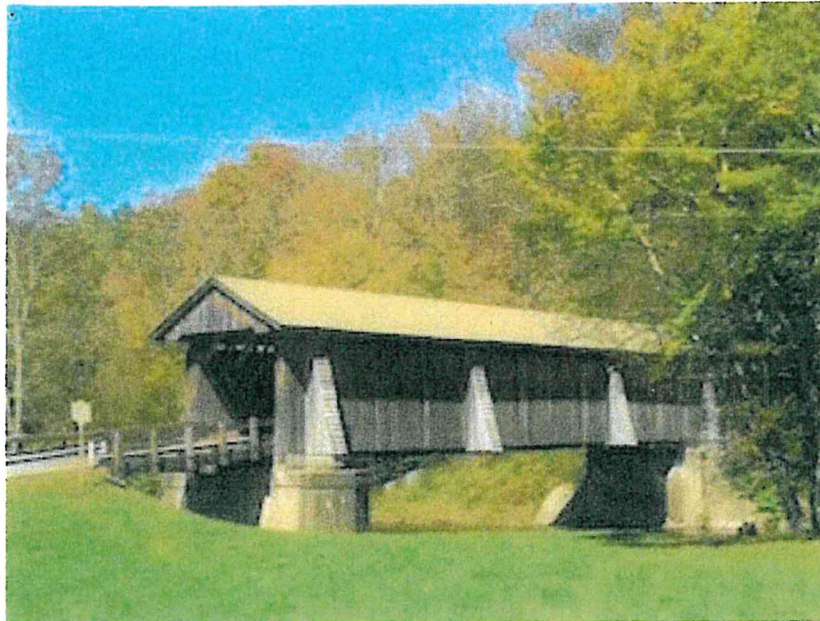


# **TOWN OF ROCKLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Adopted February 20, 2020



*Prepared by:*

Town of Rockland Comprehensive Plan Committee  
Town of Rockland Town Board

*Town of Rockland, Sullivan County, New York*

# TOWN OF ROCKLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Adopted February 20, 2020

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A downloadable copy of this Plan is located at [www.townofrocklandny.com](http://www.townofrocklandny.com)



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## **SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Purpose**

The Town of Rockland is a rural community located in northern Sullivan County, New York. Incorporated in 1910, Rockland's roots lie in logging, agriculture and tourism due to its acres of fertile soil, large tracts of forested lands, clean mountain air and numerous lakes and streams. The Town encompasses a mix of historic hamlets, rural residential settings, and abundant environmental resources and open space.

Towns in New York State are granted the authority to prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan in accordance with New York State Town Law §272-a. A comprehensive plan is defined as "the materials, written and/or graphic, including but not limited to maps, charts, studies, resolutions, reports ... that identify the goals, objectives, principles, guidelines, policies, standards, devices and instruments for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development of the town." The effect of adopting a comprehensive plan is that a town's land use regulations, which provide a mechanism to implement the town's vision, must be in compliance with its plan. In addition, all plans and projects by other governmental agencies must also consider the plan.

In 2016, the Town of Rockland determined that an update to its Comprehensive Plan was warranted in response to new information and changed conditions since its 2010 Plan was adopted. Subsequent to 2010 a number of local and regional planning studies were initiated which offer new information and ideas in areas such as transportation, agriculture and economic development (including agribusiness). The 2010 U.S. Census demographics also became available by which to analyze the Town's current socioeconomic conditions. In addition, by 2016 the effects of the "Great Recession," which began in 2008, had largely lifted and for Sullivan County this was reflected in renewed economic growth and decreased unemployment levels. Rockland saw an increase in tourism, the opening of new businesses and a slow but steady uptick in residential growth. There is also a growing national trend towards remote office (RO) workers (i.e., teleworking) that will enable people to work remotely from virtually any area in the world that has internet access. In particular, RO workers in NYC and the surrounding NY metropolitan area will find the Town an attractive place to live due to its much lower cost of living and rural character. Some RO workers already live in the Town and this trend may accelerate in the coming years. For all these reasons, this update to the Comprehensive Plan has been prepared. This action is consistent with good planning practice which recommends that a comprehensive plan be periodically reviewed and updated (if necessary).

This Plan provides a framework for planning for the Town's future over the next 5 year planning period, especially regarding decisions that will guide future growth. It also seeks to encompass a long-range planning horizon by peering into the future for the next 15 years and beyond.

The Town of Rockland Comprehensive Plan is a living document and, as such, should be periodically reviewed and updated (if necessary) to determine if its information, goals and strategies remain valid.

## 1.2 Vision statement

Long range comprehensive planning begins with a vision of what the community wants its future to be like. The vision statement is brief and clearly expressed and is both aspirational and realistic. The statement provides the foundation on which policies and actions are based in order to make the vision a reality. The following Vision Statement is written as if it was 2035 and one was describing the Town of Rockland's "ideal" future.

*In the year 2035 and beyond, the Town of Rockland is a predominantly rural community with a mixture of mountainous forests, pristine lakes and streams, productive agricultural lands and vibrant historic hamlets with thriving commercial centers and a range of housing types. These places are connected by accessible roadways, sidewalks and a network of trails, and are adequately served by public transportation. Rockland continues to offer convenient access to all that the region—including the NY metropolitan area—has to offer. Town-wide mobile communications and broad band internet access support a diverse economy with well-paying jobs. Rockland is recognized for its year-round recreational opportunities, the excellence of its schools, the productivity of its business community, the quality of its public safety, community services and cultural resources, and the beauty and health of its natural environment. All of these attributes contribute to an exceptional quality of life, community pride and a strong sense of community place.*

The recommendations within this Comprehensive Plan will guide the Town of Rockland toward achieving this vision.

The Plan has been developed with the intent of achieving a balance between hamlet and rural perspectives by guiding new growth while protecting existing environmental resources and enhancing the quality of life. The following four major themes for shaping the Town's future have been identified during the preparation of this Plan:

- > Promote year-round tourism and economic diversity
- > Preserve and enhance historic hamlets and rural character
- > Protect environmental resources and open space
- > Cultivate a sense of community place

These themes are discussed in Section 2, Themes. A wide range of goals, strategies and actions are recommended to implement the themes and they are discussed in the ensuing sections of the Plan. The recommended actions are based, in part, on Rockland's strengths, such as its convenient location and plentiful environmental resources. Other strengths include its ease of access to regional transportation, excellent school systems and many recreational opportunities.

Implementation of this Plan requires a number of parties to perform recommended actions. While this document focuses on efforts that are within the Town's jurisdiction (such as zoning amendments and subdivision regulations,) some actions require steps by Sullivan County or New York State agencies. In other instances, it will be the role of private organizations to take action. When actions are outside of the



goals and new recommendations by which achieve those goals. The updated Plan adds new sections, maps, tables and a revised layout. New sections include: Section 2, Themes; Section 3, Setting; Section 4, Residential Areas; Section 5, Commercial Areas; Section 9, Transportation; Section 11, Agriculture and Section 13, Implementation.

#### **1.4.2 Sullivan County**

Sullivan County 2020 Comprehensive Plan (adopted 2005) – Rockland’s 2020 Plan is in substantial agreement with the County’s plan and its subsequent topical updates. It embodies similar distinctions between hamlet and rural area growth, enhancing public transit, providing adequate recreational facilities, expanding walking and bicycling opportunities, diversifying the economy, expanding agricultural production and agribusiness operations, and promoting year-round tourism. It also recognizes and seeks to conserve environmental resources and open space. While certain climate change issues related to flooding are discussed in the Town’s Plan, the County’s 2014 Climate Action Plan is much more comprehensive in its discussion of this issue. The Town could seek to use County assistance in more fully tackling this issue in terms of concrete actions.

#### **1.4.3 Plans for adjacent towns**

(See Figure 3-1, Location Map on page 3.2)

Town of Neversink (eastern border) – The Neversink Comprehensive Plan (1991) shares the same land use theme as Rockland’s Plan in channeling future growth around hamlets while retaining an overall rural character in other areas. Neversink’s low-density zoning along its border is compatible with Rockland’s zoning including one small area where slightly denser development is allowed on both sides.

Town of Liberty (portion of southern border) – The Liberty Comprehensive Plan (2008) and a topical land use update (2016) seeks to maintain a rural small-town character by channeling growth to existing hamlet areas. This goal is in agreement with Rockland’s Plan and Liberty’s border is zoned for rural residential development as is Rockland’s side of the border.

Town of Callicoon (portion of southern border) – The Callicoon Comprehensive Plan (2013) establishes rural low-density development along most of the border with a small section that allows medium-density residential growth in the form of one and two-family dwellings. This is in agreement with Rockland’s side of the border which allows the same type of dwellings. One small section of Rockland’s side allows multi-family dwellings, but only as a special use. Overall land use on both sides of the border is compatible.

Town of Fremont (portion of southern border) – The Fremont Comprehensive Plan (2007) emphasizes a low-density, rural, open space landscape at its border with Rockland. Both the land use designation and the overall development goals are compatible with land uses on Rockland’s side of the border.

Town's jurisdiction, the Town should coordinate efforts with the appropriate governmental agencies or private entities. Collectively, this effort will help bring the Plan to life.

The updated Plan is designed to be easy to follow and understand. It is both comprehensive, long-range and flexible. It is (a) comprehensive in that it addresses elements that affect the Town's quality of life, (b) long-range in that it looks beyond current issues, and (c) flexible since it is subject to review and change as new information and ideas become available. With the Plan's guidance, Rockland will become an even more desirable place to live, work and visit.

### **1.3 Background and process**

The Comprehensive planning process began in 2016 when a consultant to the Town prepared a memorandum at the request of the town supervisor which outlined reasons why the 2010 Comprehensive Plan should be reviewed and possibly updated (Appendix C). After the memo and other factors were discussed at a duly noted meeting of the Town Board, the Board thereupon resolved to update the 2010 Plan. The Board further resolved to appoint a Comprehensive Plan Committee (CPC) and charged it to prepare a draft update to the 2010 Plan and present the update to the Town Board for review. The CPC included members of the Town Board, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals and community stakeholders representing different aspects of the Town. The Town Board also retained two consultants to work with the CPC in the preparation of this Plan. The CPC held its first meeting in June 2016, which meeting was advertised in advance and open to the public as were all subsequent meetings. Several field visits were made by one of the consultants, in part, to better understand some of the issues and objectives raised at Committee meetings. The CPC held a duly noted public hearing to gain important public input on the draft Plan. The CPC also referenced two community visioning workshops involving residents of the hamlets of Rockland and Livingston Manor that were conducted in 2007 and 2013 respectively (Appendices D and E). These workshops covered a wide range of topics including community assets, infrastructure and community services, recreation and social issues, community appearance, and business development and tourism. Many of the issues and thoughtful ideas developed during the workshops remain relevant today and they have been factored into the development of this Plan.

### **1.4 Local and regional planning efforts to date**

The following provides an overview of planning efforts by the Town, Sullivan County, adjoining municipalities and certain regional plans. This Plan is generally compatible with Sullivan County's comprehensive plan and with land uses of surrounding municipalities.

#### **1.4.1 Town of Rockland**

Rockland's 2010 Comprehensive Plan, in part, sought to address issues and ideas identified in the Roscoe 2007 visioning workshop. This updated 2020 Plan replaces the Town's 2010 Plan while retaining some of the goals and recommendations of the 2010 Plan which sought to address issues such as housing growth, transportation, community facilities and economic development. It also reflects new information and

Town of Colchester (western border) – The Colchester Comprehensive Plan (2003) is in substantial agreement with Rockland's Plan in areas such as environmental resources, transportation, historic resources, economic development, affordable housing and channeling new residential growth in and around existing hamlets. Colchester does not have a zoning law or zoning map so a direct comparison of land uses along the border with Rockland could not be conducted.

Town of Hardenburg (northern border) – Hardenburg does not have a comprehensive plan or an official zoning map. Its zoning regulations establish one residential district for the entire town, which district allows one and two-family dwellings and a minimum area of two acres for all lots and buildings. Other generally low-impact commercial uses are also allowed. Permitted land uses are similar on both sides of the border with the exception of light manufacturing on Hardenburg's side which is subject to a special use permit.

#### **1.4.5 Regional plans**

The Catskill Park State Land Master Plan (2008) and the Catskill Forest Preserve Access Plan (1999) – Both are key Catskill Park plans that set forth active strategies for the management and improvement of the Park's public resources. These documents encourage public participation and recognize the importance of partnerships, including those with the Park's municipalities. Within these Park planning processes there are opportunities for the Town to influence implementation of activities, both within the town and on the Park-wide scale. The Access Plan is in the process of being updated and will become the Greater Catskills Region Comprehensive Recreation Plan. As the name implies, the effort will increase the geographic range of its preceding plan, while also expanding the scope of its efforts

NYSDEC Catskill Forest Preserve unit management plans – DEC's management of the resources of the Catskill Forest Preserve is broken into units, whose programmatic and facility planning are guided by unit management plans. The majority of the Willowemoc Wild Forest lies within the town of Rockland. The Willowemoc – Long Pond Wild Forest Unit Management Plan (1991) was amended in 2001 and 2006. The subjects of these amendments include parking lot expansion, lean-to relocation, snowmobile trail designation for loop opportunities, power line relocation, and providing access for persons with disabilities. These types of plan components are related to the Town's policies that are developed around enhancing the quality of experiences for visitors and offering a diversity of recreational opportunities. The Beaverkill Campground Unit Management Plan (1996) and the Mongaup Pond Unit Management Plan (2015) guide the more intensive public use of these state campgrounds within the Town.

The Beaverkill Master Plan (2016) – This is a concept report focused on the Beaverkill Campground area, with emphasis on historical interpretation and site improvements with cost estimates. The report "is intended to give impetus for improvements and encourage further development and implementation." As NYSDEC undertakes the update to the unit management plan for the Beaverkill Campground (expected in the near term, 1-2 years) this study's recommendations can be consulted in the process. The adaption of the report's recommendations, in principle, as part of this plan would strengthen support for improving the Beaverkill Campground landscape which would benefit the Town.

Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council Strategic Plan (MHEDC) (2011) – The MHEDC covers six counties and puts forth a number of broad goals. The plan’s second goal recognizes food and beverage operations as anchor industries, and this is reinforced by the related NYS Regional Cluster Program. The 2015 MHEDC report lists expansion projects for both of Rockland’s breweries. Also listed is the O&W Rail Trail Project in Livingston Manor, which will advance NY’s Downtown Revitalization Initiative. Similar strategic plans exist for each designated region of the state and they are part of the state’s overall economic development initiatives serving as critical links between local projects and state policies.

New York State 2016 Open Space Conservation Plan (OSP) – The OSP is a statewide comprehensive plan that includes open space goals, actions, tools, resources and programs administered by state, federal agencies and conservation nonprofits. The OSP serves as the blueprint for the State’s Open Space Program, which program guides the investment of land protection funds from the Environmental Protection Fund. The current Plan directly speaks to the importance of agriculture in the Hudson Valley foodshed (of which Sullivan County is a part) which serves to conserve open space and to help meet a growing demand for locally produced food. The Plan also promotes the protection of watersheds for the Beaver Kill and Willowemoc Creek, large parts of which exist in the Town of Rockland.

## **1.5 Contents**

This document examines the major goals related to the Town’s population and community character. These are expressed in the **Major Themes** section. The Plan then describes existing land use patterns in the **Setting** section. Specific strategies regarding housing and hamlet vitality issues are provided in the **Residential Areas** and **Commercial Areas** sections. The **Community Services** section discusses the infrastructure and services provided to residents of the Town. This is followed by strategies to enhance the Town’s recreational facilities, cultural activities and historic resources (**Historic, Cultural and Recreational Resources** section) and to consider its environmental setting (**Environmental Resources** section). Improving mobility and issues related to the local economy are discussed in the **Transportation** and **Economic Development** sections. The **Agriculture** section describes the goals and recommendations for Rockland’s farmland. Key steps needed to implement the Plan are presented in the **Land Use** and **Implementation** sections. Socioeconomic conditions are described in **Appendix A** which provides demographic, social, and economic data about the Town and its residents.

## **1.6 GIS and socioeconomic information**

Sullivan County Geographic Information Systems were used extensively by Christopher Knapp, the county’s GIS technician, to create all of the maps within this Plan. Socioeconomic information provided by the Sullivan County Division of Planning, Community Development and Real Property was also used in the preparation of some of the tables and charts contained within the Plan.



## **SECTION 2 – MAJOR THEMES**

Population growth in Rockland in the form of new year-round residents and second home owners is expected to increase in the years to come which will place added pressures on Town services such as roads and recreation as well as agricultural lands and environmentally sensitive areas. The Town's responses to issues facing the community are summarized as the following four themes, which can be viewed as the major goals of the Plan.

These themes and the overall Plan will act as a guide for the Town in making decisions regarding physical, social and economic development. The statements that follow describe the general way in which residents expect and desire the community to develop. The subsequent sections of the Plan expand upon these goals and identify strategies for achieving them.

### **2.1 Promote year-round tourism and economic diversity**

Rockland's residents have expressed concern about the high cost of living in the state; high property tax rates in particular, and a lack of well-paying jobs. In recent years, the Town has attracted new businesses and property taxes paid by those enterprises help to relieve some of the tax burden from residential tax payers. The Town should take a proactive position towards economic development by encouraging clean, low-impact commercial enterprises, working to attract and expand business sectors that will diversify the economy, promoting year-round tourism and encouraging the preparation of shovel-ready sites for development or redevelopment.

### **2.2 Preserve and enhance historic hamlets and rural character**

Rockland's residents have expressed their desire to preserve and enhance the Town's rural character and historic hamlets. Rockland's rural heritage benefits residents both directly—as a source of tourist income—and indirectly—as an aesthetic and cultural resource. The Town's hamlet centers offer an attractive downtown destination, varied housing stock, and small-town feel. As development continues, it is important to recognize these features that are attractive to both residents and visitors. These features should be managed through the development and application of design guidelines and land use tools.



Grooville Road

### **2.3 Protect environmental resources and open space**

As development in Rockland continues, the town should continue efforts to protect natural resources, steep slopes, forests, stream corridors, lakes, wetlands, ridgelines, agricultural areas, aquifer recharge areas, and viewsheds. The Town recognizes the importance of parks and the preservation of open space, natural areas and farmland – all of which form the town's open space environment. All of these assets are critical to retaining the Town's rustic beauty which is so attractive to residents and visitors alike.

### **2.4 Cultivate a sense of community place**

Rockland has a strong sense of community which is grounded by its historic hamlets, public schools, places of worship and community events. The Town's hamlets are host to annual, town-wide community events including a July 4<sup>th</sup> parade, trout parade, Halloween party, winter ice festival, half marathon & 5K run, art exhibits and more. Hamlet centers are the heart of commercial enterprises, professional services, public libraries and government services. The hamlets' public schools attract community residents to sports events, choral concerts, and thespian plays. All these activities promote a sense of community place among Rockland's residents.



Town Trout Parade (Livingston Manor)



Town Halloween party (Livingston Manor)



## **SECTION 3 – SETTING**

### **3.1 Location**

As shown in Figure 3-1, Location Map, the Town of Rockland is located in northern Sullivan County, NY, approximately 100 miles from New York City and 50 miles from the City of Binghamton. The Town is part of the Mid-Hudson Valley Region and is situated in close proximity to the NY metropolitan area.

Rockland is bordered on the northwest by Delaware County, on the northeast by Ulster County, on the south by the Town of Liberty, on the east by the Town of Neversink and on the southwest by the towns of Fremont and Callicoon. NY Route 17 (future I-86) runs through the Town from west to east. The Town is approximately 95 square miles in area much of which lies within the bounds of the Catskill Park, which park includes the Catskill Forest Preserve (Figure 3-2, Catskill Park). Lands within the preserve are protected from development by state law, while the remaining lands within the park are subject to development as allowed under the Town's zoning law. Still other lands in the Town are protected from development by conservation easements as shown in Figure 3-3, Protected Open Space.

### **3.2 History**

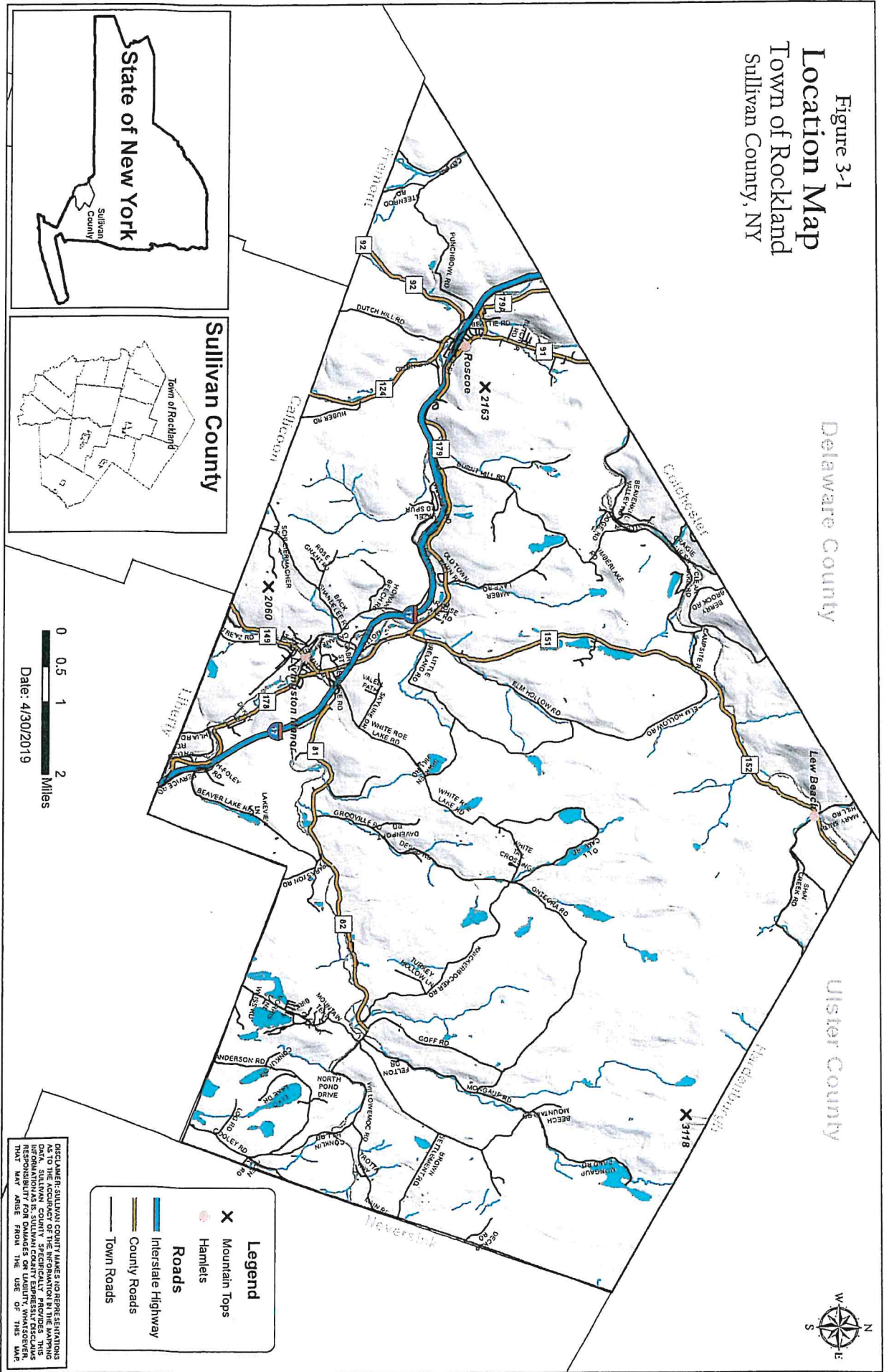
Rockland's heritage, like other communities in Sullivan County, lies partly in logging, agriculture and tourism and some of this heritage is reflected in the Town's current appearance and character. Rockland was originally part of the 1709 Hardenburgh Patent and later became part of the Town of Rochester in Ulster County. In 1798 it became a part of Neversink and in 1809 the western part of Neversink was split off to form Rockland. The Town of Rockland was legally established in 1910 by an act of the state.

The original settlement of the area dates back to the end of the Revolution in the late 1700s, and settlers at the time were largely of English origin. The region was historically a center for logging as settlers in the early 1800s cleared the land and found a ready market for logs and lumber. As roads improved, businesses began to boom and many new settlers came to the area. With arrival of railroads in the mid-1800s, the stage was set for the growth of the tourist industry as the region's cool mountain air, pure water and pristine natural beauty offered a welcome respite to New York City dwellers seeking relief from crowded tenement streets and summer heat. Agricultural dairy farms also sprang up during this period and shipped milk by rail to NYC markets.



Beaver Lake

Figure 3-1  
**Location Map**  
 Town of Rockland  
 Sullivan County, NY



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Figure 3-2  
**Catskill Park**  
 Town of Rockland  
 Sullivan County, NY

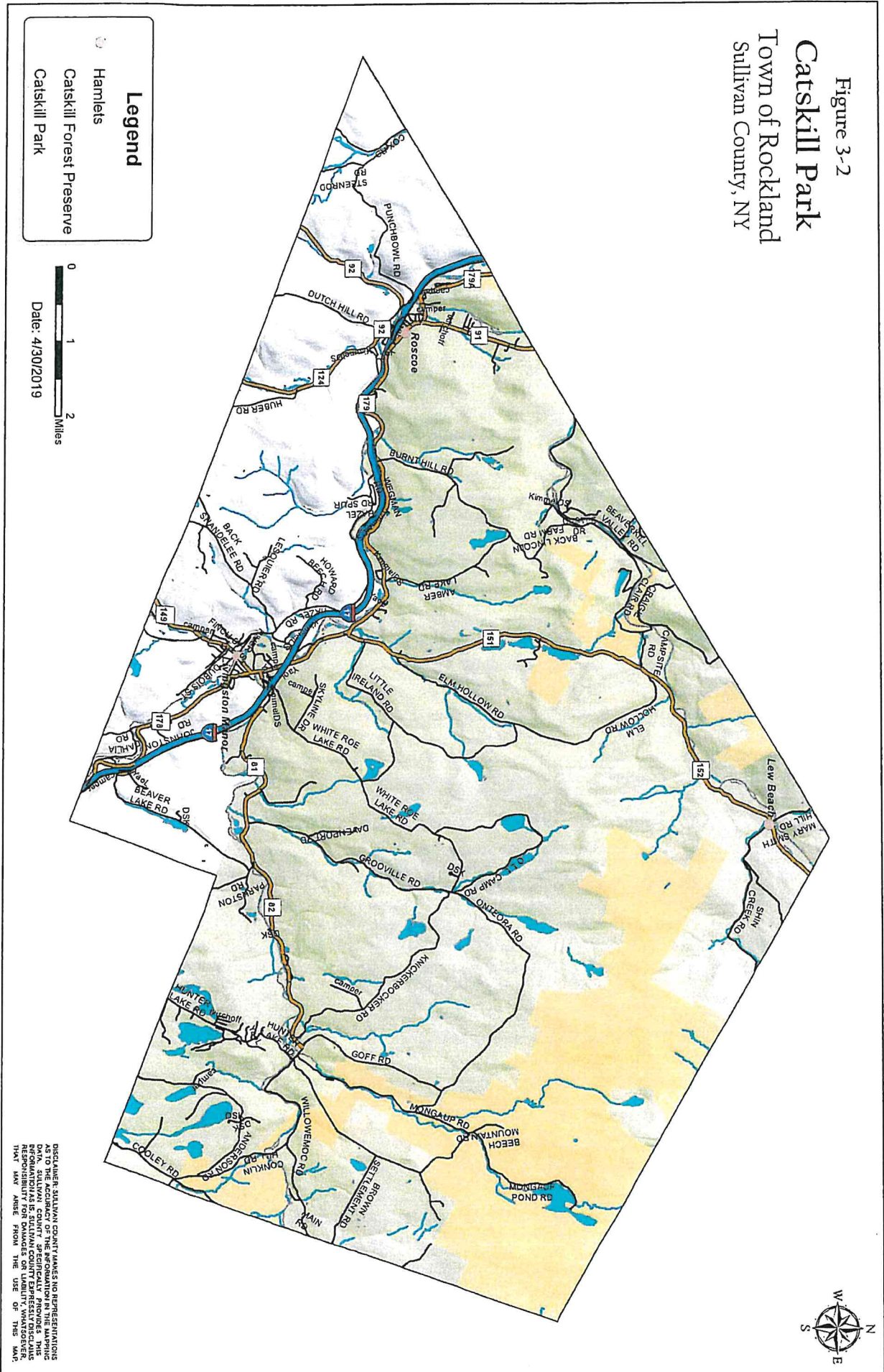
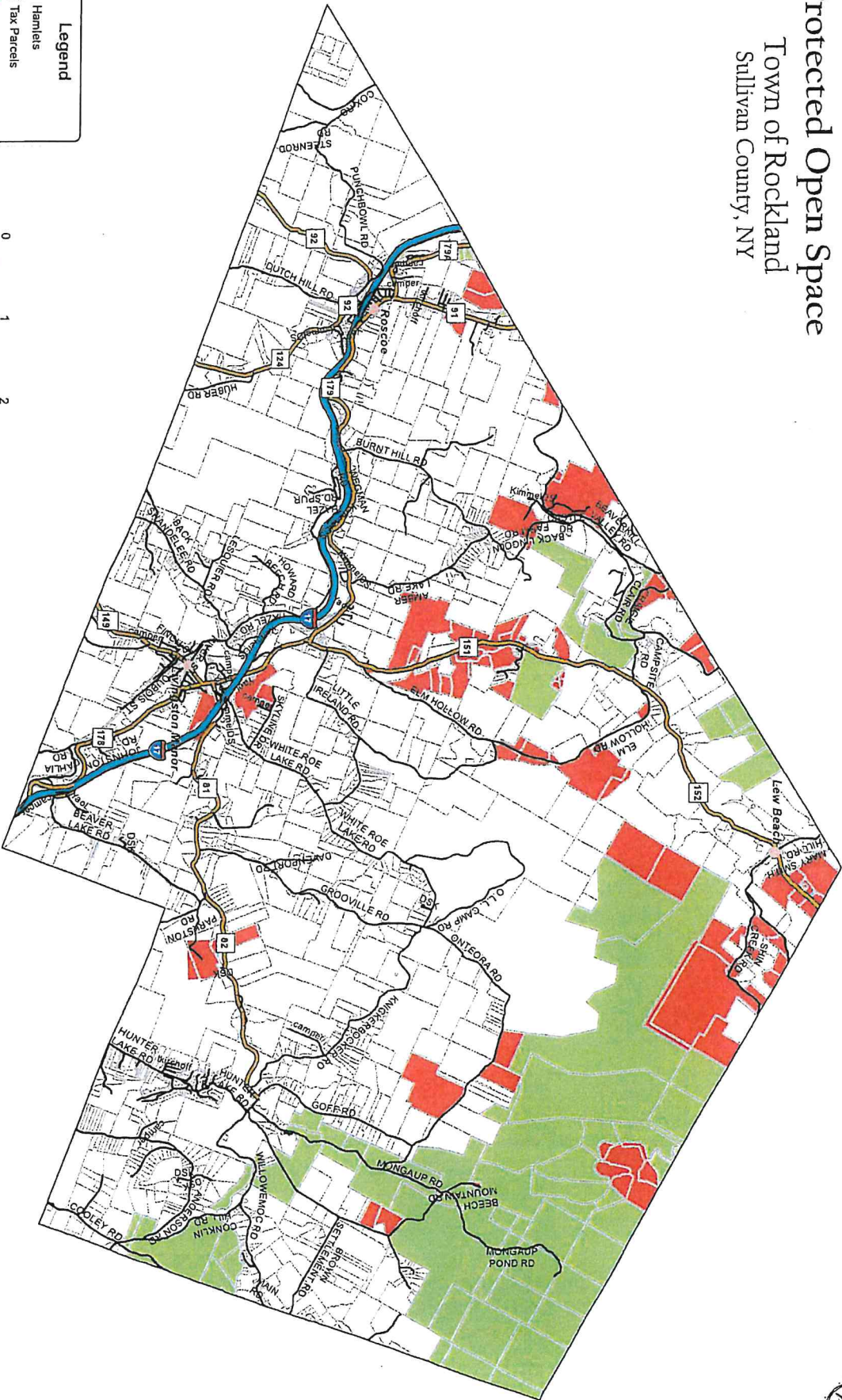


Figure 3-3  
Protected Open Space  
Town of Rockland  
Sullivan County, NY



Date: 4/30/2019



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Today, the Town's pristine rural beauty continues to attract a resurgence of tourists from the NY metropolitan area even as traditional dairy farms have all but disappeared. Increased tourism has helped to promote economic growth in the hamlets of Roscoe and Livingston Manor. The proximity of both hamlets first to the railroad and later to Route 17 has caused them to become the commercial, cultural and civic centers of the Town.

Rockland's year-round population was 3,775 in the 2010 US Census. The Town's last population increase was recorded in the 1980 Census, while succeeding Census periods have recorded incremental population decreases (see Appendix A, Table 1).

While a predominate part of the Town is zoned for low density residential uses (Figure 3-4, Zoning Districts), a good portion of these lands are either environmentally constrained and/or protected open space. As a note, Figure 3-4 is not the Town's official zoning map, but serves here for illustrative purposes only. The official zoning map is available on the Town's website and from the town clerk's office at town hall.

### 3.3 Land Use

Figure 3-5, Land Use, shows the location of the Town's existing land uses on a parcel by parcel basis. For this Plan, twelve categories of land use have been utilized based on data provided by the Sullivan County Real Property Tax Services. Definitions of these categories are as follows:

*Agricultural* – Property actively used for the production of crops or livestock.

*Public Parkland* – Property used by individuals and groups for recreational and amusement activities.

*Private Conservation Land* – Property protected from development by a conservation easement or other similar vehicle.

*Vacant* – Property that is not in use or lacks permanent improvement.

*Residential* – Property used for human habitation including single and multi-family, year-round and seasonal residences.

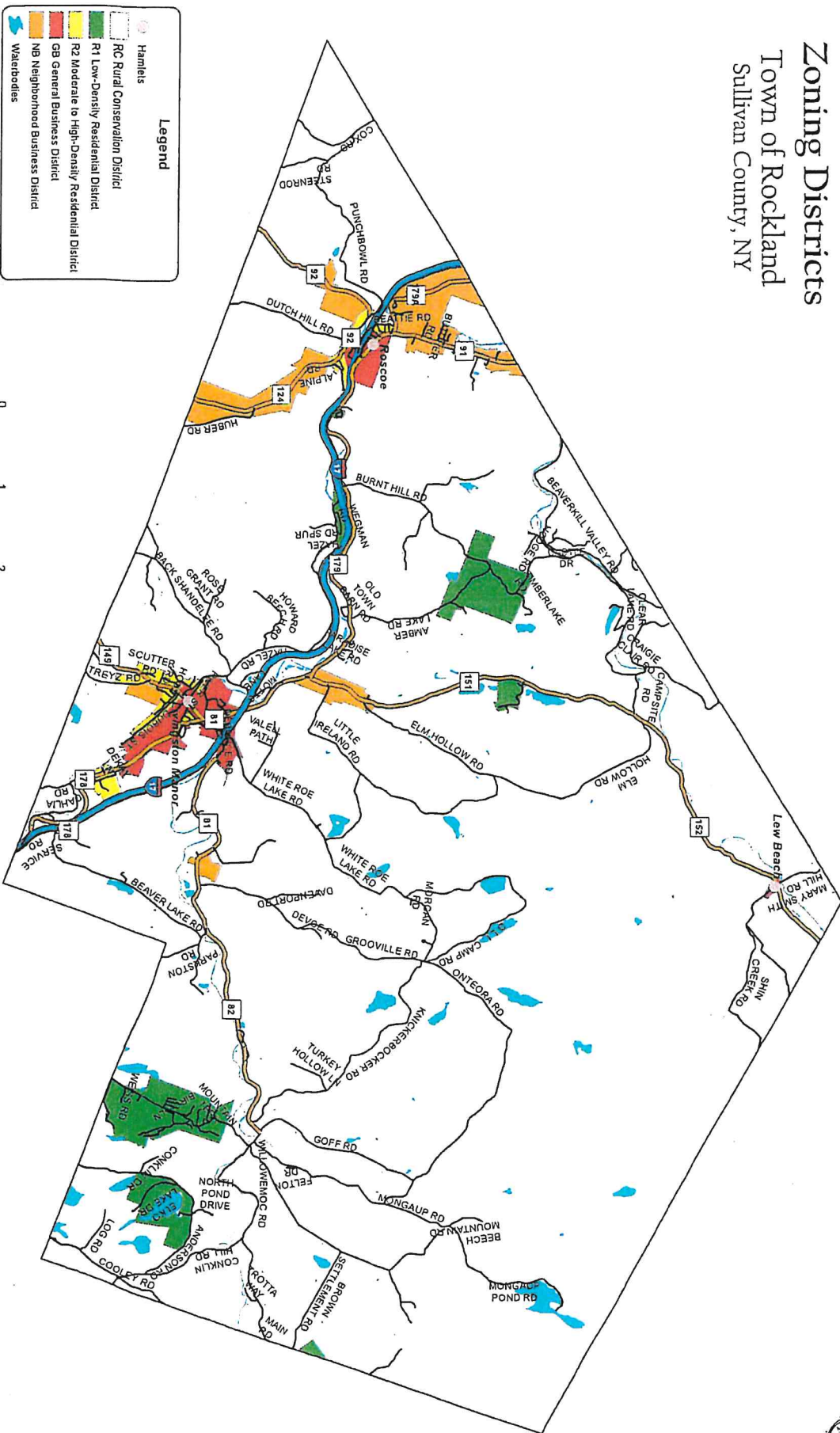
*Commercial* – Property used for the sale of goods and/or services. Includes hotels, restaurants, storage facilities, retail services, banks and office buildings, and multi-purpose properties.

*Mixed-Use* – Property that is typically commercial which includes more than one type of function such as a blend of retail and office or retail and residential.

*Private Recreation* – Property used by select individuals and groups such as private hunting or fishing clubs.

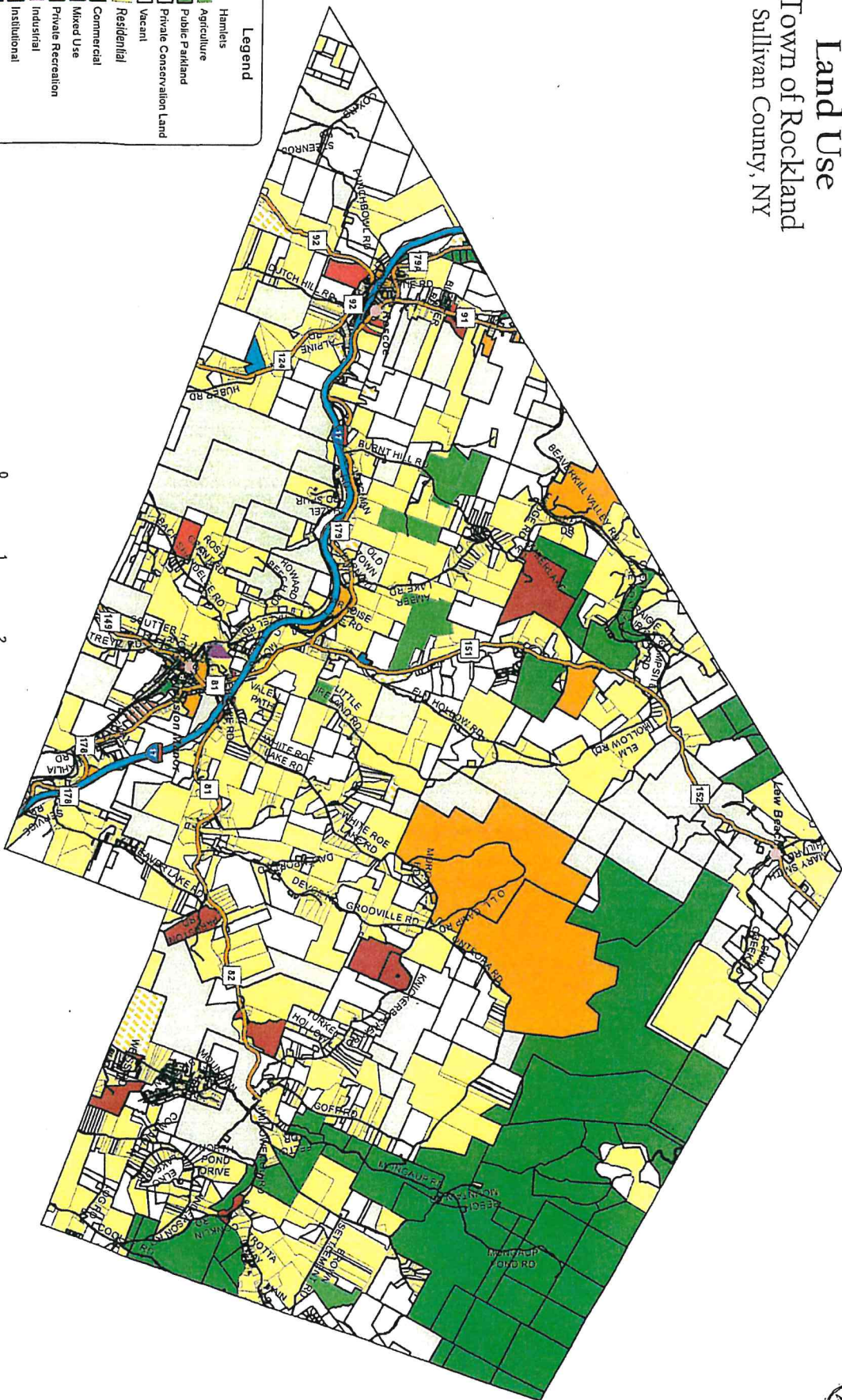
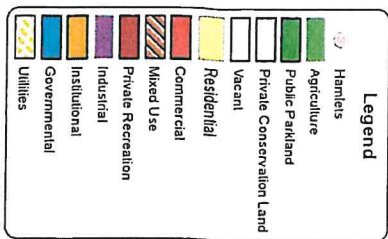
*Industrial* – Property used for the production and fabrication of durable and non-durable goods. Includes manufacturing and processing uses.

Figure 3-4  
Zoning Districts  
Town of Rockland  
Sullivan County, NY



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Figure 3-5  
**Land Use**  
 Town of Rockland  
 Sullivan County, NY



0 1 2  
 Miles  
 Date: 4/30/2019

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*Institutional* – Property used for schools, religious facilities, health care facilities, and government facilities.

*Governmental* – Property used for government facilities including offices, jails, waste disposal facilities, and water and wastewater facilities

*Utilities* – Property used to provide services to the general public including utility and communication services.

Table 3-1, Land Use, shows the acreage and percentage of each land use category in the Town including a roadway category.

