



TOWN OF CORNWALL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2025

**TOWN OF CORNWALL,
ORANGE COUNTY, NEW YORK**



Draft last revised: July 09, 2026

ADOPTED: _____

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Town of Cornwall Town Board

Josh Wojehowski, Supervisor
Tim McCarty, Deputy Supervisor
Wynn Gold
Mary Heed
Rokhsha Michael-Razi

Town of Cornwall Comprehensive Plan Committee

Wynn Gold, Chairman
Jason Burnham
Amy Richmond
Maureen Spaulding
Susanne Vondrak
Edward Warren

Legal Counsel:

Dominic Cordisco, Town Attorney, Drake-Loeb, PLLC

Technical Assistance:

Kristen O'Donnell, Town Planner
Lanc & Tully Engineering and Surveying, DPC

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
II. SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS.....	5
III. CULTURAL, HISTORIC, AND OPEN SPACE RESOURCES	9
IV. MAIN STREET/DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION.....	14
V. ZONING AND LAND USE	18
VI. NATURAL RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION.....	25
VII. SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE RESILIENCY.....	34
VIII. COMMUNITY SERVICES.....	32
IX. IMPLEMENTATION.....	41

Figures

Figure 1: Town Resident Tax Allocation

Figure 2: Town Open Space Map (from NRI)

Figure 3: Properties Located in a County Agricultural District

Figure 4: Existing Zoning

Figure 5: Town Fire Districts

Figure 6: Town Transportation Network (from NRI)

Figure 7: Public Water Districts

Figure 8: Public Sewer Districts

Appendices

Appendix A: Community Survey Response Summary

Appendix B: List of Historic Properties

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Comprehensive Plan Purpose and Authority

Section 272-a(1)(b) of New York State Town Law states that “Among the most important powers and duties granted by the legislature to a Town government is the authority and responsibility to undertake town comprehensive planning and to regulate land use for the purpose of protecting the public health, safety and general welfare of its citizens.” Section 272-a of New York State Town Law authorizes towns to carry out comprehensive planning efforts, to adopt a formal written Comprehensive Plan, and to periodically review and update their Comprehensive Plans. The Comprehensive Plan forms the basis for future land use regulations and subsequent zoning or subdivision revisions that may be necessary to implement the recommendations contained within this Plan.

This Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Cornwall is an update to the Town’s Comprehensive Plan Update 2019, which was adopted on May 22, 2019. That Plan Update recommended conducting reviews and updates to the Comprehensive Plan at a minimum of every five years.

B. Why Update Now?

It is important to carry out periodic updates to the Comprehensive Plan for several reasons: Comprehensive Plans rely on projections and assumptions that may not come to pass. Circumstances change, such as state, regional and local economies, development patterns, population growth and distribution patterns, and climatic conditions. The Town must take these factors and conditions into account while preparing for its future.

C. Public Participation and Input

Public participation played a central role in developing the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Update. Building on the 2019 Plan, this update was shaped through an extensive community engagement process, spanning several months and designed to ensure that residents, businesses, and civic organizations had meaningful opportunities to contribute their ideas and priorities.

In early 2025, the Town Board established a Comprehensive Plan Committee (CPC) composed of residents, business owners, and representatives from the Planning Board, Conservation Advisory Council, and Economic Development Advisory Committee and charged it with reviewing and updating the 2019 Cornwall Comprehensive Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan Committee meetings were open to the public. Public input and comments were invited and meeting minutes were made publicly available, ensuring transparency throughout the process.

Community Survey

A community-wide survey was conducted from April through June of 2025 to gather quantitative and qualitative feedback from residents and local business owners, representing both the Town and Village. The survey included more than 40 questions covering housing, land use, quality of life, transportation, environment, and economic development. It received **647 responses** and served as one of the most comprehensive public datasets ever collected for Cornwall. Results showed broad support for environmental protection, attainable housing, and Main Street revitalization, and informed every subsequent phase of the plan. A summary of the Survey Responses is included in Appendix A.

Visioning Workshops and other Public Forums

A **Community Vision Workshop** was held at Munger Cottage on **May 29, 2025**, inviting residents to collaboratively define a shared vision for Cornwall’s future. Participants engaged in facilitated discussions, visioning exercises, and a live prioritization activity to identify the most important long-term goals. Prioritization voting was extended to allow attendees of River Fest 2025 to cast their votes as well. More than 130 participants ranked key priorities, with top selections including **Recreation and Trails, Open Space and Environmental Protection, Economic and Business Development, and Attainable Housing.**

Building on the outcomes of the visioning process, the Town hosted a **Goals & Policies Public Workshop** on October 27, 2025, at Munger Cottage. This workshop provided residents with an opportunity to review and comment on the draft community vision, goals, and policy updates being considered for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan. The session included an overview presentation highlighting updated objectives across chapters, such as Cultural and Historic Resources, Main Street Revitalization, Zoning and Land Use, Natural Resources, and Community Services, followed by an open mic session for public feedback.

The workshop’s purpose was to “align the community to our updated vision and goals for Cornwall” and ensure the proposed policies reflected the town’s shared values, priorities, and lived experiences. Feedback from this session guided the refinement of the final draft before it was presented to the Town Board.

Additional public forums and outreach events were held throughout 2025 to engage a broader cross-section of the community.

- At the **5th Community Leadership Forum** at the Cornwall Public Library, residents discussed infrastructure projects, attainable housing, and communication improvements with Town and Village leadership.
- A **Riverlight Park Community Feedback Session** gathered input on park design, recreation priorities, and community center needs, reinforcing the importance of accessible public spaces and sustainable investment in local amenities.

- The Committee also conducted outreach at community events such as **RiverFest** and through partnerships with the school district, recreation department, and local organizations to ensure diverse participation across age groups and neighborhoods.

Integration with NY Forward & Regional Plans

The 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update was closely coordinated with the **Cornwall NY Forward Strategic Investment Plan (2023)**, which engaged local leaders, business owners, and residents in downtown revitalization planning. Together, these processes provided a unified community vision linking Main Street improvements, open space preservation, and economic growth.

The **Orange County Comprehensive Plan (2025 Update)** retained the Priority Growth Area concept which recommends concentrating sustainable development in and around “centers” such as cities, villages, hamlets – which have public utilities and sufficient transportation infrastructure -- in order to maintain the County’s rural countryside. The Town of Cornwall Comprehensive Plan supports this concept and reflects additional countywide goals for housing diversity, environmental stewardship, and climate resilience.

The **Orange County Open Space Plan** (June 2004) and is incorporated into the County’s Comprehensive Plan. The recommendations for open space preservation, trail development, and parkland development contained within the County Open Space Plan are supported through the recommendations contained within this Plan.

Orange County Bikeway Vision Plan (2023) recommends acquisition of a 10-mile segment of the abandoned railroad line from the Town of Cornwall to the County-owned Camp LaGuardia site in the Town of Chester to expand trail access to several municipalities terminating at the Huson River. The plan also recommends conversion of the Cornwall Branch O&W Rail right-of-way into a trail connecting the Salisbury Mills Train Station to Storm King Art Center. The Town Comprehensive Plan strongly supports this effort and any other initiatives to promote trail development and environmental tourism.

[The Village of Cornwall-on-Hudson Comprehensive Plan \(2021\) contains similar recommendations for the Main Street / Hudson Street corridor to maintain the dense, mixed-use character and seamless, multi-modal connection from the Town into the Village.](#)

Public Hearing & Adoption

Following completion of the draft Comprehensive Plan Update, the Town Board held a **formal public hearing** to solicit final community feedback before adoption. This hearing provided residents, business owners, and stakeholders the opportunity to comment on the proposed plan and any related zoning recommendations. All written and verbal comments were entered into the public record and reviewed by the Town Board before any final action is taken. The public hearing ensured that the plan’s adoption reflects both the extensive input gathered throughout the process and the community’s collective vision for Cornwall’s future.

Town of Cornwall Comprehensive Plan Vision Statement

Cornwall is envisioned as a thriving, inclusive, and environmentally sustainable community that protects its natural resources and honors its small-town charm while planning for responsible and sustainable future growth. Residents aspire to a town that is walkable, interconnected, and vibrant—with a revitalized Main Street, a variety of accessible public parks and recreational amenities and diverse local businesses that serve both residents and visitors.

Key objectives of the Plan are as follows:

- **Enhanced Connectivity:** Improved pedestrian and bicycle access, walkability, and ADA-compliant streetscapes linking Main Street, Hudson Street, Donahue Farm, the waterfront and regional trail systems.
- **Main Street Revitalization:** A dynamic blend of shops, services, cafes, and public spaces that reflect the character and creativity of Cornwall.
- **Environmental Stewardship:** Expanded open space and natural resource protections;
- **Cultural Destination:** Growth in arts and heritage tourism.
- **Attainable Housing:** Increased diversity in housing options to support seniors, families, and young professionals.
- **Community Identity:** A distinct brand and narrative that positions Cornwall as both rooted in history and oriented toward innovation.

II. SOCIO ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Analysis of current population trends and household characteristics provides valuable data to inform this Cornwall Comprehensive Plan Update. For the Plan to meet the community's needs, it must be based on an understanding of the Town's population and the community's socioeconomic structure. Below is a snapshot of Town-wide demographic information.

A. Population Profile

The Town's population grew steadily for the decades between 1970 and 2000. Since 2000, the Town's population has remained relatively steady with an overall increase of just under 500 people, or approximately 4%. By comparison, the Town's growth rate was considerably slower than the County as a whole. During the same time period, Orange County experienced just over 19% increase in population. The Town's population is expected to remain relatively stable into the future. Earlier Comprehensive Plans had anticipated continued higher growth rates. As can be seen from Table 1, this did not occur.

Table II- 1: Population, 2000-2023

Year	Town of Cornwall (including the Village)	Village of Cornwall-on-Hudson	Orange County
2000	12,307	3,064	341,367
2010	12,646	3,018	372,813
2020	12,884	3,075	401,310
2023	12,801	3,046	407,470

Source: US Census with 2023 estimates from the American Communities Survey

Cornwall contains 3.14 percent of Orange County's total population as of 2023. The age of town residents is spread fairly evenly over each age cohort with the largest age group in the Town being 25 to 39 years old and the median age within the town of 42. Understanding the age distribution of Town residents helps the Town to understand the needs of its residents.

Table II- 2: Age Distribution within the Town

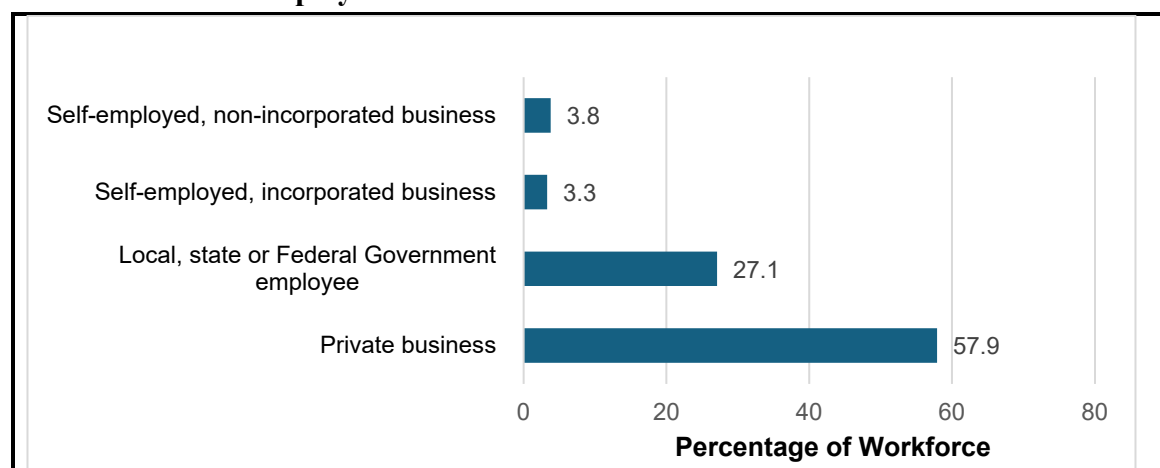
Age	% of Total Population
<5	5.2%
5-14	12.1%
15-18	3.9%
20-24	6.4%
25-39	17.5%
40-54	11.7%
55-64	14.6%
65-79	15.2%
80 +	4.3%

Source: 2023 American Community Survey

Table II- 3: Civilian Workforce Distribution by Industry

Industry	% of civilian workforce
Education, health care and social assistance	31.5%
Professional, scientific, management, administration and waste management	12.4%
Public administration	11.3%
Retail	9.2%
Manufacturing	7.0%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	6.3%
Construction	5.6%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food service	5.3%
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	3.2%
Other services	2.8%

Source: 2023 American Community Survey

Table II-4: Town Employment Breakdown

Source: 2023 American Community Survey

The Town's workforce is overwhelmingly employed in education, health care and social service industries. Town's largest employers are primarily schools and healthcare providers. The top five employers in the Town are Montefiore- St. Luke's Cornwall Hospital, Cornerstone Family Healthcare, Cornwall Central School District, Tectonic Engineering, and the Storm King School. It is important to note that just over 27% of the Town is employed by the local, State or Federal government. As expected, this total is much higher than the countywide percentage because of the Town's proximity to West Point.

