themes (e.g., arts and crafts; antiquing; rural/scenic).
- Encourage the business community, especially major employers that may expand, educational institutions of higher learning and vocational training entities, to identify workforce needs in the County and work toward an integrated approach to ensure needs are met.
• Encourage institutions of higher learning to create satellite graduate and professional education programs to enrich the quality of life of existing County residents and attract quality workers to the County.

• Provide technical assistance to local governments and non-profit and private organizations on alternative uses or re-use of significant historic and cultural properties. Such uses include conversion of schools to residential or office uses.

• Provide information on the use of federal tax credits as a mechanism for making historic preservation economically feasible.
V. Plan Implementation
V. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION  
A. Interagency Planning, Coordination and Plan Implementation  

Implementation of the proposals in the Strategies for Quality Communities Plan requires the ongoing effort of the County, in concert with its towns, villages and cities, and a variety of additional public, private and not-for-profit entities. Methodologies to monitor the Plan’s success are available through the County Planning Department.

Implementation of the land use components of the Plan, however, rests squarely with the local municipalities within Orange County, not the County itself. The legislative authority for cities, towns and villages relative to the adoption of zoning and related land use regulations, based upon local comprehensive plans, is clearly defined by the State. This home-rule concept is fundamental to planning at both the local and regional level in New York. The resulting role of counties in comprehensive planning is clear: counties can provide advice and can provide a regional planning perspective, helping localities make informed decisions. Within this context, under Section 239-l, m and -n of the General Municipal Law, counties are authorized to review certain local projects that are proximate to municipal boundaries, important roadways and drainage facilities.

Although home rule is an important planning concept in New York, it is also clear that issues of countywide concerns transcend municipal boundaries. Traffic problems, open space and environmental preservation needs, and economic development opportunities, among others, do not stop at municipal boundary lines. Communities with common problems or common interests must act together to solve problems in a cooperative manner. No city, town or village can rely on its regulations, alone, to solve countywide or regional problems.

Individual communities must also work together to avoid land use disputes with regard to major development project approvals for sites near or abutting municipal boundaries. If the tax revenues and jobs from a new shopping center, for example, result in excessive traffic congestion in an adjoining community, which realizes no economic benefits from the project, this would be poor regional planning. Similarly, if that shopping center drains essential businesses from the downtown area of a nearby village, again this is an example of poor regional planning.

Preservation of the qualities that contribute to Orange County’s semi-rural quality of life require a coordinated effort with the County providing guidance and direction, yet still recognizing local
authority. Virtually every one of the smart growth concepts discussed throughout The Plan requires attention to regional issues and concerns.

1. Regional Planning in Orange County

The County government must continue to provide the necessary leadership in the overall planning for the future of Orange County. In the past, this has included the preparation of a series of County Comprehensive Plans, a focus of which has been the urban-rural growth concept. Additionally, the County Planning Department staff is a major participant in efforts of other agencies and departments. There are several additional county-level agencies and departments that have had major roles in the ongoing comprehensive planning process. The Orange County Water Authority, for example, through its Geographic Information System (GIS), provides information on land use and environmental features as well as utility services. Certain critical aspects of the Plan are addressed by other County departments and agencies that focus on parks and recreation, senior citizen issues, tourism, environmental facilities, housing and community development.

The County Planning Department also focuses on overall transportation issues. In cooperation with state and local officials, the Newburgh-Orange County Transportation Council (NOCTC) develops a three year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The New York State Department of Transportation, the Thruway Authority and the County Department of Public Works plan for and maintain roads within their respective jurisdictions. Rail transportation, bus transportation, aviation and marine transportation planning is more fragmented than the planning for individual road systems, with public and private entities managing individual components of the system.

The County’s role as an administrator and monitor of federal, state and regional initiatives, by its very nature, represents the interest of the towns, villages and cities within the County. Its role as a conduit, facilitator and spokesman for local communities should continue.

On specific land use proposals, however, the County’s role in providing technical support differs from the municipalities’ role in making final land use decisions. The County, through the Strategies for Quality Communities Plan, can identify common interests and offer potential solutions to problems affecting one or more localities. When the County administers federal and
state programs, including housing, community development and various transportation and open space programs, it too can look to the Strategies for Quality Community Plan for guidance and direction, making certain that regional and local projects are well coordinated.