Table 3-1		
Land Use		
Land Use Designation	Acreage	Percent of Town
Agricultural	731	1.2%
Public Parkland	10,032	16.5%
Private Conservation Land	10,011	16.4%
Vacant	14,925	24.5%
Residential	18,550	30.5%
Commercial	252	0.4%
Mixed Use	72	0.1%
Private Recreation	872	1.4%
Industrial	28	0.06%
Institutional	3,516	5.8%
Governmental	69	0.11%
Utilities	504	0.83%
Roadway	1,318	2.2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60,880</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Sullivan County Real Property Tax Services

Residential is the largest single land use and is distributed fairly evenly throughout the Town with a mix of parcel sizes. Residential development within Rockland is found primarily in the form of single-family homes on lots of various sizes. Public Parkland and Private Conservation Land make up a combined 32.9% of Town lands. Vacant lands account for 24.5% of land use. The remaining uses combined account for a very small percentage of total land use.

Rockland is home to three hamlet areas: Livingston Manor, Roscoe and Lew Beach.<sup>1</sup> The hamlets of Livingston Manor and Roscoe are well defined and have concentrations of residential, commercial and civic uses. Lew Beach has one commercial building, a church and firehouse and small number of residences. The greatest mix of land uses occurs in Livingston Manor and Roscoe due largely to their roles as the Town's residential and commercial centers.

<sup>1</sup> The Town's historical record speaks to other hamlets including Hazel, Rockland, Craigie Clair, Jocelyn, Grooville, Beaverkill, Deckertown, Morsston, Parkston, DeBruce, and Anderson. Rockland has become part of Roscoe and the others are no longer recognizable as hamlets.



Land used for commercial purposes accounts for a small percent of the Town's total area and is generally found in the form of small-scale, sole-proprietor businesses. Commercial land generally lies within or near the hamlets of Livingston Manor and Roscoe. Within these hamlets, commercial uses primarily include retail stores, restaurants, professional services, lodging and community services such as libraries and fire stations.

Land used for industrial purposes exists on one parcel in Livingston Manor. Land currently used for agricultural production exists on parcels that are scattered throughout the Town.

Public parkland is one of the larger land uses in the Town with the largest such use being state parkland. The Town owns and maintains Riverside Park in Roscoe and is cooperating with Sullivan County to create a rail trail (i.e., linear park) running from Rotary Park (a privately owned park in Livingston Manor) to nearby Parksville.

Vacant land is found throughout the Town primarily in districts zoned for residential use. Such lands may be vacant due to their location and/or environmental features. Throughout Rockland steep slopes and other environmental constraints are found which makes some land unsuitable for development.

### 3.4 Zoning

The land use pattern described above is established by the Town's Zoning Law and subdivision regulations, which includes five zoning districts as shown in Figure 3-4, Zoning Districts. These districts include Rural Conservation (RC), Low-Density Residential (R1), Moderate to High-Density Residential (R2), General Business (GB) and Neighborhood Business (NB). There are two Water Supply Protection Overlay Zones which consist of (1) an Aquifer Protection Overlay District (W-1) and (2) a Watershed Protection Overlay Zone (W-2). Copies of these overlay zones are on file with the town clerk's office.

The acreage distribution of each zoning district is shown on Table 3.2, Zoning Districts. The majority of the Town consists of the Rural Conservation zone which is evenly distributed over 94% of the Town. The Low-Density Residential district accounts for 2% of Town lands. The Moderate to High-Density Residential, General Business, and Neighborhood Business zones account for .06%, 1.1% and 2.3% of

Table 3-2		
Zoning Districts		
Zoning District	Acreage	Percent of Town
Rural Conservation	57,102	94.0%
Low-Density Residential	1,378	2.0%
Moderate to High-Density Residential	348	0.6%
General Business	682	1.1%
Neighborhood Business	1,370	2.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60,880</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Sullivan County Real Property Tax Services

Town lands respectively. These latter three zones primarily exist in and around the hamlets of Livingston Manor and Roscoe.

The Town's zoning map and zoning law might require amendments to implement specific strategies of this Plan, which amendments may include modifications of the allowable use lists in existing zones. These and other refinements are discussed in Section 12, Land Use.

## SECTION 4 – RESIDENTIAL AREAS

### 4.1 Goals

- > To encourage a range of quality housing for all ages and income levels that maintains the character of the community.
- > To address the need for affordable housing through existing programs and by fostering new initiatives and partnerships.
- > To continue to make the Town's residential areas attractive through improvements to land use policies, infrastructure, and integration with related recommendations in this plan.

### 4.2 Summary of Existing Conditions

Rockland's residential areas contribute significantly to its small-town character. Located in and around the hamlets and dispersed in rural settings, residential properties comprise 55% of all parcels and 30.5% of the area in the Town<sup>1</sup>

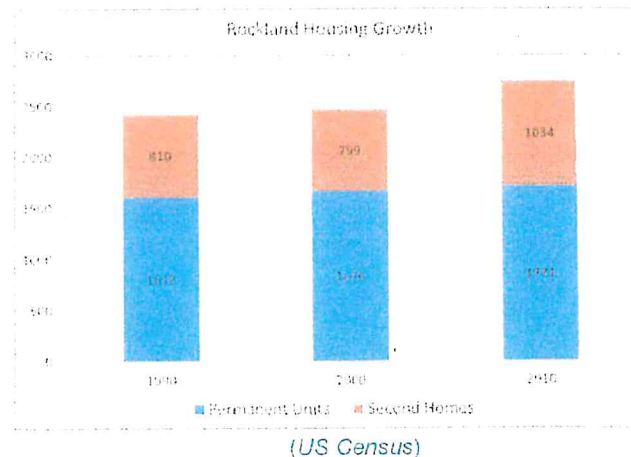
Rockland's growth rate in housing units has approximated that of Sullivan County and adjoining towns (Table 4-1). From 2014-17, the Town averaged 8 building permits issued for residential housing.<sup>2</sup>

Table 4-1

Municipality	2000	2010	Percent Change
Rockland	2475	2755	11.3
Sullivan County	44730	49186	10.0
Fremont	1182	1323	11.9
Callicoon	1797	2003	11.5
Liberty	5350	5495	2.7
Neversink	1960	2045	4.3
Hardenburgh	275	344	25.1
Denning	517	531	2.7
Andes	1326	1459	10.0
Colchester	1587	1822	15.0

*Housing Units 2000 and 2010 Rockland, Adjoining Towns, and Sullivan County (US Census)*

Table 4-2



In terms of the median value of housing in the county and surrounding towns, Rockland falls some \$40,000 [avg. = \$180,670 or \$32,670 below] below the average estimate (Table 4-3). Residential real estate transactions in the Town illustrate wide range of values and a median that is also below the US Census estimated average in 2014 (Table 4-4).

<sup>1</sup> Sullivan County Real Property Tax Services.

<sup>2</sup> Town of Rockland Code Enforcement.

Table 4-3

	Estimate
Rockland	148,000
Sullivan County	168,000
Fremont	192,700
Callicoon	201,400
Liberty	141,700
Neversink	169,700
Denning	223,800
Hardenburgh	241,700
Andes	188,300
Colchester	131,400

Table 4-4

Total Homes Sold: 136		
	List Price	Sold
Highest	750,000	705,000
Lowest	14,000	10,000
Avg.	168,184	151,859
Total \$	22,873,134	20,652,950
Median	137,000	120,000

*Town of Rockland Home Sales 2012-2016  
(RM Farm Real Estate/MLS Listings.)*

#### 4.2.1 Affordable Housing

For affordable housing, the primary indicator sets a threshold of 30 percent of household income spent on housing costs. Households at or above the 30 percent mark are not considered affordable. According to census estimates, Rockland exhibits elevated percentages of the population exceeding the 30% mark within the two lowest income brackets for both owners and renters (Table 4-5).

These statistics are reinforced in a 2014 study by the NYS Office of the Comptroller (OSC) that published county level affordability threshold rankings (for both homeowner and rental households) for the State's 62 counties.<sup>3</sup> In 2012, 34.9% of homeowner households and 51% of renter households were above the 30% affordability threshold. These percentages ranked Sullivan County 50<sup>th</sup> (homeowner households) and 48<sup>th</sup> (renter households), both in the lowest quartile. Both of these percentages increased in the 2000-12 period; 7.2 for homeowners and 9.1 for renters. The study further ranked counties within a severe housing



Sherwood Heights senior housing



Hemlock Ridge low-income housing

<sup>3</sup> Housing Affordability in New York State, March 2014. NYS Office of the State Comptroller.



cost burden category, meaning more than 50% of household income is spent on housing costs. At 26.8%, Sullivan County ranked 34<sup>th</sup> for rental households and 53<sup>rd</sup> for owner household at 17%.

While the challenges of affordable housing are impactful statewide, the trends illustrated in the data are concerning for the town of Rockland and Sullivan County. As noted in the OSC paper, there are many factors influencing the affordability equation, as well as associated results that affect economic growth. For example, lack of affordable housing can impact the ability of employers to create and sustain a workforce. And with less available financial resources for households to spend or invest in other needs comes the influence to locate in areas where housing costs are more affordable. Rockland, however, has many assets that attract and sustain residents, and these can be leveraged along with targeted strategies to offset the factors influencing affordability.

Table 4-5

	Occupied housing units	% Occupied housing units	Owner-occupied housing units	% Owner-occupied housing units	Renter-occupied housing units	% Renter-occupied housing units
	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
Occupied housing units	1,527	1,527	1,064	1,064	463	463
MONTHLY HOUSING COSTS AS A PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS						
Less than \$20,000	227	14.9%	142	13.3%	85	18.4%
Less than 20 percent	12	0.8%	12	1.1%	0	0.0%
20 to 29 percent	33	2.2%	27	2.5%	6	1.3%
30 percent or more	182	11.9%	103	9.7%	79	17.1%
\$20,000 to \$34,999	245	16.0%	169	15.9%	76	16.4%
Less than 20 percent	53	3.5%	53	5.0%	0	0.0%
20 to 29 percent	40	2.6%	40	3.8%	0	0.0%
30 percent or more	152	10.0%	76	7.1%	76	16.4%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	180	11.8%	111	10.4%	69	14.9%
Less than 20 percent	76	5.0%	50	4.7%	26	5.6%
20 to 29 percent	46	3.0%	21	2.0%	25	5.4%
30 percent or more	58	3.8%	40	3.8%	18	3.9%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	255	16.7%	201	18.9%	54	11.7%
Less than 20 percent	137	9.0%	101	9.5%	36	7.8%
20 to 29 percent	58	3.8%	40	3.8%	18	3.9%
30 percent or more	60	3.9%	60	5.6%	0	0.0%
\$75,000 or more	480	31.4%	430	40.4%	50	10.8%
Less than 20 percent	419	27.4%	369	34.7%	50	10.8%
20 to 29 percent	55	3.6%	55	5.2%	0	0.0%
30 percent or more	6	0.4%	6	0.6%	0	0.0%
Zero or negative income	11	0.7%	11	1.0%	0	0.0%
No cash rent	129	8.4%	(X)	(X)	129	27.9%

#### 4.2.2 *Second Homeowners*

As shown in Table 4-2, second homeowners account for a sizeable portion of the number of growing homes in Rockland. Sullivan County conducted a second homeowner study in 2008 that revealed many important characteristics of second homeowners that are useful as the Town plans for its future.<sup>4</sup>

The results of the study indicate that during the period from 2001 to 2007, the County experienced a 65 percent increase in second home ownership, with the number of second homeowners rising from 6,089 to 10,085. An additional 6,196 people with a full-time residence outside the county owned vacant land in the county.

Key findings of the study show that Rockland had the third highest percentage (11.2) of second homeowners among the county's municipalities. Countywide, the median number of years that second homeowners have owned their homes was 16, and almost 90% indicated that they will not sell their home in the near future. However, only 16% intended to become full-time residents and 29% plan to retire to their home in the county. The study further notes that natural amenities drew the greatest percentage of respondents to the county (62.8% cited scenery and surroundings, 46.5% cited geographic location, and 43.6% cited air and water quality).

Also yielded were survey results on purchasing and travel behavior, philanthropic giving, income levels, and frequency of stays. On the subject of community attributes, the topic 'scenic and visual quality' was ranked highest at 85.8%, while the cell phone service was most frequently cited as "poor" or "needs improvement" at 58.7%.

#### 4.2.3 *Hamlet Areas*

The major hamlets – Livingston Manor and Roscoe – offer a range of benefits to residents and visitors. These compact, historic downtowns are walkable, provide direct access to goods, services, transportation, and amenities, and they strengthen the community through social interaction and events. They serve as mixed-use hubs for the Town, which has not experienced automobile-oriented commercial sprawl. Sustaining these land-use patterns and the vibrancy of the hamlets requires a range of strategies. The hamlets are not without challenges, including vacant buildings and storefronts. Hamlets are also high priority areas for higher speed internet access.

Sustaining the mixed-use strengths of these downtowns involves the integration of residential space. There are opportunities for affordable housing and investments for residential projects. More residential uses help support hamlet businesses and events and can extend the hours of main street activities. Participants at the hamlet visioning workshops identified vacant buildings as a challenge to increased revitalization. Historic preservation tax credits, main street programs, and related funding sources for housing are among the resources that can help meet these challenges.

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<sup>4</sup> 2008 Second Home Owner Study: Assessing Attitudes, Consumer Behavior, and Housing Tenure among Second Home Owners in Sullivan County. Sullivan County Division of Planning and Environmental Management.





Rural single-family home (White Roe Lake Road)



Hamlet single-family home (Lew Beach)

#### 4.2.4 *Rural Areas*

Residential uses in the outlying portions of the Town offer privacy on larger lots and closer connections with streams, forests, and preserved public land. Accommodating residential development in these areas while maintaining the character of the Town is largely a function of land use regulations that are crafted to help strike this balance.

### 4.3 **Recommendations**

#### **Strategy 1     Increase affordable housing in the community.**

- Action 1.1     *Explore the adoption of inclusionary and incentive zoning to facilitate the provision of affordable housing.*
- Action 1.2     *Pursue funding and assistance programs to provide or facilitate affordable housing with NYS Homes and Community Renewal, Sullivan County, and other partnering agencies and organizations.*
- Action 1.3     *Invite speakers from assistance-providing agencies or organizations and examine successful affordable housing projects in other communities.*
- Action 1.4     *Explore the creation of a non-profit housing organization to elevate the provision of programs to serve housing needs. With focused resources, such as needs assessments and grant writing, eligible homeowners can receive home repair grants, or first-time homebuyers can receive incentive packages to ease the costs of home ownership and maintenance. The creation of a service providing organization could be considered in partnership with adjacent municipalities and/ or Sullivan County.*
- Action 1.5     *Consider appointing an affordable housing committee.*

- Action 1.6      *In coordination with other recommendations of this section, ensure that zoning regulations enable accessory dwelling units, apartments, and multiple family dwelling units in areas where they will benefit the community and help meet housing needs.*

**Strategy 2      Enhance housing opportunities in hamlet areas**

- Action 2.1      *Ensure that land use regulations support and encourage mixed uses, accessory apartments, and other opportunities for residential uses in and around the hamlets.*
- Action 2.2      *Encourage residential housing in and adjacent to hamlets and explore opportunities and programs for redevelopment and investment in housing stock, such as the Sullivan County Land Bank Corporation.*
- Action 2.3      *Facilitate awareness of requirements, including the NYS Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code, for renovation of hamlet structures for residential and mixed uses.*
- Action 2.4      *Continue to enhance the attractiveness of hamlet areas through property maintenance regulations, beautification projects, and similar efforts.*
- Action 2.5      *Promote connections between hamlets, adjacent neighborhoods, and nearby amenities, including parks and trails.*

**Strategy 3      Balance growth with community character in rural areas**

- Action 3.1      *Revise conservation subdivision regulations to strengthen the protection of open space and sensitive environmental resources. Improve options for open space ownership and management; and provide less costly, efficient patterns of development.*
- Action 3.2      *Revise and improve planned unit development (PUD) regulations to facilitate mixed use and encourage innovative development opportunities.*
- Action 3.3      *Review and revise subdivision regulations to help ensure that the quality of residential developments provides neighborhood amenities and blends with the character of the community.*
- Action 3.4      *Assess the effectiveness of property maintenance regulations in sustaining rural character and revise accordingly.*

**Strategy 4      Encourage the use of sustainable standards for new residential development.**

Action 4.1      *New residential developments, as well as Town facilities, should be encouraged to meet standards of the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Green Building Rating System(r). LEED is a voluntary, consensus-based national standard for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings. Sustainable elements may include, but not limited to, water saving devices, Energy Star-compliant roofing materials, and energy efficiency.*

## **SECTION 5 – COMMERCIAL AREAS**

### **5.1 Goals**

- > To preserve the architectural heritage of hamlet business districts.
- > To expand sidewalk networks to create walkable communities.
- > To mitigate flooding in hamlet business districts.

### **5.2 Summary of Existing Conditions**

A relatively small percentage of Rockland is currently zoned for intensive commercial use. There are two commercial zones, each of which allows for various principal permitted and special uses. These zones consist of the GB, General Business District and the NB, Neighborhood Business District (see Figure 3-4, Zoning Districts in Section 3, Setting). While the RC, R1 and R2 zones also allow for certain commercial uses, the focus of this section is on the GB and NB commercial zones.

The GB general business zones primarily exist in the hamlets of Roscoe and Livingston Manor. While a small GB zone is located in the hamlet of Lew Beach, the only commercial building there is a general store/gas station. The GB zone provides a principal area for a wide variety of commercial uses such as mixed-use buildings, office, retail, restaurant, essential services and light manufacturing. The NB neighborhood business zones are located near or adjacent to the GB zones in Roscoe and Livingston Manor. The NB zone allows many of the same uses as the GB zone though some uses such as light manufacturing are currently not allowed. Both the GB and NB zones allow one and two family dwellings as well as multi-family dwellings.

Most property parcels in the GB and NB zones have municipal water and sewer service, though some parcels only have one of these services but not both (see figures 6-3 and 6-4 in Section 6, Community Services). Maintaining this infrastructure is critical to attracting and retaining new and existing businesses.

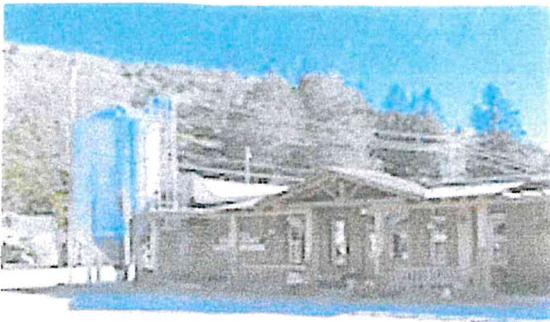


GB Zone, Downtown Business District, Livingston Manor



GB Zone, Downtown Business District, Roscoe





NB Zone, Commercial Brewery, Roscoe



GB Zone, Commercial Mixed-Use, Livingston Manor



GB Zone, Commercial Lodging, Roscoe



GB Zone, Commercial Retail, Livingston Manor

Both Livingston Manor and Roscoe have vibrant Downtown business districts each with a variety of stores that serve Town residents and the increasing number of tourists visiting the area. These include antique shops, bakery, grocery, bed & breakfast establishments, sporting goods stores (including fly-fishing specialty shops), restaurants, pharmacy, flower shop, breweries, distillery, professional services, specialty retail shops and more. These business establishments provide an attractive downtown shopping experience for both local residents and visitors.

The Downtown districts also serve as the cultural and civic centers of the Town. They host numerous community events and cultural activities such as the annual Trout Parade in Livingston Manor and the Fourth of July celebration in Roscoe. The Catskill Arts Center and Rockland Town Hall are located in Livingston Manor, while the RRFD Community Center and O&W Railway Museum are located in Roscoe. Both Towns are home to a public library and a post office. These civic and cultural places draw people downtown which in turn promotes business activity as well as a positive business climate. Taken together, the civic, cultural and commercial activities in both hamlets create an attractive downtown destination *and* provide the Town with a strong sense of community place that it otherwise would not have.

### 5.3 Marketing

Due to its location as the western gateway to recreational opportunities in Catskill Park and to its position as a world class fly-fishing destination, the Town often benefits from media exposure including social media. Within the past year, the Wall Street Journal and New York Post have each featured lengthy

articles about the Town's fly-fishing opportunities.<sup>1</sup> The *Lonely Planet*, a well known travel guide, named the Catskills as the second best travel destination in the world for 2019. Airbnb named the Catskill Mountains/Hudson Valley region as one of its top nineteen world-wide travel destinations for 2019 based, in part, on a 100% increase in regional bookings over 2018. The Town's new breweries, distillery and several lodging establishments have also been the subject of media attention over recent years. Often the most effective form of marketing is simple word of mouth, including social media reviews from visiting tourists. All of this media activity represents valuable free advertising that reaches a national and world-wide audience. This exposure, coupled with tourism promotions by the Sullivan County Visitors Association and those of the Livingston Manor and Roscoe chambers of commerce, has resulted in an increase in the number of tourists visiting Rockland in recent years. This includes New York City millennials seeking green open spaces and increasing numbers of women and couples who have discovered the joys of fly-fishing. Increased tourism translates into a boost in economic activity for the business community.

The Town and its business community should continue to work together to support existing local events that draw people Downtown, such as the annual Trout Parade in Livingston Manor. The business community should continue to coordinate local marketing initiatives and downtown street enhancements such as seasonal street decorations and planter boxes. The Town and business community should explore new strategies that draw people to the Downtown areas. For example, the Town could seek to refresh the pavilion at Renaissance Park and use it to stage summer concerts that would draw people downtown. A mobile phone application that displays Downtown destinations, activities and events could be developed and bundled with the wayfinding application discussed in Section 9, Transportation. A community activities portal could be added to the Town's website to promote destinations, activities and events.

#### **5.4 Downtown appearance and walkability.**

Creating an attractive Downtown appearance through streetscapes and facades requires careful planning and design execution. Many commercial buildings in Livingston Manor and Roscoe respect the historic facade architecture, but others do not. And yet, it is their historic architecture that makes these business districts visually unique and attractive destinations. Preserving and enhancing the historic architectural heritage of both districts would greatly add to their overall allure to residents and visitors alike. Going forward, there are steps that would enhance the architectural atmosphere and overall attractiveness of the Downtown districts.

##### **5.4.1 New development and redevelopment**

There are several sites in the GB and NB zones that are suitable for development or redevelopment. Establishing a set of design standards would help to assure that any new or renovated structures conform with the architectural atmosphere of other buildings. For example, the Wayne Bank pictured on the next

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<sup>1</sup> Dunn, Elizabeth. "A Stress-Free Weekend in the Catskills." *Wall Street Journal*, June 15, 2018.  
Steussy, Lauren. "Hooked." *New York Post*, June 23, 2018.  
Steussy, Lauren. "Goin' Up Country." *New York Post*, July 21, 2018.





Former First National Bank (Stewart Avenue, Roscoe)



Wayne Bank (Stewart Avenue, Roscoe)

page, while nice in appearance, does not reflect the Downtown architectural atmosphere. However, renovations to the former First National Bank, located just down the street, mostly preserved the building's historic heritage and is harmonious with adjacent architecture.

The Dollar General store pictured below attempts to fit in with the historic heritage, but its style still reflects that of a chain store and its signage – including roadside signage pictured on page 5.6 – does not reflect the historic atmosphere. The Chinese restaurant pictured below is an example of a facade that does not fit the architectural atmosphere, while the Brandenburg Bakery and Manor Pharmacy are examples of previously renovated buildings that are compatible with the Downtown atmosphere.



Dollar General (Main Street, Livingston Manor)



Chinatown Kitchen (Main Street, Livingston Manor)



Manor Pharmacy (Main Street, Livingston Manor)



Brandenburg Bakery (Main Street, Livingston Manor)

This is not to say that new buildings or old facades with no particular character worth preserving should be designed to “look old” in rigid conformity with existing historic styles. In these cases, both historic and more contemporary designs could be considered. Designs should be compatible with their surroundings, but do not necessarily have to be substantially historic in character. As noted above, the Manor Pharmacy represents a renovation that is harmonious with other buildings but not historic in appearance like the Brandenburg Bakery.

In general, new structures and renovations to existing buildings should respect the architecture of the building and/or the surrounding architectural atmosphere. Renovations that mask historic elements of a façade worth preserving should be discouraged. Renovations that remove a false façade to reveal a period façade underneath that is worth preserving should be encouraged.

The proposed Riverwalk Trail in downtown Livingston Manor will run along the Willowemoc Creek in back of several commercial buildings. This will create opportunities to improve the rear facades of those structures in order to create a more aesthetically pleasing view from the walkway. It could also be an opportunity to create rear entrances to existing businesses and outdoor communal areas that would enhance the attractiveness of the Downtown business district.

Developing a set of design guidelines would help to preserve the architectural integrity of existing buildings (including Downtown residences) and assure that new structures would complement the overall architectural heritage of the Downtown districts. These same guidelines (or others) could also encourage new civic, cultural and commercial developments to meet LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards. Green Building Rating System(r). LEED is a voluntary, consensus-based national standard for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings.

#### *5.4.2 Informational kiosks and commercial signage*

Information kiosks in Roscoe and Livingston Manor (pictured below) are generally attractive in appearance and provide useful information about the communities they serve. The Town should continue to maintain them and routinely update their information to keep it current. Many store fronts in both hamlets serve as informal kiosks by posting community event information in their display windows.



Information Kiosk (Old Route. 17, Roscoe)



Information Kiosk (Main Street, Livingston Manor)





Gateway sign, (Route 17 exit ramp, Livingston Manor)



Cluttered, difficult to read signage,  
(White Roe Lake Road / Old Route 17 intersect)



Wildlife Gift Shop, Livingston Manor



Dollar General, Livingston Manor



Willow Creek Falls B&B, Livingston Manor

Gateway signage to Roscoe and Livingston Manor (pictured above) is attractive, easy to read and expresses a sense of community pride and historic perspective. Other hamlet signage, however, can be cluttered, difficult to read and not in keeping with the historic heritage of the Downtown business districts. For example, the Dollar General street sign (pictured above) appears too large and does not reflect the architectural heritage of Downtown Livingston Manor, while signage for the Wildlife Gift Shop and the Willow Creek Falls B&B respects that heritage. The Town should review and update (if necessary) existing signage standards in conjunction with the building design guidelines recommended above.

#### 5.4.3 Sidewalks and crosswalks

As discussed in Section 9, Transportation, there is a need to expand the sidewalk network and improve crosswalk safety in Roscoe and Livingston Manor. The discussion here is meant to supplement discussion of this topic in Section 9.

Design guidelines for sidewalks, crosswalks and street lighting should be developed and coordinated with the building design guidelines discussed above.

*Sidewalks.* Hamlet neighborhoods in Roscoe and Livingston Manor lack sidewalks which causes residents to walk in the street in order to reach Downtown sidewalk networks. In some cases, existing Downtown sidewalks do not extend to all businesses. For example, the Dollar General store in Livingston Manor is

not connected to the sidewalk network which forces pedestrians (some of whom are low-income and may not own a car) to walk on the edge of the road in order to reach the store. Seniors living in the Sherwood Heights senior housing complex must walk a short distance on the edge of Old Route 17 before reaching a sidewalk connected to downtown shopping on Main Street. Short sidewalk extensions would solve both of these pedestrian safety issues. Expanding sidewalk networks over time in both hamlets would improve pedestrian safety and convenience *and* begin to balance pedestrian and vehicular access to Downtown areas.

*Crosswalks.* The recent increase in tourists visiting downtown Livingston Manor and Roscoe has caused issues with pedestrian jaywalking in traffic due, in part, to a lack of clearly marked crosswalks. This situation is exacerbated by the long distance between crosswalk intersections on business corridor streets in both hamlets (see picture below). Adding a mid-block crosswalk would help discourage jaywalking by offering a convenient mid-block place to cross the street. As discussed in Section 9, Transportation, incorporating clearly marked crosswalks with ADA compliant ramps to the street network would further improve overall pedestrian safety and convenience.



Long distance between crosswalk intersections  
(Main Street, Livingston Manor)



Example of a mid-block crosswalk (Village of Goshen, NY)

## **5.5 Parking**

Increased tourism has caused a shortage of vehicular parking in Roscoe and Livingston Manor especially on weekends during the peak tourist season. In Livingston Manor, this situation will be exacerbated when the proposed O&W rail trail is completed. The Town should explore ways to add additional parking in both Downtown areas. This could involve adding designated parking spaces on side streets and entering into parking arrangements with churches and banks that have specific hours of use. When their parking spaces are not needed, they could be used to supplement hamlet parking through a shared parking arraignment. While vacant lots in Downtown areas can be tempting to repurpose as parking lots, careful consideration should first be given to their potential use as viable building sites that could enhance the business community and add to the commercial tax base. Parking issues are also discussed in Section 9, Transportation.

## **5.6 Flooding**

The downtown business districts of Roscoe and Livingston Manor have been historically subject to



periodic flooding caused by streams which overtop their banks during heavy rain events. The mitigation of flooding in both hamlets are priority projects for the Town. Information about flood mitigation in the hamlets may be found on the Town's website ([www.townofrocklandny.com](http://www.townofrocklandny.com)).

In Livingston Manor, the Willowemoc Creek and Little Beaverkill stream flow through the hamlet and converge near Renaissance Park. During heavy rain events, the Willowemoc is unable to absorb all of the flow from the Little Beaverkill which causes both streams to overtop their banks and flood downtown Main Street and several side streets. Depending on the flood's high point, a number of commercial buildings are vulnerable to interior flood damage. The Town is currently working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to mitigate the flooding issue.

In Roscoe, a stream is piped under the hamlet's downtown area and outfalls to the Willowemoc Creek. During heavy rain events the Willowemoc cannot absorb all the flow from this stream causing water to backup and overtop the stream bank at the other end of the pipe. These flood waters then flow down Stewart Avenue and other streets in the downtown business center. The Town and Sullivan County are working together to mitigate these flood events and initial efforts have met with success.

## 5.7 Recommendations

### Strategy 1 Continue to maintain infrastructure serving the NB and GB zones.

- Action 1.1 *Continue to maintain streets and roadways in the NB and GB zones.*
- Action 1.2 *Continue to maintain municipal water and sewer systems serving the NB and GB zones and incorporate flood resiliency measures into these systems as warranted.*
- Action 1.3 *Continue to maintain street lighting in the NB and GB zones and seek to incorporate energy saving measures such as adding LED lighting to street lamps.*

### Strategy 2 Maintain civic and cultural elements in Downtown business districts.

- Action 2.1 *Work to keep government buildings, libraries and cultural attractions located within Downtown business districts. These civic and cultural elements act to draw people to Downtown businesses and create a community sense of place.*
- Action 2.2 *Maintain a dialog with cultural and community service entities so the Town is aware of their physical space and/or program needs.*
- Action 2.3 *Continue to hold community events to attract people to Downtown businesses and to cultivate a sense of community place. A special events portal could be established on the Town's website to promote community events. Social media could also be utilized for this purpose.*

**Strategy 3**      **Continue to promote the Town as a world class tourist destination.**

Action 3.1      *Continue to work with the Sullivan County Visitors Association on tourism marketing initiatives.*

Action 3.2      *Continue to support marketing initiatives by the Livingston Manor and Roscoe Chambers of Commerce. For example, the chambers' jointly produce an annual "Visitors Guide" magazine promoting the Town's many attractions and businesses.*

Priority Action 3.3      *Continue to explore new means, such as social media, mobile phone apps and the Town's website to promote the town as a tourist destination and as a place to live and start a business. This would include promoting Town events and activities for residents and visitors of all ages.*

**Strategy 4**      **Preserve the historic architectural heritage of Downtown business centers.**

Action 4.1      *Establish commercial design guidelines and/or development standards for the NB and GB zones as well as for all other zoning districts which allow commercial enterprises. Such guidelines would, in part, focus on Downtown business centers in Roscoe and Livingston Manor. Guidelines would encompass new and existing structures, change of use, expansion, building façade renovations, building orientation, exterior lighting, signage, landscaping, awnings, mechanical equipment (such as air conditioners, photovoltaic cells and satellite dishes), signage, building maintenance and other factors. A Town Board established ad hoc committee with assistance from a design professional is one option to facilitate this recommendation.*

Action 4.2      *Review and update (if necessary) signage ordinances and regulations for the NB and GB zones, as well as for all other zones which allow commercial enterprises. Downtown hamlet signage should be in keeping with the historic architectural atmosphere. Signage regulations should be considered within the context of commercial design guidelines recommended in Action 4.1 above.*

Action 4.3      *Conduct a signage audit to assess the need to improve Downtown signage to locations such as municipal parking, museums, parks, community health center, and libraries.*

Action 4.4      *Continue to promote dark sky lighting standards in the Town's zoning law. Modern society requires outdoor lighting for a variety of needs including safety and commerce. To minimize harmful effects of light pollution, lighting should, in part, be no brighter than necessary, only lights the intended area, and is fully shielded (pointing downward).*

- Action 4.5      *Review commercial property maintenance regulations and revise if necessary. Vacant structures and empty lots in particular can quickly become eyesores and detract from the attractiveness of adjacent areas and downtown business centers.*
- Action 4.6      *Seek governmental and private sector funding to develop building design and signage guidelines.*

**Strategy 5      Maintain and enhance Town gateway signage from Route 17 interchanges and work to identify new gateway signage locations.**

- Action 5.1      *Maintain and enhance Route 17 gateway signage. These sites should be treated as important focal points welcoming people into the community. Simple landscaping enhancements would improve the already attractive gateway signs. Reduce signage clutter where it exists at these sites and incorporate uncluttered wayfinding signage to centers and destinations.*
- Action 5.2      *Work to identify new gateway locations for comprehensive improvement projects to include aesthetic landscape treatment, coordinated signage, and interpretive opportunities related to attractions in the Town and the Catskill Park.*

**Strategy 6      Encourage the use of sustainability standards and for new and existing commercial development.**

- Action 6.1      *New and existing commercial developments, as well Town facilities, should be encouraged to meet standards of the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Green Building Rating System(r). LEED is a voluntary, consensus-based national standard for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings. Sustainable elements may include, but not limited to, water saving devices, Energy Star-compliant roofing materials, and energy efficiency.*

**Strategy 7      Create an interconnected sidewalk network in Roscoe and Livingston Manor.**

- Priority Action 7.1      *Conduct an audit to identify sidewalks/crosswalks in need of maintenance or replacement and identify locations where new sidewalks and crosswalks are needed.*
- Priority Action 7.2      *Incorporate clearly marked, ADA compliant crosswalks into the sidewalk network.*
- Action 7.3      *Explore opportunities to create shared bikeways and walkways.*



- Action 7.4      *Expand the hamlets' sidewalk networks over time to connect neighborhoods with Downtown businesses, parks, schools, libraries, places of worship and other destinations.*
- Action 7.5      *When hamlet streets are repaved or resurfaced, consider adding accommodations for pedestrians and cyclists such as sidewalks, bike lanes or widened shoulders*
- Action 7.6      *Establish sidewalk, crosswalk and street lighting design guidelines. Such guidelines would consider the needs of all users including pedestrians, bicyclists and people of all ages and abilities, including children, senior citizens, and persons with disabilities.*
- Action 7.7      *Seek governmental and private sector funding assistance to expand sidewalk networks.*

**Strategy 8      Increase vehicular parking opportunities in Roscoe and Livingston Manor.**

- Action 8.1      *Explore adding designated parking on Downtown side streets.*
- Priority Action 8.2      *Explore adding parking areas in Livingston Manor near the trailhead of the proposed O&W rail trail, which trailhead will be adjacent to Rotary Park. When completed, the trail is expected to draw heavy use by tourists and local residents. Convenient parking near the trailhead would help to mitigate existing parking issues in Downtown Livingston Manor.*
- Action 8.3      *Explore shared parking arrangements with underutilized parking areas. For example, churches and banks have specific hours of use and when not needed their parking spaces could be used to supplement Downtown hamlet parking through parking arrangements.*
- Action 8.4      *Coordinate with Sullivan County and/or private businesses to explore adding van service to bring tourists from overnight destinations such as hotels and B&Bs to Downtown business centers in Livingston Manor and Roscoe. This would reduce vehicular traffic in the hamlets and help to relieve any shortage of public parking. Some local wedding reception venues already offer this service to and from hotels, motels and B&Bs.*

**Strategy 9      Mitigate flooding events in downtown Roscoe and Livingston Manor.**

- Priority Action 9.1      *Continue to work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to mitigate flooding in downtown Livingston Manor.*

- Priority Action 9.2     *Review storm water planning and design criteria and update the same (if necessary) to ensure that new or expansion uses do not create new flooding problems.* Such design criteria could help to mitigate existing flood problems.
- Action 9.3     *Continue to work with Sullivan County to mitigate flooding if it should reoccur in downtown Roscoe.*
- Priority Action 9.4     *The Town should participate in Sullivan County's upcoming climate change Resiliency Plan.* The plan will assist the Town in tackling issues related to climate change such as flooding.
- Action 9.5     *Seek governmental and private sector funding assistance to implement flood mitigation measures in both hamlets.*

## **SECTION 6 – COMMUNITY SERVICES**

### **6.1 Goals**

- > To maintain Rockland's high level of public safety and health services.
- > To maintain the public infrastructure and make improvements when needed.
- > To provide library services that meet changing needs of the community.

### **6.2 Summary of Existing Conditions**

#### **6.2.1 Local service providers**

##### **6.2.1.1 *Police Services***

Presently, the Town of Rockland does not have its own police department, but is policed by the New York State Troopers, Troop F, the New York Department of Environmental Conservation Police and Forest Rangers, and the Sullivan County Sheriff's Office. Troop F is headquartered in the Orange County town of Wallkill and maintains a substation in the hamlet of Roscoe, while the NYSDEC police and forest rangers are based at the NYSDEC Region 3 offices in New Paltz, N.Y. The Sullivan County Sheriff's office is based in Monticello and maintains a substation at Rockland Town Hall. Rockland's residents are generally satisfied with the current level of police protection.

The need to provide police protection is a public policy matter and is also based upon the public's sense of security and response time to incidents. Depending on the amount of future growth that occurs in the Town, including growth of the tourist industry, the demand by local residents for additional police protection may increase. The Town should continue to coordinate with law enforcement agencies on the service needs of the community.

##### **6.2.1.2 *Fire and Emergency Medical Services***

The Town of Rockland has three fire districts each with its own volunteer fire department (see Figure 6-1, Fire Districts). The Livingston Manor Fire District serves the southern half of the Town and has one station house with some 48 active volunteers, one pumper truck, a tanker truck, a combo pumper/tanker truck, a heavy utility truck, a brush truck, and one small utility truck. The Roscoe-Rockland Fire District serves the southwestern part of the Town and has one station house with some 60 active volunteers, one ladder truck, two pumper engines, a heavy utility truck, a heavy rescue truck, a tanker truck, a utility vehicle and one boat. The Beaverkill Valley Fire District serves the northern part of the Town and has one station house with some 20 active volunteers and one pumper engine, two tanker trucks and a utility vehicle.

The three fire districts currently meet the needs of the community. However, pressures on volunteers in the districts to appropriately staff calls and provide adequate service may increase, especially if the Town's population begins to increase and/or as the commercial sectors continue to grow. The Town



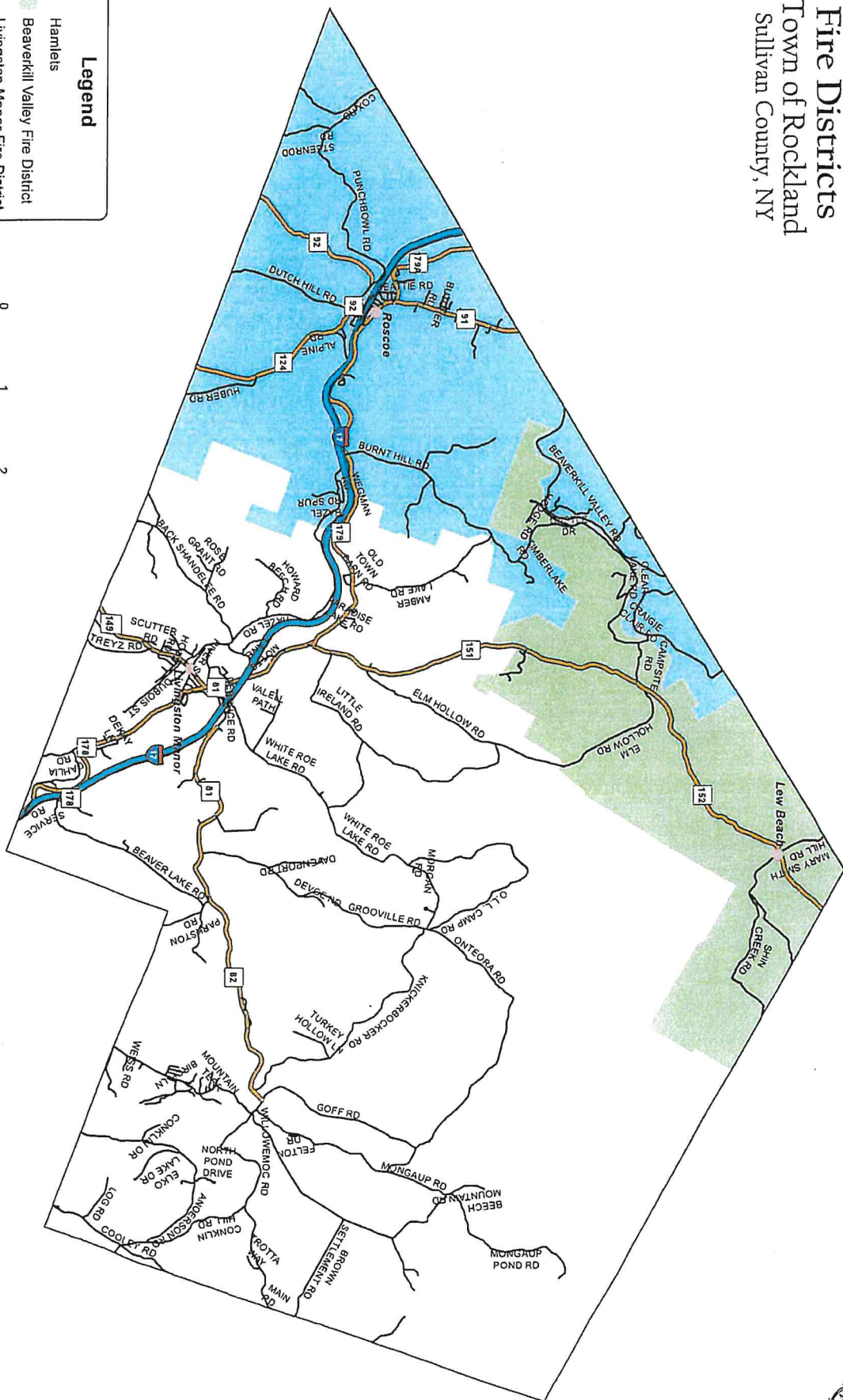
Figure 6-1  
Fire Districts  
Town of Rockland  
Sullivan County, NY

**Legend**

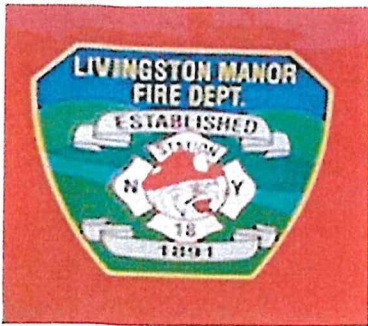
- Hamlets
- Beaverkill Valley Fire District
- Livingston Manor Fire District
- Roscoe/Rockland Fire District



Date: 4/30/2019



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Livingston Manor Fire District



Roscoe/Rockland Fire District

should continue to monitor growth in all three fire districts. As the Town grows, so too will the need for fire protection service.