As was the case in 2019, Cornwall residents overwhelmingly commute to work by driving alone (74%) with only 6.9% of residents choosing to carpool and 3.5% using public transportation. As would be expected, given recent changes in the economy, the number of individuals working from home more than doubled from 2019 to 13.1%. The average commute time is 32 minutes.

Table II-5: Household Income Data

	Town of Cornwall	Orange County	COH
Median Household Income (2023)	\$118,639	\$94,364	\$150,288
Poverty	4.9%	13%	2.4%

Source: 2023 American Community Survey

Household income in the Town of Cornwall is higher than the County as a whole. The 2023, average household income for households throughout the County was \$94,364. This is up 5.5% from 2019, while the Town of Cornwall median household income was up 9.6% from 2019 to \$118,639 in 2023. In the Village of Cornwall-on-Hudson, the 2023 median household income was \$150,288, 59.3% higher than the County-wide figure.

Despite the higher income levels in the Town, there are still some families that fall below the poverty level. A total of 4.9% of individuals Town-wide fall below the poverty level, up from the 2.65% reported in the 2019 plan. This remains well below the 13% county-wide total of individuals that are below the poverty level.

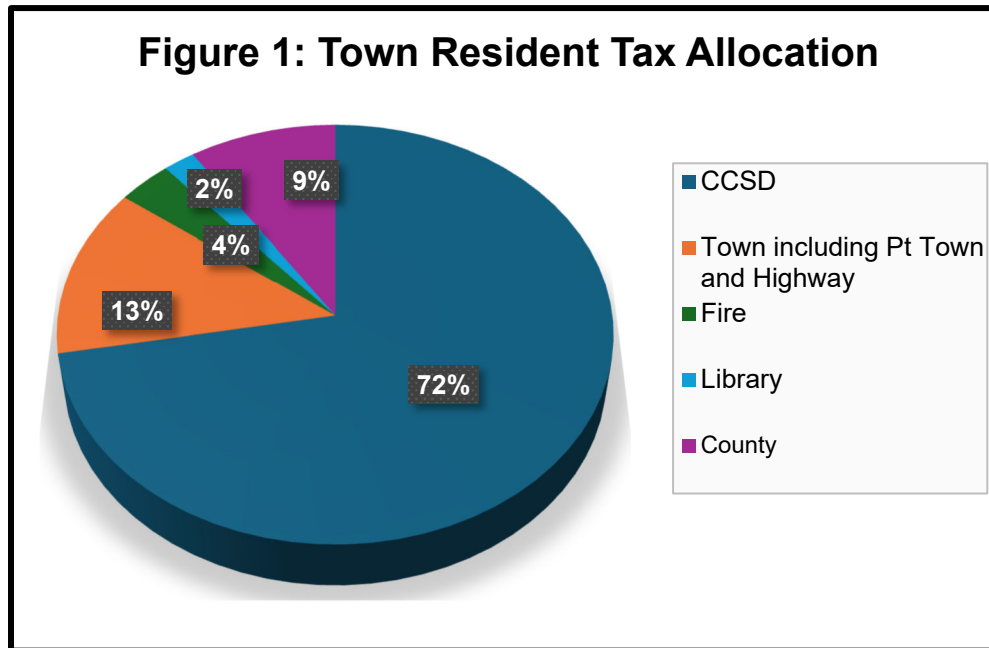
Income information alone does not paint a complete picture of the financial well-being of the Town's residents without considering household expenses. Per the 2023 American Communities Survey, the Town has 5,366 housing units, 76% of which are owner occupied and 78% are single family, detached dwellings. The average household with a mortgage in the Town pays approximately 30% of their income on housing expenses and 22.8% of households in town pay over 35% of their income on housing expenses. Despite this indicator of financial burden, this compares closely to the County-wide figure of 26% of households paying 30% or more for housing.

The current median home value in the Town of Cornwall is \$416,500 which is slightly higher than the County-wide median of \$391,800. Median home value increased in Orange County by more than 65% between 2019 and 2024. That increase is slightly higher than Dutchess, Putnam and Rockland Counties but less than Sullivan County. According to the 2024 Regional Housing Market Report from Pattern for Progress, several factors have caused home prices to rapidly increase since the Covid-19 pandemic. Thousands of households migrated north from the New York City Metro area and purchased homes for more than the asking prices. Wealthier households invested in single-family homes in our region for the intended purpose of using them as short-term rentals or second homes. The region overall has seen less housing for sale which has contributed to a situation where demand has far outpaced supply. And, although data are scant, many corporations are also purchasing homes to rent them back to local families. These factors and others have contributed to a housing market that has moved farther out of reach for neighbors, young households striving for homeownership, and seniors who want to downsize.

B. Local Tax Allocation

Taxes collected within the Town go to various purposes and taxing districts. A typical allocation of the total real property taxes collected annually within the Town is shown below in Figure 1.

The largest percentage, or 0.264 % of assessed property value, goes to the Cornwall Central School District followed by the Town and the County.



Source: Orange County Office of Real Property, assumes Canterbury Fire Department including hydrant assessment with no public utilities.

As discussed later in this plan, the Town of Cornwall has an abundance of parkland, open space resources and conservation lands. These lands contribute to the character of the Town, while at the same time, are wholly tax-exempt; the largest land holder being the Palisades Interstate Park Commission which owns Storm King Mountain State Park and Schunnemunk Mountain State Park, followed by Black Rock Forest Preserve, Inc., and Storm King Art Center.

III. CULTURAL, HISTORIC AND OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

A. Cultural and Historic Resources

The Town of Cornwall is located in a region that is rich in Colonial-era history and it was clear from the plan's public engagement that local residents value this history and its impact on the Town's character. During the Revolutionary War, the Continental Army traveled throughout the area that made up Cornwall, from West Point to Newburgh, with several structures reminiscent of that era still surviving today¹. There are multiple buildings and properties within the Town that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This includes the Quaker Meeting House, built in 1790 as the first religious meeting house in Cornwall, and still in active use. It also includes the Sands Ring Homestead, one of the oldest Dutch Colonial houses still standing in the area and one of the first meeting sites for Quakers in Cornwall, operating now as a living history museum focusing on Colonial-era activities. With the aid of state grant monies and local fundraising efforts as well as Town involvement, Sands Ring Homestead was rededicated in 2016 after completing major work that was needed to stabilize and preserve the structure.

There are 22 other properties in the Town, outside of the Village, (see full list in Appendix B) which are also listed on the National Register of Historic Places these include the Hatch Mansion at Storm King Art Center, Cromwell Manor, Canterbury Presbyterian Church, the Firthcliffe Fire House, and the A.J. Clark store on Main Street with many more historic buildings in the Village.

The Town has an active non-profit Historical Society that curates a growing collection of historic photos, information, and objects of local historical value. The Society occupies space in a separate building behind Town Hall and has a contractual arrangement with the Town securing the future ownership of the Society's collection. Munger Cottage is an important Town-owned community facility located on Town parkland near the Town Hall providing meeting space for community groups and organizations such as the Town's Senior Center. Expanding the functional space within this building will help provide for cultural and civic activities taking place within the building and in the surrounding Town parkland.

Annual community events such as July 4th festivities including parades, games, rides, activities and fireworks, a Fall Festival, the RiverFest in Cornwall-on-Hudson, and other seasonal activities promote community engagement and a deep sense of identity. The Town and Village are fortunate



The Sands-Ring Homestead, or Old Homestead, dates back to the 1700's. This Dutch-colonial style building is one of the oldest in Cornwall and one of the most historic. It was inhabited by the Nathaniel Sands family and their descendants from the early 1750's until 1907.

¹ "History of Cornwall" from the Town of Cornwall website: <https://cornwallny.gov/Town-Hall/Town-Historian/History-of-Cornwall>

to have active groups of organizers, who give generously of their time and skills to conduct these events.

The Hudson Highlands Nature Center is an outstanding nature and environmental education center headquartered on Muser Drive in the Town of Cornwall. The museum offers hands-on science and educational programs for children and adults focusing on the region's distinctive ecology. They also operate a Wildlife Education Center in the Village, fostering understanding and respect for ecology and the region's environmental resources.

Storm King Art Center, opened in 1960, is an outdoor museum that attracts visitors from all over the world. Visitors experience large-scale sculpture and site-specific commissions set on 500 acres of diverse rolling landscape, incorporating vistas of thousands of acres in its viewshed. The not-for-profit art center provides a unique and irreplaceable cultural resource that serves as a major tourist attraction while supporting dozens of local jobs, and significantly contributing to the local economy.

B. Open Space and Conservation

Cornwall has played a critical role in the history of conservation dating back to 1963 when Con Edison applied to construct a hydro-electric power plant at the base of Storm King Mountain which was opposed by local residents. Eventually making its way to the United States Second Circuit Court of Appeals, the case led to the formation of Scenic Hudson and provided the framework for formal public input on land development projects.

Cornwall's thousands of acres of scenic, research and conservation lands provide important ecological benefits, as well as recreational and tourism benefits, located only 60 minutes from the New York City metropolitan area.

Schunnemunk State Park, designated in 2003 from 2,400 acres of lands donated to the state for park purposes by the Open Space Institute, contains critical habitat areas, over 20 miles of regionally important trail network, including sections of the Long Path, and the highest point in Orange County at over 1,664 feet. It is noted that the Orange County Bikeway Vision Plan² recommends connection of the Schunnemunk Rail Trail to Storm King Art Center via the Erie Railroad Newburgh Branch to a section of the O&W Cornwall Branch. This segment would also directly connect the Bikeway to Cornwall Central High School. Since its state park designation, additional lands have been added, resulting in over 3,300 acres of rolling meadows, rivers and scenic mountain views highlighted by the iconic Moodna viaduct, the second highest and longest railroad trestle east of the Mississippi River.

² Prepared in 2023 by the Orange County Department of Planning

Storm King State Park contains 1,972 acres³ of steep, forested land, including the iconic Storm King Mountain. The park is accessible by NYS Routes 218 and 9W and provides hiking trails and scenic overlooks for dramatic views of the Hudson River.

Black Rock Forest is located adjacent to Storm King State Park on Route 9W. Now containing 3,920 acres of forested mountain land and reservoirs, which feed the Town and Village's public water system, it was initially established in 1927 by the Stillman family. The Black Rock Forest Consortium is a not-for-profit organization that maintains the forest as a scientific field station for the pursuit of ecological research studies, as well as educational programs for children, teachers, and the general public. The Consortium operates a Forest Lodge and a Science and Education Center to enable students and scientists from global institutions to pursue high level research, education, and conservation activities. There is also a network of 26 miles of publicly accessible trails within Black Rock Forest.

Black Rock Fish and Game Club owns tracts of undeveloped land used as a hunting preserve, and also maintains a meeting and event space in Mountainville. While these woodlands are not open to public access, they are used for recreational shooting and hunting by club members and play a role in the area's ecology.

Additional lands are either owned or protected with conservation easements by other conservation organizations. Included are active agricultural lands that are a valuable scenic resource in the vicinity of Schunnemunk Mountain and the inactive agricultural lands of the former Houghton Farm in Mountainville west of Route 32, once the subject of several paintings by Winslow Homer. Cornwall has long understood the importance of its abundant open space and conservation lands. As the Town continues its stewardship of these vital resources, it seeks sustainable approaches that both protect natural areas and maintain a healthy tax base to serve the community.