2. Local Planning

It is anticipated that the Strategies for Quality Communities Plan will provide a broad regional framework for the development of municipal comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances and other land use controls. As noted within the Plan, communities should look to the County for technical support; for GIS mapping; for model ordinances; and for guidance on projects that may affect adjoining communities or the County as a whole.

Technical assistance from the County should be available, upon request, to local communities that are interested in implementing Strategies for Quality Communities Plan objectives. Resource information should be provided in the development of new housing initiatives, for example, including affordable housing for first time home buyers, senior citizen housing of various types and rental housing options. Model regulations should be available to assist communities adopt
their own regulations that provide density bonuses or incentives in exchange for development of neo-traditional neighborhood or cluster designs suggested in the Plan. Regulations that illustrate possible use of transfer of development rights, planned unit development and floating zone concepts should be provided by the County when local objectives, such as open space preservation, is sought. Sample wetland, vista protection, steep slope and flood plain regulations should also be available to assist communities deal with environmental conservation issues raised in the Plan.

When a major development proposal is designed with the above or with more conventional land development regulations and techniques – the site plan or subdivision plan should be reviewed in terms of its overall compliance with the municipality’s comprehensive plan and the County’s Strategies for Quality Communities Plan. In particular, when local governments act as the lead agency for environmental reviews under SEQRA, they should require all applicants to evaluate the relationship between the proposed action and the County’s Plan as part of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. This would provide a regional perspective on project reviews, helping to make certain that developers, as well as municipalities, look beyond municipal boundaries when planning major developments.

Smart growth requires intermunicipal and inter-agency cooperation. The Strategies for Quality Communities Plan is designed to provide a basis for regional coordination, recognizing that maintaining a balance between development and preservation can only be achieved in a coordinated fashion.

**B. Implementation Tools**

The action strategies of the Plan identify programs that are intended to advance the Quality Communities vision of the County over the next 20 years. Implementation measures necessary to achieve that vision will be undertaken by various levels of government including Federal, State, County and local jurisdictions. Since land use decisions are made at the local level, localities have the most significant role in achieving plan goals. Local governments must therefore be actively enlisted to undertake actions at the local level which implement strategies of this plan.

Implementation of the Plan will generally be undertaken through: (1) promotion of planning and design techniques applied to new and existing development or redevelopment; (2) fiscal measures and capital budgeting; (3) regulatory measures; and (4) management actions.
While implementation of plan policies will often depend on individual municipalities, cooperation of localities and the coordination of plans within a regional context will be critical to maintaining a cohesive framework in which the vision can evolve.

1. Planning and Design Tools

Natural Environment Tools

Open Space Network

The objectives of the urban/rural growth concept to preserve the County’s large areas of open space surrounding concentrated areas of development, has not been fully achieved. The Strategies for Quality Communities Plan refines the urban rural concept to include the goal of interconnected open spaces. This interconnection would include pre-existing parks and public lands and areas of largely agriculture and vacant land. In 2003 the County will work to supplement this Plan with a County Open Space Plan. The supplement will define a County Open Space Network. However, a few lead resources are described here.

A north-south Walkill River Valley, from Otisville in the south to Walden in the north, contains a distinct corridor of farm and vacant lands, including the black dirt region, as well as significant County parks and other public lands such as reservoirs. Linking the farmland, vacant land and public land, would establish a corridor of green through central Orange County helping to maintain the rural and open space character around the urbanizing centers.

Another open space corridor is the area stretching along the southeastern portion of the County from Sterling Forest and the highlands around Greenwood Lake to Bear Mountain and Storm King forest. This area is characterized by forested mountain ridges and numerous lakes. A significant portion of this area is composed of parkland and large institutional properties like West Point. Linking these areas through an Open Space Network will help maintain the area’s character and beauty.

Other significant open space corridors include:

- Schunnemunk Mountain
- The Stewart State Forest
- Shawangunk Mountain and the Neversink River
- Delaware River and Mongaup River north of Sparrowbush
By identifying these areas as part of an Open Space Network and by encouraging municipalities to do the same in their comprehensive planning, these areas can be preserved through a variety of techniques, some fiscal and some regulatory. In place of the fiscal measure of outright purchase, open space corridors could be created through amended zoning requirements with defined open space preservation mechanisms.