Emergency ambulance services for Rockland are provided by MobileMedic EMS a privately owned commercial paramedic service serving Sullivan County and surrounding areas. MobileMedic provides Basic and Advanced Life Support services. The Town is also served by the Roscoe & Rockland Volunteer Ambulance Corps and the Livingston Manor Volunteer Ambulance Corps.

#### 6.2.1.3 Hospitals and Healthcare Care Providers

The nearby Catskill Regional Medical Center (CRMC) provides convenient hospital care for Rockland's residents. The hospital has 218 beds, 17 emergency treatment bays and a helipad. The CRMC operates an Urgent Care facility in the Village of Monticello. Within Rockland there are two primary care medical clinics – one in Livingston Manor run by CRMC and another in Roscoe run by the UHS Delaware Valley Hospital.

There is a wide array of healthcare providers located within the Town and in the surrounding area. These range from sole practice and small group providers to large medical care groups such as Crystal Run Healthcare and the Catskill Regional Medical Group which is affiliated with CRMC.

There is a need to provide broadband internet service to all rural areas of the Town to facilitate access to a



Beaverkill Valley Fire District



Livingston Manor Volunteer Ambulance Corps



growing trend towards telemedicine which allows patients to connect with a doctor from their home (see Section 10, Economic Development, pg. 10.7 for a discussion of broadband access).

#### **6.2.1.4**      *Post Office*

Rockland is served by two U.S. postal offices; one located in the hamlet of Livingston Manor and the other located in the hamlet of Roscoe.

#### **6.2.1.5**      *Public Schools*

Rockland comprises portions of three school districts: Livingston Manor Central School District, Roscoe Central School District, and Liberty Central School District. The Livingston Manor and Roscoe districts are very well respected as is the Liberty district. The Livingston Manor district encompasses approximately 70% of the Town, while the Roscoe and Liberty districts encompass 25% and 5% of the Town respectively (see Figure 6-2, School Districts). According to its district office, Livingston Manor has a projected 2018-2019 enrollment of 475 students while Roscoe and Liberty have approximately 257 and 2,000 students respectively. While these figures represent a slight increase over the 2017-2018 school year, school populations in the three districts have been declining since 2000.<sup>1</sup> This is a direct reflection of overall population declines in the communities within the districts. If, however, the growing interest in rural living among urban dwellers sparks an influx of people moving to the area, enrollment numbers in these school districts may increase accordingly.

In looking ahead, the Town should carefully assess impacts to the three school districts associated with new residential development. The Town could help the districts track increases in enrollment by providing the estimated number of school-age children resulting from residential projects – especially any large-scale residential project such as the existing Hemlock Ridge complex. This would assist the districts' with their capital facilities planning to accommodate increases in student enrollment.

#### **6.2.1.6**      *Library*

Rockland is served by two public libraries; the Roscoe Free Library located in the hamlet of Roscoe and



Livingston Manor Central School District



Livingston Manor Library

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<sup>1</sup> Easley, Hema. "Close, consolidate or wait: Schools grapple with shrinking enrollment." *Times Herald-Record*, October 21, 2018, p. 4.



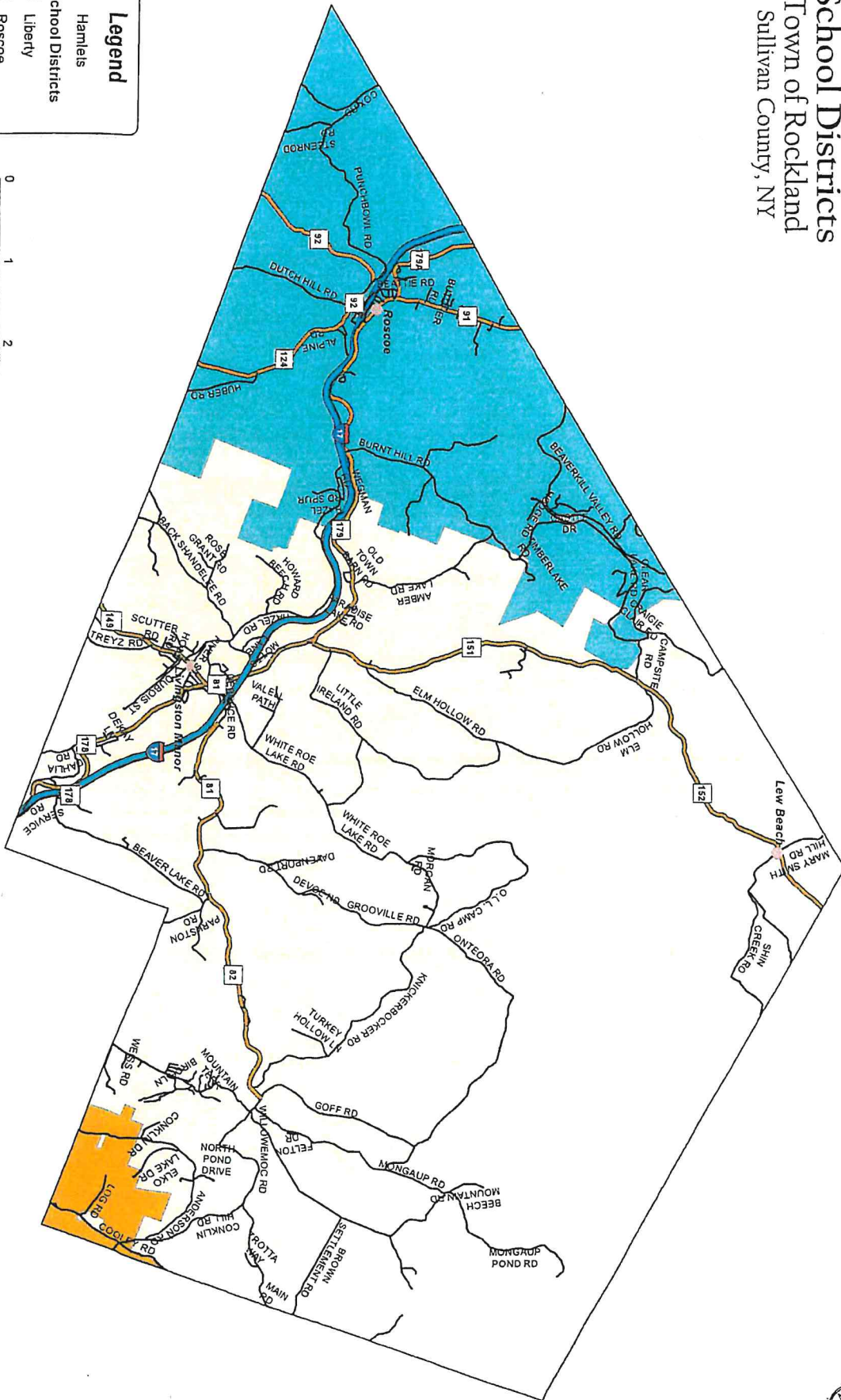
Figure 6-2  
**School Districts**  
 Town of Rockland  
 Sullivan County, NY

**Legend**

- Hamlets
- School Districts
  - Liberty
  - Roscoe
  - Livingston Manor



Date: 4/30/2019



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the Livingston Manor Free Library located in the hamlet of Livingston Manor. Both of these libraries belong to the Ramapo Catskill Library System which allows its members to use any of the 47 chartered libraries in the Ramapo Catskill system. In addition to traditional book lending, both libraries offer a wide variety of enrichment and resource programs such as children's story times, high school equivalency classes, tax preparation, summer senior art program, senior exercise classes, computer/WiFi internet access, e-books, crafts, guest speakers, and local history collections. The Livingston Manor library is home to a non-profit community newspaper primarily run by local students.

**6.2.1.7**      *RRFD Community Center*

The Rockland-Roscoe Fire District (RRFD) owns and maintains a community center which is available for public functions, holds weekly senior luncheons, and is home to the Town of Rockland Senior Citizens group.

**6.2.1.8**      *Parks*

The Town owns and maintains Riverside Park in Roscoe. There are two privately owned parks in Livingston Manor known as Rotary Park and Renaissance Park, both of which are open to the public. In addition, the public schools in Livingston Manor and Roscoe each have playground equipment and athletic fields which can be used by the public. All of these parks and their amenities are discussed in Section 7, Cultural, Historic and Recreational Resources.

**6.2.1.9**      *Roads*

The Town owns and maintains approximately 106 miles of roads which interconnect with Sullivan County and state roads to provide the Town with an excellent roadway network. Town roads are well maintained throughout the year and are kept clear and safe during winter months. The community is generally satisfied with this Town service.

**6.2.1.10**     *Water*

Rockland owns and operates two water districts each of which has its own wells and treatment processes.



RRFD Community Center



Figure 6-3

**Sewer & Water Service**  
**Livingston Manor**  
Town of Rockland  
Sullivan County, NY

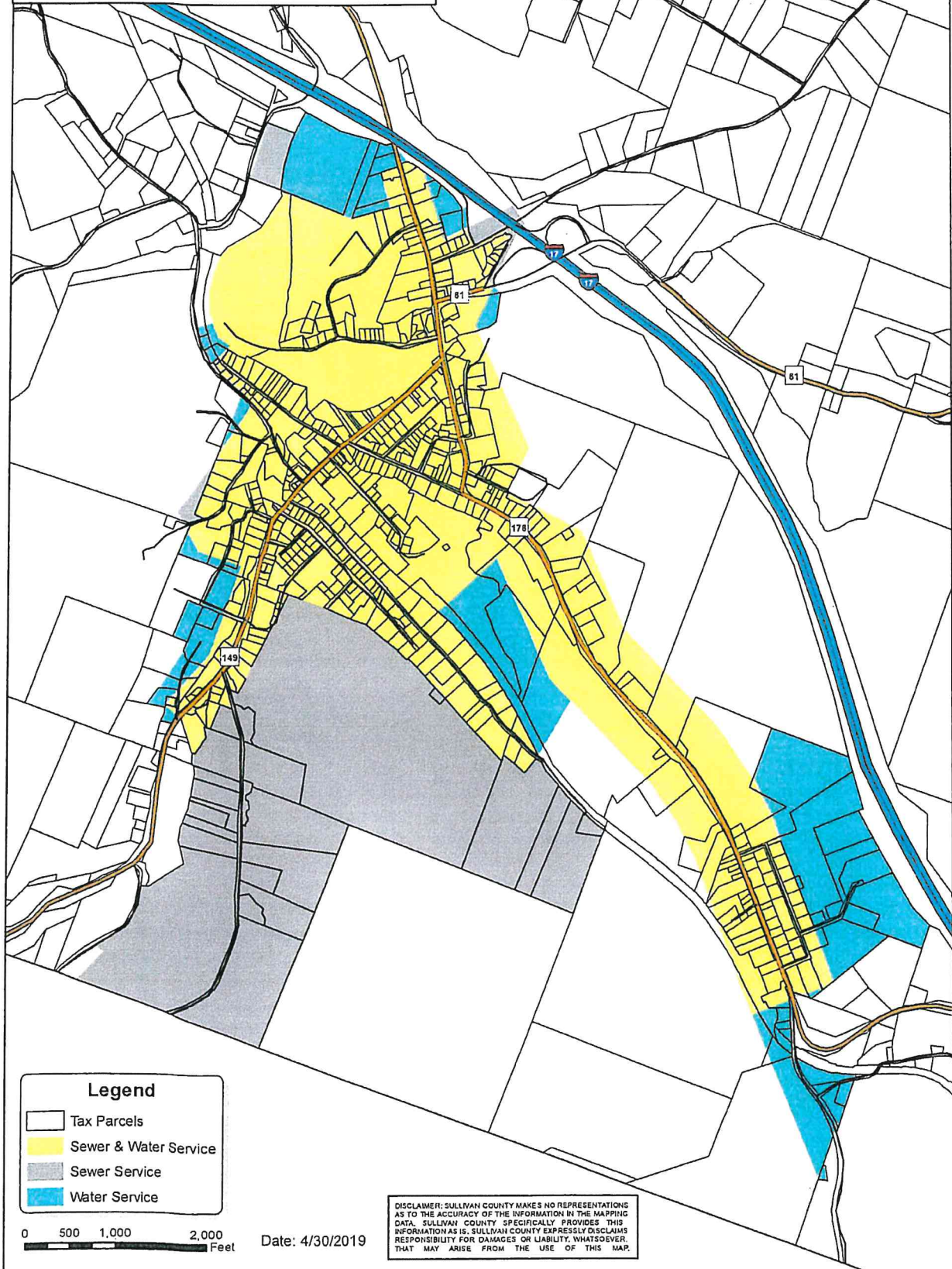
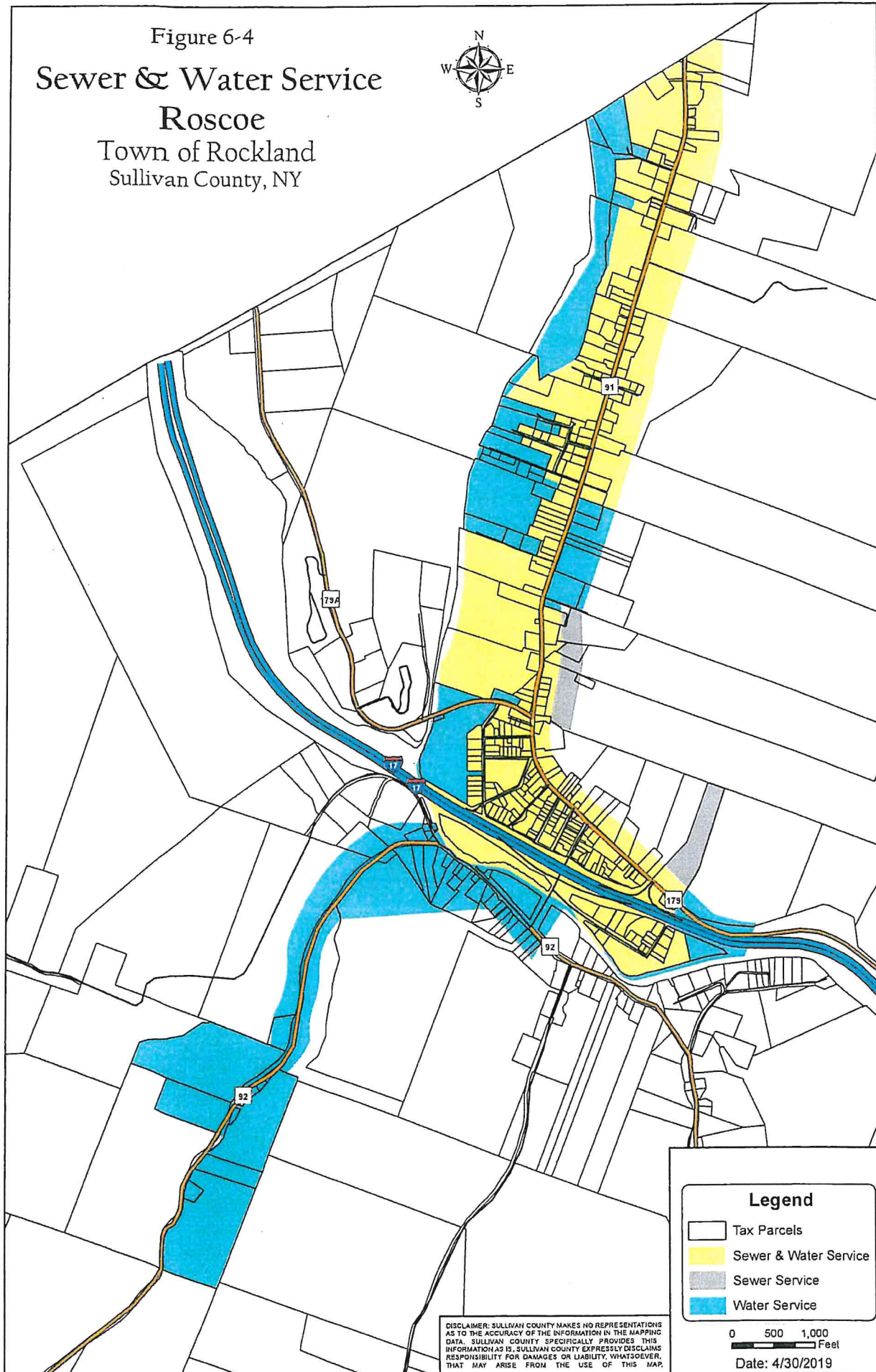




Figure 6-4  
Sewer & Water Service  
Roscoe  
Town of Rockland  
Sullivan County, NY



They are the Livingston Manor Water District, which serves residential and commercial users in the hamlet of Livingston Manor, and the Roscoe-Rockland Water District, which serves residential and commercial users in the hamlet of Roscoe (see figures 6-3, Sewer & Water Districts Livingston Manor and 6-4, Sewer & Water Districts Roscoe). The rest of the Town is served by privately owned wells. In the near future, the Town plans to replace a primary water main in the Roscoe-Rockland Water District, which main crosses the Willowemoc Creek.

#### **6.2.1.11**      *Sewer*

The Town owns and operates two sewer districts each of which has its own wastewater treatment facility (WWTF). The Livingston Manor WWTF treats flows from the Livingston Manor Sewer District, which district serves the hamlet of Livingston Manor (see Figure 6-3). The Roscoe WWTF treats flows from the Roscoe Sewer District, which district serves the hamlet of Roscoe (see Figure 6-4). Lands outside of these two districts are served by privately owned septic systems. Presently, the Roscoe Sewer District is undergoing upgrades to equipment at a wastewater pump station and to certain other equipment at its WWTF. In the near future, the Town plans to add a disinfection system to the Roscoe WWTF, which system will protect the public health and the environment. The Town is also working to add a disinfection system to the Livingston Manor WWTF, which system will protect the public health and the aquatic ecosystem of the Willowemoc Creek to which the facility discharges treated effluent.

#### **6.2.1.12**      *Solid Waste*

The Sullivan County Department of Solid Waste & Recycling Services manages solid waste disposal in the county. The department operates a transfer station and materials recovery facility in Monticello along with five recycling/refuse stations one of which is located in Rockland at the Highway Department garage. Town residents and businesses can contract individually with local haulers for solid waste pickup. Local haulers primarily dispose of solid waste at one of the County's transfer stations. Town residents can also dispose of their own refuse at the County's transfer stations for a fee. There are no active landfills in Sullivan County, so refuse from county transfer stations is shipped by private hauler to out-of-county disposal sites.

The Town sponsors an annual town-wide cleanup day during which town residents can dispose of household items, scrap metal and other acceptable items at the county transfer station located next to the Town's Highway Department garage.

### **6.3**      **Recommendations**

#### **Strategy 1**      **Continue to assess the needs of police and fire protection.**

Action 1.1      *Use the SEQR process to assess potential impacts on the demands for police protection associated with new development projects and increased tourism.*

- Action 1.2     *Use the SEQRA process to assess potential impacts on the demands for fire protection associated with new development projects. Where upgrades are needed to mitigate impacts, developers should contribute to the cost.*
- Action 1.3     *Support the fire districts' efforts to secure governmental and private sector funding for new equipment and new or expanded station houses.*
- Action 1.4     *Support meaningful governmental initiatives to attract and retain volunteer firefighters.*
- Action 1.5     *Replace fire department vehicles and other essential equipment as necessary to maintain fire fighting capabilities.*
- Action 1.6     *Coordinate with Sullivan County to establish a reverse 911 system to warn residents of emergencies.*

**Strategy 2     Strive to maintain and expand library services for Town residents.**

- Action 2.1     *Continue to support the many beneficial resources, programs and initiatives currently offered by the Roscoe and Livingston Manor libraries. Modern libraries in many ways have become more like community centers by offering a wide array of community-based activities.*
- Action 2.2     *Monitor the need for new and/or expanded library services to meet the 21st century needs of the community. Additional library resources may be needed both now and in the future to meet growing needs of the community.*
- Action 2.3     *Monitor the need and feasibility of adding future space to one or both libraries. Increasingly, modern public libraries have added space for uses such as an outdoor reading area, a tutoring room, a children's reading room or a multi-purpose community room.*
- Action 2.4     *Continue to seek governmental and private sector funding opportunities for ongoing and expanded library services.*

**Strategy 3     Inform the three school systems of growth impacts to enrollment from proposed large-scale residential developments.**

- Action 3.1     *Use the SEQRA process to carefully assess the number of school-age children resulting from any new, large-scale residential developments. Share this information with each relevant school district so it can plan for any increase to enrollment.*



**Strategy 4**      **Continue to maintain a high level of service and maintenance on Town roads.**

See also recommendations in Section 9, Transportation.

- Action 4.1      *Maintain a five year capital improvement plan for Town roads and related Highway Department equipment and facilities. Update the plan on an annual basis to keep it current.*
- Action 4.2      *Maintain an asset management plan to identify measures to fund capital improvements identified in the capital improvement plan.*
- Action 4.3      *Continue to budget adequate funding to maintain Town roads and highway equipment and related facilities.*
- Action 4.4      *Replace aging vehicles and equipment as necessary to maintain highway department capabilities.*
- Action 4.5      *Explore alternatives to traditional sand and/or salt for winter treatments of Town roads.*
- Action 4.6      *Continue to seek governmental funding assistance for the purchase of new equipment and new vehicles as well as for roadway improvements.*

**Strategy 5**      **Continue to maintain high quality standards for water and sewer service.**

- Action 5.1      *Continue to maintain a five year capital improvement plan for each water and sewer district.*
- Action 5.2      *Develop an asset management plan to identify measures to fund improvements identified in the capital improvement plan.*
- Priority Action 5.3      *Continue to maintain and improve (as necessary) equipment and facilities in the Town's water and sewer districts. Protecting potable water quality and the water quality of streams receiving treated wastewater effluent is of utmost importance to the Town. The addition of disinfection systems to the Roscoe and Livingston Manor wastewater treatment facilities are two priority projects that will further protect groundwater and stream water quality. Replacement of a primary water main in the Roscoe-Rockland Water District, part of which crosses the Willowemoc Creek, is another priority improvement project.*
- Action 5.4      *Continue to seek governmental and private sector funding assistance for improvements to the Town's water and sewer districts. Securing funding*

assistance (especially grant assistance) to help offset the cost impacts of improvement projects is critical to the Town's low-income communities and to its business districts.

Action 5.5     *Limit the expansion of water and sewer infrastructure in areas where dense growth is not encouraged by this Plan. Consideration could be given to water extensions in select areas for reasons of public health and safety.*

Action 5.6     *Periodically review and update (if necessary) Town septic system design and maintenance regulations to protect public health and the environment.*

**Strategy 6     Continue to support proper disposal of solid waste and recycling efforts.**

Action 6.1     *Work to apprise town residents—especially new residents—of Sullivan County's recycling requirements. Post county recycling requirements on the Town's website and at town hall.*

Action 6.2     *Continue to provide a town-wide cleanup day for household items, scrap metal and other acceptable items. This will help to prevent improper disposal of such items along roads and in streams.*

Action 6.3     *Periodically review and update (if necessary) junkyard and property maintenance regulations including inspections and renewals to ensure continued compliance.*

## **SECTION 10 – HISTORICAL, CULTURAL, AND RECREATIONAL RESOURCES**

### **7.1 Goals**

- > To preserve, interpret, and promote Rockland's historical resources.
- > To promote year-round cultural events and arts programs for residents and visitors.
- > To enhance and promote year-round recreational opportunities for persons of all ages and abilities.

### **7.2 Summary of Existing Conditions**

The combination of many historical, cultural, and recreational resources give expression to the Town's sense of place. These resources help attract a diversity of residents and visitors and generate economic opportunities in a rural setting. Roscoe's renowned position in the history of fly fishing in America stems from deep historical and cultural roots that are anchored around the confluence of two streams sourced from upstream forests. These forests remain havens for outdoor recreation including hiking, camping and horseback riding. Sustaining the health of these resources and their associated year-round activities are central to Rockland's vision of the future.

#### **7.2.1 Historical Resources**

The Town has an appointed historian and other active individuals knowledgeable in the Town's past.

Rockland's rich history and historic buildings contribute to its character and community sense of place. The Sullivan County Historical Society website ([www.scnyhistory.org](http://www.scnyhistory.org)) includes a Town of Rockland History, by Wilmer Sipple, former Rockland Town Historian, which explores this history in detail. A brief summary of the Town's history through the present day provides some historical perspective as follows:

The Town of Rockland's history is largely tied to the Beaverkill and Willowemoc Creek stream basins. This region was originally the borderland between the Iroquois nations to the north and the Algonquin to the south. The Lenni-Lenapes, a branch of the Delaware tribes, were the predominate Indian group in this



Woman fly fishing, ca. late 19<sup>th</sup> century



Woman fly fishing, ca. early 21<sup>st</sup> century



border region. During this time, Rockland was a wild and difficult region to penetrate except by the Indian trails in the area.

The granting of the Hardenburgh Patent to Johannes Hardenburgh in 1709 by England's Queen Ann set the stage for the eventual development of the Catskills. It was an immense tract comprising some two million acres that included what are now Delaware, Greene, Orange, Sullivan and Ulster counties.

Soon thereafter, a new owner, Robert Livingston, appeared on the scene and in less than forty years he acquired title to nearly half of the entire patent. Lands encompassing what is now the Town of Rockland were part of this acquisition.

Following the Revolutionary War, the first settlers in the Town of Rockland were the Jehiel Stewart family and his brother Luther, who settled in Big Beaver Kill Flats around 1789. The location was at the time a part of the town of Rochester in Ulster County. In 1798 it became a part of Neversink and in 1909 a bill was introduced in the legislature to separate the western part of Neversink to form Rockland. The Town of Rockland was legally established on April 1, 1910 by an act of the State of New York and Israel Dodge was its first Supervisor

The area remained remote and difficult to reach until John Hunter turned an old Indian trail into a road. When finished in 1815, it opened up settlements in Shin Creek, Beaverkill, Craig-E-Claire, Turnwood and Rockland. The first settlers worked to clear the forests for homes and farm land, and this activity provided an early source of income because of the ready market for logs and lumber. Logs were lashed together forming rafts to float down the Willowemoc and Beaverkill streams and then down the Delaware River to Trenton and Philadelphia.

With the improvement of roads into the area, the life of settlers became easier as business began to boom and new settlers came to share in the area's abundance. The arrival of railroads in the mid 1800s opened up the area and promoted the rise of the great resort era and many agricultural dairy farms. The construction of Route 17 through Rockland in the 1960s further boosted the tourist-based economy even as railroads and dairy farming declined.

Following the decline of tourism and resort era hotels in the mid-1970s, Rockland's economy and that of Sullivan County was largely mired for several decades in a recession. This period of decline lasted through the nation-wide economic recessionary period of 2008-2012.

Today, there is a resurgence of tourists coming from the NY metropolitan area. Increased tourism has helped to promote economic growth in Rockland and in its hamlets of Roscoe and Livingston Manor. The proximity of both hamlets first to the railroad and then to Route 17 has caused them to become the commercial, cultural and civic centers of the Town.

#### **7.2.1.1**     *Historical Surveys*

Two historical surveys were undertaken in recent years. In 2012 the *Reconnaissance-Level Historic*

*Resource Survey of the Lower Beaverkill Valley* was completed, and in 2015, the *Livingston Manor Historic Survey* was completed. These surveys are valuable to the Town and to this plan because they provide a wealth of information and provide recommended actions. The following summaries of these surveys inform this discussion, while the recommended actions are condensed and adapted into the recommendations, giving direction to the Town's historic preservation efforts.

#### Beaverkill Valley survey

The scope of this survey covers a sizeable portion of the Town including the hamlet of Roscoe. Well-researched and footnoted, it incorporates a breadth of historical influences, illustrating the development of natural resource-based settlements, the rise of sport fishing and tourism, and the impacts of the railroad and the automobile. The majority of its recommendations are focused on conducting more intensive level surveys, including further documentation on the post-WWII residential subdivision at Miller heights; the potential designation of historical districts at Rock Flats and Beaverkill, and the protection of the Beaverkill area through the designation of a Critical Environmental Area.

#### Livingston Manor survey

The survey focused on the hamlet, inventoried 216 properties, identified 94 of these as "notable", and of the 94, selected 34 as potentially eligible for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places. This detailed and comprehensive account of the development of Livingston Manor is accompanied by numerous photographs and is a noteworthy addition to the historical documentation in the Town. Consistent with the Beaverkill survey, a recommended action in Livingston Manor is to conduct more detailed inventories for the notable properties. Also recommended is the undertaking of a hamlet revitalization plan to help guide new development, both in terms of location and historical oriented design.

Both surveys recommend that the Town consider the enactment of a historic preservation ordinance and that the survey reports and related documentation of historic properties be published. Recommendations centering on further documentation or the development of revitalization plans could benefit from the engagement of students in related university programs. In terms of enacting a town historic preservation ordinance, there are many sources of assistance. The two town surveys and the partners involved in their creation also place the Town at an advantage for taking the next steps suggested in the surveys.



Post card view of Main Street, Livingston Manor, ca. 1925



Chester Darby house, Roscoe, ca. 1870



#### **7.2.1.2 Covered Bridges**

Three of the four remaining covered bridges in Sullivan County are in Rockland. All these bridges are open to vehicles and have adjacent recreational areas.

##### Beaverkill Covered Bridge

Erected in 1865, this bridge played a role in connecting civilization with some of the remaining wild interior lands of the Catskills. As access to the Beaver Kill increased and it became popular for fishing, the state began constructing camping areas in the 1920s and the Beaverkill Campground became the second in the Catskill Park. In the 1930s, the Civilian Conservation Corps did extensive work to improve the grounds, including building 30 individual campsites with fireplaces and tables, stone walls along the river's edge, two sets of bathhouses, a picnic area with 15 fireplaces and tables, a reservoir, and 3,000 feet of piping.

The early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century brought increased structural deterioration to the bridge and its abutments. With assistance from the State of New York, a \$2.6 million repair and restoration project was begun in 2015 and completed in 2017. The bridge was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on October 3, 2007.

##### Livingston Manor Covered Bridge

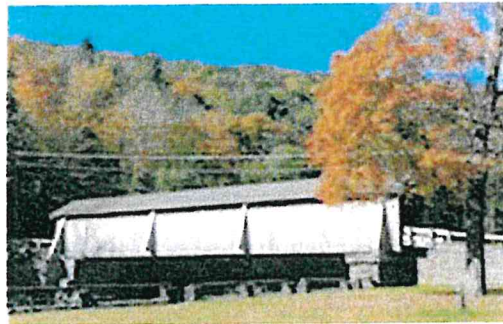
This bridge, connecting old Route 17 with Livingston Manor, was built in 1860. Originally known as Mott Flats Bridge, and also called the Van Tran Bridge, the structure was restored in the mid-1980s by the Sullivan County Department of Public Works. Adjacent to the approximately 100' wooden span is Covered Bridge Park, an open area along the Willowemoc Creek providing fishing access, picnic areas, and a pavilion with restrooms.

##### Bendo Covered Bridge

Located on Conklin Hill Road, the name of this bridge is derived from Bend of the River Bridge. Less than 50' long, the bridge was built in 1913 and is a piece of a former bridge located in Livingston Manor. Adjacent to north side of the bridge is the private Covered Bridge Campsites. On the south side of the bridge, the land is owned by the State of New York.



Livingston Manor Covered Bridge, ca. 1860



Beaverkill Covered Bridge, ca. 1865



### **7.2.1.3 Resources on the National Register of Historic Places**

In addition to the Beaverkill Covered Bridge, there are four other resources on the register. (Figure 7-1, Cultural & Historic sites).

#### Roscoe Presbyterian Church and Westfield Flats Cemetery

The church and cemetery are located in the hamlet of Roscoe. The church was built about 1884 and was spared during the 1916 downtown fire which destroyed 23 buildings. The adjacent cemetery, whose name is the former name of the hamlet of Roscoe, contains about 200 burials, with the earliest dating to the first decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The site was listed on the register on June 8, 2001.

#### Dundas Castle

The castle, also known as Craig E. Clair Castle, is a historic house near the hamlet of Craigie Clair along the Beaverkill. Modeled after Dundas Castle, Scotland, the structure was completed in 1924 and has changed owners a number of times. The building and grounds have been neglected for several years and remain in private hands. It was added to the Register on March 21, 2001.

#### Agudas Achim Synagogue

The synagogue is a historic building on Rock Avenue in Livingston Manor that was listed on the Register on November 19, 1998. Built in 1920 to serve the Jewish population of the Catskills, it possesses mixed architectural influences and unique interior and exterior features.

#### Rockland Mill Complex

The mill is a national historic district located just north of downtown Roscoe along Route 91. As described on Wikipedia, the district includes four contributing buildings and three contributing structures. They include the grist mill (ca. 1850) containing much of its original machinery; remains of the original power canal, mill pond, and tailrace with stone retaining walls; tenant house (ca. 1850); proprietor's house (1867); and ice house (1867–1900). The district was listed on the register August 23, 1984.

## **7.2.2 Cultural Resources**

#### The Roscoe O&W Railway Museum

During its heyday in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the New York, Ontario & Western Railway



Dundas Castle, ca. 1924



Agudas Achim Synagogue, ca. 1920





stretched from Weehawken, NJ, through Livingston Manor and Roscoe, to Oswego, NY, where connections could be made to Chicago. The railroad contributed significantly to the rise in tourism, recreation, and commercial development of the Town. In 1984, more than 30 years after the last passenger train departed Roscoe, the Roscoe O&W Railway Museum was established under the charter of the Ontario & Western Railway Historical Society. Spending its early years in a caboose, the museum, at the site of the former Roscoe Station, has steadily grown into an attractive destination with many historical artifacts of the former railway added over the years.

As described on the museum's webpage ([www.nyow.org/museum.html](http://www.nyow.org/museum.html)), which is part of the society's website, the museum complex consists of the O&W refurbished caboose, the original trout weather vane and train signal, the Cooks Falls and Roscoe watchman's shanties, the Beaverkill Trout Car (which released fish into local waters from Long Island hatcheries), and the O&W station motif building. The museum contains O&W artifacts and memorabilia, other railroadiana, and local history displays showing the impact of the O&W on community life, hunting, fishing, farming, tourism and local industries. The O&W Railway Historical Society remains quite active, maintaining an informative website; supporting model railroading displays; preserving railroad equipment, artifacts, and thousands of archives; and publishing many articles, books, and photos.

#### Catskill Fly Fishing Center & Museum

A celebration of the many facets of the area's tremendous fly fishing heritage, the Catskill Fly Fishing Center & Museum began in 1983 and opened at its present location in 1995. Located along Willowemoc Creek between Livingston Manor and Roscoe, the 53-acre site features a historical and contemporary museum, an education center, public fishing access, and a nature trail. The center is open seven days a week from April through October.

The Catskill Fly Fishing Center & Museum is a nonprofit organization. The center's website ([www.cffcm.com](http://www.cffcm.com)) explains the many exhibits and programs in the context of its mission to preserve America's fly fishing heritage, teach its younger generations of fly fishers, and promote the future of fly fishing.

Among the many resources and offerings of the center are the Fly Fishing Hall of Fame, Heritage Craft Center, Demarest Rodmakers Gallery, Poul Jorgensen Golden Hook Award, Catskill Rodmakers



Roscoe O&W Railroad Museum



Catskill Fly Fishing Center & Museum



Gathering, Hardy Cup, Wulff Gallery, Catskill Rodmakers Workshop, and Arts of the Angler Craft Center. Educational programs have covered river ecology, angling history, stream craft, including fishing etiquette, fly tying, fly casting, aquatic entomology, and stream improvement to increase public awareness of the values of fly fishing. The center also serves a stewardship role in preserving Junction Pool, the famed fly fishing confluence of the Beaver Kill and the Willowemoc Creek.

#### Catskill Art Society

Livingston Manor is home to the Catskill Art Society (CAS), a nonprofit organization founded in 1971 whose mission is cultivating public interest, participation, and enjoyment of the arts; and through its 4,500 square-foot multi-arts center, CAS explores contemporary art practices and facilitates creative and professional development for established and emerging artists.

CAS is dedicated to presenting multi-disciplinary programming in all art forms with a combination of local and national artists. CAS features artwork on a regular basis and, through its guidelines, invites submissions across disciplines. The Society occupies a renovated historic building on Main Street, helping to anchor the diversity of activities in the hamlet. CAS also strives to be a regional destination, serving the greater community through its facility which features plenty of natural light, galleries, a multi-purpose teaching studio, a clay studio, and an art library with digital learning resources. CAS also organizes the annual Trout Parade in cooperation with the Livingston Manor Chamber of Commerce and many others. Looking toward the future, CAS plans to add performance and exhibition spaces. More information is available at [catskillartsociety.org](http://catskillartsociety.org).

#### Bethel Woods Center for the Arts

Built adjacent to the historic site of the 1969 Woodstock Festival and opened in 2006, Bethel Woods is located about 17 miles south of Livingston Manor in the town of Bethel. Founded by Alan Gerry, entrepreneur and philanthropist from nearby Liberty, the site features the 15,000-seat indoor-outdoor concert Pavilion, a 1,000-seat outdoor terrace stage, a 440-seat indoor hall, the Woodstock Festival Field, the Museum at Bethel Woods, and event spaces and classrooms. Outdoor concerts and events run June through September, while year-round programming and exhibits are held in the other venues. Prior to the creation of Bethel Woods, the original festival site has been a longtime draw for visitors and, in the 1990s, the scene of events organized by the Gerry Foundation. The museum, which celebrates the original festival, is aptly described on Roscoe's website as an immersive and captivating multi-media experience



Catskill Art Society



Catskill Art Society, childrens art class

that combines film and interactive displays, text panels and artifacts to explore the unique experience of the Woodstock festival, its significance as a culminating event of a decade of radical cultural, transformation, and the legacy of the Sixties and Woodstock today. The entire Bethel Woods complex is a positive, regional economic driver in the region that plays a primary role in the revitalization of tourism and complements the many resources in the town of Rockland.

#### Shandelee Music Festival

Located south of Rockland in the town of Callicoon, the Shandelee Music Festival encourages and promotes the careers of young, exceptional classical musicians through an annual series of summer concerts. SMF's Sunset Concert Pavilion and bucolic festival grounds have been a consistent attraction for concert goers and a formative venue for talented young musicians. SMF is also a private, nonprofit organization founded in 1993. In helping young musicians pursue professional careers as concert artists, SMF assists students in playing music in local schools and special care facilities, along with larger venues such as Bethel Woods.

#### Livingston Manor and Roscoe Free Libraries

The libraries, also described in Section 6, Community Services, are part of the Ramapo Catskill Library System, which includes 47 libraries and encompasses parts of four counties. The libraries offer a variety of services – public use computers, internet and Wi-Fi access, printers and fax – but also serve as community gathering spaces on a regular basis. Special programs are featured, and the spaces in the libraries are often used as meeting places. Both libraries are active in community events and are open to exploring new ways to further engage the community. The Roscoe library also serves as the repository for historical information, as the town historian is also the librarian.

#### **7.2.2.1 Town events**

The Town of Rockland has a number of community organizations and businesses who are regularly involved in a wide range of activities, programs, and events, as listed on [www.livingstonmanor.org](http://www.livingstonmanor.org) and [www.roscoenv.com](http://www.roscoenv.com). Three of the larger and most well know community cultural events are the Rotary Ice Carnival and the Trout Parade held in Livingston Manor and the Fourth of July parade in Roscoe.

#### Rotary Ice Carnival

The ice carnival has been part of the Livingston Manor community for 59 years. Held in January and organized by the Rotary Club and other partners, the all-day event includes a snow sculpture contest, a dance at the school, crowning of the ice carnival king and queen, performances by ice skaters, horse-drawn sleigh rides, and snowshoe and skating races.

#### Trout Parade

The annual Trout Parade is held in Livingston Manor on the second Saturday in June. Organized by the Catskill Art Society (CAS) in partnership with the Livingston Manor Chamber of Commerce, this street fair brings the community together and encourages artistic expression through the creation of fish-themed floats and costumes for marching in the parade and by the display of student works in the windows of





Rotary Ice Carnival - ice skating event



Trout Parade

local businesses. This heritage celebration was begun in 2004 and includes marching bands, performing arts, live music, and merchandise tables.

### **7.2.3 Recreational Resources**

#### Catskill Park and Catskill Forest Preserve

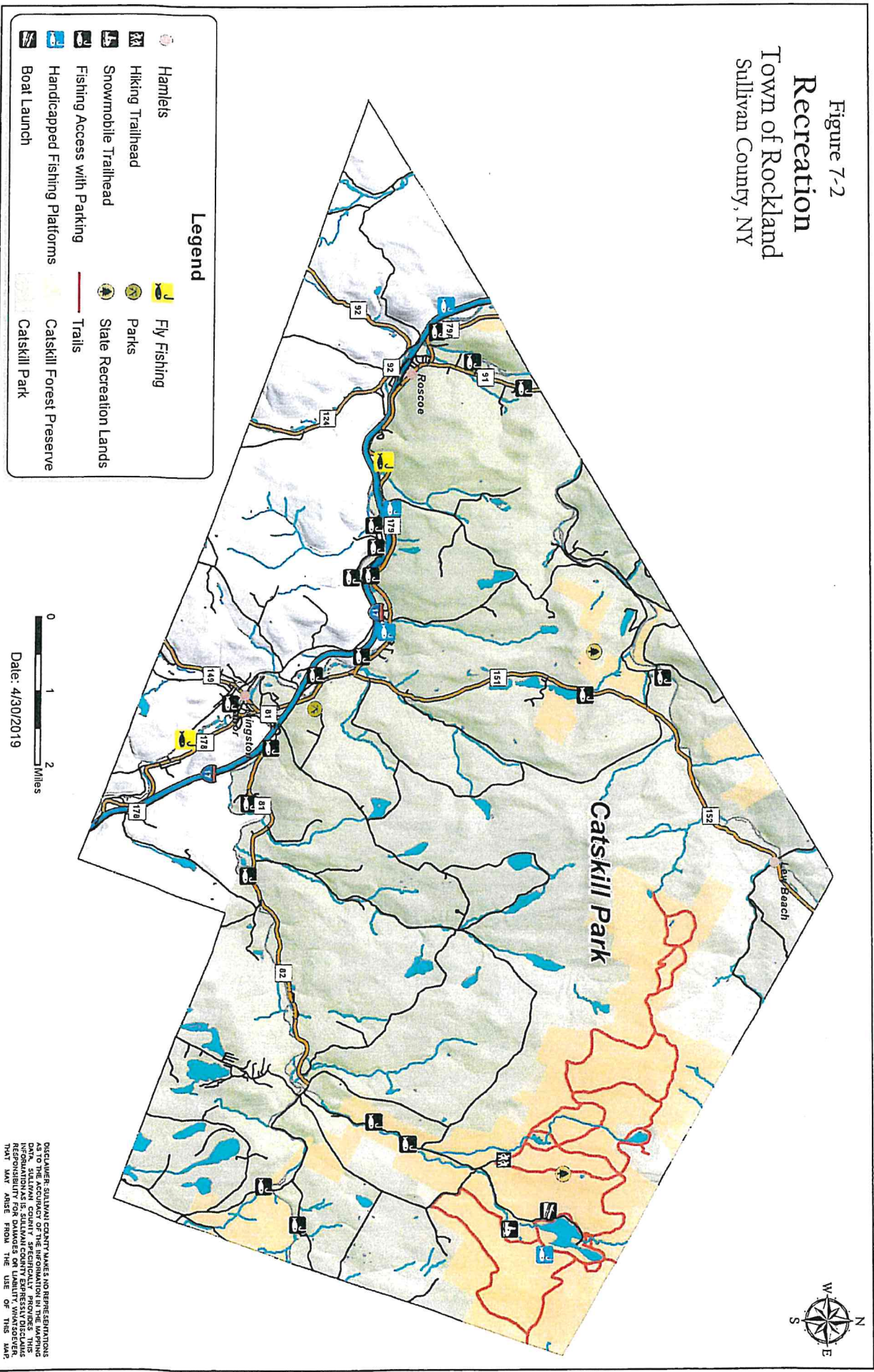
In addition to Rockland's predominantly rural and low-density land use pattern, about 80 percent of the Town's area lies within the Catskill Park, and approximately 16 percent of that area includes the Catskill Forest Preserve (see Figure 7-2, Recreation).