In 2019, the Town of Cornwall worked with several partners—including its Conservation Advisory Council, the Hudson Highlands Land Trust, the Orange County Land Trust, the Town of Blooming Grove, and the Village of Cornwall-on-Hudson—to create a Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) and an Open Space Inventory collectively called the Cornwall Natural Heritage Plan. These studies identified vital natural resources with the town, and prioritized important open space areas and their connections throughout the community. Both plans are hereby incorporated into this Comprehensive Plan and should be utilized to help inform land use decisions. An open space map from the NRI follows this page and the full reports can be found on the Town's website <https://cornwallny.gov/Community/Government/Cornwall-Conservation-Advisory-Council>.

³ Partially in the Town of Highlands

C. Agricultural Lands

Orange County has a long history of farming, and agriculture has shaped many aspects of the County as it exists today. Agricultural operations throughout Orange County include field crops such as corn, wheat, oats, rye, barley, hay, potatoes, dry beans and sod, vegetables and fruits, horticultural operations, including shrubs, ornamental trees and flowers; livestock and livestock products such as wool, milk and eggs, bees and beekeeping operations, aquaculture products and forestry products including maple syrup and Christmas Trees. Although today there is much less farmland and many fewer farms than historical highs, farming remains a dynamic, growing, and viable industry in the County as important for its contribution to the local economy as it is to its contribution to the character of the area. While the town of Cornwall does not have an abundance of active farms as many have been lost to development over the last several decades, three active farms remain along Angola Road and portions of the western portion of the town, within the Moodna Creek drainage basin are comprised of soils of statewide importance which lend themselves to crop production. Properties located within the County Agricultural District are shown on Figure 3.

D. Goals in regard to Cultural, Historic and Open Space Resources

- **Maintain** and **Protect** the Town's cultural and historic resources and pursue future opportunities for preservation grants when available;
- **Promote** these important resources both locally and regionally in order to attract visitors and generate economic development opportunities.

E. Recommendations:

- Review the Town's zoning regulations to require the consideration of historic and cultural resources and protected open space during the Planning Board environmental review process, to the extent practical. Require applicants to evaluate any potential impacts such as noise, visual impacts and traffic which could negatively impact these resources.
- Utilize the Conservation Advisory Committee (CAC) in its advisory capacity to ensure that the ecological integrity of open space, natural, and scenic resources in the town and village are maintained and enhanced. Consider the creation of a Conservation Board that could play a more prominent role in the review of development projects and provide input to the Planning Board on potential environmental impacts of land use and development.
- Continue to promote awareness of local historical resources through a combination of the Town's website, events such as local walking tours, farm dinners and class field trips. The Town maintains maps and information for a local Historic Walking Tour on its website <https://cornwallny.gov/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=sAFUL3jnVLA%3d&portalid=13>. The

map could be modernized with new clearer photos and made more user friendly with addresses or converted to mobile-friendly format. The walking tour could also be expanded to a driving tour with additional properties outside of the Main Street area; Jones Farm, the Moodna Viaduct, waterfront and other historical properties in the Town.

Historical and eco- tourism are growing areas of interest throughout Orange County and having an organized means to share information about the Town's resources will help to cultivate additional interest and generate economic development in the town. This will be of



value both for local as well as regional or other tourists. Additional efforts to promote awareness and enjoyment of these resources, as well as the local businesses that would benefit from spill-over business, should be pursued by the Town via improved community engagement. A new staff position should be considered and coordination should include continued and strengthened relationships with Cornwall Chamber of Commerce, County Tourism Department, Vision Hudson Valley and other local groups to host events and garner social media engagement.

- Improve informational and directional signage, with unified branding, in order to help direct visitors to cultural and open space resources as well as appropriate parking locations, trail or bikeway connections and local businesses.
- Continue to encourage the permanent preservation of agricultural properties through cooperation with private preservation organizations and ensure Town Zoning and other policies are consistent with NYS Agriculture and Markets Laws.
- [Consider development of a Community Preservation Plan to identify target parcels for conservation and long-term protection.](#)

IV. MAIN STREET REVITALIZATION

A. Existing Conditions

The Main Street Business District is the focal point of economic and social activity in the Town. Main Street's importance to Cornwall cannot be overstated. The historic importance is evident in the diverse range of architectural styles and buildings of significance along the Quaker Avenue/Main Street corridor extending from the Quaker Meeting House to Town Hall.

Any plan for the area should be based on a clear understanding of what the area means to the Town, the economic trends and opportunities in the region, and the needs of the Town's population, customers, and business owners. The Main Street Business District consists of two distinct sections with different characters:

The eastern section of Main Street (County Route 9), extending between Town Hall and Chadeayne Traffic Circle, is a traditional pedestrian-oriented Main Street with sidewalks on both sides of the street, on-street parking and a dense mix of office, service, retail and restaurant businesses with residential apartments on many upper floors. This area has a broad mix of architectural styles and façade materials. While several buildings date back to the 1800's, the majority of the corridor is comprised of residential conversions, modern construction or buildings that have been significantly modified since their original construction.

The western section of Main Street (Quaker Avenue/ County Route 107)) extending between the Chadeayne Traffic Circle to the corner of Cedar Lane is more modern in character with the focal points being the Cornwall Plaza Shopping Center and Montefiore -St. Luke's Cornwall Hospital. Sidewalks are provided on one side of the street opposite Cornwall Plaza with several crosswalks for pedestrian access. This area has no on-street parking but is served by large, shared commercial parking lots with limited access drives, or smaller individual business parking areas. The character of the western section of Main Street has remained relatively stable over the last 10 to 15 years.

The unique character of these two sections of the district should be taken into consideration in the plan for economic development and revitalization.

Recent developments within downtown include the construction of pocket parks such as Sands Ring Pocket Park (shown right) and Bridge Street Pocket Park, installation of new veteran flags along Main Street and replacement of the bridge



by Orange County Department of Public Works with associated pedestrian improvements, but very few if any new buildings have been constructed in this district over the last five years.

During public outreach, 65% of respondents to the Comprehensive Plan Survey selected aesthetic improvements (facades, lighting, landscaping) for downtown as a priority while the majority of respondents to the survey strongly agreed that that promoting tourism and small business should be a top priority for the town.

In a joint effort with the Village of Cornwall-on-Hudson, the Town has also recently completed a year-long planning effort through the New York Forward Grant. Within the town, grants will provide for new crosswalks, street furniture, street trees and native flowers, uniform way-finding signage along Main Street, improvements within Riverlight Park and establishment of a small-projects fund to offer capital improvement funding to small businesses. A summary of the Cornwall NY Forward initiative can be reviewed here: https://www.ny.gov/sites/default/files/2024-05/NYF_1_Cornwall_Strategic_Investment_Plan.pdf

B. Zoning

The entire downtown area from Tamara Lane to Cedar Lane is zoned General Commercial (GC). This is the only area of the Town that has this zoning designation. This zone permits offices, retail stores, dry cleaning pick up/drop off locations, personal services, household repair shops, eating and drinking establishments, banks, restaurants, schools of special instruction, medical and dental clinics, theaters, single-family dwellings and two dwelling units (apartments) above commercial uses by-right in this zone. Hospitals, libraries, museums, art galleries, day care centers, laundromats and on-site dry-cleaning businesses, health clubs, arcades, nursing homes, parking lots, storage garages, hotels, manufacturing/assembling/converting/processing by a maximum of two people, public communications/ utility towers and churches are permitted by Special Permit.

C. Parking

Main Street provides one travel lane in each direction with parallel parking on both sides of the street. While there are no parking meters, signs posted limit parking to two hours. Based on a 2023 town-commissioned parking study prepared by Creighton Manning there are 160 on-street parking spaces along Main Street, from Quaker Avenue to Hudson Street plus 88 additional on-street spaces on Clinton Street, Broadway, Torrey Lane and Bridge Street with additional public parking available in the Town Hall municipal Parking Lot.

The study concluded that there was adequate parking within the downtown business district but several recommendations for system improvements were made including better signage, improving infrastructure for alternate means of transportation and a meter/ payment system for

extended parking (more than three hours) on Main Street to free up spaces for in-and-out business use. The Town's parking utilization study can be reviewed at Town Hall.

D. Goals for the Main Street / Downtown business district

- Support for economic development within the Town's downtown commercial corridor.
- Amend the Zoning Code to modernize and expand permitted uses and accessory uses within the GC Zoning District.
- Ensure new projects and significant redevelopments are consistent with the character of the area.
- Enhance walkability, access by non-motorized transportation and connectivity.

E. Recommendations

- The Zoning Code should establish parameters for Planning Board review of architectural design of commercial projects along Main Street to ensure new projects and significant redevelopments are consistent with the character of the area and incorporate pedestrian design features such as large front display windows and location of parking to the rear or side of a building.
- Encourage mixed-use structures, with commercial development on the ground floor and residential apartments above, to increase housing options in the corridor. Currently, zoning only allows two units above commercial development. The town should remove this limitation in favor of a minimum floor area, so the number of apartments is based on the overall size of the building footprint. The GC Zone currently permits a maximum building height of 55 feet which could allow for four floors of apartments above commercial business on the ground floor. In order to limit the overall number of apartments and to ensure buildings remain consistent with the character of the business district, it is further recommended that the maximum height for Use Group B, in the GC District be reduced to 45 feet or four total stories, or less.
- Ensure a broad and contemporary mix of uses and accessory uses are permitted in the zone. Consider including a "catch-all" provision in the GC Zone to allow uses, which may not be contemplated at this time, but which are similar to those currently permitted in the zone.
- When a business intends to open in an existing building with no exterior site changes, consider allowing a waiver of the Site Plan approval process in order to expedite new business development on Main Street. The appropriateness of such a waiver could be reviewed at a technical work session.
- Review zoning requirements for parking to ensure they are consistent with the character of a modern business district and not encouraging excessive pavement.
- Review means of parking enforcement along Main Street in order to ensure cars are not parked all day in spaces intended for stop-in business.

- The GC Zoning requirements should be amended to ensure setbacks are consistent with the character of the existing area. **Many buildings on the eastern side of the traffic circle sit close to the sidewalk and abut adjacent buildings, it is the intent of this plan to continue that traditional development pattern in this location.** The minimum front setback requirement and floor area ratio should be removed from Use Group B and maximum building coverage be increased.
- Provide for defined, hardscape connections so that pedestrians, including those with mobility challenges, can safely navigate from the Hospital to the Village boundary.
- Coordination with Coach USA for a potential bus stop at Cornwall Plaza or Montefiore - St. Luke's Cornwall Hospital to benefit commuters and attract additional visitors to the Town.
- Continue to support and/or host downtown events to bring people downtown on nights and weekends such as art walks.
- Strengthen and enforce property management laws to improve the overall look of Main Street.

V. ZONING AND LAND USE

The primary focus of the Town's land use plan is to balance the preservation of the Town's rural community character and protection of its environmental resources while promoting compatible economic development. The Town's focus on economic development has traditionally been within the Main Street Corridor and along the NYS Route 32, 94, and 9W corridors. Uses along these corridors have traditionally been small businesses intended for a fairly local customer base.

This plan acknowledges, however, the Town's environmental resources, scenic views and state parkland are a regional tourism draw that can not only attract eco-tourism but also spill-over tourism from other major local attractions such the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, LEGOLAND New York, Woodbury Common Premium Outlets, and Cornwall's own Storm King Art Center.

Sound planning dictates the need to understand the Town's infrastructure limitations and not develop beyond what can be supported by the resources that the town has, nor negatively impact the character and quality of life within the town.

A. Existing Conditions⁴ – The following land uses and zoning designations are existing in the Town of Cornwall (see Figure 4: Existing Zoning).

- *Conservation Lands*: These lands are mountainous, forested areas containing wetland, sensitive habitat, public water supplies, and other limitations to development that generally coincide with preserved state parkland, farmland, Storm King Art Center and other protected open spaces described in Chapter 3, and large residential lots immediately adjacent. Zoning of these areas is designated Mountain and Conservation Residence (MCR) and Agriculture Rural Residence (ARR) and are often included in the Ridge Preservation Overlay District and/or the Schunnemunk Agricultural/Scenic Overlay District affording these areas additional protection from incompatible development. Public water and sewer services are not available in these areas which is also reflected in the permitted zoning density.

