



**2023**

**Town of Washington  
Comprehensive Plan Update**

**Draft Submitted December 2022**

**Adopted by the Town Board**

**, 2023**

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# Acknowledgements

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# Introduction

## Why Update the 2015 Plan?

The Comprehensive Plan is a ‘living’ document developed to help guide Town decision-making over time. The 2015 Plan itself was an update of earlier versions adopted by the Town of Washington in 1987 and 1989. was developed and adopted to give the Town both information and policy direction upon which to base future decisions on. The 2015 Plan also establishes broad and long-term community goals that set the Town in a direction as desired by the community.

However, a Plan is not, nor is it intended to be static: To be effective, a comprehensive plan must be updated to ensure it is current to meet the needs of the Town over time. Pursuant to New York State Town Law 272-a, which authorizes a Town to develop a comprehensive plan, it is recognized that new issues will arise in a community that will need to be addressed, and that such plans should be updated to remain relevant and current. The Comprehensive Plan can be updated whenever needed to reflect new developments and needs, and to keep it current. To ensure a comprehensive plan continues to serve its intended purpose, The Town of Washington has regularly reviewed its adopted Plan to determine if the defined goals are being met, to identify new issues that need addressing, or to establish new programs or policies to further community goals.

Since 2015, several issues have arisen in Washington related to hospitality land uses that the Town Board needed evaluated. The Town Board appointed a Comprehensive Plan Review Committee (CPRC) and charged them with evaluating the 2015 Plan and making recommendations as needed. The specific tasks that the CPRC was charged with were:

- Whether the 2015 Town of Washington Comprehensive Plan should be amended to include and permit expansion of hospitality that aligns with the historic rural character of the Town of Washington; and
- If it is determined that the 2015 Comprehensive Plan should be amended: (1) to assist the CPRC in formulating recommendations to the Town Board for specific changes to the Comprehensive Plan; and (2) draft proposed amendment(s) to the 2015 Comprehensive Plan to hand up to the Town Board.

A team of consultants (“consulting team”) led by Nan Stolzenburg of Community Planning & Environmental Associates, with assistance from James Staudt—a land use attorney—was retained by the committee to assist them with their evaluation. The CPRC conducted extensive community outreach to understand public views about hospitality uses in Washington, conducted mapping, map analysis, and economic studies, and developed a final report that was submitted to the Town Board for their consideration In July 2022.

This Updated Comprehensive Plan incorporates in full the work of the CPRC and its report. Appendix C (of this Plan) includes all data, maps, evaluation, discussion and recommendations of the Hospitality Evaluation Report and shall be considered part of this Plan update.

## The Planning Process

The planning process for this Updated Plan includes all the steps taken by the CPRC through July 2022 and the Town Board. These included:

- Review of the current Town of Washington Comprehensive Plan (2015) and zoning codes;
- Focus group meetings with residents and business owners of the Town of Washington and Village of Millbrook to identify early issues and considerations for the evaluation;
- An “Open House” meeting (both in person and virtual) to introduce the planning effort to the general public and collect preliminary input which would be used to help design a town-wide survey;
- A town-wide survey inviting all local residents, property and business owners within the Town of Washington and Village of Millbrook to provide their input on issues of hospitality;
- A trend analysis of hospitality in the state and the county;
- An economic analysis of potential (future) hospitality uses within the area;
- A geographic analysis of existing (and proposed) hospitality venues in surrounding towns within the county;
- A geographic analysis of natural features and sensitive environmental areas within the town which could be negatively impacted by local development;
- Public presentation of the Hospitality Evaluation Report by the CPRC to the Town Board and public;
- Review of the Hospitality Evaluation Report and its recommendations by the Town Board;
- Preparation of an update to the 2015 Comprehensive Plan to include the Hospitality Evaluation Report;
- Town Board and public review of the draft Updated Comprehensive Plan;

- Public hearing;
- County Planning Board Referral, as required by NYS General Municipal Law 239-m;
- SEQR and adoption of this Updated Plan by Resolution.

### New Terminology

The 2015 Plan offers a variety of definitions to clarify terms used in the document. This update continues that practice by including definitions included in this section. This section not only clarifies terms used in the Hospitality Evaluation Report, but it provides definitions needed for future zoning updates. This is important to foster common understanding. New terminology includes:

- “Short-term Rentals”: The rental of any private residential dwelling or accessory dwelling unit, in part or in whole, for a period of typically less than 30 consecutive days. Also commonly referred to as vacation rentals. These are separate and distinct from month-to-month or yearly rental agreements under contract with the same tenant.
- “Inn”: Overnight accommodations for transient users having no more than 20 rooms unless an incentive bonus has been approved by the Town of Washington. Inns may include permitted secondary accessory uses such as a restaurant and bar.
- “Event Space”: An indoor or outdoor space typically rented for not more than a one-day period for the purposes of hosting a special event such as a wedding, reception, private party, meeting or similar activity, typically with catering services. Event spaces may also be an accessory use to a permitted Inn.
- Other hospitality-related terms including motels, hotels and bed and breakfasts are defined in the Town of Washington Zoning Law.

### Summary of Findings of the Hospitality Study

Appendix C of this Updated Plan includes full details of all work included in the Hospitality Evaluation Report. These include

- Review of Existing Zoning
- Results of Public Engagement
- Evaluation of Lodging Facilities in Dutchess County
- Hospitality Trends Analysis
- Economic Impact of Potential Hospitality Development
- Current Town Fiscal Conditions

- Mapping of Natural Resources
- Mapping of Traffic Volumes
- Mapping of Viewsheds on Buildable Land
- Recommendations

This Update expands Town vision, goals and recommendations while reconfirming the vision of the 2015 Comprehensive Plan to accomplish the following:

- Accommodate some small-scale Inns.
- Continue current policies regarding Bed and Breakfasts.
- To accommodate limited hospitality venues beyond those currently allowed in Mabbettsville, the Town could establish two narrowly defined hospitality overlay districts: one in the Washington Hollow area and the other immediately adjacent to the Village outside the aquifer overlay, as these locations have been shown to be the most acceptable and environmentally suitable. These overlay districts could be clearly defined for the additional use of an Inn, and establish specific size, design, and siting performance standards for them.
- Continue current land use regulations for hotels, motels, resorts, and similar more intensive uses to be prohibited outside of these overlay areas.
- Inns should be limited in size with a 20-room limit while offering some flexibility for increase or decrease in the room density.
- The scale of permitted inns could be fine-tuned by the overlay location and/or use of a density bonus system that incentivizes provision of desired amenities, such as adaptive reuse, or provision of green building technologies.
- Town-defined overlays should include specific architectural, environmental, and site design performance standards to help ensure any development is in keeping with the capacity of the Town, with community character, and to promote use of adaptive re-use of existing structures wherever possible.



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For the purposes of this planning study, the term “hospitality uses” was defined as a range of potential lodging types for overnight accommodations including Hotels, Resorts, Motels, Inns, Bed & Breakfasts, Short-term rentals, Camping, Glamping, Farm-stays and related on-site accessory uses such as restaurants, bars or event facilities.

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- Embark on a rejuvenated effort to identify ways to work with the Village of Millbrook and help the village take advantage of its hospitality opportunities for the mutual benefit of the larger community.
- Update zoning to reflect this vision and direction for hospitality in the Town. This effort should also define and regulate short-term rentals.

### Reconfirming Vision and Goals from the 2015 Plan

The 2015 plan focused on protection of agriculture, preservation of ground and surface water quality and quantity, and additional environmental protections. It stresses the vision and goals of the community remains largely unchanged from the earlier planning effort from 1987/89. The 2015 Plan was stated to be “practical and general in scope” and to reflect the “priorities, hopes, and aspirations of the public and the commonly shared community values and goals for the future.”

This Update does not change but builds on the major principles of the 2015 Plan. The continued direction for Washington will be to be a rural community, with great scenic beauty, maintained historic character, a healthy environment, and a with a high quality of life for residents. Our community direction is to continue to stress Washington’s desire to maintain a vibrant and diverse local business district in the Village of Millbrook as our town center and validates and reconfirms all goals expressed in the 2015 Plan to support that vision.



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This Update confirms the principles and policies detailed in the 2015 Plan that establishes the long-standing vision for Washington to remain “a rural town by maintaining existing land use types, protecting environmental resources, and supporting the Village of Millbrook as the location for concentrated diverse housing and commercial activity.”

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In summary, these are to:

- Maintain existing land use types which keep the Town rural.
- Avoid infrastructure expansion into the Town.
- Keep roads rural in form, use and appearance and discourage construction of new roads in undeveloped areas and deter development or extension of centralized water and sewer systems into rural areas.
- Preserve the duality between the Town and Village – avoid future new or denser zoning that would create village like areas in the Town.
- Maintain scenic beauty and protect land, water and the natural environment (including protecting farms, agricultural soils, open space, water and floodplains, natural habitats, biodiversity, steep slopes, and scenic areas).
- Encourage reuse and rehabilitation of existing buildings and sites rather than new development whenever possible.
- Strengthen and sustain the mixed-use Village as the area for commercial, retail and service activities; Avoid creation of new commercial development or mixed-use areas that are outside of the existing Village business district.
- Take action to protect the Village water source, located within the Town.
- Review existing design and development guidelines to ensure that new buildings and expansions of existing buildings reinforce traditional historic character, and endorse compatible land use, scale, setting and architecture of new development adjacent to historic buildings and landscapes.

### Updated Goals and Strategies

1. To address hospitality land uses, the following shall be a new policy objective for Goal 1 (Keep the Town Scenic and Rural and the Village the One Developed Center), Objective 1 (Maintain Existing Land Use Types Which Keep the Town Rural:

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*This corresponds to Recommendation 1B in the Hospitality Evaluation Report (Appendix C)*

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- Allow for limited hospitality uses that are small in size, intensity, and architectural scale; which are designed to blend into the traditional rural character and historic land use patterns; that preserve Washington’s natural environment; and that are consistent with all other policies established in this Plan.
- Coordinate hospitality regulations and programs with the Village of Millbrook. Promote Village and Town leaders to initiate discussions to implement strategies outlined in this Updated Plan to accommodate desired hospitality needs, identify locations for such uses that will be mutually beneficial, and to coordinate land use regulations related to such uses to the maximum extent feasible.

2. Establish land use regulations that implement the desire for small-scale hospitality land uses that have a narrowly defined range of scale, intensity, design, and locations. To accomplish this:

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*This corresponds to Recommendation 1C in the Hospitality Evaluation Report (Appendix C)*

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- a. Create a mapped hospitality overlay district.
- b. Provide development standards for hospitality uses within the overlay district.
- c. Clarify hospitality accessory uses that are desired.
- d. Maintain Mabbettsville as a small, mixed-use hamlet and set standards to ensure that non-residential uses have size limits.
- e. Update zoning code site plan review section 485 (standards for review and design).
- f. Develop architectural and design standards.
- g. Utilize visual preference input.
- h. Continue current rules for BnBs.
- i. Develop a natural resources inventory.
- j. Map the environmental protection overlay as detailed in the text of the current zoning.
- k. Ensure resource maps for the Town are incorporated into decision making.

3. Develop short-term rental regulations.

4. Prohibit commercial campgrounds, glamping operations and RV parks as they are not consistent with the vision and goals of the Town.

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*This corresponds to Recommendations 1D, 1E, 1F, 3A and 4A in the Hospitality Evaluation Report (Appendix C)*

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5. Implement other recommendations from the Hospitality Evaluation Report Recommendation (Appendix C).

**Appendix C of this Updated Comprehensive Plan contains the recommendations made in the Hospitality Evaluation Report and shall be considered fully linked to and part of this Updated Comprehensive Plan.**

## The 2015 Comprehensive Plan

The following Town of Washington 2015 Comprehensive Plan document is hereby incorporated in its entirety into this Updated Comprehensive Plan.

# 2015 TOWN OF WASHINGTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**For eight years, dozens of individuals worked cooperatively to prepare the 2015 Town of Washington Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan Committee members, together with Town residents, farmers, and business owners, made this Plan possible.**

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**Special Thanks goes out to the Comprehensive Plan Committee Members for their hard work, perseverance, and dedication.**

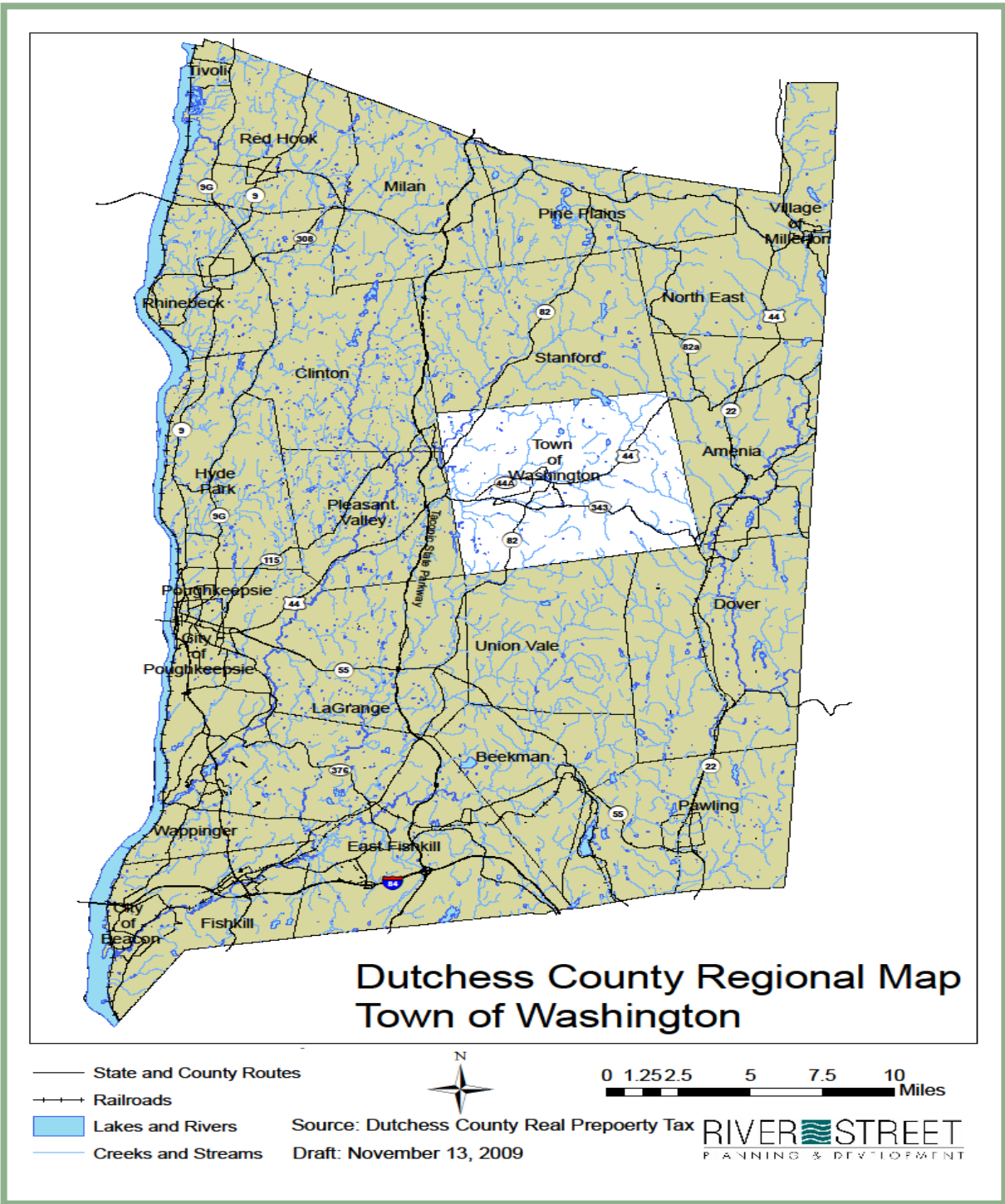
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**This Plan was developed with a  
Greenway Connections Grant and a Dyson Foundation Grant**

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	Al De Bonis
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Town Clerk	Mary E. Alex



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**Appendix A - Maps (Filed with Town Clerk)**

**Appendix B – Committee Reports (Filed with Town Clerk)**

**Appendix C - 2022 Hospitality Evaluation Report**

## INTRODUCTION

A Comprehensive Plan identifies the needs of a community and recommends goals, objectives, and actions to improve the health, safety, and general welfare of its citizens. Although not a local law itself, the plan is implemented through local laws and local government initiatives.

New York State statute requires that all municipal land-use laws be consistent with its Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan is the policy foundation for the future development and preservation of a community. It is therefore the essence of zoning; for without it there can be no rational allocation of land use.

The official Town of Washington Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1987 and amended in 1989. It is reviewed annually by the Planning Board, which in turn makes zoning update recommendations to the Town Board. In 2006 the Planning Board examined whether the 1987/1989 Plan provided adequate regulatory guidance to ensure the long term protection of surface and ground-water quality, wildlife habitats, and the rural character of the Town.

***It was determined that a wide-ranging review was prudent in order to identify changes to the local community character and surrounding environment.***

In the fall of 2007 the Town of Washington Town Board initiated a Plan review. Since the general vision and goals articulated in the 1987/1989 Comprehensive Plan remained relevant and appropriate, the focus was to be an examination of primary land use concerns; specifically, the protection of agriculture, preservation of surface and ground water quality and quantity, along with the need for additional environmental protections.

The updated Comprehensive Plan would be practical and general in scope. The process was intended to update statistical facts regarding current conditions in the Town and from there develop our shared vision for the future. The final product would reflect the priorities, hopes, and aspirations of the public; the commonly shared community values and goals for the future.

***Simply put, it would plan for what people want the Town of Washington to be like now and in the future.***

A Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee was appointed and charged with the task. Their role was to guide the planning process, oversee sub-committees, collect relevant data, review documents, supervise the consultant, educate residents about the process, and conduct community outreach.

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Planning firms were interviewed and River Street Planning and Development was selected as the professional consultant. The following sub-committees were then created:

Land Use	Housing
History and Community Character	Demographics and Local Economy
Transportation	Environmental Resources
Community Services	

***Over 30 dedicated volunteers, representing an extensive cross section of the community, convened, gathered data and completed detailed reports.***

***(Sub-Committee Reports are included in the Plan Appendix.)***

Once statistical data was collected and analyzed, a community profile was drafted documenting existing conditions within the Town. A written survey was distributed to residents and lively public workshops were well-attended. Several vision statement meetings were held and consensus was ultimately reached on a vision for our Town.

The establishment of the final Goals, Objectives, Background, Policies, and Recommendations, was a long and arduous process under-going many revisions before adoption.

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All planning activities have an inherent financial dimension. However, this 2015 Town of Washington Comprehensive Plan does not include fiscal impact assessments or cumulative impact studies. The Town Board will be able to examine the costs and benefits of proposed actions as they are raised and debated. Analytical tools are available for board reference; and using performance measures as targets for specific goal setting will ensure that this comprehensive plan leads to action.\*examples in appendix

***Fiscal consequences of this plan and potential zoning changes will affect future town budgets.***

Open, inclusive governing and responsible management of financial resources is vital for our community's success. Elected officials are charged with the safeguarding and proper use of taxpayer funds. Financial resources of the Town of Washington are not committed to policies, practices, or projects that are inconsistent with the Town's vision for the future. A long term capital plan is in place and the annual budget is scrutinized, not only during its preparation, but throughout the year. As a result, Town taxes represent a very small portion of an individual's property tax obligation.



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By means of this update process we have identified our resources, our needs, and commonly held goals. Residents must continue to be active participants in both the planning and governing of the Town. Public participation is encouraged and can be performed by attending meetings, writing or e-mailing representatives, face-to-face discussion, volunteering to serve on Town Boards and committees, and running for election.

Ultimately, implementation is the key to a successful Comprehensive Plan. Adoption of the plan is not the end of the process. From here the adopted plan will be linked to Town policy and decision making.