**Rural Area Development**
To achieve the design outcome that maintains the ambiance of the County’s rural countryside and conserves open space, localities should utilize the applicable Rural Area Development Guidelines in their planning for rural areas. Development patterns that reflect the Farm Development Preferred Alternative below and incorporate these land use principles should serve as the basis for site plan and subdivision review standards for local Planning Boards in low density areas of the County. In this way, the typical pattern of growth illustrated would not continue and rural character could be maintained side by side with additional development.

**Built Environment Tools**

*Residential Development*
Traditional neighborhood development and clustered residential subdivisions provide design alternatives to standard suburban subdivisions with their lack of common greenspace, excessive roadways and sometimes linear sometimes curvilinear, unconnected streets. The following guidelines and development alternatives should be utilized by municipal Planning Boards in their review of subdivision plats and site plans for new development.
Urban Centers

Strengthening urban centers provides focused development that supports higher density residential development on an infill or large scale new development basis and provides a series of focused economic centers for local and regional communities.

Downtown Development/Redevelopment

Downtown development and redevelopment should incorporate the components illustrated in the Downtown Redevelopment figure in a combination appropriate to the particular area. Through local comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances and site plan reviews by local Planning, Design or Architectural Review Boards downtown implementation design tools as indicated in the following can be implemented.
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Strategies for Quality Communities Planning And Design Guidelines
Rural Area Development

1) Farmland and open areas should be preserved with the assistance of zoning techniques that encourage clustering and allow for transfer of development potential from one site to another. Overlay zoning that requires or promotes farmland preservation and fosters viable agricultural-related uses should be considered. Minimum two-acre zoning would also aid in promoting clustering and the preservation of open space.

2) Scenic vistas, including view corridors and ridge lines, should be maintained through locally adopted zoning controls, similar to wetlands, flood plain and steep slope regulations.

3) Open space acquisition initiatives that prioritize critical areas which significantly contribute to the rural character of the County should be pursued. This could include outright purchase of land by various entities, securing conservation easements, purchase of development rights and increased outreach for donations.

4) Where development occurs, new buildings should be located within tree lines, or in clusters that form new hamlet centers, avoiding strips of commercial or residential buildings along major roadways. Conservation easements can be utilized to preserve undeveloped roadway frontages. Open space areas resulting from cluster developments should be connected to other open space areas where possible.

5) Zoning that permits retail strip development must be avoided. Development at rural crossroad locations should be carefully devised with uses and designs appropriate for a country commercial location.

6) Open space areas should be connected and steep slopes, wetlands and major wooded areas should be preserved for their ecological value, and also to make certain that the views from abutting roadways retain their scenic character.

7) Stone walls and other man-made features that are part of rural environments should be preserved. Attractive horse farm fencing, for example, can be retained, even if the farm itself becomes a cluster development.

8) Farm and country roads should be utilized as part of new developments, rather than cutting new roads through the natural landscape.

9) In developing areas, wooded buffer areas and the use of natural species in landscaping smaller wildlife areas should be part of the individual plans.

10) Streams and drainage ways should be protected with appropriate buffer areas and well-designed erosion and sediment control measures. Water quality control measures to polish stormwater and further protect resources are essential.
Strategies for Quality Communities Planning And Design Guidelines
Residential Developments

1) Subdivision planning should be imaginative and responsive to the natural environment and the community as a whole.

2) Large bulky houses on individual lots with minimal landscaping should be avoided. Communities should control housing design with zoning that prescribes maximum floor area ratios, maximum amounts of impervious surface and minimum requirements for trees and shrubs.

3) Subdivision regulations should not require roads and cul-de-sacs of excessive width. Narrow, curvy roads are one of a series of potential traffic calming techniques. Cul-de-sacs with planted islands are attractive. If mountable curbs are provided, planted islands would not impede fire truck access. Sidewalks should be considered within neighborhoods and be provided to connect to exterior street and roadway systems.

4) Subdivisions should have road systems that connect with adjoining subdivisions. When developed next to vacant land, future rights-of-way should be required so that street systems will connect in the future.

5) Large-scale subdivisions should be designed as neighborhoods, with integrated open space systems and various amenities that serve the resident population. Environmental features should be preserved and enhanced. Cluster development should be encouraged.