Uses permitted in the **MCR District** include agricultural operations, timber harvesting, public parks and playgrounds, outdoor recreation with no structures and operated at no charge (excluding operation of recreational vehicles), essential services, bed and breakfast residences, bed and breakfast inns, wind turbines, radio and public communication towers, museums, not-for-profit open space institutes and conference centers, places of worship, and single family dwellings on a minimum of ten acres.

Uses permitted in the **ARR District** include agricultural operations, timber harvesting, public parks and playgrounds, outdoor recreation with no structures and operated at no charge

⁴ This discussion identifies existing zoning as of the date of the plan's adoption only. Interested parties should confirm current zoning of particular properties in the building department.

(excluding operation of recreational vehicles), essential services, outdoor recreation including golf course, tennis courts, swimming pools, etc., wind turbines, bed and breakfast residences, bed and breakfast inns, animal kennels, veterinary clinics, stables and riding academies, places of worship, cemeteries, radio and public communication towers, museums, and single family dwellings on a minimum of three acres.

- *Rural Residential*: These are non-agricultural, residential land uses generally located within the Suburban Low-Density Residential (**SLR**) zoning district and limited areas of the ARR zoning district. Such lands may be located in areas with shallow or rocky soils and steep slopes, with difficult road access. Residential development taking place on such lands must be carefully planned to avoid erosion and forest fragmentation.

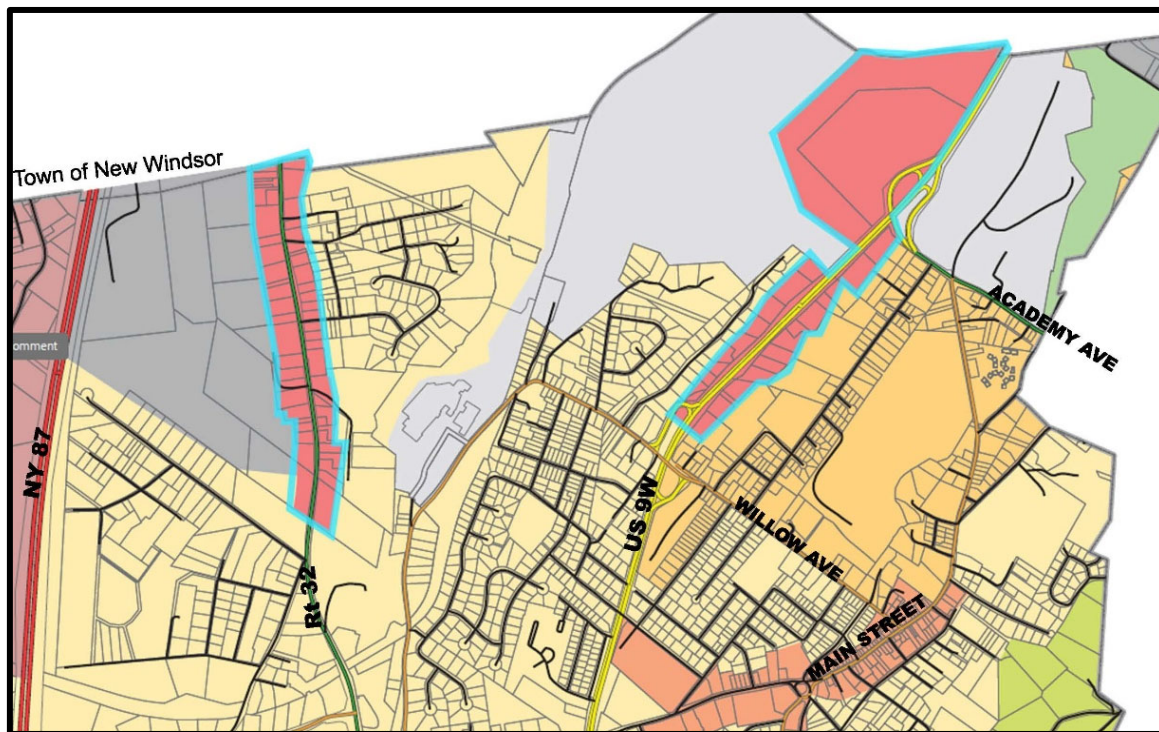
Uses permitted in the SLR Zone include parks and playgrounds, agricultural operations limited to field crops, timber harvesting, wind turbines, places of worship, cemeteries, group care facilities, day care centers, nursery schools, bed and breakfast residences, home professional offices, private schools, bed and breakfast inns, radio and public communication towers, single-family dwellings on a minimum of two acres, and conversion of single-family dwellings to two-family dwellings for structures completed prior to July 12, 1965.

- *Suburban Residential*: This land use category generally includes lands in the Suburban Residence-1 (**SR-1**) and Suburban Residence-2 (**SR-2**) districts. These are areas of the town north of 9W, Quaker Avenue and Orrs Mills Road in the central portion of the Town and in the western portion of the town, on the north side of NYS Route 94, in the vicinity of Beaver Dam Lake. Many of these areas have access to central water or sewer services allowing for this additional density.

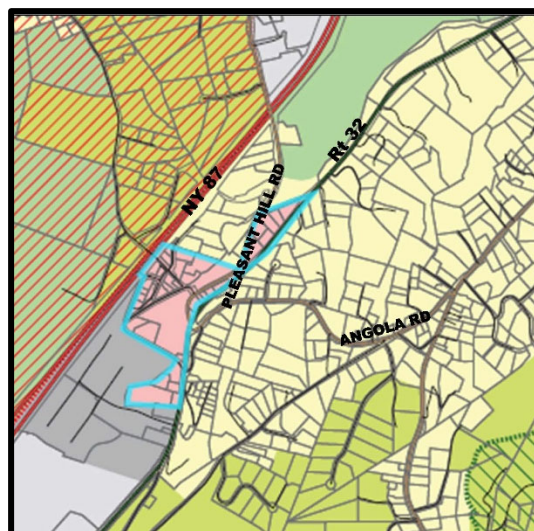
The SR-1 zone permits public parks and playgrounds, outdoor recreation with no structures and operated at no charge (excluding operation of recreational vehicles), single family dwellings on a minimum of one acre with no public utilities but on a minimum of 20,000 square feet within public water and sewer, two-family dwellings, group care facilities, private schools, places of worship, senior citizen housing, mobile home developments, bed and breakfast inns, home offices, bed and breakfasts residences (accessory to a single family dwelling) and communications towers.

SR-2 permits nearly the same mix of uses with single family dwellings with public water and sewer permitted on a minimum of 20,000 square feet and two-family dwellings permitted on a minimum of 30,000 square feet.

• *Local/ Small Business*: This land use category is for small, local retail and service uses, restaurants, and gas stations located outside of Main Street, but generally intended for a local market and customer base. These areas are located in limited areas along major commercial highway corridors such as State Routes 9W, 94 and 32 and zoned Local Shopping (LS) or Highway Commercial (HC). The areas are shown highlighted in blue in the images below.



The LS Zone permits such commercial uses as offices, retail stores, dry-cleaners, personal services, shops for service of household appliances, restaurants, gas stations, bed and breakfast, social halls, health clubs and day care centers. While the HC Zone permits the uses allowed in LS, as well as auto repair and sales, funeral parlors, laundromats, earth operations,



outdoor recreation, schools, discotheques/cabaret/ live entertainment, contractor yards, pawn shops carnivals/amusement parks, shopping centers, fast food/drive-in restaurants, light manufacturing, commercial [indoor] recreation and warehouses as an accessory to an office use. The LS District permits one apartment in a building above commercial uses while the HC zone permits two apartment units above commercial.

- *Mixed Residence*: While the town does have a mix of varied types of residential developments including multi-family developments on Quaker Avenue, Continental Road and Main Street none of them are located within the MR Zone. This zone is located on the west side of I-84 in the northern portion of the Town and permits agricultural operations, commercial forestry/ timber harvesting, wind turbines, places of worship, group homes, day care centers and nursery schools, bed and breakfast inns or residences, single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, townhouses, and multi-family developments subject to special use permits.

- *Mixed Residence*: While the town does have a mix of varied types of residential developments including multi-family developments on Quaker Avenue, Continental Road and Main Street none of them are located within the MR Zone. This zone is located on the west side of I-87 in the northern portion of the Town and permits agricultural operations, commercial forestry/ timber harvesting, wind turbines, places of worship, group homes, day care centers and nursery schools, bed and breakfast inns or residences, single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, townhouses, and multi-family developments subject to special use permits.

- *Downtown Commercial Corridor*: This area of the Town runs along Main Street between Cedar Land and Tamara Lane. The entire corridor is zoned General Commercial (GC) and is characterized by dense, often mixed-use commercial development with little to no setbacks, as discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

- *Industrial*: These lands consist of properties in use for light manufacturing, warehousing and office parks. Areas of the town identified as appropriate for larger-scale industrial development and campuses are zoned Planned Industrial Office (PIO) and Planned Commercial Development (PCD). Current areas of industrial development in the town are located off Route 32 in the southern part of the town, off Mill Street and within the Vails Gate Business Center along the Town's northern boundary.

Uses permitted in the PCD Zone include agricultural operations, laboratories or offices for product testing and research, light manufacturing, offices, bed and breakfast (in existing structures), day care centers, planned industrial parks, printing plants, manufacturing and industrial processing, communication towers and places of worship. It is noted that portions of the PCD Zone are currently developed with New York Military Academy (NYMA) campus. The PIO Zone includes most of the above uses as well as fraternal, social halls and catering facilities, sale of automotive supplies and equipment, schools of special instruction,

commercial forestry, earth operations (without onsite processing), wind turbines, animal kennels/ veterinaries, contractor or building supply yards, planned industrial parks, printing plants, manufacturing and industrial processing, communication towers and places of worship.

- *Public and Semi-Public Uses:* These lands consist of public and private schools, charitable uses, churches, public facilities such as municipal water and sewer facilities, as well as government and related public buildings and uses.

B. Goals for residentially zoned areas

- Based on public feedback and environmental constraints discussed further in Chapter VI, the Town should continue to maintain the allowable density and development patterns currently permitted in residentially zoned areas to protect the character of the town and its natural resources.
- Evaluate opportunities for housing where utilities are adequate and the character of existing neighborhoods can be maintained to add opportunities for starter homes, municipal work force, young professionals, first responders and seniors to remain in the community.
- Expand eco-tourism and agri-tourism based economic development opportunities with Planning Board review to ensure protection of neighboring properties.

C. Goals for commercially zoned areas

- Encourage and expand economic development within the Town's commercial corridors such as Rt 32 and 9W. As shown above, these areas are limited in land area, therefore in order to ensure economic success of these areas the town should ~~Ensure~~ a broad, contemporary array of permitted uses which are compatible with the town's character.
- Reduce setbacks between similar commercial uses or parking areas, while maintaining setbacks and providing vegetative buffers to protect against land use conflicts where commercial development is adjacent to residential uses and other sensitive receptors.

D. Recommendations

- Expand opportunities for accessory apartments (ADUs) within single-family homes or accessory structures, such as detached garages, where the character of the structure can be maintained. This will allow the town to provide more affordable housing options for seniors, young people and persons with disabilities while maintaining the existing character of its neighborhoods. This would not be able to be a short-term rental as defined and regulated under Code Chapter 120.