The 705,500-acre Catskill Park is defined by its "blue line" boundary, which encompasses all or part of a number counties and municipalities and is characterized by the mix of public and private lands within this boundary. Approximately 41 percent of the lands within the Park are part of the Catskill Forest Preserve. Forest preserve lands are protected by Article XIV of the New York State Constitution, which designates this land as "forever wild." Classifications of forest preserve lands are Wilderness, Wild Forest, Primitive Bicycle Corridors, Intensive Use Areas, and Administrative Areas. The forest preserve lands in the town of Rockland consist primarily of the Willowemoc Wild Forest, the Beaverkill and Mongaup Pond Campgrounds (Intensive Use Areas), and the Catskill Fish Hatchery (Administrative Area).

The Catskill Park State Land Master Plan (NYSDEC, 2008) includes statistics on the Park's resources. The 242-acre Beaverkill Campground has 109 camping sites, a camping capacity of 654, and a picnic capacity of 300. The 680-acre Mongaup Pond Campground has 163 camping sites, a camping capacity of 978, and a picnic capacity of 450; additionally, there is a 150' beach and a launch for small, non-motorized boats. Willowemoc Wild Forest offers a variety of recreational facilities including 29 miles of snowmobile trail suitable for horse and mountain bicycle use as well as 26 miles of hiking/cross-country ski trails and a leanto at Long Pond. The Catskill Fish Hatchery near DeBruce produces an average of 120,000 pounds of brown and brook trout yearly for stocking the waters of New York State. The hatchery is regularly toured by groups of school children and attracts an estimated 5,000 visitors each summer. Adjacent to the hatchery is Camp DeBruce, a NYSDEC summer camp for youth. Based on environmental educational programming, campers are exposed to new skills, including archery, canoeing, fishing, fly-tying, birding, and can engage in sportsman education classes.



Figure 7-2  
**Recreation**  
 Town of Rockland  
 Sullivan County, NY



Both Livingston Manor and Roscoe are primary gateways to the Park, leading to numerous forest preserve resources in and beyond the Town. In addition to accessing the forest preserve resources via these hamlets, there are numerous other noteworthy recreational destinations in the forest preserve to the north. These include, the Balsam Lake Fire Tower, Alder Lake, Little Pond Campground, Big Pond, several lean-tos, and numerous miles of hiking trails. During hunting season, the expansive tracts of forest preserve are a major attraction, boosting local economic activity. To the south of Roscoe in the town of Fremont is Crystal Lake Wild Forest. This is a 497-acre detached parcel of the forest preserve that includes a man-made lake, a short hiking trail with opportunities for camping, boating and fishing.

#### Fishing

Rockland's many pristine lakes and streams, along with extensive public access to them, contribute to the Town's reputation as an angler's paradise. The Town boasts many public access points to world-class fly fishing streams that are secured by public fishing rights (PFRs) (Figure 7-2). PFRs are permanent easements purchased by the NYSDEC from willing landowners, giving anglers the right to fish and walk along the bank (usually a 33' strip on one or both banks of the stream). The majority of lands adjacent to the Willowemoc Creek are accessible via PFRs. Key access points are marked by yellow-on-brown wooden DEC signs. While access to private lands along some streams is not granted to the general public, fishing clubs and resorts do account for additional access to recreational fishing, which complements public fishing opportunities in the Town.

#### Boating

Non-motorized boating is also a popular activity. In addition to Mongaup Pond, Crystal Lake, and other destinations mentioned above, Waneta Lake along the Beaverkill Road is a public destination with accessible fishing, picnicking, and car-top boat access.



Couple fishing (Beaverkill)



Catch of the day (Willowemoc Creek)



### Camping

The Town features a full range of camping opportunities. Two of New York State's seven public campgrounds in the Catskill Park are in Rockland (Beaverkill and Mongaup Pond). A third, Little Pond, is located just three miles from the town's northern boundary. Rockland is also home to three private campgrounds: Roscoe Campsites; Covered Bridge Campsite; and Hunter Lake Campgrounds. On forest preserve lands, there are lean-tos, designated campsites, and an abundance of primitive camping opportunities, consistent with NYS regulations.

### Hunting

Rockland serves as a major attraction and gateway for numerous types of hunting. New York State has designated seasons for Wild Turkey, Deer, Black Bear, Waterfowl, Migratory Game Birds, Furbearer, and Small Game Hunting. The arrival of deer season each fall helps support many local businesses in the community, including motels, restaurants, outdoor stores and food markets.

#### **7.2.3.1 Community Parks.**

In addition to recreation opportunities noted above, the Town is fortunate to have a several community parks located in or near Roscoe and Livingston Manor. These parks are open to the public and owned and maintained either by the Town, County, local school districts, local fire departments, and private individuals and organizations.

Covered Bridge Park. As discussed above, this park is located next to the Livingston Manor Covered Bridge along the Willowemoc Creek. The park offers excellent stream access, along with picnic areas, a pavilion and restrooms. The park is owned and maintained by Sullivan County.

Rotary Park. Located in Livingston Manor, the park is privately owned and maintained and is open to the public. It has two baseball fields, a multi-purpose soccer field, winter ice skating rink, playground equipment and restrooms. The park hosts the outdoor activities of the Ice Carnival each January. Under current plans to convert the adjacent O&W railbed into a recreational trail, the park will serve as a connecting trailhead.

Renaissance Park. Located in the center of Livingston Manor, the park is privately owned and maintained. It provides access to the Little Beaverkill and Willowemoc Creek. The park has a pavilion and is a gathering place for community activities. Livingston Manor Renaissance volunteers maintain the native plant garden and flower boxes at the park. The park is also an anchor on the proposed River Walk trail, which will provide enhanced access to the Willowemoc Creek by way of a linear park paralleling Main Street.

Round Top Trails. Located in Livingston Manor at the edge of Orchard Street Cemetery, the park is owned and maintained by the Town with help from a volunteer group. It features two uphill loop trails (.6 mile and .2 mile) on Round Top mountain with trailhead access near the mountain's base. The trails are





Renaissance Park entrance



Playground equipment (Livingston Manor Central School)

connected to each other with one loop featuring a scenic hamlet overlook while the other reaches Round Top's summit at an elevation of about 1,820 feet.

Riverside Park. This park is located in Roscoe and is owned and maintained by the Town. Opened in 2009, it features walking trails, three picnic areas, and access for fishing on the Willowemoc Creek.

Roscoe-Rockland Fireman's Field. Fireman's field is owned by the Roscoe-Rockland Fire Company and has a baseball field, several pavilions, and rest room facilities. In addition to firefighting training, the site may be used for a fee for certain events (e.g., parties, weddings) with permission from the fire company. Public events such as live music also take place.

Beaverkill Valley Fire Department Park. Located in Lew Beach next to the Beaverkill firehouse, the park is available for fire department members and their families. The park has a utility field/baseball field and a playground set with benches. The park can also be used by non-members for a fee.

School Facilities and Playgrounds. Livingston Manor and Roscoe Central Schools each have two baseball fields, a football field, a soccer field, a basketball court, one or more tennis courts, and a playground. LMCS also has a running track.

### **7.3 Recommendations**

#### **Strategy 1 Strengthen partnerships**

- Action 1.1 *Actively engage with the DEC and outdoor recreation stakeholders in the development and update of Unit Management Plans, the Catskill Region Recreation Master Plan, and other projects related to the outdoor resources of the Catskill Forest Preserve and Park.*
- Action 1.2 *Increase coordination among successful events and their sponsoring groups to further advance year-round activity calendars and related promotional events.*
- Action 1.3 *Seek to establish an events schedule on the Town's website and social media sites*

*to promote community participation and year-round visitation to the Town. The schedule could include events such the Trout parade and Ice Carnival as well school plays and musical concerts, senior center lectures and events, and agritourism events sponsored by local farms.*

**Strategy 2     Enhance existing resources and explore the creation of new facilities.**

- Action 2.1     *Pursue opportunities to better integrate local parks within a larger network through physical connections. For example, the future O&W rail trail (i.e., linear park) could be connected to both Rotary Park and to a new sidewalk on Pleasant Street leading to Downtown Livingston Manor. The proposed River Walk Trail will be linked to Renaissance Park and the Downtown Livingston Manor sidewalk network.*
- Action 2.2     *Explore connecting Roscoe and Livingston Manor via foot and bicycle paths.*
- Action 2.3     *Showcase the Town's many parks and recreation attractions as a whole. Utilize interpretive media including printed and web-based as well as existing Downtown kiosks and new kiosks at other strategic locations such as the municipal parking lot. This effort could also include development of a mobile phone wayfinding application discussed in Section 5, Commercial Areas and in Section 9, Transportation.*
- Action 2.4     *Improve access to community parks by improving hamlet walkability. Connecting public parks via sidewalks and ADA compliant crosswalks would improve pedestrian safety and convenience.*
- Action 2.5     *Assess existing bike routes and any new routes for adequate signage and promotional materials. For example, bike routes could be included in the wayfinding mobile phone application discussed in Section 9, Transportation.*
- Action 2.6     *Explore the creation of new parks, including reuse of lands at the former poultry processing plant, the former airport, and other locations.*
- Action 2.7     *Explore development of a community center. Identify potential locations, partners, and types of programs and facilities, e.g., recreation hall, fitness equipment, and meeting space.*
- Action 2.8     *Explore the creation of a Town parks & recreation department. This department would improve maintenance and general upkeep of existing and future recreation facilities including parks, walkways and trails, and bicycle*

paths. Personnel could also assist at Town events such as the Trout Parade and 4th of July parade.

Action 2.9 *Explore the creation of a visitors' center for the western gateway to the Catskill Park. A visitors' center can orient arriving visitors and interpret the resources in and out of the Catskill Park. One potential location for such a center is adjacent to the O&W caboose located next to the Route 17 exit ramp at Livingston Manor.*

Action 2.10 *Continue to support efforts to complete the Livingston Manor Riverwalk Trail.*

Priority Action 2.11 *Continue to coordinate with Sullivan County to construct the planned O&W rail trail. This trail would start in Livingston Manor and travel some 50 miles to Summitville in the Town of Mamakating. In part, the trail would be a tourist attraction that would provide a big boost to the local economy in Livingston Manor and to all municipalities along its path.*

Action 2.11 *Coordinate with NYSDEC to develop a scenic loop bike trail that would start and end near the Beaver Kill covered bridge. The trail would be a popular recreational attraction for tourists visiting the Town, which in turn would enhance the local economy.*

Action 2.12 *Encourage proposed subdivisions to develop multi-use pathways and linking of open spaces. Subdivision plans should recognize and address this through the creation of pathways for walking and/or biking that connect to other trails, recreational spaces, or areas of Town. Open spaces that are created or maintained by the design of a subdivision should consider trail connections to other similar open spaces where opportunities present.*

**Strategy 3     Advance historic preservation efforts.**

Action 3.1 *Work with historic resource partners to explore advancing recommended actions from the Bearverkill Valley and Livingston Manor historic surveys.*

Action 3.2 *Explore development of historical walking tours for community use and to promote historic tourism. Utilize the Town's historians and information from the Bearverkill Valley and Livingston Manor historic inventory surveys to identify historic buildings of local interest or importance to include on the tour.*

Action 3.3 *Consider enacting a town historic preservation ordinance that will allow the local designation of historic landmarks and districts.*



Action 3.4     *Consult with the State Historic Preservation Office regarding the eligibility of notable properties for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.*

Action 3.5     *Post historic survey reports and documentation of historic properties on the Town's website to raise awareness and encourage participation in the Town's historic preservation efforts.*

Action 3.5     *Post historic survey reports and documentation of historic properties on the Town's website to raise awareness and encourage participation in the Town's historic preservation efforts.*

Action 3.6     *Work to build on the Town's historical assets, cultural events, and arts programs as a complementary theme for tourism, recreation, and economic development.*

**Strategy 4     Work to provide recreational opportunities for persons with special needs.**

Action 4.1     *Seek to identify playground equipment that may be appropriate for flood-prone hamlet parks that would accommodate special needs persons including mobility challenged persons. Such equipment is versatile and can be used by children of all ages and abilities.*

Action 4.2     *Encourage the development of multi-use trails and walkways that are accessible to special needs persons including mobility impaired persons.*

**Strategy 5     Seek governmental and private sector funding opportunities.**

Action 5.1     *Community stakeholder groups and organizations should work regularly with Town government to explore and develop funding opportunities to accomplish objectives in this section.*

## **SECTION 8 - ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES**

### **8.1 Goals**

- > To protect, promote, and enhance Rockland's natural resources and environmental assets.

### **8.2 Summary of Existing Conditions**

The Town of Rockland is rich in environmental resources. Environmental resources include both natural resources and environmental assets. *Natural resources* are defined as materials or substances such as minerals, forests, water, and fertile land that occur in nature and can be used for economic gain; whereas *environmental assets* cover a broader range, inclusive of natural resources and incorporating scenic, aesthetic, recreational, and ecological values. While not focused primarily on economic gain, environmental assets typically have many indirect economic benefits.

The abundance of Rockland's environmental resources can be attributed in large part to the rural nature of the Town. At 41.5 persons per square mile, the Town's population density is comparatively sparse, especially when factoring in the higher concentrations of people in the hamlets of Livingston Manor and Roscoe. Rockland is characterized by widespread mature forests within a mix of public and private lands, providing for ample recreational pursuits and timber harvesting opportunities. The area's geology also supports bluestone quarrying and extraction of gravel products. The northern section of the Town is the most mountainous and contains the county's highest point, Beech Hill (3118'). This area comprises large portions of the Beaver Kill and Willowemoc Creek watersheds, whose high water quality and scenic beauty contribute to the Town's prominence as a world-class trout-fishing destination. The Town's hydrologic resources also support its drinking water supply system, which is protected in part through aquifer protection districts in the zoning law.

A large number of public access opportunities provide a wide variety of outdoor recreation activities in a natural setting. Activities include hiking, camping, hunting, fishing, horseback riding, snowmobiling, cycling, boating, and birding. The Catskill Forest Preserve, which comprises some 16 percent of the Town's area, includes two state-run campgrounds with facilities and programs for outdoor enthusiasts of all ages. These opportunities are complemented by the Town's parks, which are concentrated in and around the two major hamlets.

Collectively, Rockland's exceptional environmental resources contribute to the Town's quality of life, attracting second homeowners and full-time residents, as well as tourists and outdoor enthusiasts. Lodging establishments, restaurants, realtors, private campgrounds, outfitters and other businesses in the Town benefit directly from the rural, scenic character of the Town, while forestry related businesses are supported by the Town's abundant woodlands.

#### **8.2.1 Streams**

Several large streams and numerous brooks flow through Rockland with the two principal streams being



Waneta Lake



Beaver Kill

the Beaver Kill and Willowemoc Creek. Of the ten towns that have area within the Beaver Kill Watershed, only Rockland has its entire area within this watershed. The Beaver Kill's largest tributary, Willowemoc Creek, drains the majority of land area in the Town. Major tributaries of the Willowemoc include Sprague Brook, Mongaup Creek, Hunter Brook, and Cattail Brook. Numerous public fishing areas are located along the Willowemoc and are directly accessible from public roads. Willowemoc Creek runs westerly through Livingston Manor and joins the Beaver Kill at Roscoe.

The Beaver Kill runs roughly along the Town's northwestern boundary and, from south to north, is accompanied by State Route 206, Craigie Clair Road, and Beaverkill Road (County Route 152). The Beaver Kill bisects the state campground bearing its name. Public fishing areas are located near Roscoe, Craigie Clair, and Beaverkill Campground. Upstream of the campground, access to the Beaverkill is primarily from private lands. Major tributaries of the Beaver Kill are Berry Brook, Shin Creek, Voorhees Brook, Gee Brook, Jersey Brook, and Huggins Hollow Brook

### **8.2.3 Lakes**

As shown in Figure 8.1, Surface Hydrology, Rockland has numerous ponds and small lakes, especially as compared to interior portions of the Catskill Park lying just to the north. Several of these small water bodies are public and are within the Willowemoc Wild Forest: Mongaup Pond; Quick Lake; Hodge Pond; Frick Pond; and Long Pond. Waneta Lake, also public and held by New York State, is directly accessible from Route 151.

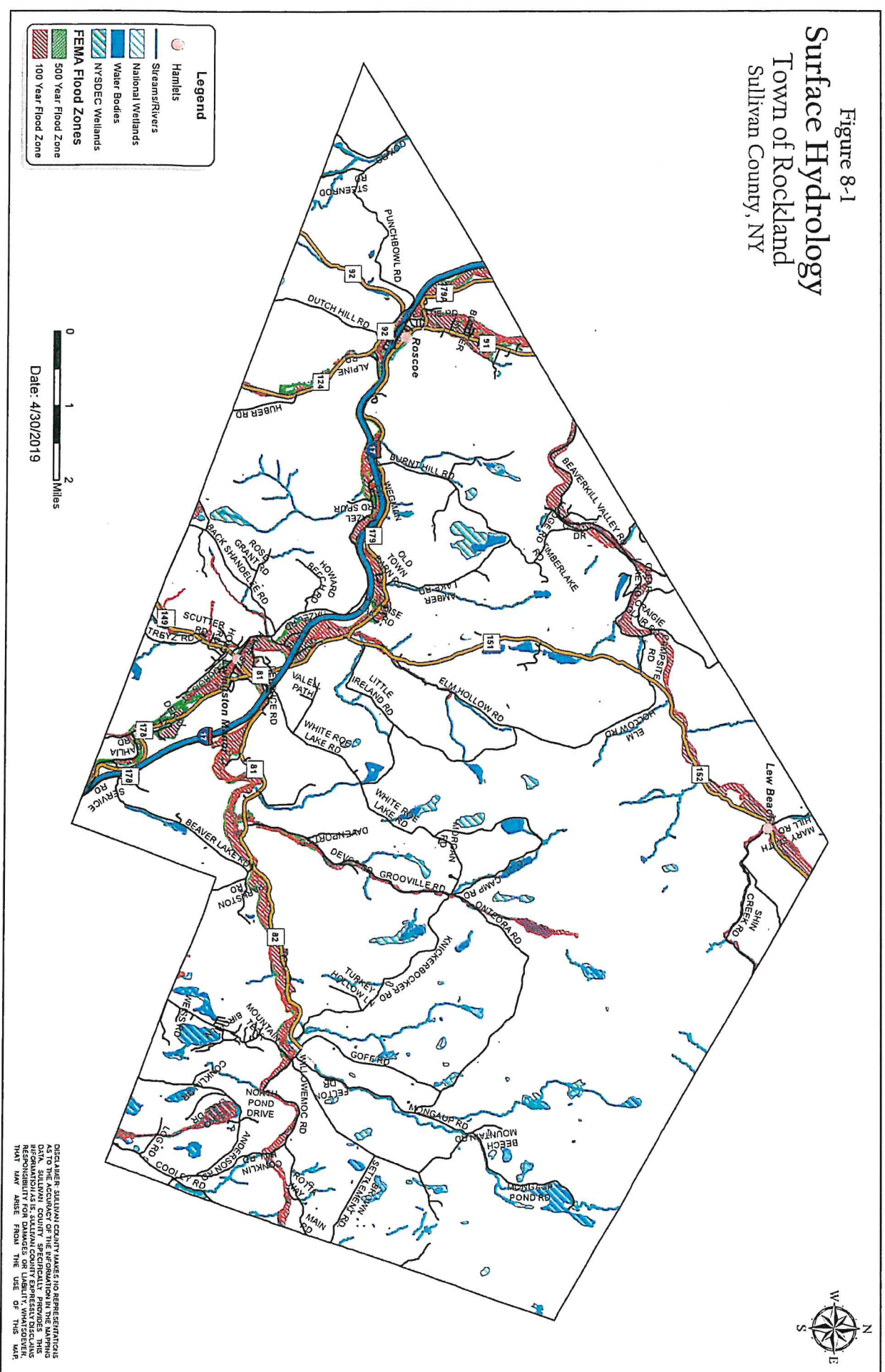
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Figure 8-1  
**Surface Hydrology**  
 Town of Rockland  
 Sullivan County, NY



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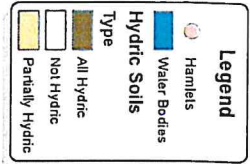
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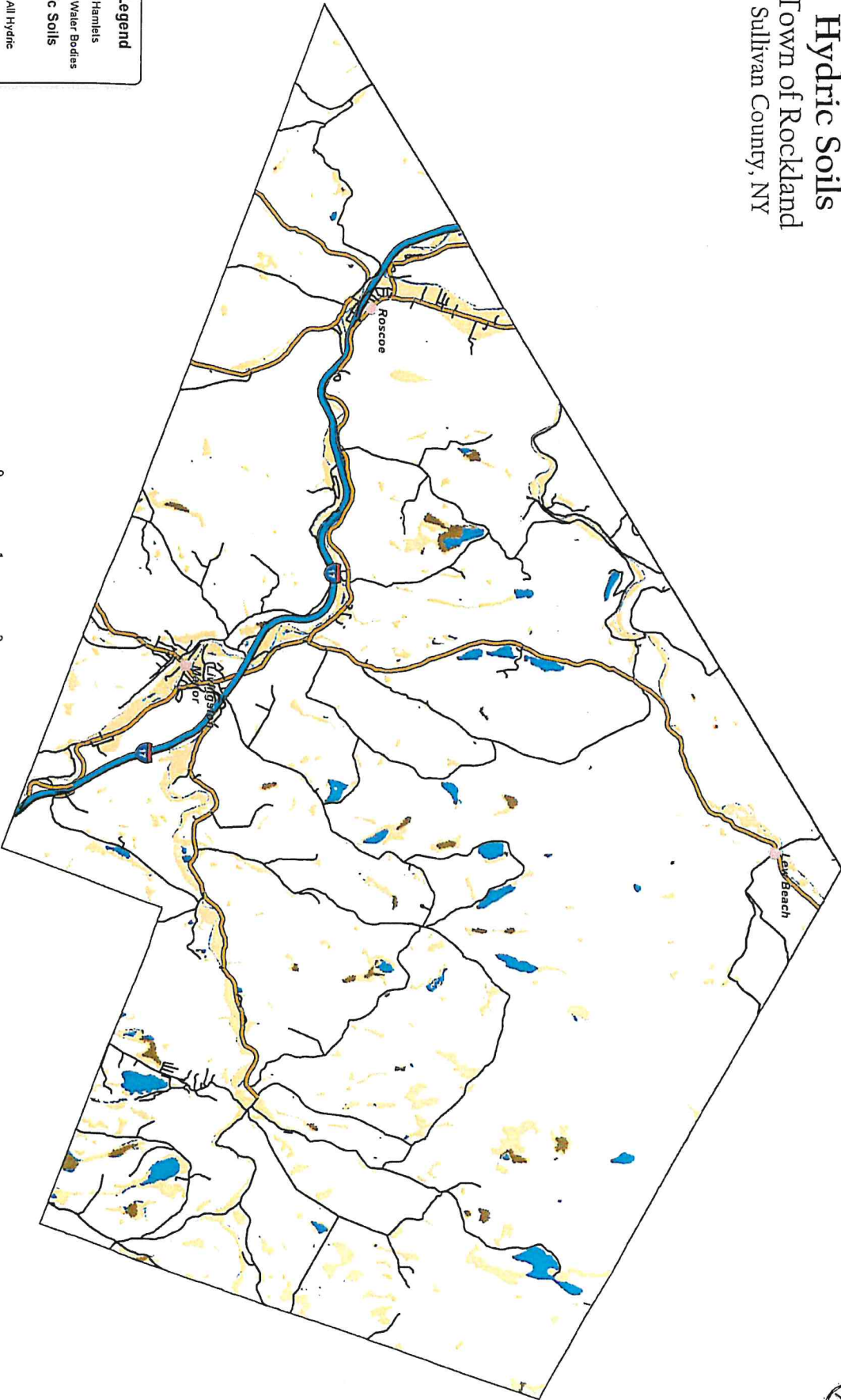
Mountains, forested lands, and gently rolling hills (view from Foxwillow Farm)



Figure 8-2  
**Hydric Soils**  
 Town of Rockland  
 Sullivan County, NY



Hydric Soils Data Source:  
 USDA NRCS, Esri



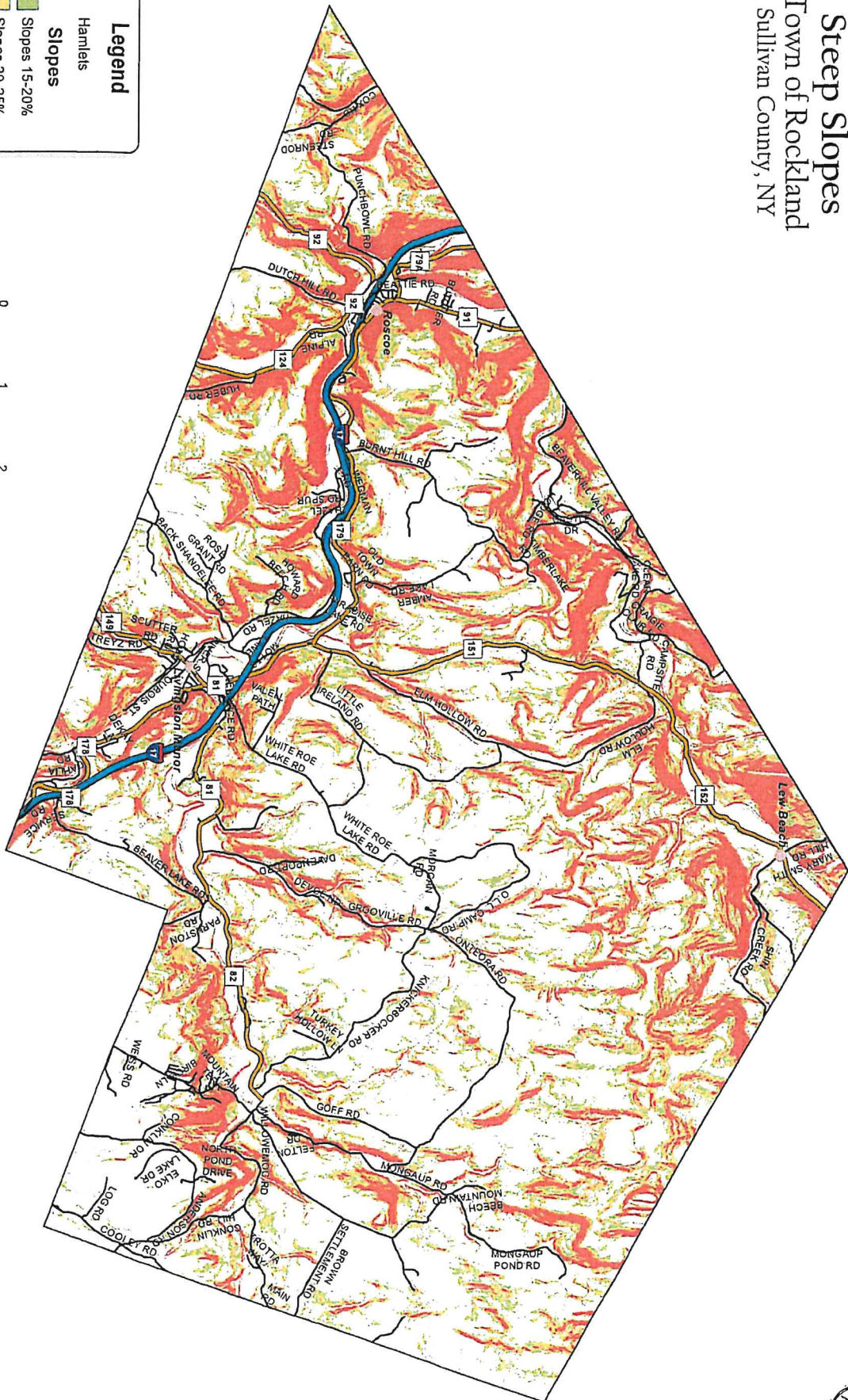
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Figure 8-3  
**Steep Slopes**  
 Town of Rockland  
 Sullivan County, NY



Date: 4/30/2019



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### **8.3 Recommendations**

Several of the recommendations of this section have important connections with those in Section 12 – Land Use.

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- Action 1.2 *Encourage Sullivan County to consider an open space bond issue to fund purchases of scenic easements and acquire floodplains and other environmentally sensitive areas.*

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**Strategy 2      Encourage stream appreciation and protection.**

- Action 2.1      *Consider developing a stream enhancement program that protects, highlights and encourages use of the Town's streams while mitigating flooding problems and enhancing water quality.*
- Action 2.2      *Seek to make available at town hall and other public locations educational guidance materials relating to stream stewardship and best streamside management practices. This material could come from sources such as the Natural Resource Conservation Council and would be targeted at property owners in general and home owners in particular.*
- Action 2.3      *Continue to build awareness of the location of the floodplains in the Town.*

**Strategy 3      Help ensure long-term quality of individual onsite septic systems.**

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- Action 5.3      *Protect sensitive environmental areas by managing the use of salt on roads and highways. Determine appropriate areas to dump snow; examine salt storage facilities and application practices; actively explore alternatives to road salt; pursue related education and training opportunities for highway department personnel.*

## **SECTION 8 - ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES**

### **8.1 Goals**

- > To protect, promote, and enhance Rockland's natural resources and environmental assets.

### **8.2 Summary of Existing Conditions**

The Town of Rockland is rich in environmental resources. Environmental resources include both natural resources and environmental assets. *Natural resources* are defined as materials or substances such as minerals, forests, water, and fertile land that occur in nature and can be used for economic gain; whereas *environmental assets* cover a broader range, inclusive of natural resources and incorporating scenic, aesthetic, recreational, and ecological values. While not focused primarily on economic gain, environmental assets typically have many indirect economic benefits.

The abundance of Rockland's environmental resources can be attributed in large part to the rural nature of the Town. At 41.5 persons per square mile, the Town's population density is comparatively sparse, especially when factoring in the higher concentrations of people in the hamlets of Livingston Manor and Roscoe. Rockland is characterized by widespread mature forests within a mix of public and private lands, providing for ample recreational pursuits and timber harvesting opportunities. The area's geology also supports bluestone quarrying and extraction of gravel products. The northern section of the Town is the most mountainous and contains the county's highest point, Beech Hill (3118'). This area comprises large portions of the Beaver Kill and Willowemoc Creek watersheds, whose high water quality and scenic beauty contribute to the Town's prominence as a world-class trout-fishing destination. The Town's hydrologic resources also support its drinking water supply system, which is protected in part through aquifer protection districts in the zoning law.

A large number of public access opportunities provide a wide variety of outdoor recreation activities in a natural setting. Activities include hiking, camping, hunting, fishing, horseback riding, snowmobiling, cycling, boating, and birding. The Catskill Forest Preserve, which comprises some 16 percent of the Town's area, includes two state-run campgrounds with facilities and programs for outdoor enthusiasts of all ages. These opportunities are complemented by the Town's parks, which are concentrated in and around the two major hamlets.

Collectively, Rockland's exceptional environmental resources contribute to the Town's quality of life, attracting second homeowners and full-time residents, as well as tourists and outdoor enthusiasts. Lodging establishments, restaurants, realtors, private campgrounds, outfitters and other businesses in the Town benefit directly from the rural, scenic character of the Town, while forestry related businesses are supported by the Town's abundant woodlands.

#### **8.2.1 Streams**

Several large streams and numerous brooks flow through Rockland with the two principal streams being





Waneta Lake



Beaver Kill

the Beaver Kill and Willowemoc Creek. Of the ten towns that have area within the Beaver Kill Watershed, only Rockland has its entire area within this watershed. The Beaver Kill's largest tributary, Willowemoc Creek, drains the majority of land area in the Town. Major tributaries of the Willowemoc include Sprague Brook, Mongaup Creek, Hunter Brook, and Cattail Brook. Numerous public fishing areas are located along the Willowemoc and are directly accessible from public roads. Willowemoc Creek runs westerly through Livingston Manor and joins the Beaver Kill at Roscoe.

The Beaver Kill runs roughly along the Town's northwestern boundary and, from south to north, is accompanied by State Route 206, Craigie Clair Road, and Beaverkill Road (County Route 152). The Beaver Kill bisects the state campground bearing its name. Public fishing areas are located near Roscoe, Craigie Clair, and Beaverkill Campground. Upstream of the campground, access to the Beaverkill is primarily from private lands. Major tributaries of the Beaver Kill are Berry Brook, Shin Creek, Voorhees Brook, Gee Brook, Jersey Brook, and Huggins Hollow Brook

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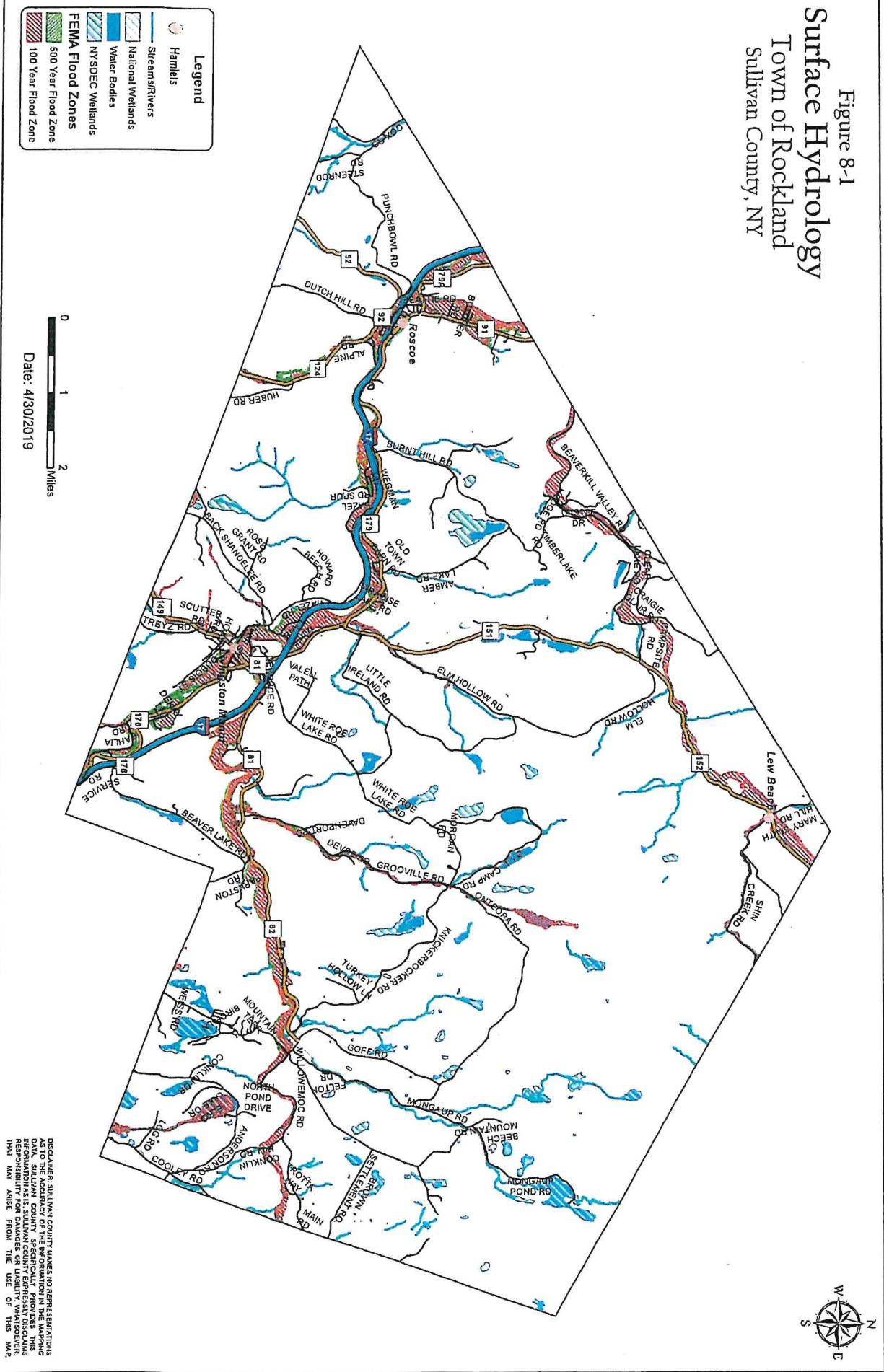
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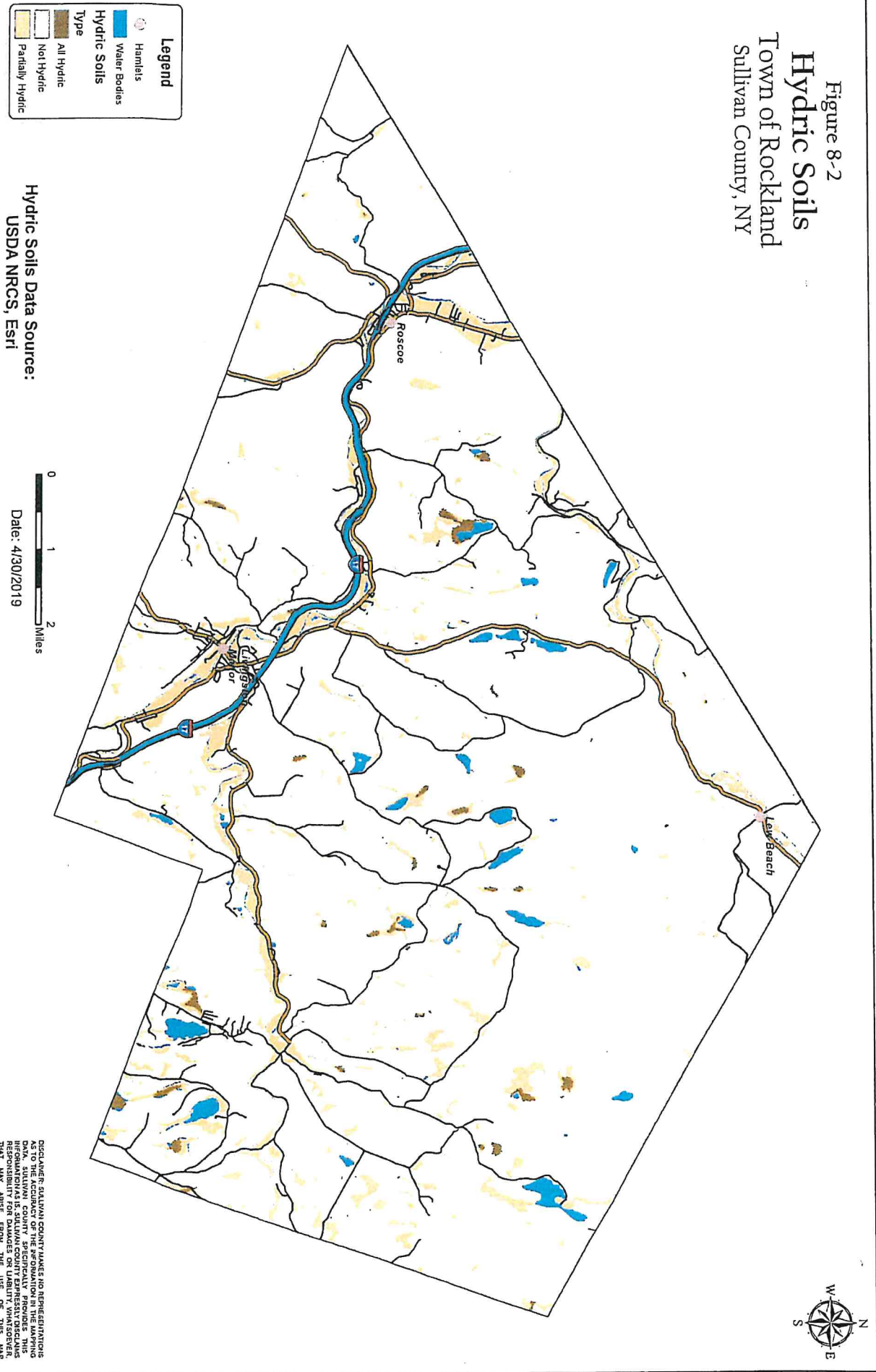
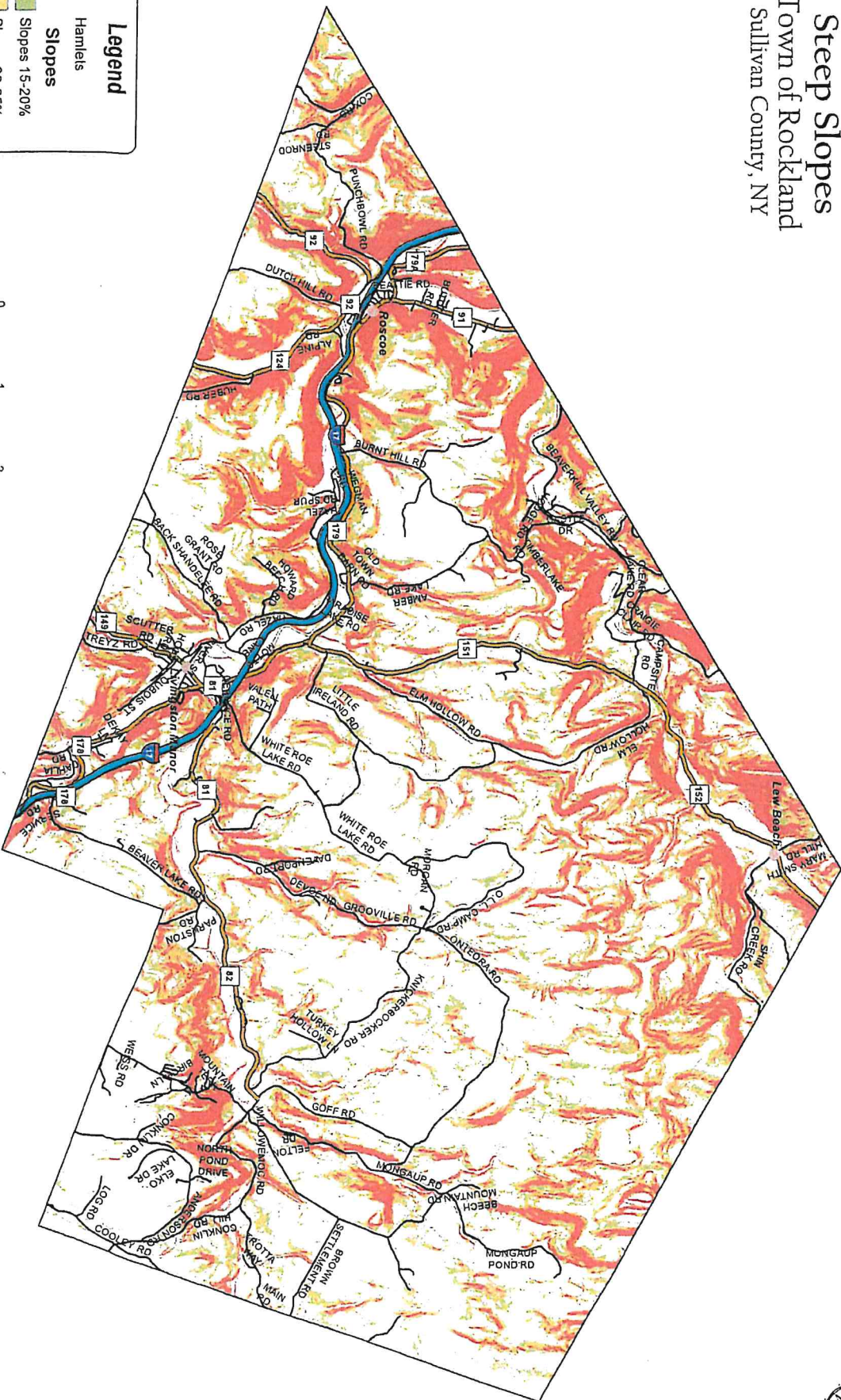


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## SECTION 9 – TRANSPORTATION

### 9.1 Goals

- > To ensure that Rockland's transportation modes are safe, accessible and resilient.
- > To expand public transportation services to provide users with an affordable means of transit.
- > To improve wayfinding signage to attractions and centers throughout the Town.
- > To expand sidewalks and trails to connect communities and promote non-motorized transit.

