

Town of Ulster Comprehensive Plan

Town of Ulster, New York



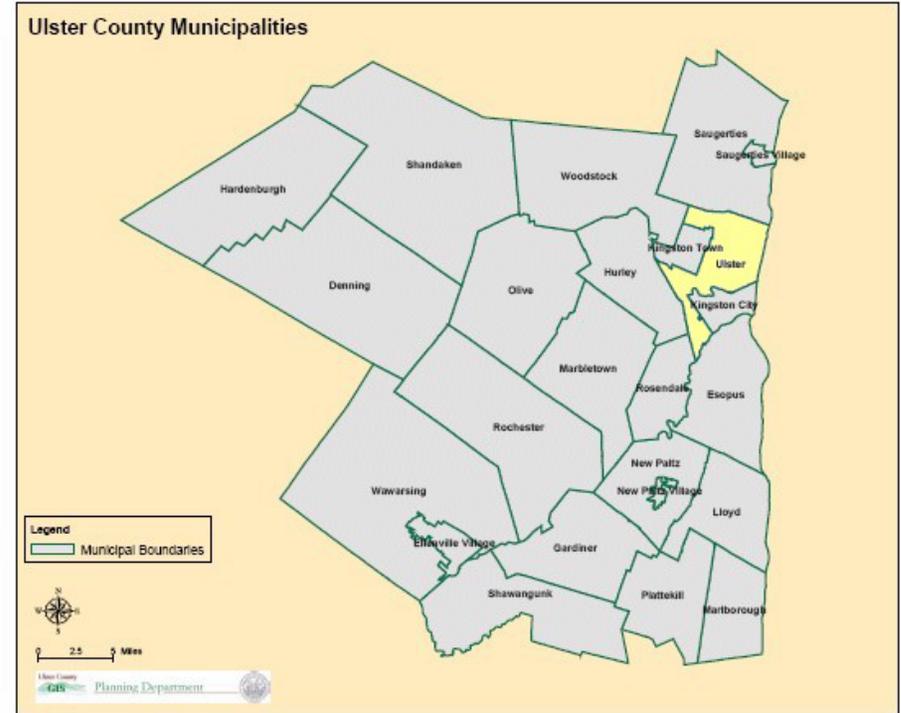
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Acknowledgements, continued

Geographic Information Systems Mapping

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) maps for this Comprehensive Plan were prepared by staff members from the Ulster County Management Information Systems Office and the Ulster County Planning Department.

Technical Support

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Vision Statement

It is the goal of the Town of Ulster Comprehensive Plan Committee to form an inclusive plan which fosters growth and development while preserving the integrity of the Town. Residential and business growth will be managed to retain our rural and historic character, a quality environment and an active agricultural community. In short, this plan will ensure an enviable quality of life for future generations while the Town remains poised for continued growth with a mix of commercial, industrial, residential, rural and suburban settings.

Vision Statement voted on and approved 5/12/05.

Table of Contents

Town of Ulster Comprehensive Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	E-1
Chapter 1 - Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2 - Historical & Regional Context	3
Chapter 3 - Public Participation	9
Chapter 4 - Population & Housing.....	25
Chapter 5 - Natural Resources.....	35
Chapter 6 - Transportation.....	48
Chapter 7 - Recreational, Historic & Cultural Resources.....	60
Chapter 8 - Community Facilities.....	67
Chapter 9 - Agriculture & Farmland	77
Chapter 10- Economic Development	81
Chapter 11 - Land Use & Zoning.....	84
Chapter 12 - Plan Implementation.....	101
APPENDICES Lighting Design, New Urbanism Street Standards and Definitions.....	108
Maps:	
Steep Slopes	36
Water Resources	37
FEMA Floodplain	37
Soils	40
Transportation	48
Public Transportation.....	55
Parks & Open Space.....	60
Fire Districts	68
Schools	71
Water Districts.....	73
Sewer Districts.....	75
Agriculture & Farmland.....	77
Empire Zone Boundaries.....	82
Existing Land Use	84
Existing Zoning	90

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Town of Ulster’s existing Comprehensive Plan was written between 1969 and 1970. Report Number One was written in 1969 and Report Number Two was completed in January of 1970. Report Number One consisted of basic studies providing an analysis of physical resources, land use, population trends, and an overview of the community’s economic base in 1969. Report Number Two provided basic studies of community facilities, a financial analysis and circulation analyses. As it has been nearly forty years since these documents were written, many issues envisioned in the existing Comprehensive Plan have either come to pass or are no longer relevant to the challenges facing the Town during the next five to ten years.

For these reasons, and others, the Town Board formed a Comprehensive Plan Committee in 2005 to lead the effort to prepare a new Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Ulster. The new Comprehensive Plan will form the basis for future land use regulations and subsequent zoning or subdivision revisions that may be necessary to implement the recommendations contained within this Comprehensive Plan. The new Plan will also be more responsive to challenges facing the Town today, rather than challenges that the Town faced forty years ago – which were far different than today. Public participation into the development of the Plan included a variety of public informational meetings, visioning sessions, public hearings and a resident survey sent to 1,000 residents.

Town of Ulster, New York

Details of the public participation process and findings are included in Chapter 3.0 Public Participation. Through public outreach and discussion, the Comprehensive Plan Committee developed a “Vision Statement” for the Town’s Comprehensive Plan which is provided below.

VISION STATEMENT

“It is the goal of the Town of Ulster Comprehensive Plan Committee to form an inclusive plan which fosters growth and development while preserving the integrity of the Town. Residential and business growth will be managed to retain our rural and historic character, a quality environment and an active agricultural community. In short, this plan will ensure an enviable quality of life for future generations while the Town remains poised for continued growth with a mix of commercial, industrial, residential, rural and suburban settings.”

Comprehensive Plan Committee

A number of specific future land use policies were developed by the Committee to achieve the broad goal of fostering growth while retaining the Town’s rural character and natural resources.



Above: View of Catskill Mountains



Above: Starbuck’s Route 9W

Future Land Use Patterns

The residential development pattern in the Town is both suburban and rural. Those areas adjacent to the City of Kingston or the Route 9W corridor are the most densely developed areas in the Town. The active agricultural lands along the Esopus Creek, forestlands in the Catskill Park, and uplands along the Hudson River waterfront are the least densely developed areas of the Town. An important goal of this Plan is to allow for growth in existing centers while preserving large areas of open space in outlying areas that help to define the Town's rural character. To do so, higher density growth will need to be encouraged near residential and commercial centers that are presently served with water and sewer. At the same time, large expanses of open space must be preserved in the more rural and environmentally-sensitive areas of the Town. These broad land use policies will help to achieve the following:

1. *Maximize the return-on-investment for the Town's water & sewer districts.* The Town has an extensive water & sewer system and encouraging growth within existing districts will ensure that systems are run cost-effectively and that capacity is reserved for the district.
2. *Provide for a variety of housing types in the Town.* This Plan encourages higher density residential development in those areas that are served by water & sewer. There is a variety of housing types permitted in the Town including townhouses, 2-family, or 3-4 family residences and senior citizen housing. This Plan recommends that the Town also explore the feasibility of mixed use developments in its existing centers. Such policies could provide for a greater variety of housing types to serve the needs of all income groups in the Town.
3. *Open space preservation and natural resource protection.* Supporting an active agricultural community and working with the timber industry to ensure that forest lands are managed for a sustainable timber harvest are two of the most important measures the Town can take to preserve large tracks of open space. The development of a Ridge Overlay Protection Zone and the creation of Local Waterfront Revitalization Programs for waterfront areas will also help to preserve open space and important vistas. The Town can use its Capital Facilities Planning to direct growth away from its rural areas by limiting the extension of water & sewer into these areas. Doing so will make the existing residential and non-residential centers more attractive for development.
4. *Expand economic opportunities for area residents.* Through better coordination with County and State economic development agencies, the Town can play a more active role in providing employment opportunities for its residents. It can also work in partnership with existing landowners to expand the inventory of "shovel-ready" sites which will make it more attractive to prospective businesses.
5. *Improve the transportation system with particular sensitivity to safety, quality of life, and visual appearance.* Policies outlined in this Plan will help to ensure acceptable traffic flows on area roadways through the implementation of congestion management practices and completion of long-range highway improvements designed to complete the highway system. Pedestrian safety will be improved by encouraging a network of sidewalks that serves the entire community.

Goals and Recommendations

The goals outlined below establish the broad framework to guide the Town of Ulster's housing, natural resource, community facility, agriculture & farmland protection, transportation, economic development, and land use policies into the future. The recommendations associated with each policy establish the specific policies, programs, or actions that can be taken by the Town to achieve each goal. The background analysis that resulted in each of these goals and policies is contained within Chapters 4.0 – 11.0 of this Plan.

Housing

Goal 1: Provide housing options that are affordable to a range of household incomes in the Town.

Recommendations:

- Develop *inclusionary zoning* provisions to encourage the development of affordable housing units;
- Ensure that zoning allows for a variety of housing types including single-family, multi-family, manufactured housing, townhouse, and senior-assisted living;
- Provide density bonuses to developers who agree to provide a percentage of affordable housing units as part of their market rate developments;
- Create a mixed-use zoning district to encourage residential/commercial development in existing centers;
- Support efforts to secure state and federal tax credits for senior housing developments within the Town; and
- Secure funding through the Governor's Office for Small Cities in order to develop housing rehabilitation programs to serve low-moderate income households and senior households in the Town of Ulster.

Natural Resource Protection

Goal 1: Protect groundwater resources to ensure that the quantity and quality of water is available to serve future needs.

Recommendations:

- Strictly enforce NYSDEC requirements for a 100-foot buffer between development and watercourses;
- Restrict the development of buildings and other impervious surfaces within the 100-year floodplain;
- Require Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPP) in accordance with the NYSDEC State Pollution Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) general permit for commercial/industrial developments or major subdivision applications;
- Encourage the use of retention/detention basins that are an integral part of the overall site plan or subdivision plan; and
- Identify important aquifer recharge areas and create aquifer protection overlay districts.

Goal 2: Protect the Town's scenic views, rural-community atmosphere, and natural quality for its intrinsic and economic value.

Recommendations:

- Develop land use policies aimed at retaining large blocks of farmland that are able to support a variety of farm businesses; and
- Create Riparian Protection Zones along the Esopus Creek and Rondout Creek;

- Form a Town of Ulster Agricultural Advisory Committee to address issues facing farmers and to develop programs to support agriculture;
- Create Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans (LWRP) for the Hudson River and Rondout Creek;
- Support efforts by property owners to participate in the Conservation Tax Credit (CTC) Program;
- Coordinate with a land trust to manage conservation easements on large tracts of land;
- Encourage the use of cluster subdivisions to retain large tracts of open space;
- Better regulate the placement of billboards (off-premises advertising) and restrict pole signs; and
- Require the placement of electric, cable and telephone wires underground.

Goal 3: Provide greater protection of ridgelines from inappropriate development.

Recommendations:

- Limit development in those areas of the Town where the slope exceeds 15%;
- Require sediment & erosion control plans for proposed development near ridgelines;
- Limit the amount of cutting and filling that is allowed on ridgelines;
- Create a Ridgeline Protection Overlay District;
- Encourage the use of conservation subdivisions to guide growth away from the ridgeline;
- Encourage participation in the Forestry Management Programs to keep ridgelines forested for the long-term;
- Limit the clearing of vegetation along ridgelines; and
- Adopt a local law to regulate timber harvesting within the Town of Ulster.

Goal 4: Enhance resource protection and public access to the Town’s waterfront lands along the Hudson River, Esopus Creek, and Rondout Creek.

Recommendations:

- Develop Local Water Revitalization Plans (LWRP) for the Hudson River and Rondout Creek waterfronts; and
- Coordinate with NYSDEC to development additional DEC fishing access points along the Esopus Creek and Rondout Creek.

Goal 5: Ensure the long-term sustainability of the Town’s Forestry Industry.

Recommendations:

- Encourage property owners with 50 or more acres of woodlands to participate in the New York State 480-A Forestry Management Program; and
- Adopt a local law to regulate timber harvesting.

Goal 6: Promote innovative land use management and building construction techniques in the Town to enhance and preserve the natural environment and utilize energy efficiently, while accommodating future development.

Recommendations:

- Encourage Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) techniques in the design, construction, and operation of new buildings in the Town; and
- Encourage environmentally friendly lighting, water-saving devices, and recycling.

*Transportation***Goal 1: Maintain an acceptable level-of-service on all area roadways.**Recommendations:

- Employ access management policies along the Town’s commercial corridors including: Route 9W, Route 28, and the Washington Avenue corridor;
- Ensure that sufficient off-street parking is provided to accommodate proposed land uses;
- Use the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) process to assess and mitigate potential traffic impacts associated with development;
- Require a traffic impact analysis for land uses with high trip generation rates; and
- Limit the number of curb cuts on major arterials and encourage site access from local collectors and access roadways.

Goal 2: Provide for the interconnection of neighborhoods through local streets that feed into local collectors.Recommendations:

- Develop a street classification map for the Town of Ulster that identifies opportunities for through streets between neighborhoods that would help to improve traffic flow by better directing residential traffic to local collector streets; and
- Require the provision of an easement to allow for the future extension of a local street to an adjacent property where it would help to complete the street system.

Goal 3: Provide for the interconnection of streets that help to complete the highway system.Recommendations:

- The Town, County and NYSDOT should continue to work together to implement the proposed extension of Frank Sottile Boulevard; and
- Pursue the development of a connector street under Route 199 that would link Boices Lane to Lake Ave.

Goal 4: Improve major commercial transportation corridors with particular sensitivity to safety, quality of life, and visual appearance.Recommendations:

- Coordinate with County and NYSDOT to develop detailed Master Plans for Ulster Avenue, Route 9W and Route 28 that focus on pedestrians as well as cars;
- Work with NYSDOT to create a sidewalk master plan for the Route 9W corridor that defines a sidewalk network that provides for safe pedestrian access to businesses centers and nearby neighborhoods;
- Create sidewalk improvement district for Route 9W;
- Require green space and street trees between the public rights-of-way and sidewalks in order to define the pedestrian and vehicular environments;
- Establish dedicated bicycle lanes along these corridors;
- Encourage joint-access between adjacent commercial sites to reduce the number of driveways; and
- Develop design guidelines for buildings, signs, and public improvements in these corridors for the purpose of creating a design vocabulary that will result in a cohesive look for these corridors.

Goal 5: Mitigate impacts associated with freight rail traffic through the Town.

Recommendations:

- Coordinate with NYSDOT and CSX to monitor traffic delays associated freight train movements through the Town with particular focus on the Boices Lane at-grade intersection; and
- Reach out to CSX to identify concerns related to noise and seek its input into terms of identifying possible solutions.

Goal 6: Provide public transportation services to serve the needs of all Town’s residents.

Recommendation:

- Coordinate with the County to provide public transportation services to meet the needs of Town residents and local businesses.

Goal 7: Ensure future viability of Kingston-Ulster Airport.

Recommendations:

- Prevent incompatible land uses from encroaching on the airport and its safety zones in order to avoid future hazards or nuisances to aircraft and the Town’s residents; and
- Proactively seek the County’s support of the Kingston-Ulster Airport’s Transportation Bond Act applications for federal funding for runway and other airport improvements.

Recreational, Historic & Cultural Resources

Goal 1: Provide a variety of recreational resources to serve the needs of the community year-round.

Recommendations:

- Use the payment-in-lieu parkland fees for the acquisition of parkland and/or further development of the Town’s existing parks;
- Develop a Parks & Recreation Master Plan;
- Create additional neighborhood parks that are in walking distance of surrounding neighborhoods;
- Coordinate with Ulster County, the City of Kingston and the Town of Hurley to create a paved rail trail along the Ontario & Western Railroad rights-of-way between the City of Kingston and Town of Hurley;
- Coordinate with the NYSDEC to identify and develop public access points along the Esopus Creek;
- Create Town designation of historic sites; and
- Coordinate with the County and neighboring communities to develop linear parks to provide passive recreational opportunities for local residents.

Goal 2: Protect and preserve historic resources.

Recommendations:

- Raise awareness of the State’s Real Property Tax Exemptions/Credits for Historic Properties;
- Support nominations for listing of properties on the State and National Historic Register; and
- Complete an historic resources inventory of the Town of Ulster.

Goal 3: Encourage the development of cultural resources that will attract visitors to the Town.**Recommendation:**

- Support efforts to implement the recommendations from the Ulster & Delaware Railroad Corridor Feasibility Study.

Community Facilities**Goal 1: Provide facilities to meet existing and anticipated community needs.****Recommendations:**

- Continue to work with its engineer to resolve the infiltration & inflow at the Whittier Sewer District (WWTP);
- Coordinate with the Kingston School District to create shared recreational facilities and/or community meeting space; and
- Create a *Capital Improvement Plan* (CIP) for all the Town's capital facilities. A CIP would assess the useful life of all capital facilities (e.g. buildings, water & sewer infrastructure, playground equipment, etc.) maintenance needs and replacement schedules. It should also include an *Asset Management Plan* that identifies future capital improvements will be financed. A well-developed CIP could help save money by increasing the useful life of long-term capital assets, reducing the likelihood of costly emergency replacement of equipment, and reducing operating & maintenance costs. This should be prepared in the next 1-2 years.

Agriculture & Farmland**Goal 1: Keep existing farmland in agricultural production and maintain the viability of area farms.****Recommendations:**

- Form a Town of Ulster Agricultural Advisory Committee (ACC) made up of elected officials and representatives from the farming community. An ACC could provide a forum for area farmers to analyze issues facing the agricultural community within the Town, articulate the benefits provided by local farms and the challenges they face, and identify strategies that the Town can employ to support the business and land use needs of local farmers;
- Identify areas where agricultural activity should be supported over the long-term;
- Develop land use policies aimed at retaining large blocks of farmland that are able to support a variety of farm businesses;
- Support applications to the State and federal government to purchase agricultural easements on local farms also referred to as Purchase of Development Rights (PDR);
- Create local program to purchase conservation easements from area farmers;
- Create an AG-Agricultural Zoning District;
- Encourage cluster or conservation subdivisions to retain prime farm lands;
- Discourage the extension of water and sewer lines to areas with prime farmlands; and
- Preserve historic barns by encouraging property owners to seek funding through the New York State Historic Preservation Office's *Barn Restoration Program*.

*Economic Development***Goal 1: Attract new businesses to the Town of Ulster**Recommendations:

- Work in partnership with Empire State Development Corporation, Ulster County Development Corporation, the Ulster County IDA, and the Kingston-Ulster Empire Zone to develop a coherent strategy to attract industries to the Town of Ulster and City of Kingston;
- Conduct an inventory of office, manufacturing, and industrial floor space that is available within the Town of Ulster by square footage, class of space, and site location so that perspective tenants can be matched with suitable space in a timely and effective manner;
- Work with private land owners to secure funding through the *Build Now-NY Program* to pay for professional services related to engineering, environmental assessments, and legal support needed to pre-permit a development site;
- Secure funding through the Ulster County Development Corporation's Shovel-Ready Fund to assess public infrastructure needs and to conduct studies to determine the feasibility of commercial and industrial development or to construct necessary supporting public infrastructure; and
- Aggressively work with the Kingston-Ulster Empire Zone to promote the significant tax advantages that are available through the Empire Zone including wage tax credits, investment tax credits, real property tax credit, sales tax exemption, tax reduction credit and Zone Capital Credits for direct equity investments; and
- Reach out to existing businesses to identify complementary businesses that the Town should attract.

Goal 2: Help existing and emerging businesses in the Town to expand within the Town of Ulster.Recommendations:

- Streamline the development review process for businesses that are looking to locate in the Town;
- Provide financial support for start-up businesses;
- Ensure that existing businesses are made aware of economic development programs that could help them in their business expansion such as Empire Zone benefits, IDA financing, and Payment-in-Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) programs;
- Reach out to existing businesses to identify their telecommunications needs and help them to secure low-interest financing through the Ulster County Development Corporation's Telecommunications fund to make necessary improvements; and
- Enhance agri-tourism and heritage-tourism initiatives.

Goal 3: Provide well-paying jobs for area residents.Recommendations:

- Retain existing businesses and help them to grow;
- Attract businesses that pay a living wage; and
- Attract those industries that are environmentally friendly, pay well and provide employee benefits.

Goal 4: Strengthen the Town's commercial tax base to reduce the burden on area homeowners.Recommendation:

- Pursue all of the above.

Land Use & Zoning

Goal 1. Manage growth in relation to “Vision Statement” for the Town of Ulster.

Recommendations:

- Protect environmentally sensitive areas such as steep slopes, floodplains, and wetlands;
- Provide incentives for the adaptive reuse of existing buildings and/or sites;
- Encourage in-fill development in established areas that is compatible with existing and/or proposed land use; that is at a compatible scale with the surrounding area; and that can be supported by adequate public facilities and transportation systems;
- Direct development to those areas already served with water & sewer infrastructure by allowing for a higher intensity of residential and non-residential development; and
- Develop a Capital Improvement Plan for the Town of Ulster that ensures that new infrastructure and new public services are planned in direct relationship to the managed growth policies stated above.

Goal 2. Preserve open space to buffer development and to preserve the area’s scenic vistas.

Recommendations:

- Use the cluster subdivision provisions to preserve large tracts of open space that are likely to impact important vistas;

- Create an AG-Agricultural Zoning District and work with the farming community to identify programs to support agriculture;
- Work with economic development agencies to devise incentives that could be made available to support farming in the community;
- Encourage the placement of utilities underground to protect important vistas; and
- Continue to support forestry as an industry in the Town and encourage landowners to participate in the State’s Forestry Management Program.

Goal 3. Stabilize residential neighborhoods adjacent to commercial areas.

Recommendations:

- Establish zoning that provides for a transition of land uses between commercial and residential districts through the control of height and the type of land uses allowed;
- Require vegetative buffers and/or architectural screens between commercial and residential developments; and
- Control vehicular access so that commercial traffic is not directed through residential neighborhoods.

Goal 4. Encourage Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) techniques in the design, construction and operation of new buildings in the Town.

- Provide education and outreach regarding LEED techniques in order to raise community awareness of its benefits.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Town of Ulster’s existing Comprehensive Plan was completed in 1970. Since that time, the Town of Ulster has seen considerable growth in new residential, commercial and industrial development. Along with this growth has come the understanding that new development is shaping the character of our community and new land use policies are needed to manage this growth and to protect our natural resources.

This 2007 Comprehensive Plan contains recommendations for future land use policies that better reflect current community values and will enable the Town to have greater control over the character of future development. The Comprehensive Plan will form the basis for future land use regulations, subsequent zoning revisions, or the adoption of other public policies that are necessary to carry out the objectives of this Plan. Specific recommendations pertaining to zoning code revisions and other land use policies are described in Chapter 11.0 – Land Use & Zoning and are also summarized in the Executive Summary of this Plan.

The development of this Comprehensive Plan included a strong public participation process and provided an opportunity for the entire community to come together to create a set of land use policies and community development programs to guide growth and redevelopment within the Town of Ulster.

The new Comprehensive Plan is being prepared in accordance with Section 272-a of NYS Town Law which states that the plan will “identify the goals and objectives, principals, guidelines, policies, standards, devices, and instruments for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development of the Town.” While the creation of a Comprehensive Plan is not required under NYS Section 272-a, once one is adopted, all subsequent land use regulations must be in accordance with a community’s adopted Comprehensive Plan.

Three distinct phases are involved in the development of the Town’s Comprehensive Plan: 1) preparation of baseline data including population & housing trends, natural resources, community facilities, open space, and infrastructure, etc. 2) identification of issues through Committee meetings, public workshops/surveys, and 3) the creation of the goals, objectives and policies. Some issues that were identified include, but are not limited to:

- Creating an identity for the Town;
- The adaptive reuse of IBM facilities;
- Design of new commercial development;
- Property maintenance and signs;
- Farmland and natural resource protection;
- Providing senior/youth recreation;
- Hamlet & neighborhood revitalization;
- Protecting the Kingston-Ulster airport;
- Expansion of the tax base; and
- Ridgeline & natural resource protection.



Top photo: Kingston-Ulster Airport.

Middle photo: Ulster County Park.

Bottom photo: Pavilion at Ulster County Park.

1.1 Purpose of the Plan

This Comprehensive Plan is meant to build upon the 1970 Comprehensive Plan and is intended to guide the Town’s growth for the next 5 to 10 years. The Comprehensive Plan serves as the Town’s official policy document, providing a general set of planning principals relating to land use, housing, economic development, as well as agricultural, natural, cultural and historic resource protection

The Vision Statement of this Comprehensive Plan is as follows: “It is the goal of the Town of Ulster Comprehensive Planning Committee to form an inclusive plan for the Town as a whole, which will foster growth and development while preserving the overall integrity of the Town. Residential and business growth will be managed to retain our rural and historic character, a quality environment and active agricultural community. Our desire is to provide an enviable quality of life for future generations yet remain poised for continued growth with a mix of commercial, industrial, residential, rural and suburban settings.” The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to realize the community’s vision for the future and to guide growth in a manner that fosters orderly, coordinated and beneficial development.

The Comprehensive Plan is meant to be a living document that is periodically reviewed and updated to ensure that it continues to reflect the long-range goals of the community.

1.2 Implementation of the Plan

In order for this Comprehensive Plan to be effective, the Town of Ulster must actively apply the policies that are contained within the Plan. Furthermore, its Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals must use the Plan as a framework to guide their decisions with respect to the review of development proposals.

Certain recommendations contained herein will require the subsequent action of the Town Board in order to enact recommended revisions to the Zoning Code and Subdivision Regulations. Other actions such as the preservation of historic resources, transportation improvements, or the development of programs to support the agricultural industry will require the collaboration between the Town, County, State and not-for-profit entities. These actions are outlined in Chapter 12 – Plan Implementation along with the parties responsible for taking a leadership role in the implementation of the policy or program.

Each member of the Town Board, Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals should have a copy of this Comprehensive Plan. The Town Board may want to appoint a Comprehensive Plan subcommittee to spend time each month reviewing progress on the implementation of this Comprehensive Plan and coordinating efforts with other entities where necessary. The following chapter provides a brief summary of the Town of Ulster’s history.

VISION STATEMENT

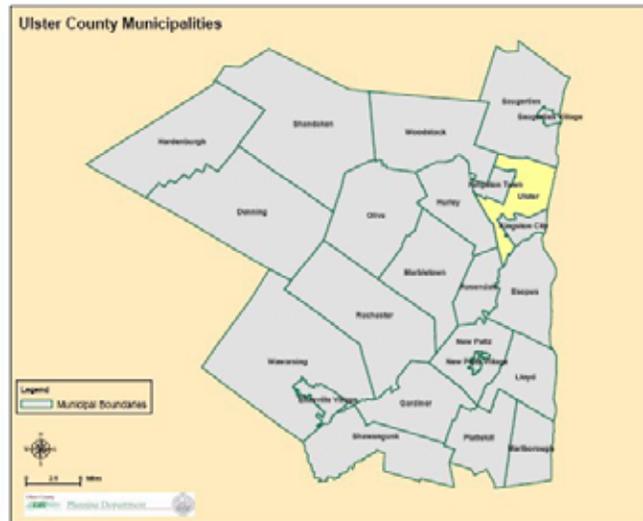
“It is the goal of the Town of Ulster Comprehensive Plan Committee to form an inclusive plan which fosters growth and development while preserving the integrity of the Town. Residential and business growth will be managed to retain our rural and historic character, a quality environment and an active agricultural community. In short, this plan will ensure an enviable quality of life for future generations while the Town remains poised for continued growth with a mix of commercial, industrial, residential, rural and suburban settings.”

Comp Plan Committee

CHAPTER 2.0 - HISTORIC & REGIONAL CONTEXT

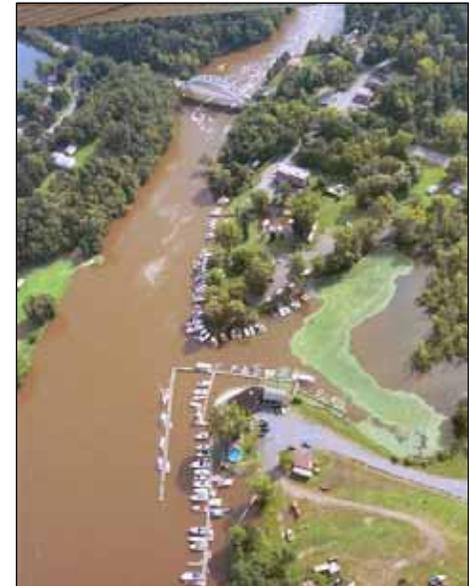
The Town of Ulster was created by an act of the Ulster County Board of Supervisors on November 28, 1879. Soon thereafter its formation was ratified by the State Legislature. The Town was formed from lands taken from the Town of Kingston. It has a land area of 28.88 square miles and is bounded north by Saugerties; east by the Hudson River; south mostly by the City of Kingston, but partially by the Town of Esopus; and west by the Towns of Hurley, Kingston, Rosendale and Woodstock.

When the Town was formed, it was still primarily a farming community with many farms along the plains of the Esopus Creek.



There were, however, several hamlet centers including Eddyville, East Kingston, Pine Bush, and Ruby that all grew up with early industries that were well-established in the Town by 1879. A brief history of those hamlet centers and associated industries follows.

Eddyville is located in the southernmost portion of the Town and is situated on the Rondout Creek in the vicinity of the rapids. The hamlet was first settled by John Eddy, who harnessed the water power to operate a grist mill. Upon the opening of the Delaware & Hudson Canal in 1828, the hamlet of Eddyville saw a period of steady growth. “From 1828 to 1898, mules pulled barges laden with anthracite coal along river valleys from Honesdale in northeastern Pennsylvania to Eddyville on the Rondout Creek. From here, it was shipped on barges down the Hudson to New York City and up the river to Canada.” Source: *D&H Canal Historical Society*. Many of the early businesses in the hamlet of Eddyville were related to the canal trade such as mule-stabling, boat-yards, and a variety of retail stores, harness shops, blacksmith shops, hotels, and a restaurant by C.B. Riggins. Following the closing of the D & H Canal in 1898, the hamlet of Eddyville lost a considerable amount of trade. Today, historic buildings of the canal era can still be seen in this hamlet and its commerce is still tied to the Rondout Creek. For example, businesses such as the Anchorage Marina & Restaurant and Rondout Bay Marina & Restaurant can be found in Eddyville.



Above: Images of Eddyville hamlet.

East Kingston is a hamlet center lying just north of the City of Kingston and bordered on the east by the Hudson River. The proximity to the Hudson River, a major trade route, made it easy to ship heavy goods to New York City. Early industries that developed along the Hudson River included ice-houses, sawmills, brick making, cement-works, quarrying, and the harvesting of shad and herring. There are several mining operations near East Kingston that are still in operation. The East Kingston Census Designated Place¹ (CDP) had a population of 285 persons living within 181 housing units in 2000.

Pine Bush described the area north of the City of Kingston in what is today referred to as the Lincoln Park and Lake Katrine neighborhoods. The Old King's Road to Albany ran from Kingston north through Pine Bush as did Old Stage Road. These roads were the primary means of travel; a number of taverns and business establishments developed along these roads to serve travelers. Today known as US Route 9W, this corridor is still a major north-south thoroughfare that has become a major retail center within the region. The Lincoln Park CDP abuts the northern border of the City of Kingston and had a Year 2000 population of 2,337 persons living within 1,114 housing units. The Lake Katrine CDP has also grown into a major population center within the Town having a Year 2000 population of 2,396 persons living within 891 housing units. Collectively, these two neighborhoods comprised 38% of the Town's total population in the Year 2000.

Ruby is located in the north-western corner of the Town of Ulster within the present day Catskill Park and near the Saugerties border. Ruby was historically called Dutch Settlement and quarrying for bluestone was the major industry in this area of the Town. Ironically, many of the workers in the bluestone mines were of Irish descent. There is still some limited blue-stone mining that occurs within the Ruby area.

Transportation Corridors

The *Kingston-Ellenville Highway* (today's Route 209) extended from Kingston to Port Jervis by the mid-1700's. It was an important settlement route that would become the major feeder to the D&H Canal. The *Old Kings Road* (today's Route 9W) was established in the 1700's providing an important link to Albany. By 1802, the *Ulster & Delaware Turnpike* (today's Route 28) extended into the Shandaken Valley improving the shipment of bluestone. These roads were important trade routes that helped to shape the settlement pattern within the Town of Ulster. The D&H Canal also helped to shape the Town. The hamlet of Eddyville, as the northern terminus of the canal, became an important center of commerce (see discussion on page 5).

Railroads also played an important role in the development of the Town although their terminus was in the City of Kingston. On May 23, 1870, the *Ulster & Delaware Railroad* commenced service between Kingston and Stamford, New York.

"The man who feels no sentiment or veneration for the memory of his forefathers is himself unworthy of kindred regard and remembrance."

Daniel Webster



Above: Ulster Town Seal



Above: D&H Canal

This rail line opened up travel to the Shandaken Valley for residents of the valley as well as a stream of summer visitors. The Stony Hollow station on the *Ulster & Delaware Railroad* was located near the northwestern boundary of the Towns of Ulster and Kingston near the Turnpike (aka today’s Route 28). The Ulster & Delaware Railroad was abandoned in 1974.

By the 1870’s, a branch line of the *Ontario & Western Railroad* beginning at Wurtsboro also provided service to the Town of Ulster via stations in Hurley and the City of Kingston. The O&W Kingston Branch was abandoned in 1956 and the track pulled in 1957. In Hurley, an attractive rail trail is built upon its right-of-way.

In the 1870’s, the *Wallkill Valley Railroad* also extended service to the City of Kingston. This line ran through the southern portion of the Town of Ulster but there were no stations on this line within the Town. The Wallkill Valley line from Kingston to Goshen, New York was abandoned in 1974.

During the 1880’s, the *West Shore Railroad* was constructed linking Jersey City, New Jersey to Albany, New York. This line was the culmination of a multitude of failed efforts to construct a rail line along the west shore of the Hudson River. This line would become, and remains today, a major freight line. The West Shore Railroad (now owned by CSX) runs through the City of Kingston and continues north along the Esopus Creek in the Town of Ulster.

Railroads were the dominant travel mode leading up to World War II, but public transportation improvements related to the automobile were being made. The Town of Ulster would soon benefit from the addition of new State and federal highways within its borders which would greatly enhance transportation access from the Town to the surrounding region.

In 1935, U.S. Highway 209 running from the Town of Ulster to Millersburg, Pennsylvania was opened. Another important transportation corridor developed around this time was U.S. Highway 9W. This highway goes from New Jersey to Upstate New York paralleling the Hudson River along its west bank, passing through the Highlands of New York, and skirting the east side of the Catskill Mountains. These two federal highways greatly improved automobile access from the Town of Ulster to Albany and New York City.

In 1957, the Kingston-Rhinecliff Bridge opened, providing the first direct connection between the Town of Ulster and Dutchess County. Prior to the construction of the bridge, the only direct route across the river was via ferry service. A major downside of ferry service was that it often had to be discontinued during winter months. The bridge greatly enhanced transportation access to and from the Town of Ulster making it a desirable location for business. Another factor that made it a desirable location was its proximity to the City of Kingston, providing a valuable labor force for prospective employers.



Top photo: O&W Kingston Station, circa 1870’s. Courtesy of Frank Almquist.

Middle photo: Lake Katrine Station – circa 1880’s. Courtesy of Frank Almquist.

Bottom photo: New York State Thruway, circa 2006.

In 1958, the New York State Thruway was completed giving the Town of Ulster direct access to the new federal Interstate Highway System and its growing network of roadways. These improvements greatly enhanced travel times between the Town of Ulster and Albany and/or New York City making it a desirable location for major industries.

Around this same time, the *Kingston-Ulster Airport* was constructed at its present-day site just north of Route 199 and the Kingston-Rhinecliff Bridge. The airport was moved from its former site west of Route 9W and south of Route 209 on what would soon become the home of IBM's new Kingston plant.

The IBM Years

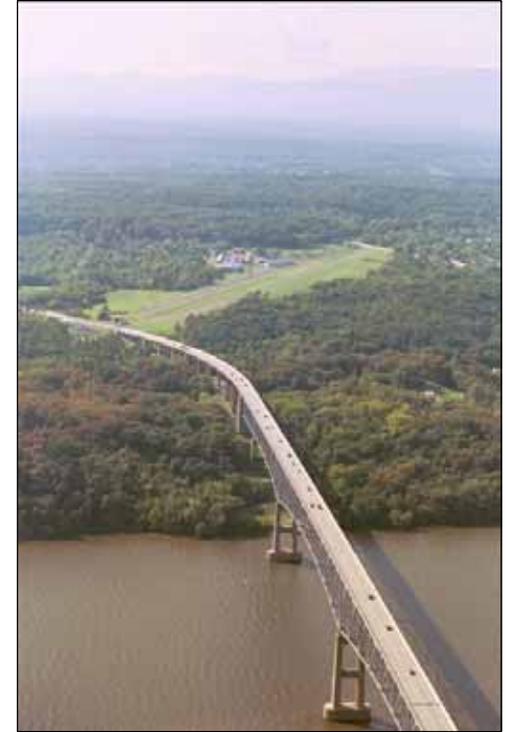
In 1956, International Business Machines (IBM) opened its one-million square-foot Kingston plant in the Town of Ulster. The IBM facility would soon grow to employ 7,100 residents from the surrounding area and lead to a period of rapid growth and development. As IBM's presence in the Town began to grow, so too did the transportation infrastructure to serve it. Interstate 587, was developed, in part, to meet the needs of a growing IBM. It is one of the shortest interstate highways at 1.2 miles. Over time, IBM would come to dominate the local economy of the Town of Ulster becoming by far its largest employer. The Company's presence would spur growth in the local housing and retail markets and change the make-up of the Town.

With the opening of the IBM Kingston Plant, the Town would see its population almost double in one decade. Between 1950 and 1960, the Town's population increased from 4,411 persons to 8,449 persons – a 91.5% increase. The new IBM plant required many white-collar and blue-collar workers and many people moved to the Town of Ulster.

Probably the greatest evidence of this period of growth is reflected in the age of the Town's housing stock. For example, only 22% of the Town's housing stock was constructed prior to 1950. Between 1950 and 1959, 948 new housing units were constructed in the Town. Between 1960 and 1969, another 1,108 housing units were constructed. Between 1970 and 1979, 911 units were constructed and another 732 units constructed between 1980 and 1989. Today, 78% of the Town of Ulster's housing stock was constructed after the arrival of IBM. In 2000, the median year of construction of the Town's housing units was 1965. For the County, the median year of construction was 1959.

New neighborhoods or hamlet centers.

Lake Katrine was part of the historic area known as Pine Bush. Following the arrival of IBM, it would grow into a major residential center within the Town of Ulster. Within the Lake Katrine Census Designated Place (CDP) there were only 157 housing units prior to 1949. Today, there are 887 housing units in this neighborhood with 2,396 residents.



Top photo: Aerial view of the Kingston-Ulster Airport looking from Kingston-Rhinecliff Bridge.

Bottom photo: The Hillside Acres Neighborhood.

Lincoln Park was also part of the historic area known as Pine Bush. Within the Lincoln Park Census Designated Place (CDP) that also includes the neighborhood of Sunset Park, there were only 299 housing units prior to 1949. Today, there are 1,113 housing units in this neighborhood with 2,337 residents according to the 2000 Census.

Hillside Acres is located to the west of the City of Kingston between Route 32 and Lucas Avenue. This area contained only 40 homes prior to 1949. Between 1950 and 1989, 309 homes were constructed in this neighborhood. In 2000, there were 882 residents in Hillside Acres.

Halcyon Park lies to the west of the New York State Thruway near the hamlet of Ruby. This neighborhood was built after 1950 and consists of approximately 150 homes with an estimated population of 345 residents.

Whittier is a neighborhood that developed to the east of Route 32 just north of the Kingston-Ulster Airport. It consists of approximately 145 dwelling units constructed after 1950 with an estimated population of 334 residents.