6) Neo-traditional design techniques and street systems should be considered for large-scale development, particularly within or adjacent to villages and other already built-up areas. Such developments could offer a variety of housing types with different densities and prices. Open space areas, including neighborhood ‘greens’ and other parks and playgrounds should be provided. Non-residential uses, like convenience shops and services, should be permitted as part of a planned neighborhood.

7) Affordable housing should be included in large scale developments, possibly through incentive zoning techniques or as inclusionary zoning requirements for zoning changes.

8) Senior housing developments should not be isolated. If located within a city or village environment, easy access should be provided to stores, parks, community facilities and transportation. If located in outlying areas, transportation facilities should be provided, along with on-site amenities and services.

9) Homes in new residential developments should incorporate energy and environmentally efficient building techniques such as those promoted by Hudson Valley Builder's Association “Green Buildings” should be encouraged.
Strategies for Quality Communities Planning and Design Guidelines

Urban Centers

1) Strengthen and revitalize downtowns and neighborhood shopping areas. Beautify the streetscape with street trees, sidewalks and other amenities; improve public and private signage and building facades.

2) Enhance pedestrian circulation systems; utilize traffic calming techniques to slow the speed of vehicular traffic. Upgrade sidewalks, provide bike paths and bus shelters as part of alternative transportation efforts.

3) Promote infill development that respects established development patterns and architectural styles. Establish design principles in local zoning that limit building mass, orientation and setbacks. Respect existing street walls.

4) Rehabilitate existing buildings; preserve historic resources, where applicable. Utilize available funding sources, such as Community Development Block Grants.

5) Provide a wide range of housing opportunities, including affordable, rental and senior housing options, to promote diversity in the local population. Accessory apartments, apartments above stores, two-family and multi-family housing should be encouraged in urban centers.

6) Create and enhance open space areas in residential neighborhoods and commercial areas, which act as gathering places for community residents. Large or small parks or village greens should be focal areas for community life.

7) Promote economic development activities that provide jobs and taxes for all segments of the workforce and tax revenues for various taxing jurisdictions. Employment centers should be readily accessible to low- and moderate-income workers.

8) Support and locate community facilities, including schools, religious institutions and libraries, that strengthen the quality of life in urban centers.

9) Upgrade infrastructure systems (roads and utilities) where necessary, to support intensive development patterns.
Highway Commercial Development and Shopping Centers

While highway commercial strip centers provide easy automobile access and a perceived convenience when compared by some to downtown shopping, they are often designed in a manner which strips communities of their character. By adhering to the following design principles and guidelines, local communities can improve existing centers or require better design of newly proposed centers. Implementation can be accomplished during site plan or design review.
Strategies for Quality Communities Planning And Design Guidelines
Downtown Revitalization

1) Downtown area strengths and weaknesses should be assessed in terms of building and land utilization, vacancies, parking, pedestrian and vehicular access and visual character.

2) Downtown improvements programs should combine governmental incentives and private sector actions.

3) Zoning regulations should promote mixed use and infill development, bringing additional housing into the downtown, which adds shoppers and vitality. This could include apartments above stores, and loft spaces in former warehouse-type buildings.

4) Rental housing, senior housing and affordable housing opportunities should be pursued to provide additional diversity in and around downtown areas. Housing should be directly linked to business areas, community facilities and open spaces.

5) Public-private partnerships such as Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) should be created to undertake programs that government cannot do alone. BIDs, for example, can market and manage downtown activities and provide amenities, like holiday decorations, that are not otherwise provided by local government.

6) Downtown infrastructure improvement should not only address basic water, sewer and road access needs, but should also include the provision of street trees, decorative sidewalks, and coordinated benches, trash receptacles and light fixtures.

7) Downtown green spaces, including parklets, community greens and plazas should be provided with pedestrian amenities like gazebos, walkways, kiosks and sitting areas.

8) Ample, well-located and nicely landscaped parking should be provided in on-street and off-street locations. Parking lot edges require special attention, screening cars from abutting uses and pedestrian areas.

9) Traffic calming techniques are essential, slowing vehicular traffic and making downtown areas pedestrian friendly. Specially designed crosswalks and sidewalk bumpout treatments can also be attractive urban design elements.