- Create a lot line realignment procedure in the subdivision code, for common applications seeking to adjust lot lines between property owners where no new development is proposed.
- Expand opportunities for apartments in the HC Zone by removing the limitation on the total number of apartments above commercial uses. This would remain limited by the bulk dimensional requirements for the building, the overall height limitation in the HC zone which is currently 35 feet, the water and sewer infrastructure available at the site and the minimum floor area permitted under the NYS Building Code.
- ~~Allow private outdoor recreation uses in the SLR Zone (currently only allowed in ARR) on lots of at least five acres, and expand the definition to include a broad range of uses such as driving ranges, field/turf sports/cross-fit, paintball, obstacle/ropes courses and similar uses with minimal, if any building construction or impervious area. It is further recommended that~~ Section 158-21O (supplemental regulations for health clubs), should be expanded from just health clubs to regulate all outdoor recreation and include landscaped buffer requirements and limited hours of outdoor operation in residential areas.
- Expand opportunities for Bed and Breakfast Inns where utilities are adequate and lot size is adequate to buffer such uses from neighboring residences.
- ~~Define~~ Create special permit criteria for warehouses and expand regulations for warehouses and other large industrial uses which include overall building size restrictions, design guidelines, and larger setbacks to protect surrounding residential properties.
- Revise special permit criteria for multi-family developments to ~~include~~ regulate setbacks, development coverage, building height, design, suitable access and other requirements to ensure compatibility with surrounding land uses and sufficiency of required infrastructure. This recommendation will add protective standards that do not exist today in the code. It does not create new multi-family zones or increase permitted density.
- Non-residential and multi-family uses in residentially zoned areas should be reviewed carefully by the Planning Board to evaluate the potential for land use conflicts. The zoning should incorporate buffer requirements and limitations on outdoor lighting, speaker systems and limit excessive pavement/ parking areas in residential areas.
- Permit a range of residential and mixed-use development options in the PCD Zone, along the 9W corridor, in a planned neighborhood design that emphasizes connectivity, protection of environmental resources and buffers to adjoining neighborhoods. Public utilities should be required for the construction of residential units in this zone.

- Remove the NYMA campus property (tax lot 9-1-25.3), from the PCD Zone, rezone this property to HC, where schools are permitted, to encourage this property to remain a boarding school campus and encourage its enhancement and redevelopment, and consider modifications to the HC District to support the school's planned expansion.
- Combine the LS and HC Zones into a single Highway Commercial Zone given their similarity.
- Review the list of permitted uses in the HC Zone and add additional setbacks for special permit uses where they may abut residential uses.
- Create a definition for "farm" which is consistent with the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets definition. This term is currently not defined in the code which has left ambiguity for applicants. Expand permitted accessory uses to include 'you-pick' events, hayrides, retail sale of farm products, drying or processing of farm products ie; making cheese, jam, yarn, honey, wine/beer, bees wax candles or any similar uses to promote and support agricultural uses. Additional ag-supportive uses such as tasting rooms, farm dinners, catered event space should also be permitted by special permit of the Planning Board to ensure adequate access, utilities and protection of neighboring properties.
- Expand landscaping requirements in the zoning code for commercial developments including requirements for internal parking lot landscaping.
- The code should define data centers independently from other industrial or warehouse uses.
- Expand the conservation cluster subdivision provisions beyond the Schunnemunk Agricultural Scenic Overlay Zone.

VI. NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

The environmental resources of the Town extend far beyond a tally of acres preserved within state parkland as discussed in Chapter 3. All of the environmental resources in the Town are part of a larger regional ecology. These resources are affected by the built environment and how it is used. Environmental changes wrought by temperature variations, intensified storms, increased flash flood events, erosion, or disease and insect damage to tree species affect the natural and built environment. Factors such as these should be considered in the Town's Comprehensive Plan.

In addition to the summaries below, a full inventory of natural resources in the Town can be found in the Cornwall Natural Resource Inventory (NRI) which is available on the Town's website <https://cornwallny.gov/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=GP2QgmhLBfA%3d&portalid=13> and interactive mapping of resources can be found on the NYSDEC's website: <https://dec.ny.gov/nature/waterbodies/lakes-rivers/hudson-river/hudson-valley-natural-resource-mapper>

A. Forests and Tree Preservation

Forest habitat is the most prevalent vegetative habitat within the Town consisting of thousands of acres of mature woodlands. Large areas of contiguous intact forest, including relatively unspoiled core forest, provide critically important habitat to many species of birds and mammals. Forest fragmentation destroys and damages critical habitat, impacting their ability to forage and breed. Even seemingly minor incursions into a forest, such as for a utility right of way, can destroy the integrity of forest-interior habitat. Breeding populations of rare or threatened species need to be able to move freely within their range to maintain healthy genetic diversity and to avoid isolation.

Where man-made features such as divided highways cross forest habitat, these animals are put at risk of death or injury, which threatens the integrity of their populations. The NYSDEC Environmental Resource Mapper identifies the Chestnut Oak Forest, Hemlock Northern Hardwood Forest and Appalachian Oak-Hickory Forest as designated Significant Natural Communities within the Town's forest land. These areas are considered significant due to their high quality based on size, habitat condition and quality of surrounding landscape. Many forested areas, while not providing habitat for rare, threatened, or endangered species, may still represent important habitat for more common species.

Beyond the conserved forested areas in the Town, there are individual mature trees and small stands of trees throughout the more developed areas of Town. These trees are important, providing shade, screening, temperature moderation, attenuating noise, enhancing air quality, preventing flooding and erosion, providing forest linkages for habitat, and enhancing the appearance of the built environment contributing to the overall character of the town. Preservation of trees is an

important priority of the Town, which has been designated a “Tree City USA Community” since 2004.

The Town recently passed a tree preservation law which provided for additional scrutiny in removal of trees to reduce overall tree clearing, discourage clear-cutting, and requiring replanting of trees where appropriate.

B. Mountains, Ridges and Steep Slopes

The Town of Cornwall contains extensive areas of steep slopes ranging from 15 to 35 percent grades and higher with the steepest slopes and highest elevations located within State Parkland (See Steep Slopes Map following this page). These areas are comprised of rocky, shallow soils over bedrock with areas of exposed ledge rock. These areas tend to have rapid stormwater runoff, are highly susceptible to soil erosion and present challenges for installation of utilities due to the shallow soil depths and thus are limited for residential, agricultural, and commercial development. Providing safe grades for vehicular, particularly emergency vehicle access in steeply sloped areas can involve the need for extensive land disturbance. Removing trees and ground cover in these areas poses a severe risk of erosion, the dry soil conditions make it hard to re-establish new plantings and avoid flooding properties down slope.

These steeply sloped areas also provide hiking opportunities and the scenic backdrop that contributes to Cornwall’s unique character and generates eco-tourism. Steep slopes and cliffs can also form microclimates that can support unique and rare specimens of plants and animals⁵.

In order to protect the Town’s natural elevations and the scenic, sweeping views of ridgelines and countryside, the Town enacted Ridge Preservation Overlay District Regulations which includes all land within the MCR and ARR Zones. The Town also requires subtraction of all areas of land with slopes greater than 25% from the lot area calculation.

C. Water Resources Protection

The Town contains a broad network of perennial, intermittent, and ephemeral streams lying within the overall Lower Hudson River Basin. The major perennial streams (flowing continuously year-round) include the Moodna Creek and its tributaries flowing from the towns of Blooming Grove and New Windsor; Woodbury Creek and its tributaries flowing from the towns of Woodbury and Highlands; Idlewild Creek, and its tributaries flowing entirely from within Cornwall. With the exception of a few streams in the Village that flow directly to the Hudson River, all streams in

⁵ Cornwall NRI, 2019

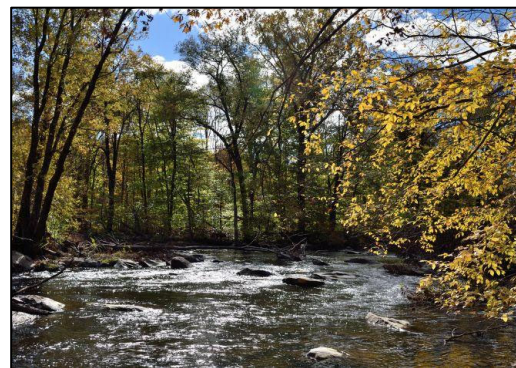
Cornwall flow into the Hudson River via the Moodna Creek and its tidal marsh⁶. Many of these streams are associated with freshwater or tidal wetlands, and mapped flood zones.

Every natural waterbody is part of an ecosystem that can support a wide variety of plant and animal life. These aquatic ecosystems are directly affected by the quality and quantity of the water in them. The Moodna Creek Watershed Management Plan stresses that these streams and their tributaries are in need of enhanced protections to prevent further degradation and to restore their integrity.

In general, the primary factors that influence water quality include the presence and structure of riparian vegetation, percent impervious surface of the watershed or sub-watershed (areas with a high percentage of impervious surfaces are associated with low water quality), discharges of inadequately treated wastewater, soil or groundwater contamination, and siltation.

Wetlands

Wetlands (swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas) are areas saturated by surface or ground water sufficient to support distinctive vegetation adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. They are transition areas between uplands and aquatic habitats that provide unique natural habitat for many species of plants and animals and also absorb the forces of flood and tidal erosion to prevent loss of upland soil. Standing water is only one clue that a wetland may be present. Some wetlands, known as vernal pools, only have visible water during certain seasons of the year. Both the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) regulate wetlands. All development within the vicinity of NYSDEC and federal wetlands must consult with and comply with the associated relevant regulation of the respective authority. The NYSDEC wetland regulations can be reviewed at the following website: <https://dec.ny.gov/nature/waterbodies/wetlands/freshwater-wetlands-program>



The Town is a member of the Moodna Creek Watershed Intermunicipal Council. The Council consists of several municipalities in the Moodna Creek Watershed and the Orange County Water Authority. With funding from the NYSDEC through the Hudson River Estuary Program, the Council published a Moodna Creek Watershed Conservation and Management Plan in 2010 which also contains a wealth of information on the watershed area. That document can be found at the following link: <https://www.orangecountygov.com/DocumentCenter/View/4133/Moodna-Creek-Watershed-Conservation-and-Management-Plan-2010-PDF>

⁶ Cornwall NRI, 2019

Floodplains

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has identified potential flood hazard areas in the Town of Cornwall, which are shown on FEMA maps. Flooding results from snow melt, heavy rains or other weather conditions. FEMA defines the likelihood of flooding into two broad categories: 1) lands within the 100-year floodplain; and 2) lands within the 500-year floodplain. Lands within the 100-year floodplain have a 1% probability of a flood exceeding a certain depth in any given year. Where the threat exists of potential loss of life or property, the construction of houses and other buildings should be discouraged. Climate change could increase the frequency and intensity of these extreme rainfall events by providing more moisture to storms.

Riparian Areas

Equally important to the stream is its riparian, or transitional buffer area. One of the most important qualities of the riparian buffer zone is its ability to control erosion and filter stormwater, and thus, to prevent pollution and sediment laden stormwater into the stream. Intricate root systems can prevent erosion and undercutting of banks during flooding, while woody stems and grasses help to physically trap sediment by slowing down the water runoff from the surrounding area, allowing the sediment to settle out. The water that is absorbed may contain nutrients, pesticides and other pollutants that will eventually be taken up by plants or broken down over time. By slowing runoff, trapping sediments, and increasing absorption, these plants act as a living filter to protect water quality. Riparian zones along the water courses in the Town play a vital function in helping to protect the water quality in these streams. The addition or retention of native trees for shading also aims to keep streams cool for cold-water fish, like brook trout.

Groundwater

Groundwater resources can be found in fractured or porous subsurface rock formations, and in sand and gravel materials that are often found adjacent to and connected with streams. Surface and groundwater resources are closely linked. Aquifers can be recharged by streams as well as discharge to them, contributing to the base flow of the stream during dry seasons. Surface water resources collect stormwater runoff to provide flood control habitat.

Groundwater and surface water resources are recharged by snow and rainfall that seeps into the soil and runs off into streams. Pervious areas enable groundwater recharge, supplying aquifers used for water supplies. Individual potable supply wells drilled into subsurface aquifers provide for most of the Town's rural population, as low population densities make it impractical to support with central or municipal water systems. Municipal water supply wells exist in the Mountainville area and community supply wells providing for businesses and organizations are located throughout the Town.

D. Wildlife Habitat

Each of the vegetated communities listed above support abundant biodiversity including rare plant and animal species that are listed as endangered, threatened, or of special concern on both the federal and state species lists. Appendix B of the Town's NRI provides an inventory of threatened and endangered species currently known to be present in the Town and a broad inventory of NYS biodiversity and conservation can be found at the website for the NYS Natural Heritage Program: <https://www.nynhp.org/>.

The Moodna and Woodbury Creeks are identified as priority stream ecosystems and dozens of regional or state-wide publications have documented the stream's critical habitat. The Moodna Creek mouth and tidal wetlands were designated as "irreplaceable" Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitat by the NYS Coastal Zone Management Program, and highlighted as one of four Selected Priority Watersheds by the Orange County Open Space Plan (June 2004). The Highlands Coalition has designated the Schunnemunk Mountain/Moodna Creek/Woodcock Mountain area as one of its Critical Treasure Areas in the New York Highlands, in part due to its biodiversity values (Highlands Coalition 2005).