Growth in the Retail Sector

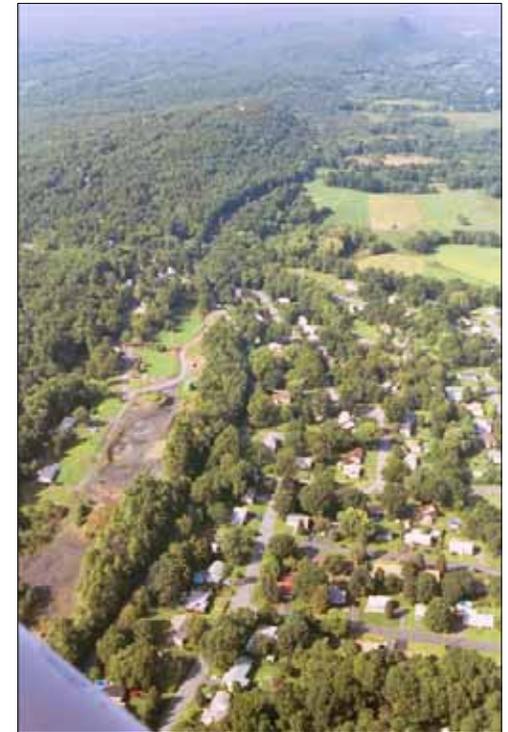
By the early 1960's, the Town of Ulster was also becoming a center for retail trade. Most of that growth was an extension of the retail trade that extended from the City of Kingston north along Albany Avenue and Ulster Avenue.

With the growing dominance of the automobile, the larger development sites in the Town of Ulster became an attractive location for retail shopping centers. Ulster also enjoyed a competitive advantage over the City of Kingston in that the Ulster Avenue Corridor was easily accessible from Route 209/199, the Thruway, and the Kingston-Rhinecliff Bridge.

The presence of IBM, the largest employer in the region, and growth in the nearby Lincoln Park and Lake Katrine neighborhoods, further fueled the desirability of Route 9W as a major retail shopping location. Over time, retail trade would continue to migrate north along Ulster Avenue (US 9W corridor) into the Town of Ulster. Today, it is a major center for retail trade in the County. In recent years, several regional shopping centers have been built here.

Post IBM Years

At its peak in the mid-1980's, IBM employed 7,100 people at its Kingston plant. Starting in the late 1980's, IBM began a process of downsizing. By 1995, that plant closed and with it the region felt the loss of 7,100 white-collar and blue-collar jobs that had fueled the local economy. The loss of IBM had an immediate impact on the housing market. Many IBM employees that relocated to other areas to seek employment had to sell their homes. As a result, there was a glut of homes on the market for sale. It would take a number of years for the market to recover, but it began to do so after the Year 2000.



Above: Halcyon Park Neighborhood



Above: Former IBM Recreation Center on Kukuk Lane

Between 1995 and 2000, only 130 housing units were constructed in the Town of Ulster – an average of 26 homes per year. Between 2001 and 2003, 92 dwelling units were constructed in the Town or an average of 31 dwelling units per year. It took a number of years for the entire region to recover from the loss of its major employer. Most of the former IBM facilities are still under-utilized, including the former Kingston plant, now known as Tech City. Also, IBM’s former recreation center on Kukuk Lane is abandoned and the adaptive re-use of this property is something that should be assessed.

Summary

The Town of Ulster has a rich history and many competitive advantages such as an excellent highway system, a strong retail and industrial base, prime agricultural lands, historic & natural resources and attractive and well-kept residential neighborhoods. Having an understanding of the Town’s history is important as we plan for its future development. For example, underutilized industrial sites hold promise for redevelopment; abandoned rail lines could become rail trails, and the remnants of the D&H Canal in Eddyville should be developed into an important heritage tourism site. There is much to build upon in the Town. Chapter Four will focus upon recent population, housing, and industry trends in the Town. This too will help to provide an important framework as the Town plans for its future.



Above: Besicorp at Kingston-Ulster Airport east of Route 32.



Above: Prime farmland Route 209 known as the Hurley Flats.



Above: A regional retail center along Route 9W - circa 2005.

CHAPTER 3.0 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Town Board appointed an eight member Comprehensive Plan Committee in April of 2005 to guide the development of the Town’s new Comprehensive Plan and to lead the public participation process. The Committee met weekly during the first year to gather background information and to prepare for the public participation process.

Starting in March of 2006, the Committee held a series of public informational meetings throughout the Town. A conscious decision was made to hold the meetings in different geographic areas of the Town to make it easier for residents to attend and for the Committee members to get a better idea of neighborhood issues. The informational meetings provided an overview of why the Town was preparing a new Comprehensive Plan and gave residents an opportunity to identify issues that were important to them.

The first information session was held on March 15, 2006 at Town Hall. This was followed by a March 29th workshop at the East Kingston Firehouse. On May 10, 2006 a workshop was held at Central Hudson’s offices on Route 28, followed by a May 24, 2006 workshop at the Spring Lake Firehouse. The last informational workshop was held on June 7th, 2006 at the Bloomington Fire House in Eddyville.

The Committee then used the feedback from the neighborhood workshops to develop a Comprehensive Plan Survey to be distributed throughout the Town. A resident survey was mailed to a random list of 1,000 residents in September of 2006. Residents were given several weeks to respond to the survey and 256 were returned for a response rate of 25.6%. A brief analysis of the survey responses is provided in Section 3.3 of this Chapter.

The Comprehensive Plan Committee also held its monthly meetings on August 30, October 11, October 25, and November 15, 2006. Its first townwide forum was held on November 21, 2006 at Town Hall. The forum included a Community Character Survey as well as an Assets & Challenges exercise conducted by Planit Main Street, Inc. An analysis of public input from the first public forum is provided in Section 3.2 of this Chapter. Following the first townwide forum, the Committee continued to hold its monthly meetings and also created a web page at www.planitmainstreet.com/ulster.html.

Other Scheduled Meetings:

- December 13, 2006 at 5:00 PM
- January 17, 2007 at 5:00 PM
- February 7, 2007 at 5:00 PM
- February 28, 2007 at 5:00 PM
- March 7, 2007 at 5:00 PM
- March 28, 2007 at 7:00 PM
- April 16, 2007 at 7:00 PM– Public Hearing
- May, 1, 2007 – Public Hearing

“It is within our power to create places worthy of our affection.”

James Howard Kunstler
Geography of Nowhere



Above: Images of Rondout Creek in and around Eddyville.

The Committee meetings provided an opportunity for Committee members to discuss and reach consensus on a variety of topics. During the meetings in December of 2006 and January & February of 2007, the Committee discussed the results of the Community Character and Assets & Challenges Surveys. The results helped to form the foundation for the goals, objectives and policies of this Comprehensive Plan. The Committee also used the analysis of existing land-use patterns and environmental constraints to help them focus on areas where development was likely to occur in the near future. This allowed the Committee to develop more detailed policies for specific areas of the Town. These are described in greater detail in Chapter 11.0 – Land Use and Zoning under the heading of “Precise Plans.”

A summary of the Assets & Challenges exercise along with the Community Character Survey follows - including a detailed analysis of each.

3.1 Assets & Challenges

At the November 21, 2006 public forum at Town Hall, thirty-two (32) Town residents participated in an Assets & Challenges exercise conducted by Planit Main Street, Inc. During the exercise, residents were first asked to describe those that they felt were “Assets” in the Town of Ulster and then what they felt were “Challenges” that the Town was facing. The individual responses were recorded that evening and later grouped into specific topic areas.

3.1.1 Assets

Assets are those aspects of a community that residents feel are attractive or inviting. Understanding resident perceptions of their community’s assets is an important step in defining a vision for its future. Generally speaking, things that residents feel are assets are the types of things its future land-use regulations or other public policies should encourage. While the specific assets for the Town varied, they could be generally grouped into several broad categories. The analysis of each is provided in the discussion below:

1. Aesthetics. Participants spoke of the Town’s three public parks – Ulster County Park, Charles Rider Park, and Robert E. Post Park – as aesthetically pleasing aspects of their community. Also mentioned was the Town’s close proximity and views of the Catskill Park and the scenic Hudson River which forms the eastern boundary of the Town of Ulster. Another important land use that helped to define the visually appealing aspects of the Town was its existing farmlands along the Esopus Creek.

2. Community Facilities. The availability and quality of various community facilities and services were also cited as assets by Town residents. Examples include good local hospitals, police department, and the Town’s new public library. Ulster’s proximity to the historic City of Kingston was also listed as an asset as were historic buildings within the Town.



Above: Robert E. Post Park on the Hudson River looking south.



Above: The Town Library on Ulster Avenue – circa 2003.

3. Identity of the Town. Several residents said the fact that the Town was made up of many hamlets and neighborhoods was an important asset of the Town. Areas mentioned were Ruby, Eddyville, East Kingston, Hillside-Acres, Lincoln Park, and Lake Katrine – among others.

4. Economic Development. Two of the most frequently cited economic assets in the Town were within two industries: retail and agriculture. Town residents identified the retail shopping centers on Route 9W as important assets to the community. A specific reference was made to the new Adam’s Fairacre Farms. Another asset was the variety of restaurants within the Town. Other economic development assets cited were the agricultural lands in the Esopus River Valley. Finally, the Town’s workforce was spoken of as an important asset.

5. Parks & Recreation. The Town’s Charles Rider Park and Robert E. Post Park were specifically identified by residents as important parks & recreation resources. The portion of the Town lying within the Catskill Park and the Town’s close proximity to the Catskill Park was also cited as an important asset. Residents also spoke of the variety of other open space within the Town including wetlands and pathways along ridgelines and river valleys. These are often used for hiking. Untapped recreational resources that were mentioned include the D&H Canal towpath, and abandoned railroad rights-of-way with the potential to become public recreation trails or rail trails.

6. Land-use Regulations. While residents spoke of the need to revise certain land-use regulations, they felt the Comprehensive Plan Committee was itself an important asset.

7. Natural Resources. Participants identified a number of the Town’s natural resources as important assets to the community. These included the Esopus Creek, Rondout Creek, and the Hudson River. Also mentioned as an important natural resource was the prime farmland lying in the Hurley Flats along Route 209 just to the south of Route 28.

8. Transportation. Access to the New York State Thruway was cited by residents as an important asset for the Town. So too was the location of the Kingston-Rhinecliff Bridge which made it easy for Town residents to cross the Hudson River. Several residents noted that the Town had well-maintained roads. Another important transportation-related asset that was identified by participants was the Kingston-Ulster Airport that is used for private as well as corporate aviation. Having the airport in the Town was seen as an advantage for area businesses and resident aviators. Proximity to the Rhinecliff Train Station and Albany & Stewart Airports were other transportation assets.

9. Water & Sewer Infrastructure. The availability of water and sewer infrastructure in large areas of the Town was seen by residents to be an important asset and a competitive advantage for the Town of Ulster.



Above: Hurley Flats Route 209.



Above: Kingston-Ulster Airport.



Above: NYS Thruway Interchange.

3.1.2 Challenges

Residents were also asked what they saw as challenges facing their Town, or expressed another way, things they would like to see change in the Town in the future. A summary of the challenges identified by local residents is summarized below.

1. Aesthetics. Residents expressed a desire to see improvements in the aesthetics along area roadways. One resident noted that there used to be a town-wide clean-up program along certain roads and that there was a need to re-establish some type of clean-up program. Several residents spoke of the need to beautify area roadways and to pay more attention to signs along roadways and its impact on aesthetics. Code enforcement, especially as it related to illegal dumping in old mining sites, was a challenge that residents felt needed to be addressed by the Town.

2. Community Facilities. Residents spoke of the need for assisted-living facilities for senior residents in the Town. They also spoke of the need for a senior center and/or a center for area youth. It was also noted that the demand for meeting space in the existing Town Hall has already exceeded capacity.

3. Identity of the Town. While some residents saw the fact that the Town was made up of many hamlets and neighborhoods as an asset, others saw it as a challenge.

Some residents felt that the Town lacked a central identity which was, in part, the result of its unique geography (e.g. wrapping around the City of Kingston). There was also a feeling that zip codes only added to the challenge of creating a central identity for the Town of Ulster, since many zip code boundaries transcended the Town's municipal boundaries.

4. Economic Development. Residents spoke of the need to find a reuse for the former IBM Kingston Plant (aka Tech City). This one-million square-foot building complex is still largely vacant following IBM's departure in 1995. Many residents spoke of the need to create well-paying jobs for area residents and understood that this was a challenge. One challenge to attracting industries to the Town was high property taxes. Residents also expressed a desire to see more mom & pop shops and fewer big-box retailers or franchises.

5. Land Use Regulations. One challenge cited by local residents was the need to clarify land-use regulations. Particularly, residents felt that the zoning code and sign regulations needed to be clarified. There was also a sense that existing regulations did not do enough to ensure that there was a sufficient buffer between residential development and commercial development. Lastly, there was a desire to have more control over the character or design of new development so that new commercial and residential development would help to enhance the character of the Town.

"There is a need to beautify area roadways and to pay more attention to signs along roadways and its impact on aesthetics."

Town Residents

6. Transportation. Challenges identified by local residents that related to its transportation system is as follows: the need for more sidewalks/crosswalks in the business districts; providing greater public transportation service; lack of direct passenger train service; no commercial airport; access from Route 209/199 to Route 9W; and traffic congestion on Route 9W and Sawkill Road.

7. Water & Sewer. Residents identified certain areas within the Town that needed improvements in water & sewer service; these included Ruby, Eddyville and the area along Forest Hill Road.

3.2 Community Character Survey™

During the November 21, 2006 public forum, 32 residents participated in a Community Character Survey. The Community Character Survey (CCS) is a planning instrument that was developed by Planit Main Street, Inc. to ascertain residents' preferences for various aspects of the community. We begin with the premise that there are common attributes of development that people find visually appealing or not.

To determine resident preferences, participants were shown a variety of images that suggest different aspects of community character. The first set of images related to commercial and/or industrial development. The second set of images related to residential development and the third set of images focused on the landscape.

Residents were asked to rate each of these images on a scale of -5 to +5 (negative vs. positive) on the survey forms.

All of the images that are included in the Community Character Survey™ are carefully chosen to reflect both the best and worst attributes of development and the landscape. In an ideal world, good design would simply happen. In reality, it is more often shaped by developer preferences within a framework of community land-use tools that help to ensure good design. The photos of commercial and industrial development within the CCS included shopping centers, office buildings, stand-alone commercial buildings, and downtown buildings. The images of residential development included single-family houses on small lots, large houses on large lots, townhouses, village streetscapes, and suburban residential development. The landscape images focused on the natural environment. Included were photos of the Esopus Creek, local farms, as well as views from public rights-of-way that were either enhanced or diminished by man-made development.

Those images that most represented what participants would like to see in their community, or what they found to be visually appealing, were given a positive rating. Those images that reflected things they did not want to see in their community, or that they found visually unappealing, were given a negative rating. The greater the preference the higher the score and vice versa.

“In an ideal world, good design would simply happen. In reality, it is more often shaped by developer preferences within a framework of community land use tools that help to ensure good design.”

A total of 32 residents participated in the Community Character Survey. An analysis of the survey responses is provided below along with a discussion of some of the land use decisions that likely affected the character of development that was represented in each photo.

The Community Character Survey revealed strong and consistent preferences among participants. These results give us solid insights into the community’s values regarding design and future land-use development. An interpretation of those values is provided below.

Highly rated attributes of commercial and industrial uses.

- The highest rated images of commercial development reflected buildings with quality design and visual interest;
- Signs that complemented the architectural design of buildings received a positive rating;
- Commercial developments that incorporated landscaping into the site design to add visual interest were rated positively;
- Monument signs with landscaping received consistently higher ratings than pole signs;
- Properties that were neat and well-maintained;
- Commercial sites with green space; and
- Commercial sites with many trees and abundant landscaping.

Five Highest-Rated Commercial Images

Three images received a weighted average of +2.5 overall based upon participant responses to the Community Character Survey™. What are some of the factors that contribute to the appeal of these developments? One factor is the well-maintained and neat appearance of the first three properties. The top image is the new shopping center on Route 9W in the Town of Ulster. Factors that contribute to its overall positive rating include the provision of landscaping, articulation of the façade with recesses and projections, changes in height, and variation in building materials to add visual interest. The signs on the new shopping center are also designed to complement the architecture of the building. The second building incorporates many of the same principles that help to reduce the perceived scale of the building. The pedestrian environment, especially entrances, are well-defined in each of these buildings.

The positive attributes that define the other images relate to signs, landscaping, building placement, and location of off-street parking. The Frontier monument sign is nicely landscaped and off-street parking is not visible from the street. The Subaru dealership, second from bottom, uses a simple monument identification sign. The building is set back from the road, there is a green front yard and parking is placed in the side yard to screen it. Positive aspects of the last image include nice monument sign, landscaping, and screening of off-street parking.



Above: Top-rated images.

Attributes of lowest-rated commercial and industrial images.

- Poorly-maintained commercial properties;
- Signs that masked the architectural features of the building on which they were placed;
- Off-premises advertising signs or billboards that detract from the natural environment due to their placement and/or maintenance;
- Corridors where signs were not uniform and/or excessive in size resulting in visual clutter;
- Commercial properties without any landscaping;
- Commercial sites where parking lots are not screened with landscaping;
- Commercial buildings with little architectural design;
- Commercial buildings that were designed in a manner that was out of character with surrounding buildings in terms of building materials, placement, and/or design; and
- Commercial areas with poorly-defined driveways and/or that lack sidewalks or other pedestrian walkways.

Five Lowest-Rated Commercial Images

The lowest-rated commercial image incorporates many of the undesirable characteristics listed above. To begin, the building is poorly maintained. It is also poorly placed so that the rear of the building and all the utilities dominate the streetscape. This building is located in a downtown setting. The billboard signs on the wall are unappealing as are the poorly maintained sidewalks. Last, but not least, is the noticeable lack of any landscaping.

The second image is an example of a poorly placed billboard at a key gateway to the Village of Ellenville. The billboard dwarfs the Welcome sign and detracts from the entranceway to the Village. The third lowest-rated image shows buildings that are poorly maintained coupled with signs that are inappropriate to the building on which they are placed. The sign masks upper story windows of these historic buildings creating an uninviting appearance.

The fourth lowest-rated image is a corridor with off-premises advertising signs, poorly maintained properties, and a noticeable lack of landscaping associated with the commercial properties. The combination of these factors results in an unappealing environment. The fifth lowest-rated image shows self-storage units. The design of the structures does not complement the historic barn. An alternative design or screening of these units could have mitigated visual impacts.



Above: Lowest-rated images.

Attributes of the highest-rated residential developments.

- Houses with trees and a modest lawn;
- Houses that were properly oriented to the street or rural roadway;
- For densely developed housing - the provision of sidewalks;
- The provision of street trees along residential streets;
- Attractive design of residential buildings whether single-family, townhouse, or multi-family;
- Residential developments where the housing designs are varied to avoid the cookie-cutter appearance;
- Housing within pedestrian-oriented neighborhood settings;
- A residential streetscape defined by narrow streets, sidewalks, tree-lined streets, and modest yards;
- Houses with front porches; and
- Good quality, well-maintained, and well-designed housing.

“The design and maintenance of residential properties were two of the largest factors affecting whether they were perceived as positive or negative by participants.”

Three Highest-Rated Residential Images

A factor that contributed to the positive rating of the top three residential developments include well-maintained houses with nicely landscaped lawns. In the highest rated images, the architecture of the house, front porch and white picket fence – in addition to trees and other landscaping – contributed to a positive rating.

The second highest rated image is of a residential streetscape in Celebration Florida – a New Urbanism community. The nicely landscaped and neat streetscape contributes to the positive rating. So too does the presence of street trees and sidewalks along the street. The architecture of the house – including the front porch – and the orientation of the house to the street and adjacent properties also help to create a sense of order which most people perceive to be positive.

The third highest rated image is similar to the two top-rated images in that there is some visual interest provided in the architecture of the house and that the property is nicely landscaped and maintained in a neat condition. It differs from the other images in that the house is larger and set on a much larger lot. The design and maintenance of residential properties were two of the largest factors affecting whether they were perceived as positive or negative by survey participants. The density of residential development does not appear to be a deciding factor based upon resident responses to the Community Character Survey.



Above: Highest-rated residential images from the Community Character Survey.

Attributes of the lowest-rated residential developments.

- Cookie-cutter design;
- Lack of street trees;
- No provision of sidewalks;
- Garages that dominate the residential buildings resulting in the “garage with attached house” effect;
- Excessively wide streets within residential areas;
- Housing sites that are clear-cut of existing vegetation;
- Housing where parked vehicles dominate the streetscape, but not the housing;
- Large homes on large lots with long driveways along a wide road with no sidewalks or street trees; and
- Poor placement of houses so that the privacy of neighbors is violated.

“The density of the lower-rated residential images was comparable to the density of the single-family development that received the highest overall ratings. This again shows the important role housing design and landscaping play in aesthetics.”

Three Lowest-Rated Residential Images

Factors that contributed to the negative rating of the lowest rated residential developments include wide streets with no sidewalks or street trees, homes that are spread out along a road and that do not relate to neighboring properties, and residential properties that are sparsely landscaped. The lowest-rated image shows a subdivision with large homes on large lots with long driveways. There are no street trees, no sidewalks, and the home sites have no trees. Collectively, these attributes do little to create a neighborhood feeling within the subdivision. The streetscape is bleak and uninviting.

The second lowest-rated residential image conveys a house that is poorly sited and sparsely landscaped. These features contribute to the overall negative rating of this home.

The factors that likely contributed to the neutral rating of the townhouses to the right include cookie-cutter units, no provision of sidewalks, no street trees, garages that overpower the residential units as viewed from the street and an excessively wide street. The density of the lowest-rated residential image was comparable to the density of the single-family development that received the highest overall ratings. This again shows the important role that housing design and streetscape amenities (such as sidewalks and street trees) play in whether a residential development is perceived as positive or negative.



Above: Lowest-rated residential images from the Community Character Survey.

Attributes of the highest-rated landscapes.

- Farms and land in agricultural production;
- Neat and well-maintained properties;
- Development that respects the rural character of the community;
- Well-maintained recreational facilities such as golf courses with large amounts of open space;
- Nicely landscaped properties;
- Natural resources such as rivers and streams; and
- Public parkland.

“Open space, farmlands, well-maintained properties, and natural resources such as streams were the aspects of the rural landscape that many residents rated very highly.”

Three Highest-Rated Landscape Images

The highest-rated image showing the landscape was that of a horse farm. The stone walls and split-rail fence shown in the photo probably added to the positive rating by respondents. The rural character conveyed in the photo is also reminiscent of many rural areas in the Town of Ulster which probably also influence the high positive rating.



The second highest rated image was a view of the Wiltwyck Golf Course & Country Club. The nicely manicured lawns and flowers are aspects of this image that were likely to have influenced residents’ positive rating of this image.



The Hurley Flats along Route 209 in the Town of Ulster are some of the most productive agricultural lands in the Town. This farmland helps to define the southwestern portion of the Town as one enters from the Town of Hurley. The farmlands also help to define the rural character of the Town of Ulster and to protect the vista from Route 209 looking toward the Catskill Park.



In addition to these three images, the other highly rated photos were of rivers, farm buildings and public parks in the Town of Ulster. Open space, farmlands, well-maintained properties, and natural resources such as streams were aspects of the rural landscape that many residents rated very highly.

Above: Highest-rated landscapes from the Community Character Survey.

Attributes of lowest-rated landscapes.

- Poorly maintained properties;
- Streets with no trees or green space;
- Poorly maintained billboards along area roadways;
- Litter or other debris along roadways or on private properties;
- Poorly maintained fencing;
- Tractor trailers used for storage or advertising, and
- General blight.

Three Lowest-Rated Landscape Images

The lowest rated image of the landscape was that of the poorly maintained and improperly used dumpster. In this photo, the enclosure for the dumpster is in an obvious state of disrepair – no longer providing a full enclosure. There is garbage laying along side the dumpster resulting in a visually unappealing environment. The photo conveys the types of issues that could be addressed through stricter code enforcement.



The second lowest rated image is that of a streetscape. The photo to the right shows a streetscape where the sidewalks are poorly maintained and covered with dirt and other debris. There are no street trees or other landscaping along this street resulting in a very bleak appearance. These are issues that could be addressed through maintenance and provisions that require the planting of street trees.



The third lowest rated image, shown in the photo to the right, shows a rural roadway blighted by the presence of poorly maintained and underutilized billboards. Each of the negative aspects shown in these images could have been avoided with stricter code enforcement; better regulation of off-premises advertising (billboards); requirements for landscaping & street trees along public rights-of-way, or through community clean-up programs.



Above: Lowest-rated landscapes from the Community Character Survey.

3.3 Resident Survey

In September of 2006, the Committee created a Comprehensive Plan Survey to get additional public input into issues that should be addressed in the Town's new Comprehensive Plan. The surveys were mailed to a random list of 1,000 Town residents within the Town of Ulster. A total of 256 surveys were returned by the mid-October deadline resulting in a 25.6% response rate. There was also a good geographic distribution of responses, with all corners of the Town represented.

Overview of Survey Responses

The majority of the respondents (47.3%) indicated that they have lived in the Town for more than 20 years. This was followed by 19.9% who indicated they lived in the Town for 1-5 years, 17.2% who lived in the Town for 11-20 years, 14.1% who lived in the Town for 6-10 years, and less than one percent indicating they lived in the Town for less than one year. There was a pretty even distribution of respondents by age cohort. Approximately 6% of respondents were between the ages of 18-34, 20.7% ages 35-44, 20.7% ages 45-55, 20.7% ages 55-64, and 32% age 65 or older. Based upon the response rate, geographic, and age distribution of respondents, the survey results represent a pretty good measure of community values and opinions. What follows is a highlight of some survey responses. A complete summary of responses is in the appendices of this Plan.

Highlights from Comp. Plan Survey Responses

Issues of Importance:

Residents were given a list of issues and asked to rate each by their level of importance to them. The highest-rated issue was that of protecting private property rights (77% very important). This was followed by the need to create employment opportunities (74%), the protection of natural resources (66%), the appearance of the Town (58%), and protecting scenic views (53%). The availability of shopping and restaurants was the issue with the highest "not important" rating which reflects the fact that there is a great variety of retail and restaurants already in the Town.

Rating of services and job opportunities:

Residents were given a list of public services and asked to rate them as "Excellent", "Good", or "Poor". Respondents indicated an overall satisfaction with most community services. Services that received the highest "Excellent" ratings were health care services (79%), fire protection (60%), emergency medical services (52%), and police protection (42%). Overall quality of life received a "good" rating of 86%. Those items that received the highest "Poor" rating included the availability of well-paying jobs (79%), youth activities (48%), and senior activities (37%). The desire for better paying jobs along with additional senior and youth activities also came out through the Assets & Challenges exercise.

"The Comprehensive Plan Surveys were mailed to a random list of 1,000 Town residents with 256 residents responding. This represented a response rate of 25.6%."

Resident Survey

Land use regulations:

Sixty six percent (66%) of Town respondents agreed that the Town should adopt design and landscaping standards for new commercial and industrial development when asked this question. Residents were given a list of land use regulations and asked whether the Town needed to strengthen its regulation of such activities. The overall response was to strengthen the regulations in all areas. Those uses with the highest response for stronger regulation included: cleaning up abandoned sites (89%), regulation of junk vehicle storage (85%), protection of natural resources (83%), protection of the right-to-farm (80%), and the design of new housing (77%).

Residents were also asked how important it was for the Planning Board to review various aspects of site plans for new commercial and industrial developments. The majority agreed that all aspects were “Very Important.” The top three aspects that the respondents felt were “Very Important” to the Planning Board review were traffic impacts (80%), protection of nearby streams and hillsides (79%), and assessing the potential impact on nearby residences (73%).

The responses above suggest a desire by the community for stronger code enforcement, greater protection of natural resources – especially streams and hillsides – and greater attention to the design and character of new development.

What types of commercial and/or industrial development should the Town encourage?

From a list of specific land uses, residents were asked to select those uses that the Town should encourage in the Town. Health care services were favored by 79% of respondents. This was followed by office research or technology companies (75%), agri-businesses (57%) and light industrial uses (57%). Interestingly, “Big Box” retail stores received the highest “Oppose” response with 41%. Based upon feedback at the public informational meetings, this feeling is influenced by traffic on Route 9W and the desire for more local mom & pop shops.

When asked where commercial or retail growth should be directed, most respondents favored the following areas: Route 28 Corridor (64%), Enterprise Drive (64%), and Route 9W north of 199/209 (55%). The areas where the largest percent of respondents opposed commercial or retail growth were along Sawkill Road (41%) and Kukuk Lane (36%).

When asked where light industrial growth should be directed, most respondents favored the following areas: Enterprise Drive (66%), Route 28 Corridor (58%), Kingston-Ulster Airport (48%) and Ulster Avenue north of Route 199/209 (47%). The areas where the largest percent of respondents opposed industrial growth were along Route 9W south of Route 199/209 (34%) and along Sawkill Road (30%).

“The top three aspects that the respondents felt were “Very Important” to the Planning Board review were traffic impacts (80%), protection of nearby streams and hillsides (79%), and assessing the potential impact on nearby residences (73%).”

Resident Survey

Residents were also asked where car dealerships should be. Most respondents favored the Route 28 Corridor (57%), Route 9W south of Route 199/209 (45%), and Route 9W north of Route 199/209 (41%). Areas with the highest percentage of residents opposing new car dealerships included Sawkill Road (50%), Kukuk Lane (48%) and Enterprise Drive (41%).

The above responses suggest that residents liked the location of existing retail, commercial, or automobile dealerships. With respect to new development, they would like to see it occur in areas where such businesses are already established rather than see these uses expand to other areas where such activities do not yet exist such as Kukuk Lane or Sawkill Road.

Appropriate land uses for the Town:

Residents were given a list of land uses and asked to choose whether the uses were “Very Appropriate”, “Appropriate”, or “Inappropriate” to the community. Those land uses that received the highest “Very Appropriate” rating were single-family homes (68%), health care services (56%), farms and agri-businesses (49%) and office research parks (39%). Those land uses that received the highest “Inappropriate” ratings were junk yards (88%), adult entertainment businesses (82%), mining and extractive industries (78%), gambling casinos (68%) and heavy industrial uses (59%).

Community services:

Residents were told of the need to expand Town Hall to meet the growing need for office/meeting space. They were then given several alternative approaches to providing additional space and asked to choose which of those alternatives they “Favor” or “Oppose”. Most respondents favored an expansion of the Town Hall on the same site (68%), followed by the construction of a separate Police/Court Building on the same site (35%). Fifty percent (50%) opposed the idea of a new Police/Court building on a new site.

When asked where certain community services should be provided, 50% favored locating senior citizen meeting space at Town Hall where only 38% supported a separate senior citizen center. However, when asked whether they would favor a new joint senior/youth activity center, 45% favored this approach to 29% who opposed the alternative.

Residents were also asked what type of recreational activities they would like to see more of in the Town. The most frequent response checked was bicycle lanes, followed by hiking and cross-country ski trails. Other types of parks facilities desired included swimming/beach areas, ball fields, and additional fishing and boating access areas. A total of 67% of survey respondents said that they would support efforts by the Town to expand its public park system.

“Residents were also asked what type of recreational activities they would like to see more of in the Town. The most frequent response checked was bicycle lanes, followed by hiking and cross-country ski trails.”

Resident Survey

Ag and Farmland Protection:

When asked whether the Town should preserve and protect farmland from non-agricultural development, 46% of respondents “strongly agreed”, 34% “agreed”, with only 10% disagreeing. The survey responses indicate strong community support for greater agriculture and farmland preservation efforts in the Town of Ulster. Given that 79% of respondents felt that private property rights was a very important issue, measures to retain farmland in production must respect private property rights.

Kingston-Ulster Airport:

Residents were asked whether the Town should take steps to protect the future operation of the Kingston-Ulster Airport. A majority of respondents (55%) said “yes” with only (14%) saying no. Thirty-two percent (32%) had no opinion.

Casino gaming:

Two questions were asked to gauge public opinion with respect to the issue of casino gaming in the Town. In Question #25 residents were asked if they would like to see a casino in the Town of Ulster. Only 24% said “Yes”, with 67% saying “No.” When asked how appropriate a casino would be to the Town of Ulster in Question #8, 68% of respondents said a casino would be inappropriate.

Strategies for Economic Development:

Most respondents felt the Town should focus on encouraging growth in emerging technologies, promoting small and local business development, and retaining existing businesses within the Town. Another area that residents felt had potential for economic growth was in the area of tourism and expansion of the service economy.

Other Comments:

Residents also provided comments in the margins of their surveys or in response to questions 26 through 30 of the resident survey. While too numerous to describe in their entirety here, some of the key suggestions are listed below:

- Most frequently cited types of businesses residents wanted to see more of: ones that pay decent wages followed by high-tech development, manufacturing, light industry and office;
- Types of businesses residents would like to see less of: retail and fast food places;
- Most desirable aspects of Town: large accessible retail corridor, convenient, river and mountain views, riverfront, nice neighborhoods, parks, etc.
- Least desirable aspects of Town: taxes, traffic, shopping malls, code enforcement, etc.

“Residents referred to the Town’s river and mountain views; accessible retail corridor; convenient transportation system; its public parks and its nice neighborhoods as the most desirable aspects of the Town.”

Summary of Residents Individual Comments

Summary

The community input received through the public participation process helped the Comprehensive Plan Committee to focus on those issues that were important to local residents. Public input through this process shows a clear desire to preserve the rural character of the Town; allow for growth in industries that provide good-paying jobs for area residents; protect the Town's natural resources; expand recreational opportunities; and ensure good quality in the design of new residential, commercial and industrial development. There is also a preference for where certain commercial and industrial land uses should be encouraged within the Town in the future.

While the Town can regulate the location of certain land uses through its zoning code, it must also factor in the geography of the Town and the environmental constraints that steep slopes, wetlands, streams, and floodplains place on development. In Chapter 5.0 of this Plan we will describe the Town's natural resources and their potential influence on where certain development should occur within the Town.

The next two chapters provide an overview of the historical context of the Town of Ulster's development along with recent population, housing and employment trends.

The Census Bureau’s 2005 population estimate shows a healthy 2.68% rate of growth for the Town between 2000 and 2005. If projected out over the decade, this would represent a 5.36% growth rate. While nowhere near the astronomical rates of growth during the 50’s and 60’s, this is a very healthy rate of growth. In contrast, the County is estimated to have lost 3.8% of its population between 2000 and 2005. Continued population growth is a reflection of the desirability of the Town as a place to live.

Within the Town, there are five Census Designated Places (CDPs): East Kingston, Hillside Acres, Hurley, Lake Katrine and Lincoln Park. The CDP’s are shown on the map provided on the preceding page. A portion of the Hurley CDP lies within the Town of Ulster (Spring Lake) and the balance lies within the Town of Hurley. In 2000, two CDP’s were created for the Town: East Kingston and Hillside. In 2000, the Census Bureau also provided a separate calculation of the part of the

Hurleyville CDP that is located within the Town of Ulster. A summary of the population within each is provided in the table below.

In 2000, 54% of the Town’s overall population was living in one of its Census Designated Places or neighborhoods. The largest centers of population within the Town are the Lake Katrine CDP (population 2,396) and the Lincoln Park CDP (population 2,337). Collectively, these two neighborhoods comprise 38% of the Town’s overall population.

One of the fastest growing neighborhoods between 1990 and 2000 was Lake Katrine. During this timeframe, Lake Katrine experienced a 19.9% rate of growth, exceeding the County population growth rate of 17%. Ease of access to Routes 9W, 209 & 199; proximity to shopping and employment, and the presence of public schools are some of the factors affecting the desirability of the Lake Katrine and Lincoln Park neighborhoods.



Above: Hillside Acres, Eddyville, and Spring Lake neighborhoods.

Places/Town	1990	2000	Percent Change
	Population	Population	
<i>Ulster Town</i>	12,329	12,544	1.74%
<i>East Kingston CDP</i>	*	285	NA
<i>Hillside Acres CDP</i>	*	882	NA
<i>Hurley CDP (Part)</i>	*	904	NA
<i>Lake Katrine CDP</i>	1,998	2,396	19.9%
<i>Lincoln Park CDP</i>	2,457	2,337	-4.8%
<i>Remainder if Ulster Town</i>		5,740	
Group Quarters		686	5.5%

* CDP for these areas were not created until 2000

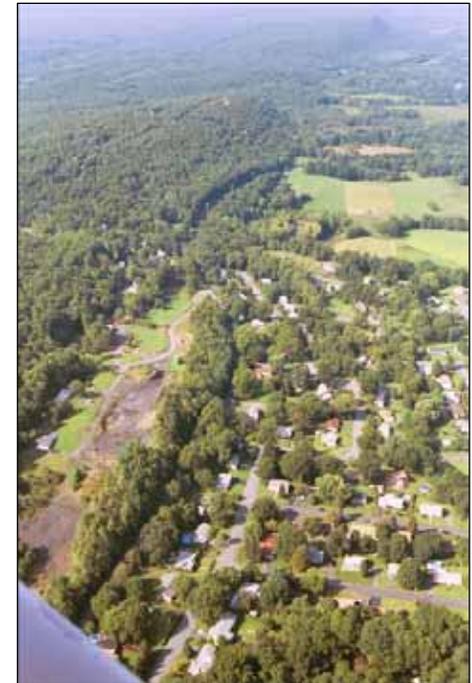
As discussed in the preceding chapter, there are other neighborhoods or hamlet centers within the Town of Ulster including Eddyville, Halcyon Park, Ruby, and Whittier. Since these areas were not locally designated as a CDP, there is no Census data available concerning their population. However, based upon the number of houses, we were able to estimate the population in Halcyon Park and Whittier at 345 residents and 334 residents respectively. For comparison, each of these neighborhoods has a greater population than the East Kingston CDP.

Comparisons of race and Hispanic origin for the Town of Ulster, City of Kingston and Ulster County are provided in the table below. The Town of Ulster has a fairly homogenous population with 94.8% of the local population being white. The minority population comprises 5.2% of the Town’s population.

This is comparable to the demographics for Ulster County where 90.6% of the population is white and 9.4% minority. The City of Kingston has the greatest racial and ethnic diversity of the three which is common in more urbanized areas.

Of the three municipalities, the City of Kingston also has the highest percentage of Hispanic residents at 6.5%, followed by Ulster County at 6.2% and the Town of Ulster at 2.4%. However, the Town of Ulster’s Asian Population was higher than that of the County and comparable to that of the City of Kingston at 2.9% of the overall population.

The average household size in the Town of Ulster was comparable to that of the County. In the Town, average household size was 2.44 persons per household and in the County it was 2.47 persons per household.



Above: Halcyon Park and East Kingston neighborhoods.

	Race and Hispanic Origin Year 2000					
	Town of Ulster		City of Kingston		County of Ulster	
	Population	%	Population	%	Population	%
Total	12,544	100.00	23,456	100.00	177,749	100.00
White	11,889	94.8	19,442	82.9	160,986	90.6
Black	435	3.5	3,487	14.9	11,180	6.3
American Indian	90	0.7	231	1.0	1,542	0.9
Asian	238	1.9	443	1.9	2,735	1.5
Native Hawaiian or PI	14	0.1	15	0.1	125	0.1
Some Other Race	89	0.7	630	2.7	5,001	2.8
Hispanic**	307	2.4	1,516	6.5	10,941	6.2
Average Household Size	2.44		2.28		2.47	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau *Town Population Including Village **Description of ethnicity not race. A person may consider themselves white/Hispanic, black/Hispanic, or other combination thereof. The percentages of all racial categories will add up to 100%.

The tables provided on this page show recent trends in the Town of Ulster’s population by age and by educational attainment.