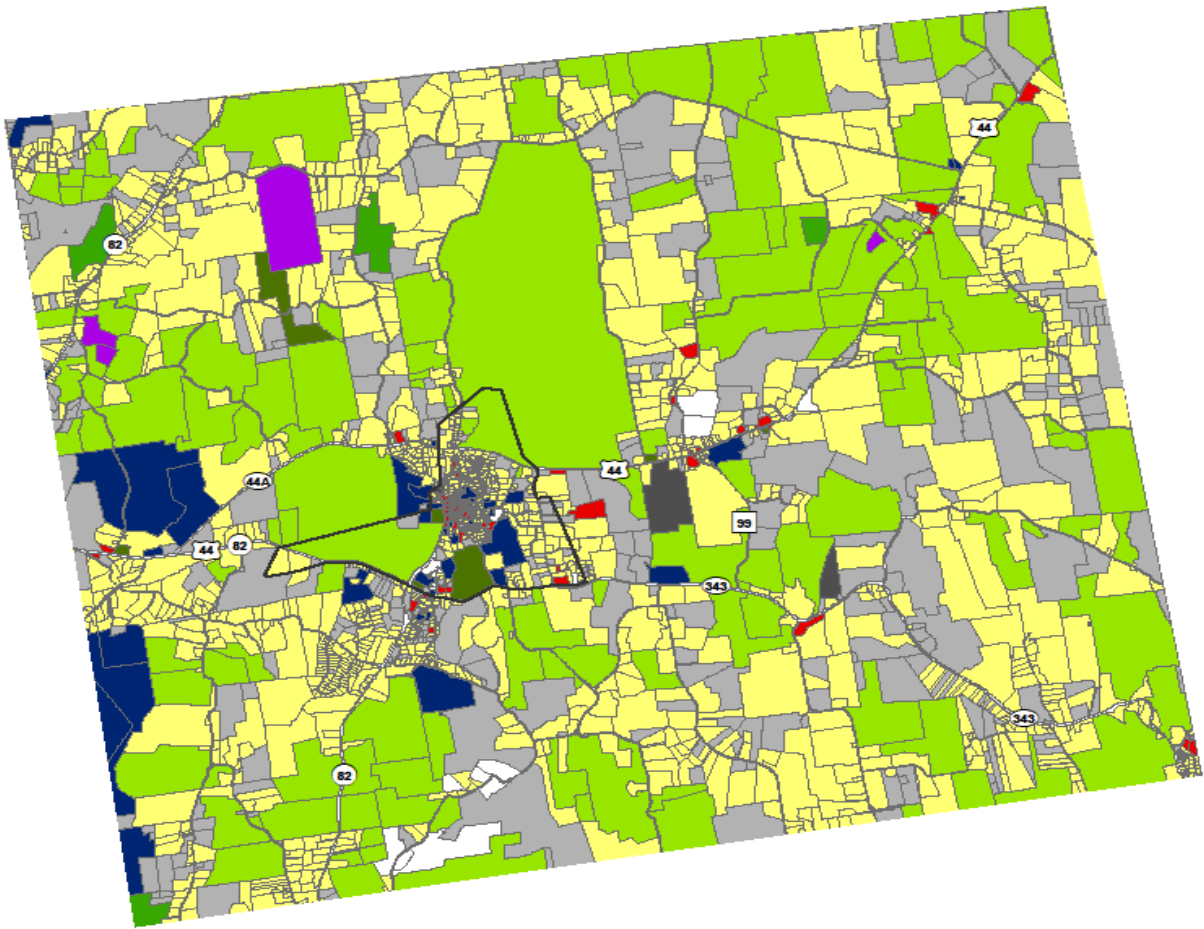
This plan represents the official statement of guiding principles for the future of the Town of Washington and therefore must continue to be periodically reviewed.

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***The 2015 Town of Washington Comprehensive Plan embodies the community's desire to remain a rural town by maintaining existing land use types, protecting environmental resources, and supporting the Village of Millbrook as the location for concentrated diverse housing and commercial activity.***

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# Town of Washington Land Use



## Land Use

-  Agricultural
-  Residential
-  Vacant Land
-  Commercial
-  Recreation and Entertainment
-  Community Services
-  Industrial
-  Public Services
-  Wild, Forested, Conservation, Parks
-  Parcels without Land Use Code

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles



**RIVER STREET**  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Source: Dutchess County Real Property Tax

Draft: November 13, 2009

## II. LAND USE PLAN

This Comprehensive Plan will guide the Town in accomplishing its vision. The Plan does not in itself change zoning, fund infrastructure improvements, or assure implementation of Plan recommendations. Over the years, Washington has been developed by a myriad of individual and group decisions. This will not change. The Plan will guide the Town Board, Planning Board, and Zoning Board of Appeals in their respective roles as project review and approval agencies.

Stated goals and calls for zoning review will be advanced based on Planning Board or Town Board suggestion. Amending or adding new zoning requires the enactment of a Local Law, which necessitates active public participation through both notification and conducting public hearings.

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The Land Use Map presented herein mirrors the Land Use Plan laid out in the 1987/1989 Master Plan and is therefore a validation and affirmation of the Town's long-term planning efforts and ability to maintain the essential rural character that makes the Town of Washington such a desirable place in which to live.

***The current Land Use Map, as well as the 1987/1989 Plan, recognizes established settlement patterns, agricultural and open space resources, and natural features.***

As expressed in the Plan, the Land Use Map also recognizes the desire to avoid construction or extension of water and sewer facilities outside of the bounds of the Village of Millbrook, as well as preventing development of stand-alone water and sewer facilities as part of development proposals, in order to avoid sprawl that would likely harm the essential rural character of the Town.

Thus, the Land Use Plan attempts to reconcile community goals for conservation and development over the next several decades with existing land uses, zoning, and environmental constraints on development.

The main purpose of the Land Use Map is to underpin the Town's official zoning map and the maps contained within this Plan. These maps should be referred to in conjunction with the Land Use Map, in order to understand the potential future development or conservation of a particular lot.

***All maps are included in the plan appendix.***

***The following assumptions apply to the Land Use Plan Map:***

- I. Land Use Map is generally consistent with the existing patterns of development in the Town. Dramatic changes in existing land uses are not proposed as the settlement patterns are generally ones that the residents are satisfied with and wish to see continued.
- II. The Village of Millbrook will remain the focus for high density residential and non-residential development. The boundaries of the existing Mabbettsville hamlet zoning are not proposed for change nor are the types of land uses permitted in the zoning area.
- III. Mid to high density residential uses will be encouraged in the Village where community services to support such densities are located. Increased residential density potential in the Town, (i.e., 1 and 2 acre minimum lot size), will continue to be concentrated in the areas around the Village, with the bulk of the land area of the Town designated for low density (i.e. 5 and 10 acre minimum lot size) development.
- IV. Non-residential development will be limited to the Town's existing mixed-use area, the Hamlet of Mabbettsville and to the Village of Millbrook.
- V. The major natural resource requiring protection by the Town is its ground water based drinking water supply. The Plan recommends measures to be added to existing local laws. The major environmental protection recommendation is the avoidance of a centralized water supply and sewage treatment and the avoidance of creating situations where failing septic fields can harm ground or surface water supplies.
- VI. Much of Washington's beauty derives from its rural character. While absorbing slow but continued population increases the Town must shape this growth so that its attractiveness remains community-wide, rather than reduced to remnants. Many of the Plan recommendations focus on preserving rural, historic, and scenic character.
- VII. The Town's existing roadway network is not expected to change substantially. The existing system of through, collector, and local roads must be maintained to function as efficiently and safely as possible. New construction is expected to be limited to driveways serving new lots and, perhaps, to intersection improvements. New local roads are discouraged, but all safety, speed, and congestion improvements will need to be made as necessary and with regard for community appearance and character.
- VIII. The Town will review the existing zoning code to determine if changes are necessary based on this 2015 Comprehensive Plan. Stated goals and calls for zoning review will be advanced based on Planning Board or Town Board advice.
- IX. The Land Use Map is not a substitute for and does not supersede the Town's official zoning map.

### III. COMMUNITY PROFILE

Washington has developed a community profile that evaluates its existing conditions, opportunities and constraints. The full profile is available as part of the Comprehensive Plan Appendices. Key issues and findings are summarized below.

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#### A. REGIONAL SETTING

Located in central Dutchess County, the Town of Washington is a community of approximately 59.37 square miles and a 2010 Census population of 4,741; *this number includes the Village of Millbrook population of 1,452.*

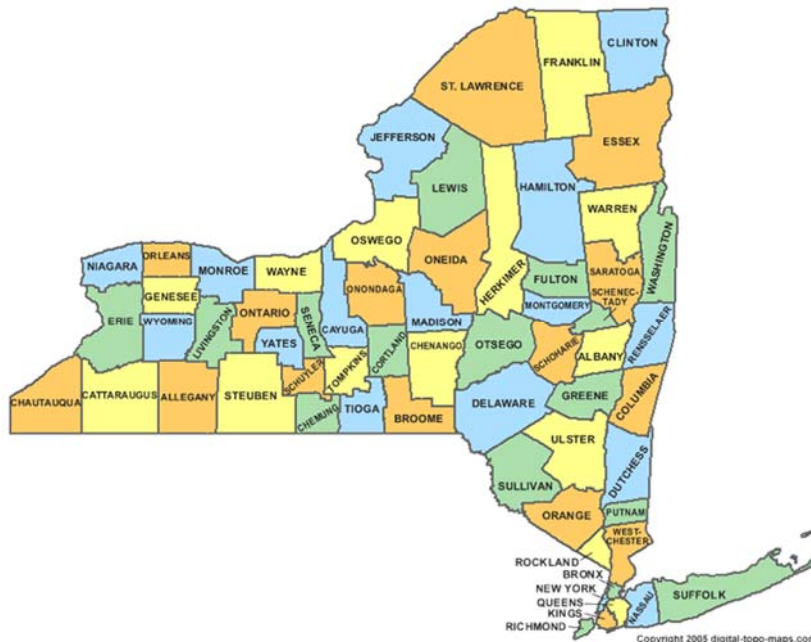
There is one village located within the Town's borders; The Village of Millbrook.

Washington is bordered by the Town of Stanford to the north, the Towns of Union Vale and Dover to the south, the Town of Amenia to the east, and the Towns of Pleasant Valley and Clinton to the west.

Prior to 2004 the whole of Dutchess County was an Independent Statistical Area; as designated by the Census Bureau for the purpose of collecting and measuring geographic statistical data. From 2004 to 2015 it was grouped with Orange County and most recently;

***Dutchess is now partnered with Putnam County in the Dutchess-Putnam Metropolitan Division***

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## **B. HISTORY OF WASHINGTON**

The Town of Washington was formed on March 7, 1788. General George Washington was the great hero of the hour, and the next year he was elected the first President of the United States. During the American War of the Revolution, General Washington made camp under the huge cottonwood tree that stood at the place which has been called Washington Hollow ever since. The blue cloth used in making the coats of the uniforms worn by the officers in General Washington's army was woven by Philip Hart at his cotton mill in Hart's Village (now Millbrook).

With all of these things reminding the people of George Washington, it was only natural that they named the new town in his honor. It was originally made up of about 67,000 acres, which lay mostly in the Great Nine Partners' land grant. However, in 1793, the Town of Stanford was formally established as a distinct municipality and Washington took its current shape.

The early settlers raised grain, hauled it in wagons to Poughkeepsie, put it on sloops, and sent it down the river for sale in New York City. They also raised cattle, sheep and turkey, and transported them to the market in, first by boat and later by train. Irish immigrants arriving in the mid-19th century began the tradition of horse breeding that characterizes much of the Town today.

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George Hunter Brown, of Brown Brothers Brokers in New York City, built the Newburgh, Dutchess and Columbia Railroad. In 1869, it came through Millbrook, a new station named after Mr. Brown's own homestead. The railroad brought the county out of its wilderness years and ushered in an era of summer boarders from the City. Mr. Brown also built a milk factory in 1870 in Hart's Village which enabled farmers to carry on a profitable dairy business.

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The great estates of Daheim, Altamont, Cary, Thorne and others grew up around Millbrook. At the turn of the century, there were more estates of millionaires around Millbrook than around any other small village in the Country. During the Depression, these local estates retained their hired help and enabled many families to survive.

In 1907, May Friend Bennett purchased Halcyon Hall, (built as an elite hotel in 1893) and established Bennett School in 1908. That boarding school later became a junior college until its operations were ended in 1977. The Bennett School and the Millbrook School (which is actually in Stanford) gave the area a unique aspect of private education.

There are many remnants of the elements that have distinguished the Town's history. Estate homes, historic farm houses and barns, distinctive stone walls, educational institutions, and churches all remain as reminders of the pattern and progress of local development.

In addition, certain of the cultural resources (many of which are concentrated in the Village of Millbrook) continue to serve Town residents as they have previous generations. The Gifford House, the Cardinal Hayes Home for Children, and the Town Hall are particularly significant. Some of these facilities involved adaptation of older buildings for different current uses.

There are also new developments, such as the Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies and the Farm and Home Center, that represent continued investment in (and appreciation of) the natural environment that distinguishes the Town.

## **C. THE VILLAGE OF MILLBROOK**

The Village of Millbrook sits entirely within the Town of Washington and is the Town's sole village. It was incorporated in 1895 for the express purpose of accepting the gift of the Thorne Memorial School Building.

***The Village of Millbrook is governed by a Mayor and four trustees and has its own distinct body of laws and zoning regulations.***

Village residents are also Town residents, but Town residents are **NOT** Village residents. Since Town residents are not Village residents, they are not assessed Village taxes.

On the other hand, Village residents are Town residents and pay taxes to both governments. In fact, Village property owners pay equitably against all appropriations in the Town of Washington General Fund. This taxation permits villagers to share in all general fund programs such as recreation, park & pool, solid waste management, the court system, and animal control.

The salaries of elected Town officials are also included in the general fund affording Village residents the opportunity to vote in all Town elections, as well as hold office.

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Millbrook had a 2010 census population of 1,452 and has been growing slowly over the past two decades. Municipal water and sewer services have been in use since 1935 and a large network of sidewalks and street lights exists

supporting the Village as a walkable mixed-use location.

The Village manages a part time local police department that provides coverage within the Village borders. In addition, the Village owns and operates the Millbrook Fire Department and Rescue Squad, setting the annual budget and acting as the Board of Fire Commissioners. The Town of Washington receives fire and rescue services pursuant to an annual contract with the Village.

The Village provides an estimated 623 housing units, including over 300 rental units, (*The Church Alliance Senior Citizen housing project provides 24 federally subsidized apartments*), and is the geographic center of the Town's affordable housing supply and commercial activity.

The boundaries of the Village, created so as to include the major estate owners of the day, remain mostly rural to the north and east. The western edge has low density housing while denser housing is found in the area surrounding the general business district. The Millbrook Golf and Tennis Club, The Tribute Garden, Village Green, and School playgrounds provide abundant green open spaces.

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Through ongoing discussion, it is clear that the Town and Village have a shared vision and wish to retain and build upon the unique differences and synergies that exist in order to benefit both communities and to work together to achieve common goals.



***Although the Town of Washington does not have governing authority within the Village borders and the Village government is not bound by recommendations in the Town Comprehensive Plan, it is clear that the vitality and success of the Village of Millbrook is of paramount importance to Town of Washington residents.***



# Village of Millbrook Zoning Map

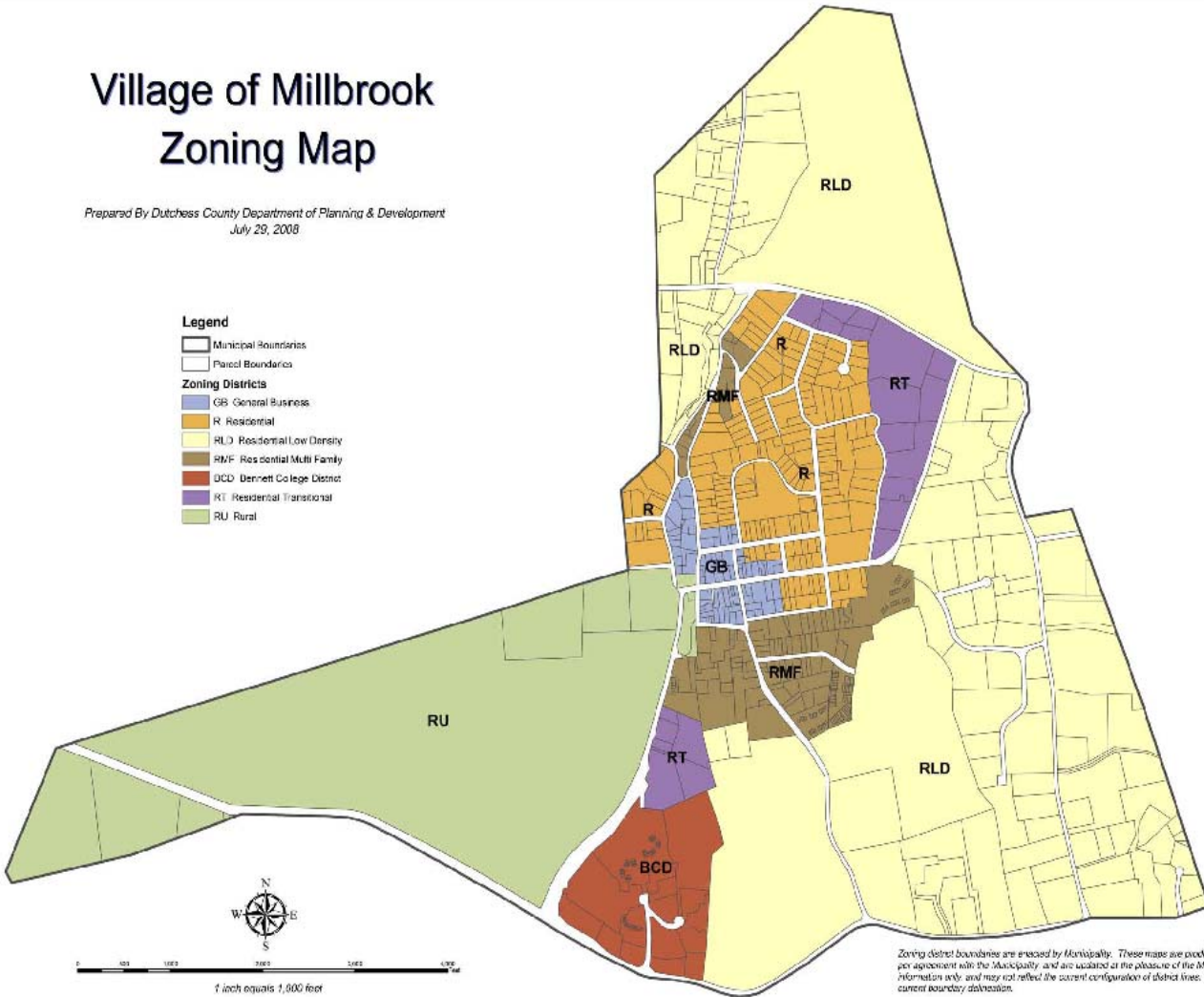
Prepared By Dutchess County Department of Planning & Development  
July 29, 2008

## Legend

-  Municipal Boundaries
-  Parcel Boundaries

## Zoning Districts

-  GB General Business
-  R Residential
-  RLD Residential Low Density
-  RMF Residential Multi Family
-  DCD Bennett College District
-  RT Residential Transitional
-  RU Rural



Zoning district boundaries are enacted by Municipality. These maps are produced by Dutchess County Planning & Development in agreement with the Municipality and are updated at the pleasure of the Municipality. These Zoning Maps are printed for information only and may not reflect the current configuration of district lines. Check with local Zoning Enforcement Officer for current boundary delineation.

## D. POPULATION

The population of the Town of Washington stands at 4,741, a decrease of 1 person from 2000. Genders are divided almost equally with 2,363 males and 2,378 females. Washington's population increased by 5.8% between the years 1990 and 2010.

**Table 1: Population by Decade**

Year	Town Outside	Village of Millbrook	Combined	Dutchess County
<b>1900</b>	2,005	1,027	3,032	<b>81,670</b>
<b>1910</b>	1,891	1,136	3,027	<b>87,661</b>
<b>1920</b>	1,699	1,096	2,795	<b>91,747</b>
<b>1930</b>	1,746	1,296	3,042	<b>105,462</b>
<b>1940</b>	1,740	1,340	3,080	<b>120,542</b>
<b>1950</b>	1,859	1,568	3,427	<b>136,781</b>
<b>1960</b>	1,978	1,717	3,695	<b>176,008</b>
<b>1970</b>	2,672	1,735	4,407	<b>222,295</b>
<b>1980</b>	3,039	1,343	4,382	<b>245,055</b>
<b>1990</b>	3,140	1,339	4,479	<b>259,462</b>
<b>2000</b>	3,313	1,429	4,742	<b>280,150</b>
<b>2010</b>	3,289	1,452	4,741	<b>297,488</b>

Source: US Bureau of the Census

During the last decade population growth in the Town remained flat, decreasing by .02%. The neighboring towns of Stanford and Dover showed a slight increase at 1.4% and 1.56% respectively; Dutchess County as a whole grew at a 6.18% rate. Growth in general has slowed from the double digit increases experienced in earlier decades to single digits for 2000-.2010.