Moodna and Woodbury Creek corridors (including the Idlewild Creek and Mineral Spring Brook), are important areas for migratory fish as well as a range of amphibians and reptiles.

While rocky, mountainous habitats support populations of species like timber rattlesnake (listed as Threatened in NYS), as well as many songbirds and raptors which use the ridges of the Highlands as migratory corridors. These species also use forests and some wetland habitats for other life needs, and require connected landscapes in order to move from one habitat to the next.

E. Goals for natural resources and environmental conservation

- Promote and protect connectivity between existing core forest habitat so that wildlife populations have access to safe and sufficient breeding and foraging territory.
- Protect groundwater resources to ensure quality drinking water for town residents.
- Protect wetlands and surface water to avoid flooding and maintain water quality for residents and wildlife.

F. Recommendations

- The Town should continue its preservation efforts in coordination with the Town's CAC and other local preservation organizations.
- Improve and enhance landscaping regulations, particularly in large parking areas and between developed areas and surface water resources.
- Encourage the use of pervious pavement where appropriate.
- Avoid clear cutting of trees and preserve mature trees on development sites. Encourage the planting of new trees where appropriate and feasible. Revise the Town's Tree

Preservation Law and Clearing and Grading Permit to provide clear instances of when approval is required before tree removal occurs.

- Require vegetated setbacks along streams to protect the stream's riparian area and water quality.
- Improve public education regarding illicit discharges, turbid stormwater and water conservation on the Town's website and through the Town's CAC and building department.
- Limit or prohibit outdoor storage of chemicals, fertilizers and fuel, vehicle or machinery repair or ~~other~~ similar potentially harmful activities over or, in the immediate vicinity of the Town's aquifers and water courses.
- Develop a lighting law in order to ~~R~~reduce light pollution and off-site glare by requiring dark-sky friendly lighting including downward-facing, full cut-off light fixtures and light dimming or motion sensor requirements for overnight hours.

VII. SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE RESILIENCY

A. Overview

Nestled in the Hudson Highlands of Orange County, Cornwall has long benefited from the natural beauty and resources that define this region. Yet these assets face mounting pressures from a changing climate and evolving environmental challenges. This chapter establishes a framework for ensuring that Cornwall remains a resilient, sustainable, and thriving community for current residents and future generations. Sustainability and climate resilience are not abstract concepts, but practical necessities that touch every aspect of municipal planning—from how we manage stormwater and protect our water supply, to how we design our neighborhoods, support local agriculture, and prepare our infrastructure for extreme weather events.

Cornwall has already experienced impacts of climate change. More intense rainfall events have tested our drainage systems and caused flooding in vulnerable areas. Longer periods of heat and drought have stressed our ecosystems and water resources. These trends are projected to intensify in the coming decades, requiring proactive planning and action to avoid more costly and disruptive consequences later.

At the same time, addressing climate resilience presents opportunities to strengthen our community in multiple ways. Investments in green infrastructure can simultaneously manage stormwater, create recreational amenities, and enhance property values. Energy efficiency improvements can reduce municipal and household costs while lowering emissions. Protecting and expanding natural areas preserves the town’s rural character while providing critical ecosystem services like flood mitigation and air quality improvement.

The goals of sustainability and climate resiliency underlie many other parts of the Comprehensive Plan. For example, in the Transportation Network section, the Plan promotes the development of bike lanes, connected bike routes, and safe pedestrian passages. In the Environmental Resources chapter, the Plan promotes maintaining and developing ecological connectivity corridors to avoid isolating populations of species requiring large blocks of habitat, and promotes measures to protect or improve existing stream water quality and reduce stormwater runoff. In the Solid Waste section of Chapter VIII, notes that the Town currently recycles and carries out yard waste composting. In the Land Use Plan chapter, the Plan also notes the importance of pursuing balanced and thoughtful development goals.

It is anticipated that this chapter will increase in scope and content as additional climate-related challenges present themselves, with the understanding that a certain amount of overlap with goals and recommendations presented in other sections may occur. It is also likely that recommendations in this chapter will have to be balanced with other environmental concerns expressed, as well as

economic goals, presented in other chapters of this plan. For example, some renewable energy sources can pose undesirable aesthetic impacts. Cornwall's scenic beauty and important wildlife habitat value makes it extremely important to protect these resources, which may rule out or place limits on certain sustainable energy or other initiatives.

B. Goals for Sustainability and Climate Resiliency

- Promote sustainability and climate resiliency through policies, regulations and programs where the Town determines appropriate.

C. Recommendations

Land Use and Green Infrastructure

- **Promote Smart Growth Principles:** Encourage compact, mixed-use development where infrastructure is available, and discourage development in floodplains to reduce exposure to climate hazards. [Additional information about NYS Smart Growth Principles can be found here: https://dos.ny.gov/smart-growth-community-planning](https://dos.ny.gov/smart-growth-community-planning)
- **Conserve Natural Areas:** Protect and restore ecosystems such as wetlands, streams, floodplains, and forests which provide essential functions like floodwater absorption, shoreline stabilization, and carbon sequestration.
- **Protect the Tree Canopy:** Review landscaping requirements to increase tree canopy coverage, particularly in parking lots and along stream corridors and wetlands.

Infrastructure and Building Resiliency

- **Innovative Construction:** The Town should encourage, incentivize and educate the public regarding more efficient and carbon neutral construction methods, innovative, clean heating and cooling and energy management solutions.
- **Protect Critical Infrastructure:** Identify and prioritize essential infrastructure (water and sewer system infrastructure, emergency services including back-up power supplies, essential evacuation roads, communication systems, etc.) at risk of severe storm damage and implement fortification or relocation strategies.
- **Upgrade Transportation Infrastructure:** Address flood risks to roads, culverts, and bridges by upsizing culverts, raising bridge elevations where necessary, and using resilient design standards for new construction.

Clean Energy and Greenhouse Gas Reduction

- Continue to pursue Climate Smart Community (CSC) certification: CSC is a New York State program that helps local governments take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate. [The Town of Cornwall adopted a resolution pledging to pursue this program in 2024, and is currently forming a committee, in](#)

coordination with the Village of Cornwall-on-Hudson to guide the Town through this program. The program offers grants, leadership recognition, and free technical assistance for making improvements that can save money for municipalities. (additional information regarding the NYS Climate Smart Communities Program can be found here: <https://climatesmart.ny.gov/>).

- Transition Municipal Fleets: Consider conversion of municipal vehicles to zero-emission vehicles.
- Encourage non-reflective rooftop solar outside of the Ridge Preservation Overlay: Rooftop solar panels can help avoid concerns posed by utility scale installations. Encouraging non-reflective rooftop solar siting on industrial roofs should be particularly encouraged as a way to promote efficient use of existing or proposed expansions of roofs or parking lots.
- Consider permitting appropriately sited larger-scale solar installations on previously disturbed or otherwise unusable land, such as brown fields or combined with active agricultural uses, such as goats or cattle (agrivoltaics). A site restoration bond should also be required. Carefully crafted regulations can allow for solar while protecting visual resources, environmental resources, wildlife, and irreplaceable agricultural resources.

VIII. COMMUNITY SERVICES

A. Existing Conditions

Police

Cornwall is served by a Town Police Department that provides 24-hour coverage based out of its headquarters at Town Hall. It is staffed with 20 officers and civilian administrative staff. The Department was awarded re-accreditation through the New York State Law Enforcement Accreditation Program in 2025. Dispatch services are shared with the Village of Cornwall-on-Hudson Police Department and there are good relations between the two departments.

Mutual Aid can be provided by neighboring municipalities as well as New York State Police and the Orange County Sheriff's Department on an as-needed basis. Cornwall residents place a high value on our safe and secure community.

Fire Protection

Fire protection is provided by all-volunteer fire companies in the Town of Cornwall, as is the case for most of the towns within Orange County. Fire departments provide rescue and emergency services within their districts, and also provide mutual aid assistance to other fire districts in the area.

The Town of Cornwall is served by three fire districts and four fire departments (see Figure 5, right):

- Canterbury (Cornwall) Fire District serves the majority of the town, with stations at 1 Quaker Avenue and in Mountainville;
- Salisbury Mills Fire District stationed on NYS Route 94 serves the Salisbury Mills/Beaver Dam Lake area in the northwestern part of the Town of Cornwall, and extends west and north into the Towns of Blooming Grove and New Windsor.
- Vails Gate Fire District is stationed on Blooming Grove Turnpike in the Town of New Windsor covers parts of Cornwall, north of the Moodna Creek, to Firthcliffe Heights and into Vails Gate.
- The Village of Cornwall-on-Hudson has its own fire district served by Storm King Fire Engine Company #2 stationed on Hudson Street.

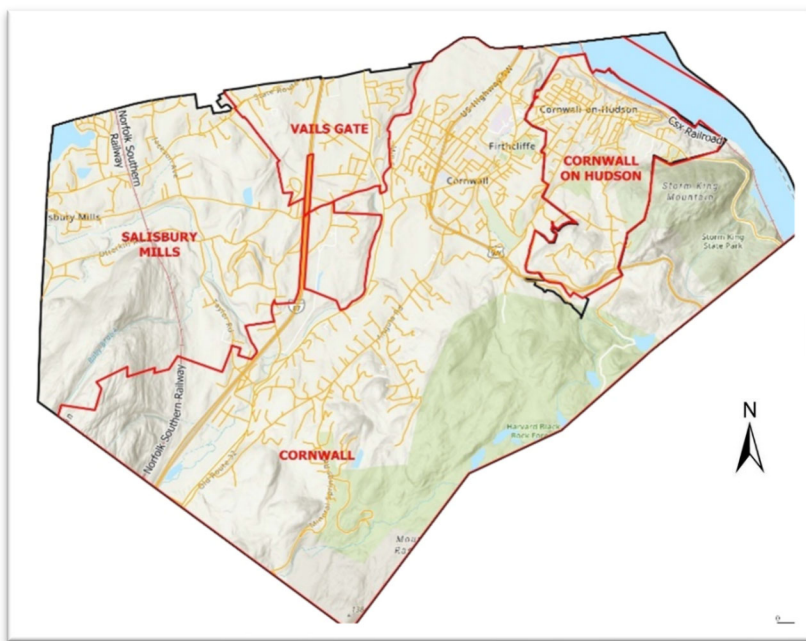


Figure 5: Fire Districts in the Town of Cornwall.

Prepared by Lanc & Tully Engineering with data from Orange County GIS

Ambulance Service

In 2022 COVAC merged with New Windsor Emergency Medical Services (EMS). New Windsor EMS is a volunteer, state-certified emergency medical service providing basic life support and paramedic level care with 24-hour response to the Town's of New Windsor, Cornwall and the Village of Cornwall-on-Hudson. According to their website, NWEMS has approximately 40 volunteers and responded to 4,000 calls in 2022.

Cornwall Public Library

The Cornwall Public Library is located adjacent to Riverlight Park. The library is a dynamic and actively used facility with a large collection of books, e-books, audiobooks, music CDs and DVDs, as well as computer stations for public use, and offers open access to a wide offering of educational and training programs for all age groups. There is also a community room and public meeting space. The library is run by a seven-member elected Board of Trustees, a director, several librarians and administrative staff. Recent library improvements include a new roof, upgraded HVAC system, ADA-compliant restrooms and technology upgrades. Improvements continue to be made to the facility.

Public Schools

Most of Cornwall, including the entire Village of Cornwall-on-Hudson, lies in the Cornwall Central School District, which also includes parts of the Towns of New Windsor to the north and Woodbury to the south. CCSD operates five schools teaching grades K-12. Three elementary schools serving grades K-4: Cornwall Elementary School, Willow Avenue Elementary School, and Cornwall-on-Hudson Elementary School, located in the Village, one middle school, and one high school opened in 2003 located off Route 94 in Cornwall, west of Vails Gate. CCSD graduation rates are high, with 96% of its graduates earning a diploma in 2024. The school offers a wide range of academic as well as athletic programs. Enrollment in the district has been consistently declining over the last several years. Recent enrollment trends are provided in Table VII-1 below.