Between 1990 and 2000, the Town of Ulster’s population has grown older. Referring to the tables, we see that the number of persons 24 or under decreased from 31.2% of the overall population to 29.8%. Those persons 25-44 decreased from 32.7% of the population to 28.1%. This shift may in part be explained by the downsizing of IBM and the relocation of younger residents to other areas to seek employment opportunities. Those persons 45-54 increased from 10.9% to 14.3% of the overall population and those persons over 65 years of age increased from 14.4% to 17.7% of all Town residents. The overall trend toward an aging population mirrors national trends.

The Town has a well-educated population and recent trends show a growing level of educational attainment among residents between 1990 and 2000. A complete breakdown and comparison to the County is provided below.

“Percent of residents with a Bachelor’s Degree - 21.7%.”

Town of Ulster, New York Population by Age 1990 & 2000				
Age Cohort	1990		2000	
	Population	%	Population	%
0-4	809	6.6	714	5.7
5-17 or 5-14(2000)*	1,962	15.9	1,714	13.9
18-24 or 15-24(2000)	1,073	8.7	1,277	10.2
25-44	4,025	32.7	3,526	28.1
45-54	1,350	10.9	1,791	14.3
55-64	1,337	10.8	1,266	10.1
65+	1,773	14.4	2,224	17.7
Total	12,329	100.00	12,544	100.00
Median Age			40.5	

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1990 & 2000 *Age cohorts recorded varied between 1990 & 2000*

Educational Attainment	Town of Ulster, New York Trends from 1990-2000				Ulster County Trends from 1990-2000				Percent Change	Percent Change
	1990		2000		1990		2000		TOWN	COUNTY
		%		%		%		%		
Total Persons 25 Years and over	8,422	100.0%	8,789	100.0%	110,058	100.0%	120,670	100.0%	4.4%	9.6%
Less Than 9th Grade	689	8.2%	429	4.9%	9,146	8.3%	6,587	5.5%	-37.7%	-28.0%
9th-12th, no diploma	1,250	14.8%	1,026	11.7%	16,553	15.0%	15,525	12.9%	-17.9%	-6.2%
High school graduate	2,786	33.1%	2,952	33.6%	32,050	29.1%	36,156	30.0%	6.0%	12.8%
Some college, no degree	1,221	14.5%	1,574	17.9%	19,521	17.7%	22,255	18.4%	28.9%	14.0%
Associate’s degree	666	7.9%	895	10.2%	9,055	8.2%	10,010	8.3%	34.4%	10.5%
Bachelor’s degree	1,000	11.9%	1,110	12.6%	13,714	12.5%	16,652	13.8%	11.0%	21.4%
Graduate or professional	810	9.6%	803	9.1%	10,019	9.1%	13,485	11.2%	-0.9%	34.6%
Percent high school graduate or higher		77.0%		83.4%		76.7%		81.6%		
Percent Bachelors Degree or higher		21.5%		21.7%		21.6%		25.0%		

Source: U.S. Census Bureau STF3 Data

4.1.1 Employment by Industry

In 2000, the largest industry in the Town of Ulster was in Educational & Health Services, representing 28.4% of all employment in the Town. This was slightly higher than the County where 25.7% of all workers were employed in

this industry. The second largest industry in the Town in 2000 was Retail Trade, comprising 14.9% of the local economy. The largest shift in any industry between 1990 and 2000 was in Manufacturing. In 1990 it accounted for 25.4% of the local economic base; by 2000 it had dropped to just 10.5%.

“Between 1990 and 2000, the Town experienced a 61.5% decrease in manufacturing.”

Employment Characteristics (Age 16 and over)	Town of Ulster, New York Trends from 1990-2000				Ulster County Trends from 1990-2000				Percent Change TOWN	Percent Change COUNTY
	1990	%	2000	%	1990	%	2000	%		
Total										
Persons 16 Years and Over	9,757	100.0%	9,947	100.0%	130,855	100%	141,015	100.0%	1.9%	7.8%
In Labor Force	6,627	67.9%	6,459	64.9%	84,549	64.6%	89,555	63.5%	-2.5%	5.9%
Civilian Labor Force	6,627	67.9%	6,415	64.5%	84,432	64.5%	89,371	63.4%	-3.2%	5.8%
<i>Employed</i>	6,351	65.1%	5,911	59.4%	80,213	61.3%	83,748	59.4%		
<i>Not Employed</i>	276	2.8%	504	5.1%	4,219	3.2%	5,623	4.0%		
Not In Labor Force	3,130	32.1%	3,488	35.1%	46,306	35.4%	51,460	36.5%		
Industry										
Educational & Health Services	1,083	17.1%	1,680	28.4%	14,964	18.7%	21,511	25.7%	55.1%	43.8%
Retail Trade	1,048	16.5%	883	14.9%	12,293	15.3%	10,341	12.3%	-15.7%	-15.9%
Manufacturing	1,611	25.4%	621	10.5%	16,038	20.0%	8,353	10.0%	-61.5%	-47.9%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	514	8.1%	461	7.8%	5,081	6.3%	4,288	5.1%	-10.3%	-15.6%
Professional services	467	7.4%	460	7.8%	6,516	8.1%	6,996	8.4%	-1.5%	7.4%
Public administration	249	3.9%	374	6.3%	3,893	4.9%	5,510	6.6%	50.2%	41.5%
Construction	327	5.1%	340	5.8%	5,495	6.9%	5,673	6.8%	4.0%	3.2%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	28	0.4%	315	5.3%	1,038	1.3%	6,880	8.2%	1025.0%	562.8%
Other Services (except public admin).	420	6.6%	252	4.3%	5,473	6.8%	4,243	5.1%	-40.0%	-22.5%
Transportation, warehousing & utilities	205	3.2%	212	3.6%	3,316	4.1%	4,112	4.9%	3.4%	24.0%
Wholesale Trade	179	2.8%	160	2.7%	2,475	3.1%	2,384	2.8%	-10.6%	-3.7%
Communications and Information	124	2.0%	131	2.2%	1,730	2.2%	2,312	2.8%	5.6%	33.6%
Agriculture, forestry and mining	96	1.5%	22	0.4%	1,901	2.4%	1,145	1.4%	-77.1%	-39.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau STF3 Data

Nearly 1,000 jobs were lost in the manufacturing industry during the 1990’s. This dramatic shift was certainly influenced by the closing of the IBM Kingston Plant in 1995 and the layoff of many local residents. Between 1990 and 2000, there was also a decline in the Other Services industry – showing a decrease of 40%. This, too, was likely attributable to the loss of jobs within service industries that provided support to the IBM facility. Not surprisingly, the Town experienced a 15.7% decrease in the number of jobs in Retail Trade, a reflection of the loss of manufacturing and service jobs during this time period.

The Agriculture, Forestry and Mining Industry also declined between 1990 and 2000 – showing a 77% reduction in the number of jobs in this industry. This decline was influenced by the closing of exhausted mining operations as well as the loss and/or consolidation of farms.

During the 1990’s, there were also some positive economic trends. For example, the Educational & Health Services field added 597 new jobs, representing a 55.1% increase. The Public Administration industry grew by 50.2%, adding 125 jobs. Growth in the Arts & Entertainment Industry was also very healthy. A total of 287 jobs were created in this industry representing a 1,025% increase. Other gainers were in the Communication, Transportation, and Construction industries. The Town may want to look at these growth industries as it plans for future economic growth.

In 1990, the top three industries in the Town comprised 59% of all employment. In 2000, the top three industries in the Town employed 53.8% of its residents. These trends show a diversification of the local economy. Trends in the number of establishments in each industry show a greater number of establishments in 2002 versus 1997. These are reported in the table that is provided on the following page of this Plan.

Between 1990 and 2000, the number of persons 16 years of age or over in the Town of Ulster increased from 9,757 persons to 9,947 persons – a 1.9% increase showing a growing labor force.

4.1.2 Incomes

Census data gathered during the 2000 Census (1999 data) indicates that the Median Household Income for the Town of Ulster was \$43,707 compared to \$51,708 for the County. This was a dramatic shift from 1989 when the Town Median Family Income exceeded that of the County, \$37,534 versus \$34,033 respectively.

These numbers again show the dramatic impact that the closing of the IBM facility had on the local economy. These numbers also demonstrate the need for economic development within the Town. Since 2000, there has been an expansion in the Town’s retail trade with new shopping centers and retail establishments being constructed in the Route 9W corridor. These centers provide employment opportunities and will also help to strengthen the Town’s tax base.

Town of Ulster Occupation 2000		
	#	%
Management, professional	2,171	36.7
Service	1,025	17.3
Sales and office	1,583	26.8
Farming, fishing & forestry	13	0.2
Construction, extraction	520	8.8
Production, transportation	599	10.1
Total	5,911	100

Mean Travel Time to Work 2000		
	Town	County
Mean Travel Time - Minutes	23.2	26.9

“Town of Ulster residents enjoy relatively shorter journey to work travel times than county residents overall. The mean travel time to work for county residents is 26.9 minutes, for town residents it was 23.2 according to the 2000 census.”

However, growth in this industry has also lead to traffic congestion along the Route 9W Corridor.

According to statistics from the U.S. Bureau of Census data from 1997 and 2002, the Town has seen a steady increase in the number of business establishments between 1997 and 2002. The largest percent increase was in the “Professional, scientific & technical field.” The number of establishments in this field grew from four (4) in 1997 to 23 in 2002 representing a 475% increase. The “administration, support and waste management” sector increased from three (3) establishments to thirteen (13) establishments for a 333% increase. Not surprisingly, the Town also saw a dramatic increase in the number of “retail trade” establishments during this period of time. Between 1997 and 2002, the number of retail establishments increased from 21 to 61, a 190% increase.

Strong growth in retail trade in the Route 9W corridor has continued since 2002. New retail establishments include Barnes & Nobel, Pier 1 Imports, Starbucks, Adam’s Fairacre Farms, CVS, and numerous other retail establishments.

Between 1997 & 2002, the number of accommodation and food service establishments in the Town increased from 11 to 24 establishments, or a 118% increase. The new Courtyard at Marriott at the Hudson Valley Mall and the new Starbuck’s Coffee are examples of the growth in this industry.

The Town has also witnessed growth in the health care industry. Between 1997 & 2002, Census data indicates that the number of establishments in this category increased from 11 to 24, or a 118% increase. All sectors in the Town grew between 1997 and 2002.

“Between 1997 and 2002, the number of establishments in the Professional, Scientific, and Technical Field” increased from 4 to 23; a 475% increase.”

Selected Statistics by Economic Sector 1997-2002 Town of Ulster, New York			
	1997	2002	%
	# establishments	# establishments	Change
Wholesale trade	5	8	66.6
Retail trade	21	61	190.0
Real Estate, rental and leasing	6	21	250.0
Professional, scientific, & technical	4	23	475.0
Admin. support, & waste mgt.	3	13	333.0
Health care & social statistics	11	24	118.0
Accommodation & food service	11	24	118.0
Other services	15	25	66.6
		100.00	
Median Age			40.5

4.2 Housing Characteristics

In 2000, the Town of Ulster had a total of 5,239 housing units. Of these, 92.6% were occupied and 7.4% were vacant. The vacancy rate for the Town was significantly lower than the County rate of 13.1% in 2000. The higher rate for the County is, in part, due to the higher percentage of second homes and seasonal dwelling units in the County which are counted as vacant when the Census is taken in April. Historically, the Town of Ulster has had a relatively small second home population.

Housing Units In Structure 1990 - 2000	Town of Ulster, New York				Ulster County 2000	
Year Round	1990 Units	%	2000 Units	%	2000 Units	%
1-unit detached	3,142	61.2	3,353	64.0	53,069	68.3
1-unit attached	174	3.4	211	4.0	1,817	2.4
2-4 units	306	5.9	319	6.1	10,401	13.4
5-9 units	375	7.4	340	6.5	3,054	3.9
10 or more units	260	5.0	229	4.4	3,321	4.3
Mobile Home	840	16.3	787	15.0	5,987	7.7
Boat, RV, Van, Etc.	43	0.8	0	0	97	0.1
Total	5,140		5,239		77,656	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The 2000 Census also showed that the Town has higher owner occupancy rates than the County. Within the Town, 72.5% of all occupied units were owner occupied compared to 68% for the County. The Town also has a much higher percentage of mobile homes than the County – 15% versus 7.7%. Both the number and percentage of mobile homes in the Town declined between 1990 and 2000.

Year Round	Town of Ulster, New York Tenure by Occupied Units 1990 - 2000				Ulster County, New York Tenure by Occupied Units 1990 - 2000			
	1990		2000		1990		2000	
	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%
Owner Occupied	3,487	72.8%	3,516	72.5%	42,104	69.2%	45,916	68.0%
Renter Occupied	1,303	27.2%	1,334	27.5%	18,703	30.8%	21,583	32.0%
Total	4,790	100%	4,850	100%	60,807	100%	67,499	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau SFT1 Data

Housing Characteristics	Town of Ulster, New York Trends from 1990-2000				Ulster County, New York Trends from 1990-2000				Percent Change	Percent Change
	1990		2000		1990		2000		TOWN	COUNTY
Housing Units	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%		
Total	5,140	100%	5,239	100%	71,716	100%	77,656	100%	1.92%	8.28%
Occupied	4,790	93.2%	4,850	92.6%	60,807	84.8%	67,499	86.9%		
<i>Owner Occupied</i>	3,487	67.8%	3,516	67.1%	42,104	58.7%	45,916	58.7%		
<i>Renter Occupied</i>	1,303	25.4%	1,334	25.5%	18,703	26.1%	21,583	27.8%		
Vacant	350	6.8%	389	7.4%	10,909	15.21%	10,157	13.1%		
<i>Seasonal</i>										

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The flooding of the Esopus Creek in 2005 and 2006 resulted in the loss of a significant number of mobile home units in the Town of Ulster. As a result, FEMA has required stricter standards for the placement of mobile homes in areas that may be prone to flooding.

Summary

In 2000, the Town of Ulster’s population of 12,544 residents was the fifth highest among the County’s 21 municipalities. The Town has a well-educated workforce, with 21.7% of its residents having a Bachelor’s Degree.

The closing of the IBM Kingston Plant (aka Tech City) had a ripple effect through the local economy and housing market that is clear from the 2000 Census. Since 2000, however, the Town has shown signs of recovery. A 2004 Housing Strategies Study prepared by the Ulster County Planning Board showed that the median sale price of a home in the Town of Ulster had increased from \$98,900 in 2000 to \$159,950 in 2004. While this mirrored comparable trends in other Ulster County communities during this time, it also demonstrates that the housing market in the Town had begun its recovery from the post-IBM fallout. The 2005 Census estimates show that the Town’s population has also grown by 2.68% between 2000 and 2005 to 12,881 persons.

The Town’s retail trade is also showing signs of growth. In recent years, a new shopping plaza

has been constructed on Route 9W that is anchored by the Sports Authority, Barnes & Noble, Bed Bath & Beyond, and other national retailers such as Panera Bread and Pier 1 Imports. A new Starbucks Coffee house just opened across the street. These regional retailers have added vitality to Route 9W and jobs for area residents. Tech City has secured a few tenants, but the buildings are largely vacant. It is important that the Town plan ahead for the re-use of the IBM site and that it identify uses that will help to strengthen the character of the community in terms of design and mix of uses.

It appears that the Town has begun its economic recovery. The Town has a number of competitive advantages to work with including a skilled workforce, well-educated population, and outstanding access to the regional highway system. The Town’s proximity to the City of Kingston, the County seat, is also an asset.



Above: Examples of retailers along Route 9W that were constructed after 2000. The Town has placed a special focus on ensuring good design of commercial development in recent years. Quality design is one of the issues that residents felt were important factors for the Planning Board to consider in the review of new commercial businesses.

The Town's average annual growth rate between 2000 and 2005, was 0.53%. Using this growth rate, the Town's population is projected to grow to 13,950 persons by 2020. As the Town's population grows, so too will the demand for community services such as fire, police, ambulance, water, and sewer. New residential construction will likely increase the demand for public education which may necessitate capital improvements in the Kingston School District. Growth in retail and commercial businesses will require improvements to the transportation infrastructure in order to accommodate traffic increases. As the community's population grows so too will the demand for parks & recreational services. It is important that the increase in demand for such services as a result of development are anticipated and carefully reviewed during the environmental review process so that such impacts are assessed and necessary measures are put in place to mitigate potential adverse impacts.

As is the case in most communities, the most suitable sites for development in the Town were the first to be developed. As the Town grows such sites will become increasingly scarce leaving less desirable sites (i.e., those with environmental or other site constraints) for development. Development on such sites will require that the Town pay closer attention to the protection of natural resources such as steep slopes, wetlands, and water resources. Care must also be taken to protect important vistas that help to define its rural character.

The demand for development sites will also put growing pressure on the Town's agricultural lands. There are policies the Town can employ to help retain farmlands and these are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 9.0 of this Plan.

From a real estate perspective, the rebound in the Town's housing market (identified in the 2004 Housing Strategies Study prepared by the Ulster County Planning Board) is a positive trend. However, with the increase in housing costs comes the challenge of providing housing options that are affordable to a range of household incomes in the community. As is the case in most of the mid-Hudson Region, increases in wages has simply not kept pace with increases in housing costs. Looking ahead, policies to ensure that affordable housing opportunities are made available to meet the needs of all its residents (including volunteer ambulance corps members, teachers, and its growing workforce) may be necessary.

The Town has many assets and with careful planning it is well-positioned to grow in a manner that will strengthen the community's economic and social vitality for years to come. The following chapters provide a broader discussion of natural resources, transportation, recreation, community facilities, agriculture & farmland protection, and economic development. Each of these chapters will frame the challenges facing the Town in the years ahead as well as policies that it can put in place to help the Town to meet these challenges.

"The Town has many assets and with careful planning it is well-positioned to grow in a manner that will strengthen the community's economic and social vitality for years to come."

CHAPTER 5.0 NATURAL RESOURCES

The Town of Ulster has a total land area of approximately 28.9 square miles. Of this area, 26.8 square miles is comprised of land and 2.1 square miles are lands under water. The Town is located in the Hudson River Valley, generally east of the Catskill Mountains and immediately west of the Hudson River, which forms a boundary between Ulster and Dutchess Counties.

The physical characteristics of land is one of the major factors that influence land development. Physical characteristics such as topography, drainage, or soil conditions will control or limit both the rate and intensity of growth. It is for these reasons that the Town of Ulster's natural resources need special consideration in helping to determine the manner in which development should be controlled or limited in various areas of the Town. One of the key goals of this Comprehensive Plan shall be to avoid disturbance of environmentally sensitive lands, to preserve important vistas and other natural resources, and to guide growth in areas that are best suited for development.

This chapter provides a brief overview of the Town's many natural resources and environmental constraints and ends with some recommendations for actions the Town can take to conserve these natural resources while allowing for growth.

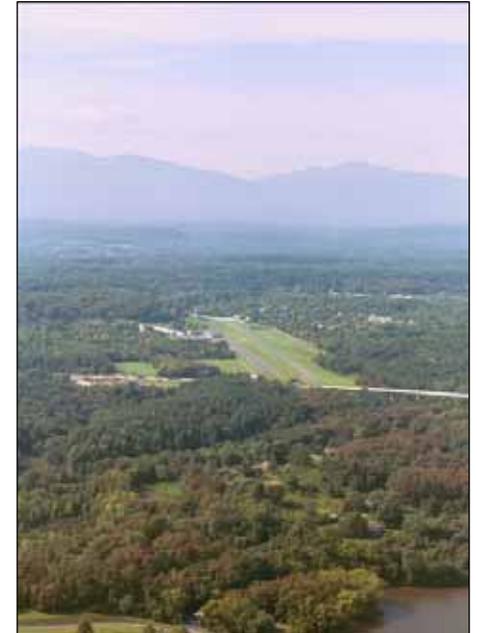
5.1 Elevation and Terrain

Topography is defined as the relief of land surface describing terrain, elevation and slope. An important measure of topography is range of elevation. In the Town of Ulster, the range of elevation is just over 600 feet. The lowest point is at the mean sea level (msl) along the Hudson River. The highest point is 600 ft above *msl* within that portion of Town laying within the Catskill Park. Change in elevation can affect local weather conditions at temperatures close to dew point or freezing. In the Town of Ulster, this change in elevation can result in longer periods of morning fog in the portion of the Town laying to the southeast of the Catskill Mountains and other low-lying areas.

5.2 Steep Slopes

Comprehensive slope information is an essential element in the planning process. Relating land use to topography can help to minimize damage to the environment and to avoid extensive site alterations that can cause destabilization of banks and erosion.

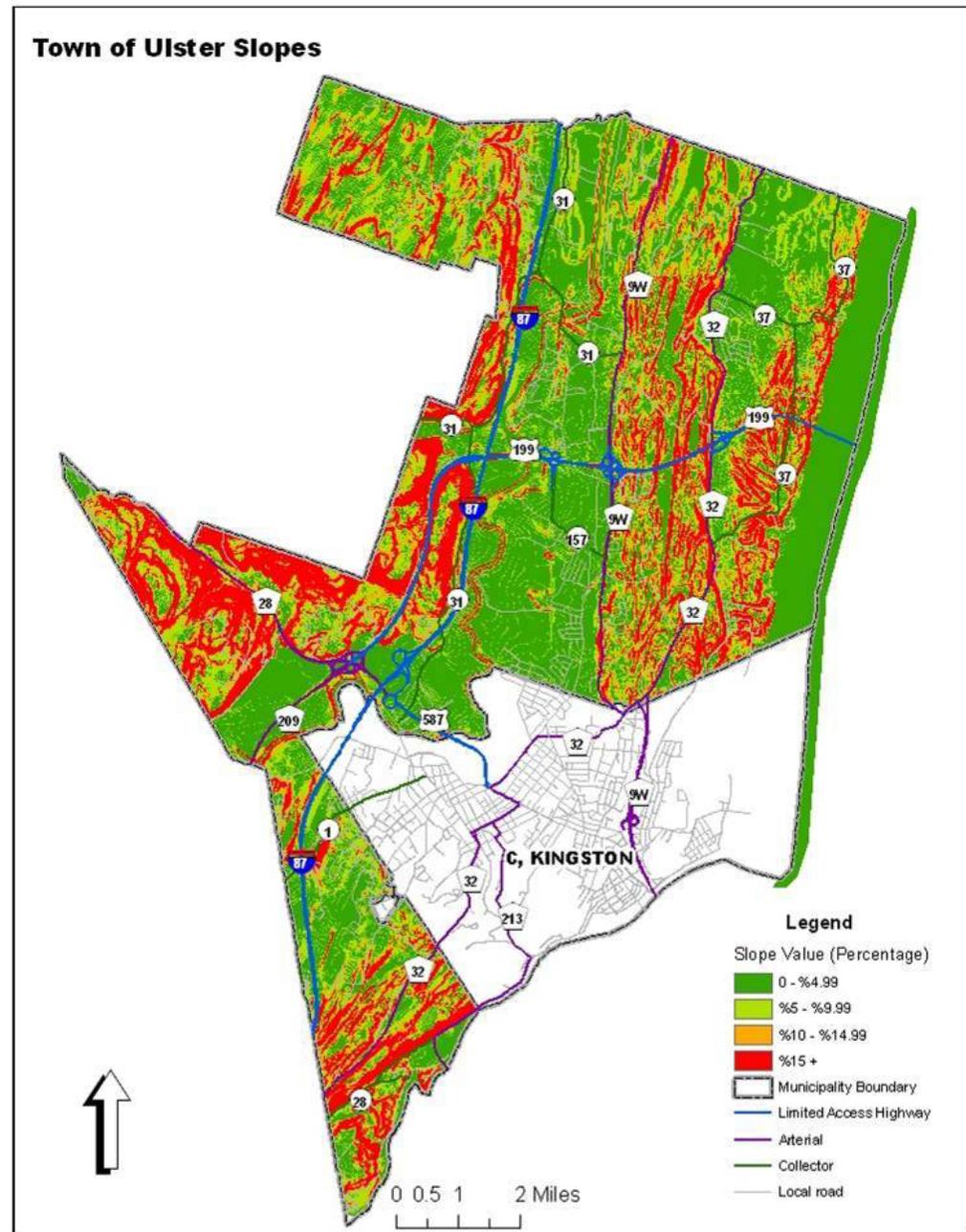
Development on slight slopes usually presents the fewest limitations and can be developed with few engineering problems or harm to the environment. In contrast, development on steep slopes can mean higher construction costs, unstable soils, and sewage disposal problems. Development on steep slopes should be avoided to mitigate the potential for erosion.



Above: Hudson River to Catskill Ridge and view of Esopus Creek.

The Ulster County Management Information System Office developed a Steep Slope Map (to the right) using its Geographic Information System (GIS). Slope indicates the percentage of incline of the land. Those areas with a slope of greater than 8.5° or 15% are generally considered to have slopes too steep for development purposes. These areas are shown in red on the adjacent slope map. Steep slopes within the Town are prominent to the west of the Hudson River shoreline, between Routes 32 and 9W north of Kingston, to the west of I-87 within the Catskill Park, and in the vicinity of Route 32, CR 28 and the hamlet of Eddyville. Three of the most common difficulties associated with steep slopes are:

- 1) Sewage disposal – soils on steep slopes are shallow, making it impractical to install subsurface disposal systems;
- 2) Drainage – the removal of trees, grading, and erection of buildings will destabilize the bank while increasing runoff. These factors contribute to erosion and sediment control problems; and
- 3) Driveway and street layout – as a general rule, the slope of driveways and roadways should not exceed 6.8° or 12%. Development on steep slopes makes alignments and safe intersections very difficult. They also may result in rapid runoff onto adjoining roads causing erosion and icing problems in the winter.



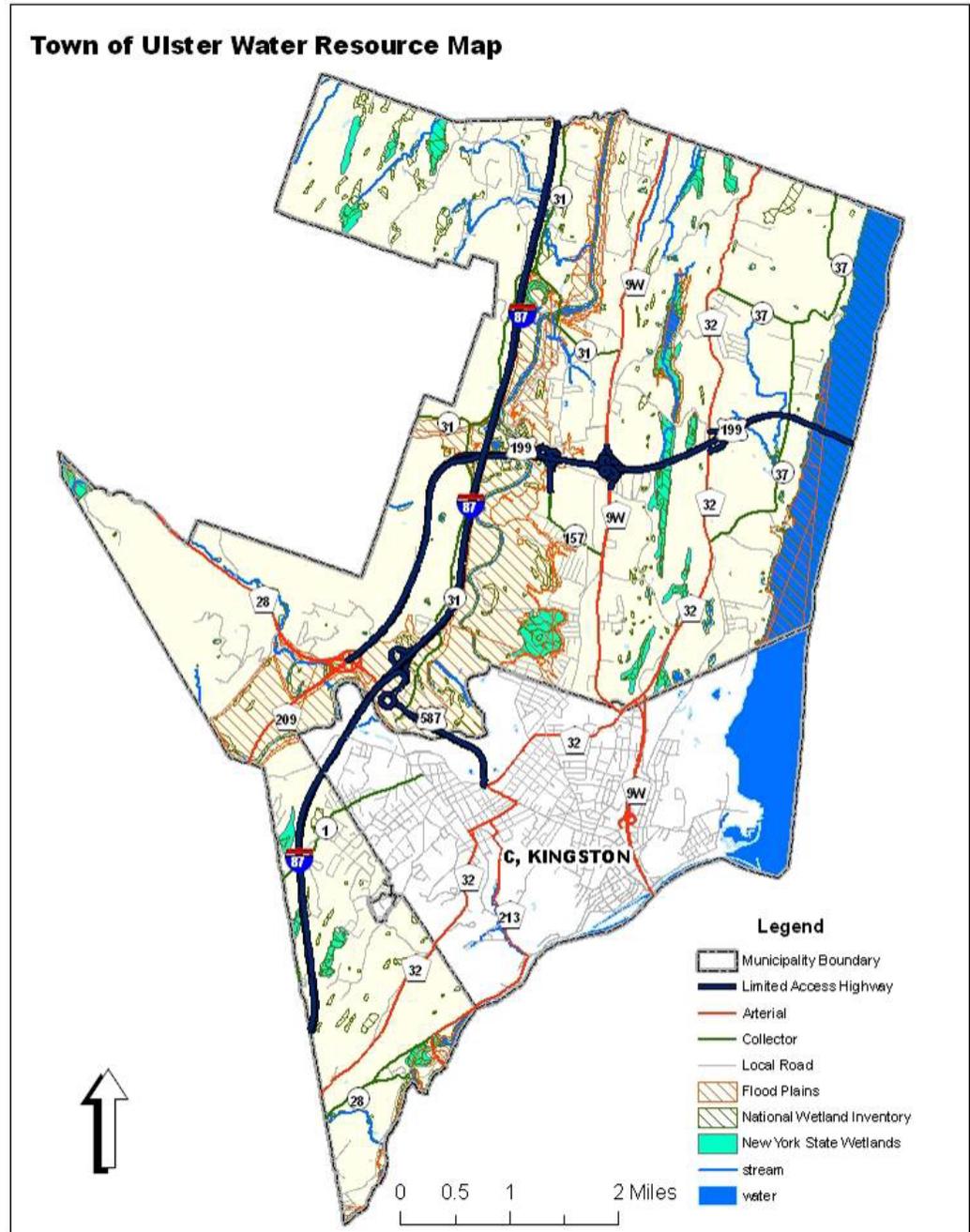
5.3 Water Resources

The Town of Ulster’s groundwater resources are located within both the unconsolidated stratified deposits (i.e., layered sediments) and the limestone ridges that are found throughout the Town. The unconsolidated stratified deposits are located mainly along the Esopus Creek and its tributaries. These deposits recharge by stream runoff caused by precipitation.

The limestone ridges are oriented in a north-south direction and can be found between Route 32 and Route 9W. The area is characterized by many small valleys and rock outcroppings that contain a number of wetlands and other areas with a high water table that are not well-suited for development. The Town can take proactive measures to protect these resources through stream course or wetland buffers and/or the creation of wellhead protection zones.

5.3.1 Flood Hazard Areas

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has identified potential flood hazard areas in the Town of Ulster. Areas in the Town that are subject to flooding include lands adjoining streams, lakes, ponds, or wetlands where flooding results from snow melt, heavy rains or other weather conditions. The Esopus Creek and Hudson River floodplains are areas that are prone to flooding. Flood hazard areas in accordance with FEMA standards are shown on the Water Resources Map to the right.



The largest area in the Town that lies within a FEMA designated floodplain are those lands along the Esopus Creek. The second largest area with FEMA designated floodplains is along the Hudson River shoreline.

By identifying these areas, it is possible to restrict development to open space uses, including agriculture, which are tolerant of flooding and do not obstruct the flow of water. It is important to do this in order to mitigate both financial loss and the potential loss of life that might occur as the result of periodic flooding. FEMA defines the likelihood of flooding into two broad categories: 1) lands within the 100-year floodplain; and 2) those within the 500-year floodplain. Lands within the 100 year floodplain have a 1% probability of a flood exceeding a certain depth in any given year. Where the threat exists, the construction of houses and other buildings should be avoided.

The floodplains along the Esopus Creek are permeable and well-suited for agriculture, especially those lands within the Hurley Flats. Providing incentives to help keep these lands in agricultural production is recommended.

It is recommended that the Town Planning Board factor in the presence of floodplains when they review site plans and subdivision applications. The Planning Board must insist on appropriate mitigation measures for any development within floodplains within the Town of Ulster.

5.3.2 Wetlands

Wetlands are perhaps the most critical of all water resource considerations due to their extreme sensitivity to development. These areas are subject to periodic or continual inundation by water and are commonly referred to as bogs or marshes.

The Water Resources Map on page 36 shows wetland areas in the Town of Ulster that are 12.4 acres or more in size. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation has mapped these resources and regulates these water resources. In addition to NYSDEC wetlands, there are also Federal wetlands in the Town that are protected under Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act. These are regulated by the Federal Army Corps of Engineers and are shown on the National Wetland Inventory maps.

Wetlands serve an important function cleansing water. They also serve a vital function in retaining large amounts of runoff during the spring thaw or major storm events. In this respect, wetlands help to reduce peak flood flows and decrease flood damage. All proposed development within the vicinity of DEC and federal wetlands must comply with the regulation of the respective authority.

The Planning Board must ensure that applicants adhere to these standards when reviewing site plans or subdivision proposals that are in the vicinity of wetlands.

“A river is more than an amenity. It is a treasure. It is a necessity of life that must be rationed among those who have power over it.”

Oliver Wendell Holmes

5.3.3 *Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System*

Approximately half of the geographic area of the Town of Ulster is designated as a "Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4)" as defined by the US Environmental Protection Agency. Under Clean Water Act amendments, EPA developed a program called the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). Under Phase II of this program, small MS4s are required to get a permit for their stormwater management system that includes storm sewers and ditches associated with stormwater runoff.

Each municipality that has an MS4-designated area must prepare a *map* showing the location of all outfalls and the names of all U.S. waters that receive water from those outfalls. Outfalls are defined as any point where a separate storm sewer system discharges to either the waters of the United States or to another MS4. Outfalls include discharges from pipes, ditches, swales, and other points of concentrated flow. Municipalities with MS4's must also prepare a Stormwater Management Program (SWMP) designed to reduce the discharge of pollutants to the maximum extent practicable.

In New York State, compliance with MS4 requirements is administered by the NYSDEC. The Town of Ulster has taken proactive measures to comply with the MS4 requirements. To date, the Town has used its Global Position System (GPS) and Geographic Information

System (GIS) mapping to locate and map all outfalls within its MS4-designated areas. The Town is also identifying the direction of flow from these outflows and has taken the additional step of mapping all outfalls outside of the MS4-designated areas as well.

As required by NYSDEC, the Town has a *Phase II State Pollution Discharge Elimination System (SPDES)* permit for discharges from its MS4. Each year, the Town submits a Stormwater Management Annual Report in which it identifies measures being taken to comply with MS4 requirements. The Town has provided public education and outreach, solicited public involvement in clean-up efforts, and informed the public of hazards associated with illicit discharges. The Planning Board also requires that Best Management Practices (BMPs) for sediment and erosion control and stormwater management are addressed during site plan or subdivision review. The Town Highway Department has also implemented runoff control measures and created three (3) Best Management Practices (BMP) demonstration sites.

Looking ahead, the Town will need to continue to implement such measures and to develop a Stormwater Management Program that ties together the efforts of its Highway Department, Planning Board [site plan and subdivision review] and Parks & Recreation programs. It will also need to develop regulatory mechanisms to address illicit discharge as well as site and post-construction stormwater runoff control.



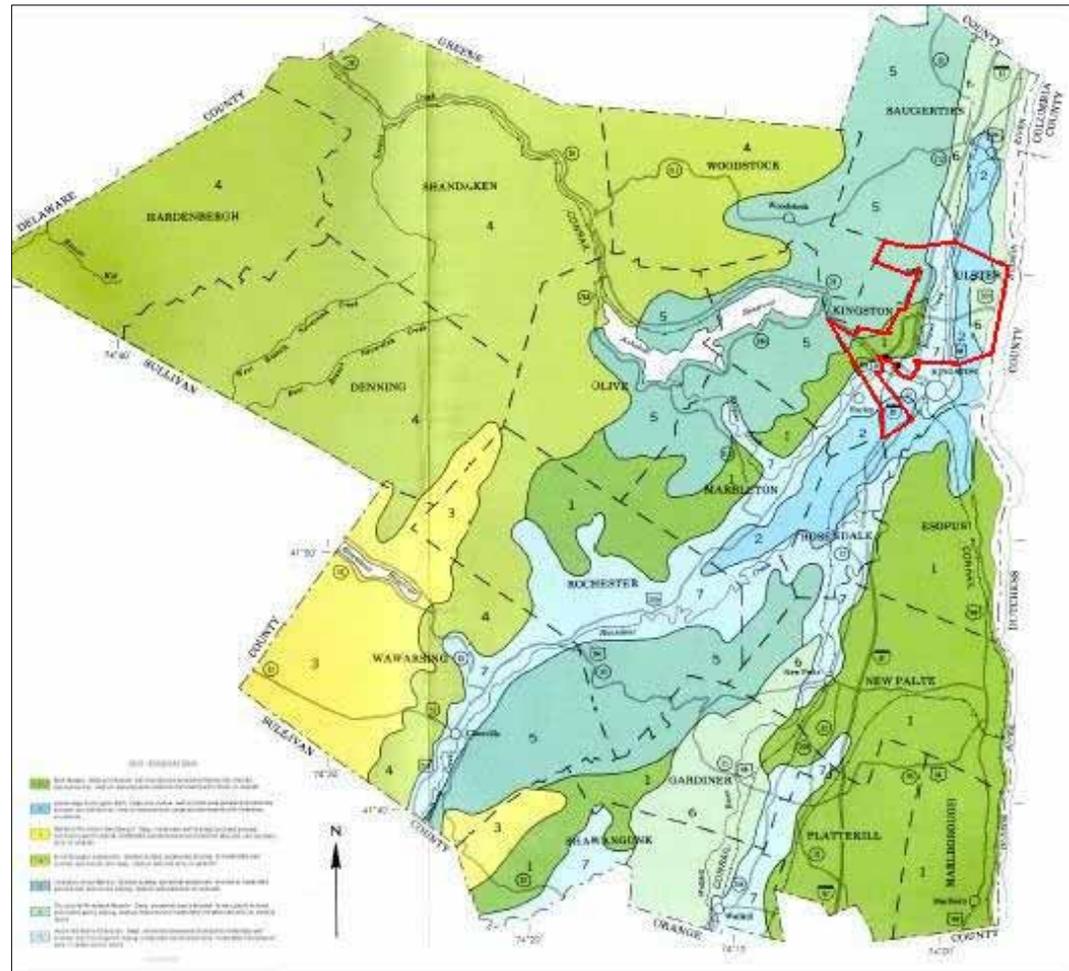
Above: The MS4-Designated Areas within the Town of Ulster are shown in olive green.

5.4 Soils

Proper siting of development must include an analysis of soil types within a community. Soils differ according to variations in composition, particle-size gradation, and compaction; factors which control permeability, porosity and strength. Each of these factors and depth to bedrock is important in determining how much and what kind of development the land is capable of supporting. It is useful to consider the specific soil conditions in a community in directing growth to areas that can support development without high construction costs.

Soil porosity and permeability is a major consideration in determining development capability. This is particularly important when considering the feasibility of on-site septic systems. Such systems installed on soils with improper drainage may result in contamination of groundwater and runoff into public water supplies or bodies of water used for recreational purposes. In low-lying areas, where drainage occurs too slowly, certain types of development can result in flooded homes and roads.

In general, the type and location of soils varies widely throughout the Town. On the western boundary, the hill slopes are covered with thin soils from glacial till which are not valuable for agriculture and are not deep enough for good percolation for sewage effluent. The banks of the Esopus Creek are characterized by sand, silt, and gravel which provide for good cropland.



Good soil drainage extends from the Esopus Creek easterly to Route 9W, after which the limestone ridges discussed previously create a complicated situation with small sections of good soils and drainage that are interspersed with larger, very poor drainage areas. A broad area of clay and hardpan, like subsoil, predominates between Route 32 and the Hudson River.