**Table 2: Comparative Population Change  
2000-2010**

Municipality	2000	2010	Change
<b>Town of Washington</b>	4,742	4,741	<b>-.02 %</b>
<b>Town of Washington , outside village</b>	3,313	3,289	<b>-.72 %</b>
<b>Town of Stanford</b>	3,544	3,823	<b>1.4 %</b>
<b>Town of Amenia</b>	4,048	4,436	<b>9.58 %</b>
<b>Town of Dover</b>	8,565	8,699	<b>1.56 %</b>
<b>Town of Union Vale</b>	4,546	4,877	<b>7.28 %</b>
<b>Town of LaGrange</b>	14,928	15,730	<b>5.37 %</b>
<b>Town of Pleasant Valley</b>	9,066	9,672	<b>6.68 %</b>
<b>Town of Clinton</b>	4,010	4,312	<b>7.53 %</b>
<b>Dutchess County</b>	280,150	297,488	<b>6.18%</b>

Source: Bureau of the Census

According to the 2010 Census, there are 372 minorities in Washington comprising 7.8% of the population. The largest minority group is the Hispanic population, which comprises 45.7% of all minorities.

The age distribution of Washington's population has implications for the delivery of services within the community, including education, recreation, and child and elder care programs. The most recent census figures show that in 2010, 20.5% of Town residents were between the ages of 25 and 44, while an additional 31.5% of residents are between the ages of 45 and 64.

The Town's school-age population (ages 5-19) represented 20.5% of the total population, while 4.0% of Washington's residents were less than five years old in 2010.

<b>Table 3: POPULATION BY AGE</b>		
<b>2010 Census</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<i>Total Population</i>	4,741	100.0
<b>AGE</b>		
Under 5 years	192	4.0
5 to 9 years	267	5.6
10 to 14 years	329	6.9
15 to 19 years	378	8.0
20 to 24 years	186	3.9
25 to 29 years	197	4.2
30 to 34 years	212	4.5
35 to 39 years	223	4.7
40 to 44 years	338	7.1
45 to 49 years	395	8.3
50 to 54 years	394	8.3
55 to 59 years	391	8.2
60 to 64 years	317	6.7
65 to 69 years	257	5.4
70 to 74 years	210	4.4
75 to 79 years	185	3.9
80 to 84 years	135	2.8
85 years and over	135	2.8

Source: US Bureau of the Census

## E. HOUSING

As defined by the Census Bureau, a housing unit is a house, an apartment, a mobile home, a group of rooms, or a single room that is occupied (or if vacant, is intended for occupancy) as separate living quarters. *Separate living quarters* are those in which the occupants live and eat separately from any other persons in the building and which have direct access from the outside of the building or through a common hall.

In 2000, there were 2,192 households in the Town of Washington, representing an increase of 5.9% from the 1990 figure of 2,070. From 2000 to 2010, the number of Housing Units in the Town of Washington increased by 12.18% to 2,459.

The predominant housing type in Washington is the single family dwelling. Approximately 53% of the Town's housing units are single family, 3% are condos, 24% are multi-family and 6% are farms. There are only 7 mobile homes in the Town of Washington.

<b>TABLE 4: TOTAL HOUSING UNITS 1940-2010 WASHINGTON &amp; SURROUNDING TOWNS</b>								
<b>Municipality</b>	<b>1940</b>	<b>1950</b>	<b>1960</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Washington</b>	507	645	816	918	1,131	2,070	2,192	2,459
<b>Stanford</b>	513	643	764	1,058	1,314	1,564	1,712	1,913
<b>Amenia</b>	675	804	1,055	1,218	1,709	1,815	1,814	2,045
<b>Dover</b>	790	844	1,677	1,631	2,540	3,018	3,266	3,637
<b>Unionvale</b>	263	300	493	614	892	1,340	1,462	1,911
<b>LaGrange</b>	527	823	1,880	3,056	3,944	4,586	5,240	5,668
<b>Pleasant Valley</b>	660	923	1,473	1,995	2,584	3,186	3,614	4,049
<b>Clinton</b>	512	664	854	1,025	1,255	1,544	1,734	1,915
<b>Dutchess County</b>	31,824	38,344	53,592	69,126	86,852	97,632	106,103	118,638

Source: U.S Bureau of the Census

***Important to note: While the number of households increased, the average size of households decreased.***

From 1980 to 2000 the Town of Washington's household's growth vastly outpaced the rest of the county. The development of condominium/townhouses within the Village of Millbrook is largely responsible for the increase. In fact 15% of the Town's housing stock was constructed between 1980 & 1989 while 57% was constructed prior to 1960.

Out of the reported 2010 units, 1,956 are occupied, an increase of 42 units (or 2.3%) over 2000. The Town's vacancy rates in 2010 were high, with rental vacancy at 29.7% and for-sale housing vacancy at 15.3%. Approximately 65% of occupied units are owner-occupied.

<b>TABLE 5: HOUSING UNITS OCCUPANCY</b>		
	Number	Percent
<b><i>OCCUPANCY STATUS</i></b>		
Total housing units	2,459	100.0
Occupied housing units	1,956	79.5
Vacant housing units	222	9.0
Second home, Seasonal, recreational,	281	11.4
<b><i>TENURE</i></b>		
Occupied housing units	1,956	100.0
Owner occupied	1,264	64.6
Owned with a mortgage or loan	812	41.5
Owned free and clear	452	23.1
Renter occupied	692	35.4
<b><i>VACANCY STATUS</i></b>		
Vacant housing units	222	100.0
For rent	66	29.7
Rented, not occupied	9	4.0
For sale only	34	15.3
Sold, not occupied	15	6.7
For migratory workers	2	.90
Other vacant	96	43.4

Source: U.S Bureau of the Census

In 2010, approximately 63.9% of the households in Washington were considered traditional nuclear families with a husband, wife, and related children under age 18, while 10.7% were headed by a single parent. Non-family units, including single-person and households of unrelated persons, account for about one-third of the households in the Town.

Housing sale prices rose dramatically between 1996 and 2006. The median price of a home in the Town grew from \$148,500 to \$440,000; based upon home sales listed through the Mid-Hudson Multiple Listing Service.

In 2007 the median price of a home sold in the Town was \$560,000 and in the Village of Millbrook it was \$500,400. The median price of a condo was \$320,000.

However, due to several factors including, a relatively small sample size, wide year to year swings, the numerous estates and properties with more than 10 acres in the Town, housing cost data must be carefully studied in order to draw accurate conclusions.

***See Table 8: 2012 Property Uses for a complete picture of the range of residential properties included in this data.***

**TABLE 6 HOUSING SALES  
1996-2010**

***DETACHED TOWN OF WASHINGTON***

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>NUMBER SOLD</b>	<b>TOTAL SALES</b>	<b>AVGERAGE PRICE</b>	<b>MEDIAN PRICE</b>
<b>1996</b>	21	3,907,398	186,006	148,500
<b>1997</b>	27	5,677,429	217,682	172,500
<b>1998</b>	46	9,891,575	215,034	179,500
<b>1999</b>	39	8,784,180	225,235	162,000
<b>2000</b>	23	11,032,948	479,693	300,000
<b>2001</b>	25	9,251,300	370,052	279,000
<b>2002</b>	25	10,212,460	408,498	260,000
<b>2003</b>	33	21,921,149	664,277	352,500
<b>2004</b>	35	29,744,940	849,855	425,000
<b>2005</b>	38	38,605,400	1,015,931	567,500
<b>2006</b>	31	28,504,400	919,496	440,000
<b>2007</b>	27	27,978,425	1,032,529	560,000
<b>2008</b>	13	7,983,425	614,109	475,000
<b>2009</b>	25	20,447,950	819,118	350,000
<b>2010*</b>	11	7,382,000	671,090	620,000

***DETACHED VILLAGE OF MILLBROOK***

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>NUMBER SOLD</b>	<b>TOTAL SALES</b>	<b>AVERAGE PRICE</b>	<b>MEDIAN PRICE</b>
<b>2000</b>	5	1,259,000	251,800	220,000
<b>2001</b>	4	881,000	220,250	222,500
<b>2002</b>	5	2,629,000	525,800	525,000
<b>2003</b>	3	1,777,500	393,500	325,000
<b>2004</b>	9	3,084,900	342,766	345,000
<b>2005</b>	11	4,461,250	405,558	365,000
<b>2006</b>	8	4,077,000	509,625	429,500
<b>2007</b>	9	4,927,150	547,461	500,400
<b>2008</b>	6	4,146,550	691,092	535,775
<b>2009</b>	10	5,124,440	512,440	342,700
<b>2010*</b>	5	2,329,000	465,800	475,000

**ATTACHED VILLAGE OF MILLBROOK**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>NUMBER SOLD</b>	<b>TOTAL SALES</b>	<b>AVERAGE PRICE</b>	<b>MEDIAN PRICE</b>
<b>2000</b>	5	1,259,000	251,800	220,000
<b>2001</b>	4	881,000	220,250	222,500
<b>2002</b>	5	2,629,000	525,800	525,000
<b>2003</b>	3	1,777,500	393,500	325,000
<b>2004</b>	9	3,084,900	342,766	345,000
<b>2005</b>	11	4,461,250	405,558	365,000
<b>2006</b>	8	4,077,000	509,625	429,500
<b>2007</b>	9	4,927,150	547,461	500,400
<b>2008</b>	6	4,146,550	691,092	535,775
<b>2009</b>	10	5,124,440	512,440	342,700
<b>2010*</b>	5	2,329,000	465,800	475,000

\*Dates Used 1/1/2010- 6/30/2010  
Source: Mid Hudson Multiple Listing Service

The Town of Washington completed a town-wide property revaluation in 2005 and has maintained assessments at a 100% market value rating ever since.

Examining assessed values is another tool which can be used to create an accurate overall picture of the value of a community's housing stock.

***“When a town is assessing property at 100% market value a property’s assessment should be roughly its market value (the price for which you could sell your property)”***. Source: New York State Department of Taxation and Finance

The **assessed** value of single family homes in both the Town and Village has dropped considerably since the bursting of the housing bubble of the last decade. From 2009 to 2012 the median **assessed value** of a single family home has dropped by 29.6% in the Town and 22.1% in the Village.

**Table 6A: Comparative Assessed Values \*  
Single Family Homes  
Town of Washington/Village of Millbrook**

<b>2009</b>				
<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Total Value</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Median</b>
<b>Village</b>	428	158,216,600	369,665	329,600
<b>Town</b>	769	363,684,243	472,931	440,000
<b>Both</b>	1197	521,900,843	436,007	395,700
<b>2012</b>				
<b>Village</b>	425	126,154,400	296,834	256,700
<b>Town</b>	773	297,979,556	385,485	310,000
<b>Both</b>	1198	424,133,956	354,035	289,600
<b>% Change 2009-2012</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Total Value</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Median</b>
<b>Village</b>	-0.70	-20.26	-19.70	-22.13
<b>Town</b>	0.52	-18.07	-18.49	-29.55
<b>Both</b>	0.08	-18.73	-18.80	-26.81

\*Chart references full assessment data base of the Town and Village

## F. INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT

Personal income is one of the key indicators of the economy and one of the most important variables in creating a vibrant community for the future. Understanding the income characteristics of the community is also important in determining the community's wealth as well as the ability of residents to maintain housing, contribute to the local tax base, and participate in the economy.

In 2000, our median household and per capita income were higher than those in Dutchess County and New York State. In 2000, the estimated median household income was \$52,104 and the per capita income was \$32,561. In 2012 the median income rose to \$65,519 and per capita to \$44,074. Thirty-three families and 336 individuals (7% of the Town's residents) lived below the poverty line in 2000.

**Table 7: Household Income and Poverty Rate Comparison**

	Town of Washington (1989)	Adjusted* Town of Washington	Town of Washington (1999)	Dutchess County (1989)	Adjusted Dutchess County	Dutchess County (1999)
Median Household Income	\$41,368	\$55,580	\$52,104	\$42,250	\$56,765	\$53,086
Median Family Income	\$50,458	\$67,793	\$69,074	\$49,305	\$66,244	\$63,254
Per Capita Income	\$29,404	\$39,506	\$32,561	\$17,420	\$23,405	\$23,940
Individuals Below Poverty Level	4.2%	n/a	7.2%	5.4%	n/a	7.5%
Families Below Poverty Level	2.4%	n/a	2.7%	3.6%	n/a	5.0%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

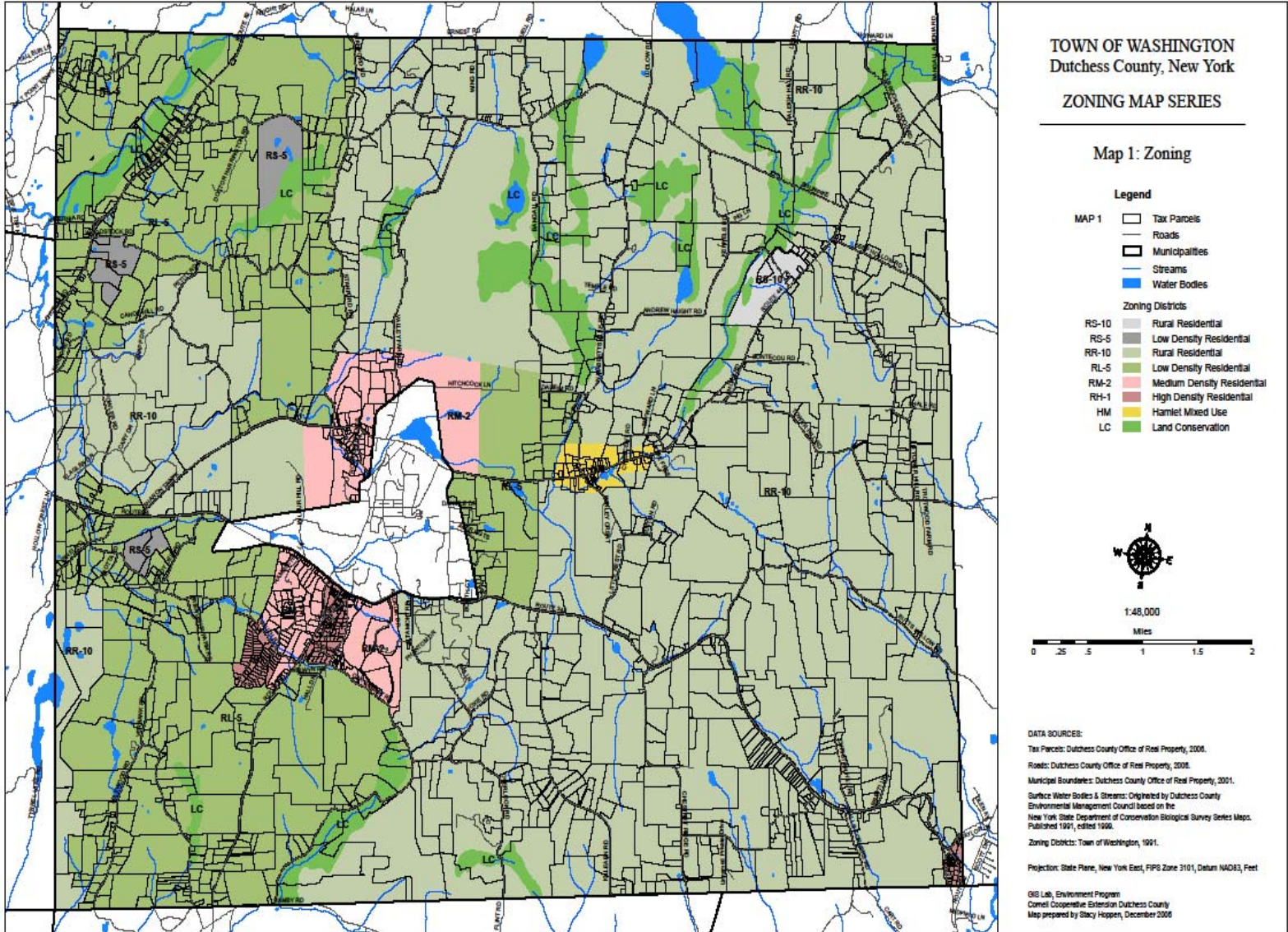
In 2010, 67.9% of residents over age 16 were employed. The most common occupations were management, professional and related occupations, as well as sales, office and service professions.

In fact, 48.6% of Washington residents, who are employed, work in the service sector, including 592 (25.2%) in the educational, health, and social services sectors. Approximately 9.7% are employed in the retail sector, while 7.5% work in construction. Like the Town, the majority of residents in the Village are employed in the services sector.

Approximately 12.0% of Town residents work outside of Dutchess County. The most common mode of transportation is by car, truck or van (74.3%) while 3.3% of workers use public transportation and 6.8% walk to work. Of the 2,113 residents that travel outside the home for work, 42.7% travel less than 19 minutes. The most common travel time is 30 to 34 minutes.



# TOWN OF WASHINGTON ZONING MAP



## **G. LAND USE AND LAND MANAGEMENT**

It is clear that there is a high degree of satisfaction throughout the Town with existing land uses, which have essentially remained the same, and an equally strong desire for that to continue in the future.

The current zoning code provides for eight districts including seven residential districts, High Density Residential RH-1, Medium Density RM-2, and Low Density Residential RS-5, RL-5. A hamlet/mixed-use district HM is found in the Mabbettsville area and Land Conservation relates to the Wetlands Local Law.

In addition there are six floating districts including: Agricultural Protection, Aquifer Protection, Environmental Preservation, Industrial/Office, Mobile Home, and Hamlet. Overlay districts include Agricultural Protection (APO), and Aquifer Protection (AQ). The Wetland Watercourse Law and Map regulate activities within wetland buffer zones.

The Town contains 59.37 square miles of land area (37,824 acres). Washington maintains assessment data on approximately 1,725 parcels that contain about 35,380 acres, indicating that approximately 2,444 acres (6.5%) is dedicated to roads and rights-of-way.

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### ***Land uses in the Town of Washington, outside the Village of Millbrook, include:***

- Residential land includes single-family homes, rural residences with acreage, multiple-family homes, manufactured homes, and seasonal homes. Parcels assessed as residential account for 37.1% of the land in Washington.
- Agricultural land accounts for 36.7% of the land.
- Vacant land in the Town of Washington includes 407 parcels consisting of 7,232 acres. It accounts for approximately 20.4% of the total acreage in the Town.
- Approximately 3.2% of the Town's land is in community services; property used for the well-being of the community.
- There are 29 parcels of commercial land comprising 116 acres in Washington (less than 1% of the total land in the Town).
- All other categories combined, including commercial development, occupy the balance, with no category occupying more than 2.0% of the land.

**Agricultural** land is found nearly everywhere in the Town, in both large

and small tracts. The largest concentration and largest overall area of farmland is located in the northeast. The only large area without a significant amount of active farmland is the southeast corner of Town, where wooded land and residential uses predominate.

**Recreation** land is found mostly in the western portion of the Town with the exception of the Town Park in Mabbettsville. Two private recreation clubs have property off Route 82 and Woodstock Road. A third area, Innisfree Gardens, is owned by a private organization whose lands are open to the public.

**Water resources** consist of several small lakes and numerous ponds, many creeks and small streams, ground water, and numerous aquifers throughout Town.

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***The following summarizes the distribution of land uses in Washington:***

- **High-density subdivisions (1 acre)**, removed from the main roads, occur in three places; Horseshoe Road, south Millbrook on the east side of Route 82, and in the south eastern corner of the Town near Dover Plains. One mobile home park exists along the Route 343 spur.
- **Medium-density residential areas** are found in small concentrations in South Millbrook and around the north perimeter of the Village. These are areas of mixed lot sizes and are predominantly low in density.
- **Low-density residential uses (5 and 10 acres)** are scattered throughout the Town along state, county and town roads. The eastern portion of the Town of Washington is predominantly 10 acre zoning.
- **Commercial business entities** are located throughout the Town, with many businesses located along state roads. A wide variety of successful businesses exist and these establishments bring visitors to the Town and in turn to the Village of Millbrook.
- **Operational extractive industry uses**; sand and gravel mining operations, are found in one location on Canoe Hill Road near NYS Route 82.
- **Communication Corridor** use is distinguished by a single transmission line which crosses the northwestern corner of the Town along Wappinger Creek.
- **Public and quasi-public uses** are found on small parcels throughout the Town, but with a greater concentration in the central area near the Village. Large areas of institutional open space are located in the northeast corner (the lands of the Millbrook School) and along the western border. The Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies occupies a very large area in the western part of Town, providing nearly two thousand acres of protected land.