*"If you plan for cars and traffic, you get cars and traffic. If you plan for people and places, you get people and places." Cynthia Nikitin, Project for Public Space, speaking at the 2017 Sullivan Renaissance Conference.*

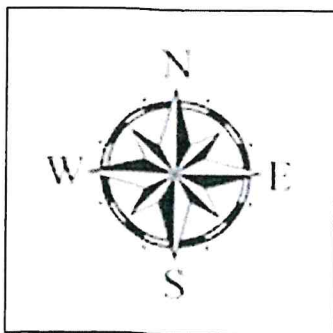
### 9.2 Summary of Existing Conditions

The efficient movement of people and goods is the primary purpose of all modes of transportation.

#### 9.2.1 Transportation network

Historically, Rockland's transportation network was built around dirt roads and the railroad. Over time, railroads declined and horse-drawn vehicles disappeared as these modes of transportation were marginalized or replaced with the advent of airplanes and motor vehicles. As a result, most dirt roads were paved and new larger capacity roads were constructed.

In 2018, transportation in Rockland primarily consists of its road network (see Figure 9-1, Transportation Network). This network is anchored by Route 17 (future I-86), a four-lane highway which bisects the Town in an east-west direction. Route 17 works in concert with a system of county and Town roads to efficiently facilitate the movement of people and goods locally, regionally and nation-wide.



Route 17 (future I-86)





With Route 17 at its core, Rockland's roadway network provides fast and easy access to major metropolitan centers, interstate highways and airports, all of which accommodate the many tourists and 2<sup>nd</sup> homeowner's that travel to and from the Town. These same roads also provide an efficient outlet for goods produced in the Town to all points of the compass nationwide, and in particular to markets in the New York metropolitan area.

The Town's highway department maintains some 106 miles of town owned streets and roads. There are a number of county arterial roadways traversing the Town, such as Route 151 and Route 82, which are designed to enable travel between different areas of the community at moderate to high speeds. Generally, the major collector roads traversing the Town are rural roads connecting arterials and local roads at moderate speeds. Based on apparent traffic volumes experienced on these roads, arterials and major collectors are not experiencing problems associated with heavy traffic volumes nor are they expected to in the near future. The remaining roads in the Town may be classified as minor collectors and local roads. Minor collectors provide connections between local roads and arterials at slower speeds. Local roads (including privately owned roads) channel traffic to and from major collectors and arterials. Local roads are used to access properties and are generally not utilized by through traffic. With a few exceptions discussed below, the Town's minor collectors and local roads are generally operating below capacity.

### **9.2.2 Transportation amenities**

As is the case in most rural communities, owner-operated motor vehicles are the primary mode of transportation in the Town. Less used modes of public transportation consist of local taxi service, local and regional bus service, and a location-based ride sharing application. There is also a private bus service which shuttles fly-fishing enthusiasts from New York City to the Town's world renowned trout streams. In addition, the Sullivan County International Airport provides regional air taxi service and can handle small general aviation aircraft as well as larger business jets. The Norfolk Southern Railway (NS) operates a freight service on tracks running along the western border of Sullivan County. NS currently has two freight accounts in the county to which it provides service via rail sidings. Currently there is no demand for a transload facility in the County according to the railroad.<sup>1</sup> While there are a number of



Coach USA



Sullivan County International Airport

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<sup>1</sup> Sidings service freight customers located adjacent to the rail line. Transload facilities service customers that are not located next to the rail line, but instead bring freight to and from the facility by truck.



biking and hiking trails in the Town, they were developed as recreation opportunities rather than a means of transporting people to and from homes, schools, and the workplace.

### **9.2.3 Transportation issues**

#### **9.2.3.1 Traffic congestion & pedestrian safety**

##### NY Route 17 (future I-86)

As previously discussed, Rockland is bisected by Route 17 which crosses the Town in an east-west direction. Route 17 enters Sullivan County near the Village of Bloomingburg and continues west through the county and on into adjoining Delaware County. Currently, that part of Route 17 which runs through the Town is operating below capacity. East of the Town, however, heavy weekend traffic during peak tourist months can occur on Route 17 starting at the Village of Monticello and continuing east through Orange County to its intersect with I-87 (NY Thruway) at Harriman. This seasonal traffic congestion can partly be attributed to the large number of NY metropolitan area tourists (including bungalow colony renters and 2<sup>nd</sup> homeowners) traveling to Sullivan County. This situation may soon be exacerbated by the recent opening of the Resorts World Catskills Casino and the Kartrite Resort & Indoor Water Park, both located in Monticello, and the 2020 scheduled opening of the Legoland amusement park in the Orange County town of Goshen. While Rockland's section of Route 17 should not experience near-term capacity issues, the efficient flow of tourists to and from the NY metropolitan area is of great importance to the Town's tourist oriented economy (see Section 6, Economic Development). Chronic capacity issues on Route 17 that impede traffic flow could depress the number of tourists visiting the area and thereby hurt the Town's economy.

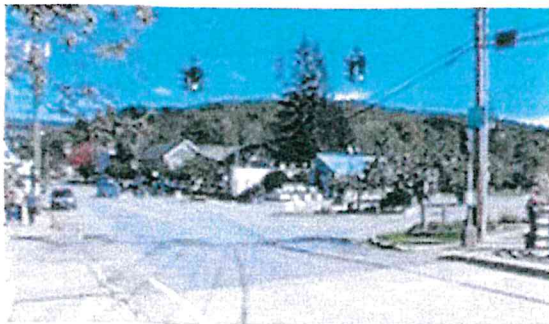
Currently Route 17 is undergoing improvements as it transitions to I-86, however these are essentially an upgrading of the existing roadway which will not have a significant effect on its carrying capacity. In 2013, a State transportation study reviewed capacity issues along the 47 mile stretch of Route 17 between Harriman and Monticello and recommended the addition of a third lane in both directions along Route 17 from Harriman to Route 211 in the town of Wallkill. In 2019, the NYSDOT will undertake a study to determine priority projects along this corridor. Sullivan County, in conjunction with other groups and elected officials, is lobbying to extend this study and the planned third lane to the Monticello area. Both the Town of Rockland and Sullivan County have a special interest in participating in the DOT study as it unfolds.

##### Livingston Manor

In recent years, the hamlet has seen a marked increase in tourism which, in part, is being driven by millennials from New York City who have discovered the Town's outdoor recreational attractions, including its fly-fishing streams. With its historic atmosphere, unique specialty shops and eateries, the hamlet has become a popular destination for tourists. However, the resulting increase in vehicle and pedestrian traffic on Main Street is straining available public parking and creating potential safety issues caused by pedestrian jaywalking through vehicular traffic - primarily on the weekends. This situation is exacerbated by the lack of clearly marked crosswalks at the Main Street signaled intersection with Pearl Street.

While there are sidewalks along both sides of Main Street's business district, many side streets connecting residences to Main Street lack this amenity. In addition, there is no sidewalk connecting Main Street with Rotary Park, which park will be a trailhead for the future O&W rail trail. Adding sidewalks and clearly marked ADA compliant crosswalks over time would improve pedestrian safety and encourage residents to leave their vehicles at home and walk to hamlet parks and Downtown shopping.<sup>2</sup> An expanded sidewalk network would also benefit those hamlet residents who cannot afford a vehicle.

The Town is exploring ways to address these issues along with similar issues in Roscoe discussed below. This will include a review of design elements under the NYSDOT's Complete Streets program (<https://www.dot.gov/programs/completestreets>). Vehicle parking issues in both hamlets are discussed in Section 5, Commercial Areas.



Unmarked intersection crosswalks (Main Street, Livingston Manor)



Clearly marked crosswalk (Hemlock Ridge, Livingston Manor)

### Roscoe

Like Livingston Manor, Roscoe has also experienced an increase in tourist related vehicular and pedestrian traffic and an occasional shortage of public parking can occur on weekends during the tourist season. The existing sidewalk network is mostly limited to the commercial businesses on Stewart Avenue. In order to get to other popular attractions, such as the Prohibition Distillery on Union Street, pedestrians must walk in the street. ADA compliant crosswalks are also lacking. The Stewart Avenue intersect with Route 179 (Old Route 17) lacks clearly marked pedestrian crosswalks which is notable



Unmarked intersection crosswalks, no sidewalks  
(Route 179 / Stewart Avenue intersect, Roscoe)



High crosswalk curbing is not wheelchair friendly  
(Stewart Avenue, Roscoe)

<sup>2</sup> ADA is an acronym for the Americans With Disabilities Act.





Scenic agricultural landscape (hay field view from Route 152)

because public parking exists on the Route 179 side of this intersect. In addition, there are no sidewalks on either side of Route 179 which connect the parking areas to Stewart Avenue. Pedestrians are therefore forced to walk on the edge of Route 179 in order to reach Stewart Avenue sidewalks. Adding sidewalks and clearly marked ADA compliant crosswalks would improve pedestrian safety and encourage hamlet residents to leave their vehicles at home and walk to Downtown destinations. An expanded sidewalk network would also benefit those residents who cannot afford a vehicle.

#### Rural Roads

There is an increasing number of vehicles on Grooville Road, White Roe Lake Road, and Knickerbocker Road due to traffic from seasonal camps. The Town should monitor this situation for potential vehicle and pedestrian safety issues that may need to be addressed either now or in the future.

#### **9.2.3.2 Scenic roadway views**

There are opportunities throughout the Town to recognize the unique character of scenic roads and seek to preserve them as viewshed corridors. In addition to their transportation function, scenic roads establish the Town's overall rural beauty so beloved by its residents and tourists alike. Methods to preserve scenic roadway viewsheds, including views of scenic working farms, could be considered in order to assure their continued visual significance. While some viewsheds may be protected by designated parkland or conservation easements, others may be located in areas subject to change (see Section 3, Figure 3-3, Protected Open Space). In these latter cases, the implementation of development techniques may suffice to preserve visual attributes. Still others may require conservation easements or even outright purchase.



Scenic view (Route 151)



Scenic view (Camp Site Road)



The Town should identify important roadway viewsheds and determine if existing zoning regulations support their continued integrity. Attention would be given to viewsheds that transition between two zoning districts to assure that visual continuity is maintained.

#### **9.2.3.3 Roadway flooding**

Many of Rockland's roads and streams are closely nestled together at the base of its many steep-sloped mountains. As a result, periodic flooding during heavy rain events occurs on Downtown streets in Livingston Manor and Roscoe and on Craigie Clair Road, Tuttle Hill Road and Beaverkill Valley Road. There are a few other roads such as Grooville Road and Covered Bridge Road that are subject to flooding during less frequent extreme weather events such as Hurricane Irene. The Town is currently working with the U.S Army Corps of Engineers to mitigate flooding in Livingston Manor. The Town and Sullivan County are coordinating efforts to mitigate flooding in Roscoe. Hamlet flooding is also discussed in Section 5, Commercial Areas.

#### **9.2.3.4 Public transit gaps**

The combination of a low year-round population, a high percentage of vehicle ownership and a seasonal tourist population has likely caused a gap in public transportation for some low-income residents who could benefit from this service. While there are support services in Sullivan County to transport people to and from social benefit agencies and medical facilities, there is a gap in affordable transit services to take people to and from work. In this situation, the price of a job becomes a car or a cab which some low-income people cannot afford. Nearly 10% of Sullivan County households do not have a car according to a 2015 county transportation study and a number of those households are in Livingston Manor and Roscoe.<sup>3</sup> While there is bus service in both hamlets, the buses only run two scheduled trips per day which is not enough to support shift work at say Walmart or the new casino, both located in nearby Monticello. Lacking a convenient and affordable means to get to work can cause people and families to become trapped in poverty and all the social and health issues associated with it. This same problem applies not only to getting to work, but to shopping and post-secondary education classes as well. The county study recognizes this issue and starts a dialog on ways to address it. The Town should join in this discussion.

#### **9.2.3.5 Wayfinding signage**

Wayfinding signage to attractions and centers could be improved in a number of places throughout the Town. For example, the westerly exit 96 ramp from Route 17 to Livingston Manor is lined with attraction signs that are too small and poorly placed to read, while there is a hodgepodge of signage at the ramp's intersect with Route 81 (DeBruce Road). In addition, underutilized roadside kiosks can lack useful, up-to-date information. Some beneficial signage is difficult to see, such as a hamlet of Roscoe sign on Route 206 that is partially blocked by foliage. The Town should conduct an audit of existing signage and identify places in need of new or improved signage. The development of a wayfinding mobile phone

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<sup>3</sup> 2015 Sullivan County Coordinated Transportation Services Plan.



Cluttered signage (Route 17 exit ramp intersect with Route 81)



Underutilized State roadside kiosk (Route 81)

application would be of further benefit to visitors. As more tourists come to the area, clearly marked, well maintained signage, both physical and mobile phone based, is important to guide people to attractions and centers of interest. See also Section 5, Commercial Areas for further discussion of signage improvements.

### 9.3 Recommendations

**Strategy 1** Coordinate with governmental agencies and elected officials as Route 17 transitions to I-86 and seek mitigate traffic congestion.

**Priority Action 1.1** *Coordinate with efforts by Sullivan County and elected officials to add a third lane in both directions to Route 17 from its intersect with I-87 (NY Thruway) to exit 100 at Liberty.*

**Action 1.2** *Work with the NYSDOT to preserve the Town's three existing Route 17 interchanges.*

**Action 1.3** *Work with the NYSDOT to implement directional signage improvements (if needed) on Route 17.*

**Strategy 2** Improve wayfinding signage to attractions and centers throughout the Town.

**Action 2.1** *Conduct an audit of existing signage on all roads and streets in the Town and identify areas in need of new or improved signage.*

**Action 2.2** *Work with appropriate governmental agencies to implement signage improvements on State and County roads.*

**Priority Action 2.3** *Explore development of a mobile phone wayfinding application. This could include maps of biking and hiking trails, fly-fishing streams and other cultural, historic and agritourism attractions and centers of interest.*

- Action 2.4 *Identify governmental and private sector programs that offer funding opportunities for improved roadway signage, including software development of a mobile phone wayfinding application.*

**Strategy 3      Seek to preserve scenic roadway viewsheds in the Town.**

- Action 3.1 *Conduct a visual audit to identify unprotected scenic roadway viewsheds. This action will provide a list of scenic vistas for which options can be identified to preserve them.*
- Action 3.2 *Review and improve (if necessary) zoning and land use ordinances for viewshed protection. This may include establishment of viewshed corridors as tools to protect scenic views. It could also include establishment of strict off-premise signage controls and even banning billboards and other signage that block scenic viewsheds.<sup>3</sup>*
- Action 3.3 *Explore the establishment of design ordinances that place limits on development impacts to scenic viewsheds. Controls on things like height, bulk, design, color landscaping, density, vegetation, grading, and ridgeline development can better blend a project with its surroundings.*
- Action 3.4 *Explore the establishment of rural roadway design standards. Such standards could take into account things like topography, preservation of existing vegetation, minimal street lighting and traffic calming measures.*
- Action 3.5 *Encourage Sullivan County to consider an open space bond issue to fund purchases of scenic easements.*

**Strategy 4      Work to mitigate flooding on Town roads and streets.**

- Priority Action 4.1 *Continue to work with the Army Corps of Engineers to mitigate flooding in downtown Livingston Manor.*
- Action 4.2 *Continue to coordinate with Sullivan County to mitigate flooding in downtown Roscoe if it reoccurs.*
- Action 4.3 *Identify Town roads and streets that are subject to periodic flooding and explore ways to mitigate future flood events. Predicted climate change scenarios in New York State include an increase in the number and intensity of heavy precipitation events.*

<sup>3</sup> "An off-premise sign is a sign displaying advertising copy that pertains to a business, person, organization, activity, event, place, service or product not principally manufactured or sold on the premises on which the sign is located." Texas Department of Transportation, 2013.



- Action 4.4     *Review designs for new public and private roads for appropriate flood resiliency measures.*

**Strategy 5     Work to address gaps in public transportation.**

- Action 5.1     *Coordinate with Sullivan County as it implements public transportation recommendations in the 2015 "Sullivan County Coordinated Transportation Plan."*
- Action 5.2     *Encourage Sullivan County to expand its public bus service to include routes in the Town.*

**Strategy 6     Coordinate with State and County agencies as they implement local and regional traffic plans.**

- Action 6.1     *Coordinate with Sullivan County as it implements transportation recommendations in its comprehensive plan.*
- Action 6.2     *Coordinate with Sullivan County and elected officials regarding Town participation in the upcoming 2019 NYSDOT study to address congestion issues on Route 17 (future I-86). The study will, in part, review the addition of a third lane in both directions from its I-87 (Thruway) intersect to Route 211 in the Town of Wallkill and perhaps to Liberty.*

**Strategy 7     Improve Town roadway design specifications.**

- Action 7.1     *Continue to periodically review and update (if necessary) Town specifications for new road construction. See also actions 3.4 and 4.3 above.*
- Action 7.2     *Evaluate the use of private roads as a mechanism for access to residential subdivisions. Private roads are a tool to allow development of residential subdivisions without placing the burden of roadway maintenance on the Town.*
- Action 7.3     *Work to minimize curb cuts along Town roads. Develop access management standards such as shared driveways for adjacent uses in order to reduce points of access on roads in the Town. As development occurs, access drives are created and each new access point creates a potential for traffic conflict.*
- Action 7.4     *Evaluate rural roads for the need to incorporate NYSDOT Complete Streets elements.*

- Action 7.5      *Continue to document vehicle accidents in order to identify any accident-prone roadways and intersections that may need improvement.*

**Strategy 8      Improve and expand sidewalk networks over time in Livingston Manor and Roscoe.**

- Priority Action 8.1      *Conduct a visual audit of existing sidewalks and crosswalks and identify any needed repairs and improvements.*

- Action 8.2      *Explore NYSDOT Complete Streets elements for ways to improve pedestrian issues such as jaywalking. For example, if there is a long distance between signalized intersections in commercial districts, consider adding a mid-block crossing with crosswalk signage directing motorists to stop for pedestrians.*

- Action 8.3      *Work to assure that all new and existing pedestrian crosswalks are clearly marked and ADA compliant.*

- Action 8.4      *Work to add sidewalks over time to hamlet streets and link them to the Downtown sidewalk networks. This would improve pedestrian safety and encourage people to walk to Downtown business centers.*

**Strategy 9      Seek to incorporate trails, bicycle lanes and pedestrian walkways into the Town's transit network.**

- Action 9.1      *Identify roadways, streets and abandoned railroad beds that may be appropriate for the addition of trails, bicycle lanes and pedestrian sidewalks.*

- Action 9.2      *When Town roads and streets are repaved or resurfaced, consider adding accommodations for pedestrians and cyclists such as sidewalks, bike lanes or widened shoulders. Coordinate with Sullivan County to consider adding the same amenities to county roads that traverse the Town*

- Action 9.3      *Continue to pursue construction of the Riverwalk Trail project in Livingston Manor. Along with its recreational opportunities, the project would provide a pedestrian-friendly walkway to access commercial businesses on Main Street (see also a discussion of the Riverwalk Trail in Section 5, Commercial Areas).*

- Priority Action 9.4      *Evaluate the need for pedestrian safety measures for streets and sidewalks leading to the Round Top trailhead in Livingston Manor.*

- Action 9.5      *Explore adding a shared pedestrian/bicycle lane on Pleasant Street running from the Livingston Manor business center to Rotary Park. This would enable*

cyclists and walkers using the proposed O&W rail trail to safely access the Downtown business district. Bicycle lock stations could be located at the park and at locations in the Downtown district.

Action 9.6     *Promote connectivity between residential developments.* Residential developments, especially cul-de-sacs, can become dead ends with one way in and out. Multiple ways should be explored to connect subdivisions to local destinations and to other subdivisions. For example, the Hemlock Ridge residential development has two points of vehicle ingress and egress, one of which connects the development's sidewalks with Livingston Manor's Downtown sidewalk network.

Action 9.7     *Promote interconnection opportunities between trails, parks and pedestrian walkways with the rest of Town's transit network.*

Action 9.8     *Coordinate with adjacent municipalities on bicycle and pedestrian transit opportunities that may cross mutual borders.*

**Strategy 10     Monitor advances in vehicle technology against infrastructure needs they may require.**

Action 10.1    *Encourage additional EV charging stations in the Town as needed.* Currently there are EV charging stations located at the Roscoe Diner and Roscoe Beer Co. in Roscoe and at the Catskill Brewery in Livingston Manor. If electric vehicles become more common place, there may be a need for additional charging stations at these and other locations to accommodate the people that drive them.



## **SECTION 10 – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **10.1 Goals**

- > To maintain a land use pattern that accommodates orderly business growth while preserving the Town's natural beauty and rural character.
- > To promote year-round tourism to enhance the economy.
- > To promote a diversified economy.
- > To invest in public improvements necessary to attract and retain businesses.

### **10.2 Summary of Existing Conditions**

In 2018, the business atmosphere in Sullivan County is generally upbeat with the opening of the \$1.3 billion Resorts World Catskills Casino and the Kartrite Resort & Indoor Water Park along with a surge in recreational tourism. Unemployment in Sullivan County is 3.8% – a ten year low, and housing sales are up.<sup>1</sup> Rockland's business community, which consists mainly of small owner-operated enterprises, shares this enthusiasm as they have seen an increasing number of tourists visiting the Town and spending money. It is interesting to note that a number of businesses are owned by individuals who hail from other regions of the nation – having once been visiting tourists themselves. Interest in opening a business in Rockland has also increased as reflected in its relatively new breweries, distillery, lodging, wine & spirits shop and others. With this increase in economic activity, now is an opportune time for the Town to take stock of its economic development strengths and challenges and plan for its economic future.

### **10.3 Strengths and challenges**

Rockland has many strengths for economic development including location, transportation, a trained labor force, infrastructure, business incentive programs and quality of life resources. However, in 2018, the



Roscoe Lumber Yards



Prohibition Distillery

<sup>1</sup> Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. Unemployment Rate in Sullivan County, NY, October 2018.

Axelrod, Daniel. "Residential real-estate market booming throughout the region." Times Herald-Record, July 28, 2018.

Town is facing challenges from stiff regional competition for business attraction, online shopping and the high cost of living and doing business in New York State. Within this context the Town must continue to take a focused and proactive approach to economic development.

### 10.3.1 Strengths

*Strengths are the resources that strengthen the economic base and positively contribute to business operations. These resources may include the local labor force, location, incentive programs that make doing business desirable, and quality of life resources. Strengths foster economic development and retain and expand business.*

*Location.* Approximately 60 million people live within a five-hours drive from Rockland and 20 million of them are within a two hours drive in the New York metropolitan area. The Town is the western gateway to the state's Catskill Park and is traversed by world-class trout streams. Rural beauty and proximity to urban areas make the Town an attractive place in which to live, start a business and telework.

*Transportation Network.* Rockland's excellent roadway system, with Route 17 (future I-86) at its core, provides fast and convenient access to major metropolitan centers, interstate highways and airports. The roadways facilitate the efficient movement of people and goods both regionally and nation-wide. In particular, NY metropolitan area markets, which generated an estimated GDP of \$1.72 trillion in 2017, are within a two hours drive of the Town.<sup>2</sup> Regional motor freight services offer LTL (less-than-truck-load) and truck load freight service. NY Stewart International Airport is 1.5 hours away and offers air cargo service and international flights.

#### Travel times:

- New York City – 2 hours drive
- Boston, MA – 4.5 hours drive
- Hartford, CT – 3 hours drive
- City of Binghamton – 1 hour drive
- City of Middletown – 1 hour drive
- Route 17 intersect with I-84 in Orange County – 1 hour drive
- Sullivan County International Airport – 30 minutes drive
- Greater Binghamton Airport – 1.5 hours drive
- NY Stewart International Airport – 1.5 hours drive
- Newark Liberty International Airport in New Jersey – 2 hours drive

*Skilled workforce.* Town residents comprise an experienced and educated labor force. A large portion of the labor force is employed by professional industries, with education, healthcare and social services being the largest segment in that group (see Appendix A, Table 13). Some 90% of the Town's labor force is employed at job locations within Sullivan County, while a lesser number of workers commute to job locations outside the County (Appendix A, Figure 5). A skilled labor force is as important to business attraction as are incentive programs.

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<sup>2</sup> "GDP of the New York metro area from 2001 to 2017." Statistica.com.



*Water and sewer service.* Municipal water and sewer service is available in the commercial zones of Roscoe and Livingston Manor (see Figure 3-4, Zoning Map, and figures 6-3, Livingston Manor Sewer & Water Districts and 6-4, Roscoe Sewer & Water Districts). The availability of municipal water and sewer service is a valuable asset to business attraction.

*Business incentive programs.* Numerous federal, state and county incentive programs are available to the business community. While it is not the purpose of this Plan to list each program, two county examples of note are (a) the Sullivan County Industrial Development Agency (IDA) which offers financial assistance to qualifying businesses in the form of tax incentives and tax abatement opportunities, and (b) The Sullivan County Revolving Loan Fund which provides low-interest loans to help businesses, including agribusinesses, get started and expand in the county.

*Quality of Life.* Rockland's high quality of life is grounded in a strong sense of community, attractive rural character, excellent school districts, vibrant hamlets, cultural events, and exceptional recreational opportunities. All of these attributes make Rockland an attractive place to live, work and locate a business.

### **10.3.2 Challenges**

*Challenges are negative factors that provide obstacles or stumbling blocks to economic development, and detract from business retention and expansion.*

*Cyclical economy.* The effects of the economic recessionary period of 2008-2012 have largely disappeared in the Hudson Valley and this is reflected in increased economic activity. Corporate spending within the U.S. is up as is consumer spending. Bank lending has increased and unemployment rates are at low levels, though many new jobs often pay less than pre-recession jobs. All of this has been good news for Rockland's tourist-based economy which is very much tied to the economy's cyclical highs and lows. However, lurking underneath this robust economy are rising debt levels that could put the brakes on it. In particular, US household debt at over \$13 trillion exceeds the 2008 pre-recession peak by some \$837 billion and total global debt is estimated at \$247 trillion – 2.5 times the size of the global economy.<sup>3</sup> While too-easy credit brought on the last recession, high debt levels could bring on the next one.

*Stiff Competition.* Competition for business attraction and retention primarily comes from the New York City area, northern New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut, as well as the Hudson Valley region up to and including the Albany area. All of these competing regions offer attractive business incentive programs and some have less burdensome tax and/or regulatory structures compared to New York State.

*High cost of doing business in New York State.* For over 200 years, New York State was the nation's center of capitalism, prosperity, ingenuity and opportunity. However, over the past forty years the state's role as an economic engine has faltered. The cause is largely rooted in New York State's tax structure,

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<sup>3</sup> Federal Reserve Bank of New York, Center for Microeconomic Data. [Household Debt Registers Faster in Q3 2018](#).  
Institute of International Finance. [Global Debt Monitor – July 2018](#).  
International Monetary Fund. [World Economic Outlook \(April 2018\)](#).



and multiple layers of government and regulatory requirements all of which can be impediments to economic development. The State has one of the highest overall tax rates in the nation according to the Tax Foundation; the State's municipal "home rule" structure gives local municipalities authority over various land use approvals which can cause delays, and projects may require review from county and state agencies which can add further delays. If a project is determined to be a Type 1 action under the State Environmental Quality Review Act, the project sponsor may need to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement which can add considerable time and cost to a project's pre-development costs.

*High cost of living in New York State.* New York's high cost of living is causing many of its working age residents to flee the state to less expensive areas of the country.<sup>4</sup> Between 2017 and 2018, the state had the highest out-migration rate of any state in the nation for the third year in a row.<sup>5</sup> Where the workers go businesses will follow.

*Lack of shovel-ready building sites.* While this issue primarily affects projects involving more than five acres, it can affect smaller ones as well. Currently there is a shortage of shovel-ready building sites in Sullivan County and there are none in Rockland, yet shovel ready sites can play an important role in attracting economic growth.<sup>6</sup> This poses a challenge to attracting new corporate businesses, many of which want to be operational within one year. However, navigating the regulatory approval process can take a year or longer, especially if an Environmental Impact Statement is required. Fully engineered sites with municipal approval are important to attracting companies interested in doing business in Sullivan County. The Town and County are currently at a disadvantage with competitor regions that have a varied selection of shovel-ready sites.

*High Infrastructure costs.* The high cost of infrastructure improvements can be an impediment to economic growth. The Town currently benefits from a well maintained infrastructure base which includes municipal water and sewer service in most of its commercial zones. In particular, wastewater facilities serving the Roscoe and Livingston Manor downtown business zones are currently in the midst of significant upgrades which will allow them to operate well into the future. However, the cost to expand water and sewer service to unserved areas of the Town's commercial zones could be a disincentive to attracting new businesses, especially those projects with high volume water and sewer requirements.

*Broadband service gaps.* Currently broadband service gaps exist in certain rural parts of the Town which is a major deterrent to economic growth in those areas. Tourists, including second home owners, home-based businesses, teleworkers, farmers and year-round residents all require internet service.

*National and Global competition.* Even rural communities such as Rockland are competing in the global economy. On the one hand, the Town successfully competes as a world-wide recreational tourist

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<sup>4</sup> Quinnipiac University / Poll. *55% of New Yorkers expect to move for a better life*, March 20, 2019.

Campanile, Carl and Max Jaeger. "41% in city can't afford life in state: poll," *New York Post*, March 21, 2019.

<sup>5</sup> Westchester County Business Journal. *New York ranks first in population loss (again)*, January 4, 2019.

<sup>6</sup> Walsh, James. "Real estate summit explores county's strengths, challenges." *Times Herald-Record*, May 22, 2015.

attraction. In particular, its world-class fly-fishing streams attract fishing enthusiasts from all over the world. On the other hand, the Town would seem to be a logical location for manufacturers of fishing equipment. At a minimum, one might expect to find a small, boutique manufacturer of fishing flies. Unfortunately cheap overseas labor coupled with the high cost of doing business in the state causes companies to manufacture this equipment elsewhere. Many fishing flies are imported from Africa.

*Online shopping.* In addition to competing with large-scale malls, many small-business owners are also competing with online shopping. Many people today – working long hours and sometimes two jobs – have less time to do things like shop at small stores or even at large malls and supermarkets. Still other folks prefer use their free time for other activities rather than shopping at a box store. The convenience and time saving advantage of shopping at online sites – which often offer lower prices than box stores – represents a challenge to a number of Rockland’s small businesses.

#### **10.4 Planning for future economic development**

While it is recognized that some elements which attract business investment, like market forces and capital availability, are out of the Town’s control, it is also recognized that there are many things the Town *can* do to promote a positive business environment.

##### ***10.4.1 Maintain a land use plan that accommodates growth while preserving the Town’s natural beauty, rural character and historic heritage.***

The pristine natural beauty of Rockland’s forests, streams and lakes; its exceptional recreational opportunities; its open space and attractive hamlets are critical assets to its success as a tourist and second home destination. As discussed below, tourism represents a large component of the Town’s economy, so protecting these natural assets is vital to a successful economic future. The Town should periodically review its zoning districts and Zoning Law with an eye toward guiding growth in ways that protect and enhance these assets from which future generations can enjoy and prosper.

##### ***10.4.2 Enhance year-round tourism.***

Rockland’s economy is largely driven by tourism including second-home owners which fall into the tourism category. The Town’s rural natural beauty, attractive hamlets and exceptional recreational opportunities, including world-class fishing streams, attract tourists from around the nation and the world. In 2016, the total state-wide economic impact of tourism was 104.8 billion which generated 914,000 tourism jobs and 8.2 billion in state and local taxes.<sup>7</sup> In 2016, tourism was up some 8% over the previous year in Sullivan County and it realized \$419 million from tourism spending of which \$140 million was generated by second homes.<sup>8</sup> The annual economic impact from sport fishing alone in Sullivan County is

<sup>7</sup> New York State Office of the Governor. Governor Cuomo Announces Economic Impact of Tourism Achieves Historic \$104.8 billion. May 11, 2017.

<sup>8</sup> Tourism Economics. “The Economic Impact of Tourism in New York: 2016 Calendar Year Catskill Focus.” Oxford Economics Ltd. Abraham, Joseph. “Tourism sparks the economy to the tune of \$419 million in 2016.” Sullivan County Democrat, March 2018.



Small business shops, Livingston Manor

estimated at \$12 million.<sup>9</sup> Some 15.5% of all labor income in the County comes from tourism.<sup>10</sup>

Currently most tourism activity, including second homeowners, occurs during the warm months of spring, summer and early fall and then declines during the winter. That leaves many tourist dependent businesses with several lean months to contend with. The drop in economic activity seems to coincide with a drop in media and marketing exposure despite the fact that the area offers exceptional winter recreation opportunities in the form of snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, snow biking, ice fishing, snowboarding, etc. For example, NYC millennials looking for a break from the digital world are discovering the peaceful attractions of ice fishing just as they have with warm weather fly fishing. When the O&W rail trail is operational it will present some excellent cross-country skiing, snow biking and snowshoeing opportunities. The Town could work with the Sullivan County Visitors Association and the local chambers of commerce to promote the area as a year-round tourist destination, and not just for outdoor recreation but for quaint lodging, cultural arts, and eco-tourism. Development of a social media based presence that touts year-round tourist attractions could benefit the Town.

#### *10.4.3 Diversify the economy to make it more resilient.*

With Rockland's economy largely built around tourism, this reliance on one industry comes with risks such as the cyclical ups and downs of the economy and the ever evolving nature of the tourism industry. Tourism is a discretionary expenditure and, as such, it tends to be something people cut back on when economic times are tough. And while tourists are once again flocking to the area, what happens if Sullivan County's many tourist attractions fall out of favor as they did once before in the 1970s? When the resort industry died in the 1970s, the County was mired for several decades in a recession with high unemployment. Broadening the Town's economic base would help make it more resilient to economic downturns and/or to the loss of any one industry. For example, agribusiness, which includes agricultural production, support services and value-added processing (i.e., breweries that turn hops into beer), is an economic sector that is well positioned to expand in the Town (see Section 11, Agriculture). The trend

<sup>9</sup> Beam, Andrew. "A cold start to trout fishing season." *Times Herald-Record*, April 2, 2015.

<sup>10</sup> Tourism Economics (see footnote 8).



towards remote office (RO) work (i.e., telework) is another area that could benefit the Town. Made possible by high speed broadband, more companies and workers are embracing the flexible work style offered by RO. In 2015, roughly 23% of employees reported some work done remotely and by 2020 RO workers may account for up to 50% of the workforce with educated millennial and Gen Z workers leading the way.<sup>11</sup> RO workers in the NY metropolitan area would find Rockland's far lower cost of living, high quality of life and proximity to NYC an ideal place to relocate. Attracting RO workers to live in the Town would provide a year-round boost to the local economy and help to stem recent declines in population. The Town should assess its stock of rental housing as many RO workers prefer to rent (see also Section 4, Residential Areas).

#### *10.4.4 Invest in public improvements necessary to attract and retain businesses.*

Maintaining and improving infrastructure is critical to attracting and retaining businesses, and Rockland has infrastructure assets that businesses look for. Most Town lands zoned for intensive commercial use have available municipal water and sewer service. The Town has been diligent in maintaining its water and wastewater systems and is currently upgrading its two wastewater treatment facilities. Most businesses do not want the expense of developing and maintaining potable water and septic systems. For businesses with large water and wastewater demands, there is often little choice but to locate in a municipality where these services are available. The Town's roadway system is well maintained and its centers of commercial activity in Roscoe and Livingston Manor have quick access to Route 17 (future I-86). The Town should continue to invest in road maintenance and make sure that it keeps its three access interchanges to Route 17 as it transitions to I-86.

The quaint, historic beauty of downtown Roscoe and Livingston Manor are qualities that attract businesses and people to these hamlets. As discussed in Section 5, Commercial Areas, the Town should develop town-wide design guidelines for commercial structures and expand the sidewalk networks in the two hamlets. These steps would improve the attractiveness of both hamlets to businesses and visitors.

Broadband internet plays an integral role in 21st century economies and in the daily lives of most people young and old alike. Commercial lands in and around Roscoe and Livingston Manor have access to broadband service which is vital to attracting and retaining businesses. Fiber optic service may also be available in the near future in the Downtown areas of both hamlets. However, there are some rural gaps in town-wide broadband service which deters new residents, second home owners, commercial development, home-based businesses, and teleworkers from locating to these areas. The Comprehensive Plan Committee placed special emphasis on eliminating broadband service gaps in the Town and making broadband coverage available to every person and business regardless of location. Toward this end, the Town is working with state and local elected officials to achieve this goal and some locations without broadband service are now set to receive it. The Town is also exploring alternative means to provide internet service such as the NYC-Mesh system which operates independently from major carriers such as Spectrum and Verizon.

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<sup>11</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. *American Time Use Survey—2017 Results*, June 28, 2018.  
"By 2020, 50% of Workforce Will be Remote. Here's How." Sector Watch, MarketWatch. April 19, 2017.

## **10.5 Recommendations**

### **Strategy 1 Develop a list of strategic locations for development.**

- Action 1.1 *Develop an inventory of commercial sites available for development or redevelopment as a tool to facilitate business attraction and expansion. Each identified property should include detailed information such as parcel size, utility availability, building and/or land description, and distance to transportation modes.*
- Action 1.2 *Coordinate with property owners, realtors and the Sullivan County Partnership to maintain the above said inventory so it remains up-to-date. Real estate is a constantly changing resource so to be successful the inventory must be current.*
- Action 1.3 *Coordinate with the Sullivan County Partnership to showcase commercial and industrial properties available for development on the Partnership's website.*
- Action 1.4 *Establish a web portal for economic development on the Town's website and post the property inventory on the portal (see also Action 5.1 below). Also include other information relevant to business attraction and retention such as financial incentive programs.*
- Action 1.5 *Explore expanding the GB and NB zones to increase the inventory of commercial properties.*

### **Strategy 2 Develop a target list of business sectors that would enhance and diversify Rockland's economy.**

- Action 2.1 *Identify types of businesses that would complement the Town's existing businesses and tourism infrastructure (including 2<sup>nd</sup> homeowners). These may include additional lodging, restaurants, garden center, bicycle sales and repair, refrigerated trucking for agricultural products and food processing and distribution.*
- Action 2.2 *Consult with Sullivan County and the Sullivan County Partnership to develop a list of target industries that would add diversity to the Town's economy. These could include software development, light manufacturing, corporate offices and agribusiness value-added processing.*
- Action 2.3 *Develop a target list of jobs that can be done by telecommuting. Rockland's high quality of life attractions, low cost of living and its proximity to New York City*

make it an ideal location for telecommuting jobs such as law, graphics, design, animation, ROBO (remote office/branch office), software development, distance research and learning, artists and interactive media. These types of jobs could add new full-time residents to the community and boost the Town's year-round economy. Target telecommuting job sectors via social media and other means to promote Rockland as an ideal place from which to live and telework.

- Action 2.4      *Support Sullivan County's initiatives to enhance and diversify the county's economy. Rockland residents could benefit from well-paying jobs located in other parts of the county as well as in the Town.*

**Strategy 3      Seek to develop shovel-ready sites.**

- Action 3.1      *Encourage property owners to ready their lands for business development by conducting a site analysis and environmental reviews leading to generic environmental approval.*
- Action 3.2      *Encourage property owners to apply for governmental funding initiatives targeted to develop shovel ready sites.*
- Action 3.3      *Encourage Sullivan County to develop shovel ready incentive programs.*

**Strategy 4      Support efforts to streamline Permits and SEQRA**

- Action 4.1      *Periodically review the Town's Zoning Law for ways to streamline the permit approval process without compromising essential reviews. Opportunities may exist to create more business-friendly regulations for small businesses, including home-based businesses and agribusinesses.*
- Action 4.2      *Encourage governmental efforts to develop meaningful procedures to streamline the effectiveness and predictability of actions subject to the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). For example, the Environmental Assessment Short-Form under SEQR was revised by the state to help streamline the review process for some projects.*
- Action 4.3      *Review the Town's Zoning Law with a focus on identifying ways (if any) to simplify and expedite the commercial land use review process.*

**Strategy 5      Promote the Town as a desirable place to locate a business.**

- Action 5.1      *Utilize the Town's website to create a business portal by which to tout the Town's economic development strengths including quality of life assets. Include the property inventory discussed in strategy 1 above and showcase new*



businesses and successful, well established businesses in the Town. Include a link to the Sullivan County Partnership and Roscoe and Livingston Manor Chambers of Commerce

- Action 5.2      *Utilize relevant social media platforms to promote business attraction.* Social media has integrated into daily communications and the Town should use these platforms to promote its attributes as a desirable place to locate a business or from which to telework (see action 2.3 above). Target businesses identified in Strategy 2 above.