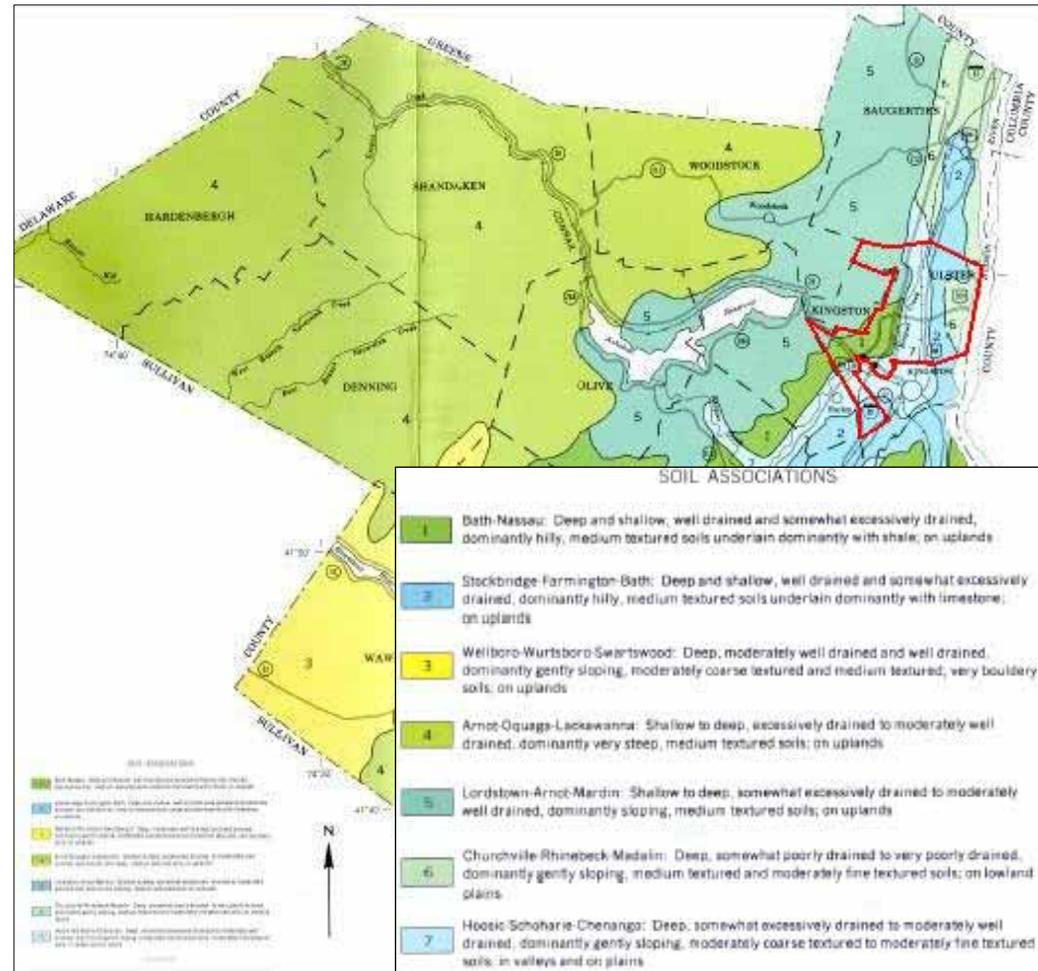
SOIL ASSOCIATIONS	
1	Bath-Nassau: Deep and shallow, well drained and somewhat excessively drained, dominantly hilly, medium textured soils underlain dominantly with shale, on uplands
2	Stockbridge-Farmington-Bath: Deep and shallow, well drained and somewhat excessively drained, dominantly hilly, medium textured soils underlain dominantly with limestone, on uplands
3	Wellboro-Nurtsboro-Swarthout: Deep, moderately well drained and well drained, dominantly gently sloping, moderately coarse textured and medium textured, very bouldery soils, on uplands
4	Arnot-Oquaga-Lakeview: Shallow to deep, excessively drained to moderately well drained, dominantly very steep, medium textured soils, on uplands
5	Lordsburg-Arnot-Mardin: Shallow to deep, somewhat excessively drained to moderately well drained, dominantly sloping, medium textured soils, on uplands
6	Churchville-Rhinebeck-Medina: Deep, somewhat poorly drained to very poorly drained, dominantly gently sloping, medium textured and moderately fine textured soils, on lowland plains
7	Hosic-Schoharie-Chenango: Deep, somewhat excessively drained to moderately well drained, dominantly gently sloping, moderately coarse textured to moderately fine textured soils, in valleys and on plains

These soils are very impervious and poorly suited for agriculture or on-site septic systems. According to the Ulster County Soil Survey of 1979, there are four Soil Associations found in the Town of Ulster as follows:

Bath-Nassau: Deep and shallow, well-drained, and somewhat excessively drained, dominantly-hilly, medium-textured soils underlain dominantly with shale; on uplands. These are found within the portion of the Town lying within the Catskill Park and are shown in dark green on the adjacent soils map.

Hoosic-Schoharie-Chenango: Deep, somewhat poorly drained to very poorly drained, dominantly gently sloping, medium textured and moderately fine textured soils; on lowland plains. This area is shown in the lightest shade of blue (#7) on the map and is best described as that portion of the Town lying within the Esopus Creek floodplain along with the hamlet of Eddyville lying within the Rondout Creek floodplain.

Stockbridge-Farmington-Bath: Deep and shallow, well-drained and somewhat excessively drained, dominantly hilly, medium textured soils underlain dominantly with limestone; on uplands. This area is shown in sky blue (#2) on the map and representing those areas between Route 9W and Route 32 north of the City of Kingston. South of Kingston it includes the area from Hillside Acres extending down to CR28.



Churchville-Rhinebeck-Madalin: Deep, somewhat poorly drained to very poorly drained, dominantly gently sloping, medium textured and moderately fine textured soils; on lowland plains. These soils are found along the Hudson River but also encompass the Kingston-Ulster Airport and the Kukuk Lane area.

5.5 Forestland

Large expanses of mature forest lands help to define the rural character of much of the Town of Ulster. Forestland is an important natural resource that provides important wildlife habitat, valuable open space, recreational opportunities, scenic vistas, and economic opportunities. When properly managed, forestlands provide an important component of the local economy through timber harvesting.

It is important that the Town regulate the harvesting of timber to ensure its forest lands remain a sustainable natural resource for years to come. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has developed Timber Harvesting Guidelines and best management practices to help ensure a sustainable timber harvest and avoid potential adverse environmental impacts associated with timber harvesting.

One of the environmental concerns associated with timber harvesting relates to the potential for soil erosion. When soil washes into streams and lakes, it reduces water quality and may harm spawning beds. With proper logging practices, erosion never starts and streams are protected from careless disturbance and water quality is maintained. Best management practices recommended by the DEC include keeping stream crossing to a minimum, protecting streambanks, and logging steep slopes during dry weather.

New York State Real Property Tax Law Section 480-A provides a property tax reduction to owners of woodlands over fifty (50) acres who keep their properties in a forestry management program. Encouraging participation in this program is one way the Town can help to protect forest lands in the Town and ensure a sustainable timber harvest for future generations.

In addition to following DEC Best Management Practices, there are other aspects associated with the harvesting of timber that should be regulated by the Town. These include the need to mitigate potential impacts on local roads, visual impacts, and noise impacts. The Town could adopt a Local Law to regulate timber harvesting to ensure that such impacts are mitigated.

Ensuring that the proposed entrance to the logging operation is well-sited and that local bridges and roads can handle the weight-load of heavy trucks is important. Requiring a buffer along local roads could help to reduce potential visual impacts associated with a logging operation. To maintain a buffer area, the Town could limit the amount of harvest within 100 feet of public rights-of-way to no more than 20% of the basal area (or canopy). Such measures allow the harvester to cut valuable timber while ensuring that the integrity of the buffer area is retained. Impacts associated with noise can be mitigated by regulating the hours of operation of a timber harvest. This is especially important during early morning hours ([i.e., before 7:00 am), weekends and/or certain holidays.



Upper Photo: View from Dewitt Mills Road (County Road 28) as you enter the Town of Ulster from the Town of Rosendale. The mature tree canopy along the road provides a sense of enclosure which helps to preserve the rural character.

Lower Photo: Tree farm in Oneonta, New York. In addition to managing existing forestlands, the creation of tree farms on marginal agricultural lands is an effective way of preserving valuable open space and diversifying the local economy.

5.6 Ridgeline & Vista Protection

The Catskill Mountains, the Hudson River uplands, the ridgeline between Route 9W and Route 32 and the ridgeline along the Rondout Creek are critical features of the Town of Ulster’s heritage whose preservation enriches and benefits both residents and visitors.

Whether you are looking northeast across the Hurley Flats from Route 209 or looking northwest from Route 9W – the Catskill Mountain range provides a dramatic backdrop to the Town’s natural landscape. The uplands along the west shore of the Hudson River provide a stunning backdrop to the Hudson River. The ridgeline between Route 9W and Route 32 helps to retain the rural feel of the Town. The forested ridgeline along the northern banks of the Rondout Creek are an important part of the landscape that echoes to an earlier time when canal boats made their slow journey along the creek more than a century ago. It is important that the Town take measures to protect the panoramic views along these ridgelines as well as their sensitive natural environments.

There are areas within the Town where the ridgeline views have been well-preserved. The view from Route 209 looking toward the Catskill Mountains is one example. However, billboards (i.e., off-premises advertising) do impact vistas in certain instances. The regulation of such signs should consider potential impacts on the Town’s important vistas.

The heart of the Town’s retail trade is along the US Route 9W corridor. Presently, most retail growth has occurred south of Routes 209/199 but is steadily moving north of Routes 209/199. There are certain aspects of the existing retail development along the US Route 9W corridor that unnecessarily impact views of the Catskill Mountains. One of the most ubiquitous is the presence of on-premises pole signs. Many of these existing signs are 25 feet in height or higher. The presence of pole signs not only clutters the streetscape, but they also obstruct views of the Catskill Mountain range. This point is illustrated in the photo to the right. Notice how the view of the Catskill Mountains is blocked by the pole signs. Without the pole signs, a much greater view of the Mountains would be visible.

Development within ridgelines and mountain areas provides unique challenges that should be addressed in the community’s land-use regulations. For example, ground disturbance on steep slopes can present erosion problems, thin soils can present septic problems, and surface runoff can contaminate mountain streams. Development at higher elevations is highly visible from the valleys and important vistas within the Town of Ulster.

This Comprehensive Plan identifies ridge and mountain areas in the Town where additional land-use regulations to conserve ridgelines are recommended. It also recommends the creation of a Ridge Protection Overlay District.



Top Photo: View of Catskill Mountain range from Route 209 looking across the Hurley Flats.

Middle Photo: View of Catskill Mountains from Route 9W.

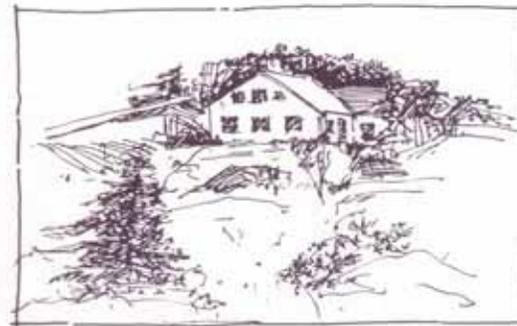
Bottom Photo: View from the banks of the Rondout Creek in the vicinity of Eddyville.

An overlay district is a zoning district with supplementary regulations which are superimposed upon existing zoning districts. The purpose of a Ridge Protection Overlay District is to protect the natural environment and the Town's scenic vistas. To accomplish these goals, an overlay district could be created that would require additional standards for residential or commercial development that is proposed within the overlay district.

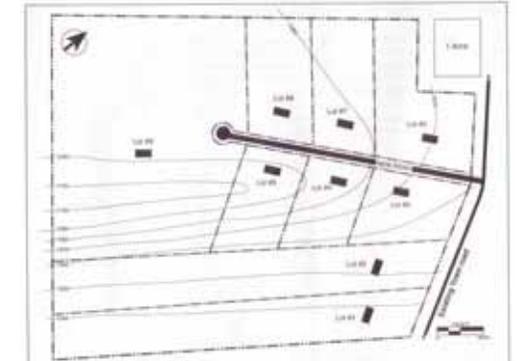
To mitigate visibility, the overlay zone might mandate that a Visual Assessment Addendum to a SEQRA EAF be completed for any development within the district. The overlay district could incorporate design standards for new structures that would prescribe the types of building materials and colors that should be used to reduce visual impacts. Another way to mitigate visual impacts is to reduce the glare from lighting. A typical lighting standard would be to limit the light level at the lot line to no more than 0.2 footcandles when measured at the ground level. Visual impacts associated with development on the ridge can also be mitigated by preserving existing vegetation on the site, providing new plantings, and limiting the thinning of trees for the purpose of creating views. Providing an unobstructed view for the ridgeline homeowner means the public will have an obstructed view of the house – diminishing the public vista.

The illustrations that follow show various aspects of design can reduce visual impacts.

Town of Ulster, New York



The upper illustration shows a structure on a ridge that has not been screened due to existing vegetation being removed. The lower illustration shows the same structure and site with existing vegetation retained to help screen the structure while still allowing views. The illustrations to the right show how a conservation subdivision can be used to protect the ridgeline. The upper illustration shows a conventional subdivision with homes built on top of the ridge. The lower illustration shows a conservation design where houses are clustered below the ridgeline. The ridgeline is placed within a conservation easement. A broader discussion on conservation subdivisions is provided in Chapter 9.0 – Agriculture & Farmland.



Top photo: Residential development on the ridge along Gallis Hill Road.

Middle Illustration: A conventional subdivision.

Bottom Illustration: A conservation subdivision with open space easement.

Source: Shawangunk Ridge Conservation & Design Guidebook by Church – Meyers 1993.

5.7 Recommendations

There are a variety of regulations that Town of Ulster can employ to protect its natural resources including the following:

5.7.1 Steep Slopes

Restrict development on slopes that are greater than 15% (steep slopes). Where a developer proposes to disturb a portion of a site with steep slopes, a sediment & erosion control plan should be required by the Planning Board.

The New York State Forestry Best Management Practices “Management Practices” manual should be used as a guideline in protecting steep slopes during forestry operations. Require adherence to these guidelines for forestry operations that may take place within the Catskill Park or other steep-slope areas.

5.7.2 Water Resources

Strictly enforce NYSDEC requirements to maintain a 100-foot setback between development and adjacent watercourses. During the site plan and special permit review process, applicants must be required to show existing watercourses and required setbacks on their site plans. Such features must also be shown on subdivision plats. Early identification of natural resources will help the Planning Board in its review and ensure protection of these resources.

Restrict the development of buildings and impervious surfaces within the 100-year floodplain. The Town must carefully review applications for development on lands within the 100-year floodplain. This will help to prevent future loss of property and life due to flooding.

Require Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPP) in accordance with the NYSDEC State Pollution Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) general permit for commercial developments or major subdivision applications. SWPPP’s help to ensure that post-development runoff rates from a site do not exceed the rates that existed pre-development. Such plans also provide for the treatment of runoff and the release runoff at controlled rates to protect the quality of surface waters and prevent flooding from storm events. The NYSDEC regulations require basic SWPPP for single-family developments that disturb between 1 and 5 acres of topsoil. A full SWPPP is required for commercial developments that disturb one or more acres of soil.

Encourage the use of retention/detention basins that are an integral part of the overall site plan or subdivision plan. Detention basins are dry basins that fill with water during a storm event.

Identify important aquifer recharge areas and create aquifer protection overlay districts. This could require additional water quality controls for development within the overlay district.

“Devel op a Stormwater management Program in accordance with MS4 Regulations.”

“Require Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPP) in accordance with the NYSDEC State Pollution Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) general permit for commercial developments or major subdivision applications.”

They work by delaying the storm water so that it is released at a rate that mimics the pre-development flow. Retention basins are different than detention basins in that they hold water in a pool rather than just during storm events. The only outlet in a retention basin is through an emergency spillway that allows the basin to overflow in a controlled manner should it become too full. The Planning Board should require developers to mitigate post-development storm water runoff through the use of detention and/or retention basins. The detention/retention basin should be integral to the site plan layout or proposed subdivision plat.

One advantage of detention basins is that they require little maintenance while serving the purpose of controlling storm water runoff. Retention basins can be an attractive water feature if well-designed and maintained. Retention basins should include native wetland species in order to enhance water quality and to provide aquatic/wildlife habitat. This will allow pollutants to settle at the bottom of the basin, thus removing them from runoff. The activity of plants and other microorganisms within retention basins also help to remove toxins from storm water runoff. Developers should provide a long-term maintenance plan for retention basins.

Work with DEC, NYCDEP and the Ulster County Soil & Water Conservation District to educate landowners about the natural functioning of streams and wetlands in order to mitigate damage to and protect water resources.

5.7.3 Soils

Where proposed development involves grading of the site or cutting and filling operations, require a Sediment & Erosion Control Plan. Generally, development on sites should work with the topography of the site and avoid excessive grading of the site. Where grading is proposed, a sediment & erosion control plan should be provided.

5.7.4 Forestland

Encourage property owners with 50 or more acres of woodlands to participate in the New York State 480-A Forestry Management Program. New York State offers a tax reduction through Section 480-A of the Real Property Tax Law for owners of woodlands over 50 acres that keep their properties in a forestry management program. Under a forestry management program, cutting of timber is permitted within limits that ensure a sustainable harvest of timber into the future. Participation in the program will help to ensure the preservation of valuable open space and wildlife habitat within the Town.

Adopt a Local Law to regulate timber harvesting. A timber harvesting law could regulate the hours of day when harvesting is permitted, certain holidays when it is prohibited, the duration of the timber harvest, the placement of entrances to the site, and the provision of buffers along public rights-of-way.

“Encourage property owners with 50 or more acres of woodlands to participate in the New York State 480-A Forestry Management Program.”

5.7.5 Ridgeline and Vista Protection

Create a Ridgeline Protection Overlay District. As described above, a ridgeline overlay district could be created to cover important ridgelines and vistas such as the Catskill Mountains, Hudson River uplands and the Rondout Creek.

Encourage the use of Conservation Subdivisions. As illustrated in Section 5.6, conservation subdivisions can be used to cluster development away from environmentally sensitive areas such as ridgelines. Section 190-16 of the Town Zoning Code authorizes the Planning Board, as part of its approval of a subdivision plan, to permit conservation or cluster subdivisions.

Coordinate with a land trust to help acquire and manage conservation easements within the Town of Ulster. A land trust is a not-for-profit organization that plays an important stewardship role with respect to managing lands subject to conservation easements. There is a variety of existing land trusts such as the Open Space Institute that could work with the Town to acquire and/or manage conservation easements. Conservation easements might be sought for the protection of ridgelines which are important vistas. The Town could also encourage the development of a local land trust organization that could take the lead in monitoring conservation easements that might result from the purchase of development rights, participation in the NYS Conservation Tax Credit Program or other conservation programs.

Support efforts by property owners to participate in the Conservation Tax Credit (CTC) Program. The New York State legislature passed the CTC in 2006 that gives landowners whose land is restricted by a permanent conservation easement an annual rebate of 25% of the property taxes paid on that land, up to \$5,000 per year. This credit is available to all owners of easement-restricted land regardless of when the easement was created, provided that the easement was wholly or partially donated to a land trust or governmental agency. The CTC does not reduce local property taxes. The landowner pays their normal taxes to the Town and receives a rebate from the State.

Better regulate the placement of billboards (off-premises advertising) and pole signs. Within important vistas, the Town could adopt an overlay district to prohibit the placement of billboards and/or pole signs.

Create Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans (LWRP) for the Hudson River and Rondout Creek Waterfronts. A Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) is a locally-prepared land and water-use plan and strategy for a community's natural, public, working, or developed waterfront through which critical issues are addressed. A LWRP for the Hudson and Rondout waterfronts could, in part, address ridgeline protection while also identifying land uses that could be encouraged along these waterfronts, recreational opportunities for the public, as well as economic opportunities.

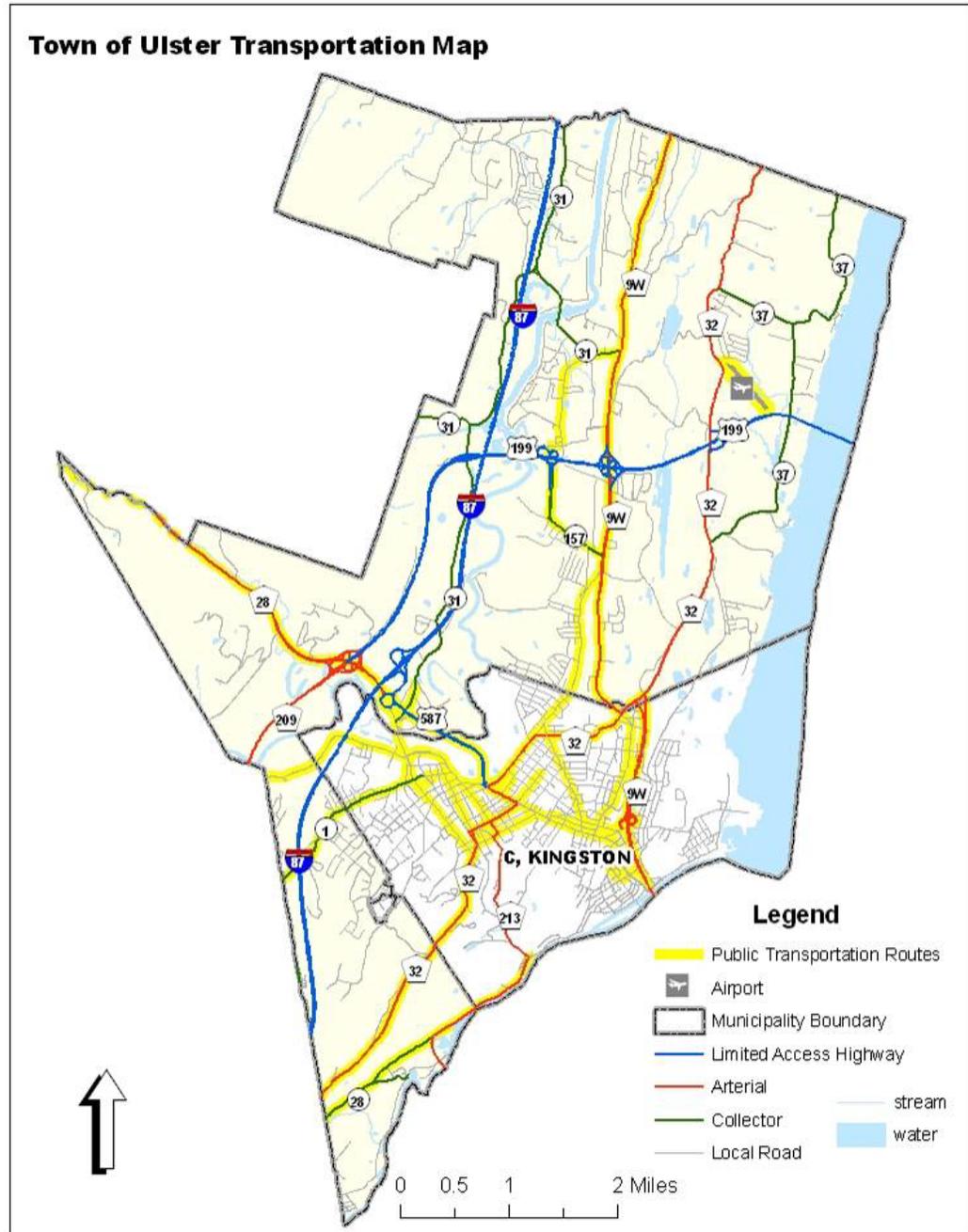
“The Town Board May Authorize the Planning Board to require an owner to submit an application for a conservation subdivision subject to criteria contained in a local law.”

Section 278 of Town Law

CHAPTER 6.0 TRANSPORTATION

Transportation corridors influence the overall growth as well as the location of specific commercial, industrial and residential developments. As previously discussed in Chapter 2.0 – Historical and Regional Context, the first phase of the Town’s development was influenced by the Rondout Creek and the development of the D&H Canal that served as major transportation and trade routes during the early 1800’s. Early settlements were clustered along the river valleys in the Town including the Hudson River and Rondout and Esopus Creeks.

The Kingston-Ellenville Highway (today’s Route 209) was another important transportation corridor affecting the Town’s settlement pattern. By the 1870’s, the Ulster & Delaware Railroad, Ontario & Western Railroad, and Wallkill Valley Railroad were providing service through the Town of Ulster. By the 1880’s they were joined by the West Shore Railroad. With the arrival of the railroads, the density of development within the Town shifted to areas with train depots and away from the rivers. The latest phase of development in the Town of Ulster is defined by the Town’s highways and vehicular roadways. The highest density areas of the Town in terms of population and industry are along its major roadways including US Route 9W, Ulster Avenue and Route 199/Route 209.



Each and every road or highway in the Town of Ulster plays a part in moving people and goods within and through the Town. A description of roadway classifications is provided below:

6.1 Roadway Classifications & Highways

Highways are generally described by their functional classifications. The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) has created a functional classification system for roadways which is described below.

Interstate and Limited-Access Highways: This type of highway moves large volumes of traffic at relatively high speeds to and from locations outside the region. Such highways have limited access via designated exits with no at-grade intersections. Examples include Interstate 87 (aka the New York State Thruway), Interstate 587, and that portion of Route 209/199 from Route 28 to the Kingston-Rhinecliff Bridge.

Arterial: The function of an arterial is to carry medium-to-heavy volumes of traffic at moderate to high speeds and provide access to major traffic generators. Examples include NYS Routes 28, 32, & 209 (from Route 28 to the Town of Hurley), NYS Route 213 south of the City of Kingston, and US 9W.

Major Collector: Provide connections between arterials and local roads at relatively higher speeds. Examples of these roads within the Town include County Routes 28, 31, and 37.

Minor Collector: These roads provide connections between arterials and local roads at comparatively slower speeds and carry moderate volumes of traffic. Neighborhood Road and Legg’s Mills Road are two examples.

Local: This type of road provides direct access to abutting properties and channels local traffic to collector roads.

Understanding Ulster’s roadways in the context of the ITE system is helpful when analyzing transportation needs. For the purpose of this Comprehensive Plan, we have analyzed the major roadways within the Town of Ulster from the perspective of the Town’s existing land use regulations in order to ascertain whether zoning amendments and/or revisions to subdivision regulations are warranted. The goal is to ensure that specific land uses are directed to roadways that best serve their transportation needs.

6.2 Level of Service

The ITE Highway Capacity Manual provides a description of how well traffic flows along highways and roadways which is referred to as Level-of-Service (LOS). The LOS on roadways is described in accordance with a six-step scale from A-F. The LOS A represents the free flow of traffic and a LOS F represents traffic congestion on an area roadway.

LOS A: Free traffic flow, with low traffic volumes and speeds at the posted speed limit.



Above: Aerial views of the New York State Thruway within the Town of Ulster. Top photo shows the Ulster Rest Area, middle photo the Thruway exit and round-about, and bottom photo the Sheehan Lane overpass over the Thruway near Halcyon Park.

LOS B: Is in the zone a stable traffic flow, with operating speeds beginning to be restricted somewhat by traffic conditions, however, drivers still have reasonable freedom to select their speed and lane of operation.

LOS C: Is in the zone a stable traffic flow, but speeds and maneuverability are more closely controlled by higher traffic volumes.

LOS D: Approaches unstable flow, with tolerable operating speeds being maintained though considerably affected by changes in operating conditions due to traffic volumes.

LOS E: Level of Service E cannot be described by speed alone, but represents operations at even lower speeds than Level D, with volumes at or near the capacity of the highway. Flow of traffic is frequently interrupted with stop & go motion.

LOS F: Describes forced flow operation at low speeds, frequent stop and go motion, with high traffic volumes at capacity of the roadway. It should be noted that traffic flow is not dictated by the number of travel lanes alone.

6.3 Transportation Corridors

The arterials in the Town are meant to carry large volumes of traffic over long distances. These roads invite development, sometimes to the point where the original purpose of the road is compromised. The number of driveways along a roadway directly affects traffic flow. As

a driver enters a roadway they cause oncoming traffic to slow down. Vehicles making a left hand turn have to stop until the travel lane is free of oncoming traffic. Cars behind the vehicle making the left hand turn, in turn, must stop, further interrupting traffic flow.

For these reasons, it is important the development proposals are carefully reviewed in the context of how they are likely to impact the local and regional transportation system. The Town can use the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) process to effectively evaluate potential traffic impacts associated with development along with the appropriate mitigation measures to be provided by the developer. The Planning Board, in its review of site plans under the Town’s Site Plan Review Law, has the ability to require that traffic flow is managed through individual sites and between adjacent commercial properties.

Requiring joint access between adjacent commercial developments is one way to reduce the number of driveways onto a highway thereby ensuring smoother traffic flow. Washington Avenue, US Route 9W, NYS Route 28, and Ulster Avenue are the primary commercial corridors. Careful review of driveways, interior circulation, off-street parking and sight distances must be provided to ensure an acceptable level-of-service along these corridors long-term. What follows is a summary of recommendations that the County has provided for the Washington Avenue Corridor.



Upper photo: View of entrance ramps to Route 209 from Route 9W.

Middle photo: Driveway onto Route 9W.

Bottom photo: LOS A on the New York State Thruway.

6.3.1 Washington Avenue Corridor

The Ulster County Transportation Plan, completed in 2003, includes a Master Plan for the streetscape and access improvements along the corridor. The study was prepared by the LA Group and the images provided on this page are taken from the County Transportation Plan.

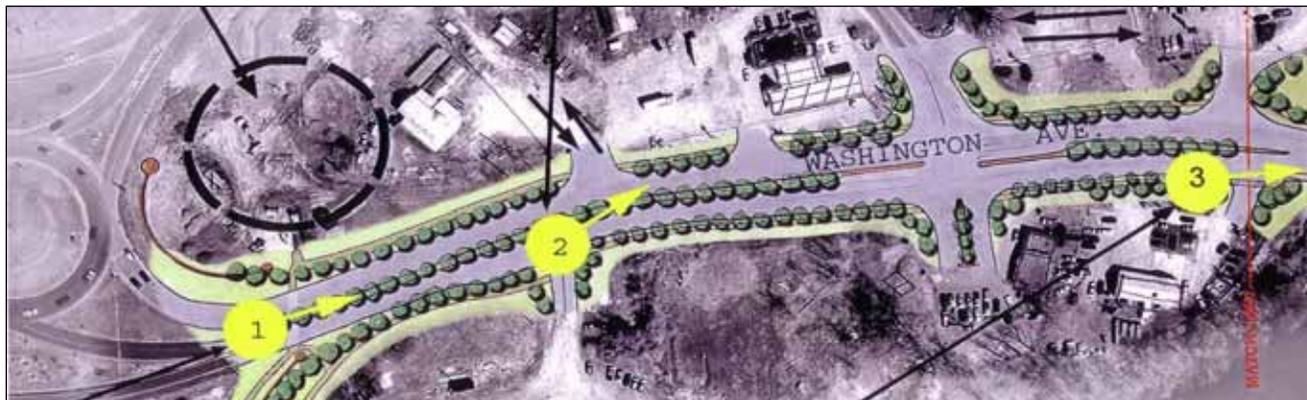
The Plan for the corridor is designed to make the corridor more visually appealing while also improving pedestrian safety and traffic circulation through access management and other techniques. There are three general proposals for this corridor that are described below.

Proposal 1: Continue the median with accent material and plantings to aid in the calming of traffic flow and to add definition to the gateway to the community. This proposal also calls for the using complementary plantings, signs and identifiable structures (such as a stone entry wall with the name of the community on it) to create the expression of a gateway.

Proposal 2: Calls for enhancing the road edge through selected tree plantings, continuing the green median and providing breaks for turning at strategic points. The Plan also calls for reducing the number of curb cuts in the corridor in order to increase traffic safety while presenting a cleaner and more cohesive image upon arrival.

Proposal 3: Shows proposed improvements for the bridge over the Esopus Creek. It calls for limiting road lanes to 11 feet with a 2-foot offset to allow for the development of sidewalks. Also recommended are accent lighting, community banners, and tree plantings.

With the recent creation of the Washington Avenue Sewer District this corridor is ripe for redevelopment. The Town should coordinate with the County and NYSDOT to implement the recommendations contained within the County Transportation Plan and summarized herein. It is recommended that the Planning Board refer to these recommendations for guidance as they review development proposals in this corridor.



Upper photo: Concept of Proposal 1
Middle photo: Concept of Proposal 2
Lower photo: Concept of Proposal 3

Source: The images on this page were prepared by the LA Group and taken from the County Transportation Plan.

6.3.2 Ulster Avenue & US Route 9W Corridors

In the years following World War II, the Ulster Avenue and US Route 9W corridors became the center of strip retail development within the Town of Ulster. Traffic-related problems along these corridors include uncontrolled access to sites (e.g. no curb cuts) and poor access management. There is also a lack of street trees and other landscaping within these corridors.

In recent years, the Planning Board has worked to try to address some of these issues on a case-by-case basis. The Planning Board has required the installation of new sidewalks, landscape islands to soften the visual impact of off-street parking areas, curb cuts for access driveways, and other access management improvements for new developments and/or the redevelopment of existing commercial sites.

There are two approaches that the Town can take to implement access management along these corridors. The first is an incremental approach using the site plan review process whereby the Planning Board continues to require 5-foot wide sidewalks along these corridors as sites are developed. It can also use this approach to require street trees and improved access management. The second approach involves coordination between the Town, County and NYSDOT to prepare an Ulster Avenue and/or US Route 9W access management plan that would detail necessary sidewalk, access management and streetscape improvements.

The NYSDOT requires that municipalities adopt an access management plan before they will consider a corridor for an “*access management project*.” An access management project is one where the NYSDOT participates in making the roadway improvements and/or provides funding to implement the necessary corridor enhancements. There is a two-fold advantage of developing an access management plan for these corridors. First, it defines the necessary improvements which could help the Planning Board make recommendations during the site plan review process. Secondly, it could result in State funding to construct the needed improvements if NYSDOT selects the corridor for an access management project. In the interim, access management policies that should continue to be followed by the Planning Board in its review of site plans are as follows:

- Require joint-access agreements between adjoining parcels where feasible;
- Require landscaping islands to help control the movement of traffic;
- Require the installation of well-defined curb cuts as sites are developed;
- Require developers to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to install sidewalks upon completion of a pedestrian circulation plan; and
- Work with the County and NYSDOT to create an access management plan for these corridors that includes a pedestrian circulation plan, streetscape plan, and access management plan.

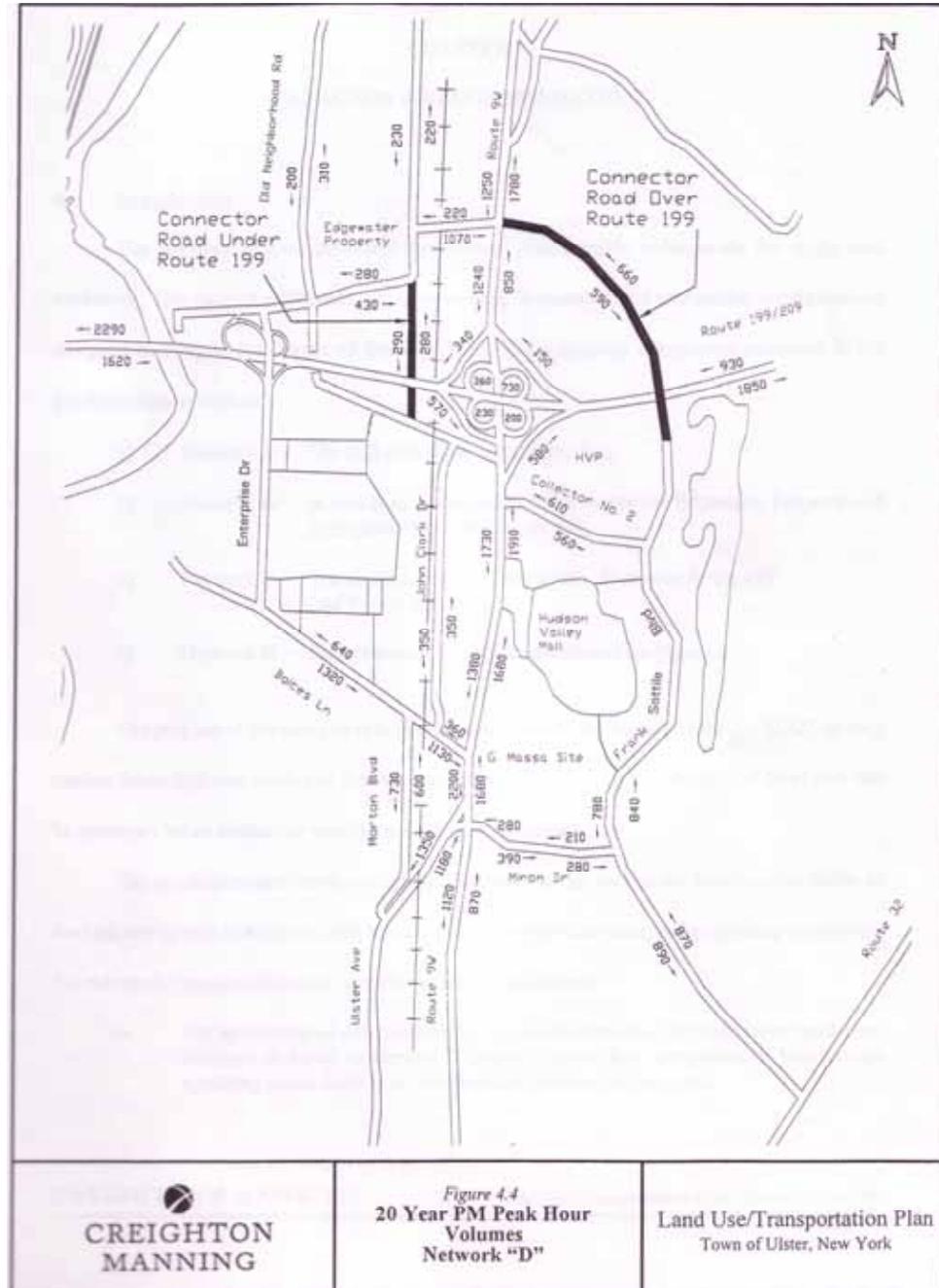


Above: Aerial view of the Ulster Avenue Corridor north of the City of Kingston. The areas in green show where landscaping islands or curb cuts could be placed to help define driveways in order to better control access into and out of development sites. Many existing sites within this corridor do not have curb cuts to control access. The corridor is not pedestrian friendly, but the provision of sidewalks and controlled access to commercial sites would make the corridor more pedestrian friendly.

6.3.3 Connector Roads

Over the years, the Town of Ulster and NYSDOT have completed a series of transportation studies designed to improve the transportation system in the Route 9W corridor surrounding the Route 209/199 Interchange. In 1997, Creighton Manning completed a Land Use Transportation Plan for the area as shown on the map to the right. That Plan called for two new connecting roads to complete the existing highway system: 1) A road under Route 199 to link Boices Lane to John Clark Drive, and 2) an extension of Frank Sottile Boulevard over NYS Route 199 to US Route 9W at Grant Avenue.

The completion of these connector roads would result in a looped transportation system that would help to ensure an acceptable level-of-service on area roadways as development occurs in the future. The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the extension of Frank Sottile Boulevard was accepted by the Town Board on August 7, 2006 paving the way for this project to move forward. Completion of this roadway segment is strongly supported by this Plan. However, future land use along the extension will affect traffic flow and a more detailed analysis of appropriate uses north of Route 209/199 is needed. The SEQRA Findings Statement calls for this area to remain RC-Regional Commercial provided there is a cap on the amount of trips that can be generated from adjacent sites. A more detailed discussion of land use for this area is provided in Chapter 11.



6.4 Pedestrian Policy

It is important that pedestrians are able to move safely and conveniently within their neighborhoods or within the commercial centers of the Town. One of the best ways to ensure pedestrian safety is through the provision of sidewalks. Within higher density residential subdivisions, sidewalks should be encouraged along both sides of the street so that children and adults do not have to walk in the street. Within the Town’s commercial corridors, sidewalks should be provided along the public right-of-way with an appropriate green space between the sidewalk and right-of-way to further separate vehicular and pedestrian movements.