**TABLE 8: PROPERTY USES**

**2012 PROPERTY USES -- TOWN OF WASHINGTON and VILLAGE of MILLBROOK**

Parcels	Village	Town	Total				
1 Family Res	426	773	1199	Parking lot	5	2	7
1 use sm bld	3	1	4	Pheasant		2	2
2 Family Res	36	28	64	Picnic site	1		1
3 Family Res	7	3	10	Playground	1		1
Abandoned ag	1		1	Police/fire	1		1
Aged - home		1	1	Priv Hunt/Fish		1	1
Air transprt		1	1	Prof. bldg.	2		2
Apartment	22	2	24	Pub Util Vac		2	2
Att row bldg	1	3	4	Rec facility		2	2
Auto dealer		2	2	Religious	5	3	8
Bank	2		2	Res Multiple	18	61	79
Branch bank	1		1	Res Vac		1	1
Cattle farm	1	23	24	Res vac land	52	47	99
Cemetery	1	3	4	Res w/Comuse	5	1	6
College/univ	1		1	Restaurant	2	1	3
Com vac w/imp		2	2	Ridng stable		1	1
Converted Res	18	4	22	Road/str/hwy	6		6
Country club	1		1	Rural res	3	202	205
Culture bldg	2		2	Rural res&ag	1	65	66
Dairy farm		9	9	Rural vac<10	6	157	163
Det row bldg	18	2	20	Rural vac>10		100	100
Diner/lunch	1		1	Sand&gravel		1	1
Educatn fac	2	6	8	School	3	1	4
Elec-Substation	1		1	Seasonal res		2	2
Estate	2	35	37	Sewage	2		2
Field crops	1	28	29	Sheep farm		1	1
Forest s480a		2	2	Snack bar		1	1
Fruit crop		3	3	Spec. school		3	3
Fuel Store&Dist		3	3	Special farm		1	1
Funeral home	1		1	Tele Comm	1		1
Gas station	1	1	2	Underwtr Ind	1		1
Govt bldgs	2	2	4	Vac farmland		41	41
Greenhouse	1		1	Vac w/imprv	5	19	24
Health bldg	1	2	3	Vacant comm	7	3	10
Health spa		1	1	Vacant Land		2	2
Highway gar	1		1	Vacant rural		22	22
Horse farm	1	26	27	Vineyard		2	2
Inn/lodge	1		1	Water supply	1	1	2
Kennel / vet		4	4	(blank)			
Landfill		1	1	<b>Total</b>	<b>696</b>	<b>1736</b>	<b>2432</b>
Library	1		1				
Mfg hsing pk		1	1				
Mine/quarry		3	3				
MiniWhseSelfSto		1	1				
Motel		1	1				
Multiple res		1	1				
Nursery		3	3				
Office bldg.	5	2	7				
Other stock	1	3	4				
Other Storage	2	1	3				
Outdr sport	2	1	3				

## H. NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

***Careful attention to the opportunities and the limitations of the natural environment is necessary to maintain the natural beauty, economic vigor, and quality of life in the Town of Washington.***

Development that is incompatible with natural conditions may negatively impact natural resources such as groundwater or wildlife, create problems in nearby or downstream properties, or result in excessive costs to develop and maintain structures and activities on the property itself.

***Environmental features in the Town of Washington include:***

- **Unconsolidated materials** deposited by glaciers and glacial melt waters (till, sand and gravel, or lacustrine deposits) cover much of the bedrock in the Town. Most till in Washington is high in clay, which reduces its permeability, limits its usefulness for ground water supply, and requires septic systems to be carefully designed and separated.
- **Sand and gravel** deposits consist of larger particles deposited in lowlands and river valleys. These deposits are the Town's most productive groundwater sources. They also provide materials for building and road construction.
- **Most bedrock** in the Town of Washington is shale and schist, with smaller areas of quartzite and limestone. Except for the small areas of limestone in the Town, these bedrock formations generally are not productive sources of water.

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**Soils** in the Town are highly varied; 20% of the Town is covered by Prime Agricultural Soils, but about half of the Town is covered by soils whose depth or permeability limits land use. Lands with prime agricultural soils represent an irreplaceable resource. ***Carefully planned land use policies are needed if the Town is to maintain the agricultural resource base that gives Washington its rural character.***

*Detailed information about local soils, including maps, is available in Faber, the USDA web soil survey site, and the local Natural Resources Conservation Service. These sources provide specific information about the precise location of different soil types in the town, as well as assessments of their suitability for building, septic systems, agriculture, and other uses. This detailed information is too voluminous to include here, but can provide invaluable information to guide planning and assess the proposed development of specific sites.*

**Relief and slope** are two topographic features that significantly affect land use. Our Town has one of the greatest ranges in elevation of any town in the County, with elevations ranging from 120 to 1300 feet above sea level. This topography offers both outstanding scenery and challenges for land development and protection.

**Steep slopes**, defined as areas with more than a 15% grade, cover 16% of Washington. Steep slopes appear throughout the Town, but are most common along streams in the eastern hills. In particular, slopes rise steeply along Butts Hollow Road and Stone Church Brook along Route 343, and steep slopes are widespread in the Tower Hill Road area.

**Aquifers** are surficial or bedrock deposits that store and yield large amounts of groundwater. As noted previously, sand and gravel form the most productive surficial aquifers, and carbonate rocks such as limestone form the best bedrock aquifers. Areas where sand and gravel overlie limestone are therefore the most productive, as well as the most vulnerable, aquifers in the Town.

Such areas occur south of Mabbettsville along Mill Brook and north of Lithgow along a tributary of Wassaic Creek. The area along Mill Brook is especially important, because this recharge zone feeds the aquifer that is the source of the municipal water supply for the Village of Millbrook. Land use regulations should protect the quality of this resource.

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The **Watershed**, or drainage basin, is the area of land that contributes water to a stream or lake. The Town is part of three drainage basins; Wappinger Creek, Tenmile River and Fishkill Creek. The fact that three drainage basins originate in Washington means that a large area of the Town is near drainage divides and is at higher elevation than most areas of surrounding towns.

Except for a small area traversed by the Wappinger Creek, Washington does not receive waters draining from other towns. Instead, storm waters flow out of the Town into nine other municipalities in Dutchess County. This gives Washington both an advantage and a responsibility in terms of water quality and flood conditions. Likewise, most of Washington's surface waters and aquifers are not subject to contamination from land uses outside the Town, but land uses within the Town of Washington can affect flooding, water quality, and water supplies.

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The numerous lakes, ponds, wetlands, and small streams that are found throughout the Town are important for biodiversity and scenic beauty. Wetlands cover more than 6% of Washington; 29 of these wetlands are state-protected, and many smaller wetlands and watercourses are protected under the Town's Wetlands Local Law.

About 1% of the Town lies within FEMA 100-year floodplains, which imposes stringent limitations on possible land uses. Ground water supplies essentially all of the water for residents, so long-term protection of the quality and quantity of ground water is a key challenge for Town managers.

Washington contains a wide range of habitats that support a correspondingly wide range of plants and animals. A complete biodiversity study of Washington has not been undertaken, but Hudsonia, a not for profit Environmental Research Institute, performed a detailed analysis of the habitats in the Town that serves as a valuable guide to the Town's biodiversity and strategies for its protection.

## I. TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Washington has 107.88 miles of roadway, including 25.1 miles owned by New York State and 18.57 miles owned by Dutchess County. Approximately 64.21 miles of road are maintained by the Town Highway Department.

Jurisdiction	Miles	Percent of Total
<b>New York State</b>	25.10	23.2
<b>Dutchess County</b>	18.57	17.2
<b>Town of Washington</b>	64.21	59.5
<b>Total</b>	107.88	100

Source: 2007 Data Traffic Report for New York State

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There are three key thoroughfares in the community: Routes 44, 82, and 343. The highest traffic volumes can be found on Route 44 between Washington Hollow and the former 44A intersection. From the 44 intersection to South Millbrook, the level of traffic remains heavy, indicating a high degree of travel between the Village of Millbrook and the western part of the County.

Statistics regarding commuting patterns show that more than 90 percent of Washington workers commute to areas within Dutchess County. Of the workers holding jobs outside the county, nearly half commute to New York City.

One factor influencing traffic patterns is the location of residences in the Town. There is a concentration of residential development in the south Millbrook area out to Oak Summit Road. The county roads in this area approach a range of use usually found on state roads. Other areas of residential concentration are Mabbettsville and the area bounded by the former 44A, Stanford Road and the Village border.

A second factor affecting traffic patterns is the existence of three major New York State roadways, all converging in and around the Village of Millbrook. Traffic is the heaviest throughout the Town along Route 82, Route 44, and Route 343, which serve as major corridors for East-West and North-South traffic in the central to eastern part of the County, and are heavily used by residents exiting or entering the Village from all parts of the Town.

In order to preserve and protect the quality and character of certain and specific roads, sixteen roads in the Town of Washington have been designated as scenic roads. (See appendix)

Also, two sections of road, in particular, have been listed in the Dutchess County Natural Resource Inventory as having scenic vantage points:

- Route 82 north of Verbank
- County Route 98, North Mabbettsville Road, north of the Shunpike.

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Washington is served by the Dutchess County Loop System (Countywide Bus System), which provides a route passing through the Village of Millbrook.

The Town of Washington has no designated bike trails; however, Dutchess County Tourism has designated several Scenic Bike Trails, including one that passes through Washington.

Metro-North Commuter Railroad provides two major rail lines connecting Dutchess County with Grand Central Station in New York City. The Harlem Valley line extends to Wassaic, Ten Mile River and Dover Plains in eastern Dutchess, and the Hudson River line serves Beacon, New Hamburg and Poughkeepsie. In addition, Amtrak trains travel along the Hudson River, making stops at Rhinecliff and Poughkeepsie. Washington residents can travel to the Poughkeepsie station by means of Route 44 and to the Dover Plains station via Route 343.

The nearest airport facility with regularly scheduled commercial flights is Stewart International Airport. The Dutchess County Airport provides services for recreational flights, corporate aircrafts and charters. Sky Acres Airport in Unionvale, which lies about 10 minutes south of Millbrook, provides facilities for private airplanes.

The Town's Transfer Station is located on Route 343, on the same site as the former landfill, which was closed and capped in 1993. The transfer station is available 3 days a week to Town and Village residents and accepts most household waste and various hazardous materials.

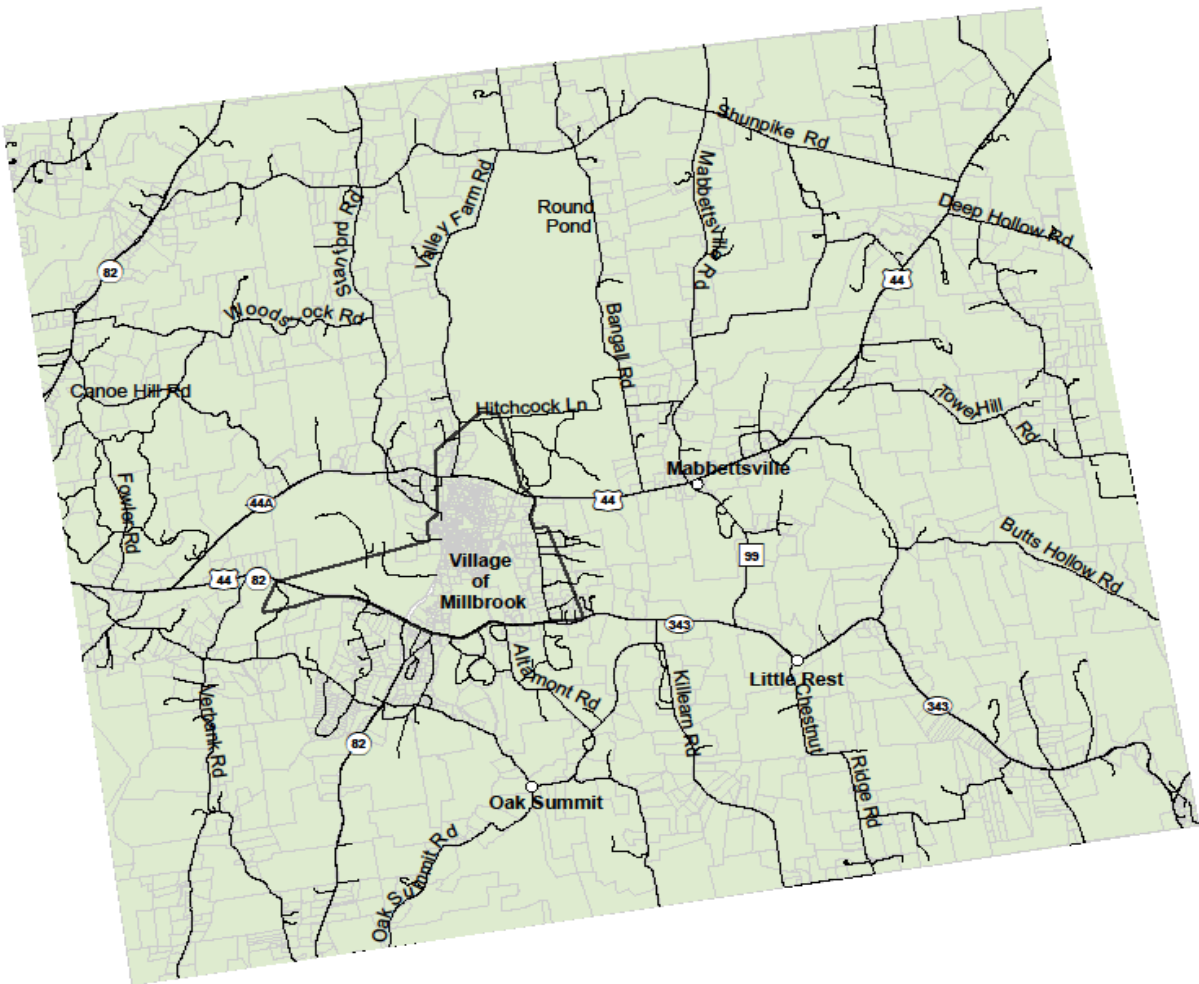
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**Most of the Town of Washington (excluding the Village of Millbrook) is served by individual on-lot wells. Some portions of the south Millbrook area are connected to the Village water system.**

**The Town of Washington (excluding the Village of Millbrook) is served almost exclusively by private on-lot septic systems with some portions of the south Millbrook area connected to the public system.**



# Town of Washington Roadways



- Local Roads
- County and State Routes



Source: Dutchess County Real Property Tax

Draft: November 13, 2009

RIVER  STREET  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

## **J. PARKS, RECREATION, SERVICES, AND GOVERNMENT**

The Town of Washington is governed by a Town Supervisor and a four-member Town Board. There are seven distinct departments, three of which are run by elected officials; the Town Clerk, Highway Superintendent and Town Justices. Municipal offices and the Highway Garage are located in the Village. There is a base of 35 full and part time employees with a significant increase in the summer months to manage the various recreational programs offered by the Town.

The Town also has six boards and commissions: Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Board of Assessment Review, Agricultural Advisory Commission, Conservation Advisory Commission, and Recreation Commission.

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The Town of Washington Park, the jewel of our community, is a multi-use recreation facility owned by the Town and located in Mabbettsville. The park provides a swimming area, athletic fields, playground, pavilions, camp building and fishing dock. Other recreational facilities nearby include; Village Hall Gymnasium, Innisfree Gardens, Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies, Millbrook Tribute Gardens, Wethersfield Garden and Trevor Zoo.

The Town's Recreation Department utilizes a variety of community locations for its programming, including the Town Park athletic fields, the Dutchess Day School, the Millbrook Preparatory School; the Millbrook Tribute Garden; the Millbrook Fire House, Village Band Shell for events, and the Millbrook Community Tennis Courts.

Numerous clubs and community organizations exist within the Town including the Girl and Boy Scouts, Millbrook Seniors, Rotary Club, Lions Club, Millbrook Arts Group, The Millbrook/Town of Washington Business Association, Millbrook Hunt Club, Millbrook Historical Society, several garden clubs, and sporting associations.

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Houses of worship provide for both the spiritual and social needs of their congregants. They include, The Church of St. Joseph Roman Catholic Church, Grace Episcopal Church, Lyall Federated Church, St. Peters, The Central Baptist Church and the Free Evangelical Church. Vital services offered include Meals on Wheels, Food Pantry, Alcohol Anonymous, senior citizen organizations, and thrift shops.

Residents are served by the Millbrook Central School District, Webutuck Central School District and Dover Union Free School District. Millbrook, located in the Village, is the primary district. Its four buildings serve 1,200 students in grades K-12. Other schools in the community are The Dutchess Day School, The Upton Lake Christian Academy, The Millbrook School, and the Cardinal Hayes Home for Children.

The Millbrook Free Library is located in the Village and it has been renovated and expanded several times, lastly in 2002. In addition to offering periodical and computer services, the Library offers a host of cultural programs including, concerts, gallery space, lectures, and children's activities.

***In 2003 the Town of Washington tax payers approved a referendum to fund the library \$100,000 annually through property taxes.***

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The Town of Washington is served by the Millbrook Fire Department and Rescue Squad, under contract with the Village of Millbrook, for emergency and rescue services. Mutual aid service companies include East Clinton and Stanford.

Washington does not provide any law enforcement functions. Two constables serve as court officers. Police responses in the Town are handled by either the Dutchess County Sheriff's Department or the New York State Police at the discretion of the Dutchess County Emergency Response Center.

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The Town's diverse business community has a comparable number of establishments to those located within the Village, which is consistent with the membership of the Millbrook Business Association (MBA).

Businesses located in the Town provide generous employment opportunities. These businesses also increase economic development, tourism, and sales tax revenue. Agribusiness and recreational facilities attract visitors from the tri-state area and beyond.

***Dutchess County Tourism encourages the partnership of Town and Village businesses in order to strengthen the economic benefits available to all.***

## IV. COMMUNITY SURVEY

During the fall of 2009, a community survey was conducted to assess the opinions of residents and to identify the issues of importance. A paper survey was mailed to every household and property owner. It was also available for completion via the internet. A total of 631 surveys were completed, representing an 18% response rate of adult residents. The majority of respondents were over the age of 40 with 31.7% retired.

Survey participants made numerous references to conditions in the Village of Millbrook with or without realizing that the Town of Washington Comprehensive Plan is not intended to address issues specific to the Village. The Village of Millbrook maintains its own Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code.

The majority of respondents support the following statement, without regard to age, income, or residence status;

***They live in and/or own property in Washington for the scenic beauty, rural atmosphere, small town feel, safety, quiet/peacefulness, green/open spaces, horses, knowing neighbors, the friendliness of people, and proximity of family.***

The following conclusions have been drawn from the survey data collected:

- Residents strongly support protecting water supplies and aquifers, rural character, stream corridors, scenic views and ridgelines, forested areas, and wetlands. There is also interest in protecting both historic resources and the agricultural character of the community.
- The Village has long functioned as the residential and commercial center of Town. The majority of survey responses wished this function to continue.
- General comments regarding housing favored preventing new housing development in the Town preferring to see it develop in the Village. A need for new housing did not appear to be a major concern for the community as housing is ranked at or near the bottom of priorities.
- Slightly more than half the survey respondents strongly agree that the Town should improve the environment for small business, however expanding the amount of land in the Town for commercial use was only supported by 7% of the respondents. Only support for manufactured homes ranked lower. Additionally, respondents were supportive of agricultural based businesses and did not want chain or big box stores.