Table VIII-1: Cornwall Central School District Enrollment Trends

	2015-16	2017-18	2019-20	2021-22	2023-24
Total Students Enrolled	3,184	3,150	3,102	3,000	2,989

Source: NYS Department of Education/ <https://data.nysed.gov>

Transportation Network

The following roads comprise the Town's transportation network (see Figure 6: Transportation Network).

Interstate Highways - The New York State Thruway (I-87) bisects the Town. Access to the highway and connecting interstate highway access is located in Newburgh and Woodbury.

State Roads - Several state highways serve the Town of Cornwall. Routes 32 and 9W run north-south and are vital commercial corridors in the eastern third of the Town. Route 9W is a four-lane divided highway, part of which is designated as a NY State Scenic Byway where the road passes over the mountains and through Storm King State Park. Route 32 is primarily a two-lane road, with some three- or four-lane sections near Vail's Gate. Route 94 is a two-lane highway running east-west, connecting Vails Gate, Salisbury Mills and Washingtonville, Newburgh and New Windsor. Route 218 is a short two-lane stretch of road running through the Village of Cornwall-on-Hudson and connecting with the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and Highland Falls. The highway affords stunning views of the Hudson River and the Hudson Highlands, and is a vital commuter route connecting West Point and Cornwall. Route 218 experiences closures at various times of the year, requiring a detour to Route 9W.

County Roads - There are multiple county roads within the Town. These include the Town's Main Street (County Route 107), and several other important connector roads, such as Orrs Mills Road (CR 20), Angola Road (CR 65), Pleasant Hill Road (CR 89), Willow Avenue/Mill Street (CR 32) and Mineral Springs Road (CR9).

Town Roads - The Town owns and maintains approximately 44 miles of municipal roads, and also plows 12.5 miles of County Roads by contract. The Town highway facilities are short on space and additional buildings are needed in order to store and service its vehicles and equipment properly. The Town has identified a need to expand and improve its Department of Public Works facilities.

Private Roads - Numerous private roads exist within the Town, providing access to small residential enclaves and in a few cases, access to commercial/industrial facilities. Cornwall has regulations establishing design standards for new private roads to ensure safe and adequate access to all times and requires maintenance agreements. Private roads are privately maintained and not the responsibility of the Town, though when changes are being made to private roads, the Town may require improvements to be made.

Rail - There is a Metro-North Commuter Rail station located in the Town of Cornwall in Salisbury Mills, in the northwest part of the Town. This station is on the Port Jervis-Bergen Line, and connects Campbell Hall, Middletown and Port Jervis, NY to points in Bergen County, New Jersey, including Secaucus Junction and Hoboken, with connections to New York City. The rail station is not staffed.

Bikeways and Pedestrian Facilities

There are currently no formal, marked trails or bikeways in the Town outside of the state parks. However, the Orange County Bikeway Vision Plan (2023) states, the County, in a joint venture with Open Space Institute (OSI), plans to acquire a 10-mile segment of the abandoned railroad line from the Town of Cornwall to the County-owned Camp LaGuardia site in the Town of Chester, recognizing that the proposed Schunemunk Rail Trail would intersect with the Heritage Trail at

Camp LaGuardia and expand access to several municipalities⁷ terminating at the Huson River. The plan also recommends conversion of the Cornwall Branch O&W Rail right-of-way into a trail connecting the Salisbury Mills/Cornwall Trail Station to Storm King Art Center. This segment would also directly connect the Bikeway to Cornwall High School. OSI is spearheading broader, regional efforts, known as their Growing Greenways Plan, to develop the unified, primarily off-road trail network that would span more than 250 miles and connect more than 20 communities throughout Ulster, Sullivan, and Orange Counties.

The Town maintains a sidewalk and crosswalk network along Main Street and the immediate area, that connects with the Village. There are approximately 5 miles of sidewalks in the Town. This sidewalk network is proposed to be improved as part of the Town's Cornwall Forward Project with the goal of improved signage, street trees and street furniture for a continuous, safe connection from the Town's business district to the Hudson River and Donahue Park. When new development is proposed, it is recommended the town ask for sidewalks to be provided where none exist if they can be connected to the existing sidewalk network. The more rural areas of the Town generally do not have sidewalks.

Solid Waste

The Town Department of Sanitation provides municipal solid waste (MSW) collection in the Town including collection of recyclables for approximately 3,300 residences, several apartment complexes and 30 commercial locations. At this time, MSW is hauled to Orange County's waste transfer station in the Town of Newburgh, and recyclables are hauled to Hudson Baylor in the City of Beacon. Additional collections are made for yard waste and related seasonal waste and compost is collected by volunteers in the Cornwall Youth Garden Club. Some larger businesses contract with private carters for solid waste pickup.

Water Service

There are two water districts and a private water system serving parts of the Town of Cornwall (see Figure 7: Public Water Districts):

- The Cornwall Water District serves portions of the Town outside the Village of Cornwall-on-Hudson. This district, and all related infrastructure is owned and operated by the Village of Cornwall-on-Hudson. The district is supplied by the Taylor Road wells located in Mountainville and Black Rock Forest Reservoirs. The system is capable of producing up to 3.9 million gallons of water per day and has combined 900,000 gallons of storage capacity⁸. When needed, it can use a water tap from the NYC Catskill Aqueduct for up to 1.5 mgd.

⁷ *County Bikeway Vision. Orange County Department of Planning. 7/25/2023*

⁸ *Village of Cornwall-on-Hudson Annual Water Quality Report, 2024*

- The Firthcliffe Heights Water District is supplied by the Town of New Windsor in accordance with an intermunicipal agreement.
- The Beaver Dam Lake Water District serves the Beaver Dam Lake community located in the Towns of New Windsor, Cornwall, and Blooming Grove and has its own private community well system that operates as an intermunicipal single-governing body system.

The remainder of the Town is supplied by private wells that are drilled and maintained by individual landowners or businesses.

Sewer Service

- There are five sewer districts serving parts of the Town of Cornwall (see Figure 8: Sewer Districts. Cornwall Sewer District: This district is served by a municipal treatment plant located on Shore Road, discharging into the Moodna Creek, close to its confluence with the Hudson River. The plant is jointly owned by the Village and Town, and operated by the Town. The plant was designed for a capacity of 1.5 million gallons per day (MGD), shared between the Town and Village; with the average flow at approximately 1 MGD. The plant sustained flooding damage in previous hurricanes, additional mitigations to increase the plant's resilience in future large storm events would benefit this plant. The Town has also been pursuing an inflow and infiltration ("I&I") reduction program in all of the sewer districts to free up capacity. The I&I mitigation project for Sewer District #1 is nearly complete but further study may be needed in the future.
- Firthcliffe Sewer District: This district is served by the Firthcliffe Wastewater Treatment Plant located off Willow Avenue. This plant has a capacity of 0.12 MGD but regularly exceeds this volume due primarily to I&I. The Town is currently pursuing an I&I reduction program and pump station upgrade to increase daily capacity.
- Firthcliffe Heights District: This district is run by the Town of New Windsor via an intermunicipal agreement with wastewater transmitted to New Windsor's treatment facilities. The plant has a capacity of 5.0 mgd but is currently undergoing improvements to expand capacity.
- Beaver Dam Lake District: The Beaver Dam Lake community is located in the Towns of New Windsor, Blooming Grove and Cornwall. The Town provides services through an intermunicipal agreement with the Town of New Windsor for the Cornwall section of the community. The Town of New Windsor is building a new plant to expand capacity.
- Majestic Sewer District: This district encompasses only the lands of the former Majestic Weaving Company property off Mill Street. The Town provides services through an intermunicipal agreement with the Town of New Windsor.

The balance of the Town is served by private septic disposal systems that are owned and maintained by individual lot owners.

Parks and Recreation

The Town owns, maintains and operates several municipal parks. These include:

- The Town Park, also known as Riverlight Park, located on Main Street adjacent to Town Hall which contains tennis courts, a swimming and wading pool, a pond, baseball fields, basketball courts, a playground and the newly renovated ice house pavilion.
- Laurel Crest, located on Harold Avenue, contains a poorly maintained baseball field, multi-use sports fields and a playground.
- A dog park (known as the Bark Park) located off of Angola Road.

The Town operates a Recreation Department that runs programs for people of all ages. Recreation offerings within the Town include swimming lessons, art and theatre programs, senior programs at Munger Cottage, children's summer camp, youth garden club, Wednesday Farmers' Market and other activities. The town has private leagues for tennis, baseball, softball, golf, lacrosse, soccer, and track and field. There are also a host of additional recreation activities at the riverfront park in the Village of Cornwall-on-Hudson available to all residents of the Town including a boat launch ramp and Hudson River access, a gazebo and recreation area and a pavilion. Community movie nights are held at Donahue Farm. Recreation facilities are also located at the schools, and all elementary schools in the Town and Village have handicapped-accessible playground facilities.

Parks and recreation were the top priority identified by the public through the Comprehensive Planning Committee outreach efforts.

B. Goals

- Provide practical and cost-effective government services to residents and regularly engage residents' input and feedback on policy and planning decisions.
- Maintain strong intermunicipal relationships with service and mutual-aid providers to ensure long-term viability and provide the highest level of service to the community.
- Continue capital improvement planning for town infrastructure to properly plan and budget for road maintenance and Town Highway Department facilities, and seek grants to supplement the Town budget.
- Protect water supply sources within the town.
- Continue to assess needs and upgrade park facilities.
- Enhance recreational programming and inclusion.

C. Recommendations

- Support regional trail improvements planned by OSI and Orange County.
- Work to promote crosswalk and other pedestrian safety improvements at key areas of the Town. The Town has identified the importance of improving crosswalks, particularly in the Main Street area and at the traffic circle. Improving the visibility of markings and related

improvements will enhance user safety and meet accessibility standards. This will likely involve seeking County and New York State DOT participation.

- Advocate for [West Shore Line passenger rail service and other](#) rail service improvements. The Town should encourage improvements to the Port Jervis line and lobby for improved rail service between the Town and major employment centers in New Jersey and New York City. The Town should also pursue signage within the rail station to direct travelers to key locations in the Town.
- Actively work to resolve and eliminate infiltration and inflow (I&I) into existing sewer Lines with focus on the Firthcliffe Wastewater Treatment Plant once the project is completed for Sewer District #1.
- Coordinate with the County, and other agencies as needed, to improve road safety and planning for long-term sustainability and environmental threats to critical roads.
- The Town should provide additional restroom facilities at Riverlight Park.
- The Town should seek to provide multi-modal, non-motorized trails connecting to existing public lands, trail systems and other destinations.
- The Town should work to establish indoor public facilities in order to support the development of winter space recreational activities for all ages in inclement weather.
- Pursue locations for additional multi-use sport fields.
- The Town should evaluate improvements to drainage at Laurel Crest Park.

IX. IMPLEMENTATION

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

Certain recommendations contained herein will require the Town Board to enact revisions to the Town code and other land-use regulations. Other actions may require collaboration between the Town, Village, County, State and not-for-profit entities. These actions are outlined in the implementation tables contained within this chapter along with the party responsible for taking a leadership role in the implementation of the policy or program.

The following table provides a summary of the major recommendations that are part of this Plan. The recommendations are organized by chapter of this document. For each chapter there is a list of specific recommendations, along with an indication of when the recommendation should be implemented and the party responsible for ensuring that the recommendation is followed. For the purposes of this plan, an immediate priority should be ideally implemented immediately after the plan adoption or as soon as possible thereafter, short-term items should be implemented within 1 to 2 years of plan adoption and long-term actions should be implemented within 2 to 4 years of plan adoption. The schedule for the plan's implementation will help the Town Board to set priorities for the subsequent actions that will be necessary to implement this Comprehensive Plan. Setting priorities ensures the process will get underway.