**Strategy 6      Maintain and enhance the Town's transportation advantages.**

- Action 6.1      *Monitor new development projects that could increase traffic flow on the Town's roadways.* Seek to implement appropriate measures to mitigate potential traffic congestion on these roads.

*Priority Action 6.2      Support governmental initiatives to mitigate traffic congestion on Route 17 between Liberty and its intersect with NY I-87 (Thruway).* Developers seeking to site a commercial operation such as a food processing hub or distribution center are concerned about the potential for traffic congestion that can impede business flow. Tourists and 2<sup>nd</sup> homeowners share the same concern.

- Action 6.3      *Maintain Town roads to facilitate traffic flow to and from business centers.* Local market-based businesses require well maintained roads for customer access while larger manufacturing businesses require ease of access to interstates.

- Action 6.4      *Identify any existing traffic bottlenecks and other traffic problems and seek to develop solutions for the same.*

- Action 6.5      *Encourage regional initiatives to improve transportation and distribution infrastructure which could benefit Sullivan County.* The state's proposed cargo distribution hub at NY Stewart International Airport and locating a transrail distribution hub in Orange County are two such projects that could benefit businesses in Sullivan County.

- Action 6.6      *Support Sullivan County efforts to expand public transit services both in the private and governmental sectors.*

**Strategy 7      Explore expanding water and sewer service in commercial zones.**

- Action 7.1      *Explore opportunities to expand municipal water and sewer service in the GB and NB commercial zones in Roscoe and Livingston Manor.* Some properties in

these zones do not have access to water and sewer service, while others have access to one of these services but not both.

- Action 7.2      *Identify governmental funding programs and private sector opportunities to finance any future expansion of municipal water and sewer service in the GB and NB commercial zones. It is not unusual for developers to contribute to costs associated with bringing water and sewer service to their properties.*

**Strategy 8      Work to close broadband service gaps in the Town.**

- Priority Action 8.1      *Continue to work with elected officials and governmental agencies to expand broadband service to all areas of the Town.*

- Priority Action 8.2      *Work to identify areas in the Town where mobile phone and/or broadband internet service are not available. This would enable the Town to become a more effective advocate in working to provide mobile phone and broadband service to these areas.*

- Action 8.3      *Continue to monitor alternative ways to provide broadband service to close service gaps. New or existing technologies may offer viable ways to close service gaps and/or offer better and less expensive internet service to all areas of the Town.*

- Action 8.4      *Explore federal, state and private sector programs designed to assist rural communities in closing local gaps in broadband internet service.*

**Strategy 9      Partner with Sullivan County, the Sullivan County Partnership and the Roscoe and Livingston Manor chambers of commerce on initiatives to attract and retain businesses.**

- Action 9.1      *Coordinate with Sullivan County as it implements recommended actions in its Economic Development: Sullivan 2020 Toolbox. The plan contains strategies which could benefit Rockland's business attraction and retention efforts.*

- Action 9.2      *Work with the Sullivan County Partnership on business attraction opportunities and marketing strategies. Focus on industries where there is an identified local need and/or locational advantage such as food processing, food distribution and on industries utilizing teleworkers.*

- Action 9.3      *Work with the Sullivan County Partnership on opportunities to target a small but growing number of companies seeking to 'reshore' foreign operations to the United States. One example is the high-end apparel industry which has made a significant move back to the U.S.*

**Strategy 10    Promote small business attraction and retention.**

Small businesses generate tax revenues and often account for a large portion of jobs in a given community. Small businesses are significant generators of jobs in Rockland.

- Action 10.1    *Support county-wide entrepreneurial programs that assist new and existing businesses with marketing, business plans, local regulations and funding opportunities.*
- Action 10.2    *Continue to support small-scale home occupations in the Town's residential zones.*
- Action 10.3    *Support shared office space for business start-ups and short-term and long-term businesses. Opportunities for shared space can lower operating costs and provide an additional source of income for businesses that own their buildings. For example, Willow & Brown, a retail store in Livingston Manor, shares space with the Sugar Blossoms floral shop.*
- Action 10.4    *Encourage new agribusiness ventures in the Town.*
- Action 10.5    *Explore creating a Town Local Development Corporation (LDC). LDC's can be used to support economic development efforts and other public purposes. LDC's have a wide variety of activities in their toolbox to foster the attraction or expansion of new and existing businesses, enhance employment opportunities, provide job training, acquire and sell real property, and other activities.*
- Action 10.6    *Explore the implementation of local incentives that would benefit new and existing businesses. For example, some communities offer property tax reductions for a period of time to commercial property owners who improve their buildings in specific ways such as façade improvements.*

**Strategy 11    Promote agribusiness industries, including agricultural production, support services, and value-added processing.**

Rockland recognizes the importance of agribusiness operations to the Town's economy. See also Section 11, Agriculture.

- Action 11.1    *Encourage and support Sullivan County as it implements recommended actions in its 2014 Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan. The plan contains recommendations that could enhance agribusiness retention and development in the Town.*



- Action 11.2     *Encourage governmental and private sector financial initiatives that support young farmers.* For example, New York State offers the New Farmers Grant Fund and the Young Farmers Loan Forgiveness Program to help young farmers get in the business and remain there. Many farm credit cooperatives have programs to help start-up farms secure working capital.

**Strategy 12     Promote labor force education.**

- Action 12.1     *Work to identify skills gaps in the local labor force and encourage development of training and education programs to fill them.* Promote this action with the Sullivan County Partnership and local and higher education institutions. For example Orange-Ulster BOCES has offered a commercial sewing class in response to the reshoring of the high-end clothing manufacturing industry (see Action 9.3 above).
- Action 12.2     *Encourage governmental and private sector initiatives to promote apprenticeship programs.* There are currently shortages of trained workers in areas such as construction trades, manufacturing trades, technology and healthcare. Many of these are well-paying trade jobs which do not require a college degree.

**Strategy 13     Encourage the expansion of childcare providers in the Town.**

- Action 13.1     *Work with Sullivan County on ways to increase the number of childcare providers in the county.* This service is critical to many working families. Currently, there is a shortage of childcare providers in the county and there are none in Rockland.

**Strategy 14     Plan for the development of alternative energy systems that minimally impact adjacent land uses, properties, and the environment in each of the Town's zoning districts.**

- Action 14.1     *Periodically review and revise (if necessary) existing Town regulations for solar photovoltaic energy systems.* For example, recent advances in solar energy storage will now allow on-site energy storage to be included with solar photovoltaic systems. The Town should review its existing solar energy regulations and revise them (if necessary) to factor in this advance.
- Action 14.2     *Periodically review and revise (if necessary) existing regulations for wind energy systems.*
- Action 14.3     *Monitor advances in energy technology and develop regulations for any such advances where appropriate.*

## SECTION 11 – AGRICULTURE

### 11.1 Goals

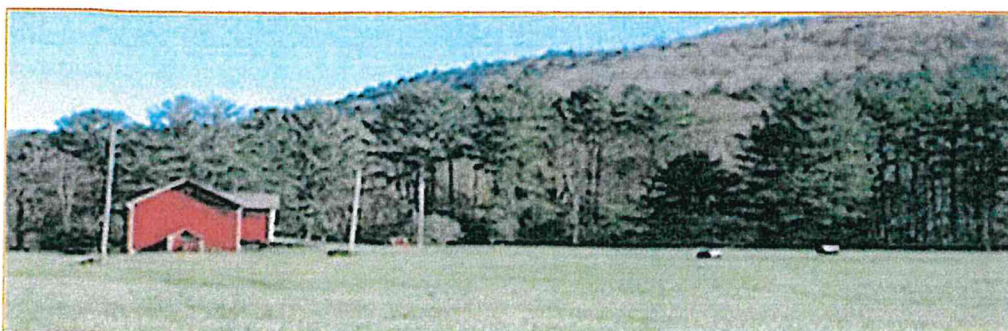
- > To promote and expand agribusiness entrepreneurship as an important component of Rockland's economy.<sup>1</sup>
- > To encourage policies and programs that enhance the economic viability of agricultural production.
- > To preserve prime farmland and facilitate access to farmland for new and next-generation farmers.

### 11.2 Summary of existing conditions

Rockland's roots lie partly in agriculture and this heritage continues to be a presence in the Town today despite the escalating challenges of operating farms and preserving farmland. The Town is located within Agricultural District #4, which district was created by the New York State Legislature in 1975 under the State's 1971 Agricultural Districts Law. District #4 covers approximately 46,747 acres across Sullivan County including lands in Rockland and several nearby townships. As shown in Figure 11-1, Agricultural Districts, the portions of District #4 in Rockland primarily consist of scattered parcels of land. Figure 11-2, Farmland Soils, shows that a considerable amount of Town lands are suitable for agricultural production.

Rockland has many strengths for agricultural production including a growing regional market for local farm products, proximity to the NY metropolitan area food market and an excellent transportation network. The Town also has available lands that are zoned to accommodate agricultural support services and food processing operations. However, in 2018 the Town's farmers are facing increased national and global competition, high costs of production, high costs of land, the State's high tax rates, and, in the case of dairy farms, volatile milk prices that are currently too low to support most farms.

Historically, agriculture has been a vital economic engine to the economy of New York State while at the



Hay field (view from Route 152)

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<sup>1</sup> Agribusiness is an all-inclusive term coined in the 1950s that covers the complex value-added chain that begins with the farmer's purchase of seed and livestock and ends with a product for the consumer's table. Agribusiness is the business of agricultural production, agricultural support services and agricultural manufacturing.

Figure 11-1  
**Agricultural Districts**  
 Town of Rockland  
 Sullivan County, NY

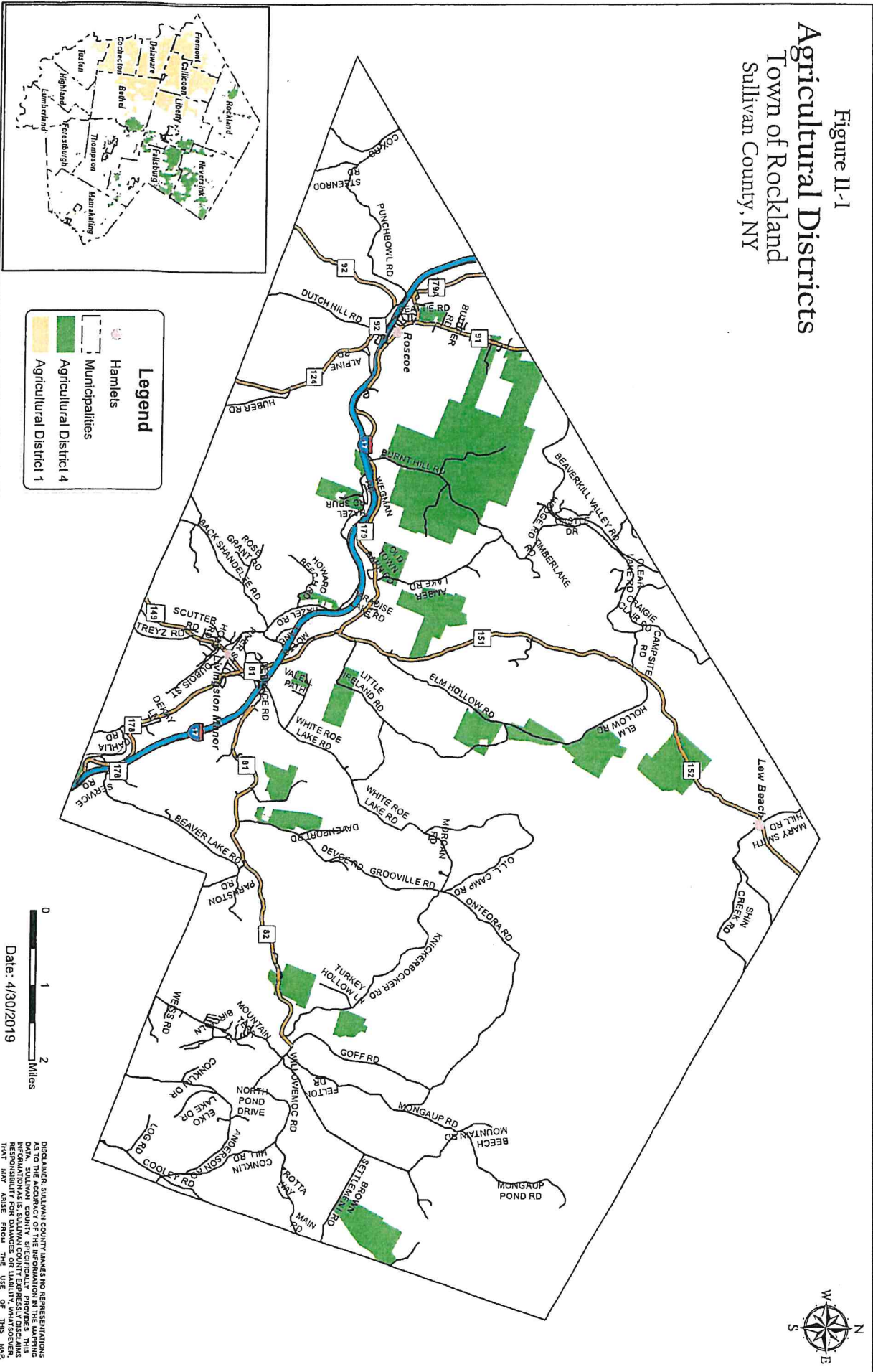
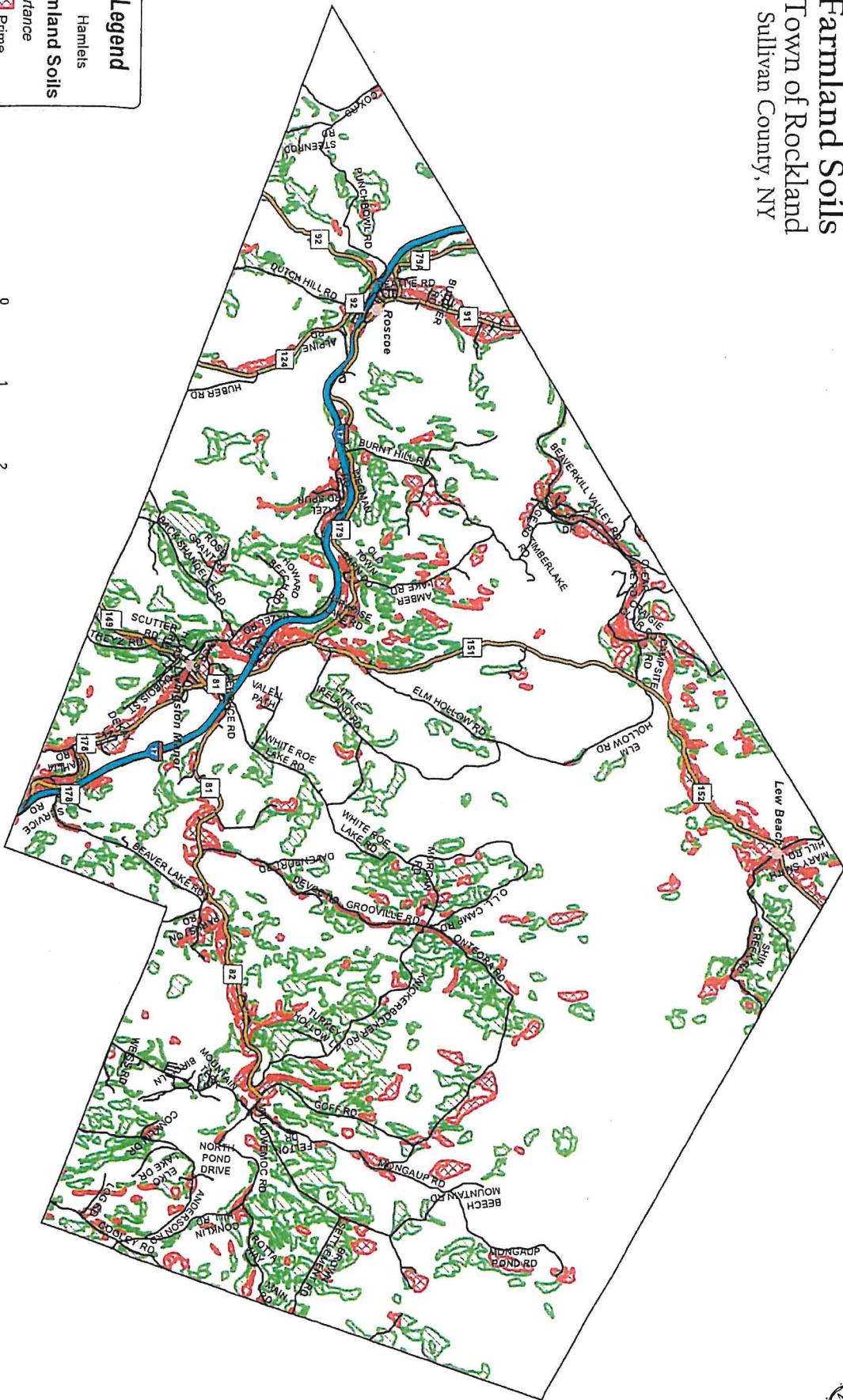
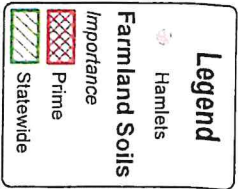




Figure 11-2  
**Farmland Soils**  
 Town of Rockland  
 Sullivan County, NY



DISCLAIMER: SULLIVAN COUNTY MAKES NO REPRESENTATIONS AS TO THE ACCURACY OF THE INFORMATION IN THE MAP. THE INFORMATION IS PROVIDED FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY. SULLIVAN COUNTY EXPRESSLY DISCLAIMS ANY LIABILITY FOR DAMAGES OR INJURY, WHATSOEVER, THAT MAY ARISE FROM THE USE OF THIS MAP.

same time enhancing the social and environmental quality of life of all New Yorkers. Agriculture contributes billions of dollars to the state's economy while also providing open space and scenic beauty that is cherished by millions of New Yorkers, as well as by the millions of tourists that visit the state each year.

It is important to stress that agriculture *is* economic development. All too often agriculture's economic contribution to the overall economy is overlooked by local governments which tend to focus on other sectors like technology, distribution and manufacturing. In fact, the agribusiness industry is a significant economic engine in New York State that produces jobs and revenue, while placing little demand on public services such as fire, police, and education. Studies have shown that farms generally contribute more in taxes than they require in public services making them net revenue generators for both municipal and school budgets (In 2008, for every dollar Rockland's farms paid in taxes they required only 50¢ in services.<sup>2</sup>).<sup>3</sup> In 2014, on-farm agricultural production returned over \$6.7 billion to the state's economy and employed over 54,000 workers.<sup>4</sup> While agriculture production only accounts for a small portion of the state's economy, output from this sector generates a strong downstream multiplier effect on the economy in terms of jobs and added economic output.<sup>5</sup> This is because agricultural production requires support services such as feed, seeds, financial services, fuel, equipment and equipment repair, veterinary services, as well as food processing facilities. It also creates spin-off businesses such as wineries, breweries, distilleries, ice cream parlors and many others. The agricultural services and value-added agricultural manufacturing sectors contributed over \$38 billion in sales to the state's economy in 2014 and accounted for close to 91,000 jobs.<sup>6</sup> This statistic suggests that agricultural production, support services and manufacturing sectors have a combined impact of some 44.7 billion annually to the state's economy and generate some 145,000 jobs. Farms also contribute scenic working landscapes, rural heritage and quality of life, all of which support the state's multi-billion dollar tourism industry. Simply put, agricultural land use is an economic driver that creates jobs and helps to balance both municipal and school budgets in the same way as commercial and industrial land use. Agriculture *is* economic development.

The number of farms in Sullivan County has been in decline for decades. In the 1960s there were some 500 operating farms in the County while in 2003 only 235 farms remained.<sup>7</sup> However, it is encouraging to note that by 2017 the number of farms had increased to 366 with a combined 59,942 acres.<sup>8</sup> This trend shows an increase in the number of farms producing vegetables, while the number of dairy farms continues to decrease from 53 in 2002 to just 18 by the end of 2018.<sup>9</sup> To put this figure into perspective, in 1950 there were 631 dairy farms in the County.<sup>10</sup> In 2012, the market value of agricultural production

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<sup>2</sup> Sullivan County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan, December 2014.

<sup>3</sup> Glynwood Center. The State of Agriculture in the Hudson Valley, 2010.

<sup>4</sup> Schmit, Todd. The Economic Contributions of Agriculture in New York State (2014). Cornell University, Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management, August 2016.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Abstract.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> "Ground UP, Cultivating Sustainable Agriculture in the Catskill Region." Columbia University, 2010.

<sup>8</sup> 2017 Census of Agriculture, Sullivan County, New York. US Department of Agriculture.

<sup>9</sup> Rife, Judy. "Growing number of local dairy farms shutting down," Times Herald-Record, December 25, 2018.

<sup>10</sup> Sullivan County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan, December 2014.





Bee hives, Cripple Creek Farm



Elm Garden & Flora Design – commercial flower farm

in Sullivan County was \$28.4 million with livestock and poultry accounting for \$22.8 million and \$5.6 million for crops.<sup>11</sup> When this figure is combined with agricultural support services and value-added manufacturing the total impact to the County's economy is over \$741 million.<sup>12</sup> In addition, agritourism is a small but growing component of the agricultural economy, which plays nicely into the County's \$449.7 million tourism industry.<sup>13</sup>

In Rockland, the importance of agribusiness to the Town's economy and the pressures impacting farming are recognized. Historically, agricultural production was a profitable business despite unpredictable weather and other challenges. However, the introduction of supermarkets and national and global competition in the 1960s and 1970s began to alter the agricultural landscape. Increased competition and high operating costs resulted in decreased profit margins throughout the production and distribution chain, with profits often not making it to the farmer. In this climate, the Town has seen the number of full-time farms steadily decline as farmers frequently have little choice but to shut down rather than operate at marginal profit rates or at a loss. That said, in the past year a new vegetable farm began production in the Town, so the county's recent uptick in new farms may spread to the Town.

While there are no remaining dairy farms in Rockland, there are full-time and part-time agricultural operations which produce forage, vegetables, microgreens, berries, livestock, poultry, horses, honey and flowers. The Town has recently seen growth in the agribusiness processing sector with the opening of two breweries and one distillery with an additional brewery under construction. It should also be noted that some farmers have seen an increase in prices for produce, beef and lamb as a result of direct sales to high end restaurants and New York City green markets where these commodities command a higher price than local markets offer. The twist is that many locally raised farm products are not available to local residents because they can be sold at higher prices elsewhere.

A community such as Rockland, which has seen the steady growth of its 2<sup>nd</sup> home market, has a higher risk of losing valuable agricultural land along with part of its rural character. The low profitability of farming has impacted a farmers ability to stay on the land to say nothing of saving for retirement. This

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<sup>11</sup> 2017 Census of Agriculture, Sullivan County, New York. US Department of Agriculture.

<sup>12</sup> Sullivan County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan, December 2014.

<sup>13</sup> Axelrod, Daniel. "Hudson Valley tourists spending more every year," *Times Herald-Record*, August 26, 2018.





Main Street Farm (an eatery featuring local farm products)



Livingston Manor farmers market

essentially causes the value of a farmer's land to become his/her retirement nest egg. While farmers can choose to sell their land to developers, many farmers, and sons and daughters of farmers, might prefer to stay on the land if farming was more profitable. Promoting profitable farms is the best way to keep farmers on the land.

### 11.3 Strengths and challenges

#### 11.3.1 Strengths

*Strengths are the resources that strengthen the economic base and positively contribute to business operations. These resources may include the local labor force, location, incentive programs that make doing business desirable, and quality of life resources. Strengths foster economic development and retain and expand business.*

Regional food movement. Increasing concerns over food safety and public health have contributed to a strong food movement in New York City and the greater Hudson Valley and an increased demand for safe, fresh, local food. This has resulted in a surge in the number of farmers markets as well as an increase in mainstream grocery stores, food distributors, restaurants, breweries and other food service companies that carry and/or process locally produced food.

New York City food market. Rockland's proximity to the New York City food market, which is larger, more ethnically diverse and wealthier than most other consumer markets in the nation, is a key asset for



Catskill Brewery



Strawberries, Mountain Sweet Berry Farm



Beaver Lake Farm



Snowdance Farm

local farms. The NYC food market consists of some eight million residents, \$30 billion in food spending and a budget for institutional meals second only to the U.S. military.<sup>14</sup> However, this is a market whose demand for regionally produced food is not fully met. It is estimated that the City's unmet annual demand for regionally produced food exceeds \$600 million.<sup>15</sup> This represents an opportunity for local farmers and food processors to expand operations to meet this demand and thereby increase profits. The Mountain Sweet Berry Farm has tapped into the NYC market and sells produce directly to consumers through the GrowNYC farmers market program. The Catskill Brewery markets its craft beer to the NYC market.

Transportation network. As discussed in Section 9, Transportation, the Town has access to an excellent regional network of local roadways, interstate highways and an international airport. Regional motor freight services offer LTL (less than truck load) and truck load freight services. These transportation modes provide quick access to the New York metropolitan markets and to other regional markets via interlinking highways. There is a need, however, for more “small box” trucking as well as refrigerated trucking services to transport perishable farm products.

Direct sales. A number of Sullivan County farms are able to sell a large part of their production directly to end users at farmers markets, restaurants and grocery stores. Direct sales can increase profits by cutting out the middleman. The Snowdance Farm in Rockland distributes livestock and poultry meats, including beef, chicken, turkey, lamb, pork and pheasant, directly to high-end restaurants both local and in NYC.

Availability of land. Rockland currently has lands suitable for agricultural production which are not being used. Farmland in Rockland is generally less expensive than lands in the rest of the mid-Hudson region. In addition, the Town's zoning law allows land uses for a variety of agricultural support businesses.

Increasing number of new farmers. Over the past twenty years, the Mid-Hudson region has seen a marked increase in the number of new farmers which is largely driven by the demand for locally produced food and by the region's proximity to the NYC food market. Most of them work small to midsized farms that often incorporate multiple crops and a variety of livestock into their business models.

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<sup>14</sup> The New York City Council, “Foodworks: A Vision to Improve NYC's Food System,” 2010.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*



Soils and climate. The Town's soils are not entirely suited to growing vegetable crops, though some lands are productive in this regard. However, most soils are well suited for raising forage such as hay along with grazing livestock. The climate supports a wide variety of agricultural products.

Diversity of products. Local farms can produce a variety of agricultural products which allow them to fill a growing demand from regional populations and high-value markets. In addition, markets for niche ethnic foods in NYC can offer favorable prices and reduced competition.

### 11.3.2 Challenges

*Challenges are negative factors that provide obstacles or stumbling blocks to economic development, and detract from business retention and expansion.*

Competition. The competitiveness of agriculture in New York State relative to national and global competitors is a concern. The high cost of food production in the State makes competing with lower cost national and global food producers a challenging proposition.

Difficulty accessing the New York City food market. Weaknesses in the food distribution system can make it difficult for small regional farmers to connect with the NYC food market. At the same time, City restaurants and food retailers often encounter difficulty sourcing regional agricultural products from wholesalers.<sup>16</sup>

High operating costs. The high costs of equipment, feed, energy, fertilizer, capital, labor and other factors contribute to high production costs. In addition, New York State has one of the highest overall tax rates in the country including property taxes and income taxes. The State's minimum wage rates are higher than many other states.

Low profitability. Prices received for the sale of farm produce outside of the NYC market are often low in comparison to production costs and this causes thin profit margins. Average expenses per farm in Sullivan County were \$111,068 in 2017, while average net income (after expenses) was -\$23,866.<sup>17</sup>



Upward Brewing Company



Harvest time, Mountain Sweet Berry Farm

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<sup>16</sup> The New York City Council, Foodworks: A Vision to Improve NYC's Food System, 2010.

<sup>17</sup> 2017 Census of Agriculture, Sullivan County, New York. US Department of Agriculture.





Collins Farm



Beaver Lake Farm



Foxwillow Farm

Dairy farms in particular are subject to volatile milk prices which frequently do not cover production costs. Roughly one-third of county farms cleared a profit in 2012.<sup>18</sup> Bulk milk prices are currently so low that many dairy farms in New York State are operating at a loss and going out of business.

High cost and diminishing supply of farmland. Lack of affordable farmland can be an impediment for new and existing farmers in the Mid-Hudson region and this issue will continue as growth pressures drive up the developed value of prime agricultural land. Farmers need deep, well-drained soil on fairly level land which is exactly the type of land developers seek. Developers usually win in the ensuing competition for land and much of the Mid-Hudson's prime farmland has been sold to developers. While farmland in Sullivan County tends to be less expensive than in the rest of the Mid-Hudson region, it is still an expensive proposition for farmers to expand operations and new farmers can be priced out of the market. This forces some farmers to rent land, if they can afford to, which impacts already thin profit margins.

Weak distribution system. The food distribution network in the Mid-Hudson region is currently not adequate to meet the supply of local food production. In particular, this hurts medium and small sized farms that may not have the resources to distribute their own products to regional markets.

Difficulty attracting new farmers. A majority of New York State farmers are over age 50 and in Sullivan County the average age was 59.7 years in 2012.<sup>19</sup> Not surprisingly, the farming industry has struggled to attract young farmers because farming will not financially sustain them. In 2007, farmers in the Hudson Valley region had an expense to sales ratio of 94% making for very narrow profit margins.<sup>20</sup> As a result, many farm families must earn off-farm income in order to survive. Approximately 55% of county farms earned less than \$10,000 in 2012 and it is assumed that off-farm income keeps most of these farms in business.<sup>21</sup> Residents have expressed concern about county farms that have no successors to eventually take over operations.<sup>22</sup> Aging farmers need to be replaced by new young farmers in order to preserve farmland and maintain agriculture's contribution to the Town's overall economy.

<sup>18</sup> Sullivan County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan, December 2014.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Glynwood Center. *The State of Agriculture in the Hudson Valley*, 2010.

<sup>21</sup> Sullivan County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Plan, December 2014.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

Rural gaps in Town-wide high speed internet service. As discussed in Section 10, Economic Development, internet service gaps currently exist in certain rural parts of the Town. At the same time, access to the internet has become increasingly important to farmers for crop management, marketing and accessing governmental assistance programs.

Other issues. Additional issues facing Sullivan County's farmers are the lack of local processing facilities, farmers unaware of the broad array of governmental assistance programs, a burdensome regulatory structure, and the high cost and limited availability of capital. The limited availability of a motivated and qualified labor force due, in part, to unsettled federal immigration policies and a cumbersome guest worker program is also problematic.

#### **11.4 Recommendations**

##### **Strategy 1      Coordinate the implementation of strategies in this section with Sullivan County's farmland protection plan.**

- Action 1.1      *Coordinate with Sullivan County as it implements recommended actions in its "2014 Agriculture & Farmland Protection Plan." The plan contains many recommendations which could benefit local farmers.*
- Action 1.2      *Encourage Sullivan County to explore coordinating with New York City's efforts to better connect local farmers with NYC markets. Connecting upstate farmers with NYC wholesalers and end users is a stated goal in the City's 2010 'Foodworks' plan.*

##### **Strategy 2      Continue to maintain the Town's farm-friendly regulations.**

- Action 2.1      *Periodically audit the Zoning Law to explore modifications that support agriculture. New technologies and changing market conditions may warrant adjustments to the zoning law. For instance, demand for local beef is increasing which could represent a market opportunity for local farmers. Allowing smaller lots to contain livestock would help to promote this activity. Small lots could also be used by 4-H groups and other organizations to help prepare next-generation farmers.*
- Action 2.2      *Review farm-friendly zoning code guidelines in Sullivan County's "2014 Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan." Incorporate appropriate recommendations into the Town's zoning law.*
- Action 2.3      *Explore expanding the allowable types of agricultural uses on small lots. The number of small farm operations is increasing in the Mid-Hudson Valley. Some*

of these farms fill ethnic niche markets where there is less competition. See also 2.1 above.

- Action 2.4      *Continue to allow alternative uses for existing agricultural buildings and farmland.* Allowing compatible uses for existing agricultural buildings and farmland would help farmers to remain on their land even while farming is not taking place. The Town could define alternative uses for existing buildings and farmland in its zoning law. Alternative or additional uses that are compatible with the surrounding area but not necessarily agriculture-related may include low-impact businesses such as packaging or warehousing.
- Action 2.5      *Explore ways to better define land-use designations for agritourism.* Agritourism activities can fall into a gray zone between hospitality and agricultural land-use regulations which makes navigating local permitting, land-use coding, and land use controls a tricky proposition for budding entrepreneurs. See also strategy 7 in this section.
- Action 2.6      *Accessory agricultural uses as allowed by the zoning law should be encouraged.* Elements such as seasonal farm stands and ice cream stands can help boost agritourism efforts and supplement income. Businesses featuring on-farm processing (milk and cheese, jams, baked goods), on-farm retail (grains, hay, fertilizer), and the sale of non-perishable items and local produce grown outside of Rockland should be encouraged.
- Action 2.7      *Seek to have a member of the agricultural community on the Town's Planning Board and/or Zoning Board of Appeals.* Individuals experienced in agricultural operations can offer valuable contributions in the administration of regulations affecting agriculture.

**Strategy 3      Work to preserve farms and agricultural lands for next generation farmers.**

- Action 3.1      *Promote Purchase of Development Rights (PDR), Transfer of Development Rights (TDR), conservation easements and term easement programs to preserve both farmlands and farming.* For example, PDR's involve the voluntary sale by a landowner of the right to develop a property to a government agency or private nonprofit land trust. The cost of doing this would vary depending on the appraised value of the specific parcel—both the current value and its appraised value as open or agricultural land without development potential. The difference between these two numbers is the value of the development rights to be purchased.



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Benefits of Purchase of Development Rights (PDR)

- > PDR protects farmland permanently, while keeping it in private ownership.
- > Participation in PDR programs is voluntary
- > PDR allows farmers to capitalize on undeveloped assets – their land.
- > PDR programs can protect ecological as well as agricultural resources.
- > PDR removes the non-agricultural value of land, which keeps it affordable to farmers.
- > PDR can be implemented by state or local governments, private organizations and not-for-profit entities.
- > PDR provides farmers with a financially competitive alternative to development.

Source: Action Guide: Agricultural and Farmland Protection for New York (American Farmland Trust).

The purchase of a conservation easement is the same thing as PDR; however, whereas a PDR typically refers to a government acquisition, the purchase of an conservation easement is typically done by a private land trust.

In addition to PDR and conservation easements, term easements are sometimes employed. A term easement is a temporary covenant that may include a right of first refusal for purchase of the property in cases where the farm may transition to another agricultural use.

- Action 3.2     *Explore sources of grant funding for farmland protection.* These could involve agencies of the state or federal governments or private organizations such as Equity Trust that work with land conservation organizations in the Hudson Valley. For example, the State's Farmland Protection Implementation Grant program helps local governments and land trusts offset the cost of conservation easements. Equity Trust is a non-profit organization that partners with local organizations to help fund the purchase of farmland for farmers.
- Action 3.3     *Explore a Leasing of Development Rights (LDR) program as a supportive tool in farmland purchase or PDR acquisition.* LDR's can temporarily protect farmland until a PDR can be employed.
- Action 3.4     *Promote the New York State Agricultural Districts Law to encourage the continued use of farmland for agricultural production.* The program is based on a combination of landowner incentives and protections, all of which are designed to forestall the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses. Included in these benefits are preferential real property tax treatment (agricultural assessment and

special benefit assessment), and protections against overly restrictive local laws, government funded acquisition or construction projects, and private nuisance suits involving agricultural practices.

Action 3.5     *Encourage owners of inactive farmland to rent their land to new and existing farmers.* Work to connect land owners to farmers. Land owners renting farmland may qualify for an agricultural assessment on their land. The Hudson Valley Land Trust partnered with 16 other organizations to launch the HV Farmlink network which is designed to connect farmers and landowners.

Action 3.6     *Explore allowing appropriate agricultural uses on open space that may be created in a conservation subdivision or clustering.* Take into account any property tax implications that may arise from such use.

**Strategy 4     Encourage policies that support new and next-generation farmers.**

Action 4.1     *Encourage governmental and private sector financial initiatives to support young farmers.* For example, New York State in recent years launched the New Farmers Grant Fund and the Young Farmers Loan Forgiveness Program to help young farmers get in the business and remain there. Many farm credit cooperatives have programs to help start-up farms secure working capital.

Action 4.2     *Promote education, training, and technical assistance programs for farm start-up operations.* Historically farming skills have been handed down from one generation to the next. But that is not always the case today as sons and daughters leave the farm for more profitable careers. In addition, the increasing pace of new technologies and methods can be challenging for farmers to keep up with. Access to training programs is essential for new and next-generation farmers. The Hudson Valley Farm Hub sponsors the ProFarmer Program which trains individuals with farming experience who aspire to farm management positions or to own and operate their own farms.

**Strategy 5     Seek to expand food processing and distribution networks.**

Action 5.1     *Coordinate with the Sullivan County Partnership to attract and expand value-added food processing companies to the Town.* The Town's quick access to Route 17 would be an attractive asset to food processing firms. The property inventory recommended in Section 6, Economic Development, would assist in site identification and land assemblage. One example of connecting processors to local produce is Farm-to-Table Co-Packers in Kingston, NY which processes local produce to make soups, frozen vegetables, jarred sauces and other value-added products that it then sells to regional markets. Another example is Hudson

River Fruit Distributors in Milton, NY which is the region's biggest marketer/distributor of New York apples.

Action 5.2      *Support efforts by Sullivan County to establish food hub projects for local food producers.* Food-hubs act like warehouse distributors where local food can be sourced by downstream users such as groceries and restaurants. Such hubs could serve to connect locally produced food with the NYC food market. One food hub has recently opened in Liberty. See also Action 1.2 in this section.

Action 5.3      *Encourage Sullivan County and Cornell Cooperative Extension, in conjunction with local dairy farmers, to explore the feasibility of developing a dairy processing facility.* Through such a facility, local dairy farmers could process milk and produce other dairy products and market them through an established brand or newly created brand. The Hudson Valley Fresh brand of dairy products processed in Dutchess County is a success story for using this strategy.

Action 5.4      *Support any regional efforts to establish livestock slaughtering and processing capacity.* There is an increasing demand for local beef which could provide a new source of income for local farmers. Some former dairy farms might convert to beef cattle operations if there was a nearby FDA meat processing facility. Currently, the two closest USDA slaughterhouses are each two hours drive away in Moscow, PA and Otego, NY.

**Strategy 6      Support financial incentives, access to capital, and farm-friendly policy reforms.**

Action 6.1      *Encourage New York State and Sullivan County to continue economic incentive programs specific for agriculture.* For example, the Sullivan County Industrial Development Agency offers a number of loan and lease programs to farmers and other types of agribusiness enterprises such as farm equipment dealerships.

Action 6.2      *Encourage State and federal policy and regulatory reforms that are farm friendly.*

**Strategy 7      Work to promote agritourism in the Town.**

Action 7.1      *Support Sullivan County efforts to promote agritourism.* Agritourism has become increasingly popular in the local region with activities such as wineries, distilleries, Christmas tree farms, on-farm dinners, u-pick farms, pumpkin carving, hayrides and other activities. There is also a spin-off effect with visitors patronizing local eateries, gas stations and retail stores.



- Action 7.2      *Support the development of New York State and private sector programs that provide technical assistance and start-up capital for agritourism entrepreneurs.*
- Action 7.3      *Utilize the proposed special events portal on the Town's website to promote agritourism. Establishing a special events portal is discussed in Section 5, Strategy 2 in this Plan.*
- Action 7.4      *Explore development of a "heritage trail" to promote historic tourism and agritourism. The mobile phone wayfinding application discussed in Section 9, Transportation, Strategy 2 could include these items.*

**Strategy 8      Promote citizen education on farmland benefits.**

- Action 8.1      *Educate the community about the benefits of farming to the community (economic, rural heritage, scenic working landscape, etc.).*
- Action 8.2      *Coordinate with Sullivan County on marketing methods to promote local farms and buying locally produced foods.*

## **SECTION 12 – LAND USE**

### **12.1 Goals**

- > To protect Rockland's environmental and aesthetic resources to benefit the public health and safety and for the enjoyment and prosperity of future generations.
- > To balance growth of all land uses with conservation of the Town's scenic and rural character and environmental integrity.
- > Continue to improve land use regulations to meet the objectives of this plan.

### **12.2 Summary of Existing Conditions**

The unspoiled character of the Town is largely attributed to the nature and location of a diverse set of land uses. The growth of the Town throughout its history to the present day reflects traditional settlement patterns. Closely knit hamlets are economic hubs in the stream valleys which serve as transportation corridors; undisturbed agricultural open spaces and large, forested swaths of protected, public forest contribute to the Town's rural and wilder feel. Residential growth has centered on the hamlets, where it complements the Town's sense of place, and is also dispersed in rural areas.

Land uses are summarized within twelve property classifications (see Table 3-1 on page 3.8 ) while the distribution of these land uses is depicted on Figure 3-5, Land Use Map (page 3.7). Reinforcing the Town's land-use pattern are parcel sizes, with the map showing both an abundance of larger parcels throughout the rural areas and concentrations of smaller parcels in and around hamlets and denser residential areas, such as Hunter Lake. The pattern reflects existing character and also illustrates that there is significant opportunity for future development.

The Town has five primary zoning districts that generally correspond with the land use patterns (see Figure 3-4, Zoning Districts on page 3.6). The Town has been active in reviewing and revising the zoning law. In June 2016, the town board appointed a committee who issued a series of changes that were adopted in December 2016. The changes included the improvement of existing use definitions and the development of new definitions; enhancement of stormwater protection language; the creation of a downtown overlay district to promote business through eased parking requirements, new sections on Signs and Solar Collection Systems; and several procedural improvements to bring the zoning law in better conformance with state statutes. In 2017, the Town further improved the stormwater protection standards, integrating the requirements of the NYS Stormwater Design Manual. In 2018-19, the existing sections on campgrounds and nonconforming uses were revised and limitations on dwellings and uses per lot have also been drafted, although these proposed changes have not yet been adopted.