***A full analysis of the survey results is available as part of the Plan Appendix.***

# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SURVEY RESULTS

Ranked by Priorities Most Strongly Agreed With

Rank	Topic	Priority	Strongly Agree	Percent of Respondents
1	Open Space and the Environment	Protect water supplies and aquifers	494	80.59
2	Open Space and the Environment	Protect rural character	465	76.48
3	Open Space and the Environment	Protect stream corridors	429	70.44
4	Open Space and the Environment	Identify and protect scenic views and ridgelines	420	69.42
5	Open Space and the Environment	Protect forested areas	387	63.76
6	Agriculture	Preserve the agricultural character	385	63.85
7	Agriculture	Protect agriculture from impact of development	373	61.75
8	Open Space and the Environment	Identify and protect wetlands	368	60.43
9	Open Space and the Environment	Use zoning to protect critical environmental areas	363	59.70
10	Open Space and the Environment	Identify and protect wildlife habitats	360	59.02
11	Open Space and the Environment	Provide incentives for private land conservation	356	59.53
12	Open Space and the Environment	Adopt tighter standards to protect rural character	340	56.86
13	Agriculture	Work to market local farm products	332	54.34
14	Economic Development	Improve the environment for small business	310	51.16
15	Agriculture	Encourage community-supported agriculture	304	50.33
16	Historical Preservation	Protect historic resources from new development	300	49.92
17	Economic Development	Retain existing businesses	298	49.34
18	Infrastructure	Support recruitment of volunteers (i.e. fire/rescue)	292	48.18
19	Agriculture	Purchase development rights for open lands to preserve working farms	292	48.75
20	Historical Preservation	Protect historic homes, places and buildings	279	45.81
21	Economic Development	Support a "buy local" campaign	277	45.79
22	Agriculture	Improve farmer representation on local boards	270	44.26
23	Economic Development	Support agricultural based businesses	269	45.21
24	Agriculture	Encourage niche or specialty farming	267	43.99
25	Historical Preservation	Continue to inventory historic buildings, sites and locations	261	42.86
26	Open Space and the Environment	Purchase open space	259	43.17
27	Economic Development	Limit development to existing commercial areas	256	42.67
28	Infrastructure	Promote alternate energy: solar	255	42.29
29	Housing	Help seniors to remain in their homes	250	41.67
30	Economic Development	Encourage new businesses	248	41.47
31	Historical Preservation	Provide tax incentives for rehabilitation of historic buildings	244	40.20
32	Economic Development	Help "green" environmentally friendly businesses	226	37.79
33	Historical Preservation	Protect stone masonry and walls	224	37.21
34	Infrastructure	Improve high-speed internet service	224	36.84
35	Transportation	Develop walking/bike paths	223	36.86
36	Infrastructure	Promote alternate energy: wind	204	33.94
37	Infrastructure	Improve cable/satellite television service	201	33.33
38	Open Space and the Environment	Encourage cluster development to conserve open space	199	33.06
39	Transportation	Make the town more walkable	186	30.90
40	Transportation	Improve facilities for bicyclists	181	30.17
41	Economic Development	Encourage home-based businesses	165	28.01
42	Transportation	Improve/provide transportation for seniors	160	26.53
43	Economic Development	Create businesses that meet the needs of senior citizens	160	26.71
44	Community Facilities	Develop multi use trails	159	26.28
45	Transportation	Improve road conditions	148	24.71
46	Economic Development	Help arts based businesses	140	23.14
47	Community Facilities	Develop more teen/youth services	140	23.49
48	Community Facilities	Improve community spaces such as a community center	134	21.97
49	Housing	Encourage single-family homes	129	21.90
50	Community Facilities	Improve town parks	128	21.23
51	Community Facilities	Develop more senior services i.e. recreational, day care	119	19.83
52	Economic Development	Provide more convenience retail	113	18.86
53	Housing	Encourage affordable senior housing	109	18.14
54	Housing	Encourage development of homes affordable to first-time homeowners	105	17.56
55	Infrastructure	Develop town water system	104	17.39
56	Housing	Encourage affordable apartments	102	17.03
57	Infrastructure	Develop town sewer system	101	16.83
58	Community Facilities	Provide new recreational services	94	15.54
59	Transportation	Create public transportation	91	15.27
60	Housing	Encourage assisted living facilities for seniors	85	14.12
61	Infrastructure	Develop a mass evacuation plan from high population centers (NYC)	81	13.61
62	Housing	Encourage nursing homes/acute care for seniors	70	11.86
63	Transportation	Pave gravel/dirt roads	56	9.33
64	Housing	Encourage more second home development	45	7.56
65	Economic Development	Expand the amount of land for commercial uses	43	7.12
66	Housing	Encourage high density manufactured (mobile) homes in the Town	7	1.16

## **V. COMMUNITY VISION AND GOALS**

### **VISION STATEMENT**

The purpose of a vision statement is to provide direction for the community's growth and development. It serves as the foundation underlying the development of goals, objectives, and strategies for implementation. Public Visioning Workshops were held to develop the vision statement. At the meetings, the committee and the consultant presented an overview of the planning effort and explained the visioning process.

Participants were asked to answer three questions:

- What do you love about Washington?"
- "What things would you change?"
- "When these things are changed, what will the Town be like?"

This Vision Statement reflects the common values of our residents and expresses the "ideal future" that we hope to attain.

### **A VISION FOR THE TOWN OF WASHINGTON**

We envision the Town of Washington will remain a rural community with great scenic beauty, a healthy natural environment, and a high quality of life for its residents.

We envision protecting our Town by ensuring that our working farms, beautiful historic landscapes, water resources, and natural habitats for our plants and animals are preserved for the future.

We believe in maintaining a vibrant and diverse local business district in the Village of Millbrook, and we want to maintain our historic character because of its importance in preserving the look and feel of our community.

## V. GOALS

Based upon the vision statement, as well as the community profile, input from residents at public workshops, and information gathered from the survey, a set of goals has been developed. The goals address key elements, including land management, economic development, and open space.

These goals guide the action planning process and allow for the execution of the policies and recommendations outlined in this action plan.

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***Goals for the Town of Washington are as follows:***

**GOAL I:                   Keep the Town Scenic and Rural and the Village the One Developed Center**

**GOAL II:                 Protect Land Water and the Natural Environment**

**GOAL III:               Strengthen the Village Center**

**GOAL IV:                Maintain a High Quality of Life**

## **GOAL I**

### **KEEP THE TOWN SCENIC AND RURAL AND THE VILLAGE THE ONE DEVELOPED CENTER**

#### **A. Objectives:**

1. Maintain existing land use types which keep the Town rural.
  2. Avoid infrastructure expansion into the Town.
  3. Keep our roads rural in form, use, and appearance, minimizing the impact of motor vehicles.
- 

#### **B. Background**

The Land Use Subcommittee observed that there is strong community consensus that our natural environment, scenic and historical attributes, farmland, and open space resources are valued for our future. The visual and scenic attributes of the Town's varied landscape define this natural beauty and rural character. They recommended that the Town maintain existing land use types, preserve and enhance the contrasts between the Town and the Village, and not rezone existing areas for new uses.

***Future planning should focus on maintaining and improving those appropriate land uses in each of the Town's existing zoning areas that work toward supporting contrasts between a rural town and a more urbanized village, and should focus on removing those uses from future consideration which do not.***

The Economy Subcommittee concluded that the Town should plan to remain largely a rural, open area that retains its agricultural economic base and serves as an aesthetic and recreational amenity to the Village of Millbrook and Dutchess County as a whole.

The Transportation Group observed that unpaved roads (almost one-half of the Town's roads are unpaved) preserve environmental resources and control development, but are problematic to maintain. The grade of unpaved roads is inconsistent. The cost of maintaining unpaved roads is greater than for paved, however, it would be very expensive to resurface dirt roads and any improvements would undoubtedly require bonding.



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**OBJECTIVE 1: Maintain Existing Land Use Types Which Keep the Town Rural**

**Policies**

- a. Preserve traditional rural land use patterns.
- b. Enhance and preserve the duality between the Town and Village.
- c. Avoid future new or denser zoning that would create village like areas in the Town.
- d. Maintain the scenic beauty and natural diversity of the Town by avoiding the disruption of scenic vistas, view sheds, corridors, ridgelines, natural areas, and historic resources.
- e. Cooperate with organizations that conserve rural character to preserve open space, and protect scenery and natural resources.

**Recommendations**

1. Evaluate existing property uses of each zoning district and remove uses from the zoning code update that are incompatible with the goal of remaining a rural community.
2. Continually review zoning and land management tools to help achieve desired development patterns.
3. Avoid creating new Hamlet-Mixed Use Zoning, or new commercial areas in the Town.
4. Encourage reuse and rehabilitation of existing buildings and sites rather than new development whenever possible.
5. Make sure that the Town's Conservation Advisory Commission continues to be involved in the planning and evaluation of new development from an early stage.
6. Periodically review planning board procedures so as to insure environmental and natural resource concerns are addressed early in the planning process and are incorporating conservation principles into choices of development sites, site designs, and construction practices.

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**OBJECTIVE 2: Avoid Infrastructure Expansion into the Town**

**Policies**

- a. Discourage construction of new roads in undeveloped areas.
- b. Deter the development or extension of centralized water and sewer systems into rural areas, except as necessary to address public health and safety.

**Recommendations**

1. Review standards for road construction and maintenance that reduce adverse environmental impacts.
  2. Minimize the alterations of roads, both paved and unpaved, in scenic and historic areas.
  3. Prohibit the construction of public water and wastewater facilities, except as necessary for public health and safety.
- 

**OBJECTIVE 3: Keep our Roads Rural in Form, Use, and Appearance, Minimizing the Impact of Motor Vehicles**

**Policies**

- a. Avoid zoning uses which will increase traffic congestion and flow as they detract from the look and feel of a rural community.
- b. Design and maintain roads in ways that minimizes their environmental and visual impacts.
- c. Avoid projects in the Town which will increase traffic congestion to and from the Village.

**Recommendations**

1. Design zoning code that will avoid increasing traffic beyond what would be generated by the principal and accessory by right uses allowed in the zoning district in which the use is located.
2. Pay particular attention to avoid new projects which may increase traffic flow on main roads immediately surrounding the Village, as this may discourage Town residents and tourists from patronizing businesses located in the village.

3. Promote development designs that minimize congestion at road points of ingress and egress so as to preserve the look and feel of the roads as well as avoiding areas of congestion that interfere with traffic flow and take away from the sense of living in a small rural community.
4. Identify and designate scenic roads according to Town regulations and by Dutchess County and the NYS Department of Transportation.
5. Consider conducting a comprehensive road study that results in a road network that is safer, more livable and more welcoming to everyone, including the young and old, motorists and bicyclists, pedestrians and wheelchair users, bus riders and shoppers.
6. Study and improve conditions on the Town's existing dirt roads, as they contribute to the Town's scenic, rural atmosphere, and serve as low traffic areas where our residents may enjoy such outdoor activities as walking, running, and biking in a rural setting.
7. Work with the Town Highway Department, Dutchess County Department of Public Works, and the New York State Department of Transportation to minimize the undesirable effects of certain road maintenance practices, such as paving, widening of shoulders, ditch clearing, salting, tree cutting and development of the transportation network.

## GOAL II

### PROTECT LAND, WATER, AND THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

#### A. Objectives

1. Conserve rural lands: farms, agricultural soils, and open space.
  2. Protect ground water, surface waters (including lakes, streams, and wetlands) and floodplains.
  3. Protect valuable natural habitats and the bio-diversity they support.
  4. Protect sensitive environmental areas including steep slopes and scenic areas.
- 

#### B. Background

Preservation of agriculture was a central goal in the Town's last Comprehensive Plan. Currently, in 2015, there are 114 parcels of agricultural land comprising 12,990 acres or 36.7% of the Town of Washington (second highest behind residential uses in the land use categories). According to the assessor's database, 27.4% of agricultural land is in cattle farms, followed by horse farms (17.8%) and field crops (12.6%).

In charging the Comprehensive Plan Update Committee, the Town Board observed that between adoption of the 1987/1989 Master Plan and the present, the primary issue has shifted from protection of agriculture to protection of surface and ground water, and that the development of an overall water quality protection strategy is central to the comprehensive planning effort.

***Almost all of the water used in the Town is ground water and its protection is critical to all Town residents.***

Although the amount of acres of farmland has remained stable, the nature of farming has changed, in that in addition to larger production farms there are also smaller, specialty farms. The Land Use Team observed that the danger of increasing levels of taxation, inheritance tax rates, personal tax obligations, and succession situations are driving larger farmers to consider selling or subdividing land. Because nearly half of the Town's land is owned by fewer than 50 landowners, the actions of a few owners could put the Town's agricultural base and rural character at risk.

The Economy Subcommittee observed that since the last Master Plan, farm services as well as services provided to farmers (such as machinery, equipment repairs, and markets to sell products) have declined in the Town of Washington, which has hastened the departure of dairy farms from the area.

The Environmental Resources Committee identified water resources, prime agricultural soils, open space protection and biodiversity as important environmental issues in Washington.

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**OBJECTIVE 1: Conserve Rural Lands: Farms, Agricultural Soils, and Open Space**

**Policies**

- a. Identify, manage and protect sensitive environmental areas on an ongoing basis to protect natural resources.
- b. Research alternative means to fund community purchase of land for conservation purposes.
- c. Consider the establishment of conservation easements.
- d. Think about offering tax incentives to private property owners to encourage conservation of open space.
- e. Cooperate with organizations that conserve rural character to preserve open space, and protect scenery and natural resources.
- f. Protect areas sensitive to erosion and sedimentation. Direct development away from steep slopes to prevent adverse impacts. Require appropriate control measures for areas where development will disturb soils.
- g. Preserve the maximum amount of agricultural land in large blocks for farm use and discourage development of productive agricultural areas and prime agricultural soils.
- h. Support a variety of farm types and farm businesses, such as niche farming, micro-farming, cooperatives and value-added agriculture facilities.
- i. Evaluate other working uses of the landscape that are consistent with rural character, such as honey production and maple sugaring, which allow landowners to generate income.
- j. Encourage farmers, non-farmers owning farmland and the public to participate in local land use decisions affecting agriculture
- k. Use input from the Town's Farmland Protection Committee to advise the various boards and officers of the Town on matters pertaining to the preservation, promotion and ongoing operation of agricultural activity in the Town of Washington.
- l. Periodically review the Town's policies and make amendments where necessary to ensure compliance with New York State Agriculture and Market Law.
- m. Require projects in agricultural districts to evaluate the impacts on agriculture.
- n. Adopt best practices regulations to protect forested areas.

## **Recommendations**

1. Contemplate the establishment of conservation easements and the use of conservation subdivisions, clustering and buffering to preserve agricultural areas, prime agricultural soils, as well as scenic and natural areas.
2. Consider revising the Zoning Code to regulate density of housing units through density-averaging (clustering) rather than minimum lot size to preserve blocks of agriculture or wild lands. Consider offering a density bonus to the clustering provision to encourage its use.
3. Review and expand allowed uses for farm businesses. Consider allowing farmers the ability to extract a controlled amount of non-renewable resources like sand, topsoil and gravel as an additional revenue stream.
4. Consider the use of farm-scale alternative energy (such as wind turbines) that does not detract from scenic resources.
5. Endorse efforts that benefit farmers by supporting their attempts to add value to local products and bring them to market through storing, processing and packaging products more efficiently, including creating or locating new agriculture-support businesses.
6. Investigate enacting zoning regulations to protect prime agricultural soils.
7. Support marketing and distribution for local farm products in the region and nearby urban areas through buy local initiatives. Provide support to local farmers markets and farm stands that provide locally grown produce, meats and other products.
8. Consider development of a voluntary Purchase of Agricultural Easement Program to acquire future development rights.
9. Look into adoption of a Community Preservation Act. The Act would provide for a real estate transfer fee of up to two percent of the sale price of real property to fund the establishment and preservation of parks, nature preserves, recreational areas, open spaces, agricultural areas, wetlands and marshes, watershed areas, water bodies, forest lands, historic places and wildlife habitat. The first task in this process is production and adoption of a Community Preservation Plan.
10. Evaluate the cost/benefit of providing additional tax incentives for working farmers and owners of conserved agricultural land. Consider use of a term easement abatement approach which provides tax abatement in exchange for protection of the agricultural, open space or historical values of land or buildings.
11. Investigate materials from professional organizations to find specific examples of strategies to protect local agriculture and model ordinances.

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**OBJECTIVE 2: Protect Ground Water, Surface Waters and Floodplains**

**Policies**

- a. Develop a coordinated town-wide program to protect ground water and surface waters.
- b. Ensure that zoning and other long-term planning is compatible with available and projected water resources.
- c. Continue to minimize disturbance in and around wetlands, water bodies, and watercourses.
- d. Prevent incompatible land uses over aquifers and recharge areas to minimize runoff and potential sources of contamination.
- e. Restore and maintain broad buffer zones of natural vegetation along streams, shores, wetlands and around the perimeter of other sensitive habitats.
- f. Manage storm water runoff to maximize ground water recharge, minimize flood flows, and prevent erosion.
- g. Continue to limit or prohibit subsurface sewage disposal systems adjacent to wetlands and watercourses.
- h. Minimize the area of impervious surfaces (roads, parking lots, sidewalks, driveways, roof surfaces) and maximize onsite runoff retention and infiltration to help protect ground water recharge and surface water quality and flows.
- i. Prohibit or discourage land uses in and near floodplains that block flood flows, increase flood hazards in the Town of Washington or surrounding towns, or damage value of floodplains as habitats for plants and animals to minimize impediments to flood flows, minimize damage, and maximize the habitat value.
- j. Do not allow changes that impede the movement of floodwaters. Coordinate with adjacent communities to assure that floodplain management practices do not shift the flood hazard to adjacent communities.
- k. Regulate the construction of vulnerable structures in the floodplain.

**Recommendations**

1. Consider adoption of an ordinance to provide a coordinated program to protect ground water and surface waters throughout the Town.
2. Contemplate conducting a town-wide study of the ground water recharge, flow and quality with the aim of quantifying sustainable ground water withdrawals and identifying threats to ground water quality and quantity.

3. Use a build-out analysis to determine whether existing zoning could be sustainably supported by water resources. Adjust zoning as needed to accommodate actual and projected water resources, given likely climate change.
  4. Require new developments to manage storm water to maximize ground water infiltration, minimize storm flows, and reduce erosion.
  5. Examine need for a Storm Water Pollution Plan and Illicit Discharge Prevention Plan.
  6. Look into establishing a standard for septic treatment maintenance for new buildings based upon the density of population in a given area.
  7. Encourage proper management of existing septic systems, perhaps through the use of a local ordinance.
  8. Research benefits of floodplain management measures as part of zoning, subdivision, or building ordinances. Encourage the development of conservation easements along privately held and unprotected floodplains in the Town.
  9. Consider extending any protective or restrictive measures concerning floodplains to areas outside of FEMA-designated 100-year floodplains to accommodate likely effects of climate change.
- 

***OBJECTIVE 3: Protect Valuable Natural Habitats and the Biodiversity they Support***

***Policies***

- a. Look to protect regionally rare habitats, such as those listed by Hudsonia, including circumneutral bog lakes, fens and calcareous meadows, and kettle shrub pools.
- b. Direct development away from large and high-quality areas of contiguous forest, areas of contiguous meadow, and high-quality habitat complexes.
- c. Promote redevelopment of previously altered sites, “infill” development, and reuse of existing structures wherever possible.
- d. Protect or restore corridors of undeveloped land between habitat patches, fauna migration corridors, and habitats. Restore degraded habitats wherever possible, but do not use restoration projects as a license to destroy high-quality habitats.
- e. Educate the public about habitat and biodiversity in partnership with local environmental organizations.
- f. Work closely with environmental professionals to better use scientific information to assess and minimize environmental impacts.



- g. Support the use of sustainable timbering best practices to prevent fragmentation of forest lands.
- h. Coordinate Town actions that affect the environment with those of nearby municipalities.

**Recommendations**

1. Consider using density-averaging (clustering), conservation easements, and other tools mentioned elsewhere in this Plan to minimize loss of valuable habitats and prevent habitat fragmentation.
  2. Use the Town-Wide habitat map prepared by Hudsonia, which provides a landscape perspective to prioritize areas for protection and identify sites for new development where the ecological impact will be minimized.
  3. Minimize construction of roads and driveways that fragment habitats.
  4. Consider adopting a tree ordinance to protect valuable shade trees.
  5. Involve the Town’s Conservation Advisory Commission in discussions and decisions that affect habitats and biodiversity.
  6. Study the need for regulating outdoor wood boilers.
  7. Prohibit the practice commonly known as “hydrofracking” or “fracking” for exploration/exploitation of natural gas.
- 

**OBJECTIVE 4 :    Protect Sensitive Environmental Areas  
Including Steep Slopes and Scenic Areas**

**Policies**

- a. Identify, manage, and protect sensitive environmental areas on an ongoing basis to protect natural resources.