10) Facade designs and storefront signs should be upgraded to present an attractive shopping environment. Historic buildings require special attention. Public signage, leading visitors to downtown attractions, governmental offices and parking, should be carefully designed and well-located, and coordinated with "Welcome" signs that create an important image for the downtown area.
Activity Nodes

Activity Nodes tend to be located outside of urban areas and demonstrate, to a large extent, suburban design characteristics. By providing municipal boards including Planning and Architectural Review Boards with the tools below, additional design elements can be introduced into activity centers, which improves their visual, aesthetic as well as operational characteristics.
Strategies for Quality Communities
Planning And Design Guidelines
Activity Nodes

1) Encourage pedestrian-friendly design elements, like sidewalks, walkways and well-designed accessways through parking lots, providing connections between various elements of an activity node.

2) Connect activity nodes with adjacent land uses, where appropriate, through safe roadway crossings.

3) Provide edge treatments to help ensure an attractive visual impression for activity nodes from all vantage points. Buffering and landscaping of parking lots, loading areas and side and rear yards should be pursued.

4) Use clearly designed signage to direct visitors to activity nodes, and, along with signage, use kiosks, information centers or other means to direct visitors to other attractions in the vicinity.
Industrial and Office Park Development

Office and industrial parks provide needed opportunities for economic development and can provide ready sites for companies interested in relocating to the County. By adhering to the

| 1) Limit the extent highway business zoning to avoid extreme strip commercial development along major roadways. Consider alternative uses with retail permitted in compact pedestrian friendly locations. |
| 2) Require wide, well-landscaped separator strips of at least 20 feet in width between the highway right-of-way line and shopping center parking lots; provide street trees and shrubs that require limited maintenance. For excessively large parking lots, berning would also be appropriate. |
| 3) Provide additional landscaping alongside and rear property lines and within shopping center parking lots. Trees within parking lots should be placed between every 10 to 20 parking stalls. |
| 4) For large shopping centers, consider utilizing portions of the frontage for small, closely-spaced buildings to help create an interesting streetscape. The rear facade of these small buildings then require careful design treatment, since they face the balance of the shopping center. |
| 5) Regulate shopping center signage so as to avoid visual clutter. Signs should be legible for passing motorists. Large directory signs, for example, are seldom effective. Although signs should be attractive and coordinated, they need not be of uniform color or design. |
| 6) Shopping center driveways should be designed to provide safe and efficient access between internal parking lots and adjoining roadways. Connections between abutting shopping centers and uses are desirable, minimizing roadway traffic and turning movements. |
| 7) Intersection designs should provide for turn lanes where necessary, preferably from planted median dividers. |
| 8) Pedestrian access should be incorporated into shopping center design, including plazas with seating, with walkways provided to nearby residential areas, bus stops and adjacent shopping centers. Where appropriate, bike racks should also be provided. |
| 9) Building designs should avoid long linear strips, with all of the parking provided between the storefronts and the street. Some parking can be provided to the side or even to the rear of the buildings. L-shaped or similarly interesting building designs could add architectural variety. |
| 10) Where two or more existing shopping centers are proximate to one another, plans for expansion or improvement should consider the entire highway strip, not just an individual center. |
| 11) Building facade designs should not be overly ornate or brightly colored. Architectural interest can be added, without the use of garish colors or gimmicks. |
| 12) Commercial development performance standards should be considered for highway oriented businesses, including shopping centers and big box stores. They could include standards for landscaping, screening, signage, parking, building design treatment and access. Curb cuts should be minimized and controlled. |
following design and approval principles, municipalities can ensure their ability to capture new jobs and industries within their borders in an aesthetically pleasing way that enhances the image as well as the tax base of the municipality.

**Strategies for Quality Communities Planning And Design Guidelines**

- **Industrial/Office Park Development**

1. The optimum location of industrial and office parks and the zoning districts which permit them are in close proximity to interstate highways where the number of ninety degree turns from such limited access highways are minimized.

2. Industrial parks should be planned, approved subdivisions which can be built in phases with pre-approved access and interior roads which can be built in phases.

3. Minimum site size of four to five acres should be established and lots should be configured so sites can be assembled into larger sites to permit marketing to different users.

4. Large setbacks should be established from internal park streets. All setbacks should be grassed and landscaped resulting in green strips providing aesthetically pleasing approaches to the entire park, as well as to individual sites within the park.

5. Zoning controls could incorporate a wide range of permitted uses including offices, research and development facilities, distribution and manufacturing uses, with or without accessory retail facilities, hotels, banks, and restaurants.