In recent years, the Town has taken proactive measures to ensure that commercial businesses provide sidewalks along its commercial corridors such as US Route 9W. As the Planning Board reviews applications for the redevelopment and/or development of properties along these corridors, it should require developers to provide sidewalks where feasible. The Town could coordinate with the County and NYSDOT to pursue additional funding to create corridor master plans for US Route 9W, Ulster Avenue, and Route 28 along the lines of the work that the County recently completed for the Washington Avenue corridor. Through this process, design standards for sidewalks, plantings, and signs could be developed for each corridor to provide better traffic safety, traffic flow, and a more aesthetically pleasing environment.

6.5 Bicycle Policy

Through the Comprehensive Plan Survey, residents were asked which type of recreational activities should be in the Town. Of those that responded, the highest percent (18%) chose bicycle lanes along state/county/local highways and (17%) chose hiking, biking, and cross-country ski trails.

Creating bicycle lanes or hiking and biking trails is something that requires regional cooperation. This is because the best bike lanes and trails extend for many miles transcending municipal boundaries. There are regional agencies such as the Hudson River Valley Greenway, NYSDOT, and Ulster County, that play an active role in the development of bike lanes and trails. State Bike Route 32 is already established in the Town of Ulster running from Rosendale to the Route 199. There are also bike lanes and trails proposed within the Town of Ulster today. For example, the NYSDOT has proposed a bike route along Route 209 and Route 9W. Its *Hudson Valley Bikeways and Trailways Plan* also calls for a trailway along the D&H Canal tow path. The County recently completed an Ulster & Delaware Railroad Corridor Trail Feasibility Study for the purpose of creating trails along this corridor. Similar opportunities in the Town include the creation of rail trails along the O&W and Wallkill Valley Railroad right-of-ways. The Town should coordinate with and support efforts by regional entities to create new bikeways and trailways.



Upper Photo: Views of sidewalks along Route 9W.

Lower Photo: Sidewalks in Warwick Grove – a New Urbanism Community in Orange County, NY.

6.6 Public Transportation

The Ulster County Transportation Plan, completed in 2003, identifies existing public transportation services within the Town of Ulster and City of Kingston. Privately operated bus companies that provide transportation services include Laidlaw (with service along NYS Routes 32 & 9W), Trailways [serving the Route 28 Corridor with a station in Kingston], and Shortline (serving the Route 209/199 corridor).

Ulster County also provides direct public transportation services through its *Ulster County Area Transit (UCAT)* service which offers safe, affordable, reliable public transportation throughout the County. The system is designed to coordinate with other public transportation providers to offer commuter service and rural route service. Wheelchair accessible buses are available with 24 hours' notice. UCAT's public transportation routes are shown on the Town of Ulster Transportation Map to the right. The County is also planning to develop a multi-modal hub that could provide shuttle service to passenger rail at the Rhinecliff MTA station. Public transportation is the type of community service that is most cost-effective when provided by regional agencies such as UCAT. Existing UCAT routes serve a large percentage of the local population since the routes go through the densest residential and commercial areas of the Town. The Town should continue to coordinate with the County to provide public transportation to meet the needs of its residents and businesses.

Town of Ulster Transportation Map



6.7 Air Transportation

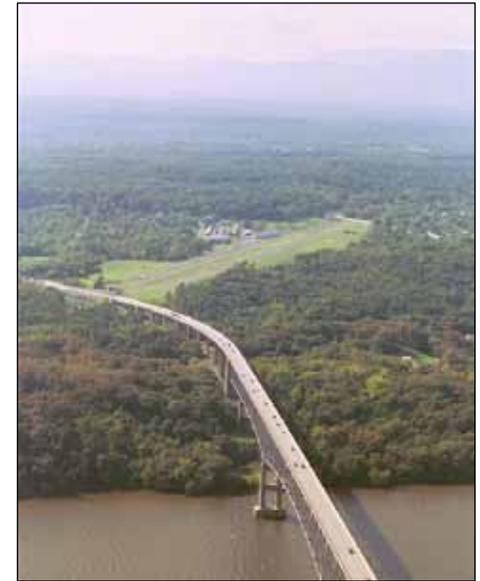
The Kingston-Ulster Airport is privately owned but open to the public. The airport runway has an asphalt surface that is 3,100 feet long and 60 feet wide. The airport is home to a variety of private aircraft, charter planes, and corporate aircraft. The airport houses a Fixed-Based-Operator (FBO) – River Aviation. River Aviation provides the following services: airframe maintenance, service & repair, aircraft rentals, hangar rentals, tiedown rental areas for planes and/or helicopters, and a fuel farm to refuel planes and helicopters at the airport. River Aviation also provides a pilot’s lounge, internet service, and a full-service flight school. Persons interested in getting a private pilot license can get training from a Certified Flight Instructor (CFI) at the airport.

The airport serves a vital transportation function. Through the Kingston-Ulster Air Charter Service and Kingston-Ulster Airlines, the public and local businesses can charter flights to locations throughout the United States. This makes the Town of Ulster very accessible which gives it a competitive advantage in terms of future economic development opportunities.

In addition to the activities described above, the airport is also home to the Kingston-Ulster Commerce Park which is a light industry & business park that is home to Besicorp and other business activities. The transportation and business function of the airport are beneficial.

The transportation function of the airport provides a direct and needed service to a variety of major industries in the Town (e.g. the ability to conveniently and cost-effectively fly from anywhere in the US to the Town of Ulster). The business activities that include the FBO, fuel farm, and the Kingston-Ulster Business Park help to strengthen the tax base of the Town. The County benefits from the sale of fuel through the fuel tax. Most importantly, the airport and commerce park is a source of well-paying jobs for area residents. Through the Comprehensive Plan Survey, residents were asked to rate the importance of a variety of issues to them. The second most cited issue of importance was creating employment opportunities. A total of 74% of the respondents said that this was a “very important” issue with another 22% saying it was “important.” Only 4% said the issue was not important.

When asked whether the Town should take steps to protect the future operation of the Kingston-Ulster Airport, a majority of respondents (55%) said “yes.” Only 14% said “no.” Given the important transportation and economic development functions of the Kingston-Ulster Airport – coupled with community supports to take steps to protect the future operation of the airport – this Comprehensive Plan support the continued operation of the Kingston-Ulster Airport. In the recommendations section of this Chapter a variety of policies, land-use regulations, and economic development policies are outlined to help support the airport operation.



Above: Aerial view of Kingston-Ulster Airport, private plane tie-downs and private hangar.

6.8 Rail Service

The West Shore Rail Line, owned and operated by CSX, is the primary freight line to the Metropolitan New York Region. Today, as many as 35 high speed CSX trains pass through the Town of Ulster every day. In recent years, the frequency of freight traffic along this rail line has increased dramatically as rail freight has gained favor due to the increasing fuel costs. Along with the increase in the frequency of freight trains has come an increase in nuisances associated with the train traffic. These include the noise of engine brakes or horns as they pass through nearby residential neighborhoods in the dead of night, traffic congestion at at-grade crossings; and growing concerns over the potential of a hazardous material spill.

New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law Section 375 regulates the noise levels that certain weight classes of vehicles are permitted to generate. The table below provides a summary of the maximum allowable decibel levels by weight class of vehicle. Trains would fall into the “over 10,000 lbs” classification.

Weight Limit	Maximum Allowable Decibels (dB)
Over 10,000 lbs	86 dB
Over 10,000 lbs w/ engine speed governor	86 dB
Less than 10,000 lbs	76 dB
Motorcycle	82 dB

Enforcing NYS Vehicle and Traffic Safety Law Section 375 as it relates to noise levels of trains would require the use of sound meters to measure the noise level of the trains which could be costly. The Town may do better to coordinate with officials from CSX in order to raise their concerns regarding noise levels (especially at night). Measures that CSX could take include: reminding their engineers to avoid the use of engine brakes in order to reduce noise levels; limiting the sounding of horns to the minimum necessary to ensure safety, and placing signs along the rail line to remind the engineers when they are traveling through residential neighborhoods.

Boice’s Lane is probably affected the most by a CSX at-grade crossing. Due to high traffic volumes during peak hours, traffic often has to stop for 3 to 5 minutes to allow the trains to pass which causes traffic to back up. A grade separation at this location would help but would require extensive property acquisition and may be impractical due to the proximity of the tracks to Route 9W. The Town should coordinate with NYSDOT to explore alternatives.

The CSX line runs adjacent to the most densely populated neighborhoods in the Town. There needs to be coordination between CSX, emergency management agencies, and the Town to protect public safety. The Town should coordinate with CSX and NYSDOT to discuss the issues identified above and to jointly develop appropriate mitigation measures.



Upper photo: CSX at-grade crossing at Neighborhood Road.

Middle photo: Retail business without the curb cuts, landscaping, or sidewalks.

Bottom photo: At-grade crossing at Boice's Lane.

6.9 Recommendations

The following is a summary of recommendations that are described in greater detail above.

6.9.1 Transportation Corridors

Use the State Environmental Impact Statement Process to Mitigate Potential Traffic Impacts. The Town can require environmental impact statements for large-scale residential and commercial developments that may have an adverse impact on the transportation system. Through the environmental review process impacts can be properly assessed and mitigation measures provided.

Require a traffic impact analysis for uses with high-trip generation rates. Certain smaller businesses such as gas stations and fast-food establishments generate high volumes of traffic. Where such uses are likely to affect the level of service on area roadways, a traffic impact analysis should be provided.

Incorporate congestion management practices into the site plan review process. Where feasible, the Town should require joint access agreements between adjacent commercial properties to reduce the number of curbcuts onto area roadways.

Ensure off-street parking standards provide for sufficient number of off-street parking spaces.

Coordinate with the County and NYSDOT to develop Corridor Master Plans for Ulster Avenue, Route 9W and Route 28. Using the Washington Avenue Study and Saugerties Area Mobility Analysis as a model, the Town could coordinate with these agencies to secure additional funding to undertake detailed corridor studies for these corridors. Through this process, design standards for sidewalks, plantings, and signs could be developed for each corridor to provide better traffic safety, traffic flow, and a more aesthetically pleasing environment.

Require interconnection of roadways between subdivisions and/or provide for future connectivity. When reviewing subdivision applications, the Town should carefully review proposed roadways in the context of its existing transportation system. New roads should provide connections to existing roads where they are feasible. To this end, the use of cul-de-sacs should be discouraged unless an applicant can make a compelling reason otherwise.

6.9.2 Bicycle Policy

Work with Ulster County, neighboring towns, and the NYSDOT to develop new rail trails that pass through the Town of Ulster. As was discussed above, the County recently completed an Ulster & Delaware Railroad Corridor Trail Feasibility Study. The Town should coordinate with the County and its neighbors to explore like opportunities along the O&W Railroad and Wallkill Valley Railroad rights-of-way.

Coordinate with Region 8 of NYSDOT to advance the plans for the Route 209 and Route 9W bike routes. The Town could show its support for these efforts by reaching out to NYSDOT to help bring these projects to fruition.

6.9.3 Public Transportation

Coordinate with the County to provide the public transportation services to meet the needs of its residents and businesses. As was discussed above, the provision of public transportation is best left to a regional agency.

Support efforts by Ulster County to develop a multi-modal transportation hub. Ulster County is proposing to develop a transit hub that would accommodate bicyclists, taxis, pedestrians, buses and shuttle services. The proposed transit hub may also provide shuttle services to passenger rail service which is available across the Hudson River in nearby Rhinecliff, New York as well as shuttle to Stewart International Airport.

6.9.4 Air Transportation

Prevent incompatible land uses from encroaching on the airport and its safety zones in order to avoid future hazards or nuisances to aircraft and the Town's residents. It is important that residential development not be allowed to encroach too closely to the airport to avoid future complaints regarding airport noise and other issues. An buffer zones around the airport should be considered.

Ensure Town-owned (non-park) parcel on the Hudson River Waterfront (north and south of Kingston-Rhinecliff Bridge) continue to buffer the airport from incompatible land uses. The Town owns approximately 54 acres of land to the south and east of the Kingston-Ulster Airport. These lands are undeveloped and have not been designated as parkland. They serve an important function in buffering the airport.

Reach out to the County to ensure that they support the Kingston-Ulster Airport's Transportation Bond Act applications for federal funding for runway and other airport improvements. The New York State Department of Transportation, under Section 14-1 of the State Transportation Law, requires that project applications made by privately owned airports be accompanied by a resolution from the governing body of the County in which it is located.

6.9.5 Rail Service

Coordinate with NYSDOT and CSX to ensure that local issues and concerns are addressed and appropriate mitigation measures employed. It is recommended that the Town reach out to NYSDOT to continue to monitor the impacts at-grade crossings have on the level-of service along area roadways, especially during peak travel hours. With respect to noise, the posting of signs to remind CSX engineers that they are traveling through densely developed neighborhoods may be useful in mitigating potential impacts.

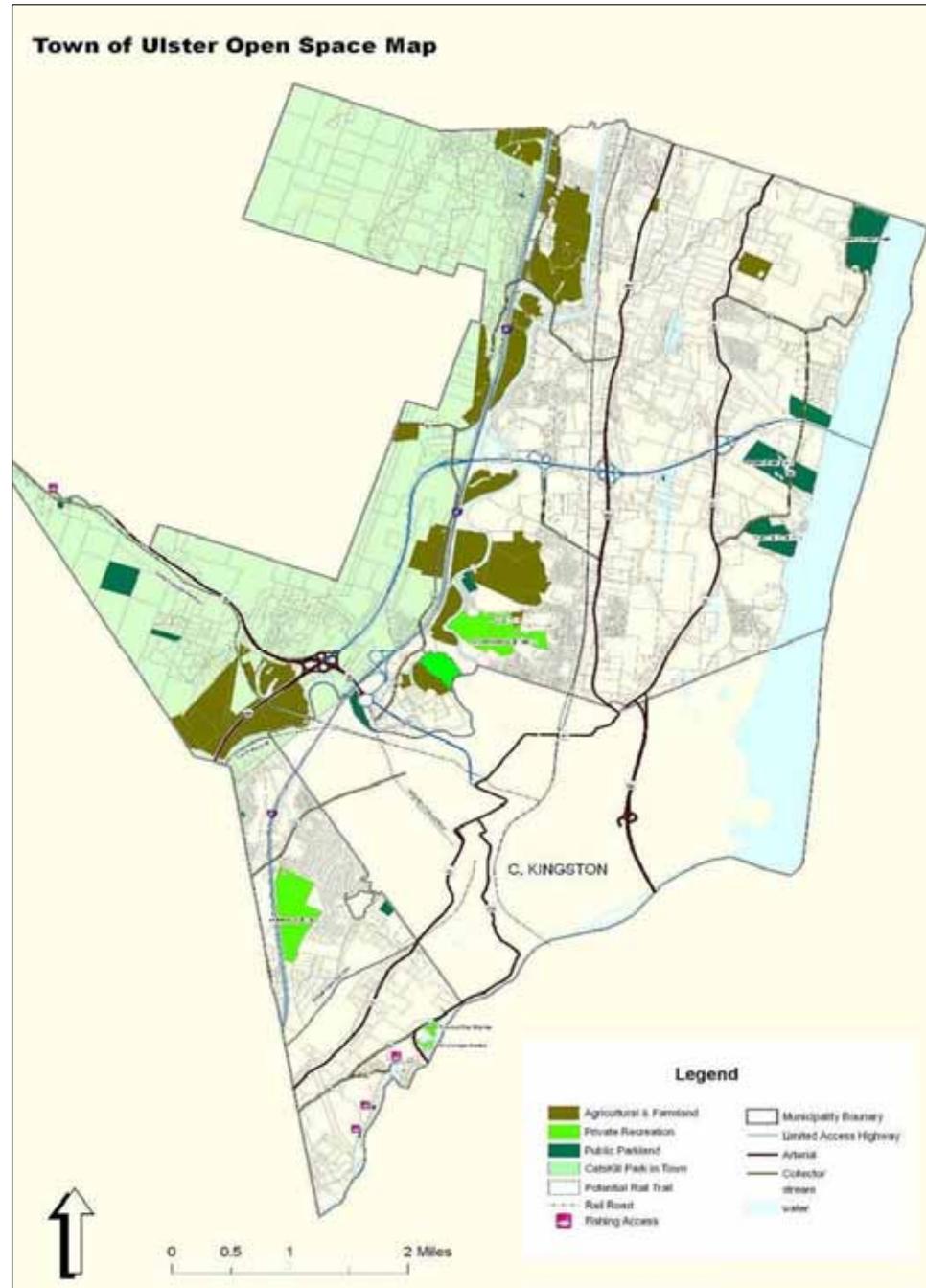
CHAPTER 7.0 RECREATIONAL, HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES

The Town of Ulster has a wonderful variety of open space that includes an active agricultural landscape, lands within the forestry management program, private recreational facilities (e.g. golf courses), marinas, DEC fishing access points, State forestland, and public parkland. While not all open space is accessible to the public (e.g. farmlands and private forest lands) it still serves a vital public purpose by helping to define the rural character of the Town while also protecting scenic vistas. The existing open space resources within the Town are shown on the Open Space Map to the right.

There are a variety of public and private recreational resources that are open to the public within the Town of Ulster. These resources not only serve local residents, but also residents throughout the entire mid-Hudson Region.

7.1 Public Recreation

The Town operates and maintains three public parks: 1) Orlando Street Park, 2) Robert E. Post Park, and 3) the Charles Rider Park. The *Orlando Street Park* is the smallest of the three parks comprising a total of 10.8 acres. This park contains an outdoor basketball court and two baseball diamonds. The park also has frontage on the Esopus Creek.



The Town has two beautiful parks that front on the Hudson River. The *Robert E. Post Park* is 59 acres and is the site of the Town of Ulster’s Children’s Summer Day Camp program. Facilities at the park include picnic tables, charcoal BBQ stands, a playground, soccer field, volleyball court, bocce courts, horseshoe pit, bathroom facilities and two picnic pavilions. This park is open seasonally from May 15 through October 15 each year.

The *Charles C. Rider Park* is also located on the shore of the Hudson River. This 90.2-acre Town Park contains a boat ramp and picnic tables. This park also operates seasonally with an attendant on the site from the April 15 weekend through Labor Day.

Both of these parks provide outstanding access to the Hudson River waterfront as well as recreational opportunities for the local residents during the spring and summer months. However, they do little to serve resident needs for recreation during the winter months. Though the Comprehensive Plan Survey, residents were asked to rate the importance of recreational opportunities to them. Of the respondents, 37% indicated that recreational opportunities were “very important” and another 54% said it was “important.” When asked to rate recreational facilities, only 9% said they were “excellent” with 64% indicating they were “good” and 27% finding that they were “poor.” One factor that may be lowering the satisfaction with local parks is their seasonal nature.

Ulster County also operates a Hudson River waterfront park in the Town of Ulster. The Ulster County Park is 102.9 acres and its services include: swimming, kiddy pools, playground and a snack bar. This park is opened from June though Labor Day.

The National Recreation and Parks Association established standards and development guidelines for community parks and recreational needs. These standards are based upon population size and should be used to help the Town plan for future parks and recreation needs. The table below provides an overview of recreation facilities that are needed based upon population size.

Facility Type	Standard per 1000 persons	Town of Ulster Needed	Town of Ulster Provided
Neighborhood Park With tot lots & playfield	1 acre	12 acres	10.3 acres
District Park Should have restrooms, playfields, tot lots and 1/3 activities for winter (ice skating or sledding).	2 acres	24 acres	59 acres at Robert E. Post Park
Regional Park Should have camping, picnicking, water access, cross country skiing.	15	180 acres	Rider Park 90.2 acres UC Park 102 acres at
Basketball Courts	1 court	12	8
Field Games	3 acres	36 acres	Approx. 24
Tennis Courts	½ court	6	0
Boating access	1/2,500 pop	5	1



Above: Images from Charles C. Ryder Park including an aerial view of the park and a view of the boat ramp in use.

While the Town appears to have a sufficient amount of acreage of parkland for a community of its size, it does lack certain types of facilities such as tennis courts, basketball courts, hiking or bicycle trails that would enhance recreational opportunities for area residents. The seasonal accessibility of its parks (from late spring to early fall) also greatly limits opportunities for the public to fully benefit from these recreational resources. The Hudson River parks are great summer resources, however, they are limited in that they are only accessible by automobile.

Consideration must be given to the creation of more neighborhood parks that are in close proximity to existing population centers. So too the creation of regional bikeways, cross-country ski trails, and bikeways will better link local residents to the Town’s parklands.

Other public recreational opportunities that are available to local residents are New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) managed fishing access points. There are several DEC fishing access points on the Rondout Creek in the vicinity of Eddyville. These access points give the public access to the community’s rivers and streams. There are also several tracts of State-owned forest land within the Town. These lands are available to the public for hiking and other passive recreation. Hunting is also permitted on these lands. Recommendations for enhancing the Town’s recreational opportunities are described further in Section 7.3 of this chapter.

7.2 Private Recreation

The Town of Ulster has a variety of private recreational opportunities for area residents and visitors. These include two marinas – the Anchorage Marina & Restaurant and the Rondout Bay Marina & Restaurant on the Rondout Creek in Eddyville. The Anchorage has fifty (50) wet slips, four transient slips and public restrooms. The Rondout Bay Marina & Restaurant has seventy-five (75) wet slips, a launch ramp, and public restrooms.

The Wiltwyck Golf Club, founded in 1933, is a member owned, family-oriented private club offering complete facilities and programs for its members and their guests. The 18-hole Robert Trent Jones designed golf course offers a challenging test of golfing abilities for beginners as well as advanced golfers. The course measures 6,575 yards (5,711 for women) and has a slope rating of 123 for men and 126 for women. The well-manicured course is the site of many Club tournaments in addition to outings and competitive tournaments such as the Wiltwyck Invitational, Wiltwyck Two Man Best Ball, the Herdegen and the Wiltwyck Pro Am. The Ascot Park driving range is another golfing resource for area residents and there is a second golf driving range off of Sawkill Road.

Another private recreational resource is the Kingston-Ulster Airport. There are many private pilots that keep their planes at the airport and use them primarily for recreational purposes.



Top to bottom: Aerial view of the Anchorage Marina & Rondout Bay Marina on the Rondout Creek; Wiltwyck Golf Course; and Ascot Park driving range.

7.3 Historic Resources

The period of Dutch settlement, the D&H Canal era, and the age of passenger rail service all contributed to the Town’s unique historic resources. The Town of Ulster Historical Society is developing a comprehensive history of the Town and an inventory of historic resources.

The Hudson Valley Vernacular Architecture (HVVA) organization has documented a number of early Dutch stone houses within the Town of Ulster. One of these is the *Felton/Markisenis House* which was built in 1798 by Philipus Felton, a Palatine German immigrant. The *Lem Boice House* is another early Dutch stone house that has been documented by HVVA. According to the Hudson Valley Vernacular Architecture Newsletter, the house was constructed during the early period of Dutch settlement and began as a one room stone house.

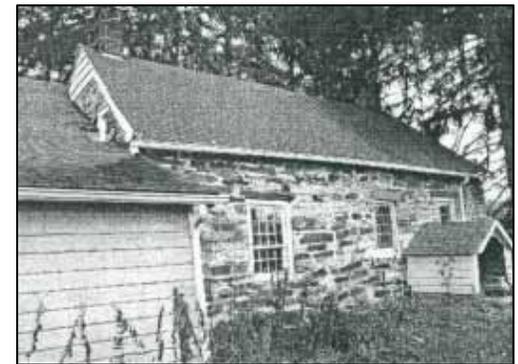
The *Felton/Ten Broeck/Chmura/Sweeney Stone House* is located in Flat Bush and is an example of a modified mid-18th century Dutch house. According to the HVVA September 2004 Newsletter, “this house has a whitewashed exterior which is a finish that is rarely seen on local stone houses today but was common 100 years ago, and can be seen on early photographs and in the 1870 paintings of Ulster County by the artist Winslow Homer.” This is an important early Dutch house and was first documented in the 1936 Historic American Building Survey. The photo was taken by Thomas T. Waterman.

Throughout the Town of Ulster, there are a number of early Dutch settlement houses. Two other examples include: 1) the 1804 *Johannes Snyder/McCaan Center-hall Stone House* and 2) the early 19th century *Viviani Center-hall Stone House* which is located on Glenere Boulevard (see photos of each on page 63).

Remnants of the D&H Canal Tow Path and locks are still visible in the vicinity of Eddyville. So too are furnaces that were used by the early brick making industry. Within the Town, there are many other buildings that appear eligible for listing on the national and state register of historic places. Without a comprehensive inventory of these resources, their importance and existence could be lost to future generations.

The author Daniel Webster once said that “The man who has no veneration for the memory of his forefathers is himself unworthy of kindred regard and remembrance.” Beyond the intrinsic value that historic preservation plays in helping us to understand the history of our community, it also plays an important part in helping to preserve the Town’s rural character while providing future economic opportunities through the promotion of heritage tourism.

The Town Board can play an important role in historic preservation efforts by supporting the development of a detailed historic resource survey for the Town. The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation provides grants for such efforts.



Upper photo: The Felton/Markisenis House; circa 1798. Photo courtesy Karen Markisenis.

Middle photo: The Lem Boice House – Early Dutch Stone House.

Lower photo: Felton/TenBroeck-Chmura/Sweeny House; circa 1751.

Source: HVVA Newsletters -various

7.4 Cultural Resources

Local residents in the Town of Ulster have access to a treasure trove of cultural resources. The Town of Ulster wraps around the historic City of Kingston which was the first capital of New York State. Within the City there are a multitude of museums, restaurants, and other civic and cultural attractions. Museums within the City of Kingston include: The Fred J. Johnston Museum, Friends of Historic Kingston Museum, Hudson River Maritime Museum, Old Dutch Church, Rondout Lighthouse, Senate House & Museum, Trolley Museum of New York, and Volunteer Fireman’s Hall & Museum.

The Ulster Performing Arts Center, built in 1927, is one of Ulster County’s finest cultural attractions and is located in the City of Kingston. The Center’s 1500-seat historic Broadway Theater is the largest performing arts center between Albany and New York City.

Kingston is also home to fine galleries such as The Coffey Gallery and Skybox Gallery in the historic Stockade section as well as Donskoj & Co. and the Artists Gallery in the Rondout waterfront section. Each features works by local and regional talents. The Woodstock Film Festival is one of the most exciting regional festivals in the country. Over five days, awards are given to the best of 100 films in categories such as fiction, documentary, shorts, experimental and editing. These cultural resources are easily accessible to Town residents.

7.5 Summary & Recommendations

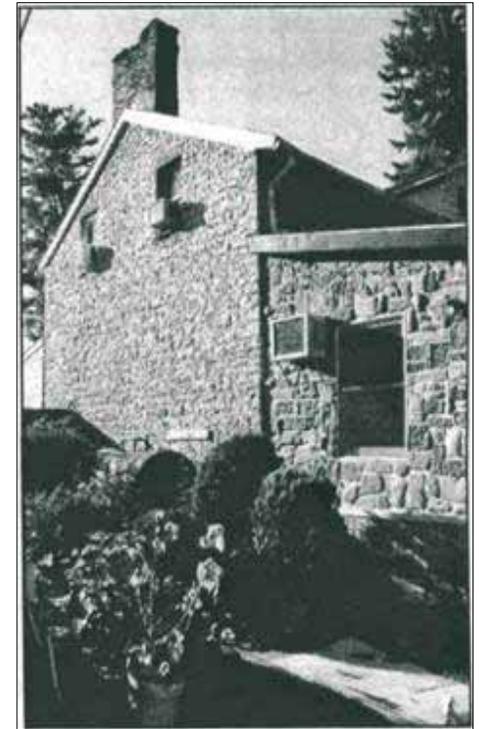
7.5.1 Public Recreation

Develop a Parks & Recreation Master Plan for the Town. The Town should conduct an inventory of its parks & recreational resources and identify any deficiencies it may have by using the National Recreation and Parks Association standards as a guideline.

Provide more year-round parks & recreation activities within its parks system. When asked through the Comprehensive Plan Survey what type of recreational activities they would like to see, 18% responded bicycle lanes along highways, while 17% responded hiking, biking and cross-country ski trails.

Create additional neighborhood parks. Such parks should be within walking distance to nearby residents and can be a ½ acre to an acre in size. These serve daily needs for recreation.

Ensure that new residential development helps to fund future park improvements. New York State Town Law provides a mechanism for funding the creation of parks, the need which is generated by new residential development. Section 160-22 of the Town’s Subdivision Regulations establishes that, concurrent with subdivision approvals, the Planning Board may require the reservation of land for park, playground, or that it require payment in lieu thereof. Section 160-22 should be applied to all subdivision reviews.



Upper photo: 1804 Johannes Snyder/McCaan House.

Lower photo: Early 19th century Viviani House.

Source: HVVA Newsletter – Oct. 2005

Work with Ulster County, the City of Kingston and Town of Hurley to create a paved rail trail along the Ontario & Western Railroad rights-of-way between the City of Kingston and Town of Hurley. The Town of Hurley has coordinated with Ulster County and regional transportation entities to construct a first-class paved rail trail along the abandoned O&W railroad right-of-way within the Town of Hurley. The rail trail stops at the Town of Ulster line; however, the O&W right-of-way continues through the Town of Ulster and into the City of Kingston. The Town should coordinate with the City of Kingston and Ulster County to complete the paved rail trail from Kingston to the Town of Hurley. Residents in all three communities will benefit from an expanded rail-trail system. Today, the Hurley segment of the trail is heavily utilized year-round. It is used for walking, biking, roller blading, strolling and even cross country skiing. This is the type of recreational resource that is needed within the Town to meet unmet needs.

Coordinate with the NYSDEC to identify and develop public access points along the Esopus Creek. The Town should coordinate with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) to identify and develop public access points along the Esopus Creek. The Town’s Orlando Street Park is a perfect location for such an access. The Town also owns an 11-acre parcel on the Esopus Creek to the southwest of Boices Lane. There is a right-of-way to the property that might lend itself as a NYSDEC public fishing access point as well.

Coordinate with the Kingston School District in order to expand recreational opportunities. With substantial investments in capital facilities, schools offer a means of providing lower cost active recreational activities during the summer and when not in use by others. The Town should coordinate with the school district to identify opportunities to use such facilities.

Support efforts by property owners to participate in the Conservation Tax Credit (CTC) Program. The New York State Legislature passed the CTC in 2006 that gives landowners whose land is restricted by a permanent conservation easement an annual rebate of 25% of the property taxes paid on that land, up to \$5,000 per year. This credit is available to all owners of easement-restricted land regardless of when the easement was created, provided that the easement was wholly or partially donated to a land trust or governmental agency. The landowner pays his/her taxes and receives a rebate from the State.

Pursue funding through the New York State Office of Parks Recreation & Historic Preservation. Each year, state grants for acquisition of public recreation easements, parkland acquisition, and historic preservation efforts. The acquisition grants programs provides funding for such things as the acquisition of permanent easements or fee title to lands for open space and recreation purposes. The parks grant program can be used for such things as playgrounds, swimming, boating, camping and other recreational activities.



Above: Views of the recently completed O&W Rail Trail in the Town of Hurley. There are opportunities to continue this trail through the Town of Ulster and into the City of Kingston.

Coordinate with neighboring communities, the County, State and Regional agencies to develop linear parks to provide passive recreational resources for local residents. In addition to the opportunity to create rail trails within the Town of Ulster and neighboring communities, there are other linear parks that could be developed. The D&H Canal Tow Path is one example of a linear park that the Town should play a role in helping to create. The Town and the County also own a large number of acres on the Hudson River waterfront. The Town also owns other waterfront lands on the Hudson River waterfront in the vicinity of the Kingston-Ulster Airport. The Town and County should explore the feasibility of developing a linear park along the Hudson River. This would require the cooperation of private land owners who might be interested in applying the Conservation Tax Credit program to a portion of their lands for the purpose of developing a linear park.

7.5.2 Historic Resources

Raise awareness of the State's existing Real Property Tax Exemptions for Historic Properties. The Real Property Tax Exemptions for historic properties gives authority to local communities to offer a five-year freeze on increases in assessment that commonly result after an owner has rehabilitated a property. After five years, the increased taxes will be phased in over the next five years, resulting in a ten-year delay before the full impact of the new assessment is felt.

Complete An Historic Resources Inventory for the Town of Ulster. The Town may be able to secure funding through New York State Office Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation to conduct a historic resources inventory for the Town of Ulster. The inventory could be used as the basis for developing a heritage tourism industry within the Town of Ulster.

Secure funding through the New York Main Street Program. Such funds could be used to revitalize the business district in Eddyville.

Enact a local historic preservation law. Section 119-dd of the General Municipal Law establishes that Town Boards are empowered to create historic preservation regulations. The Town Board could establish a historic preservation commission to carry out the regulations.

Create Town recognition of historic resources. The Town could develop its own recognition program for historic properties to recognize property owners that have restored historic resources in the community. Town of Ulster Historic plaques could be developed.

7.5.3 Cultural Resources

Support efforts to implement the recommendations from Ulster & Delaware Railroad Corridor Feasibility Study. This includes direct Town coordination with Ulster County and neighboring town's to apply for and secure state and federal funding for such efforts.

"Coordinate with neighboring communities, the County, State and regional agencies to develop linear parks to provide passive recreational resources for local residents."

CHAPTER 8.0 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The Town of Ulster has a population of 12,881 persons spread over a 28.9 square-mile land area. This is the equivalent, on average, of 445.7 persons per square mile to be served by a variety of community facilities and services.

The ability of the Town and its special districts to cost effectively provide community services to a rural population is diminished if development is further scattered throughout the Town. For this reason, this Comprehensive Plan proposes to concentrate the majority of future development primarily within and around the historic hamlet centers and new residential and business centers that have developed within the Town since the 1950's. By doing so, community services and facilities can be sited and expanded where the majority of the future population is anticipated to grow within the Town of Ulster.

8.1 Police Protection

The necessity to provide police protection is a matter of public policy and is also based upon the public's perception of security and their satisfaction with the response time of existing entities. The Town of Ulster has its own police force which provides police protection throughout the Town. Additional police protection is provided by the Ulster County Sheriff's Department and the New York State

Police which have a State Trooper's Barracks on Route 209 within the Town of Ulster. The Town is also part of the County's Emergency 911 Response System. The responses to the Comprehensive Plan survey indicate a general satisfaction with police services. When asked to rate various services within the Town, 43% of respondents rated the Town's police protection as "excellent" and 51% said it was "good." Only 7% said it was "poor". Police Department statistics for its Road Patrol indicates an average response time of five minutes. The Ulster Police Department includes a Patrol, K-9, Detective Division a DARE Program, and Cadet Program.

Depending upon the amount of growth that occurs within the Town, the demand by local residents for additional police protection in the future may increase. By focusing new growth within existing centers, the Town will be better able to provide such services in a cost effective manner. More importantly, the response time for requests for police protection will be reduced if less distance has to be covered to reach population centers. Presently, the Town's Police force is housed in Town Hall in Lake Katrine. It is well-sited due to its central geographic location within the Town. The future space needs for all of Town Hall needs to be evaluated. The Police Department is located at the lower level of Town Hall where there is little to no room for expansion. The Town should continue to track the needs of its Police Department including its need for office space. What follows is a discussion on fire services.



Above: Town Hall in Lake Katrine.

Town Hall houses the Supervisor's Office, Police Department, Town Court, Tax Collector's Office, and the Water & Sewer Departments.

The Town Assessor's Office, Building Department, Planning & Zoning Department, and Highway Department are located several miles from Town Hall at 584 East Chester Street Bypass.

Both of these facilities are full and the dispersion of certain services within the two separate complexes requires customers to travel to and from the complexes to get certain tasks completed.

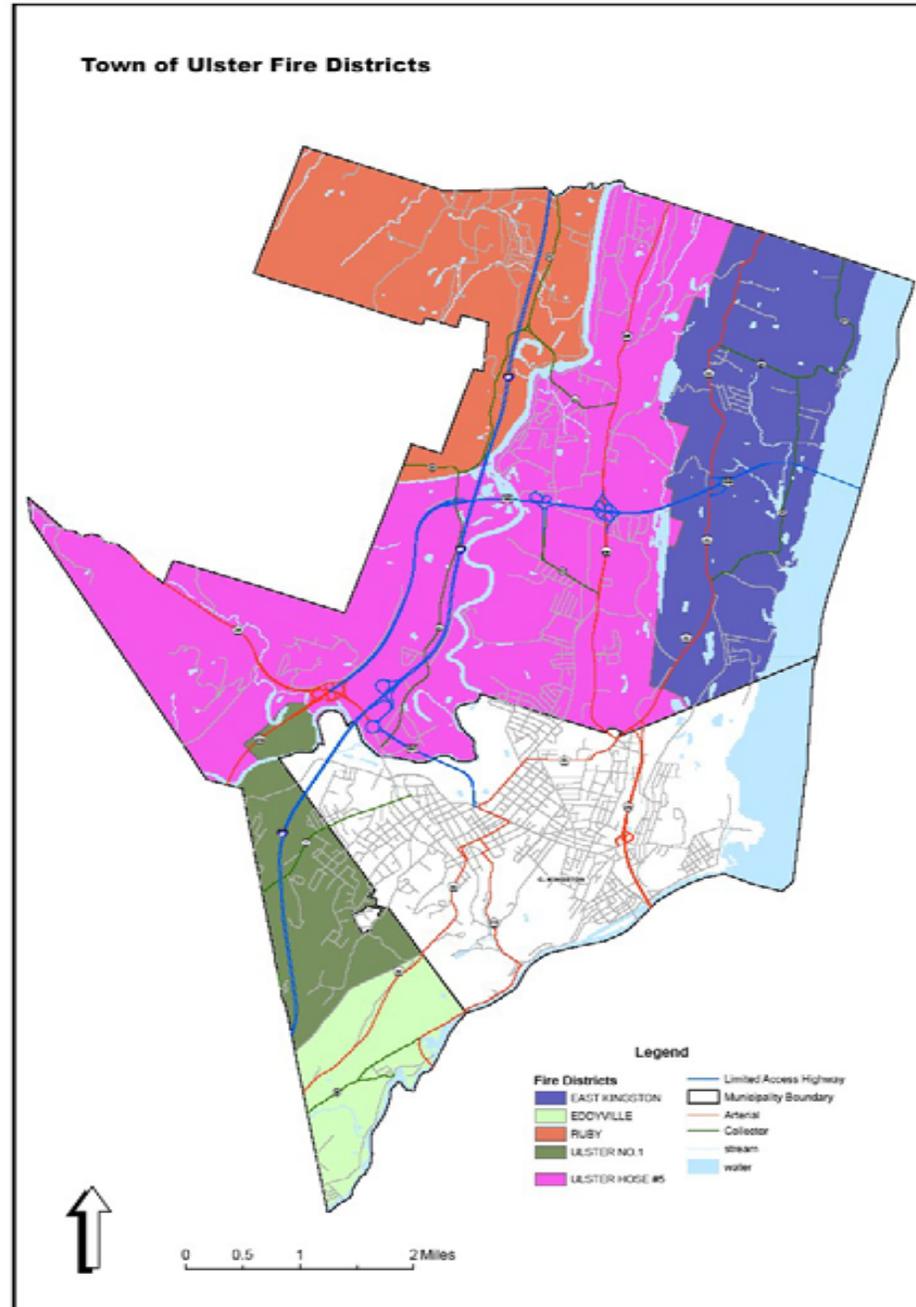
Without question, there is an immediate need for public meeting space in the Town. In fact, a number of the Comprehensive Plan Committee meetings were held in the lunch room at Town Hall because no other meeting space was available. A comprehensive evaluation of the space needs of each Town Department is recommended along with a capital improvement plan for future improvements.