**Recommendations**

1. Consider designating sensitive areas as formal New York State Critical Environmental Areas.
2. Protect areas sensitive to erosion and sedimentation. Direct development away from steep slopes to prevent adverse impacts.
3. Require control measures where development will disturb soils.
4. Consider development of a Steep Slopes Protection Plan/Overlay to control development, minimize erosion and preserve the natural scenic beauty of prominent hillsides.

## GOAL III

### STRENGTHEN THE VILLAGE CENTER

#### A. Objectives

1. Support the Village as an affordable, compact, walkable and mixed-use locale, serving as the centralized location for affordable housing.
2. Sustain the Village in its role as the concentrated site of the Town's commercial activity.
3. Take action to protect the Village water supply.
4. Promote tourism as an important regional economic driver and expanding market for the Town and Village.

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#### B. Background

Conceptually in the Comprehensive Plan process it is essential to view the Village and the Town as one entity, each with a unique function in making our entire community the special place that it is.

The Village has been relied on in its traditional role as the region for high density housing, commerce, government, entertainment, education, and transportation for the Town and Village combined.

The Town in turn contributes to the community's rural atmosphere and scenic beauty. The Town's low density development and large tracts of open space, which pay taxes without demanding a high rate of services in return, help to maintain a stable tax base for all.

***Future planning should focus on maintaining and improving those appropriate land uses in each of the Town's existing zoning areas that work toward supporting contrasts between a rural town and the more urbanized Village.***

The Village is the geographic center of the Town's commercial activity, offering a range of retail establishments and services. However, our relatively low population poses a difficult threshold for rural retailing. We simply do not have the resident population to support retailing in both the Town and Village beyond what exists today.

Fortunately, the Town has remained largely agricultural. Great estates, originally used for farming and as summer retreats, remain largely unchanged. These estates are essentially responsible for keeping the Town rural. They impart huge tracts of open space and are a haven for horse lovers.

***It is the balance of different functions between the Town and Village that is at the core of what has enabled the quality of life in our community to be in harmony with our residents' most commonly held values and visions for our future.***

Nevertheless, Millbrook faces the same challenges as many small villages in the region; aging infrastructure, decreased assessments, growing commercial rents and the threat of competition from major retailers and the internet. At the same time, Millbrook has some unique advantages. Because the Town is rural, with a relatively small population growth rate, there has been little incentive for a second, competing business center or major retailer to develop and draw business away from the Village.

As part of a scenic, rural Town, Millbrook enjoys tourism trends that favor shorter distance and shorter duration trips that make it and the Town of Washington strong weekend destinations.

If the mutually beneficial duality of the Village of Millbrook and Town of Washington concept is to continue, cooperative planning between the two municipalities should persist. Over the years both municipalities have actively shared services and continue to look for ways to consolidate. When mutually beneficial, inter-municipal agreements should be undertaken to meet the needs of both entities.

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***OBJECTIVE 1: Support the Village as an Affordable, Compact, Walkable, and Mixed Use Locale, Serving as the Centralized Location for Affordable Housing***

**Policies**

- a. The Village has been identified as a service rich and walkable environment and, as such, it is the appropriate place for high density housing. Housing in the Village is viewed as good for business and a sense of community. Plan cooperatively with the Village whenever possible to support it in its traditional role.

**Recommendations**

1. Acknowledge the traditional role of the Village in regards to providing a variety of housing stock, including affordable housing.
2. Consider exploring an inter-municipal agreement with the Village allocating it as the area for affordable and multi-family housing for the entire Town of Washington.
3. Keep Town and Village municipal offices, buildings, and other public spaces in the Village center.

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**OBJECTIVE 2: Sustain the Village in Its Role as the Concentrated Site of the Town's Commercial Activity**

**Policies**

- a. Focus on maintaining the mixed-use Village as the area for commercial, retail and service activities.
- b. Discourage the creation of new commercial development or mixed-use areas that are outside of the existing Village business district.
- c. Work with the Village of Millbrook and Millbrook Business Association to promote an attractive growing retail mix in the Village.

**Recommendations**

1. Maintain existing land uses that keep the Town rural.
2. Avoid the development of mixed use business areas within the Town as these may detract from the vibrant Village center and cause sprawl.

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**OBJECTIVE 3: Take Action to Protect the Village Water Supply**

**Policies**

- a. Protect the Village water source, located within the Town, as Village residents and commercial establishments depend on it for their sole source of water.

**Recommendations**

1. Develop an aquifer protection law and execute an inter-municipal agreement with the Village for the protection of those areas and aquifer resources in the Town that the Village depends on for its water supply.

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**OBJECTIVE 4: Promote Tourism as an Important Regional Economic Driver and Expanding Market for the Village & Town**

**Policies**

- a. Encourage community support of the Thorne Building as a cultural center.
- b. Ensure that area roads have proper signage directing visitors to the Village Center. Highlight specific events such as the Farmers Market, as appropriate.

**Recommendations**

1. Develop an inventory of nearby attractions and tourism amenities.
2. Work with the Town of Washington/Village of Millbrook Business Association to market the nearby attractions and tourism assets of the Town and the Village through brochures, websites and face-to-face education.
3. Engage the New York State Department of Transportation, the Town and Village Highway Departments and local business owners to provide a more bicycle-friendly environment. Encourage bicycle based recreation and tourism.

## GOAL IV

### MAINTAIN A HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE

#### A. Objectives

1. Protect and strengthen our inclusive, safe, lively, and healthy community.
  2. Plan for and encourage excellent telecommunications services, including cellular phone coverage, cable and satellite television, Wi-Fi, and high-speed internet through facilities that are located and designed so as to protect the Town's important scenic, historic, and rural resources.
  3. Protect and Preserve historic resources.
- 

#### B. Background

According to the 2010 census data, the Town's population has remained stable at 4,741 residents. The school population age group of 5 to 19 has decreased slightly from 981 to 974. The senior population of 65 and older has increased by 146, from 766 to 922 residents. Except for a strong consensus from the community that we need to help seniors stay in their homes, issues relating to these two groups on the Comprehensive Plan Community Survey ranked near the bottom of the list of community priorities.

***Finding ways to assist our volunteer fire department and rescue squad were important to the community. Volunteer levels have fallen off and fundraising to support major projects is necessary, relying in large part on community donors.***

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The rapid consumer acceptance of wireless technology has resulted in the proliferation of wireless communications facilities, which have the potential for adverse impacts on the Town's scenic, historic, and rural qualities. More and more people rely on wireless communications as their singular source for phone service. Additionally, both full and part time residents regularly conduct business remotely.

The Town of Washington must evolve its policies and regulations for accommodating the wireless industry while protecting the visual resources integral to the Town's character and economy. One way to achieve this is by making consistently fair decisions through comparison of alternatives to typical telecommunications industry standards and deciding which alternative is best for the community.

Also of concern is the emerging use of drones, and other developing technologies, and how their arrival could affect our rural quality of life.

In terms of historic preservation, only Lynfield (the Milton Conrad Ham House), located at South Road east of Tyrell Road, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Other significant properties have been identified and include Lithgow, St. Peter's Episcopal Church, and Killearn Farm. Many other properties, places and landscapes may be eligible for State or National Register listing.

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***OBJECTIVE 1: Strengthen our Safe, Lively, and Healthy Community***

**Policies**

- a. Sustain an attractive level of municipal services and recreational activities for all members of the community, including youth, families and seniors. Educate the public about these resources.
- b. Maintain a safe community by supporting the volunteer fire company and EMS service through financial assistance for facilities and equipment as appropriate. Consider providing a limited property tax rebate to volunteers that could be scaled based upon degree of participation and years of service.
- c. Support arts and cultural activities to enrich the lives of Town residents.
- d. Encourage all rural matters: community gardens, preserves, nature trails.
- e. Strengthen fiscal effectiveness by broadening the range of fiscal options and analytical techniques available to the Town.

**Recommendations**

1. Support the Village in the development of a community arts facility, perhaps in the Thorne Building.
2. Consider partnerships with the Village, public and private schools, and other organizations.
3. Contemplate a joint Town and Village commission to identify and evaluate innovative solutions, such as inter-municipal agreements.
4. Consider a practical noise ordinance.
5. Work to balance an individual's right to maintain their property's appearance as they see fit, vs. the need to uphold neighborhood and community standards for the benefit of the entire community.
6. Think about establishing outdoor lighting standards for commercial buildings and parking lots. Limit the height of lighting fixtures and require lights to prevent glare. Ensure that lighting standards effectively manage light pollution.
7. Review existing design and development guidelines to ensure that new buildings and expansions of existing buildings reinforce traditional historic character.

8. Review and update the Disaster Preparedness Plan as necessary in coordination with the Village.
9. Explore practical cost-effectiveness techniques regarding Town policy making.
10. Investigate benefits of using fiscal impact analysis and related techniques.
11. Remain up to date regarding non tax revenue funding sources, such as grants.

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**OBJECTIVE 2: Plan for and Encourage Excellent Telecommunications Services**

**Policies**

- a. Maintain the current zoning law regulations that create a “by-right” building permit process for those wireless telecommunication facilities that would be located on existing towers and other structures in the Town where no part of the wireless facility would exceed the height of the existing tower or structure and where no change or alteration of the height or appearance of the existing support structure is required.
- b. Encourage installations that are hidden within existing architectural features.
- c. Establish specific restrictions for protecting sensitive areas such as view sheds, historic districts, scenic roads, and critical environmental areas.

**Recommendations**

1. Identify “areas of opportunity” and “areas of avoidance” for siting wireless telecommunications facilities, along with a preferred hierarchy of locations and installation type. Require that to the extent feasible, wireless service facilities be sited in public rights-of-way or other quasi-public locations.
2. Encourage the establishment of a greater number of smaller, less obtrusive wireless telecommunication structures as preferable to a lesser number of larger, more obtrusive structures.
3. Avoid the over-utilization of specific types of stealth installations, such as flagpoles and stealth water towers. “Tree” type monopoles are discouraged, but if used they must be of a type, style, and height that are consistent with the surrounding vegetation.
4. Prohibit the use of guyed structures.
5. Limit the height of new wireless telecommunications facilities to 10 feet above the height of prevailing development. When there is no surrounding development, facility height should be measured against the average tree canopy.



6. Where the applicant for a wireless facility is a company that specializes in building and managing “towers” require that these companies provide signed and binding lease agreements with licensed wireless communication providers. The tower building companies are not included in the FCC definition of functionally equivalent services or personal wireless services and should not be treated as such.

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***OBJECTIVE 3: Protect and Preserve Historic Resources***

***Policies***

- a. Assist the Dutchess County Department of Planning to identify, inventory and protect potential historic landmarks in the Town.
- b. Enhance, preserve and promote historic landmarks, landscapes and historic districts, which represent distinctive elements of the Town of Washington’s historic, architectural and cultural heritage for the economic, cultural, and educational benefit of the community.
- c. Promote nomination of local historic landmarks (including stone walls, culverts and railways) for listing on a local, state and national register of historic places in order to access available funding.
- d. Encourage Town boards to consult with the Town of Washington/Village of Millbrook Historical Society on projects affecting historic resources.
- e. Endorse compatible land use, scale, setting and architecture of new development or redevelopment adjacent to historic buildings and landscapes.

***Recommendations***

1. Expand the local register of historic homes, barns and structures.
2. Put forward a local preservation law and demolition review process for buildings, stone walls, old barns and landscapes that are eligible for local, state or national registers.
3. Review existing design and development guidelines to ensure that new buildings and expansions of existing buildings reinforce traditional historic character.

## **AFFIRMATION OF 1987/1989 MASTER PLAN GOALS AS WE PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE**

The updated objectives and recommendations of this 2015 Comprehensive Plan are consistent with the following objectives set forth in the 1987/1989 Master Plan, which are re-affirmed:

- “New growth should not consume active agricultural land or disturb historic resources.”
- “New growth should not disturb sensitive natural features.”
- “New growth should contribute to maintaining the preferred level of services and facilities.”
- “New growth should be subject to rigorous review and enforcement.”
- “New growth should contribute to the local economy and the rural environment.”
- “New growth should be compatible with the local character.
- “New growth should address local housing needs.”
- “New growth should be subject to strict performance standards.”

## Appendix C Hospitality Evaluation Report

The following Appendix contains the 2022 Hospitality Evaluation Report and is hereby incorporated in its entirety into this Updated Comprehensive Plan. Due to their length, Hospitality Study Appendix A, B, and C are available on the Town of Washington Website at <https://www.washingtonny.org/>

Elements Incorporated into this Updated Plan include:

- The Hospitality Evaluation Report
- Appendix A – Focus Group Notes
- Appendix B – Open House Findings
- Appendix C – Town Wide Survey Report
- Appendix D – Hospitality Trends Analysis
- Appendix E – Economic Impact of Potential Hospitality Development
- Appendix F – Mapping of Environmental Resources
- Appendix G – Mapping of Existing Traffic Volumes
- Appendix H – Mapping of Viewsheds
- Appendix I – Millbrook Village Zoning Map



**Town of Washington, NY**

# Hospitality Evaluation Report

**FINAL: JULY 1, 2022**

Prepared by:



**Community  
Planning and  
Environmental  
Associates**

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Prepared by:



In association with:



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-

# PART ONE

## CONSULTING TEAM CHARGE

In the Fall of 2021, the Town of Washington Comprehensive Plan Review Committee (CPRC) issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) seeking the services of independent professional planners to assist the committee with an evaluation of the current Town Comprehensive Plan as it relates to hospitality uses. Specifically, the committee sought assistance with evaluating the following:

- Whether the 2015 Town of Washington Comprehensive Plan should be amended to include and permit expansion of hospitality that aligns with the historic rural character of the Town of Washington; and
- If it is determined that the 2015 Comprehensive Plan should be amended: (1) to assist the CPRC in formulating recommendations to the Town Board for specific changes to the Comprehensive Plan; and (2) draft proposed amendment(s) to the 2015 Comprehensive Plan to hand up to the Town Board.

A team of consultants (“consulting team”) led by Nan Stolzenburg of Community Planning & Environmental Associates was selected by the committee for this planning evaluation. In addition to the consulting team, James Staudt—a land use attorney—was also separately retained by the committee to assist them with their evaluation.

This Hospitality Evaluation Report has been prepared by the consulting team as a complete summary of the data and findings collected during the course of that planning process as well as final recommendations for consideration by the CPRC and Town Board.

For the purposes of this planning study, the term “hospitality uses” was defined as a range of potential lodging types for overnight accommodations including Hotels, Resorts, Motels, Inns, Bed & Breakfasts, Short-term rentals, Camping, Glamping, Farm-stays and related on-site accessory uses such as restaurants, bars or event facilities.

## THE PLANNING PROCESS

The independent consulting team, in cooperation with the CPRC, developed a planning process to conduct the evaluation of hospitality uses. This process included the following efforts and analysis:

- Review of the current Town of Washington Comprehensive Plan (2015) and zoning codes;
- Focus group meetings with residents and business owners of the Town of Washington and Village of Millbrook to identify early issues and considerations for the evaluation;
- An “Open House” meeting (both in person and virtual) to introduce the planning effort to the general public and collect preliminary input which would be used to help design a town-wide survey;
- A town-wide survey inviting all local residents, property and business owners within the Town of Washington and Village of Millbrook to provide their input on issues of hospitality;
- A trend analysis of hospitality in the state and the county;
- An economic analysis of potential (future) hospitality uses within the area;
- A geographic analysis of existing (and proposed) hospitality venues in surrounding towns within the county;
- A geographic analysis of natural features and sensitive environmental areas within the town which could be negatively impacted by local development.

Taken together, the above steps were designed to provide the CPRC and Town Board with the necessary information and tools to make an informed decision regarding any proposed expansion of hospitality uses within the town.

# FINDINGS

## REVIEW OF 2015 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The 2015 Comprehensive Plan (2015 Plan) updated a previous version from 1987-89. As per the Plans' introduction, the 2015 plan focused on protection of agriculture, preservation of ground and surface water quality and quantity, and additional environmental protections. It stresses the vision and goals of the community remains largely unchanged from the earlier planning effort. The 2015 Plan was updated in recognition that it "was prudent in order to identify changes to the local community character and surrounding environment." That periodic review remains the same today – it is important to ensure that a comprehensive plan remains relevant to the community.

The 2015 Plan was stated to be "practical and general in scope" and to reflect the "priorities, hopes, and aspirations of the public; and the commonly shared community values and goals for the future." It very clearly and strongly establishes the long-standing vision for Washington to remain "a rural town by maintaining existing land use types, protecting environmental resources, and supporting the Village of Millbrook as the location for concentrated diverse housing and commercial activity." Thus, major principles of the 2015 Plan all support a continued direction for Washington to be a rural community, with great scenic beauty, maintenance of the Town's historic character, a healthy environment, and a high quality of life for residents, and again stressing the desire to maintain a vibrant and diverse local business district in Millbrook.

Four goals are established to support that vision. The major objectives/recommendations of the plan that pertain to long-term hospitality and that must be considered in all future planning in Washington are (paraphrased from the 2015 Plan) to:

- Maintain existing land use types which keep the Town rural.
- Avoid infrastructure expansion into the Town.
- Keep roads rural in form, use and appearance and discourage construction of new roads in undeveloped areas and deter development or extension of centralized water and sewer systems into rural areas.
- Preserve the duality between the Town and Village - avoid future new or denser zoning that would create village like

areas in the Town.

- Maintain scenic beauty and protect land, water and the natural environment (including protecting farms, agricultural soils, open space, water and floodplains, natural habitats, biodiversity, steep slopes, and scenic areas).
- Encourage reuse and rehabilitation of existing buildings and sites rather than new development whenever possible.
- Strengthen and sustain the mixed-use Village as the area for commercial, retail and service activities; Avoid creation of new commercial development or mixed-use areas that are outside of the existing Village business district.
- Take action to protect the Village water source, located within the Town.
- Goal III (strengthen the Village Center) also establishes the objective to promote tourism as an important regional economic driver and expanding market for the Town and Village. There is no direct mention of hospitality uses in the 2015 Plan.
- Review existing design and development guidelines to ensure that new buildings and expansions of existing buildings reinforce traditional historic character, and endorse compatible land use, scale, setting and architecture of new development adjacent to historic buildings and landscapes.

Overall, the prior two Comprehensive Plans for the Town of Washington were found to be very consistent in their vision, and this vision appears largely consistent with the public input received during this planning effort. Notably, the 2015 Plan also supports future planning efforts and states that the Town should "continually review zoning and land management tools to help achieve desired development patterns". This planning effort—to evaluate hospitality uses in Town—is one such effort.

## REVIEW OF EXISTING ZONING

The Town of Washington Zoning was reviewed in regard to how the code specifically addresses hospitality uses, as well as overall zoning direction and standards. The most recent zoning is dated 2008 (prior to the adoption of the Town's Comprehensive Plan in 2015) with amendments to the wetlands and watercourse section (Local Law #1 of 2011), and addition of regulations for solar and wind energy systems (Local Law #1 of 2018). Several



other land use related laws have been adopted since 2008 including those to increase fines, amend the flood damage prevention law, address aquatic invasive species, and in 2009, an interim development law and moratorium. Most recently a moratorium was established in 2021 to allow for this hospitality planning effort.

Overall, the zoning law establishes seven different residentially oriented zoning districts having different density/lot sizes (RH-1, RM-2, RL-5, RS-5, RR-10, and RS-10) along with a hamlet mixed-use district (HM) in Mabbettsville (*See Figure 1*). It also establishes an aquifer protection overlay, agricultural overlay, and wetlands/watercourse regulations. The zoning allows for the creation of several other districts as floating zoning districts for Hamlet, Environmental Protection, Industrial/Office, and Mobile Home. As floating districts, the zoning text provides all the procedures, regulations and development standards but does not map such districts. To date, no hamlet, environmental protection, industrial/office, or mobile home park maps have been adopted.