6. Development controls should be incorporated into local zoning ordinances which regulate lot and bulk with specified minimum lot width and depth, maximum coverage and maximum building height.

7. An environmental review for full build out of an industrial or office park should be undertaken to determine project-generated impacts even if the project is to be phased.
Corridors Development

Development occurring along the highway corridors, whether residential or commercial, provides a first defining image of the County. Segments of these corridors need definition. The following tools should be used to guide development or redevelopment along the various types of roadway segments, borrowing from design guidelines already identified for highway commercial or country commercial, farm, or residential development.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies for Quality Communities Planning And Design Guidelines Corridors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) The separate and distinct character of County roadway corridors should be recognized as comprising: a) natural feature roadway corridors; b) agricultural area corridors; c) rural residential corridors; d) suburban residential corridors; e) mixed use corridors; f) intensive business corridors; and g) limited access highway corridors.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2) The edges of corridor segments should be defined with substantial buffers to avoid the spillover of more intense uses into less developed areas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3) Infill and revitalization within corridor segments should be pursued to preclude expansion of uses beyond segment boundaries.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4) The character of natural corridors should be preserved and design guidelines should be developed to manage and improve the character of developed corridors.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5) Significant viewsheds in all corridors should be preserved through techniques that include zoning, conservation easements and outright purchase.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6) Active and inactive rail corridors should be preserved to enhance current transportation alternatives and provide future transportation options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Pedestrian and bike trails and corridors should be expanded, where appropriate, to complement areas of designated open space and act as alternative transportation modes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Signage

The local landscape can be enhanced or marred by the type, number and size of signs in downtowns and along roadway corridors. Signage can either present a helpful, pleasing design statement that aids the motorist or pedestrian, or signage can create visual clutter that undermines the local aesthetic without providing clear information or direction. The following design tools for signage will provide the standards against which Planning and Architectural Review Boards can measure and guide proposed signage associated with development or renewal.

![Signage Diagram]

**Strategies for Quality Communities Planning And Design Guidelines Signage**

1) Sign design guidelines to augment local sign ordinances should be devised addressing various types of signs (full standing, wall mounted, etc.) And various sign locations such as downtown or along the highway.

2) In general, sign guidelines should promote the following design principles:

   - The fewer signs, the better.
   - Signs should be as low as possible, recognizing the frame of vision for pedestrians and for motorists at differing speeds of travel.
   - Signs should be as small and discreet as possible; they should be a regular shape (e.g., rectangles, circles, ellipses), generally avoiding awkward angles and unusual shapes.
   - Lettering should be large enough to be easily read; the signs should identify the use, not the details of the product line or business. Signs should have as few words as possible.
   - Garish colors and gimmicks should be avoided; lighting should be discreet.
   - Adjacent signs should be of the same height. Storefront signs for abutting establishments should respect a unified sign band, unless the architectural design of a given building has already established a sign location. Adjacent signs should be reasonably harmonious in terms of design and color.
   - Free standing signs should be combined and integrated with other elements of the landscape, like stone walls, whenever possible.

3) Although company logos should be accommodated, their size and location should blend into the streetscape and not overwhelm the individual building site or surrounding area.

4) Billboards along major roadways should be minimized.
Traffic Calming

Traffic calming measures not only serve to reduce traffic speeds and increase roadway and pedestrian safety, they provide techniques for improving neighborhood character and reducing elements of suburban sprawl. Whether in commercial or residential areas, installation of new or retrofitting of old roadways, parking areas or sidewalks improves community cohesiveness and sense of place. The following tools can be applied during the site plan review or subdivision process by the Planning and Architectural Review Boards.

Strategies for Quality Communities Planning And Design Guidelines

Traffic Calming

1) Within residential areas, roadway design techniques should be utilized to reduce vehicular speed, including narrow roadway widths and cul-de-sac radii in subdivisions. Installation of speed bumps and speed tables and provision or rough pavement areas (rumble strips) at intersections would also slow traffic.

2) Within business areas, sidewalk designs and crosswalks can enhance pedestrian safety. Measures could include sidewalk bumpouts (also known as roadway chokers), specially paved crosswalks and median dividers.

3) Parking areas should be separated from pedestrian areas through the use of low fences, walls, bollards or landscaping.