8.2 Fire Protection & Emergency Medical

A review of the existing fire districts and facilities within the Town suggest that fire protection services and facilities are adequate to meet current needs. The existing fire houses are geographically well-situated throughout the Town helping to ensure satisfactory response times throughout the Town. The Comprehensive Plan Survey asked residents to rate fire protection services in the Town. A total of 60% of the respondents rated it as “excellent” and another 38% said it was good. Only 2% said it was “poor.” Generally speaking, satisfaction with fire protection services is closely related to response times. Existing fire districts include:

- East Kingston District;
- Eddyville Fire District (served by Bloomington Fire House);
- Ruby;
- Spring Lake aka Ulster No. 1; and
- Ulster No. 5.

This Comprehensive Plan recommends that the needs of each district continue to be monitored. As the population within the Town increases, so too will the needs for fire protection services. As applications for subdivisions and commercial developments are reviewed by the Town Planning Board, it will be important to solicit input from the Town’s Fire Districts to ensure their existing facilities and equipment can meet the needs of any new development.



Where a development presents a unique impact of fire services (such as the height of buildings or number of dwelling units proposed) mitigation measures should be provided. These are the types of issues that should be considered in the environmental review of large development proposals.

This column reserved

Ulster County has an Ulster County Fire & Mutual Aid Plan in which its fire companies agree to share their firefighting equipment and personnel when called upon by other companies. Town participation in the mutual aid program is a cost-effective way to share services and to provide for the growing needs of the community.

With respect to Emergency Medical Services (EMS), there appears to be a general satisfaction in the community. When asked to rate “emergency medical services” in the Comprehensive Plan Survey, 52% rated it as “excellent” and another 45% rated it as “good.” Only 3% rated it as being “poor.”

The Ulster Hose Fire Department recently merged with Ulster – Onteora District and now serves the 5th Fire District of the Town of Ulster which covers 13 square miles and 8,000 residents. In addition to fire protection services, the Department houses a Dive Command Vehicle, dive boat and an EMS vehicle. The Spring Lake Fire Department also provides EMS and rescue protection within its service area which comprises approximately five square miles and 2,500 residents.



Top photo: Ruby Firehouse which serves the Ruby Fire District.

Middle photo: Spring Lake Firehouse which serves Ulster District No. 1.

Bottom photo: Ulster Hose Company No. 5 - Fire District No. 5.

8.4 Library

The Town of Ulster Public Library is located at 860 Ulster Avenue in the Town of Ulster. The library is funded through a special district. The 2007 voter approved budget allocates \$240,204 for annual operating expenses. The library hours of operation are as follows:

	Open	Close
Monday	10:00 am	5:00 pm
Tuesday	12:00 am	8:00 pm
Wednesday	10:00 am	5:00 pm
Thursday	12:00 am	8:00 pm
Friday	10:00 am	5:00 pm
Saturday	10:00 am	3:00 pm

Based upon the Town’s 2005 population of 12,881 persons, a total of 8,500 square feet should be provided for staff work area, children’s area, reading stacks, reference, periodical, adult browsing and bathrooms. Presently, the library is housed in a 5,400 square-foot building that was constructed in 2003. The library includes a multimedia computer workstation in its children’s room, a Summer Reading Program and Story Hour which resumes in the Fall. Other services that the library and staff offer are copying, fax services, notary services, and the Inter-Library Loan service that covers New York State and beyond. The library offers a large assortment of best-seller fiction, non-fiction, audio books, and videos to the public. The library has a total cataloged book collection of 37,633 books.

The American Library Association (ALA) recommends that libraries serving between 10,000-20,000 persons maintain two (2) volumes per capita – the Ulster Public Library maintains 2.92 volumes per capita, slightly higher than the ALA minimum. The Ulster Library also belongs to the Mid-Hudson library system which allows for the loan of books, supplementing the Town of Ulster Public Library’s holdings. In addition to books, the library houses 3,660 audio and videos, and 55 magazine subscriptions. The library also has seven (7) computers that provide patrons with access to the Internet, on-line magazine databases, the card catalog, word-processing software, and CD encyclopedias. The library’s grand total holdings are 43,801.

8.5 Post Offices

There are two (2) post offices physically located within the Town of Ulster. These include:

- Lake Katrine – 12449
- Ruby – 12475

The Town also falls within a number of zip code boundaries as follows:

- Bloomington – 12411
- Hurley – 12443
- Kingston – 12401

The multitude of zip code boundaries covering the Town adds to the lack of a central identity of the Town by many of its residents.



Top photo: Town of Ulster Public Library at 860 Ulster Avenue.

Middle photo: Lake Katrine Post Office at Tuyenbridge Road and Route 9W.

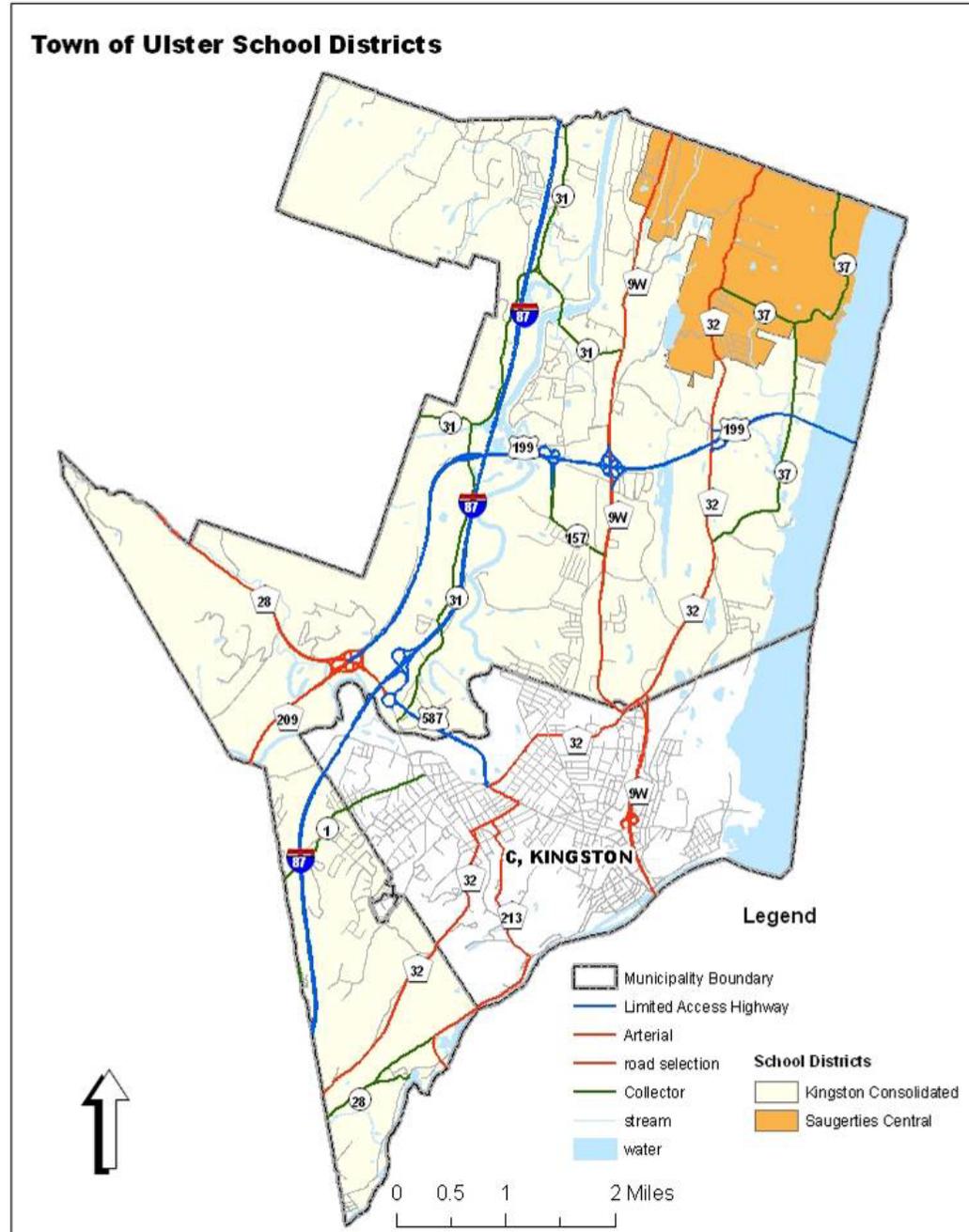
Bottom photo: Ruby Post Office at Main Street in the hamlet of Ruby.

8.6 Schools

The Town of Ulster lies within the City of Kingston School District and the Saugerties Central School District. The School District Map to the right shows the geographic distribution of the districts. The vast majority of Town residents send their children to the City of Kingston School District. There are four City of Kingston School District buildings physically located within the Town of Ulster. These are the M. Clifford Miller Middle School, Lomaier Lane; the ER Crosby Elementary School, Neighborhood Road; the John A. Coleman High School, Hurley Avenue Extension; and the Chambers Elementary School, Morton Boulevard. Students also have access to the Ulster County Board of Cooperative Educational Services located in New Paltz. The most recent district data shows student enrollment as follows:

School Enrollment		
School	Grades	Enrollment
Chambers ES	K-6	
Crosby ES	K-2, 3-5	362
Miller MS	6-8	1,000
Kingston HS	9-12	2,400
John A. Coleman HS (Catholic School)	9-12	158

While the Town Board does not have a direct say in the placement of school facilities, it is important that the Town Board and Kingston School District communicate with one another. There may be opportunities for shared recreational facilities that could benefit the school districts and Town residents.



The Kingston School District’s *Facilities Master Plan* calls for the construction of a new high school. The proposed high school would consist of a new building in a closed campus setting. According to the district, this would not only be better suited to the nature of education today, but will also provide students with a safe, secure learning environment.

The School Board evaluated over 50 possible locations for a new high school. The two primary sites that were under consideration were in the Town of Ulster and included a 173-acre parcel known as the Chambers Farm property and a 57.5-acre vacant parcel known as Tech City II. The owner of the TechCity II site did not express an interest in selling the property to the District, so the Board began negotiations with the owner of the Chambers Farm property. Further evaluation revealed that the Chamber’s site was located within a FEMA designated floodplain and that it also had poor site access. Both sites have since been dropped from consideration for the new high school.

The development of the new High School – within the Town of Ulster – has the potential to be an important community resource for the Town. If well-sited and planned, a new high school campus could provide much needed public meeting space for Town residents as well as shared recreational facilities to serve both the school district and the Town of Ulster. The Town should work with the Kingston School District to identify a site for the new high school.

It is recommended that the Town reach out to the School Board to ensure that the Town Planning Board is involved in the decision-making with respect to the high school site, the layout of the campus roads and infrastructure. Coordination between the Town and school district will help to ensure the greatest benefit for both parties.

Looking ahead, the Town must also ensure that the potential impacts associated with large-scale residential development on the school district are carefully assessed. Such development may increase the year-round population and in turn the number of school-age children. This could lead to the need to build additional classrooms or even new school facilities. The Town could help the school district track new residential construction by providing quarterly building permit reports. Such information could help the school district with its capital facilities planning.

One tool that the Town can use to ensure that potential impacts to schools are mitigated is the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). The Planning Board can use the environmental review process to require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for large-scale developments that are likely to result in increases in the number of school-age children. Within the EIS, developers would be required to identify whether the development will create a demand for additional community services – such as schools. Where impacts are identified, appropriate mitigation measures would be required by the developer.



Top photo: M. Clifford Miller Middle School.

Bottom photo: Chambers Elementary School.



8.7 Water

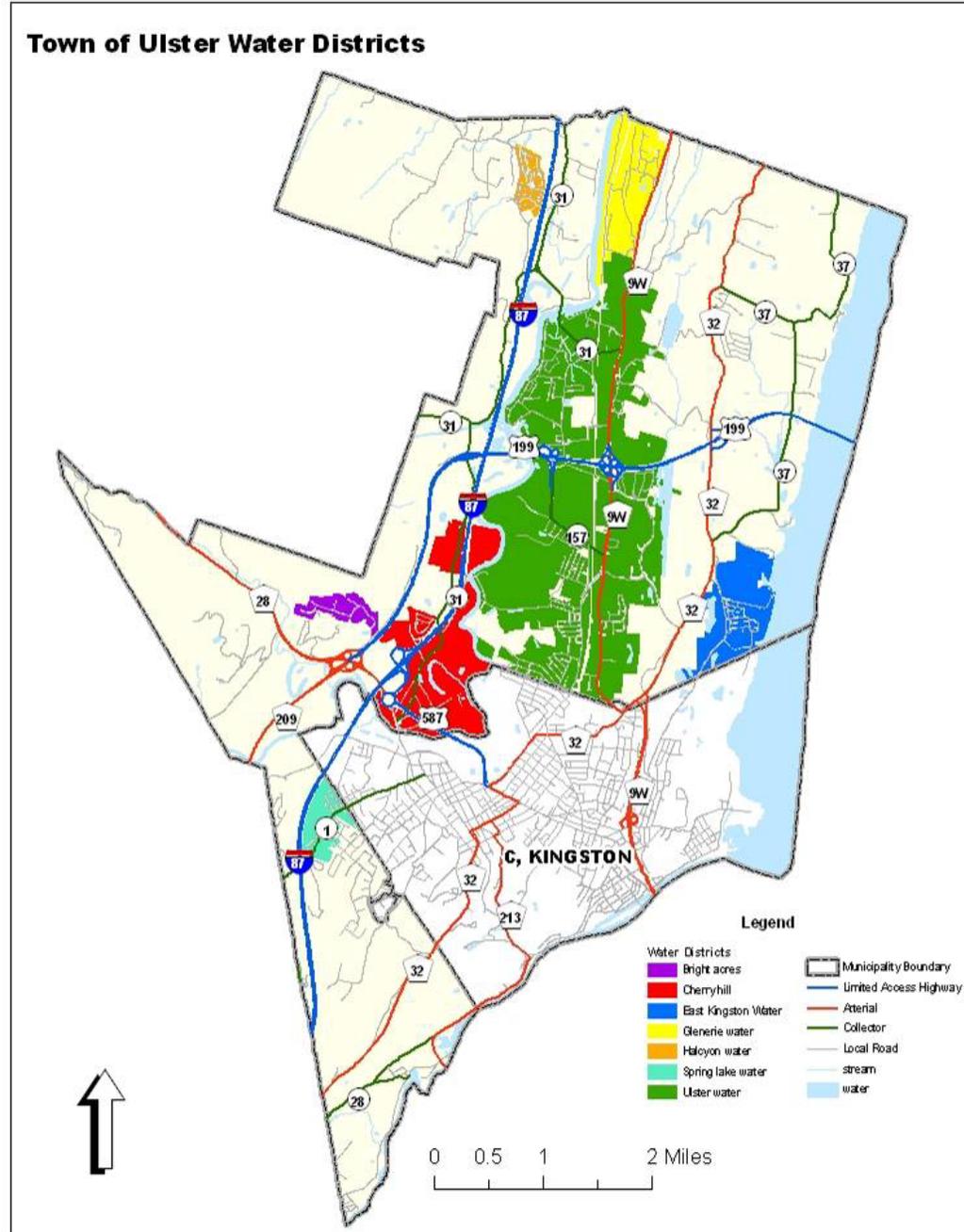
The Town of Ulster operates and maintains seven water supply systems with the following districts: 1) Bright Acres, 2) Cherry Hill, 3) East Kingston, 4) Glenerie Water, 5) Halcyon Water, 6) Spring Lake Water, and 7) Ulster Water. These are shown on the Water District Map to the right. There are also three areas of the Town served by private water companies: 1) Hillside Acres, 2) Rolling Meadows, and 3) Whittier. A brief description of each of the Town’s districts is provided below:

Bright Acres. This district has a capacity of 12,000 gallons per day (gpd) and is operating at capacity. There is no room for growth in this water district.

Cherry Hill. This district is presently using 29,000 gallons per day. This district purchases its water from the Ulster Water District and there is plenty of capacity to serve new users in the area defined by the district.

East Kingston Water. This district is designed to provide 25,000 gpd and will buy its water from the City of Kingston. A proposed development by AVR called “The Landing” is anticipated to use this water district.

Glenerie Water. Created in 2004, this district presently uses 18,000 gpd and purchases its water from the Ulster Water District. There is room for growth within this water district.



Halcyon Water. This district currently is using 18,000 gpd of water and is at capacity. The two wells that serve the district cannot support additional growth for the district. There is no room for growth within this water district.

Spring Lake Water. Presently using 41,000 gpd with a capacity of 75,000 gpd based upon a contract to buy water from the City of Kingston.

Ulster Water District. This is the largest water district in the Town and the one with the greatest capacity. Today, the plant utilizes 825,000 gpd but the plant can produce 1.4 million gpd. In 2006, the Town entered into a 99-year contract with the City that will allow this district to purchase up to an additional 200,000 gpd. This is the district and the area within the Town that has the greatest potential to accommodate new growth based upon the provision of water.

Based upon the above, the Town is in a good position to accommodate new residential and commercial growth within most of its water districts. The two exceptions are the Bright Acres and Halcyon Water districts which are operating at capacity. The Town’s contracts to purchase water from the City of Kingston have helped to ensure the long-term needs for additional capacity will be met for years to come. Still, it is important that the Town carefully monitor the capacity of each plant and ensure that new development is carefully evaluated for their potential impacts on water consumption.

Under the Town’s zoning, the permitted density in the residential zoning districts is, in part, determined by the provision of water & sewer. In the R-30 Residential District, the minimum lot area is 40,000 square feet if a property does not have central water or sewer. With central water or sewer, the minimum lot area is reduced to 30,000 square feet. This Comprehensive Plan supports the policy of directing higher density development to areas of the Town where water & sewer service is already provided. Section 11.1.2 of this Comprehensive Plan shows general areas where higher density residential and commercial development should be encouraged. These areas overlap with the Town’s existing water & sewer infrastructure.

It is recommended that the Town adopt a policy of reviewing all requests for water line extensions (outside of existing districts) in the context of this recommended density pattern. Extension of water lines into areas that are recommended for lower densities and/or lands within state certified agricultural district should be discouraged. Sufficient capacity must remain to serve existing properties within each district before requests for extensions are considered. These policies will encourage higher density development near existing development centers and reduce the cost of operating the water systems in the future by reducing the linear feet of pipe that is required to serve district users. The Town also needs to monitor capacity to ensure that existing users are served before granting any water line extensions.

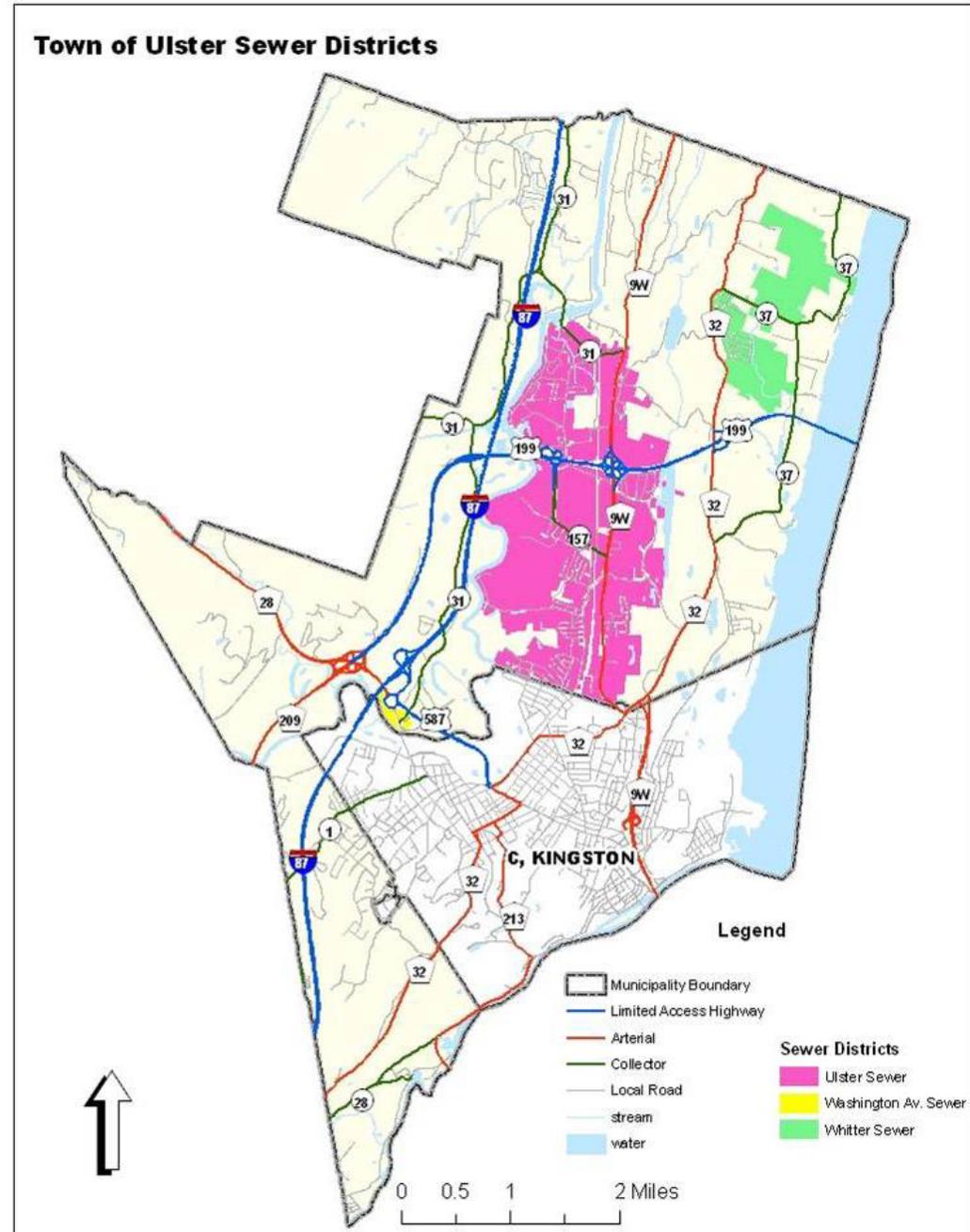
“This Comprehensive Plan supports the policy of directing higher density development to areas of the Town where water & sewer service is already provided.”

8.8 Sewer

There are three sewer districts in the Town of Ulster: 1) Washington Avenue Sewer District, 2) Whittier Sewer District, and 3) the Ulster Sewer District. The geographic boundaries of these districts are clearly shown on the Town of Ulster Sewer District Map to the right. A brief description of each district is provided below:

Washington Avenue. This is a new sewer district that will be coming on-line in 2007. The Town has entered into a contract with the City of Kingston to purchase 75,000 gpd of capacity from the City of Kingston Sewer District. This capacity should be more than enough to accommodate growth within the Washington Avenue Corridor. It may also open up the possibility of serving the area within the Cherry Hills Water District in the future.

Whittier Sewer District. This sewer district has a capacity of 100,000 gpd. During dry weather the plant is handling 40,000 to 45,000 gpd. During wet weather the plant is routinely using 90,000 to 100,000 gpd. This district suffers from a long-term Infiltration & Inflow (I&I) problem that greatly reduces the efficiency and effectiveness of the Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP). The Town is working to resolve the I&I issue but until it is resolved the WWTP is for all practical purposes operating at full capacity. Addressing the I&I issue could effectively make available up to 45,000 gpd for this district.



8.9 Town Highway Facilities

The Town's Highway Department has the responsibility for maintaining 73 miles of Town roads as well as the job of keeping those roads accessible for vehicular traffic every day, in all kinds of weather. The Highway Department Complex is located at 584 East Chester Bypass. This location has sufficient space to accommodate the existing needs of the Highway Department with room for future expansion. The site is well-maintained and screened from public view. The central location of the site within the Town, coupled with ease of access to Route NYS 9W and NYS Route 32, make it easy for Town trucks to get to and from Town roads within the Town.

8.10 Solid Waste



The Town of Ulster operates a solid waste transfer station at Miron Lane. The transfer station is a drop-off for household trash, recyclables and other items. The Ulster County

Resource Recovery Agency coordinates a comprehensive countywide solid waste management and recycling program. Waste Management, Inc. and other private haulers provide the residential trash pickup for most households in the Town.

8.11 Summary & Recommendations

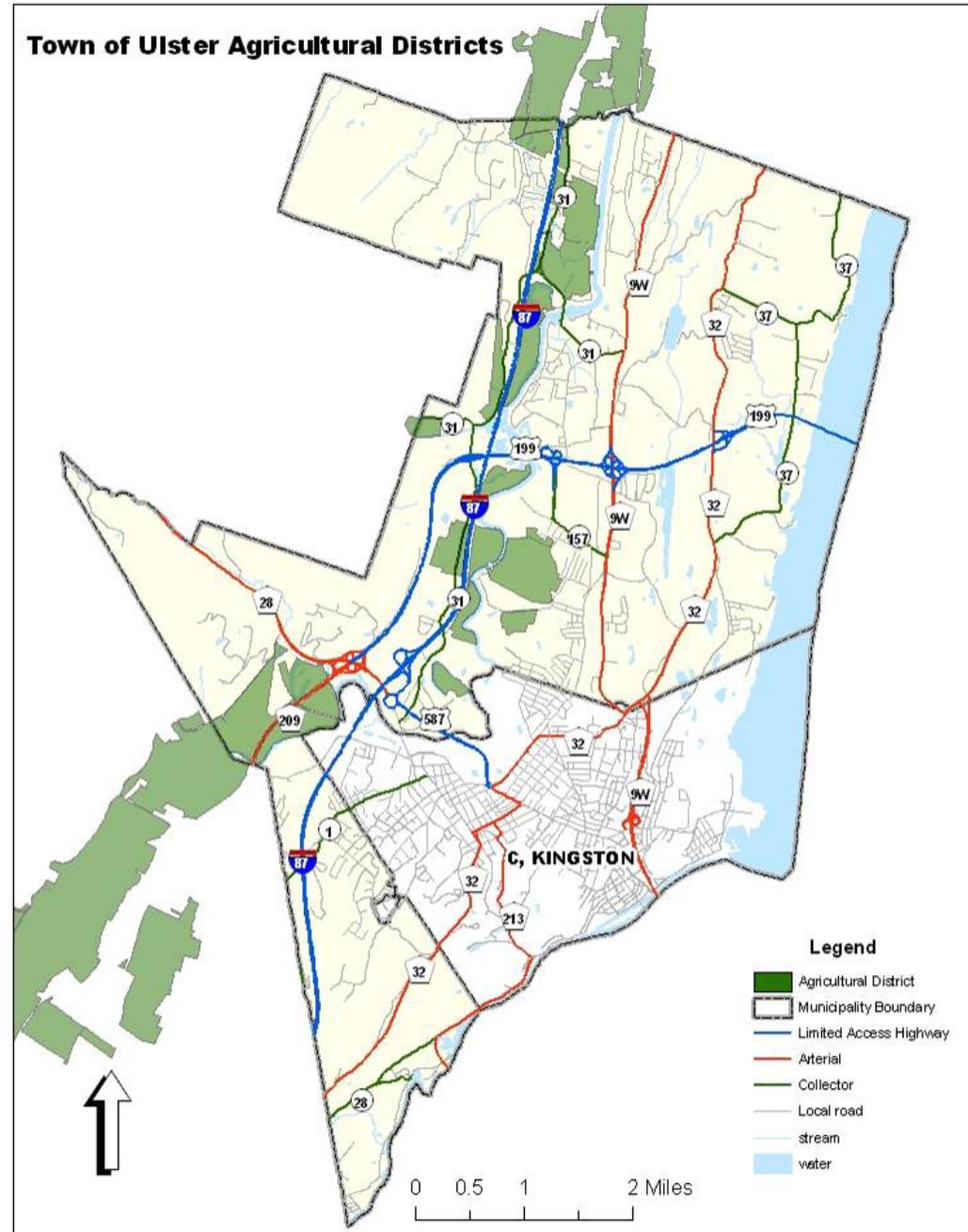
Based upon the above and the results from the Comprehensive Plan Survey, it appears that most community services and facilities are sufficient to meet the needs of the Town today. The noticeable exceptions are the growing need for public meeting space at Town Hall, the Bright Acres and Halcyon Water Districts which are operating at full capacity, and the Whittier Sewer District which is at capacity due to a long-term Inflow & Infiltration problem. The following are some general recommendations for the Town to pursue with respect to community facilities:

- Continue to work with its engineer to resolve the infiltration & inflow at the Whittier Sewer District (WWTP);
- Coordinate with school district to create shared recreation/meeting facilities; and
- Create a *Capital Improvement Plan* (CIP) for all the Town's capital facilities. A CIP would assess the useful life of all capital facilities (e.g. buildings, water & sewer infrastructure, playground equipment, etc.) maintenance needs and replacement schedules. It would also help the Town to identify and plan for the financing of future capital improvements. A well-developed CIP could help save money by increasing the useful life of long-term capital assets, reducing the likelihood of costly emergency replacement of equipment, and reducing operating & maintenance costs.

CHAPTER 9.0 AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND

The Comprehensive Plan Survey showed that 80% of Town residents supported the protection of the right-to-farm. A total of 91% of survey respondents felt that the preservation of farmland was an important issue for the Town Board to consider in the development of this Comprehensive Plan. A total of 94% of the respondents felt that farms and agri-businesses were an “appropriate” or “very appropriate” land use within the Town of Ulster.

There are a variety of farms and other agri-businesses operating within the Town. Lands within the state certified agricultural districts are shown in green on the Agricultural Districts map to the right. Most of the farmland is located within Esopus Creek river valley. In fact, some of the richest agricultural soils in the County are the Hurley Flats within the Town of Ulster. These lands are used for the cultivation of a variety of crops and help to define the rural character of the Town. There are also active agricultural lands within close proximity to some of the Town’s densest neighborhoods such as Lincoln Park and Lake Katrine. Keeping these lands within the state-certified agricultural districts protects farmers from potential nuisance complaints from nearby residential areas. Much of this farmland is located within FEMA designated floodplains making it less suitable for other development purposes.



There are other agricultural lands lying north of Routes 209/199 that are used for the raising of livestock (including a bison farm) and raising of horses. These working farms help to define the rural character of the Town.

Keeping land in agricultural production is one of the best ways to preserve open space. Working farms help to define the rural landscape within the Town of Ulster. By protecting cropland, pastures, and woods, the Town can retain its traditional sense of place and rural identity. Working farms also provide the potential to attract tourist dollars to the Town. Throughout the mid-Hudson Valley, wineries, u-pick farms, farm stands, and other agri-tourism establishments are direct draws for tourists.

Farms have the least impact on the local tax base and provide the greatest economic multiplier of any industry. This is because farmland and farms require fewer community services. The preservation of farmland will help to maintain the rural landscape of the Town as well as contribute to the local economy through the sale of locally grown produce and livestock. Farms are local businesses. They create jobs and support many other businesses by purchasing local goods and services such as farm equipment.

There are a variety of land-use tools that can be employed to assist the farming community in the Town. These include conservation easements, right-to-farm laws and other measures that are described in Section 9.1 – Recommendations.

9.1 Recommendations

Form a Town of Ulster Agricultural Advisory Committee (ACC). The Committee could be made up of elected officials and representatives from the farming community. An ACC could provide a forum for area farmers to analyze issues facing farms and farmland in the Town, articulate the benefits provided by local farms and the challenges they face, and identify strategies that the Town can employ to support the business and land use needs of local farms.

Identify areas where agricultural activity should be supported over the long-term. These are generally the existing farmlands locally known as the Hurley Flats and the farmlands within the state-certified agricultural districts within the Town. Those farms that are in close proximity to other farms, or natural features such as streams, wetlands, parks, or important vistas, are also areas where agricultural activity should be strongly supported.

Develop land-use policies aimed at retaining large blocks of farmland that are able to support a variety of farm businesses. Larger areas of farmland provide greater opportunities for farms to adapt to changing market conditions and to develop synergies with adjacent farming operations. It also helps to ensure a buffer between residential areas and lands in agricultural production. Strategies that might be employed include the purchase of conservation easements which is described on the next page.



Top photo: Pasture lands near County Route 35.

Middle photo: Aerial view of the Hurley Flats.

Bottom Photo: Farmland east of CR 35.

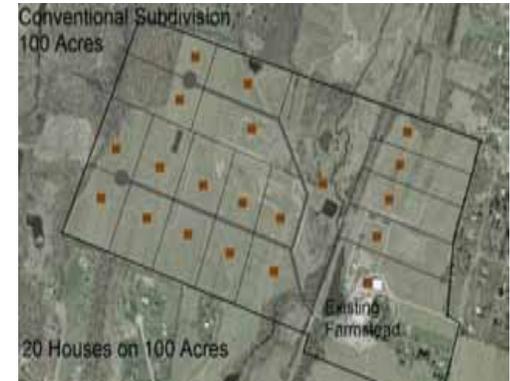
Support applications to the State and federal government to purchase agricultural easements on local farms. Under a purchase of agricultural easements or purchase of development rights program, a farmer sells the future right to develop the property for non-agricultural uses through a conservation easement in exchange for a cash payment of the Fair Market Value of that easement. The Town Board should support applications to NY Ag & Markets for grants to purchase conservation easements from area farmers who want to participate in the program. Doing so will allow area farmers to take equity out of their properties while ensuring that the farmland is preserved for farming in the future.

Create local program to purchase conservation easements from area farmers. The Town could coordinate with the County to create a fund to purchase conservation easements. One way of raising funding for such a program might be through an increase in the transfer tax or mortgage recording tax that would be dedicated to such a program.

Create an AG-Agricultural Zoning District. Within the Town of Ulster, the best farmlands lie within the state-certified agricultural districts. These lands are also located within a variety of zoning districts ranging from I – Industry; OM – Office Manufacturing; R-30 Residential; and R-10 Residential. The unique business and land-use needs of local farms may be better met through the creation of a new AG-Agricultural Zoning District for the Town of Ulster.

An AG-Agricultural Zoning District could encompass all lands within existing state certified agricultural districts. The purpose of a specific zoning district would be to ensure a favorable business environment for agriculture while not accelerating the conversion of farmland. There are a variety of non-farm business opportunities that could be developed on local farms to provide additional farm income. These include but are not limited to: bed & breakfast, commercial bakery in home, gift shops, farm equipment & repair; welding assembly, milk processing, automobile repair shop, farm stands, and commercial composting that could be allowed within agricultural districts subject to a special permit to ensure design issues are addressed.

Encourage cluster or conservation subdivisions to retain prime farm lands. A conservation subdivision or cluster subdivision is a form of development that allows for a reduction in lot area and bulk requirements, provided there is no increase in the number of lots or density permitted under a conventional subdivision and that the remaining land area is devoted to open space. Conservation subdivisions could be used to cluster development on one portion of a site in exchange for retaining a large tract of land for agricultural production. There are some practical issues that have to be considered in using conservation subdivisions to retain farmland such as ensuring the conservation parcel is large enough for farming while providing a buffer between the farming activity and houses.



Above: Example of a conventional subdivision versus a conservation subdivision.

“Section 190-16 of the Town Zoning Code already authorizes the Planning Board to allow cluster subdivisions.”

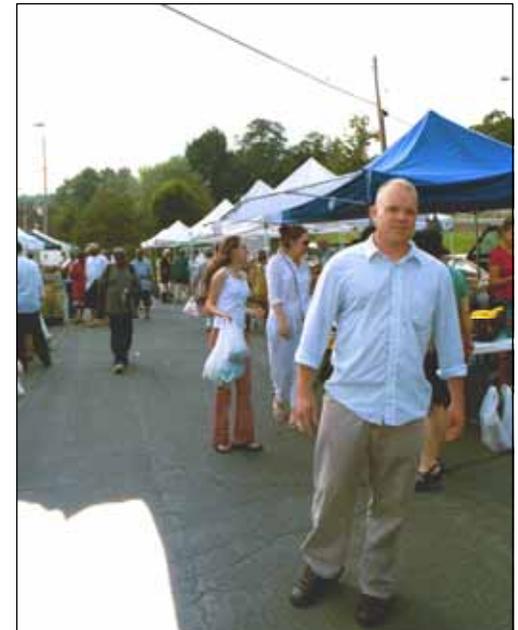
Discourage the extension of water and sewer lines to areas with prime farmlands. The Town should avoid the extension of water and sewer lines into prime farmlands. Without sewer & water, the remaining farmlands will be less attractive for residential and/or non-residential development – helping to preserve the land for agricultural uses.

Preserve historic barns by encouraging property owners to seek funding through the New York State Historic Preservation Office’s Barn Restoration Program. Funding through this program is offered annually to support the preservation of historic barns. Historic barns, silos, and open farm lands are an important link to the Town’s farming heritage. By preserving the historic barns in the Town, we are also preserving a part of our agricultural heritage. The Town Board can help with barn restoration and preservation efforts by supporting applications to the New York State Department of State for barn restoration grants. Doing so will help the Town to retain its bucolic landscape which could be an important component of an emerging heritage tourism industry.

Coordinate with Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) to support local farmers. The Ulster County Cornell Cooperative Extension is located at 10 Westbrook Lane in the City of Kingston. CCE provides a variety of programs to support area farmers. The Town should add a link from its website to CCE Ulster.

Encourage local farmers to participate in the Kingston Farmer’s Market. Every Saturday, from June through November, Uptown Kingston hosts a Farmer’s Market that brings together local and regional vendors who offer a broad variety of their goods and wares. Seasonal produce and plants, cheeses, baked goods, jams, jellies, coffee, wines, meats and much more are sold at the Farmer’s Market. Local farmers should be encouraged to participate in the Kingston Farmer’s Market and to coordinate with Cornell Cooperative Extension with respect to identifying the types of specialty crops that could be grown for sale at the Farmer’s Market.

Review land use controls to ensure they are Agriculture friendly. The Town should ensure that certain accessory farm activities such as farm stands are approved in a timely and effective manner.



Top photo: Farmer’s Market – Albany, NY

Bottom photo: Farmer’s Market–Liberty, NY

CHAPTER 10.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

10.1 Business Needs

"There are generally nine needs and concerns of any firm that is looking for a place to conduct business. These include: Land, Labor, Capital, Energy, Finance, Management, Low Taxes, Research, and Quality of Life." ⁱⁱ What follows is a description of each.

Land - Companies seeking a location for their business need sites that are suitable for development. This includes sites that are zoned for their type of business and free of environmental constraints that would inhibit their development.

Labor - Firms looking for a place to do business will look closely at the availability and quality of the community's labor force. In this respect, the Town of Ulster has a competitive advantage in that it has a well-educated labor force.

Physical Capital - A region's physical capital includes its transportation system, water & sewer, tele-communications infrastructure and building infrastructure. The Town of Ulster has outstanding access to the interstate highway system, availability of freight service, and an excellent telecommunications infrastructure. These are competitive advantages that it needs to aggressively market to prospective businesses.

Energy - Generally, most companies that are major users of energy are concerned with the cost of energy and the adequate and uninterrupted supply of this resource. Electric and gas service is provided by Central Hudson.

Finance - All companies need capital to start-up, grow and expand. There are a variety of financing packages that the County and its economic development agencies provide to assist small and large companies alike. These programs could be used to help attract start-up businesses in the Town of Ulster.

Management - Good management skills are essential to any successful business operation. The NYS Small Business Development Center in Kingston provides free assistance to start-up companies in managing their businesses.

Taxes - Firms will generally gravitate to areas with lower real property tax rates. The Kingston –Ulster Empire Zone (EZ) provides a 10-year real property tax credit to qualified businesses.

Research - Research facilities may include such places as good libraries, technical colleges, community colleges, universities and corporate research facilities.

Quality of Life - The appearance of a community, safety of its residents, opportunities for a good education, and availability of cultural and recreational resources are all factors that contribute to our quality of life.



Top photo: Besicorp at Kingston-Ulster Commerce Park at the K-U Airport.

Middle photo: Underutilized portion of Tech City.