As related to hospitality uses and related topics explored in public engagement for project:

- Bed and Breakfasts are defined (with a maximum of 5 bedrooms and 10 people) and are allowed in all zoning districts, including overlays. Bed and Breakfast uses are further prohibited from being used for retreats, weddings, and restaurants or other for-hire events.
  - Bed and Breakfasts are also allowed to be within a newly created Hamlet District, and all non-residential uses within such a district are limited to 2,000 square feet in building footprint.
- Hotels and motels are both defined (without any size parameters) and are allowed in the HM District (Mabbettsville). The HM district limits non-residential development to 50% of the total square footage of floor space of all new residential buildings constructed in the HM within a 2-year period. There are no other development standards offered in the zoning specifically to hotels or motels.
- Restaurants are allowed in the HM District (Mabbettsville) only. The sizing of such a use would also be determined by the HM limitation of 50% of total square footage of floor space of all new residential buildings constructed in the

HM within a 2-year period. There are no other development standards offered in the zoning specifically to restaurants.

- Agricultural uses are allowed in the HM, RM-2, RL-5, RS-5, RR10, RS-10 (but do not allow any sales to the public at the property). In the LC (Land Conservation), agriculture is also allowed but without restrictions of on-site sales of ag products. However, the Agricultural Protection Overlay (APO), covering larger parcels containing prime farmland soils and soils of statewide importance, allow for roadside stands (< 500 square feet) as a permitted use, and sale of farm products (> 500 square feet buildings) along with storage/sale of certain agricultural products, collection/storage and distribution of agricultural products, and processing of animal products as specially permitted uses. Zoning does not address ag-tourist-oriented uses that are hospitality-related such as farm stays, tasting rooms, and events (such as u-pick operations). The zoning does not address consistency with NYS Agriculture and Markets Law 25-aa, the New York State agricultural districts regulations. Note that New York State does have guidelines for direct sales of agricultural products when the farm operation is in a NYS Certified Agricultural district – which would pertain especially to those parcels included in the APO.
- Public engagement showed that the community is very supportive of architectural standards for hospitality uses. Zoning does establish the need to ensure that new development is designed and sited in a manner that protects the historic and rural character of the Town. This is addressed specifically by requiring architectural review of clustered subdivisions, of non-residential uses in the HM district, in a hamlet floating district, and in the general standards for actions undergoing site plan review. There is an expectation that the architectural style and layout of new districts or uses will replicate and be consistent with the historical patterns and the rural character of Washington. Site plan review includes standards for review and design, of which general statements related to architectural consistency are included (Section 485 (6) Building Design). The Town has also adopted the Greenway Connections, which offer guidelines into architectural design.
- Public engagement showed that the community prioritizes environmental protection. Current zoning addresses this by adopting the Greenway Guidelines, and by establishing

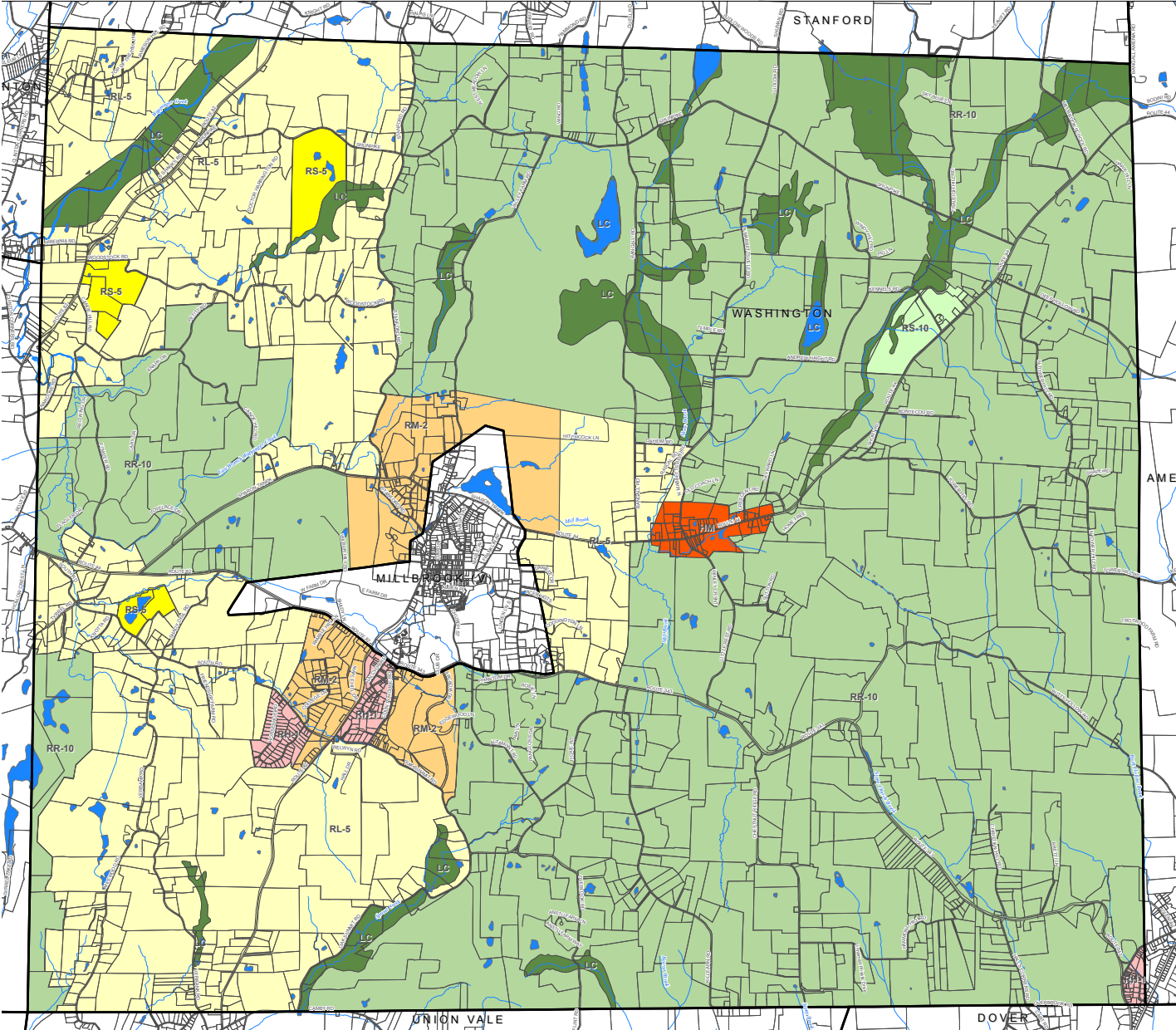








Figure 1. Zoning Map

**Zoning Districts**

-  HM: Hamlet Mixed Use
  -  RH-1: High Density Residential
  -  RM-2: Medium Density Residential
  -  RL-5: Low Density Residential
  -  RS-5: Low Density Residential
  -  RR-10: Rural Residential
  -  RS-10: Rural Residential
  -  LC: Land Conservation
-  Roads
  -  Streams
  -  Water Bodies
  -  Tax Parcels
  -  Municipalities

an Aquifer Protection Overlay, wetlands and watercourse map and regulations, open space subdivision procedures and requirements, scenic road protections, and criteria within site plan and special use permit reviews to protect the environment. Zoning also establishes an environmental protection district (EP). The EP district may be set up by the Town Board based on the natural characteristics of the resource lands identified of importance. To date, no EP district has been created, but the procedures are in place to do so. When created, EP districts requires site plan approval for most development including single-family dwellings, and establishes certain activities as needing additional environmental review, increases lot area and density to be the same as RR-10.

It should be noted that the Aquifer Protection (AQ) overlay district establishes a review process for proposed uses within the Town's aquifer areas to prohibit or control certain uses and activities which may be incompatible with the goal of long-term groundwater protection. This area is illustrated by an adopted aquifer protection overlay district map. Town zoning also recognizes the Village of Millbrook Water Supply Watershed regulations and requires that actions with the Village's watershed must also comply with their requirements, regulated under Section 1100 of the NYS Public Health Law. This area is illustrated by an established watershed map created by Cornell Cooperative Extension. The Village and the Town's aquifer protection maps are different and may present confusion or conflicts in determining land use development constraints. (The aquifer protection map included in this study was also created using data from Cornell Cooperative Extension, but is an updated version from the one created for the Village watershed.)

## FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

In the lead-up to the development of the Open House Meeting, two focus group meetings were held with a selection of local residents and business owners on December 6 and December 7, 2021. These meetings were conducted remotely via Zoom by the consulting team, with participants selected and invited directly by the CPRC. The purpose of these small meetings was to identify early issues, concerns and ideas from a sampling of the community which could provide background to the consulting team and help inform topics and questions for the upcoming Open House meeting.

The focus group conversations noted the long history of tourism and hotels in the village area, and that there were many places and (seasonal) events for visitors to enjoy on and off during the year. However, places to accommodate visitors were often spotty. A single local event or wedding could often not be supported with the available lodging in the area, and many agreed there was a general need for more accommodations. Some of these accommodations were desired to support visiting tourists, while others were desired to serve local friends and family. Another large factor in people's support of any new lodging depended on whether or not it would really support (and bring money to) local businesses.

Almost everyone agreed that, although there seemed to be a need for more lodging, it was very much a question of size and scale. Adaptive re-use of existing structures, redeveloping former Inns, keeping things relatively small, and located in or around the village were popular responses. *Summary notes from the focus group meetings are provided in Appendix A.*

## OPEN HOUSE MEETING

A public "Open House" style meeting was scheduled and facilitated by the consulting team on February 26, 2022 at the Millbrook Firehouse in Millbrook Village. The open house format was chosen to provide greater flexibility for people to attend at different times of the afternoon to help increase participation instead of a presentation at a set time. Recognizing that not everyone was able to attend, the in-person open house was followed by a "virtual" (online) version of the same material for about a week after the event. Approximately 118 people attended the live event, and 113 people participated in the virtual event afterwards.

The purpose of this meeting was to introduce the planning effort to the wider community, collect early input on ideas and concerns the public had about hospitality, and to test some preliminary questions which could be used in the subsequent town-wide survey. Participants at the open house were presented a series of display boards which gave an introduction to the purpose of the planning effort, and invited them to use stickers and post-it notes to vote and comment on a variety of different topics.

Input from the open house seemed to show that people were supportive of small to medium-sized Inns. The issue of whether new hospitality uses would help to bring money to local businesses was a very important consideration to people, but

their opinions were often divided on if this would be true. Most people indicated that they may want new hospitality in the area, but their support was largely dependent on a number of factors including the size and scale of the development, if it avoids disturbing sensitive environmental resources, how it fits into the existing community character, and if it would be an adaptive re-use of an existing structure.

Common locations suggested as appropriate for new hospitality included in and immediately around the Village of Millbrook, the Washington Hollow area along Route 44, and Mabbettsville hamlet.

*A summary of the findings from the Open House event are provided in **Appendix B**.*

## **TOWN-WIDE SURVEY**

Following the open house event, the CPRC and the consultant team worked collaboratively to develop a list of potential questions for the town-wide survey. The purpose of this survey was to reach a large local audience and measure their opinion as to whether the town comprehensive plan should be amended to address future hospitality development, and if so, to measure what, if anything, the public desired for such development. The desired target audience for this survey was intended only for people within the geographic extents of the Town of Washington and Village of Millbrook, New York. Residents, property owners and business owners within this area were invited to participate. Although the purpose of this survey was focused on results for the Town of Washington only, people within the Village of Millbrook were included as they are also town residents.

The preliminary survey questions were ultimately narrowed down and refined by the CPRC and consulting team. Once finalized, the consulting team was responsible for launching and facilitating the actual survey, in both online and paper format, and tabulating the results for the CPRC. The survey was launched on Monday, April 11, 2022 and ran until the end of day on May 6th, 2022, collecting a total of 690 responses.

The findings from this town-wide survey were largely consistent with the results found at the Open House. There was a strong priority for protecting sensitive environmental areas and for ensuring that the rural character of the town was maintained. People were most supportive of small to medium sized Inns, up to around 20 rooms in size, and encouraged adaptive re-use

solutions over new construction. When asked which locations would be the most appropriate for any new hospitality venues, the Village of Millbrook was the most popular response. This was followed by the Washington Hollow area, the areas just outside the Village of Millbrook, and finally the Mabbettsville hamlet.

Most of the results of the town-wide survey seemed to validate the vision and recommendations of the 2015 Comprehensive Plan, with at least one notable difference. While the 2015 Comprehensive Plan seemed to be quite clear that the town wanted no new commercial development outside the village, this new public input appears to show the public is somewhat more amenable to at least some hospitality development, provided it is small in scale, fits in the character of the community and does not disrupt the environment. It is suspected that in 2015, when considering the vague notion of “commercial development outside the village” the public would likely say they were against it (since commercial development could take on many different sizes, types and intensities). However, when considering the more specific notion of “do you want hospitality development outside the village, and if so, what size and scale and location” then the public would potentially be more comfortable providing their support for only limited areas and limited sizes. We believe that this would explain some of the apparent change in opinion since the 2015 Comprehensive Plan, and suggest that public opinion on development has not really changed much.

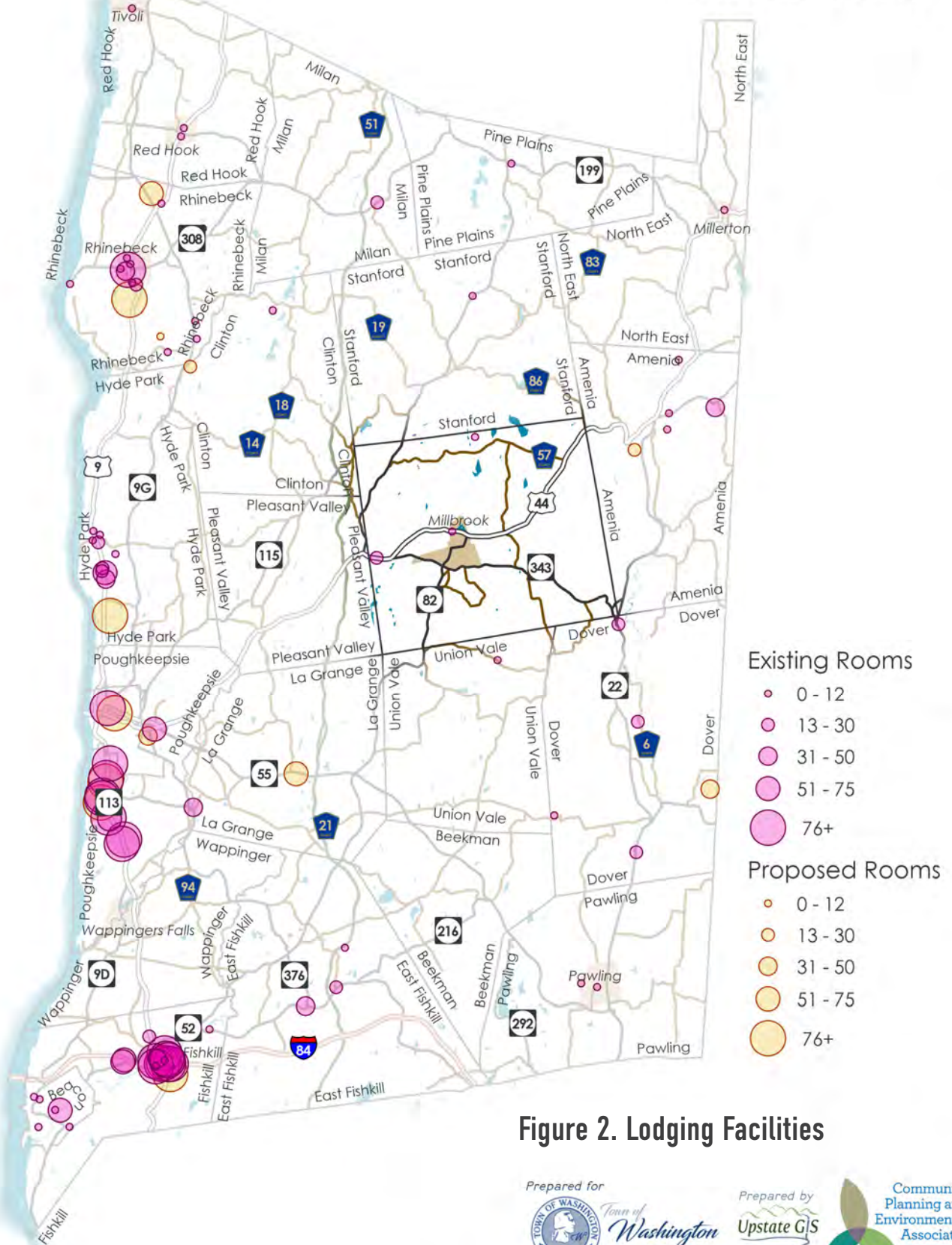
*The complete Survey Results Report is provided in **Appendix C**.*

## **LODGING FACILITIES IN DUTCHESS COUNTY**

In order to understand how the Town of Washington fits into the context of hospitality uses within the larger region, an inventory of all known lodging facilities was developed for areas within Dutchess County (*See Figure 2*). This inventory included existing facilities, as well as any known hospitality facilities which are being proposed, under construction or in some phase of design, review or approvals. The mapping analysis was weighted by the number of guest bedrooms at each facility, showing larger location bubbles for venues with more rooms and smaller bubbles for venues with less rooms.

This visual analysis illustrates that a majority of the lodging rooms available within the county are found in communities along the Hudson River, with strong concentrations in the areas of Fishkill and Poughkeepsie, and lesser concentrations further

### Lodging Facilities in Dutchess County



north on the river in Hyde Park and Rhinebeck. The number of available lodging rooms diminishes as one looks further inland to the east, although almost all towns within the county have at least one lodging venue. Based on data from December 2021, approximately 47% of lodging venues within the county have 12 rooms or less, while 26% have more than 75 rooms.

This data analysis indicates that there are relatively few lodging venues in the adjacent towns immediately surrounding the Town of Washington. It also indicates that there appears to be approximately 139 new guest bedrooms currently being proposed in the adjacent towns of La Grange, Dover, Clinton and Amenia, although some of these proposals date back to 2003 and it is not clear how many of them will be realized.

*Details on the proposed lodging facilities included in this analysis are provided in the Hospitality Trends Analysis in **Appendix D**.*

## HOSPITALITY TRENDS ANALYSIS

To understand the role of tourism and hospitality in the local and regional economy, an analysis of trends in traveler spending, hospitality employment, and the lodging market was conducted. Although leisure and hospitality employment and travel spending in Dutchess County experienced relatively steady growth from 2010 through 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic had a dramatically negative impact as business closures and fears of catching the virus reduced lodging demand.

Nationally, the hospitality industry has largely rebounded from the impacts of the pandemic since spring 2021, and it is projected by some to fully recover in 2022. This recovery, however, is driven primarily by leisure travel; business travel is not anticipated to return to pre-pandemic levels for at least another two years.

A travel market research study conducted for Dutchess Tourism in 2018 indicates that the highest occupancy rates in the County typically occur during the summer months (June through August), followed closely by October, while the lowest rates are in December through March. Notably, a visitor survey associated with the study found that the County makes almost three times as much money on overnight visitors as it does on day-trippers. As a result, the primary focus of tourism marketing efforts has been the overnight segment.

Research on travel trends during the pandemic shows that

families visited more rural areas for access to outdoor recreation and stayed for longer durations. With new technologies allowing people to work from anywhere, many travelers were able to mix work and play while on vacation. These trends are likely to continue post-pandemic with a continued interest in enjoying nature, avoiding crowds, and taking advantage of remote-work flexibility.

*The complete Hospitality Trends Analysis is provided in **Appendix D**.*

## ECONOMIC IMPACT OF POTENTIAL HOSPITALITY DEVELOPMENT

In order to understand the potential effects of new hospitality venues on the local economy, an economic impact analysis was conducted using a model based on the results of the town-wide survey. In this analysis, a new lodging facility of about 20 guest rooms was modeled as a scenario. Potential accessory uses to this lodging facility such as a bar & restaurant and an event venue were modeled as well for comparison purposes.

In this scenario, a 20-room boutique Inn was modeled because it would be in line with the preferred size of venue identified in the survey. This Inn was assumed to be at the "luxury tier" of hotel accommodations based on available visitor preference data which indicated a preference to upper tier brands. This tier would also have the greatest level of investment and potential income for the Town of Washington for modeling purposes. In this scenario, it was estimated that it would create 11 full-time equivalent jobs, generate almost \$50,000 in annual lodging tax, and over \$160,000 in property taxes. It was also expected to purchase at least some of its goods from local vendors, providing income to other local businesses.