4) Streetscape designs should include landscaping that enhances the image of the area. Street trees and shrubs should be selected that, when mature, will allow clear lines of sight.

5) Where possible, alternative modes of travel should be encouraged, including mass transit (train and bus), bicycle and walking, through the provision of sidewalks, bike racks and well-located and well-lighted parking areas.

6) Roadways that are popular to bicycle riders should be identified, and separate bike lanes should be provided between automotive travel lanes and sidewalk or should areas. Separate bike trails should also be provided on former railroad rights-of-way.

7) Traffic calming and other safety measures should be incorporated into State, regionally and locally sponsored roadway sustainable development studies designed to coordinate land use and traffic issues.
Country Commercial Development

Rural commercial development along corridors or at crossroads tends to have suburban strip qualities or exhibit older, rural unorganized, undefined commercial use characteristics. By applying the standards incorporated in the design tools below, local boards can ensure the provision of small, neighborhood scale commercial development that serves community needs without being visually incompatible with the rural landscape.

Strategies for Quality Communities Planning And Design Guidelines
Country Commercial Development

1) Commercial development at rural crossroads or in rural corridors should transmit and be compatible with the surrounding rural context.

2) Special zoning techniques regulating rural commercial uses should be devised that avoid highway strip development.

3) Regulations should provide bulk requirements and design guidelines that foster compact commercial development with limited commercial development opportunities.

4) Permitted uses should exclude drive-in or thru establishments or auto-related uses. Permitted uses should include craft or antique uses with limited accessory workshops for production.

5) Design guidelines should limit building length and require modulated facades. Parking should be prohibited in front set backs. Clearly identified pedestrian ways should connect to other pedestrian bikeways.
2. Fiscal Tools
The most direct method of implementing some of the strategies of this plan are through direct funding of projects that foster plan goals. Municipal, County, State or federal governments and agencies can be funding sources through their capital budgets or expense budgets or through special programs. Private institutional funding sources are also possibilities.

While capital and experience budgets will change based on economic circumstances and political philosophies those funding sources will always be a means for fiscal implementation of plan objectives.

County Fiscal Programs - Once the Strategies for Quality Communities Plan is adopted by the County, funding mechanisms based on existing or future programs could be directed toward plan implementation. Current County fiscal tools include:

- Methods of raising funds to implement open space and all other strategies of the plan include: 1) annual and multi-year appropriations; 2) bonds; 3) land purchase installment obligations; 4) real estate transfer taxes; 5) reduced tax assessment; or, 6) the leverage of County, State, federal and other grant appropriations. This is particularly the case when the methods of securing interest in land for the purposes of creating parks and open space are considered. Local or other funds can be utilized through: 1) purchase of title; 2) purchase of development rights; or, 3) lease of development rights.

Local Fiscal Measures - The most direct measures available to local governments to implement policy is through their annual expense and five year capital budgets. Through the funding of local facilities and programs, localities can take an active hand in shaping their environment and economic health. Although other sources of funding in any of the categories identified above can be paired with local funding, local fiscal action is the first line of action.

3. Regulatory Measures
Land use regulations in New York State generally are within the jurisdiction of local governments who have the power of zoning. Zoning is the most powerful of the available tools to regulate land use and the varying techniques which are available can have a powerful effect on the ability of localities to implement strategies of comprehensive plans. However, the County, State and Federal governments do have regulatory powers under other statues that can be effective
tools in shaping the future growth of the County.

Federal, State and County Regulatory Measures

Environmental review of actions funded under federal programs and all actions undertaken within New York State which are not among the category of actions known as Type II actions are subject to environmental review in accordance with the provisions of the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) or are subject to the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), respectively.

At the federal level, regulations relative to floodplains are adhered to under the Federal Emergency Management Act (FEMA) guidelines regulating the use of lands in located in floodplains and floodways. The Army Corps of Engineers also is responsible for regulating any development impacts to federal wetlands under its permitting procedures.

At the State level, the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) regulates development impacts on State designated wetlands and streams resulting from development. The State Department of Coastal Resources, under its Coastal Zone Management regulations, can seek compliance of waterfront development and improvements which are consistent with the State Policies or with a State approved local waterfront revitalization plan.