### **12.3 Cluster development and conservation subdivision**

Although the Town has improved its zoning law, there remains opportunity for further upgrades to land

use regulations, many of these being specified in the Town's 2010 comprehensive plan and carried forth in this plan. For example, the 2010 plan includes expanded discussion on *conservation subdivision*. It's important to recognize that New York State uses the term *cluster development* (Town Law §278). The two are not necessarily synonymous but they operate on the same principle: a subdivision plat in which the applicable zoning law is modified (often by a reduction in lot size) to provide an alternative permitted method for the layout (i.e., configuration and design of lots, buildings and structures, roads, utility lines and other infrastructure, parks and landscaping) in order to preserve the natural and scenic qualities of open lands. Often the difference lies in the statutory requirement for cluster development that the density - the number of lots or units -- shall not exceed the number that is permitted by a conventional subdivision and the underlying zoning district. Whereas, conservation subdivision does not necessarily come with this requirement.

Cluster development is a land use tool that preserves open space. Open space is intended to be the driver of the subdivision design. Because lot size can be modified, a cluster development affords flexibility in design, allowing for more creative and efficient use of land. It enables communities to structure neighborhoods around common spaces that may include trails, historic features, working landscapes, significant natural resources, or wildlife habitat preservation. It also enables the protection of stream corridors by riparian buffers and, because the overall impervious surfaces on the site are reduced, it offers improved opportunities for stormwater management. The efficiencies of reduced lengths of streets and utilities come with lower costs for infrastructure installation, fees, and maintenance. The amenities that are often provided in the open space, such as trails and parks, often increase property values and marketability. It is also possible to preserve larger, contiguous open spaces when cluster developments abut, and the larger context and long-term planning are factored in.

An open space plan, a natural resource inventory, an analysis of environmental constraints, or a build-out study with alternate projection scenarios (e.g., conventional vs. conservation subdivision design or applied vs. not-applied open space protection strategies) are all planning tools that help determine the benefits and location of cluster developments and guide a quality of development that is less consumptive in the long term. Analyzing environmental constraints at the site level is also integral to the application of cluster development. Typically in cluster development regulations two (or more) sketch plats are undertaken. The conventional plat illustrates the number of lots that can be accommodated by the site; while the cluster plat(s) illustrates the alternate design(s).

The offering of incentives for the application of clustering is often put forth as a need to drive the use of this tool. However, not only does the statute provide for the option of the town to require clustering (the Rockland Planning Board has this authority under certain circumstances), but with all the benefits of clustering and the adoption of its application as a town policy, incentives should not be needed. Nevertheless, if the Town would like to offer density bonuses, for example, Town Law §261-b. Incentive Zoning, provides the basis for doing so. This zoning tool enables a system of exchanging bonuses for community amenities, both of which the town identifies in the local regulations. The use of clustering itself, if it is optional on the part of the applicant for example, is typically not an amenity. Amenities, like



bonuses, are meant go above and beyond baseline requirements. Incentive zoning may also be used for a host of other reasons to help carry out town policy.

Effective development and application of cluster development regulations requires careful consideration by the Town. There are many options to choose and define, and among the best sources for developing cluster regulations are local laws from other municipalities, as these illustrate the spectrum and detail of this tool's components.

The Town of Rockland Subdivision Law includes a modest section on conservation subdivision. This existing language should be compared with other municipal examples. The presence of rock outcrops, soils that present challenges for wastewater disposal, steep slopes, and other factors limiting development opportunities, are important factors in the application of clustering in Rockland. At the same time, if these constraints are identified in advance or during the application process, it will facilitate the use of this tool, which is suited to accommodate both development and environmental protection.

#### **12.4 Ongoing review of land use tools**

Towns in New York State are afforded the ability to adopt numerous land use tools and tailor these to meet local needs. The extent to which a municipality details requirements within these tools has a direct relationship with the resulting development project. In subdivision regulations, site plan review, special use permit, and planned unit development, among others, are all facets of these tools and they should be reviewed on a regular basis and improved as needed. Submission requirements, performance standards, review procedures, tools for assuring site improvements, definitions, stormwater mitigation practices, and many other components will all benefit from periodic review and improvement.

#### **12.5 Stormwater**

The Town's 2010 comprehensive plan includes several recommendations related to stormwater protection. Since 2010, the Town has taken steps to implement improvements to stormwater protection. Each zoning district has an impervious surface threshold per lot, and language has been integrated into the zoning law requiring that stormwater practices are in conformance with the NYS Stormwater Design Manual.

#### **12.6 Scenic resources**

Given the Town's outstanding scenic and aesthetic qualities and their importance in attracting homebuyers, recreationists, and tourists, it is critical the town protect these resources while also accommodating the growth that is generated. Land use tools, regulatory and recommendatory, offer numerous opportunities to strike this balance. Any combination of chosen approaches should be carefully based on a solid planning foundation. Because the scenic and aesthetic area of the land use arena is its most subjective, it is crucial that a municipality provide strong rationale for the regulatory tools it adopts.

(Non-regulator tools, e.g., supplementary guidance materials, can complement regulations or stand on their own.) A scenic resources inventory, which could be conducted at the county level, or a visual preference survey are examples of baseline exercises to guide the adoption and implementation of tools to protect scenic qualities.

Use of the overlay zoning district is among the most common methods to apply criteria for protecting scenic resources. Design guidelines, often a combination of text and graphics, are also popular and successful. And there is no shortage of additional ways, and combinations thereof, to integrate scenic and community character protection tools: performance standards, review elements in site plan review, criteria in a special use permit, incentive zoning, and non-regulatory guidance materials.

## 12.7 Recommendations

Many of the land-use recommendations that follow have relationships with those found in other sections. For example, design guidelines relate to historic preservation; complete streets to transportation; and several regulatory measures to environmental resource protection.

### Strategy 1      **Continue to review and improve as necessary land use regulations on a regular basis.**

- Action 1.1      *Continue to involve the committee that has been reviewing and developing improvements to the Town's land use regulations for adoption.*
- Action 1.2      *Focus on "hot button" emerging topics and identified priorities for revising regulations. These topics may include, but not be limited to short-term rentals, traffic impact analyses, and adoption of campground regulations and nonconforming use provisions.*
- Action 1.3      *Improve cluster development regulations by integrating more detailed review procedures, illustrated guidance materials, provisions for determining calculations for buildable and unbuildable areas, and open space ownership options.*

### Strategy 2      **Adopt guidelines with illustrations to complement land use regulations and help sustain the character of the community.**

- Action 2.1      *Work to develop and integrate design guidelines within the zoning law and connect these with the site plan review and special use permit review processes. Consider applying these guidelines to all commercial development throughout the Town. Guideline elements include overall site design, parking and landscape layout, best site practices for stormwater mitigation, lighting, architectural materials and form, signage, and historical preservation.*

- Action 2.2      *Work to adopt a set of illustrated rural siting guidelines to include elements that are intended to mitigate the visual or environmental impacts of residential development and may be arranged in a preferred vs. discouraged format. Elements include cut-and-fill, driveway placement, tree preservation, and the choice of architectural features. Such guidelines could be adopted as a handbook, separate from regulations.*

**Strategy 3      Undertake planning and policy initiatives to assist in the long-term implementation of land use recommendations.**

- Action 3.1      *Consider conducting a scenic resources inventory and analysis to provide a basis for protection strategies, such as a scenic or ridgeline protection overlay district.*
- Action 3.2      *Explore undertaking a buildout and fiscal analysis study to better understand the benefits and drawbacks of long-term growth scenarios and to further implement the goals and objectives of this plan.*
- Action 3.3      *Explore adopting a Complete Streets resolution to help direct policy and increase eligibility for funding sources.*

**Strategy 4      Develop and adopt regulations for floodplain and stormwater protection**

- Priority Action 4.1**      *Develop regulations for land clearing and development on steep slopes to mitigate stormwater runoff impacts that can negatively affect water quality, harm unique ecosystems and exacerbate flooding.*
- Action 4.2      *Integrate incentives within land use regulations for development projects that reduce the overall amount of stormwater runoff such that post-development runoff amounts are less than predevelopment amounts.*
- Action 4.3      *Work to ensure that the requirements and amounts for professional fees to assist in the review of projects are sufficient in meeting the needs of the Town. For example, the involvement of a Certified Professional in Erosion and Sediment Control (CPESC) or similarly qualified professional can ensure that the standards of the NYS Stormwater Design Manual are being adhered to.*
- Action 4.4      *Explore creating a stream corridor overlay district with protective buffers that include limitations on development, land clearing activities, and storage of materials. This action would will afford greater protection of the Town's water resources.*



**Priority Action 4.6**     *With input from the forest industry, work to develop a local timber harvesting permit that requires site plan review and integrates NYS Best Management Practices for Water Quality and other guidance.* This will help to ensure logging operations do not create adverse environmental impacts such as stormwater runoff, impacts on Town roads, and sedimentation of streams.

**Strategy 5**     **Examine options to increase protections for the larger lakes within the north central portion of the Town and integrate the same within land use regulations.**

**Action 5.1**     *Explore the creation of a lake overlay district with specific development standards such as buffers, heightened septic system design standards, building height limitations, and increased minimum lot sizes.*

**Action 5.2**     *Consider provisions for lake access, including minimum lot frontage, limited public access, limitations on the number of boats per lot, and requiring accessory use permits for all new boat docks, such that lake use does not exceed carrying capacity.*

**Strategy 6**     **Take advantage of land-use training and other topical session opportunities that will fulfill the planning board's and the zoning board of appeal's annual training requirements and benefit the community.**

**Action 6.1**     *Coordinate with Sullivan County and other providers to have training topics that are related to the implementation of this plan.* Such topics could include Conservation Subdivision, Planned Unit Development, Design Guidelines, Historic Preservation, and Complete Streets.

**Strategy 7**     **Explore the creation of an Official Map**

New York Town Law §270) permits a town to create an Official Map indicating proposed roadway, sewage and water infrastructure, and other public facilities. The map can be a useful and effective tool for implementing a Comprehensive Plan by reserving future development sites and rights-of-way. In addition, development cannot take place in a way that does not conform to the public facilities set forth on the Official Map. This aspect provides a rare level of certainty and stability to the development process.

## SECTION 13 – IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter includes a description and prioritization of the recommended strategies that the Town will take to implement this Plan. Although the preference may be to implement all of the recommendations immediately, a prioritized approach may be more realistic based on the availability of funding, staff and volunteers.

The Town Board is ultimately responsible for implementation of the Plan. To monitor progress in Plan implementation and to identify and address new issues and changes that may emerge in the coming years, the Town Board should maintain a dialogue with the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals. However, it is often a burdensome task for town boards to carry out a plan's recommendations on their own and as a result many comprehensive plans are simply shelved. One way to prevent this from happening in Rockland is for the Town Board to establish an ad hoc committee to assist it with shepherding the Plan's recommendations towards completion.

The pages that follow list the recommended strategies found in this Plan and they are organized under the sections in which they appear (see the relevant section for action items that appear under each strategy). For each strategy there is an indication of when it should be implemented and what party is responsible for ensuring it is followed. Some strategies should be implemented immediately (within 1 year) while others are "short-term" (within 2 to 3 years) and "long-term" (within 4 to 5 years). Still others require "ongoing" action on a continual basis. Some strategies are also marked as "Priority" items because they either: (a) address critical issues, (b) require a timely response, or (c) are readily achievable given existing or expected resources (i.e., personnel, costs, etc.). Setting time periods in this way helps to ensure that the implementation process will get started upon adoption of the Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan itself should be understood to be a "living document." As such, the Plan may need to be adjusted or updated from time to time in order to reflect current conditions and needs of the community. As a point of reference, the final implementation item in this section recommends that every five (5) years the entire Comprehensive Plan should be reviewed and (if necessary) updated.

Recommendations

Time Horizon

Responsibility

**Section 4 – Residential Areas**

Strategy 1.	Increase affordable housing in the community (p. 4.5).	Long-term	Town Board
Strategy 2.	Enhance housing opportunities in hamlet areas (p. 4.6).	Short-term	Town Board
Strategy 3	Balance growth with community character in rural areas (p. 4.6).	Short-term	Town Board
Strategy 4	Encourage the use of sustainable standards for new residential development (p. 4.7).	Ongoing	Town Board Planning Board ZBA

**Section 5 – Commercial Areas**

Strategy 1.	Continue to maintain infrastructure serving the NB and GB zones (p. 5.8).	Ongoing	Town Board
Strategy 2.	Maintain civic and cultural elements in downtown business districts (p. 5.8).	Ongoing	Town Board
<i>Priority Strategy 3.</i>	<i>Continue to promote the Town as a world-class tourist destination (p. 5.9).</i>	Ongoing	Town Board
Strategy 4.	Preserve the historic architectural heritage of Downtown business districts (p. 5.9).	Short-term	Town Board
Strategy 5	Maintain and enhance Town gateway signage from Route 17 and seek to establish new gateway signage locations (p. 5.10).	Long-term	Town Board
Strategy 6.	Encourage the use of sustainable standards for new and existing commercial development (p. 5.10).	Ongoing	Town Board Planning Board

Immediate = 1 Year      Short-Term = 2-3 Years      Long-Term = 4-5 years      Ongoing = continual basis



<u>Recommendations</u>		<u>Time Horizon</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
Priority Strategy 7.	Create an interconnected sidewalk network in Roscoe and Livingston Manor (p. 5.10).	Long-term	Town Board
Priority Strategy 8.	Increase vehicle parking opportunities in Roscoe and Livingston Manor (p. 5.11).	Short-term	Town Board
Priority Strategy 9.	Mitigate flooding in downtown Roscoe and Livingston Manor (p. 5.11).	Short-term	Town Board
<b>Section 6 – Community Services</b>			
Strategy 1.	Continue to assess the needs of police and fire protection (p. 6.9).	Ongoing	Planning Board Town Board
Strategy 2.	Strive to maintain and expand library services for Town residents (p. 6.10).	Ongoing	Town Board
Strategy 3.	Inform the three school systems of growth impacts to enrollment from proposed large-scale residential developments (p. 6.10).	Ongoing	Planning Board
Strategy 4.	Continue to maintain a high level of service and maintenance on Town roads (p. 6.10).	Ongoing	Town Board
Priority Strategy 5.	Continue to maintain high quality standards for water and sewer service (p. 6.11).	Ongoing	Town Board Water & Sewer Dept.
Strategy 6.	Continue to support proper disposal of solid waste and recycling efforts (p. 6.11).	Ongoing	Town Board
<b>Section 7 – Historic, Cultural and Recreational Resources</b>			
Strategy 1	Strengthen partnerships (p. 7.14).	Ongoing	Town Board
Immediate = 1 Year      Short-Term = 2-3 Years      Long-Term = 4-5 years      Ongoing = continual basis			

<u>Recommendations</u>		<u>Time Horizon</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
Strategy 2	Enhance existing resources and explore the creation of new facilities (p. 7.15).	Long-term	Town Board
Strategy 3	Advance historic preservation efforts (p. 7.16).	Long-term	Town Board
Strategy 4	Work to provide recreational opportunities for persons with special needs (p. 7.17).	Long-term	Town Board
Strategy 5	Seek governmental and private sector funding opportunities (p. 7.17).	Ongoing	Town Board
<b>Section 8 – Environmental Resources</b>			
Strategy 1	Take proactive steps to protect and sustain environmental resources (p. 8.8).	Long-term	Town Board
Strategy 2	Encourage stream appreciation and protection (p. 8.9).	Long-term	Town Board
Strategy 3	Help ensure long-term quality of individual onsite septic systems (p. 8.9).	Short-term	Town Board
Priority Strategy 4	Pursue initiatives and practices to mitigate flooding and flood damage (p. 8.9).	Long-term	Town Board
Strategy 5	Work to adopt measures to help ensure that new roadway design blends with the natural surroundings and will not adversely impact the environment (p. 8.10).	Long-term	Town Board
<b>Section 9 – Transportation</b>			
Priority Strategy 1	Coordinate with NYSDOT and County agencies as Route 17 transitions to I-86 (p. 9.8).	Ongoing	Town Board Sullivan County NYSDOT
Immediate = 1 Year	Short-Term = 2-3 Years	Long-Term = 4-5 years	Ongoing = continual basis

<u>Recommendations</u>		<u>Time Horizon</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
<i>Priority Strategy 2</i>	Improve wayfinding signage to attractions and centers throughout the Town (p. 9.8).	Ongoing	Town Board Sullivan County NYSDOT
Strategy 3	Seek to preserve scenic roadway viewsheds (p. 9.9).	Long-term	Town Board
<i>Priority Strategy 4</i>	Work to mitigate flooding on Town roads and streets (p. 9.9).	<i>Short-term</i>	<i>Town Board</i>
Strategy 5	Work to address gaps in public transportation (p. 9.10).	Long-term	Town Board Sullivan County Private sector
Strategy 6	Coordinate with state and county agencies as they implement local and regional traffic plans (p. 9.10).	Ongoing	Town Board Sullivan County
Strategy 7	Improve Town roadway design specifications (p. 9.10).	Short-term	Town Board Town Highway Dept.
<i>Priority Strategy 8</i>	Improve parking and sidewalk networks in Livingston Manor and Roscoe (p. 9.11).	Long-term	Town Board
<i>Priority Strategy 9</i>	Seek to incorporate bicycle lanes and pedestrian walkways into the Town's transit network (p. 9.11).	Long-term	Town Board Sullivan County
Strategy 10	Monitor advances in vehicle technology against infrastructure needs they may require (p. 9.12).	Ongoing	Town Board
<b>Section 10 – Economic Development</b>			
Strategy 1.	Develop a property inventory for commercial and industrial sites (p. 10.8).	Immediate	Town Board
Immediate = 1 Year	Short-Term = 2-3 Years	Long-Term = 4-5 years	Ongoing = continual basis



## *Implementation*

<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Time Horizon</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
Strategy 2. Develop a list of target industries that would enhance and diversify Rockland's economy (p. 10.8).	Immediate	Town Board
Strategy 3. Seek to develop shovel ready sites (p. 10.9).	Ongoing	Town Board
Strategy 4. Support efforts to streamline Permits and SEQRA (p. 10.9).	Long-term	Town Board
Strategy 5. Promote the Town as a desirable place to do business (p. 10.9).	Ongoing	Town Board
<i>Priority Strategy 6. Maintain and enhance the Town's transportation advantages (p. 10.10).</i>	Ongoing	Town Board
Strategy 7. Explore expanding water and sewer service in the commercial zones (p. 10.10).	Long-term	Town Board
<i>Priority Strategy 8. Work to close broadband service gaps in the Town (p. 10.11).</i>	<i>Short-term</i>	<i>Town Board</i>
Strategy 9. Partner with Sullivan County, the Sullivan County Partnership and the Roscoe and Livingston Manor chambers of commerce on initiatives to attract and retain businesses (p. 10.11).	Ongoing	Town Board
Strategy 10. Promote small business attraction and retention (p. 10.11).	Ongoing	Town Board
Strategy 11. Promote agribusiness industries including agricultural production, support services and value-added processing (p. 10.12).	Ongoing	Town Board
Strategy 12. Promote labor force education (p. 10.13).	Ongoing	Town Board SC Partnership Education institutions

Immediate = 1 Year	Short-Term = 2-3 Years	Long-Term = 4-5 years	Ongoing = continual basis
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<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Time Horizon</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
Strategy 13. Encourage the expansion of childcare providers in the Town (p. 10.13).	Short-term	Town Board
Strategy 14. Plan for the development of alternative energy systems that minimally impact adjacent land uses, properties, and the environment in each of the Town's zoning districts (p. 10.13).	Short-term	Town Board
<b>Section 11 – Agriculture</b>		
Strategy 1. Coordinate the implementation of strategies in this section with Sullivan County's farmland protection plan (p. 11.10).	Short-term	Town Board
Strategy 2. Continue to maintain the Town's farm-friendly regulations (p. 11.10).	Ongoing	Town Board
Strategy 3. Work to preserve farms and agricultural lands for next generation farmers (p. 11.11).	Ongoing	Town Board
Strategy 4. Encourage policies that support new and next generation farmers (p. 11.13).	Ongoing	Town Board Sullivan County New York State
Strategy 5. Seek to expand food processing and distribution networks (p. 11.13).	Long-term	Town Board Sullivan County SC Partnership
Strategy 6. Expand financial incentives, access to capital and farm-friendly policy reforms (p. 11.14).	Long-term	Town Board Sullivan County SC IDA
Immediate = 1 Year	Short-Term = 2-3 Years	Long-Term = 4-5 years
Ongoing = continual basis		

## *Implementation*

<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Time Horizon</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
Strategy 7. Work to promote agritourism in the Town (p. 11.14).	Short-term	Town Board SC Tourism Ass.
Strategy 8. Promote citizen education on farmland benefits (p. 11.15).	Short-term	Town Board Sullivan County
<b>Section 12 – Land Use</b>		
Strategy 1 Continue to review and improve land use regulations on a regular basis (p. 12.4).	Ongoing	Town Board Planning Board
Strategy 2 Adopt guidelines with illustrations to complement land use regulations and help sustain the character of the community (p. 12.4).	Short-term	Town Board
Strategy 3 Undertake planning and policy initiatives to assist in the long-term implementation of land use recommendations (p. 12.5).	Short-term	Town Board
<b>Priority Strategy 4</b> Develop and adopt regulations for floodplain and stormwater protection (p. 12.5).	<b>Immediate</b>	<b>Town Board</b>
Strategy 5 Examine options to increase protections for large lakes within the north central portion of the Town and integrate within land use regulations (p. 12.6).	Short-term	Town Board
Strategy 6 Take advantage of land-use training and other topical session opportunities that will fulfill the planning board's and zoning board of appeal's annual training requirements (p. 12.6).	Ongoing	Planning Board
Strategy 7 Explore the creation of an Official Map (p. 12.6).	Short-term	Town Board
Immediate = 1 Year	Short-Term = 2-3 Years	Long-Term = 4-5 years
Ongoing = continual basis		



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*Implementation*

**Review the Comprehensive Plan**

As a final recommendation, the Town should review and update (if necessary) this Comprehensive Plan in its entirety every five (5) years. As the Town of Rockland changes over time, its needs and desires may also change. The Plan should be a flexible and adaptable document that reflects such changes.

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Immediate = 1 Year	Short-Term = 2-3 Years	Long-Term = 4-5 years	Ongoing = continual basis
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## Appendix A

## Appendix A

### Demographic, Social, and Economic Data

Population	2
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Prepared by:  
Peter Manning, Genius Loci Planning



The following tables provide demographic and other trends influencing the Town of Rockland. These data contributed to development of the Comprehensive Plan and informed other components of the planning process: research for each topic, public input and committee discussion, and materials from the Town's 2010 comprehensive plan.

(Information in tables and figures are from U.S. Census Bureau, unless otherwise noted.)

### Population

The Town of Rockland, occupying the northernmost extent of Sullivan County, had a population of 3775 persons as of the 2010 US Census. The Town's 2010 population density of 41.5 people per square mile places it significantly below the average of Sullivan County (80/ sq. mi.), yet well above other towns in the western portion of the county.

While the County as a whole experienced an average of just under 6% population growth from the 1990 through the 2010 censuses, the Town of Rockland saw a 3.5% average population loss during the same period (Table 1). This trend is not unlike that of Rockland's adjacent towns (Table 2). The County's growth rate from the 2000 through the 2010 censuses placed it just outside the grouping of the state's fastest growing counties (Figure 1). However, following the 2010 census, the County began to lose population, and from July 1, 2014 – July 1, 2015 Sullivan led the state's 62 counties in population loss at 1.18%, according to U.S. Census Bureau estimates. The County lost approximately 2700 people from 2010 to 2015.

	Town of Rockland	Percent Change	Sullivan County	Percent Change
<b>1980</b>	4,207	(7.3%)	65,155	(23.9 %)
<b>1990</b>	4,096	(-2.6%)	69,277	(6.3%)
<b>2000</b>	3913	(-4.5%)	73,966	(6.8%)
<b>2010</b>	3775	(-3.5%)	77,547	(4.8%)
<b>2014 (est.)</b>	3668	(-2.8%)	74,877	(-3.4%)

Table 1. Population Change  
Town of Rockland and Sullivan County, 1980-2014  
(% change from previous census)

	Callicoon	Fremont	Liberty	Neversink	Andes	Colchester	Denning	Hrdnbg.
<b>1980</b>	2998	1346	9879	2840	1312	1848	474	280
<b>% Change</b>	(25.0)	(28.6)		(38.2)	(10.0)	(11.0)	(59.6)	(17.2)
<b>1990</b>	3024	1332	9825	2951	1291	1928	524	204
<b>% Change</b>	(0.9)	(-1.0)	(-0.5)	(3.9)	(-1.6)	(4.3)	(10.5)	(-27.1)
<b>2000</b>	3052	1391	9632	3556	1356	2042	516	208
<b>% Change</b>	(0.9)	(4.4)	(-0.2)	(20.5)	(5.0)	(5.9)	(-1.5)	((2.0)
<b>2010</b>	3057	1381	9885	3557	1301	2077	551	238
<b>% Change</b>	(0.2)	(-0.7)	(2.6)	(0.0)	(-4.1)	(1.7)	(6.8)	(14.4)
<b>2014 (est.)</b>	2976	1353	9719	3472	1268	2049	547	231
<b>% Change</b>	(-2.6)	(-2.0)	(-1.7)	(-2.4)	(-2.5)	(-1.3)	(0.7)	(-2.9)

Table 2.  
Population Change, Town of Rockland and Adjoining Towns, 1980-2014  
(% change from previous census)

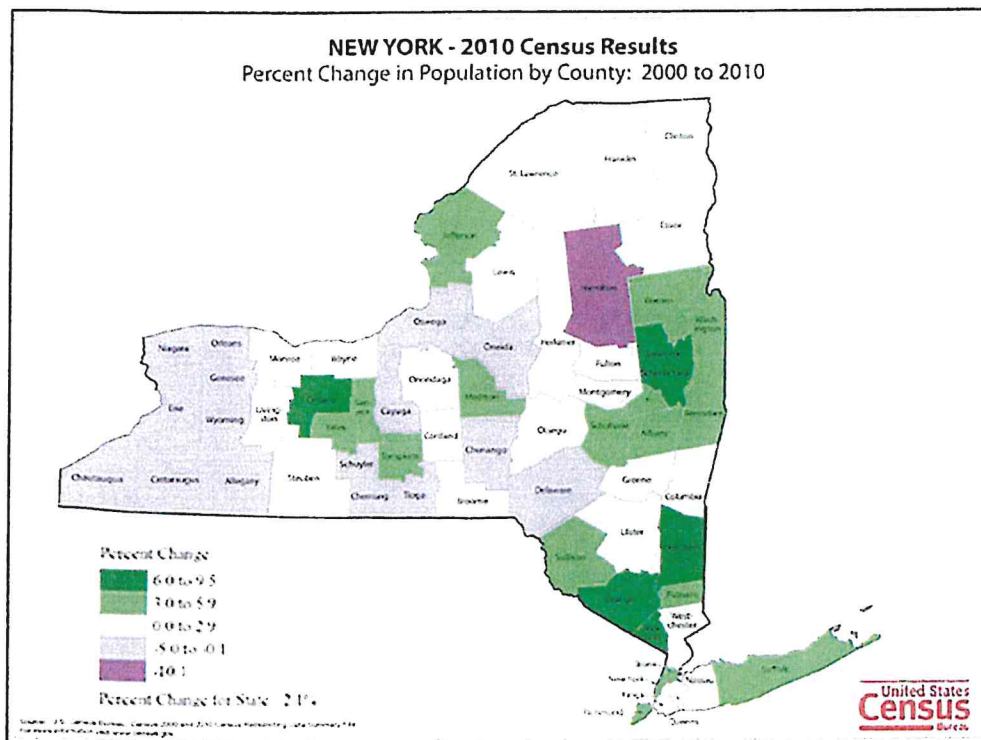


Figure 1.

From a statewide perspective, New York, from 2005 – 2013, saw a domestic outmigration of 416,871 people, while only 265,970 people moved to the state during the same period, resulting in a net loss of 150,901, or an average of 16,767 people per year. Despite these statistics, projections for Sullivan County show a slight increase in population for 2020, with a steadying to slight loss for the following 20 years (Figure 2).

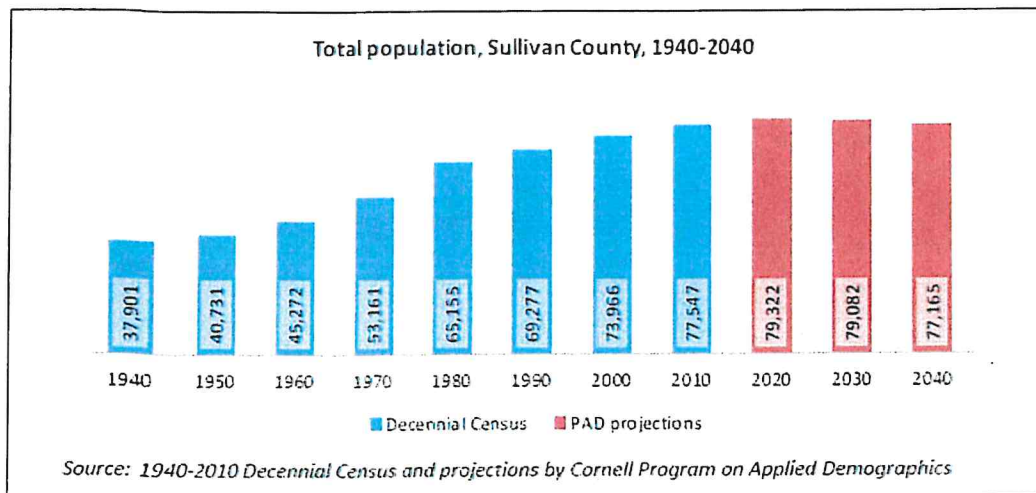


Figure 2.

### Age Distribution

The percentage distribution of Rockland's age cohorts approximates that of Sullivan County, although Rockland's median age was almost three years higher than the county's in the 2010 census. Also of note is the county's slightly higher percentages for people ages 20-39 (Table 3). Both the percentage distribution of age cohorts (Table 3) and age groups (Table 4) for the Town illustrate decreased numbers of people ages 20-39 from 2000-2010. These statistics may be connected to the outmigration of youth at the high school graduate age, a pattern exhibited in several counties in upstate New York. Details on the increase in the Town's median age are shown in Table 5.

Town of Rockland			Sullivan County		
Total population	3,775	100 (%)	Total population	77,547	100 (%)
Under 5 years	188	5	Under 5 years	4,626	6
5 to 9 years	229	6.1	5 to 9 years	4,728	6.1
10 to 14 years	250	6.6	10 to 14 years	4,878	6.3
15 to 19 years	243	6.4	15 to 19 years	5,351	6.9
20 to 24 years	164	4.3	20 to 24 years	4,476	5.8
25 to 29 years	186	4.9	25 to 29 years	4,248	5.5
30 to 34 years	175	4.6	30 to 34 years	4,340	5.6
35 to 39 years	212	5.6	35 to 39 years	4,410	5.7
40 to 44 years	260	6.9	40 to 44 years	5,397	7
45 to 49 years	296	7.8	45 to 49 years	6,479	8.4
50 to 54 years	303	8	50 to 54 years	6,271	8.1
55 to 59 years	254	6.7	55 to 59 years	5,677	7.3
60 to 64 years	296	7.8	60 to 64 years	5,211	6.7
65 to 69 years	239	6.3	65 to 69 years	3,940	5.1
70 to 74 years	171	4.5	70 to 74 years	2,748	3.5
75 to 79 years	142	3.8	75 to 79 years	1,987	2.6
80 to 84 years	104	2.8	80 to 84 years	1,514	2
85 years and over	63	1.7	85 years and over	1,266	1.6
Median age (years)	44.6	(X)	Median age (years)	41.7	(X)

Table 3.  
Age Cohorts, 2010



Age Group	Age Range	Total	Percentage
Pre-School	Under 5	188	5
School Age	5 to 19 years	752	19.1
College Age	20 to 24 years	164	4.3
Young Professional	25 to 29 years	186	4.9
Young Family	30 to 39 years	387	10.2
Teenage Family	40 to 49 years	556	14.7
Empty Nester	50 to 64 years	853	22.5
Senior	65+	719	19.1

Table 4.  
Town of Rockland Age Groups, 2010

	2000		2010		2000-10
	Number Percent		Number Percent		Percent Change
<b>Total population</b>	3,913	100.0	3,775	100	-3.5
<b>Male</b>	1,941	49.6	1,903	50.4	0.5
<b>Female</b>	1,972	50.4	1,872	49.6	-0.5
<b>Under 5 years</b>	238	6.1	188	5	-1.1
<b>5 to 9 years</b>	276	7.1	229	6.1	-1
<b>10 to 14 years</b>	298	7.6	250	6.6	-1
<b>15 to 19 years</b>	263	6.7	243	6.4	-0.3
<b>20 to 24 years</b>	182	4.7	164	4.3	-0.4
<b>25 to 34 years</b>	384	9.8	361	9.5	-0.3
<b>35 to 44 years</b>	571	14.6	472	12.5	-2.1
<b>45 to 54 years</b>	565	14.4	599	15.8	1.4
<b>55 to 59 years</b>	246	6.3	254	6.7	0.4
<b>60 to 64 years</b>	211	5.4	296	7.8	2.4
<b>65 to 74 years</b>	387	9.9	410	10.8	0.9
<b>75 to 84 years</b>	226	5.8	246	6.6	1.2
<b>85 years + over</b>	66	1.7	63	1.7	0
<b>Median age</b>	40.4	(X)	44.6	(X)	

Table 5.  
Town of Rockland Age Cohort Change, 2000-2010

### Educational Attainment

Education levels can contribute to the economic success of a community and help influence locational decisions of businesses, for example. While the percentage of Rockland's residents over 25 years of age with a Bachelor's or higher degree was less than the same categories for New York State, Rockland did outpace the county for these categories and for the Associate's attainment level, which also surpassed the state percentage. Rockland also saw a marked increase in higher attainment levels from the 2000 census, in which the percentages were Associate's 6.7, Bachelor's 7.9, and Graduate or Professional: 3.6.

Level of Attainment (Population Aged 25+)	NYS	Sullivan Co.	Rockland
Less than 9th grade	6.5%	4.3%	3.2%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	7.5%	9.6%	11.4%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	26.4%	33.3%	34.1%
Some college, no degree	16.1%	19.9%	15.4%
Associate's degree	8.6%	10.5%	11.1%
Bachelor's degree	19.7%	12.3%	13.6%
Graduate or professional degree	15.1%	10.1%	11.3%

Table 6.  
Educational Attainment, NYS, Sullivan County, Town of Rockland  
2016 Estimates

### Household Income

A town's median household income is influenced by many factors, including the number of family members in the workforce, the level of educational attainment, the age-group structure of the town, and of course the availability of employment. As shown in Table 5, Rockland has experienced decreases in those segments of the population that are in their prime working years, ages 20-44. Rockland's median household income is slightly below the average of the surrounding towns and the county's (Table 7). In 2014, New York State's median household income was \$59,691 and the United States' was \$54,398.

Municipality	Estimate
Hardenburgh (Town)	37,500
Liberty (Town)	39,851
Colchester (Town)	41,010
Andes (Town)	44,750
Rockland (Town)	47,007
Sullivan (County)	49,388
Fremont (Town)	50,221
Neversink (Town)	53,721
Callicoon (Town)	60,375
Denning (Town)	71,000

Table 7.  
Median Household Income for Previous 12 months, 2014  
for Town of Rockland, Adjoining Towns, and Sullivan County  
(in 2014 Inflation-adjusted dollars)

In terms of family poverty status, Rockland's average among area towns and the county was 2.7 percent higher, while the average for Rockland families with related children under 18 years of age was almost 9 percent higher. Compared to the United States for the same period, Rockland's 13.6 percent was 2.1 higher, while the town's 24.5 percent for families with related children under 18 was 6.4 percent higher than the national average.

		Estimate	Percent
Rockland	Families	997	13.6
	w/ related chldrn <18	433	24.5
Sullivan Co.	Families	18060	12.0
	w/ related chldrn <18	7948	21.1
Fremont	Families	399	4.3
	w/ related chldrn <18	175	0.0
Callicoon	Families	852	11.4
	w/ related chldrn <18	385	20.8
Liberty	Families	2293	15.0
	w/ related chldrn <18	1119	23.1
Neversink	Families	1015	5.7
	w/ related chldrn <18	464	4.3
Denning	Families	193	6.2
	w/ related chldrn <18	82	4.9
Hrdnbrgh	Families	42	2.4
	w/ related chldrn <18	9	0.0
Andes	Families	309	13.9
	w/ related chldrn <18	97	21.6
Colchester	Families	529	16.4
	w/ related chldrn <18	224	35.3

Table 8.  
Poverty Status of Families for Previous 12 Months, 2010-14

### Employment

Examining percentages of the population age 16 years and over in the labor force (Tables 9 & 10), the town of Rockland (64.4%) ranks above Sullivan County (59.8%) and above the average of the eight surrounding towns (54.9%).



TOWN OF ROCKLAND			SULLIVAN COUNTY		
	Estimate	Percent		Estimate	Percent
Population 16 years and over	3,017	3,017	Population 16 years and over	62,012	62,012
In labor force	1,943	64.4%	In labor force	37,087	59.8%
Civilian labor force	1,943	64.4%	Civilian labor force	37,058	59.8%
Employed	1,728	57.3%	Employed	32,340	52.2%
Unemployed	215	7.1%	Unemployed	4,718	7.6%
Armed Forces	0	0.0%	Armed Forces	29	0.0%
Not in labor force	1,074	35.6%	Not in labor force	24,925	40.2%

Table 9.  
Town of Rockland and Sullivan County  
Labor Force Participation Rates, 2010 – 2014

		Estimate	Percent
Fremont	Pop. 16+ yrs.	1318	1318
	In Labor Force	736	59.6
Callicoon	Pop. 16+ yrs.	2416	2416
	In Labor Force	1470	60.8
Liberty	Pop. 16+ yrs.	7570	7570
	In Labor Force	4535	59.9
Neversink	Pop. 16+ yrs.	2851	2851
	In Labor Force	1670	58.6
Denning	Pop. 16+ yrs.	528	528
	In Labor Force	275	52.1
Hardenburgh	Pop. 16+ yrs.	164	164
	In Labor Force	88	53.7
Andes	Pop. 16+ yrs.	964	964
	In Labor Force	484	50.2
Colchester	Pop. 16+ yrs.	1599	1599
	In Labor Force	891	44.3

Table 10.  
Labor Force Participation Rate  
Towns Adjoining Rockland, 2010 – 2014

Unemployment rates in Sullivan County decreased somewhat or held steady until 2018 when the rate dropped from 4.9% to 3.9%. This can be attributed largely to the Resorts World Casino, which opened in the town of Thompson in February 2018 and sought to fill some 1400 jobs. By April, the County enjoyed a 9.3 percent increase in new jobs. With the prospect of a new hotel and waterpark to open adjacent to Resorts World in 2019, the economic outlook for the region was promising, although as of June 2018, income at the casino was reported as being below projections. Summer 2018 is expected to bring an increase in revenues.

	2015	2016	2017	2018*
Sullivan County	5.4%	4.8%	4.9%	3.9%
New York State	5.3%	4.8%	4.7%	3.7%
United States	5.3%	4.9%	4.4%	3.8%

Table 11.  
Unemployment Rates  
Sullivan County, New York State, and United States, 2015-18  
(\* through May 2018)  
(NYS Department of Labor; U.S. Dept. of Labor)

A prominent characteristic in the county's employment pattern is that of seasonal fluctuation. Shown in Figure 3, the pattern reflects the county's prominence as a tourism and recreation destination. In addition, the large numbers of camps and the influx of seasonal residents have a marked effect on summer employment.

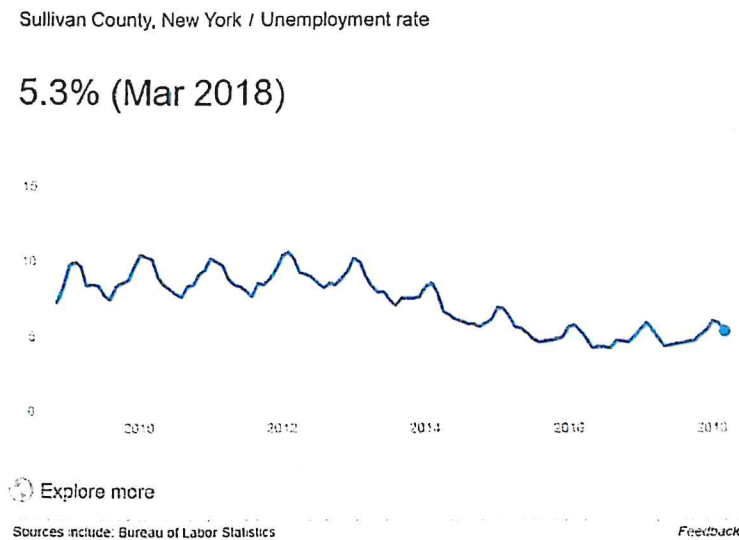


Figure 3.  
Sullivan County Unemployment Rate, 2009-2018  
(U.S. Dept. of Labor)

Comparing the share of workers by major industries between Rockland and Sullivan County reveals several consistencies (Tables 12 & 13). Noticeably underrepresented is the industry category "Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining" category. The Top 5 Industries in the town and the county (Tables 14 & 15) also bear similarities, with a noticeable and perhaps expected difference being the higher percentage for Rockland in the "Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food service" category.

OCCUPATION		
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	1,728	1,728
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	483	28.0%
Service occupations	507	29.3%
Sales and office occupations	388	22.5%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	164	9.5%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	186	10.8%
INDUSTRY		
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	1,728	1,728
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	0	0.0%
Construction	168	9.7%
Manufacturing	85	4.9%
Wholesale trade	88	5.1%
Retail trade	192	11.1%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	27	1.6%
Information	26	1.5%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	34	2.0%
Prof., scientific and mngmt; administrative & waste mngmt. services	171	9.9%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	530	30.7%
Arts, entertainment; recreation; accommodation and food services	239	13.8%
Other services, except public administration	54	3.1%
Public administration	114	6.6%

Table 12.  
Town of Rockland Share of Workers by Occupation & Industry (2010-14 Estimates)

OCCUPATION		
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	32,340	32,340
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	9,925	30.7%
Service occupations	7,274	22.5%
Sales and office occupations	7,404	22.9%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	4,087	12.6%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	3,650	11.3%
INDUSTRY		
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	32,340	32,340
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	552	1.7%
Construction	2,711	8.4%
Manufacturing	2,037	6.3%
Wholesale trade	927	2.9%
Retail trade	3,934	12.2%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	1,552	4.8%
Information	578	1.8%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	1,521	4.7%
Professional, scientific, and mngmt., and administrative and waste mngmt. services	2,307	7.1%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	9,590	29.7%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	2,651	8.2%
Other services, except public administration	1,596	4.9%
Public administration	2,384	7.4%

Table 13.  
Sullivan County Share of Workers by Occupation & Industry (2010-14 Estimates)



Town of Rockland		
INDUSTRY	Estimate	Percent
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	530	30.7%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	239	13.8%
Retail trade	192	11.1%
Professional, scientific, management, and administrative and waste management services	171	9.9%
Construction	168	9.7%

Table 14  
Town of Rockland, Top 5 Industries, 2010-14

Sullivan County		
INDUSTRY	Estimate	Percent
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	9,590	29.7%
Retail trade	3,934	12.2%
Construction	2,711	8.4%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	2,651	8.2%
Public administration	2,384	7.4%

Table 15  
Sullivan County, Top 5 Industries, 2010-14

### Place of Work

Figure 5 and Table 16 do not reveal anything out the ordinary. Additional census data shows that an average of about 5% of the workforce 16 years and older worked at home (for the years 2010-16). With improved internet (or broadband) access – one of the recommendations of this plan – this average could be increased. Rockland is a desirable setting from which to conduct a small business, but reliable, higher-speed internet is an essential requirement, especially among younger “millennial” workers, some of whom have already demonstrated interest in relocating to the town.