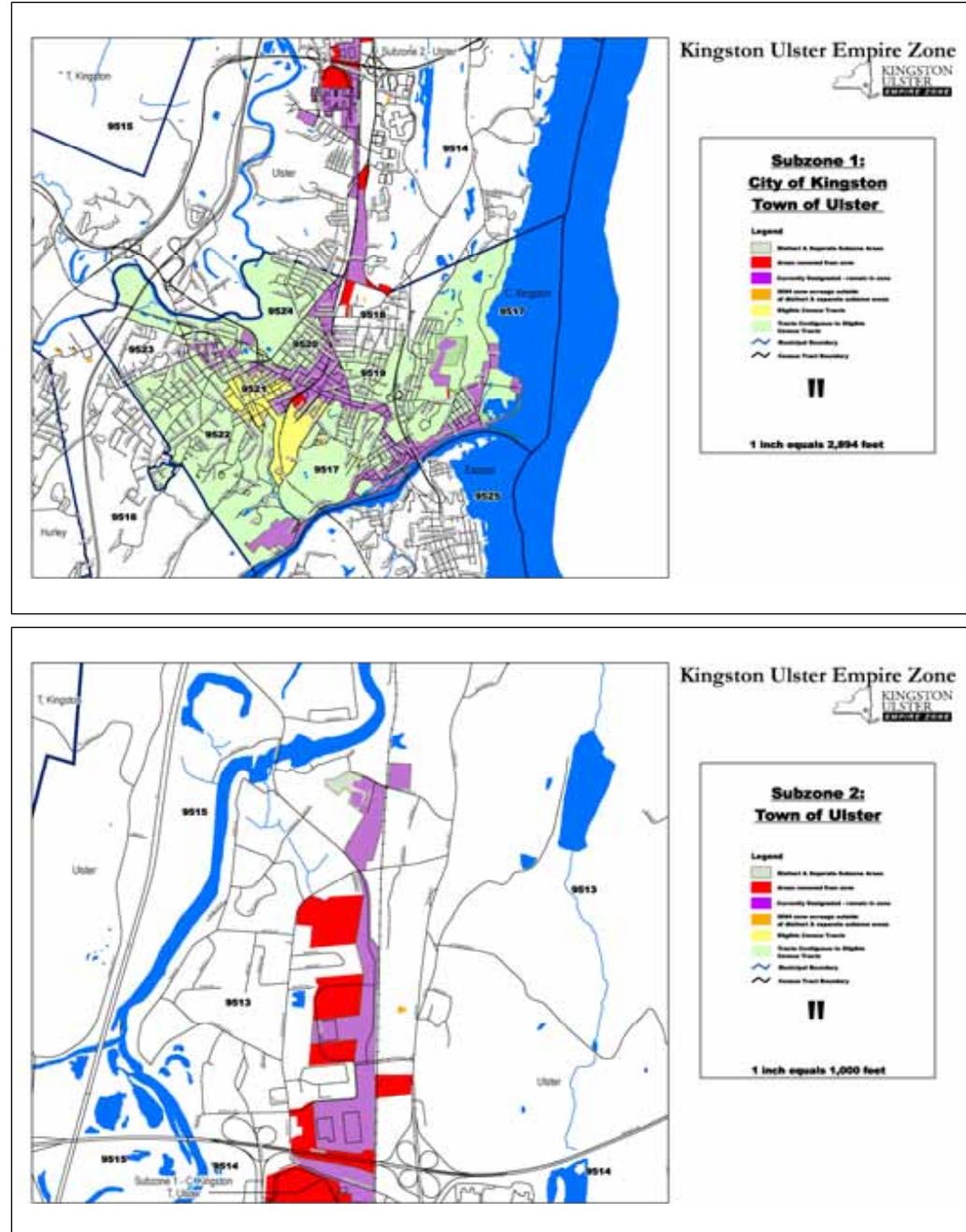
Bottom photo: Bank of America offices at Tech City campus.

10.2 Empire Zone & Shovel-Ready Sites

One of the most powerful incentives that New York State provides to help its communities attract new businesses is the Empire Zone Program. Each Empire Zone in the State is given a geographic area of two square miles to include in their EZ Boundary. A large portion of the Kingston-Ulster EZ lies within the Town of Ulster as is shown in the EZ Subzone maps.

The Town should aggressively work with the Kingston-Ulster Empire Zone to promote the significant tax advantages that are available through this program including wage tax credits, investment tax credits, real property tax credits, sales tax exemptions, tax reduction credits and Zone Capital Credits for direct equity investments. It must also work with the private sector to create shovel-ready sites.

Shovel-ready refers to a process where potential development sites are pre-permitted for future development. The *Build Now-NY Program* provides funding to pay for professional services related to engineering, environmental assessments, and legal support needed to pre-permit a development site. Pre-permitting insures that the necessary approvals are already in place to allow construction and enables businesses to get a shovel in the ground in months rather than years. In business, time is money and pre-permitting of sites adds value to individual properties while making the community more attractive for development.



10.3 Other Measures

There are a many things the Town can do to stimulate new investment and job creation within the Town. The following are a few measures that should be further explored by the Town.

- Work in partnership with Empire State Development Corporation, Ulster County Development Corporation (UCDC), the Ulster County IDA, and the Kingston-Ulster Empire Zone to develop a coherent strategy to attract industries to the Town of Ulster and City of Kingston;
- Conduct an inventory of office, manufacturing, and industrial floor space that is available within the Town of Ulster by square footage, class of space, and site location so that perspective tenants can be matched with suitable space in a timely and effective manner;
- Secure funding through the Ulster County Development Corporation's Shovel-Ready Fund to assess public infrastructure needs and to conduct studies to determine the feasibility of commercial and industrial development or to construct necessary supporting public infrastructure;
- Reach out to existing businesses to identify complementary businesses that the Town should be trying to attract;
- Streamline the development review process for businesses that are looking to expand within the Town of Ulster;
- Ensure that existing businesses are made aware of the economic development programs that could be used to help them in their business expansion such as: Empire Zone Benefits which are also available to expanding enterprises, IDA financing and payment-in-lieu-of-taxes (PILOT) programs;
- Reach out to existing businesses to identify their telecommunications needs and help them to secure low-interest financing through the UCDC's Telecommunications Fund to make necessary improvements;
- Continue to support the agricultural community and form an Agricultural Advisory Committee;
- Prevent incompatible land uses from encroaching on the airport and its safety zones in order to avoid future hazards or nuisances to aircraft and the Town's residents. This will help to retain the employment base that the airport currently provides as well as create opportunities for continued job growth;
- Encourage continued growth at the Kingston-Ulster Commerce Park;
- Explore opportunities for growth in the arts & entertainment, hospitality and heritage tourism industries; and
- Reserve the best light industry sites for such use and discourage development as retail. This will require a careful evaluation of the Town's OM-Office Manufacturing Zoning District.

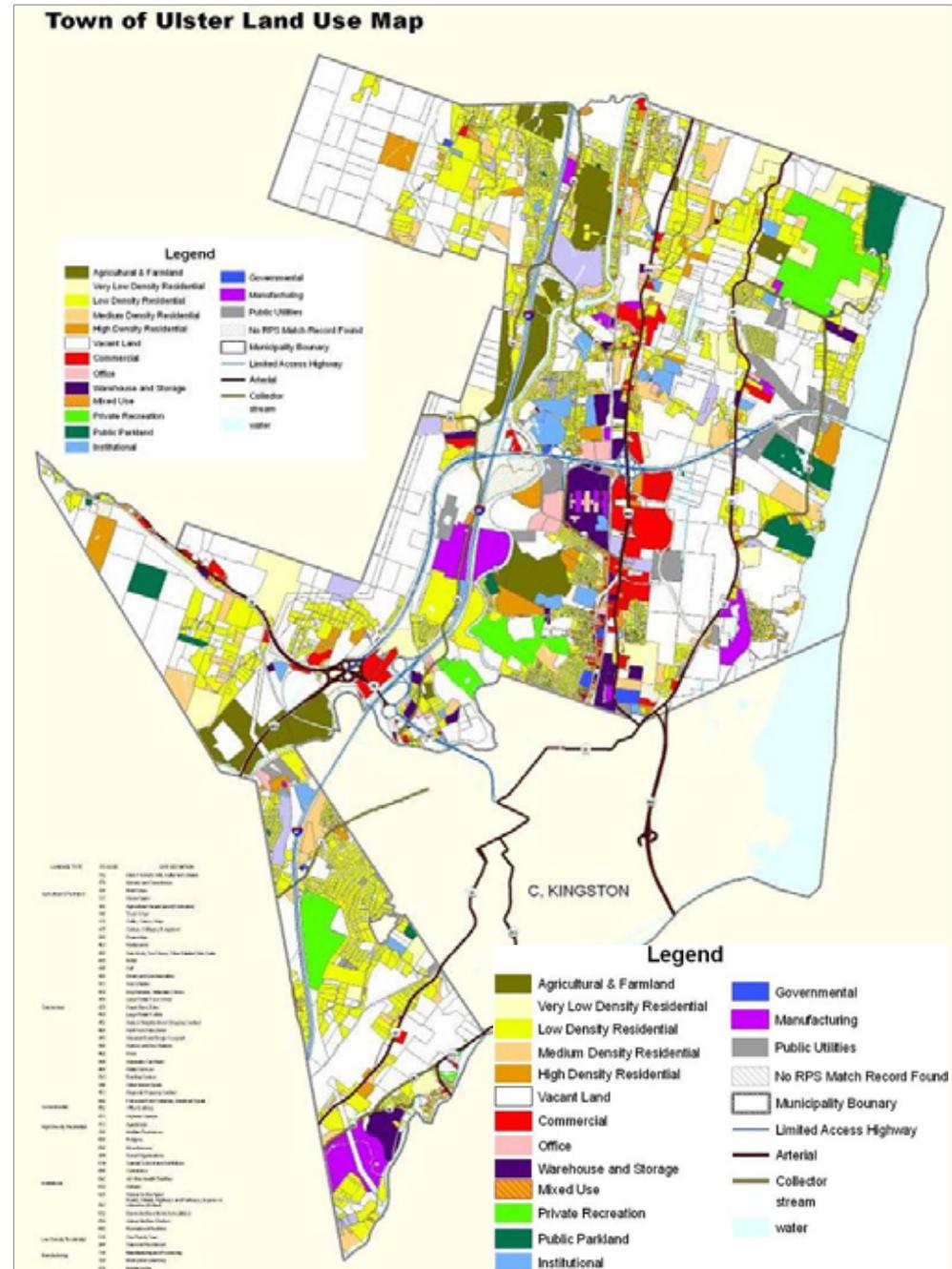
"Streamline the development review process for businesses that are looking to expand and ensure that existing businesses are made aware of the economic development programs that could be used to help them to grow."

CHAPTER 11.0 LAND USE & ZONING

11.1 Land Use

Land-use refers to how individual parcels of land are used. Generally, land-use is divided into broad categories including agricultural, residential, commercial, office, manufacturing, warehousing, institutional, parkland and vacant land. Residential land uses are further defined by the density of housing that is developed on such sites. The Town’s existing land uses, by parcel, are shown on the Land Use map to the right. Having a clear picture of the Town’s existing land-use pattern is very useful when planning for its future development.

The residential development pattern in the Town is both suburban and rural. More densely developed neighborhoods are close to the City of Kingston (e.g. East Kingston, Lincoln Park, and Hillside Acres, Spring Hill and Lake Katrine neighborhoods). Its retail centers have developed in a strip retail manner along Ulster Avenue, US Route 9W, Washington Avenue and NYS Route 28. Farmlands tend to be concentrated within the floodplains of the Esopus Creek. One goal of this Plan is to allow for growth while preserving the Town’s rural character. To do so, higher density will need to be encouraged near existing residential and commercial centers. The adaptive re-use of existing sites also needs careful consideration.



There are three variables that have and will continue to influence the land-use pattern in the Town of Ulster: environmental constraints, access to transportation corridors, and availability of water & sewer infrastructure. A careful review of these variables makes it very clear where higher density growth should be encouraged and where it should be discouraged.

11.1.1 Low Density Development Areas: Those lands within the Catskill Mountains should be restricted to very low density residential (e.g. 1 unit per 1.5 acres) and other low intensity uses. The Catskills are very hilly, transportation access is limited off major highways, and the area is not presently served with public water or sewer. The Town should strongly encourage the use of cluster subdivisions and also consider a Ridge Protection Overlay District for this area. A more detailed discussion on the latter is provided in Section 5.7 of this Plan.

Lands within the Esopus floodplain should be limited to low density development. Appropriate uses include farming, recreation, and other low intensity land uses. Constructing new buildings within the floodplain should be discouraged and FEMA guidelines followed. Low density development should also be encouraged within the north-south ridgeline between Routes 9W and 32 (excluding the existing shopping centers). This area of the Town has many small valleys, wetlands, and rock outcroppings that are not conducive to higher density development. Clustering in this area is also encouraged.



- Protection of Catskill Mountains:
- Create Ridge Protection Overlay District
 - Encourage use of cluster subdivision provisions
 - Limit development to very low density land uses
 - Do not extend water or sewer infrastructure to steep slope areas

- Ridgeline Protection Area:
- Create Ridge Protection Overlay District
 - Encourage use of cluster subdivision provisions

- Esopus Floodplain:
- Follow FEMA guidelines
 - Encourage agricultural and recreational land uses
 - Limit to very low density land uses
 - Create incentives to help preserve farming on these lands
 - Cluster housing away from floodplains

- Ridgeline Protection Area:
- Ridge Protection Overlay District
 - Riparian Protection Zone along Rondout Creek
 - Develop Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan for Rondout Creek

11.1.2 High Density Development Areas: Areas with few environmental constraints, good transportation access and public water & sewer is where higher density residential and/or non-residential growth should be encouraged.

Ulster Avenue Route 9W Corridor: This area has very good transportation infrastructure, public water & sewer, and few environmental constraints. This is an area where high density residential and non-residential development should be encouraged. This is also an area where mixed use residential/commercial/office development would be appropriate.

Washington Avenue Corridor: Low density strip retail development exists along this corridor. The creation of the Washington Avenue Sewer District has enabled this corridor to be developed at higher densities. The Town should encourage the redevelopment of this corridor for higher density development provided floodplain issues are resolved for certain sites. Design guidelines for the corridor should be developed, sidewalks required, and landscaping provided on each site.

Tech City & Edgewater Properties: The adaptive reuse of the Tech City buildings and/or site is strongly encouraged by this Plan. Furthermore, mixed-use development on the site should be considered. A mixed-use development on the site could provide for a new Town Center. Development on the Edgewater site which has the transportation and water & sewer capacity to accommodate new growth should be encouraged.



- Tech City & Edgewater Properties:**
- Encourage reuse of IBM Kingston Plant [TechCity]
 - Explore mixed use opportunities
 - Establish design guidelines for the development in this area
 - Work w/ County/State to provide incentives to redevelop Tech City

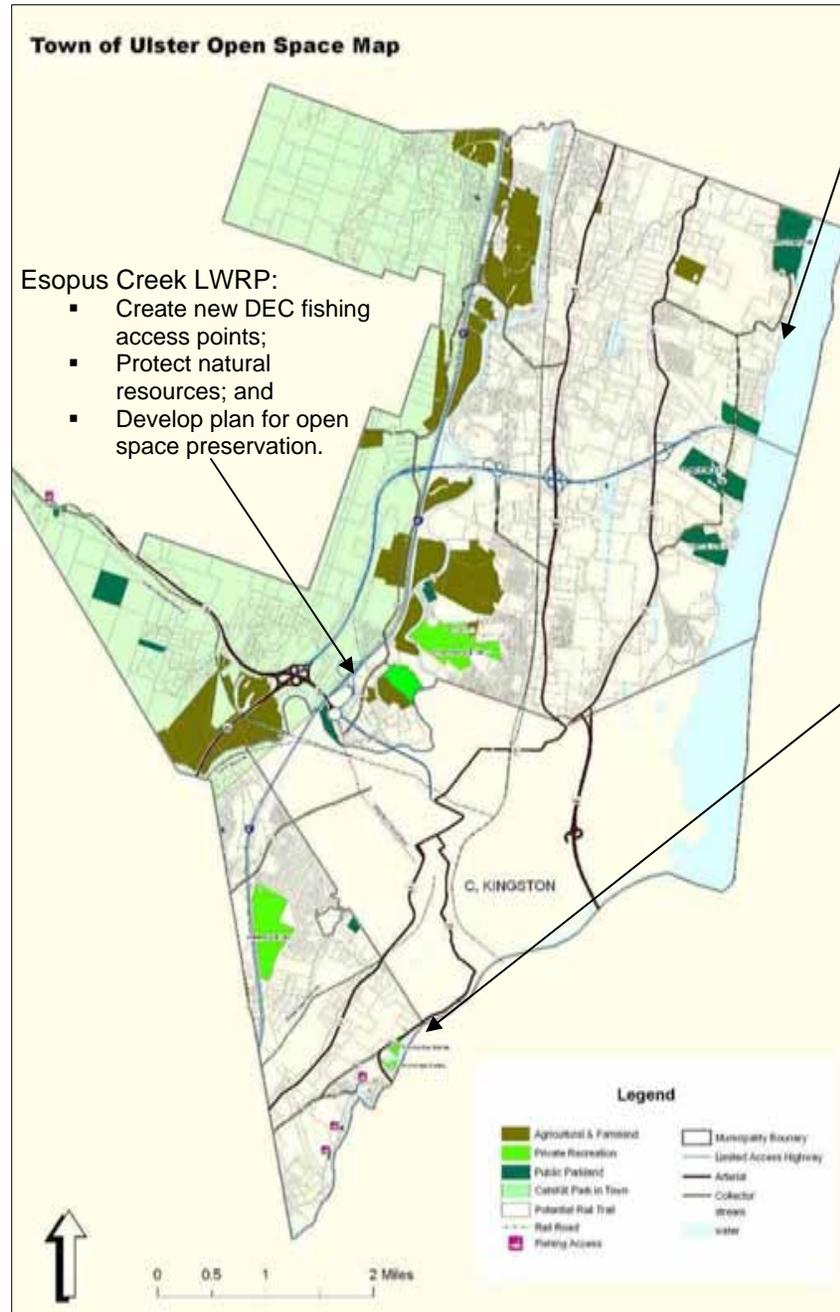
- Ulster Avenue and Route 9W:**
- Work with County to prepare a Route 9W Transportation Study that addresses pedestrian as well as vehicular traffic needs
 - Encourage redevelopment of underutilized sites
 - Explore mixed use residential/retail opportunities within these corridors
 - Develop design guidelines
 - Create sidewalk and landscaping standards

- Washington Avenue Corridor:**
- Adopt design guidelines
 - Follow FEMA guidelines for development in flood prone areas
 - Follow recommendations of Ulster County Transportation Plan as summarized in Section 6.3.1 of this Plan.

11.1.3 Waterfront Development: The Hudson River, Esopus Creek and Rondout Creek are tremendous natural, recreational, economic and historic resources. Many communities in New York State have utilized the Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP) process to develop detailed “Master Plans” for their waterfronts. The City of Kingston recently completed its LWRP for the Rondout Creek and Hudson River waterfronts and this Plan recommends that the Town prepare an LWRP for the Rondout Creek and Hudson River waterfronts.

Through an LWRP the Town can carefully plan for the future use of its waterfronts. Detailed plans for public improvements such as waterfront promenades, waterfront parks, and other public improvements could be developed through the LWRP process. The LWRP would help to define appropriate zoning for the Town’s waterfronts, policies for public access, open space and appropriate economic activities.

Once an LWRP is created, the Town could pursue funding through the New York State Department of State’s Coastal Resources programs to implement recommendations of the LWRP. This might include the procurement of grants to make public investments along the waterfront. This could involve investments in public parks, the creation of a D&H Canal linear park or interpretive center in Eddyville, or any number of other possibilities. An LWRP would also further natural resource protection and economic development goals of this Plan.

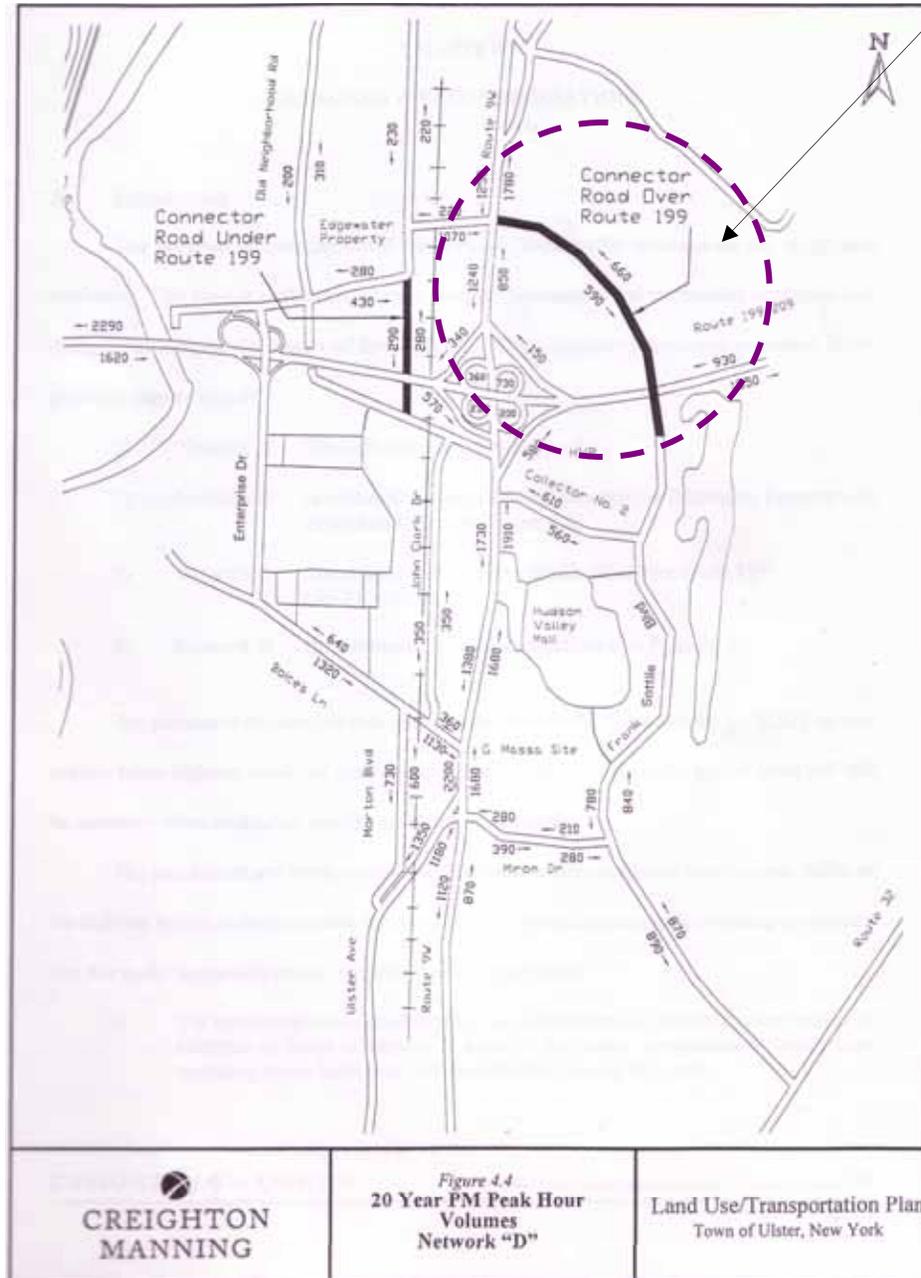


11.1.4 Frank Sottile Boulevard Extension

The proposed extension of Frank Sottile Boulevard has the potential to greatly improve the transportation system within the vicinity of Route 209/199 and US Route 9W Interchange. However, it is important that any development that occurs in the area north of Route 209/199 does not in itself create traffic generation that would diminish the level-of-service in this area.

The Findings Statement for the SEQRA review of the Frank Sottile Boulevard Extension recommended that the zoning remain RC-Regional Commercial north of Route 209/199, but that there be a cap on the trip generation. Following completion of the FEIS, the NYSDOT looked at alternative approaches to funding the proposed improvements. The decision was made to phase in the improvements. Phase 1 involves the construction of a south bound off-ramp from Route 199 to Frank Sottile Boulevard along with a northbound on-ramp to Route 199 east. NYSDOT has committed funding, but more is needed. The gap in funding could be raised by re-establishing the *Road Improvement District*.

A more detailed Master Plan for the area surrounding the proposed Frank Sottile Boulevard Extension is recommended that includes an access management plan, a pedestrian circulation plan and design guidelines. It would provide for traffic safety and economic opportunities while helping to mitigate vehicular and pedestrian conflicts in the study area.



Sottile Blvd. Extension:

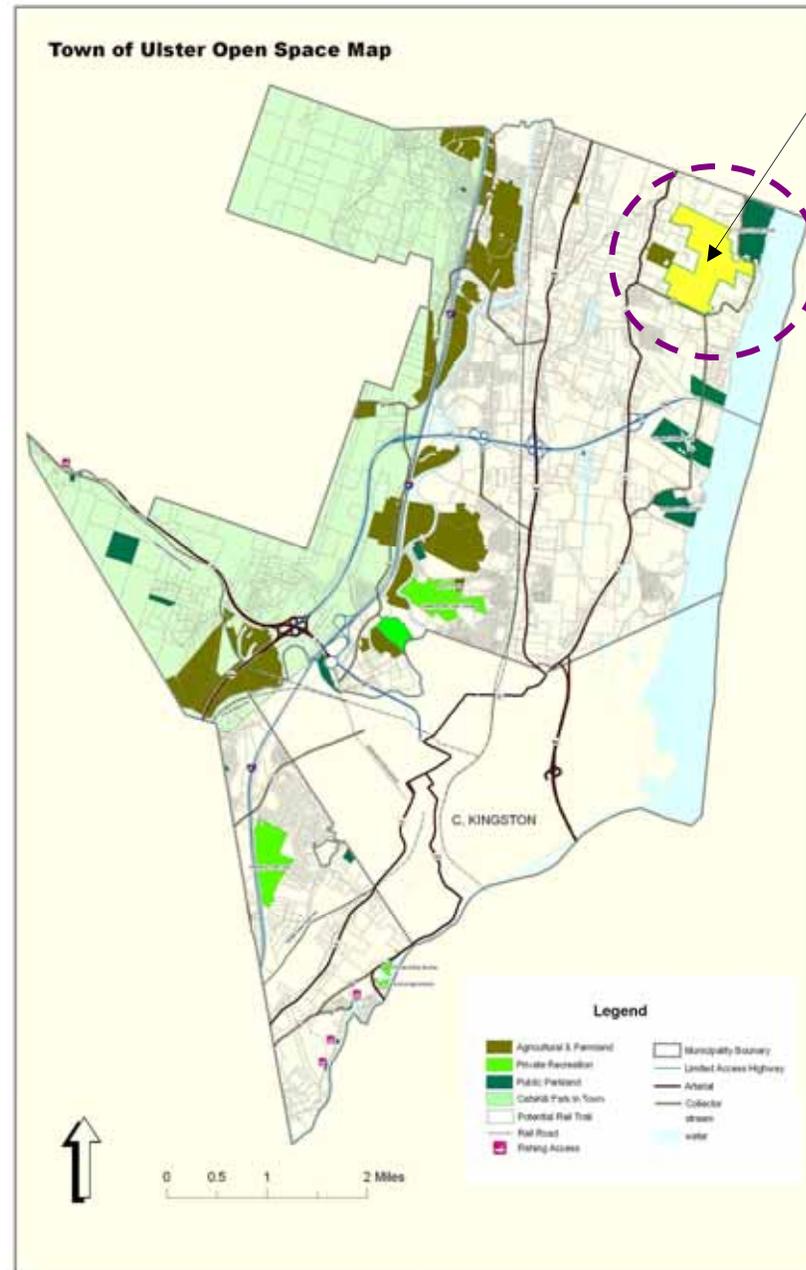
- Keep RC-Regional Commercial District but set a cap on trip generation;
- Explore idea of new zoning district that would allow mixed use residential/commercial with a cap on traffic generation;
- Employ access management and congestion management measures;
- Create a pedestrian circulation plan;
- Create design standards for target area;
- Protect natural resources;
- Coordinate with NYSDOT to move Phase I of project to Design Phase;
- Re-establish the *Road Improvement District (RID)* to provide gap funding needed to complete the Phase 1 Improvements;
- Create sidewalk improvement district.

11.1.4 Former IBM Recreation Center Site

The former IBM Recreation Center site is located on Kukuk Lane in the northeastern corner of the Town of Ulster. Since IBM’s departure in the mid-1990’s, the once-beautiful recreation center has fallen into a state of disrepair. This property is 305.6 acres – making it one of the largest undeveloped (non-agricultural) sites within the Town of Ulster. The site also appears to have few environmental constraints in terms of wetlands or steep slopes.

Given the original use of the site for a recreation center, coupled with its proximity to the Ulster County Park, this site lends itself to parkland. However, this would require acquisition by the County and/or the Town. If acquired for public park use it could serve as a multi-purpose facility that could be used for a variety of public events.

Presently, the property is located within the R-60 Zoning District which allows one (1) unit per 60,000 sq. ft. for areas that are not served with central water or sewer. The permitted density increases to 1 unit per 30,000 with the provision of central water or sewer. This site was once considered for Casino, however, any use with very high-trip generation rates could adversely affect traffic flow on NYS Route 32. Due to the sheer size of the site, its future use must be carefully considered. A few alternative development scenarios are described in the right-hand column of this page. Any development should include clustering to preserve open space.



IBM Rec Center Site:

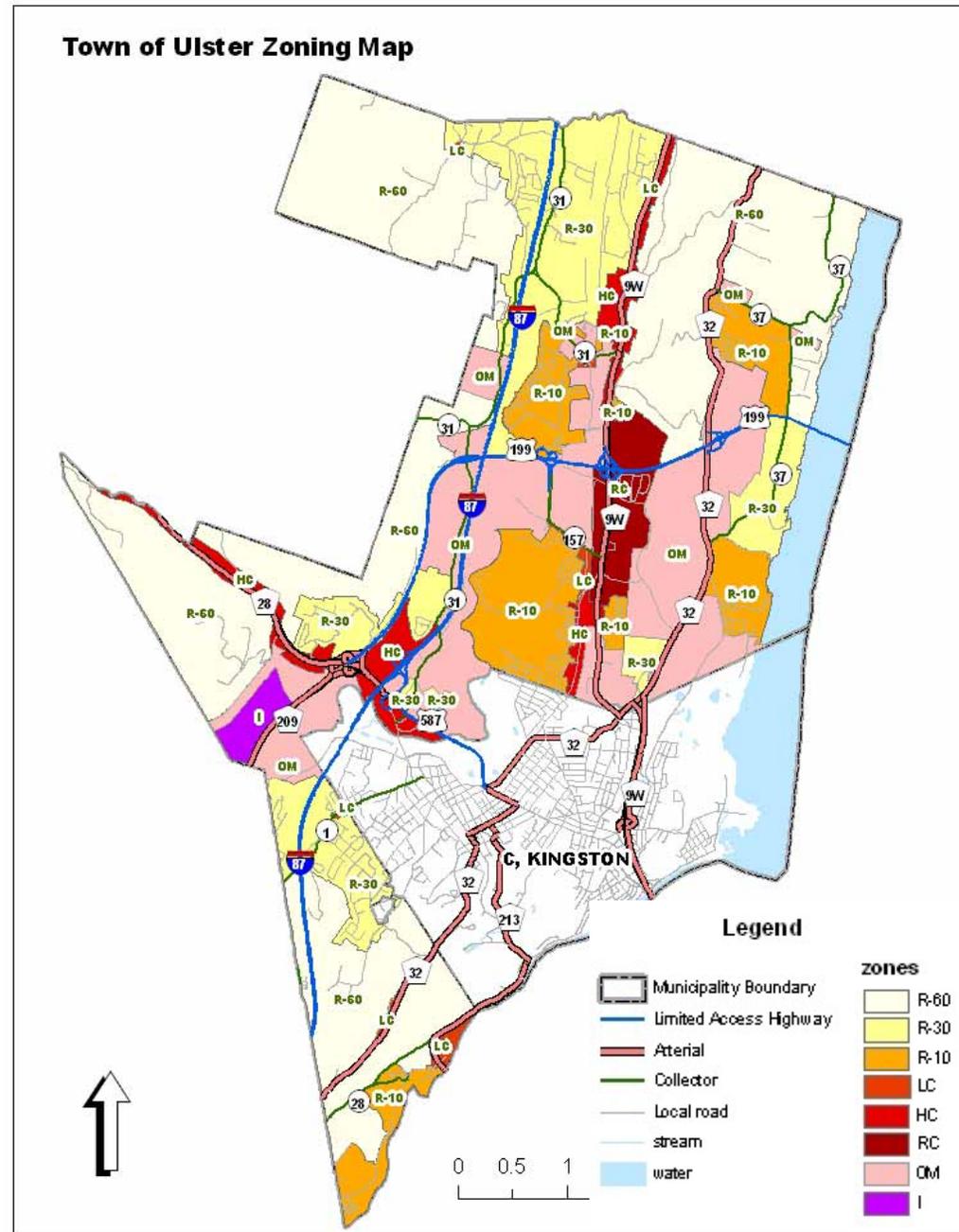
- Alternative A:
- Acquisition for County/Town parkland.
- Alternative B:
- Currently zoned R-60 Residential;
 - Explore idea of planned unit development to allow for a New Urbanism development that would include a mix of residential and non-residential uses;
 - New Urbanism design would be contingent on developers upgrading water & sewer capacity to serve site;
 - Density bonus in conjunction with stipulation that 10% of units remain affordable to persons earning 100% - 120% of County MFI; and
 - Design standards and clustering to preserve open space should be part of design.

11.2 Zoning

The Town of Ulster’s Zoning Code divides the Town into eight (8) distinct zoning districts, as shown on the Zoning Map to the right. The zoning districts define where certain land uses are permitted and regulate the intensity of land development through bulk regulations that control permitted density, building height, and separation between uses. The Town’s Zoning Code is the most important tool that the Town has to manage growth in the future.

Over the years, the Town has invested millions of dollars in the development of its water and sewer districts. Along with the State, County and federal governments, millions of dollars have also been invested in the community’s transportation infrastructure. Guiding growth toward existing centers where existing water & sewer infrastructure is already in place will maximize the return-on-investment from these public improvements and enable the Town to operate these systems cost-effectively. Developing around existing centers will also help to preserve the rural character of the Town by reducing development pressure on rural areas.

The Town can use its Zoning Code to direct higher-density development to those areas where existing infrastructure is in place. It can also use it to discourage development in areas where a more rural development pattern is desired for environmental and other reasons.



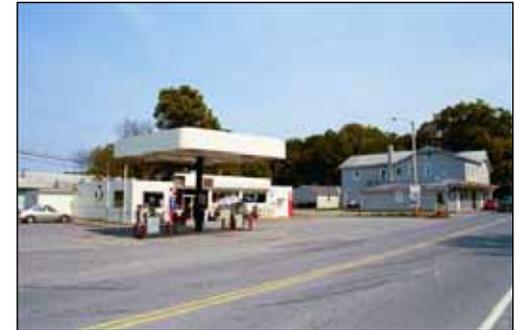
The following is a general description of the Town’s existing zoning districts:

R-60 Residential: The R-60 District is the lowest density residential zoning district in the Town. The R-60 District requires a minimum lot size of 60,000 sq. ft. for a single-family lot or stated another way one (1) home for every 1 ½ acres of land. The R-60 District generally encompasses that area within the Catskill Park, lands south of the City of Kingston abutting Route 32, and lands north of Route 199 (see zoning map). In addition to single-family residential, the R-60 District allows agricultural operations, bed & breakfasts, camps, conservation preserves, farming, forestry, golf courses, horse stables, kennels, livestock keeping, marinas, mobile home parks, multiple & attached dwellings, nursery schools, schools, summer colonies, and veterinarian clinics – among a few other uses.

R-30 Residential: The R-30 District requires a minimum lot size of 40,000 sq. ft. for a single-family lot or stated another way one (1) home for every one (1) acre of land. If a site has central water or sewer, the permitted lot size can be reduced to 30,000 sq. ft. The R-30 District provides for a relatively low residential density. In addition to single-family residences and attached dwellings the R-30 District allows: agricultural operations, bed & breakfasts, conservation preserves, farming, golf courses, marinas, mobile home parks, nursery schools, schools, and senior citizen housing – among a few other uses.

R-10 Residential: The R-10 Residential District allows for the highest density of residential development within the Town of Ulster (see zoning map). Within the R-10 District, the minimum lot size required for a single-family home is 10,000 square feet in areas served with water & sewer; 15,000 sq. ft. with central water & sewer; 20,000 sq. ft. with central water or sewer; and 40,000 sq. ft. in areas with no central water & sewer (see zoning map). In terms of permitted uses, the only difference between the R-10 District and the R-30 District is that the R-30 District does not allow farming operations.

LC - Local Commercial: The LC Districts are designed to allow for convenience retail and other business enterprises within neighborhood or hamlet centers. There is an LC District in Eddyville, Glenerie, Lake Katrine, Ruby, and Spring Lake. There are also LC Districts along NYS Route 32 South, Morton Boulevard and Boice’s Lane. The images to the right are typical of the types of businesses found within the Town’s existing LC Districts. The LC District is quite permissive and allows a variety of land uses including agricultural operations, farming operations, garages, gas stations, hospitals, kennels, local convenience stores, marinas, offices, single-family and two-family residences, restaurants, retail businesses, senior citizen housing, theaters, veterinarian clinics and wholesale uses – among others. All commercial uses allowed within the LC District are either uses permitted as of right (but subject to site plan approval) or uses requiring a special permit.



Top photo: Convenience Store in Lake Katrine.

Middle photo: Store in Eddyville

Bottom photo: Convenience Store in Spring Lake.

Note: Design guidelines should be considered for the LC Districts.

HC - Highway Commercial: As the name implies, the Highway Commercial Districts straddle major highways including Ulster Avenue, US Route 9W, Washington Avenue, and NYS Route 28. The Highway Commercial Districts allow for a similar variety of land uses as those that are allowed within the LC Districts. Additional uses that are permitted in the HC District but not the LC District include bowling alleys, camps, car washes, contractors storage yards, forestry operations, hotels, shopping malls, manufacturing, mining, motels, museums and galleries, recreational facilities, research office, summer colonies, trucking companies, and warehouses. Uses permitted in the LC District but not within the HC District include: marinas and senior citizen housing. Since none of the HC Districts are on the waterfront, the exclusion of marinas is reasonable.

RC - Regional Commercial: The RC-Regional Commercial District is the most permissive commercial business district in the Town of Ulster. This district encompasses US Route 9W to the north and south of Route 209/199. As the name implies, this district is meant to serve the retail needs of the surrounding region and development in the past decade has defined the Town's portion of the US Route 9W corridor as a major retail shopping destination. The Regional Commercial District allows many of the uses permitted within the LC & HC Districts. It is more permissive in that it allows multiple dwellings, horse stables, manufacturing – large, restaurant w/ off-complex, and riding academies.

The RC District is more restrictive than the HC or LC District in that it does not permit Bed & Breakfast establishments. Like the LC and HC Districts, the RC District allows single-family and two-family residences.

OM - Office Manufacturing: The Office and Manufacturing District encompasses a large area of the Town and is shown in pink on the Zoning Map. In terms of permitted uses the O&M District builds upon the RC District. Uses permitted in the OM District, but not the RC District include airports, cemeteries, excavation, junkyards, livestock keeping, marinas, mobile homes, mobile home parks, recycling yards, and indoor theater complexes. It is interesting that indoor theater complexes are not allowed in the Regional Commercial district. Uses that are not allowed in the OM District that are allowed in the RC District include local convenience commercial and indoor theaters. Like the LC, HC, and RC Districts, the OM District allows single-family and two-family residences.