Town of Cornwall Comprehensive Plan Implementation Schedule				
No.	Recommendation	Action	Priority	Responsibility
Chapter 3 - Cultural, Historic and Open Space Resources				
1	Review the zoning regulations to require the consideration of historic and cultural resources and open space during the Planning Board environmental review process, to the extent practical.	Policy/ Potential Zoning Amendment	Immediate	Town Board / Planning Board
2	Utilize the Conservation Advisory Committee (CAC) in its advisory capacity to ensure that the ecological integrity of open space, natural and scenic resources in the Town and Village are maintained and enhanced. Consider the creation of a Conservation Board that could play a more prominent role in the review of development.	Policy	On-going	Town Board
3	Continue to promote awareness and enjoyment of local historical resources through a combination of the Town's website, digital mapping, events and			

	continued relationships with Cornwall Chamber of Commerce, County Tourism Department, Vision Hudson Valley and other local groups to host events and garner social media engagement.	Policy	On-going	Town Board
4	Improve informational and directional signage, with unified branding, in order to help direct visitors to cultural and open space resources as well as appropriate parking locations, trail or bikeway connections and local businesses.	Policy	Short Term	Town Board
5	Continue to encourage the permanent preservation of agricultural properties through cooperation with private preservation organizations and ensure Town Zoning and other policies are consistent with NYS Agriculture and Markets Laws.	Policy	On-going	Town Board
Chapter 4 - Main Street Revitalization				
6	The Zoning Code should establish parameters for Planning Board review of architectural design of commercial projects along Main Street.	Zoning Amendment	Immediate	Town Board/ Planning Board
7	Encourage mixed-use structures, with commercial development on the ground floor and residential apartments above, to increase housing options in the corridor. Remove the limitation on the total number of units in favor of a minimum floor area, so the number of apartments is based on the overall size of the building footprint. <u>It is further recommended that the maximum height for Use Group B, in the GC District be reduced to 45 feet or less.</u>	Zoning Amendment	Immediate	Town Board/ Planning Board
8	Ensure a broad and contemporary mix of uses and accessory uses are permitted in the zone.	Policy	On-Going	Town Board
9	Consider including a “catch-all” provision to allow uses, which may not be contemplated at this time, but which are similar to those currently permitted in the zone.	Zoning Amendment	Short Term	Town Board
10	Consider allowing a waiver of the site plan approval process, where no exterior site changes are proposed, to expedite new business development on Main Street.	Policy/ Zoning Amendment	Immediate	Town Board
11	Review zoning requirements for parking to ensure they are consistent with the character of a modern business district and not encouraging excessive pavement.	Zoning Amendment	Short Term	Town Board

12	Review means of parking enforcement along Main Street in order to ensure cars are not parked all day in spaces intended for stop-in business.	Policy	Immediate	Town Board/ Town Police
13	Amended the GC zoning requirements to ensure setbacks are consistent with the character of the existing area. The minimum front setback requirement and floor area ratio should be removed from Use Group B and maximum building coverage be increased.	Zoning Amendment	Immediate	Town Board
14	Provide for defined, hardscape connections so that pedestrians, including those with mobility challenges, can safely navigate from the Hospital to the Village boundary.	Capital Improvement	Long Term	Town Board
15	Coordinate with Coach USA for a potential bus stop at Cornwall Plaza or Montefiore St. Luke's Hospital to benefit commuters and attract additional visitors to the Town.	Policy	Long Term	Town Board
16	Continue to support and/or host downtown events to bring people downtown on nights and weekends such as art walks.	Policy	On-going	Town Recreation Department/ Local NFPs
17	Strengthen and enforce property management laws to improve the overall look of Main Street.	Code Amendment	Short Term	Town Board/ Building Department
Chapter 5 – Zoning and Land Use				
18	Expand opportunities for accessory apartments within single-family homes or accessory structures.	Zoning Amendment	Immediate	Town Board
19	Establish a lot line realignment procedure in the Subdivision Code to allow for expedited processing of lot line changes where no new construction is proposed.	Code Amendment	Immediate	Town Board
20	Expand opportunities for apartments in the HC Zone by removing the limitation on the total number of apartments above commercial uses.	Zoning Amendment	Immediate	Town Board
21	Allow private outdoor recreation uses in the SLR Zone on five or more acres, and expand the definition to include a broad range of uses such as driving ranges, field/turf sports/cross fit, paintball, obstacle/ropes courses and similar uses. It is further recommended that Section 158-210, <u>should</u> be expanded from just health clubs to <u>regulate</u> all outdoor recreation and include landscaped buffer	Zoning Amendment	Short Term	Town Board

	requirements and limited hours of outdoor operation in residential areas.			
22	Expand opportunities for Bed and Breakfast Inns where utilities are adequate and lot size is adequate to buffer such uses from neighboring residences.	Zoning Amendment	Immediate	Town Board
23	Define Create specific special permit criteria <u>expand regulations</u> for warehouses and other large industrial uses.	Zoning Amendment	Immediate	Town Board
24	Revise special permit criteria for multi-family developments to <u>regulate</u> include setbacks, development coverage, building height, design, suitable access and other requirements to ensure compatibility with surrounding land uses <u>and sufficiency of required infrastructure</u> .	Zoning Amendment	Immediate	Town Board
25	Combine the LS and HC Zones into a single Highway Commercial Zone.	Zoning Amendment	Short Term	Town Board
26	Review the list of permitted uses in the HC Zone and add additional setbacks for special permit uses where they may abut residential uses.	Zoning Amendment	Short Term	Town Board
27	Permit a range of residential development options in the PCD Zone in a planned neighborhood design that emphasizes connectivity and protection of environmental resources. <u>Public utilities should be required for the construction of residential units in this zone.</u>	Zoning Amendment	Per request from applicant with additional plans & analysis	Town Board
28	Create a definition for “farm” which is consistent with the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets definition. Expand permitted accessory uses to include ‘you-pick’ events, hayrides, retail sale of farm products, drying or processing of farm products (ie; making cheese, jam, yarn, honey, wine/beer, bees wax candles or any similar uses) to promote and support agricultural uses. Additional ag-supportive/ agri-tourism uses such as tasting rooms, farm dinners, catered event space should also be permitted by special permit of the Planning Board to ensure adequate utilities and protection of neighboring properties.	Zoning Amendment	Immediate	Town Board
29	Expand landscaping requirements in the zoning code for commercial developments including requirements for internal parking lot landscaping.	Zoning Amendment	Short Term	Town Board
30	Amend the zoning to incorporate buffer requirements and limitations on outdoor lighting, speaker systems	Zoning Amendment	Immediate	Town Board

	and limit excessive pavement/ parking areas where non-residential uses are proposed in residentially zoned areas.			
31	Establish a process for keeping performance securities for public improvements current to ensure that sufficient funds exist to permit the Town to complete public improvements if necessary.	Code Amendment	Immediate	Town Board
32	Amend the zoning to allow the Planning Board to request and approve architectural design plans where appropriate for developments requiring special permit approval.	Zoning Amendment	Immediate	Town Board
33	Remove the NYMA campus property (tax lot 9-1-25.3), from the PCD Zone, rezone this property to HC and consider modifications to the HC District to support the school's planned expansion.	Zoning Amendment	Per request from applicant and with additional plans & analysis	Town Board/ Planning Board
34	<u>The zoning code should define data centers and this use should be separate from, and not permitted in the same manner as, other industrial or warehouse uses.</u>	<u>Zoning Amendment</u>	<u>Immediate</u>	<u>Town Board</u>
35	<u>Expand the conservation cluster subdivision provisions beyond the Schunnemunk Agricultural Scenic Overlay Zone.</u>	<u>Zoning Amendment</u>	<u>Short Term</u>	<u>Town Board</u>
Chapter 6 - Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation				
36	Continue preservation efforts in coordination with the Town's CAC and other local conservation organizations.	Policy	On-going	Town Board
37	Improve and enhance landscaping regulations, particularly in large parking areas and between developed areas and surface water resources.	Policy	Short Term	Planning Board
38	Encourage the use of pervious pavement or other materials that reduce stormwater runoff where appropriate.	Policy	On-going	Planning Board
39	Avoid clear cutting of trees and preserve mature trees on development sites. Encourage the planting of new trees where appropriate and feasible. Revise the Town's Tree Preservation Law and Clearing and Grading Permit to provide clear instances of when approval is required before tree removal occurs.	Policy/ Code Amendment	Immediate	Planning Board
40	Require vegetated setbacks along streams to protect the stream's riparian area and water quality.	Zoning Amendment	Immediate	Town Board/ Planning Board

41	Improve public education regarding illicit discharges, turbid stormwater and water conservation on the Town's website and through the Town's CAC and building department.	Policy/ Program	On-going	Town Board / Building Department
42	Limit or prohibit outdoor storage of chemicals, fertilizers and fuel, vehicle or machinery repair or other <u>similarly potentially harmful</u> activities over or in the immediate vicinity of the Town's aquifers and watercourses.	Zoning Amendment	Short Term	Town Board/ Planning Board
43	<u>Create a lighting law to</u> R reduce light pollution and off-site glare with dark-sky friendly lighting including downward-facing, full cut-off light fixtures and light dimming or motion sensor requirements for overnight hours.	Zoning Amendment	Short Term	Town Board/ Planning Board
Chapter 7 – Sustainability & Climate Resiliency				
44	Encourage compact, mixed-use development where infrastructure is available, and discourage development in floodplains to reduce exposure to climate hazards.	Policy	On-going	Planning Board
45	Protect and restore ecosystems such as wetlands, streams, floodplains, and forests which provide essential functions like floodwater absorption, shoreline stabilization, and carbon sequestration.	Policy	On-going	Town Board / Planning Board
46	Review landscaping requirements to increase tree canopy coverage, particularly in parking lots and along stream corridors and wetlands.	Zoning amendment	Short Term	Town Board / Planning Board
47	Encourage, incentivize and educate the public regarding more efficient and carbon neutral construction methods, innovative, clean heating and cooling and energy management solutions.	Policy	Short term	Town Board
48	Identify and prioritize essential infrastructure (water and sewer system infrastructure, emergency services including back-up power supplies, essential evacuation roads, communication systems, etc.) at risk of damage from severe storms and implement fortification or relocation strategies.	Program	Short term	Town Board/ Emergency Service Providers
49	Address flood risks to roads, culverts, and bridges by upsizing culverts, raising bridge elevations where necessary, and using resilient design standards for new construction.	Policy	On-going	Town Board
50	Continue to pursue NYS Climate Smart Community (CSC) certification.	Policy/ Program	On-going	Town Board

51	Consider conversion of municipal vehicles to zero-emission vehicles.	Program	Long term	Town Board
52	Encourage non-reflective rooftop solar panels outside of the Ridge Preservation Overlay, particularly on large commercial buildings.	Policy	On-going	Town Board
53	<u>Consider permitting</u> larger-scale solar installations on previously disturbed or otherwise unusable land, such as brown fields or combined with active agricultural uses, such as goats or cattle (agrivoltaics). <u>A restoration bond should be required by the town.</u>	Zoning Amendment	Short term	Town Board
Chapter 8 – Community Services				
54	Formalize a community engagement process and institute protocols to involve the public in policy and community development decisions, while also providing a platform to educate the public and receive ongoing feedback.	Policy	Short Term	Town Board
55	Support regional trail improvements planned by OSI and Orange County.	Policy	On-going	Town Board
56	Work to promote crosswalk and other pedestrian safety improvements at key areas of the Town.	Policy	Short term	Town Board/ Orange County
57	Advocate for improvements to the Port Jervis line and lobby for improved rail service <u>including West Shore Line passenger service.</u>	Coordination	On-going	Town Board/ MTA
58	Pursue signage within the rail station to direct travelers to key locations in the Town.	Capital Improvement	Short term	Town Board/ MTA
59	Actively work to eliminate infiltration and inflow (I&I) into existing sewer lines with focus on the Firthcliffe Heights District and Wastewater Treatment Plant once the project is completed for Sewer District #1.	Capital Improvement	Short term	Town Board/ Town Sewer Department
60	Coordinate with the County, and other agencies as needed, to improve road safety and planning for long-term sustainability and environmental threats to critical roads.	Policy	Long term	Town Board/ Orange County
61	Provide additional restroom facilities at Riverlight Park.	Capital Improvement	Short term	Town Board
62	Seek to provide multi-modal, non-motorized trails connecting to existing public lands, trail systems and other destinations.	Capital Improvement	Long term	Town Board
63	Establish available indoor public facilities in order to support the development of winter space	Capital Improvement	Long term	Town Board/ Town Recreation Department

	recreational activities for all ages in inclement weather.			
64	Pursue locations for additional multi-use sport fields	Policy	Short term	Town Board
65	Evaluate improvements to drainage at Laurel Crest Park.	Capital Improvement	Long term/ On-going	Town Board/ Town Building and Grounds