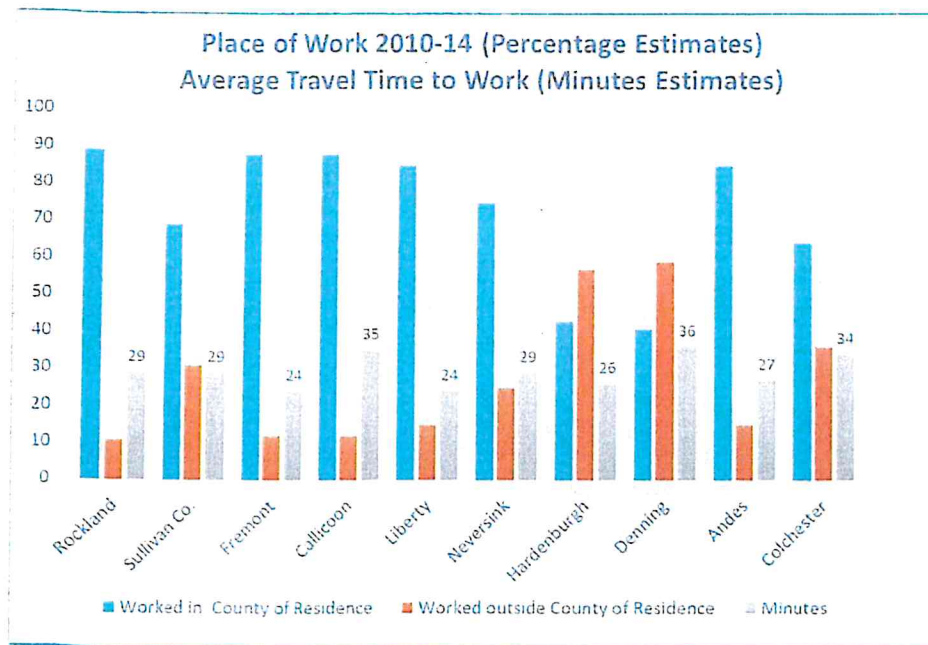


Figure 5.  
Place of Work and Travel Time to Work, 2010-14  
Town of Rockland, Surrounding Towns, and Sullivan County

	Estimate
Total:	1,561
Less than 30 minutes	777
30 to 59 minutes	642
60 or more minutes	142

Table 16.  
Town of Rockland  
Travel Time to Work, 2010-14

COMMUTING TO WORK		
Workers 16 years and over	1,640	1,640
Car, truck, or van -- drove alone	1,346	82.1%
Car, truck, or van -- carpooled	101	6.2%
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	9	0.5%
Walked	97	5.9%
Other means	8	0.5%
Worked at home	79	4.8%
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	28.8	(X)

Table 17.  
Town of Rockland, Means to Work, 2010-14

## Tax Rates

	County Tax Rate	Town Tax Rate	School District Rate/\$1000 FV
Rockland	7.89	6.34	Liberty: 30.51 Livingston Manor: 16.37 Roscoe: 14.74
Fremont	7.89	4.08	Roscoe: 14.74 Sullivan West: 15.63
Callicoon	7.89	6.87	Livingston Manor: 16.37 Roscoe: 14.74 Sullivan West: 15.63
Liberty	7.89	9.03	Liberty: 30.51 Livingston Manor: 16.37 Sullivan West: 16.56 Tri-Valley: 18.75
Neversink	7.89	4.47	Liberty: 13.51 Livingston Manor: 16.37 Tri-Valley: 14.74
Hardenburgh		4.91	Livingston Manor: 16.37 Margaretville: 8.50
Denning		5.95	Tri-Valley: 18.75
Andes	5.49	3.49	Andes: 7.22 Delhi: 13.45 Downsville: 9.24 Livingston Manor: 16.37 Margaretville: 8.50
Colchester	5.49	2.74	Downsville: 9.24 Livingston Manor: 16.37 Roscoe: 18.50

Table 18.  
Overall Property Tax Rates for Rockland and Adjoining Towns  
Fiscal Year Ending 2015  
(NYS Office of Real Property Tax Services)

## Residential Growth and Housing

Although the population of the town dropped between 2000 and 2010, the number of housing units increased (Table 19). This could be due in part to construction of second homes -- units whose owners are often not reflected in the census for the town. Renovations of existing housing stock that result in additional units may also be a factor. Available data for building permits (Table 20), although not for the same period, indicates a large number of permits but only a small fraction for new homes.



Municipality	2000	2010	Percent Change
Rockland	2475	2755	11.3
Sullivan County	44730	49186	10.0
Fremont	1182	1323	11.9
Callicoon	1797	2003	11.5
Liberty	5350	5495	2.7
Neversink	1960	2045	4.3
Hardenburgh	275	344	25.1
Denning	517	531	2.7
Andes	1326	1459	10.0
Colchester	1587	1822	15.0

Table 19.  
Housing Units 2000-10  
Rockland, Sullivan County and Adjoining Towns

Year	Total	1 or 2-Family Dwelling
2013	134	(not available)
2014	192	6
2015	208	5
2016	175	12
2017	174	7

Table 20.  
Town of Rockland, Building  
and Zoning Permits

# of Parcels	Residential Prop. Class. Code	Description
1247	210	Single – Family
4	215	Single w/ apt.
47	220	Two-family
8	230	Three-family
253	240	Rural
1	241	Primary w/ ag
150	260	Seasonal
217	270	Manfrd. Housing
10	271	Mobile
27	280	Multi-Purp./Structure
3	281	Multiple
1967	Total Residential	
3604	Total Parcels	

Table 21.  
Town of Rockland Residential  
Parcels, 2016  
Sullivan County Office of Real  
Property Tax Services

	Estimate
Rockland	148,000
Sullivan County	168,000
Fremont	192,700
Callicoon	201,400
Liberty	141,700
Neversink	169,700
Denning	223,800
Hardenburgh	241,700
Andes	188,300
Colchester	131,400

Table 22.  
Median Value of Occupied  
Housing Units  
Rockland, Adjoining Towns and  
Sullivan County  
2010-14

Also of note is that 55 percent of all parcels in the town are classified Residential. Table 21 shows the breakdown by type of residential classification for these properties.

### Housing Values

In comparison with other area towns and the county, Rockland's housing values are lower (Table 22). In addition to census data, MLS listings from Roscoe and Livingston Manor (zip codes) for the years 2012 – 2016, show the average sold price for 152 homes was \$141,817, while the average asking price for these homes was \$157,223. Given Rockland's idyllic setting and easy access to the four-lane highway, values are likely to increase as economic activity does.

Municipality	Occupied	Owner-Occupied	Vacant
Rockland	57.9	70.4	42.1
Sullivan County	61.3	67.0	38.7
Fremont	45.9	79.4	54.1
Callicoon	64.0	79.7	35.7
Liberty	70.7	56.1	29.3
Neversink	71.6	79.8	28.4
Hardenburgh	32.6	76.8	67.4
Denning	44.1	75.2	55.9
Andes	43.3	86.1	56.7
Colchester	49.4	80.3	50.6

Table 23.  
Housing Tenure, 2010  
Rockland, Adjoining Towns, and Sullivan County

### Housing Vacancy and Second Homeownership

When examining census data for housing tenure in the town of Rockland and surrounding towns (Table 23), the higher vacancy rates are influenced by “seasonal, recreational, or occasional use”, a category that is a subset of vacant housing units. Second homeownership is an important factor in the town and the county. To gather information and learn more about various aspects of second homeowners, Sullivan County Division of Planning and Environmental Management completed the *2008 Second Home Owner Study: Assessing Attitudes, Consumer Behavior, and Housing Tenure among Second Home Owners in Sullivan County*.

Key findings show that Rockland has the third highest percentage in the county of second homes, at 11.2. Property assessment data gathered at the time (for properties with ownership addresses outside the town) reveals 614 properties in the town fell under the 200 Property Type Residential Classification Code (property used for human habitation), while the remaining 38 properties were classified under the 900 code, which includes private hunting and fishing clubs.

The study contains a series of survey results (Figure 6) and offers recommendations “to nurture the second home market.” These include:

- Establish a Periodic Think-Tank to Monitor and Discuss Future Trends of the Second Home Industry in the County, and
- Cultural and Public Interest Groups Need to Reach Out Second Home Owners Directly

Such recommendations could be initiated locally, as well as countywide.

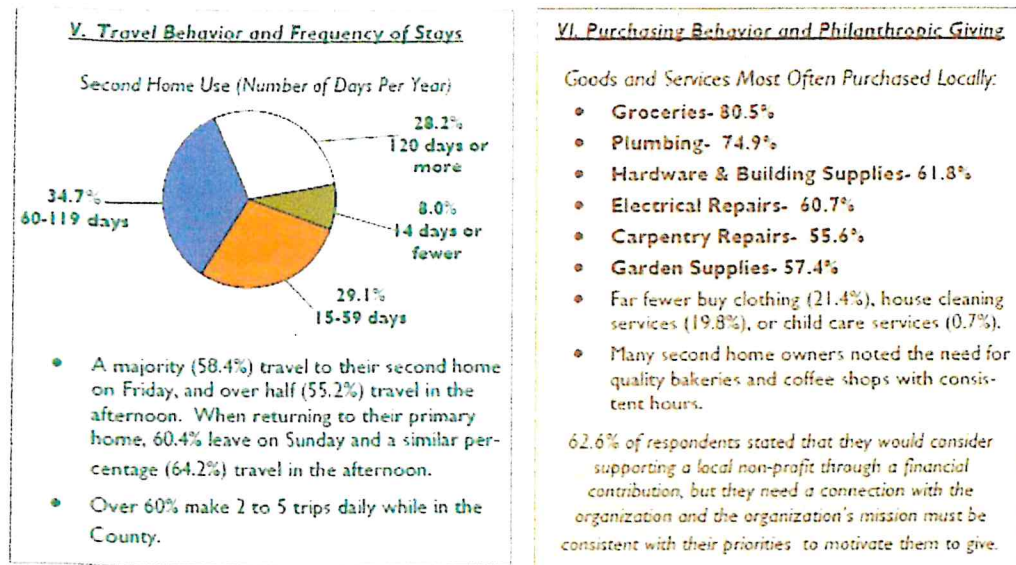


Figure 6.

Select Behavioral Patterns of Second Homeowners.  
 2008 Second Home Owner Study: Assessing Attitudes, Consumer Behavior, and  
 Housing Tenure among Second Home Owners in Sullivan County.  
 (Sullivan County Division of Planning and Environmental Management.)



## Appendix B

## APPENDIX B

### List of Reference Materials

#### Government Documents

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#### Other Documents

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Livingston Manor Historic Resource Survey. Larson Fisher Associates. 2015. Woodstock, NY.



## Appendix C

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*Memorandum*

To: Hon. Robert Eggleton, Supervisor  
Town of Rockland, NY

Date: February 16, 2016

Re: *2010 Town of Rockland Comprehensive Plan*



As per your request, I have reviewed the 2010 *Town of Rockland Comprehensive Plan* (the "Plan"). Based on this review, it would be in the Town's best interest to conduct a formal review of the Plan to determine if its information, goals, and strategies remain valid. In part, the review would determine if the underlying data and resulting assumptions upon which the Plan was based are still current. This action would be consistent with good planning practice which recommends that a municipality review and update (if necessary) its comprehensive plan in its entirety every five (5) years.

While I am not a professional planner, a number of places in the Plan would benefit from an update to reflect current information and new ideas. Since the 2010 Plan was finalized, several Sullivan County and regional planning studies have been completed which may offer new information and ideas in areas important to the Town such as transportation, economic development, agribusiness, agricultural protection, and land use planning and zoning for solar projects. Additionally, the results of the 2010 U.S. Census should be incorporated into the Plan which will allow the Town to evaluate changes to the population and its needs. All of this new information may well cause the Town to revise some of the Plan's goals and strategies. In addition, any outdated statements could be revised or deleted. Examples of places in the Plan in need of review and possible revision are listed below. Any update to the Plan would involve, in part, incorporating new information, updating goals and strategies as necessary and recommending any new zoning amendments.

Keeping a comprehensive plan current every five years has become increasingly important in securing State grants and loans. In addition, recent State changes to the Short Environmental Assessment Form under SEQR place increased emphasis on how a plan's vision and goals compare with a proposed project's various elements. In this changed State climate, it would be good planning practice for the Town to review its comprehensive plan at least every five years.

### **What is a comprehensive plan**

A comprehensive plan is a written document formally adopted by the local governing body (such as a town board) that contains the vision, goals and strategies for the future development and conservation of the community. The plan serves as the community's official policy statement relating to land use; natural and historic resources; economic development; housing and other related topics.<sup>1</sup> *A comprehensive plan and attendant zoning code are the blueprints for a community's future.*

The comprehensive plan is not a law in itself nor does it establish regulations. It is a guiding document which must be considered when developing land use regulations, such as zoning. Land use regulations are one of the means by which the plan's vision is implemented and *all* such regulations must be in accordance with the plan. In turn, an adopted plan, in part, gives a municipality more strength and defensibility when making tough land use decisions.

New York State law does not require towns to have a comprehensive plan, however, State law identifies comprehensive planning and the regulation of land use as "among the most important powers and duties" granted by the State to a town government.<sup>2</sup>

### **Comprehensive plan review and update – why update?**

By their very nature comprehensive plans require periodic review because the ideas and information on which they are based may change over time. Conducting a review of the comprehensive plan does not necessarily mean that an update to the plan is warranted. If the review concludes that the plan's ideas and information remain valid, then the process can stop there. If, however, the review concludes that revisions to the plan are necessary, then the update process can commence.

New York State town law specifies that the town board, or by town board resolution, the town planning board or special committee may prepare a comprehensive plan or update thereto. The Rockland Town Board would have to decide how it wants to proceed with the process.

### **2010 Rockland Comprehensive Plan – why update now?**

There are numerous places in the Plan where revisions could be made. Some of these are changes that would incorporate new information and delete outdated statements. Any revisions to the Plan's goals and strategies will require thoughtful consideration of new ideas and current information. Listed below are just a few examples of areas in the Plan that would benefit from review and possible revision. They are as follows:

---

1. New York State Law § 272-a suggests fifteen (15) areas that "may" be addressed in a comprehensive plan along with other topics consistent with a community's orderly growth and development.

2. NYS Town Law § 272-a.



1. The Plan lacks a Vision Statement. A vision statement describes the “ideal” future of the community. It is the platform upon which a plan’s goals and strategies are based, so it is a critical part of any plan. An example of a vision statement is as follows:

*In the year 2025 and beyond, the Town of “X” is a community of productive agricultural areas, attractive residential neighborhoods, cohesive hamlet centers, and protected undeveloped lands. These places are suitably connected by accessible regional highways and streets and linked by a network of walkways and trails. The Town offers convenient access to all that the region—including surrounding counties, the New York metropolitan area, and upstate New York—has to offer. “X” is recognized for the continuing legacy of its rich agricultural heritage, the excellence of its schools, the quality of its public safety and community services, the abundance of its historic resources and recreational opportunities, the productivity of its local businesses, and the beauty and health of its natural environment. The exceptional quality of life contributes to the economic growth and prosperity of the Town and the region, assuring that “X” can continue to meet the increasingly diverse needs and expectations of its residents in a fiscally sustainable manner.*

2. The information, tables, and any discussion of needs in each section should be updated to reflect current information such as the 2010 U.S. Census demographics, property tax rates, land use maps, and any changing needs of the Town.
3. New conditions need to be factored into the Plan. For example, the State’s new Solar PV Community Net Metering program creates a need to incorporate solar language into the Plan and to create zoning regulations specific to solar arrays.
4. Better organize the Plan using detailed, stand-alone topic sections each with their own specific recommendations as suggested below. While some of these topics exist in the current Plan, in many cases the discussion is both cursory and thin on recommendations. *In particular, the sections on economic development and agribusiness lack a discussion of the existing business climate and solid actions to be taken in order to attract new businesses and retain existing businesses.*

Suggested revision to the Table of Contents including new stand-alone sections:

Section 1 – Introduction

Purpose

Vision Statement – new

Background and Process – new

Regional and Local Planning Efforts to Date – new

Content – new

SEQRA – new

Section 2 – Setting

Section 3 – Summary of Socioeconomic Conditions – new

Section 4 – Natural Resources

Section 5 – Residential areas – new

Section 6 – Commercial Mixed Use Areas – new

Section 7 – Economic Development

Section 8 – Agriculture (agribusiness) – new

Section 9 – Transportation

Section 10 – Community Services

Section 11 – Cultural, Historic and Recreational Resources – new

Section 12 – Proposed Land Use & Zoning Changes – new

Section 13 – Implementation – new. Itemize strategies from every section and assign each a priority ranking and identify the party(s) responsible to implement them.

#### Appendices

5. There is a lack of important reference maps in the Plan. Such maps are vital planning tools in making informed decisions affecting the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development of the community. A list of certain maps typically found in good comprehensive plans is as follows:
  - Existing zoning map
  - Map showing proposed zoning changes (if any)
  - Map of the Town showing roads, hamlets, streams, etc.
  - Map showing the Town's location within Sullivan County and the State
  - Existing land use map showing actual use by parcel for residential, commercial, farms, etc.
  - Agricultural District map
  - Map of existing school districts
  - Map of existing fire districts
  - Municipal water and sewer district maps
  - Environmental features map – showing wetlands, flood plains, streams, etc.
  - Groundwater resources map
  - Historic, cultural & recreational resources map – showing parks, historic structures, etc.
6. List specific projects within relevant sections of the Plan. For example, if a park needs to replace old playground equipment or add new equipment to meet growing demand, then list the specific type equipment in the section on Cultural, Historic and Recreational resources. Creating new parks, walkways/trails and improvements to potable water and wastewater facilities are other examples of projects to list. The State's revised grant system places increased emphasis on projects that can demonstrate evidence of public support. Projects listed in a comprehensive plan are presumed by the State to have public support.

This is by no means an all inclusive list of areas in the Plan that would benefit from a review and potential update. However, the list and this memo will hopefully provide the Town Board with a clear sense of (a) why the existing Plan should be reviewed, (b) what areas of the Plan could benefit from an update, and (c) how the Town would benefit from this action.

---

END

## Appendix D



# Roscoe Community Visioning Workshops

August 20, 2007

## What We Love

### Our Setting:

Natural Beauty\*\*\*\*\*  
Mountains\*\*  
Rivers \*\*\*  
Location - streams & scenery  
Natural resources (4-season recreation)  
Outdoor resources  
Wilderness (hiking, biking, etc.)  
Environment  
Fishing  
Mountains  
Views  
Pretty  
Snowy winters

### Our Character:

Small town feel\*\*\*\*\*  
History\*\*  
Great potential!  
Good place to raise kids  
Quiet  
Safe  
Main Street  
Farm Market  
Outdoor Café  
O&W Museum  
Library

### Our Community:

People \*\*\*\*  
Caring & giving people  
Great neighbors  
Togetherness\*\*  
Sense of community  
Mix of people  
Welcoming  
Friendliness  
No-one bothers you, but everyone pulls together

## What We Would Like to Change

### Improve Appearance:

Appearance\*\*\*

Empty buildings \*\*\*

New sidewalks \*\*\*

Better curb appeal (exits)

Stewart Ave. & Old 17

Old 17 needs a face lift \*\*

Beautify entrance ramps

One color on Main St?

Need a cohesive look

Code enforcement

Cosmetic improvements

TLC

Clean up

Walkability

River clean up

### More Recreational Activities:

Fix pool! \*\*\*\*\*

Riverside park\*\*\*

Recreation for kids

Family-oriented activities

Activities for kids & teens\*\*

Structured activities for youth

Recreational opportunities for everyone

Walking path around pool

Walking trail along river

Family/recreation center

Community Center

Swimming places

Gathering spot

Skate park

Indoor pool?

Science Fair

### Economic Development:

More tourism

More flyers & better promotion

Tax incentives to fill empty buildings

New investment in buildings

Business development

More taxable property

Better grocery store

Fix movie theatre

More arts

Timing of events  
People to man things  
Missing a market to capitalize on

**Community Needs:**

Pool  
Swimming holes  
Community recreation area  
Bicycle and walking paths  
Youth and elderly health  
Band concerts  
Expand Winter Fest  
Harvest events  
Expand business season  
Community Center  
Code enforcement  
Street repairs

**Community Appearance  
and Aesthetics**

**Community Assets:**

Good first impression  
Natural beauty of the area  
"Trout Town USA"  
Small Town America feel  
Easy on/Easy off  
Welcoming & skilled artists  
Farmers' Market

**Community Problems:**

Code enforcement  
Lack of community involvement  
Lack of communication  
Lack of funding  
Resistance to change  
Lack of Leadership  
Lack of Information  
Need to include weekenders

**Community Needs:**

Neglected buildings & homes  
Sidewalks  
Parking  
Traffic patterns  
Community gathering space  
Public art  
Benches & parks  
Better publicity for events  
Improved welcome area  
Litter pick-up  
Community clean up assistance



# Roscoe Community Visioning Workshops

## Summary of Focus Group Findings

### Business Development and Tourism

#### Community Assets:

Natural resources  
(streams, mountains, seasons)  
Marketable location  
EZ on/EZ off from Route 17  
Existing business infrastructure  
Name recognition:  
Roscoe, Trout Town USA  
History (fishing, railroad, etc.)  
O&W Museum  
Eateries  
Bus service from metro areas  
Quality nursing home

#### Community Problems:

Insufficient commitment to marketing  
Lack of rooms/lodging  
River (aesthetics)  
Flooding  
Parking space & requirements  
Code enforcement  
Abandoned buildings  
Snow removal  
Public perception  
Web page

#### Community Needs:

Commitment to advertising  
Sign ordinance  
Town traffic control  
Highway signs  
Local marketing  
Rooms/beds  
Grocery store

### Infrastructure and Community Services

#### Community Assets:

Woods & water  
Accessibility to the highway

Interested community members  
History  
Talent & ability  
Dual community –  
    P/T & F/T residents  
School  
Riverside Park site location  
Public library  
Museum  
Strong community theatre group

**Community Problems:**

Apathy/Customer service manners  
Slow speeders down  
Traffic  
Lack of community constables  
Abandoned health clinic  
Poor attendance at town meetings  
Union Street garbage  
Cost of utilities

**Community Needs:**

Spa at the Campbell Inn  
Open the Antrim!  
Pharmacy  
Theatre  
Riverside Park for film, park, fun  
Public services (restrooms)  
Ample parking  
A “commons” or gathering space  
Another cell tower  
Color to the “ROSCOE” sign  
Manned information booth  
Displaying our history  
Pool

**Recreation and  
Social Issues**

**Community Assets:**

Pool (under school control)  
Determination of residents  
Fishing  
Hunting  
Outdoor activities  
Surrounding countryside  
Areas to develop needs  
Fireman’s Park

**Community Problems:**

Floodplain area  
Pool cracking  
Elderly  
Insurance problems

Roscoe Community Visioning Workshops  
Summary of Project Ideas

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM						
Project Title	Project Description	Cost?	Difficulty?	Timeframe?	Controversy?	Votes
New Enhanced Web Site	This project involves developing a new web site that is to date with today's technology. The new web site will be complete with information on all outdoor activities, businesses and services.	Low	Easy	Short	None	18
Roscoe Outdoor Publication	This project would involve printing a yearly magazine with information on everything outdoors - including fishing, hunting, biking, etc.	Medium	Medium	Short	Moderate	13
Real Impact Advertising	This project involves developing a high impact advertising campaign to direct visitors to Roscoe, including TV ads on regional cable channels, advertising at local outlets and print ads in publications such as the Bethel Woods program.	High	Easy	Short - Long	None	13
Highway Business Directory	This project involves installing a business directory at the exit ramp that would provide clear, concise direction for visitors upon entering Roscoe.	Medium	Easy	Short	None	3
Catskill Grocers Sign	This project involves utilizing the ideal visibility of the Catskill Grocers building to entice travelers to visit our town. A mural could be painted or a sign placed on the side of the building proclaiming "East or West Exit 94 is the best!"	Low	Easy	Short	Moderate	6

RECREATION & SOCIAL ISSUES						
Project Title	Project Description	Cost?	Difficulty?	Timeframe?	Controversy?	Votes
Seasonal Banners & Flags	This project involves purchasing seasonal banners to display throughout the year - patriotic, trout, holiday, harvest, etc.	Medium	Easy	Short	None	2
Fall Harvest Programs & Events	This project involves developing a series of harvest-themed events to be kicked-off with the September Fall Festival. Activities and events to be held every weekend in October could include hay rides, cornstalk decorating, scarecrow competition, scary story time, square dances...	Medium	Medium	Short	None	3
Ice Skating Rink	This project involves creating a temporary ice skating rink and would include getting permission from the property owner, purchasing a liner and restoring some benches.	Low	Easy	Short	None	4
Recreation Hall	This project involves utilizing the existing Rockland Fire House as a "recreation hall" with activities such as bingo, low-impact exercise, expanded senior activities, art programs for kids, movie nights, etc.	Low	Easy	Short	Moderate	6
Walking Path Around School Yard	This project involves developing a designated walking trail around the perimeter of the school yard, connecting to the area that runs along the river by the bus garage.	Low	Easy	Short	None	6
Code Enforcement	This project involves stepping up code enforcement in Roscoe, forcing property owners to paint and repair empty buildings.	Low	Hard	Long	High	4
Pool Restoration	This project involves restoring the existing pool at the school through a bond referendum put up to vote. An alternative would be to find another location for a new pool to be built possibly by the Town.	High	Hard	Long	High	12
Town Gathering Spot	This project would involve purchase of the old theatre lot on Stewart Avenue where a gazebo could be placed and a "town square" developed.	High	Hard	Long	High	2



### INFRASTRUCTURE & COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Project Title	Project Description	Cost?	Difficulty?	Timeframe?	Controversy?	Votes
<b>Enhanced Code Enforcement</b>	This project would involve cleaning up the trash on Main St., Union St. & Stewart Avenue, getting rid of old cars and painting run down buildings and homes.	Low	Easy	Medium	Moderate	***
<b>Exit 94 West - Staging Area</b>	This project involves sprucing up the area around the existing directory sign at Exit 94 westbound with benches, seasonal decorations, etc. Will require approval from NYSDOT and may be impacted by I-86 work.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Moderate	1
<b>Stewart Avenue Enhancements</b>	This project involves several enhancements along Stewart Avenue, including planting trees, adding additional lighting on the east side of Stewart Avenue, new sidewalks, waste receptacles and public restrooms. It also involves contacting the Sherriff's Dept. for assistance with slowing down speeders.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Moderate	13
<b>Wetland Park</b>	This project involves developing a wetland park area on the property along the river. The property is town owned and would need to be cleared and maintained, and could include an information kiosk and porta-johns, but no infrastructure that could be damaged by flooding.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Moderate - High	8
<b>History Walk</b>	This project would involve placing signs and plaques about Roscoe's history along Old Route 17, Stewart Avenue, Highland Ave, etc.	Medium	Medium	Medium	None	7
<b>Flood Mitigation</b>	This project involves soliciting sponsors for a collaborative effort to provide protection of Roscoe and its history from further flooding.	Medium	Hard	Long	High	10

### COMMUNITY APPEARANCE & AESTHETICS

Project Title	Project Description	Cost?	Difficulty?	Timeframe?	Controversy?	Votes
<b>Targeted Code Enforcement</b>	This project involves targeting code enforcement along Old Route 17, Union Street and Rockland Road. Focus should be placed on paint & general repairs, debris removal, lawn care and making owners accountable for derelict buildings.	Low	Medium	Medium	Moderate	***
<b>Cultural Events</b>	This project involves utilizing open spaces in and around Roscoe for cultural events and year-round arts or music.	Low	Easy	Short	None	13
<b>Hiking Trails</b>	This project involves constructing new trails in the Roscoe, Cooks Falls and Livingston Manor area, as well as mapping existing trails	Medium	Medium	Medium	None	4
<b>Parking Evaluation</b>	This project involves evaluating existing parking and traffic flow in Roscoe. The goal would be to identify areas for expanded municipal parking (pre-flood acquisition property?) and possibly changing traffic patterns.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Moderate	1
<b>Art Installations</b>	This project would involve a "Public Art Initiative" designed to display local talent. Art installations could be placed in empty storefront windows, and an art opening night or art walk could be created.	Low	Easy	Short	None	11
<b>Sidewalk Installation</b>	This project involves securing funding for the replacement of existing sidewalks and the construction of new sidewalks along Stewart Avenue and Old Route 17.	High	Hard	Long	Moderate	3
<b>Scenic Mural</b>	This project involves painting a four-season scenic mural with a trout or other logo along Highland Ave that would be visible from Route 17.	Low	Easy	Short	Moderate	9
<b>Trout Town USA Icon</b>	This project would involve placing a huge symbol (trout or fly-fishing statue) on Route 17 near the Exit to Roscoe, perhaps by the "ROSCOE" sign.	Medium	Medium	Medium	None	1

## Appendix E

2013

## Livingston Manor Community Visioning Workshops Summary of Focus Group Findings

### Recreation and Social Issues

#### Community Assets:

Library  
Local Service Organizations  
- Catskill Art Society  
- Rotary  
- Lions Club  
- Ambulance/Fire Dept.  
Rotary Park - Ice Carnival  
River access  
Easy access to Route 17  
Wide Main Street  
Community Partnerships  
Multi-age community  
Positive businesses  
Beautiful school  
Caboose - info about things to do  
Livingston Manor Web Site

#### Community Problems:

Flooding/environmental issues  
Lack of jobs  
Poor communication among groups  
More community involvement (diversity)  
Better information to visitors  
Lack of youth activities  
Need more diverse businesses  
Get students to use the Library  
More activities beyond Main Street

#### Community Needs:

Community Center  
Youth/Senior all-purpose center  
More volunteers  
Engage youth more  
Local police dept.  
Better use of the river  
More parking  
More lodging/places to stay  
More communication  
Sidewalks on Upper Main  
River Walk

### Community Appearance and Aesthetics

#### Community Assets:

Natural beauty & river  
Beautiful school  
Caring volunteers  
Creative people/artists/CAS  
Local Promoters  
Rich history (web site)  
Abundant recreational opportunities  
Churches & programs  
Catskill Fly Fishing Museum  
Parks - Rotary/Renaissance  
Main Street (quaintness/accessible)  
Interesting facades/architecture  
Beautiful Victorian houses on side streets  
Planters/flowers/banners  
Layout of the business district  
Foundation of core businesses on Main St.  
Great parking  
Community gardens/gardeners  
Camping  
Easy highway access  
Covered Bridges  
Ice Fishing

#### Community Problems:

Knotweed eradication  
Litter  
Dog poop  
Empty lots (like "missing teeth")  
Crime/drugs/poverty  
Not enough full-time residents

#### Community Needs:

Façade improvements (Main Street)  
More history panels  
Riverwalk  
Stricter code enforcement  
Gateway improvements  
Repainting of buildings  
Extend sidewalk to the Library  
Dog Park  
Garbage cans  
Dog poop ordinances



# Livingston Manor Community Visioning Workshops

## Summary of Focus Group Findings

### Business Development and Tourism

#### Assets:

Physical beauty & setting of town  
Proximity to Route 17  
Tourist info near highway  
Walkable Main Street  
Bed & Breakfasts  
Fishing  
Pretty Town  
Good Mix of businesses  
Abundance of Artists  
Gateway to Catskill Park  
Proximity to NYC  
Library  
Fly Fishing Museum  
Catskill Art Society  
Manor Inn  
Trout Parade

#### Problems & Needs

Flooding  
Vacant & foreclosed storefronts  
Insufficient marketing of businesses  
Need business plan/marketing strategy  
Need a movie theatre/music venue  
Need facilities for locals & tourists  
Place to stay for weekend/B&Bs  
Community Calendar/Bulletin Board  
Need a mix of different businesses  
Large business as a draw  
Restaurants/Cafés  
Bakery  
Basic Department Store  
Antique Mall/Flea Market  
Fish Market  
Pharmacy  
Need more hiking/biking trails  
River walk with benches  
Equivalent of "high line" in NYC  
Encouragement to use trails  
Drugs/poverty/crime  
Neighborhood Watch/cameras  
Lack of public transportation  
Need more volunteers  
Swimming Pool

### Infrastructure and Community Services

#### Assets:

Boutique & Gourmet Shopping  
Creative & talented businesses  
Post office/bank/school  
Walkability  
Proximity of essential services  
Friends/colleagues/community  
Water & Sewer Plant  
Catskill Art Society  
Catskill Fly Fishing Museum  
High Speed Internet  
Easy parking  
Access to Route 17/I-86  
Catskill State Park  
Historic buildings/structures  
Dedicated volunteers & organizations  
Camping  
Trout Parade  
Railway Bed/Railroad Station  
Litter Pluck

#### Community Problems:

Parking on Main Street  
Drug problem @ park  
Lack of youth/senior facility  
No town pool  
Molding/decaying buildings  
Sewer system needs repair  
Foreclosed buildings  
Too much Section 8 housing

#### Community Needs:

School after hours (community center)  
New sidewalks (upper Main to Library)  
Better code enforcement  
Long-term public access to parks  
Medical care/dentist/pharmacy  
Municipal parking  
Jogging/hiking/biking/walking trail

## Livingston Manor Community Visioning Workshops Summary of Project Ideas

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM (GROUP 1)						
Project Title	Project Description	Cost?	Difficulty?	Timeframe?	Controversy?	Votes
Branding the Town	This project involves branding Livingston Manor as a "gateway to the Catskills" emphasizing its affordability, proximity to NYC, historic Main Street, and more.	Medium	Medium	Done in phases	None	3
Recruit & Target Businesses	This project involves developing a strategy to recruit new businesses to Livingston Manor, including researching other successful towns with a similar draw. Priority would be recruiting restaurants and B&Bs.	Medium	Medium	1-3 years	None	15
Commercial Kitchen	This project would involve establishing a commercial kitchen in town with an emphasis on farm-to-table value-added co-packers. It would capitalize on the town's location, captive audience of producers in the area, and could possibly be a distribution hub.	High	Medium/High	2-5 years	Moderate	12
Fly Fishing Shop	This project involves attracting a fly-fishing shop to Livingston Manor, capitalizing on the Wulff School of Fly Fishing nearby.					0
Live Music/Bar or Comedy Club	This project involves attracting a business that would offer live music, such as a bar or comedy club that could be a place for musicians to perform, and also for special events.	Medium	Medium	Medium	None	18
Lodging/B&Bs	This project involves attracting new lodging establishments, including bed & breakfasts that are close to town.	High	Medium	Medium	None	3
Restaurants/ Food Truck	This project involves attracting new eating and drinking establishments to the town, as gathering hubs for the community. It also includes the idea of hosting a "Food Truck Festival" or simply creating a place where a food truck could park permanently with picnic tables, etc. (for example at the site of the former Hoos Building.	Medium	Medium	Medium	1 year	19

Livingston Manor Community Visioning Workshops  
**Summary of Project Ideas**

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM (GROUP II)						
Project Title	Project Description	Cost?	Difficulty?	Timeframe?	Controversy?	Votes
River Walk/Rails to Trails	This project involves establishing a river walk behind the businesses on Main Street and down to the Hoos Building which may end up being green space. Also make a connection to the rail-trail that goes through Parksville on the O&W right of way.	High	Hard	Long	Medium	22
Living Herb Center	This project involves creating a non-profit "Living Herb Center" which would feature a medicinal herb garden in a solar heating greenhouse, an educational conference and workshop facility, and a library.	Medium	Medium	Medium	None	12
Advertising/PR Committee	This project involves convening a group of individuals to spearhead and implement a business recruitment search.	Low	Easy	Medium	None	4
Extend Main Street to Shandelee	This project would involve developing a plan to extend the existing business district along Upper Main toward Shandelee where it doesn't flood. It would involve identifying business locations and potential tenants, and exploring the addition of sidewalks and lighting.	Low	Medium	Medium	Moderate	3
Improve Parking Lot at Renaissance Park	This project involves improving the parking lot at Renaissance Park and making it more attractive and part of the park.	Medium	Medium	Short	None	2
Announcement/Bulletin Board	This project involves installing a centralized announcement board or community bulletin board where announcements of community events and activities could be posted.	Low	Easy	Short	None	1



Livingston Manor Community Visioning Workshops  
**Summary of Project Ideas**

INFRASTRUCTURE & COMMUNITY SERVICES (GROUP 1)						
Project Title	Project Description	Cost?	Difficulty?	Timeframe?	Controversy?	Notes
<b>Railroad Trail/ Parking</b>	This project involves creating a jogging, hiking, biking and walking trail where the railroad to Parksville is presently located. Parking lots would be located along the way with benches and bike racks. It could also incorporate a geo-caching site.	Medium	Medium	Medium	None	23
<b>Community Center @ School</b>	This project involves creating a community center for students, seniors, and the entire community to use. It could be located at the school and include after-school programs, use of gym, and possibly Friday night movies.	Medium	Medium	Short	None	5
<b>Health Care Infrastructure</b>	This project involves providing space/facilities for health care providers (MD, DDS, Pharmacist, Nutritionist, PT, OT, etc.) in Livingston Manor.	High	Hard	Long	None	0
<b>Wind Turbine/ Renewable Energy</b>	This project involves exploring the idea of developing a community-owned and developed wind farm to reduce the tax base for landowners.	High	Hard	Long	Moderate	22

Livingston Manor Community Visioning Workshops  
**Summary of Project Ideas**

INFRASTRUCTURE & COMMUNITY SERVICES (GROUP II)						
Project Title	Project Description	Cost?	Difficulty?	Timeframe?	Controversy?	Votes
New Business Corridor (Old 17)	This project involves turning Old Route 17 into a "new" business corridor for Livingston Manor. This would take advantage of available water & sewer infrastructure, as well as substantial off-street parking.	High	Hard	Long	High	3
New Business Corridor (Upper Main)	This project involves redeveloping Upper Main Street into a new business corridor, including possibly securing grant money to finance building renovations	High	High	Long	High	8
Sidewalks & Lights on Upper Main	This project involves completing the sidewalk project which was started 10 years ago by extending sidewalks onto Upper Main Street and adding matching lamp posts.	Medium	Medium	Medium	None	18
Rails to Trails Feasibility Study	This project involves evaluating the feasibility of creating a rail trail from Main St. in Livingston Manor to Morriston utilizing the old railroad bed. Such a trail could incorporate Sonoma Falls and the Catskill Fly Fishing Museum.	Medium	Easy	Medium	None	11
Redevelopment Consultant	This project involves hiring a consultant to evaluate and prepare a business plan for the redevelopment of Upper Main Street.	Medium	Medium	Medium	None	1



## Livingston Manor Community Visioning Workshops Summary of Project Ideas

RECREATION & SOCIAL ISSUES						
Project Title	Project Description	Cost?	Difficulty?	Timeframe?	Controversy?	Votes
Community Center & School	There is a great need for a central place for people to gather for programs and information. In the absence of constructing a new building, there are opportunities to use existing locations, such as the school.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	38
Community Center Without Walls	This project involves creating community center (in the absence of a physical building) by taking advantage of opportunities to program existing "spaces" such as the library, the Catskill Art Society etc.	Low	Easy	Short	Medium	5
Outdoor Recreation Area (Trails/River Walk)	This project involves using Rotary Park to create a trail system. There is a rail to trail connection in Livingston Manor and with some effort it could lead to Parksville, and could also incorporate the river.	Medium-High	Medium-Hard	Long	Medium	16
Volunteer Recruitment	This project would involve developing a strategy to recruit more community volunteers for Renaissance, Fire Department, Rotary, etc.	Low	Difficult	Ongoing	None	5
Communication: Bulletin Board, etc.	This project involves improving communication about community events through a community bulletin board that could be located on Main Street and/or social networking.	Medium	Easy	Ongoing	None	0



Livingston Manor Community Visioning Workshops  
**Summary of Project Ideas**

RECREATION & SOCIAL ISSUES						
Project Title	Project Description	Cost?	Difficulty?	Timeframe?	Controversy?	Votes
<b>Community Events</b>	This project involves creating new annual events (in addition to the Trout Parade and Ice Carnival) that will bring the community together. Ideas include barn dances, movies @ Renaissance Park, etc.	Low	Easy	Short	None	10
<b>Youth Board</b>	There is no existing structure to program events and activities for youth town-wide. This project involves exploring the feasibility of the Town Board formally establishing a Youth Board, or Volunteer Youth Commission.	Low	Easy	Short	Medium	13
<b>Enhanced Programs @ Library</b>	Everyone loves the Library! This project involves creating additional programming at the Library and communicating that to the public.	Medium	Easy	Ongoing	Low	14

Livingston Manor Community Visioning Workshops  
**Summary of Project Ideas**

COMMUNITY APPEARANCE & AESTHETICS						
Project Title	Project Description	Cost?	Difficulty?	Timeframe?	Controversy?	Votes
Sign Enhancement	This project involves improving signage throughout town, including at the Caboose and all entrances. The signage could include a covered bridge theme, and new directional signage for the covered bridges. Also, maybe a large sign that can be seen from Route 17 with space for community events.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Moderate	5
Entry/Exit Improvement	This project involves adding trees to Terry's Garden at the entrance/exit to Route 17, improving the fishing access parking area, and painting/refurbishing the caboose.	Medium	Medium	Long	None	7
Streetscape Amenities	This project involves repairing/replacing metal trash cans and lamp posts on Main Street, adding dog waste stations, resetting paver bricks, and adding iron benches to match the lamp posts and trash cans.	High	Medium	Long	None	4
Covered Bridge Theme	This project involves using covered bridges as a marketing/branding theme for Livingston Manor. It could include a logo contest, creating a covered bridge walking/bike tour and developing a brochure for the info kiosk.	Medium	Medium	Medium	None	24
River Walk/ Central Town Square	This project involves creating a central park on Main Street and making a connection along the river to Renaissance Park. It could include lighting along the pathway, and possibly an anchor restaurant.	High	Medium	Medium	Moderate	24