I - Industrial: The I-Industrial District is the least permissive of business districts in the Town. It is located north of Route 209 in the area known as the Hurley Flats. A large portion of the district lies within a FEMA designated floodplain. The Industrial District allows agricultural operations, cemeteries, contractor storage yards, excavation, farming & forestry operations, garages for repair, light industry, laboratories, large manufacturing, mobile homes, mining, recycling yards, research office campus,



Top photo: Panera Bread at Night – Shopping Mall on Route 9W

Middle photo: Barnes & Noble, Modell's – Regional Mall Route 9W.

Bottom photo: CVS and Hotel Development on Route 9W.

theater complexes, trucking companies, warehouses and wholesale businesses. The Industrial District presently encompasses some of the best farmland within the Town of Ulster. In Chapter 9.0 – Agriculture & Farmland, there is a broader discussion with respect to the creation of an Agricultural Zoning District that would allow a variety of farm-related uses and business activities that would allow the farming community to derive income on their properties through compatible business ventures while keeping the farmland in production.

Overlay Districts: An overlay district is a zoning district with supplementary regulations which are superimposed upon existing use districts. Presently, the Town of Ulster does not have any overlay districts. In Chapter 5.0 of this Plan two types of overlay districts are recommended for the Town of Ulster. The first is a Ridge Protection Overlay District that would establish supplemental regulations that would better control the siting of buildings in ridgeline areas, the amount of tree clearing that would be permitted, and stricter controls on grading and cutting in ridge protection areas.

The second overlay district that is recommended is an Aquifer Protection Overlay District that would impose stricter controls for development within the Town’s aquifer recharge areas in order to ensure that the Town’s wells are protected from contamination from nearby development. Uses that have a higher probability of contaminating ground would be prohibited.

Zoning Summary: The Town’s Zoning Code must be consistent with its Comprehensive Plan. There are several aspects of the existing zoning code and map that may have to be revised in order to achieve certain recommendations contained within this Comprehensive Plan. For example, there is an inconsistency between the goal of preserving the rural character of the Town and zoning the best agricultural lands in the Town for industrial development. A careful review of the I-Industry District should be conducted with an eye toward creating a new AG-Ag District as described in Chapter 9.0.

The HC-Highway Commercial Districts (along Routes 28 and Route 9W north of Route 209/199) encourages high-density strip retail development along the entire length of these corridors. This pattern of development will detract from the Town’s rural character that residents want to preserve. Another concern with strip retail along these corridors is its potential to impact traffic flow. It is well known that densely developed strip retail development generates high traffic volumes. If these corridors were to build out (within the parameters of the HC-Highway Commercial District) it would likely result in greater traffic congestion along these roadways. In addition to serving an important function as business centers, these corridors also serve an important transportation function as major travel routes. The Town needs to carefully review how best to balance the business function of these corridors with the long-term transportation function.

“In addition to serving an important function as business centers, these corridors also serve an important transportation function as major travel routes. The Town needs to carefully review how best to balance the business function of these corridors with the long-term transportation function.”

The OM – Office Manufacturing District should also be reviewed in the context of the existing district boundaries and the uses permitted within this district. Almost all the commercial business uses in the RC-Regional Commercial District are permitted in the OM District effectively resulting in a significant area of the Town in which Regional Commercial uses are allowed. A number of OM-zoned properties abutting US Route 9W are being developed for retail. If this trend carries over to sites west of the CSX rail line, some of the best office/research/light industry sites will be lost to retail – leaving little room for growth in other industries. The OM District east of the CSX rail line might be better placed in the RC District south of Grant Avenue with the properties west of the CSX tracks reserved for office/research and light industries.

There are certain nuisance industries such as junk yards, mining operations, and other heavy industries – that due to noise, dust, odors or other impacts – are better regulated under more narrowly defined districts such as a HI-Heavy Industrial District. A HI District would prohibit residential land uses to avoid adverse impacts from the industries in these districts. A careful analysis of where such districts should be created could help to ensure that such heavy industrial uses are permitted while ensuring that their operation does not adversely impact adjacent properties. Generally speaking, such districts should be narrowly defined and not encompass broad expanses of the Town’s geographic land area as the OM District does.

As we noted in the beginning of this Chapter, not all land uses should be separated. There are areas (such as the Regional Commercial District along Route 9W or Tech City) where residential and non-nuisance commercial/business uses could be brought together within a mixed use development. Allowing mixed use development would require the creation of a MX – Mixed Use Zoning District to accommodate such developments. The design guidelines would address such issues as site development, architectural guidelines, off-street parking requirements, and other design issues that are unique to mixed use developments. The creation of a MX – Mixed Use District could help the Town achieve a desired goal of creating a central identity or Town Center for the Town of Ulster.

11.3 Site Plan Review

Chapter 145 of the Town Code grants the Planning Board with the authority to review and approve site plans for all residential and non-residential land uses in the Town. For commercial businesses that are over 2,500 square feet, the Planning Board makes an advisory recommendation to the Town Board who has retained the authority to approve such site plans. Site plan review is a powerful planning tool that the Planning Board can use to shape the character of new development. Through site plan review the Planning Board can control the placement buildings and other elements of the site plan including landscaping, signs, lighting, and off-street loading and parking.



Top photo: Strip retail running along NYS Route 28.

Middle photo: Vacant commercial property on Route 9W north of Route 199/Route 209.

Bottom photo: View of Wal-Mart from Route 9W.

The Town’s Site Plan Regulations are fairly simple in that they lay out the applicability, procedures and requirements for site plan review. It provides some basic review standards to help guide the Planning Board’s decisions. With respect to landscaping, Section 145.6 of the Town Code outlines the following objective: “adequacy of landscaping screening, buffering, plantings, and setbacks in regard to providing reasonable compatibility with and protection of adjacent uses, particularly residential subdivisions, and adequacy of maintenance provisions.” Section 190-37 of the Zoning Code states that “the minimum landscape requirements are for a general guide only and may be waived, varied or increased where, due to special circumstances, changes are necessary.”

The Comprehensive Plan survey showed that 54% of respondents felt that landscaping was “very important” to the Planning Board’s review of new commercial and industrial developments. Another 43% felt it was “important.” Only 6% responded that it was “not important.”

In recent years, the Planning Board has done a good job at requiring developers to provide landscaping, however, this was not always the case. Without some clear standards as to the minimum amount of landscaping that is required, the community cannot be assured that subsequent Planning Boards will take the same view toward the need for landscaping. This could have an adverse impact on the aesthetics of the community in the future.

One way to ensure that future developments provide sufficient landscaping is to establish minimum landscaping standards for all residential and non-residential developments. Landscaping standards would establish minimum requirements for the landscape areas, the caliper of trees, percentage of landscaping within off-street parking areas, standards for landscaped buffers between residential and non-residential land uses, requirements for maintaining landscaping, and other applicable standards. Such standards would ensure a minimum level of landscaping on each development site and also help to guide developers as they prepare their required landscape plan for review by the Planning Board.

When residents were asked (through the Comprehensive Plan Survey) the importance of certain issues related to the Planning Board’s review of site plans, 80% responded that traffic impacts were “very important” to consider with another 18% responding it was “important.” With respect to the layout of parking lots, 59% thought it was “very important” while another 32% indicated it was “important.” Feedback from the first town-wide forum suggests that the Town’s off-street parking standards need to be reviewed since they do not require enough off-street parking. The Planning Board can require applicants to submit a traffic impact analysis and require developers to demonstrate (using accepted standards such as the ITE standards) that sufficient off-street parking is provided and that potential traffic impacts are addressed.



Top photo: New Bed, Bath & Beyond—circa 2005.

Middle photo: Cingular Wireless on US Route 9W – circa 2005

Bottom photo: Regional retail center on Route 9W – circa 2005.

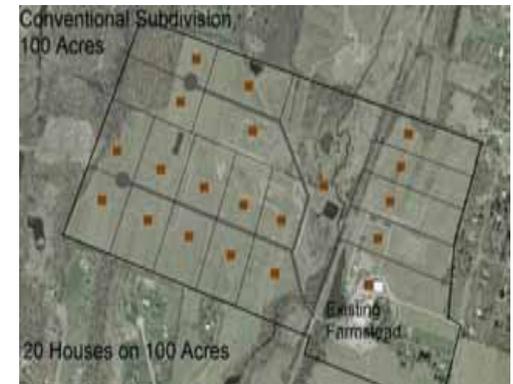
11.4 Subdivision Review

A subdivision is the division of a lot, tract, or parcel into two or more lots, tracts, or parcels. Chapter 160 of the Town Code gives the Planning Board the authority to review and approve subdivisions and lot line revisions (e.g. a transfer of land between two adjoining parcels by relocating the boundary line between the two parcels so that no new lot is created). The Planning Board, in its review of subdivisions, can require modification in lot layout, control roadway configurations and require the reservation of parkland or payment in lieu of parkland. Section 190-16 of the Zoning Code authorizes the Planning Board, as part of its subdivision approval, to modify the applicable bulk requirements pursuant to Section 278 of Town Law (aka cluster subdivision provisions).

These are important powers that should be exercised by the Planning Board to ensure that the long-range goals of the Town are met through the subdivision of land. For example, the Planning Board should review each subdivision in the context of surrounding properties to identify opportunities for the provision of easements that would allow for future streets to connect between adjacent properties. Where proposed lots unnecessarily impact sensitive environmental features, the Planning Board should require the reconfiguration of lots to avoid such impacts. They can also require that up to 10% of the subdivision land to be set aside for parkland.

The Planning Board can exercise its powers to require a conservation subdivision where it would help to protect environmentally sensitive areas, important vistas, or further other objectives of this Plan. A cluster subdivision allows for a reduction in lot area and bulk requirements, provided there is no increase in the number of lots permitted under a conventional subdivision or increase in the overall density of development, and that the remaining land area is devoted to open space, active/passive recreation, preservation of environmentally sensitive areas, or agriculture. The approval of a cluster subdivision is done concurrently with the review of a subdivision plat.

Use of a conservation subdivision is illustrated in the images to the right. The upper image shows a conventional subdivision of 100 acres at a density of one dwelling unit per four acres. After environmental constraints and new cul-de-sacs are factored in, 20 lots can be created. Note how the entire parcel is consumed by the subdivision with the loss of prime farmlands. In the cluster subdivision example, the parcel is divided into the same number of lots, but with one acre lots. Thirty-three acres of the parcel are consumed with the remaining 67 acres preserved as open space. The Planning Board should require the developer to impose deed restrictions on the open space parcel to ensure the agricultural or natural resource value is maintained. The parcel could then be owned by the original owner, a homeowners' association, a land trust, or sold to a neighboring farmer.



Above: Example of a conventional versus a conservation subdivision.

“Section 161-22 of the Town Subdivision Code authorizes the Planning Board to require the reservation of parkland or payment in lieu thereof.”

11.5 New Urbanism

New Urbanism or Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) is an approach to designing human-scale, walkable communities with moderate to high residential densities and a mixed use core. Instead of driving on highways, residents of TND neighborhoods can walk to shops, businesses, theaters, schools, parks, and other important services that are located in close proximity to one another. The heart of a TND community is the mixed use center where residents can live above stores and where a variety of retail, cultural, or professional services and institutional uses (such as a Post Office) are available to serve the community’s needs.

Another important aspect of TND developments is the way buildings and streets are arranged to foster a sense of community closeness. A dense network of narrow streets with reduced curb radii is fundamental to TND design. Houses are also placed in close proximity to one another on smaller lots in order to reinforce the human-scale of the community and sense of place. This closeness greatly enhances the pedestrian scale of the community.

Architecture and design are also important design features of TND communities. The architectural styles in TND communities often borrow heavily from traditional periods of American Architecture including Victorian, Colonial, Federal, Greek Revival as well as other architectural styles.

A TND development would not be allowed under the Town’s existing Zoning Code and Subdivision Regulations. To begin, the Town’s Zoning Code does not allow for mixed use centers which are the core of TND communities (see Section 11.2 – Zoning). The Subdivision Regulations require residential street widths that would not accommodate a TND community. The recommended right-of-way for a single-family residential street in a TND community is forty (40) feet. This is comprised of an 18-foot paved street with six (6) foot grass median and five (5) foot sidewalk on both sides of the street (see Appendices). The Town’s densest residential district, the R-10 District, requires a minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet. The typical TND lot is as small as 5,000 square feet.

There are certain areas where New Urbanism communities should be encouraged such as on the former IBM Recreation Center site on Kukuk Lane (see also Section 11.1.4) or the former IBM Kingston Plant (Tech City). TND concepts could also be used to strengthen existing centers and/or to create a new Town Center that would help to define the Town of Ulster’s sense of place within the surrounding region.

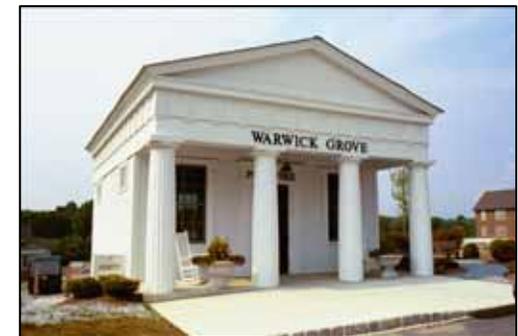
This Plan supports the use of New Urbanism or TND concepts within the Town. It further recommends that future amendments to the Town’s Zoning Code be made to provide the zoning mechanisms needed to allow TND developments. Traditional Neighborhood Design should be encouraged in the Town.



Above: Celebration, Florida
A New Urbanism community circa 1992



Above: Warwick Grove – Warwick, NY
Single-family residential circa 2006



Above: Warwick Grove – Warwick, NY
Community Post Office circa 2006.

11.6 Design Review

The Town could enhance the effectiveness of its site plan review laws through the adoption of design review guidelines for commercial developments. Design guidelines will help to guide the Planning Board’s decisions while giving developers a clear understanding of design requirements. Design standards would vary for different areas of the Town. For example, standards for US Route 9W would differ from standards for Eddyville.

Most municipalities in New York State base their authority to establish design guidelines on General Municipal Law Section 96-a which allows communities to place restrictions in order to protect or enhance “sites, buildings, or other objects having special character or aesthetic interest or value.” In some communities, the Planning Board acts as the review board and in others a separate Architectural Review Board is created. It is a recommendation of this Plan that the Planning Board be given the authority to review design issues in conjunction with its site plan review powers.

It was clear from the Community Character Survey™, public feedback, and Comprehensive Plan Committee meetings, that for many local residents, the design of new commercial development was important issue. This Plan recommends that design guidelines be developed for the LC, HC, RC and OM Districts to address the unique requirements of each zoning district.

The design guidelines should address building form with a special focus on franchise architecture and regional retail development. This Plan recommends that design guidelines be developed that give the Planning Board the authority to require franchise and chain stores to modify their prototypical stores in terms of form, colors and materials so that they are more in keeping with the character of the Town of Ulster.

Until design guidelines are developed, the Town must strictly enforce its site plan review, landscaping and sign regulations to ensure that new development complements rather than detracts from the community’s character.

11.7 Code Enforcement

The presence of junk vehicles on residential properties, illegally dumped tires, litter along area roadways, poorly maintained buildings or signs all have a negative visual impact on the community’s character. The Code Enforcement Officer has the authority to address such nuisances and to impose penalties on those who do not comply with local regulations.

Strict enforcement of the Code is very important, but so too are programs to encourage resident compliance. One approach is to increase the fines that are imposed on violators. Another is to provide community sponsored programs to encourage residents to comply with Town regulations such as litter pluck or adopt-a-highway programs.



Above: Rite Aid – Lake Placid, NY
A community with design guidelines.



Above: Rite Aid – Ellenville, NY
A community without design guidelines.



Above: Jiffy Lube – Colonie, NY
A community with design guidelines.

Building code compliance must be a given in the Town. Property maintenance is essential to protecting the visual environment in the Town. Buildings that are left unpainted, signs that are not maintained and landscaping areas that are not appropriately cared for become eyesores.

With respect to area roadways, it is important that the Town monitor illegal dumping and littering pursue the violators. It can also get the community involved in clean-up efforts by sponsoring litter-plucks which give residents an opportunity to become part of the solution.

11.8 Summary & Recommendations

The Town has experienced a lot of growth but has managed to retain its rural character. This is because most residential growth has occurred in densely developed neighborhoods surrounding the City of Kingston and its retail/industrial growth has primarily occurred in the Route 9W corridor south of Route 209/199. This Plan recommends that growth be directed to existing centers. The Town can use its zoning, site plan, and subdivision regulations to achieve that goal.

11.8.1 Land Use

Direct growth to existing development centers that are served with water & sewer. Higher density development should be encouraged in areas with water & sewer infrastructure. The Town should discourage sewer line extensions to areas where low density development is desired.

Preserve important vistas in the Town. Through the adoption of a Ridge Protection Overlay District, encouraging participation in the NYSDEC Forestry Management Program, and supporting agriculture in the community.

Develop Local Waterfront Revitalization Programs for the Hudson River and Rondout Creek waterfronts. A detailed study of the appropriate land uses and density of development along the Hudson River and Rondout Creek shorelines is recommended.

11.8.2 Zoning

Carefully evaluate the permitted uses in each of the Town's Zoning Districts to ensure the intent of each district is met. There is a broader discussion on this matter in Section 11.2.

Create an AG-Agricultural District to better accommodate the business needs of farmers.

Evaluate the appropriateness of the existing I-Industry District in terms of its location and list of permitted uses.

Create a Ridge Protection Overlay District to conserve important vistas and to protect natural resources.

Create an Aquifer Protection Overlay District to protect the Town's wells and other sources of potable water.

"We shape our buildings and afterwards our buildings shape us."

Sir Winston Churchill

Further explore the feasibility and desirability of encouraging mixed-use zoning within the Route 9W corridor between the Lincoln Park and Lake Katrine neighborhoods.

The OM-Office Manufacturing Zoning District should also be reviewed in the context of the existing district boundaries and the uses permitted within this district.

Consideration should be given to creating an Office Light Industry Zoning District to ensure that the best sites for these industries are not lost to retail development.

11.8.3 Site Plan Review

Update Site Plan Review Law to provide minimum standards for landscaping, lighting, and screening to help guide the Planning Board's decisions.

11.8.4 Subdivision Regulations

Require the provision of easements that would allow for future streets to connect between adjacent properties.

Require the use of a cluster subdivision where such use would protect important vistas or protect environmentally sensitive areas.

Require the reservation of parkland or the payment in lieu of parkland to ensure that the recreational needs of the community are met.

11.8.5 New Urbanism

Encourage New Urbanism or Traditional Neighborhood Design by developing a zoning statute that provides for such development.

11.8.6 Design Guidelines

Adopt design guidelines for the Washington Avenue Corridor.

Adopt Design Guidelines for the LC – Local Commercial Zoning Districts.

Adopt Design Guidelines for Route 9W and the RC-Regional Commercial Zoning District.

11.8.7 Code Enforcement

Ensure strict compliance with the building code and property maintenance laws.

Identify and prosecute those who illegally dumps tires and other trash.

Sponsor community-wide clean-up efforts through litter pluck and adopt-a-highway programs.

11.8.8 Inclusionary Zoning

Develop inclusionary zoning provisions to encourage the development of affordable housing units within the Town of Ulster.

CHAPTER 12 PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

In order for this Comprehensive Plan to be effective, the Town of Ulster must actively apply the policies that are contained within the Plan. Furthermore, its Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals must use the Plan as a framework to guide their decisions with respect to the review of development proposals.

Certain recommendations contained herein will require the subsequent action of the Town Board in order to enact recommended revisions to the Zoning Code and other land use regulations. Other actions such as the preservation of natural resources, transportation improvements, or the development of programs to support the agricultural industry will require the collaboration between the Town, County, State and not-for-profit entities. These actions are outlined in implementation tables provided in this Chapter along with the party responsible for taking a leadership role in the implementation of the policy or program.

Each member of the Town Board, Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals should have a copy of this Comprehensive Plan. The Town Board should appoint a Comprehensive Plan subcommittee to spend time each month reviewing progress on the implementation of this Comprehensive Plan and coordinating efforts with other entities where necessary.

The following pages provide a summary of the major recommendations that are part of this Plan. The recommendations are organized under the broad topic areas as follows: Land Use & Zoning, Natural Resource Protection, Transportation, Recreational & Historic Resources, Community Facilities, Agriculture & Farmland Protection, and Economic Development.

For each subject there is a list of specific recommendations, along with an indication of when the recommendation should be implemented and the party responsible for ensuring that the recommendation is followed. The Implementation Plan table is useful in helping the Town to set priorities for the subsequent actions that will be necessary to implement this Comprehensive Plan.

Some recommendations should be implemented immediately including the recommended revisions to the Town's Zone Code. Other measures will be implemented in the "short-term" within two (2) years of adopting this Comprehensive Plan. There are other recommendations that are "long-term" in nature - meaning they are anticipated to be completed over a 2-5 year timeframe. It is not reasonable to assume that all the recommendations contained herein will be implemented immediately. The implementation of the Plan is meant to be a process that will occur over a period of years. Setting priorities ensures the process will get underway.

"In order for this Comprehensive Plan to be effective, the Town Board and its Planning Board must actively apply the policies that are contained within the Plan."

Town of Ulster Comprehensive Plan Implementation Plan				
No.	Recommendations	Action	Priority	Responsibility
Land Use				
1	Direct growth to existing development centers that are served with water & sewer infrastructure [Section 11.8.1].	Policy	Immediate	Planning Board Town Board
2	Encourage the use of cluster subdivisions to preserve important vistas, protect natural resources and retain farmland [Section 11.4].	Policy	Immediate	Planning Board Town Board
3	Protect environmentally sensitive areas such as steep slopes, floodplains, and wetlands [Chapter 5.0].	Policy	Immediate	Planning Board Town Board
4	Support applications to the State and federal government to purchase agricultural easements on local farms [Section 9.1].	Policy	Immediate	Planning Board Town Board
5	Require the reservation of parkland or the payment in lieu of parkland to ensure that the recreational needs of the community are met [Section 7.5.1].	Policy	Immediate	Planning Board Town Board
6	Carefully regulate proposed development within ridgelines areas to protect natural resources and scenic vistas [Section 5.7.5].	Policy	Immediate	Planning Board Town Board
7	Continue to support forestry as an industry and encourage landowners to participate in the State’s Forestry Management Program [Section 5.7.4].	Policy	Immediate	Planning Board Town Board
8	Require vegetative buffers, architectural buffers, and/or opaque fencing between commercial and residential developments [Section 11.3].	Policy	Immediate	Planning Board Town Board
9	Support historic preservation efforts and nominations for the listing of properties on the National and State Historic Register [Section 7.3].	Policy	Immediate	Planning Board Town Board
10	Require interconnection of roadways between subdivisions and commercial properties in order to provide for future connectivity [Section 6.9.1].	Policy	Immediate	Planning Board Town Board
11	Require developers to enter into a <i>Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)</i> to construct sidewalks in accordance with a Pedestrian Circulation Master Plans to be developed by the NYSDOT/Town [Section 6.4].	Policy	Immediate	Planning Board Town Board
12	Support efforts to create “shovel-ready” sites in the Town of Ulster in order to enhance economic opportunities. [Section 10.2].	Policy	Immediate	Town Board County/State
13	Use the SEQRA process to assess potential impacts on community services and require appropriate mitigation measures from developers [6.9.1].	Policy	Immediate	Planning Board Town Board
Immediate = 1 Year		Short-Term = 1-2 Years		Long-Term = 2-5 years

Town of Ulster Comprehensive Plan Implementation Plan				
No.	Recommendations	Type	Priority	Responsibility
Land Use Regulations and Zoning				
14	Carefully evaluate the list of permitted uses in each Zoning District in order to ensure the intent of each district is met [Section 11.2].	Zoning Update	Immediate	Planning Board Town Board
15	Update the Town’s <i>Site Plan Review Law</i> to provide minimum standards for landscaping, lighting, and screening [Section 11.3]	Zoning Update	Immediate	Planning Board Town Board
16	Create a <i>Pedestrian Circulation Master Plan</i> for the Route 9W Corridor in conjunction with the NYSDOT [Section 6.4 & 11.1.4].	Pedestrian Master Plan	Immediate	Planning Board TB & NYSDOT
17	Adopt <i>Design Guidelines</i> for the Regional Commercial, Highway Commercial and Local Commercial Zoning Districts [Section 11.6].	Zoning Revision	Short-term	Planning Board Town Board
18	Create <i>Local Timber Harvesting Law</i> to regulate timber harvesting within the Town [Section 5.8.4].	Local Law	Short-term	Planning Board Town Board
19	Create a <i>Ridge Protection Overlay District</i> in order to conserve scenic vistas and protect natural resources [Section 5.7.5].	Zoning Revision	Short-term	Planning Board Town Board
20	Create an <i>Aquifer Protection Overlay District</i> in order to protect the Town’s wells and other sources of potable water [Section 5.7.2].	Zoning Revision	Short-term	Planning Board Town Board
21	Create an <i>AG-Agricultural Zoning District</i> to better accommodate the business needs of local farmers [Section 9.1].	Zoning Revision	Short-term	Planning Board Town Board
22	“Develop a <i>Stormwater Management Plan</i> in accordance with the requirements of MS4.”	Local Law	Short-term	Town Board Highway Dept.
23	Create an <i>HI-Heavy Industry District</i> to allow for heavy industries while ensuring they are buffered from residential uses [Section 11.2].	Zoning Revision	Long-term	Planning Board Town Board
24	Evaluate the limits of the existing <i>HC-Highway Commercial Districts</i> along Route 9W and Route 28 with view toward reducing the extent of these districts to existing commercial nodes [Section 11.2].	Zoning Map Amendment	Long-term	Planning Board Town Board
25	Create a new <i>MX-Mixed Use District</i> and zoning mechanisms to allow for New Urbanism/TND communities [Section 11.1.2, 11.4, & 11.5].	Zoning Revision	Long-term	Planning Board Town Board
26	Develop <i>Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans</i> for the Hudson River, Rondout Creek, and Esopus Creek waterfronts [Section 11.1.3].	LWRP	Long-term	Planning Board Town Board
Immediate = 1 Year Short-Term = 1-2 Years Long-Term = 2-5 years				

Town of Ulster Comprehensive Plan Implementation Plan				
No.	Recommendations	Type	Priority	Responsibility
Cultural, Recreational & Historic Resource Recommendations:				
40	Ensure that new residential development helps to fund future park improvements by requiring payment in lieu of parkland [Section 7.5.1].	Policy	Immediate	Planning Board Town Board
41	Support efforts by property owners to participate in the Conservation Tax Credit (CTC) Program [Section 7.5.1].	Policy	Immediate	Town Board
42	Pursue funding through the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation for parkland acquisition, open space easements and parkland improvements [Section 7.5.1].	Policy	Immediate	Parks & Recreation Town Board
43	Support efforts to implement recommendations from the Ulster & Delaware Railroad Corridor Feasibility Study [Section 7.5.1].	Policy	Immediate	Town Board
44	Provide more year-round parks & recreation activities within the Town’s park system [Section 7.1 & 7.5.1].	Program	Short-term	Parks & Recreation Town Board
45	Coordinate with NYSDEC to identify and develop public access points along the Esopus Creek [Section 7.5.1].	Planning & Construction	Short-term	Parks & Recreation Town Board
46	Complete an <i>Historic Resources Inventory</i> of the Town of Ulster [Section 7.5.1].	Resource Inventory	Short-term	Historic Society Town Board
47	Create a rail trail along the Ontario & Western Railroad r-o-w between the City of Kingston and Town of Hurley [Section 7.5.1].	Planning & Construction	Short-term	Town Board Ulster County
48	Create Town recognition of historic resources [Section 7.5.1].	Local Law Resolution	Short-term	Historic Society Town Board
49	Create additional neighborhood parks in those areas of the Town with a higher population density [Section 7.1 & 7.5.1].	Program	Long-term	Parks & Recreation Town Board
50	Develop a <i>Town of Ulster Parks & Recreation Master Plan</i> [Section 7.5.1].	Park Master Plan	Long-term	Parks & Recreation Town Board
51	Pursue the enactment of a local <i>historic preservation law</i> [Section 7.5.1].	Local Law	Long-term	Historic Society Town Board
52	Reserved			
53	Reserved			
Immediate = 1 Year		Short-Term = 1-2 Years		Long-Term = 2-5 years

Town of Ulster Comprehensive Plan Implementation Plan				
No.	Recommendations	Type	Priority	Responsibility
Community Facility Recommendations:				
54	Reach out to the School Board to request that the Town Planning Board is involved in the site selection for a new high school [Section 8.6].	Policy	Immediate	Planning Board Town Board
55	Use the State Environmental Quality Review Act process to ensure potential impacts on schools are assessed and mitigated [Section 8.6].	Policy	Immediate	Planning Board Town Board
56	Review all requests for water line extensions [outside of existing districts] in the context of the recommended density pattern of this Plan [Section 8.7].	Policy	Immediate	Planning Board Water Dept. Town Board
57	Monitor capacity to ensure that existing users are served before granting water line extensions outside of existing districts [Section 8.7].	Policy	Immediate	Water Dept. Town Board
58	Continue to work with Town engineer to resolve the infiltration & inflow at the Whittier Sewer District (WWTP) [Section 8.8].	Study & Construction	Short-term	Sewer Dept. Town Board
59	Create a <i>Capital Improvement Plan</i> (CIP) for all the Town’s capital facilities. A CIP would assess the useful life of all capital facilities (e.g. all buildings, infrastructure, equipment, etc.) maintenance needs and replacement schedules. It should also include an <i>Asset Management Plan</i> to identify how to fund improvements [Section 8.11].	Capital Improvement Plan	Long-term	Planning Board Town Board Highway Dept. Water Dept. Sewer Dept.
60	Reserved			
Agriculture & Farmland Recommendations:				
61	Support applications to the State and federal government to <i>purchase agricultural easements</i> on local farms [Section 9.1].	Policy	Immediate	Town Board
62	Discourage the extension of water & sewer lines to areas with prime farmlands [Section 9.1].	Policy	Immediate	Town Board
63	Coordinate with Cornell Cooperative Extension to support local farmers [Section 9.1].	Policy	Short-term	Town Board
64	Create an <i>AG-Agricultural Zoning District</i> [Section 9.1 & 11.2].	Zoning Amendment	Short-term	Planning Board Town Board
65	Form a Town of Ulster <i>Agricultural Advisory Committee</i> [Section 9.1].	Resolution	Short-term	Town Board
Immediate = 1 Year		Short-Term = 1-2 Years		Long-Term = 2-5 years

Town of Ulster Comprehensive Plan Implementation Plan				
No.	Recommendations		Priority	Responsibility
66	Create a local program to purchase conservation easements from area farmers in cooperation with Ulster County [Section 9.1].	Local Law	Long-term	Town Board Ulster County
Economic Development Recommendations:				
67	Work in partnership with ESDC, UCDC, the Ulster County IDA, and the Kingston-Ulster Empire Zone to develop a coherent strategy to attract industries to the Town and Kingston [Section 10.2 & 10.3].	Policy	Immediate	Town Board
68	Encourage continued growth at the Kingston-Ulster Commerce Park [Section 10.3].	Policy	Immediate	Town Board
69	Secure funding through the Ulster County Development Corporation’s Shovel-Ready Fund [Section 10.3].	Grant Application	Short-term	Town Board Consultant
70	Secure funding through the <i>Build Now-NY Program</i> to pay for professional services related to engineering, environmental assessments, and legal support needed to pre-permit development sites [Section 10.2].	Grant Application	Short-term	Town Board Developer Consultant
71	Conduct an inventory of office, manufacturing, and industrial floor space that is available within the Town of Ulster by square footage, class of space, and site location [Section 10.3].	Inventory	Short-term	Town Board Consultant
72	Streamline the development review process for businesses that are looking to expand within the Town of Ulster [Section 10.3].	Administrative Revisions	Short-term	Town Board Consultant
Other Recommendations:				
73	Secure funding through the <i>Small Cities CDBG Program</i> for housing rehabilitation, public facilities, and economic development projects within the Town of Ulster.	Grant Application	Short-term	Town Board
74	Secure funding through the <i>New York Main Street</i> program for improvements to the Eddyville Business District [Section 7.5.2].	Grant Application	Short-term	Town Board
75	Reserved			
76	Reserved			
77	Reserved			
Immediate = 1 Year		Short-Term = 1-2 Years		Long-Term = 2-5 years

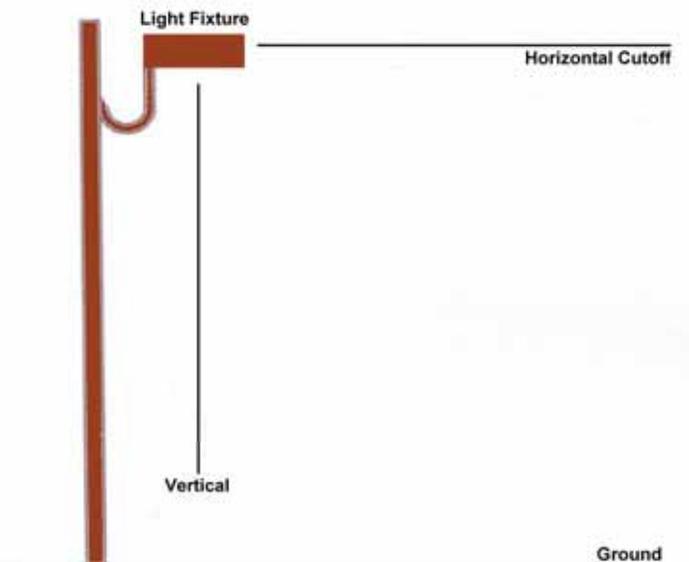
Site lighting should be sufficient to facilitate the safe and convenient circulation of motorists and pedestrians, but not too bright so as to produce excessive light and glare. Given the rural nature of the Town, coupled with the close proximity of residences in the vicinity of the Town's commercial and industrial areas, lighting shall be designed, directed and shielded in such a manner that direct light does not leave the perimeter of the site.

All outdoor lighting, including the fixture, pole, and other supporting elements, shall be designed to complement the overall design of the site and prevent excessive glare. To minimize excessive lighting, entry points and pedestrian crosswalks can be lit with accent lighting that helps to define these areas rather than using brighter lights throughout the site. Lower-level lighting can then be used in other areas of the site where less lighting is required. Shorter lighting poles can also be used to light pedestrian walkways. The following shall be incorporated into all commercial lighting plans.

- Timing mechanisms and photo cells to reduce light levels and conserve energy during non-operational hours.
- Light that is mounted on the building shall also be down-lit and integrated as an architectural component of the building.
- All pole-mounted lighting (as shown above) shall have a full cut-off lens that does not allow light to shine above a 90-degree angle measured from the vertical line from the center of the lamp.
- Low pressure or high pressure sodium lights, metal halide, florescent and compact florescent lights are encouraged.
- Height of poles shall not exceed building heights and should be limited to no greater than 18 feet in height as measured from the ground to the top of the lighting pole.

Design Guidelines: Lighting

All Commercial and Industrial Districts



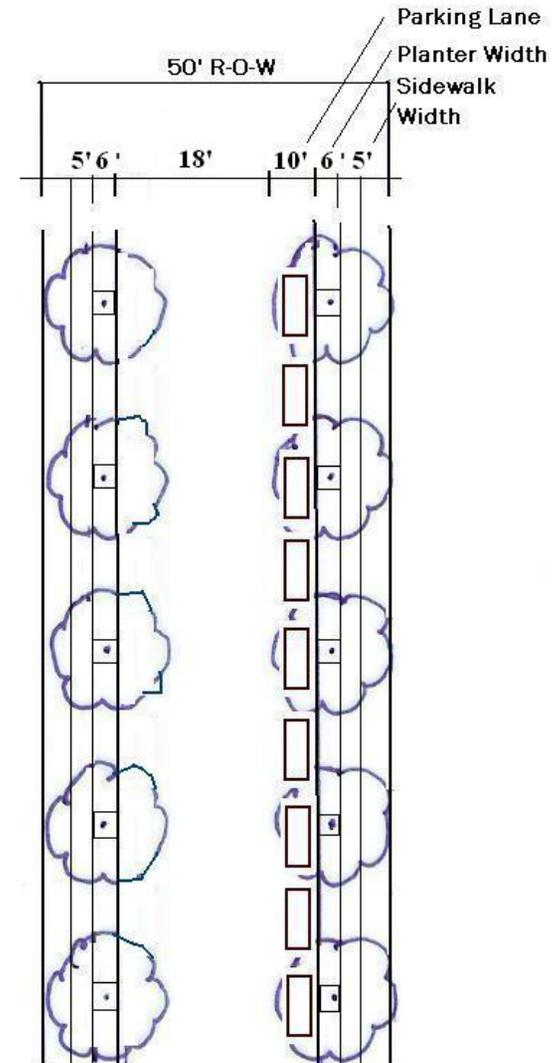
Design Guidelines: Street

New Urbanism or Traditional Neighborhood Design

A typical single-family residential street design in a New Urbanism or Traditional Neighborhood Design community would follow the standards outlined below. Table-A1 outlines additional street standards for a TND single-family residential street and the figure to the right illustrates these standards. Also included in the table are standards for landscaping, sidewalks, and street lighting.

Table-A1 – Street Standards

	Standards
<i>Streets & Curbing</i>	
Right-of-Way Width	50 feet
Pavement Width	18 feet
Traffic Flow	2 ways
Parking Lanes	10 feet one side
Curb Type	Raised curb
Design Speed	20 mph
<i>Sidewalks</i>	
Placement	Both sides of street
Width	5 feet
<i>Planting Strip</i>	
Width	6 feet
Tree Planters	For each tree
Tree Spacing	30 feet on center
Tree size	8' high w/ 3" caliper
Type	Deciduous
<i>Street Lighting</i>	
Lighting type	Pedestrian-oriented period lighting
Utilities	Underground
Spacing	50 feet on center



Definitions

Cluster Subdivision: A form of development that allows a reduction in lot area and bulk requirements, provided there is no increase in the number of lots permitted under a conventional subdivision or overall increase in the overall density of development, and the remaining land area is devoted to open space, active recreation, preservation of environmentally sensitive areas, or agriculture (aka conservation subdivision).

Detention Basin: Are usually dry basins that fill with water during a storm event. They work by delaying the storm water so that it is released at a rate that mimics the predevelopment flow.

Farm: A parcel of land used for agricultural activities including the production, storage, keeping, harvesting, grading, packaging, boarding, or maintenance, for sale, lease, of plants and animals useful to humans.

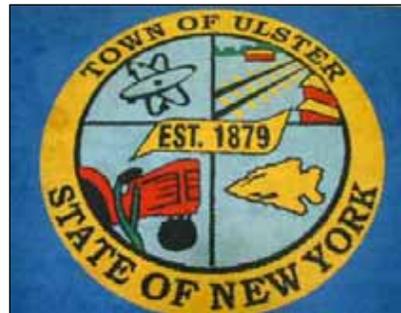
Light Manufacturing: A use engaged in the manufacture, predominantly from previously prepared materials, of finished products or parts, including processing, fabrication, assembly, treatment, packaging, and incidental storage, sales, and distribution of such products, but excluding basic industrial processing.

Retention Basin: A basin that holds water in a pool. The only outlet is through an emergency spillway that allows the basin to overflow in a controlled manner should it become too full.

The retention basin loses water through infiltration and evaporation but is designed with capacity to hold the runoff from average storm events.

Recreation, Active: Leisure Time activities, usually of a formal nature and often performed with others, requiring equipment and taking place in prescribed places, sites, or fields.

Recreation, Passive: Activities that involve relatively inactive or less energetic activities, such as walking, sitting, picnicking, and hiking.



ⁱ CDP is the abbreviation for Census Designated Place, a statistical entity defined for each decennial Census according to Census Bureau guidelines, comprising a densely settled concentration of population that is not within an incorporated place, but is locally identified by a name.

ⁱⁱ Source: Lyons, Thomas S., and Roger E. Hamlin. Creating an Economic Development Action Plan: A Guide for Development Professional. Praeger Publishers, Westport CT, 1991.