The County regulatory role in land use issues is governed under Section 239-L, N and M of the General Municipal Law. Under this law, the County can make advisory recommendations related to development and land use in certain cases based on the regulations.

Regulatory measures that should be undertaken by the County are:
• Undertake general municipal reviews within the context of this plan on large scale projects or on projects which are within 500 feet of a neighboring municipality that have environmental impacts on the adjacent municipality.
• The County should develop model zoning regulations which can be adapted and adopted by localities which foster strategies of the Strategies for Quality Communities Plan. These regulations should address density bonuses or incentives in exchange for development that meets important local objectives such as the development of neo-traditional neighborhood or cluster design, with or without affordable housing components. Regulations that illustrate possible use of transfer of development rights, planned unit development and floating zone concepts should be
provided by the County. Sample wetland, vista protection, steep slope ridgeline, and flood plain regulations should be available to assist communities deal with environmental conservation issues raised in the Plan.

• Health Department reviews of subdivisions should continue but revisions of the minimum lot rule should be considered as a way to avoid fragmented land development.

Local Regulatory Measures

Zoning - Zoning powers rest with local governments and directly affect how land is utilized. In addition to the standard techniques of density, coverage, height, setbacks, floor area ratio, and parking requirements which are utilized to control the amount of development that can occur and the amount of open space which remains, there are specialized techniques to achieve land use goals which include:

• overlay zoning to protect environmental features
• floating zoning to achieve local objectives
• transfer of development rights to preserve open space
• planned unit development to permit flexible design
• cluster zoning to preserve open space
• senior and accessory apartment housing to serve specialized housing needs

The County can enhance the ability of municipalities to utilize available zoning techniques by establishing model ordinances which can be adopted by municipalities to accomplish specific purposes and implement county and municipal plan strategies.

Site Plan and Subdivision Review - As incorporated in local law, these two measures provide a framework for local Planning Boards to implement the design principles as identified in the above specified design tools.

Natural Resource Protection Ordinances – The measures incorporated in these ordinances can stand alone as separate ordinances or they can be incorporated in local zoning laws. Either way, they are measures that secure the protection of the following resources through setbacks, specification of timing, siting guidelines, and required erosion and sedimentation plans. Resources to be protected include:

• freshwater wetlands
• scenic roads
• ridgelines
• significant trees and woodlands
• floodplains
• streams and watercourses
• productive farmland

4. Management Actions
Management techniques for different levels of government relate to efforts to coordinate the roles of agencies, governments, groups or individuals who are involved in actions which would implement strategies of the Plan. In some cases, management actions are the precursors to establishment of regulations that would specify required actions. The following are examples of management measures which can be undertaken by different levels of government as well as not-for-profit agencies.

Federal and State Management Actions
Federal and State agencies should work with County and local authorities to utilize their funding and regulatory capabilities to foster the strategies of the Quality Communities Plan. Coordination between agencies and awareness of the goals of the plan should be utilized as a benchmark in directing funding and program activities.

County Management Actions
The County can implement recommendations of this plan by coordinating efforts of local groups and other levels of government. It can also establish certain non-regulatory commissions or support those already existing that would have a role in developing strategies of the plan. Following are management related implementation measures which can be undertaken by the County:

• Prioritize open space lands for preservation through working with existing agencies and local municipalities to make recommendations to the County Executive
• Continue and expand training programs sponsored by the Orange County Municipal Planning Federation for volunteers involved in the land use decision making process
• Support the land use community education efforts by the Orange County Citizens Foundation and encourage continued emphasis on techniques which foster strategies promoted in the plan
• Actively participate with regional agencies such as the Regional Plan Association, the Hudson River Valley Greenways Council, Mid Hudson Pattern for Progress and others.
• Support concepts of Plan during 239 L and M reviews
• County decision-makers will take actions which are with consistent the goals and objectives of the Plan.

Local Management Actions
Accomplishing the goals of the Plan will depend on the active efforts of local municipal officials and leaders throughout the county. Municipalities should continue and increase their efforts to work with each other and with other levels of government to further regional objectives from which they can benefit locally.
• Municipalities can establish local taskforces to further economic development, open space, and farmland and environmental protection and increased housing options
• Municipalities can coordinate development along municipal borders with adjacent municipalities and agree to resolve border disputes through the development of intermunicipal agreements, and with the aid of mediators or neutral facilitators if necessary.