As a potential accessory use, a 60-seat full service restaurant was also modeled, marketed toward upper-income residents and visitors to explore the highest income potential for the town. This business would be expected to create between 11-15 full time equivalent jobs, generating about \$87,000 in sales taxes and \$27,000 in property tax. Similar to the lodging facility, at least some of its purchases would be assumed to be sourced from local vendors.

As a third type of hospitality use, an event venue was also modeled, although it was anticipated to have the smallest economic benefit of the three hospitality types studied. This use

was anticipated to generate \$6,250 in property tax revenue, and would not likely result in any notable sales tax revenue or full-time jobs. Similar to the other use types, this venue would likely source at least some of its purchases from local vendors.

Lastly, it was determined that the activity generated by these venues would likely result in some peripheral spending by guests and visitors in other area establishments.

*The complete Economic Impact analysis is provided in **Appendix E**.*

## **CURRENT FISCAL CONDITIONS**

The committee was charged by the Town Board with determining how hospitality could play a role in mitigating risks to the potential erosion of the retail/commercial tax base. As part of addressing that charge, the question as to the current fiscal health of the Town has been raised. To help answer this, the level of fiscal stress was evaluated.

The New York State Comptroller's Fiscal Stress Monitoring System is a statewide program to objectively identify issues related to the budgetary solvency for each county, city, town, village and school district. The System analyzes the financial information submitted to the Comptroller by local governments against a set of uniform financial and environmental indicators. Those financial indicators for towns include year-end fund balance, operating deficits/surpluses, cash position, use of short-term cash flow debt issuance, and fixed costs. The System also includes environmental and demographic indicators which provide insight about economic and demographic forces confronting communities—that are beyond the immediate control of local officials but might influence revenue-raising capability and the demand for certain types of services.

The System acts as an early warning and provides valuable information to local leaders and citizens so that they are well-equipped to take a deliberate, long-term and strategic approach to managing their local government. As of April 2022, the Town of Washington is not on the Comptroller's list of communities facing significant stress, moderate stress or even susceptible to fiscal stress. Further, data exists for the Town of Washington for fiscal year 2020, and at that time, the Towns' score was 23.3, which indicates no designated level of fiscal stress. Note that the largest contributor to the points Washington received was related to the tax base (20 points)—specifically the percent

change in house value and its relation to the consumer price index and loss of population contributed to the additional 3.33 points of the 2020 score. There are no indications from this data that the Town is experiencing fiscal stress.

## **MAPPING OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

In order to understand the extents of existing natural resources in consideration of future hospitality development locations, data was collected and mapped to show environmental resources in the Town including surface waters (wetlands, streams, floodplains), subsurface aquifers, stream riparian buffers, agricultural soils, contiguous forests, and important habitats such as significant biodiversity and rare species areas (*See Maps in **Appendix F***).

The location coverages for all of these elements were combined together as a series of transparency layers into a final Resource Layers Map which illustrated darker red areas where there was overlap of multiple resources, and lighter red or white areas where there was little or no overlap of resources (*See Figure 3 and also full map in **Appendix F***).

The relative transparency/darkness of each of these natural resources were weighted evenly, with the exception of aquifers which were displayed darkest for Zone 1 (directly over the aquifer), lighter for Zone 2 (within the immediate watershed of the aquifer) and lightest for Zone 3 (in the watershed of streams which may contribute to the aquifer). Conservation lands, which are under a protective covenant and would not permit new development, were not included and were simply shown in green for the purposes of this analysis.

This Resource Layers Map provides a basic qualitative analysis on the general location of existing natural resources within the Town of Washington. When considering future development sites, the lighter red or white areas would represent locations which would have less impact on natural resources. It should be noted that this map is intended for conceptual planning purposes to identify general areas within the town which may be more or less suitable for development, and is not intended to be a site-specific or parcel-specific analysis for any individual project. (Proposed development plans on any given parcel would still need to undergo their own individual site assessments and consideration of buffers, wetland permits, etc.) This analysis provides a non-biased method of looking at the resource locations, without any weighted system for scoring certain

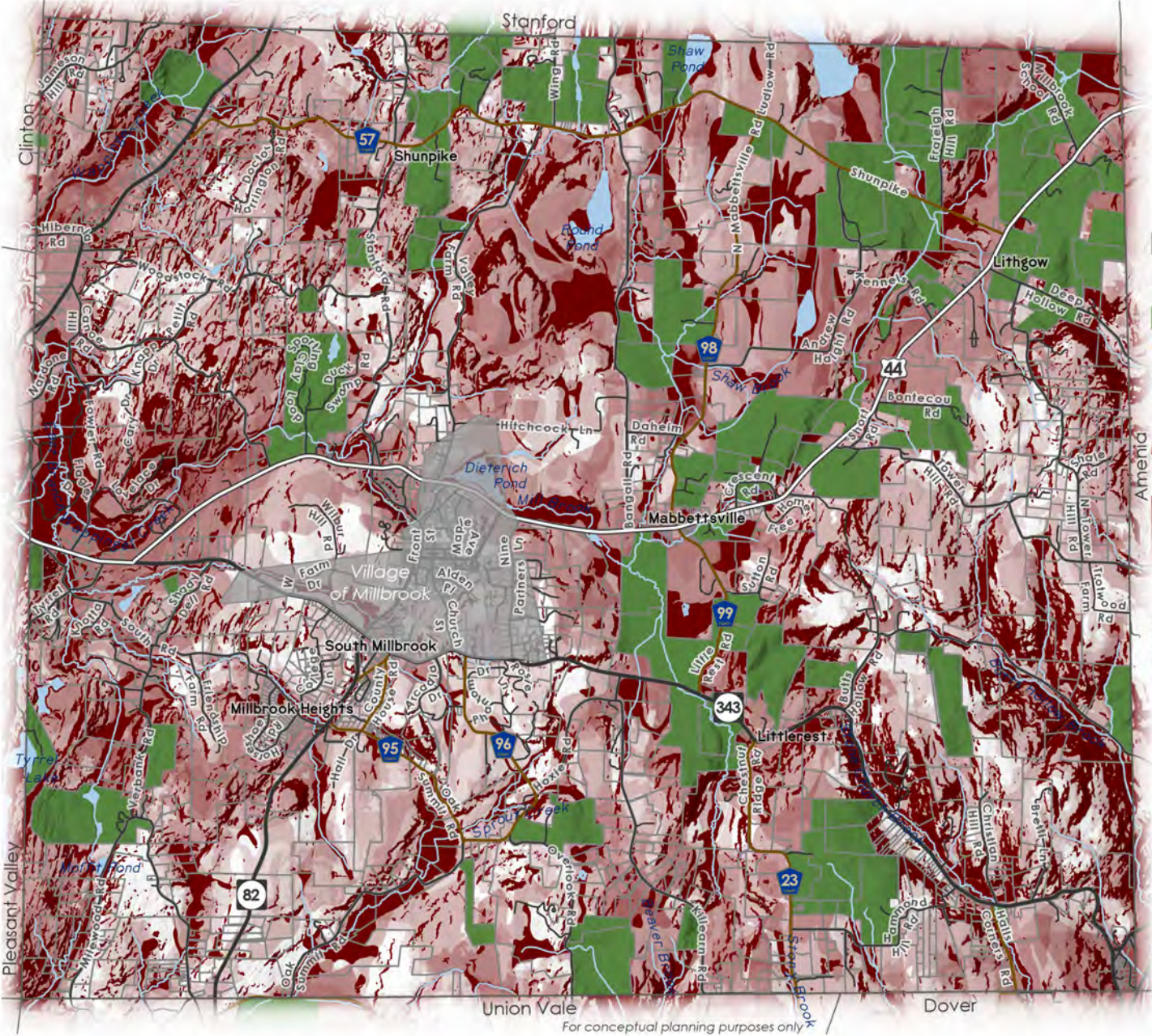


Figure 3. Resource Layers Map



features at a higher value than others.

The results of the Resource Layers Map shows that there are very few areas within the Town which are free from some form of habitat or natural feature. However, it also appears to indicate that some of the areas identified by the public as “appropriate” for future hospitality development seem to be in relatively less sensitive locations. This includes areas directly within the Village of Millbrook, as well as just outside the village boundaries.

The complete set of Resource Layers maps is provided in Appendix F.



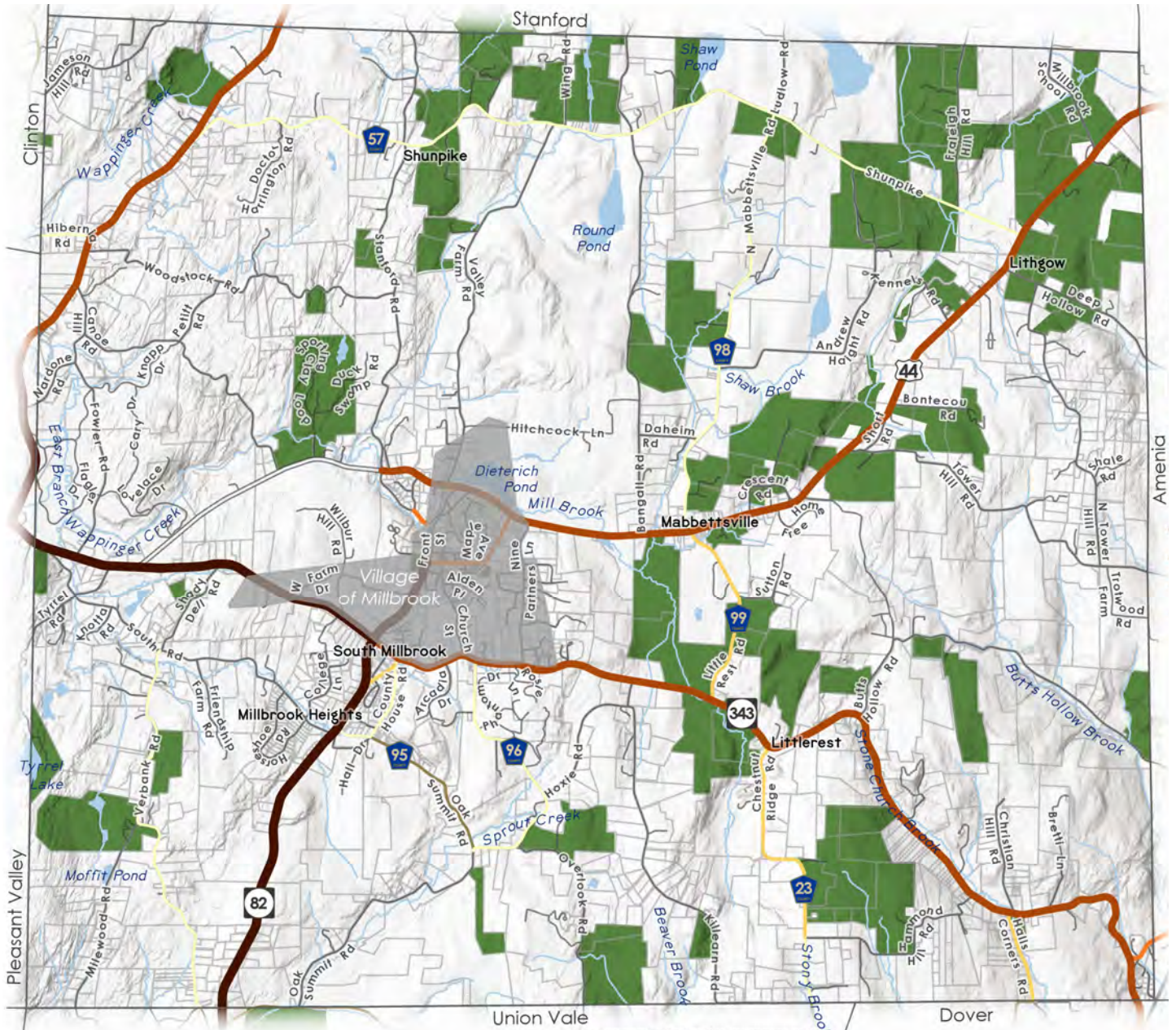


Figure 4. Traffic Volume



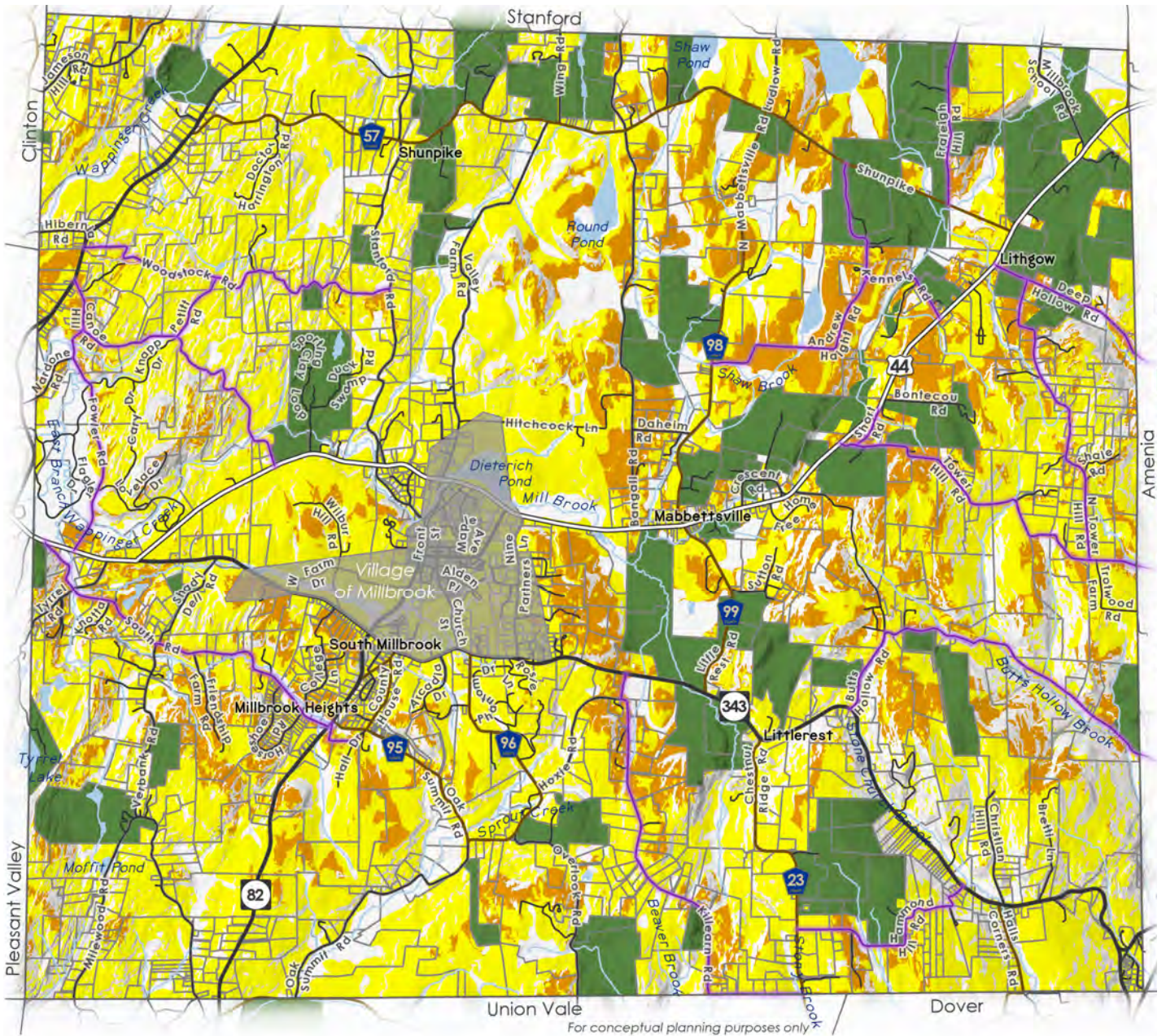


Figure 5. Viewsheds and Buildable Land

-  Tax Parcels
-  Village of Millbrook
-  Conserved Land
-  Rivers and Streams
-  Surface Water
-  Scenic Roads
-  Buildable Land\*
-  Buildable Land within Viewshed of Scenic Roads

## **MAPPING OF EXISTING TRAFFIC VOLUMES**

In order to understand the relative traffic volumes of local roads for consideration of future development locations, known traffic volume data was illustrated on a map of local roads (*See Figure 4 and full map in Appendix G*)

This map shows that Route 82 currently has the highest traffic volumes of major roads in town (4,001 to 11,000 AADT) with Routes 44 and 343 having lower daily volumes of 2,500 to 4,000 vehicles. County Routes 99 and 23 have the lowest counted daily traffic volumes. The Traffic Volume Map provides a baseline for comparison to traffic increases that may result from future development, and offers insight into locations in town having low volume roads.

## **MAPPING OF VIEWSHEDS ON BUILDABLE LAND**

To supplement the mapping of natural resources, a computer analysis was conducted to identify the likely visibility (viewshed) of potentially buildable land as seen from the town-designated scenic roadways within the Town of Washington. This analysis was conducted in response to public input which supported the desire to maintain the rural character of town and limit visibility of new development along roadways. Scenic roadways were chosen for this analysis due to their importance in helping to define the natural character of the community. The result of this analysis was the "Viewsheds and Buildable Land" map (*See Figure 5 and full map in Appendix H*).

This map depicts "buildable land" in yellow, and any overlapping "buildable land within the viewshed of scenic roads" is in brown. Buildable land, as defined by the town code, are areas that are free of mapped wetlands, surface water, slopes over 20% and flood zones.

The viewshed from scenic roads was created by starting with a USGS 10-meter resolution digital elevation model (DEM), and then adding existing buildings and forest cover to create a digital surface model (DSM). Using a DSM allows for a more realistic viewshed as it accounts for the obstruction of views by trees and buildings. Building footprints used in the analysis are approximate, estimated with a uniform height of five meters (approximately 16 feet) for each building polygon. For forest cover a height of 12 meters (approximately 39 feet) was applied. The forest cover layer is from Esri's 2021 Sentinel-2 10-meter derived land cover, which was modified to clip out roads and

buffered buildings to increase the validity of the layer. Forest cover was estimated at a height of 12 meters (approximately 39 feet).

In order to complete the viewshed analysis, "observer points" were generated every 200' along all scenic roads, with an observer height set to 1.06 meters (3.5') to account for a typical eye height in a vehicle. The final viewshed results includes areas that are visible from two or more observer points to account for what would more realistically be visible as one is traveling down the road. As you are moving in a car, a brief window through the trees does not provide a "view," rather a sustained opening is what creates the scenic view.

The Viewsheds and Buildable Lands Map offers insight into those buildable locations that may have adverse impacts on the scenic roads identified by the Town. Such locations could be considered as having higher potential impact and where potential adverse impacts on scenic resources would need to be carefully studied as part of any development proposal.

# PART TWO

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Washington Town Board created a committee on June 28, 2021 to conduct a limited review of the Town's existing Comprehensive Plan (adopted in 2015). The Comprehensive Plan Review Committee (CPRC)'s review was focused on evaluating community desire for, and municipal capacity for, additional hospitality uses in the Town of Washington. As instructed by the Town Board, the CPRC created a planning process that focused on community input as essential in this review. Although charged with just conducting a town-wide survey, the CPRC developed a broader, comprehensive public engagement process that included listening sessions (conducted prior to consultants being retained), two focus groups (citizen representatives and business community representatives), an in-person open house, an on-line open house, and a town-wide survey made available via online and paper copies. Additionally, all CPRC meetings were open to the public and members of the public were given a chance to comment or ask questions at each meeting. The consultants and CPRC used the maps developed as part of this hospitality study to understand environmental conditions and sensitivities to where hospitality development may be more appropriate or less appropriate. The recommendations have as their foundation the same goals as established in the 2015 Plan—to protect environmental resources in the Town.

Upon consideration of all these efforts by the CPRC and the input collected, the Community Planning & Environmental Associates (CP&EA) consulting team offers the following responses and recommendations related to each of the four charges given to the CPRC by the Town Board in June 2021.

### SUMMARY STATEMENT

**Overall, it is our recommendation that the Town of Washington reaffirm the vision of the 2015 Comprehensive Plan, but update it to reflect the results of this community planning process and to accommodate for some small-scale Inns. It is recommended the Town continue current policies towards Bed and Breakfasts. Additionally, to accommodate limited hospitality venues beyond those currently allowed in Mabbettsville, it is recommended that the Town establish two narrowly-defined hospitality overlay districts: one in the Washington Hollow area and the other immediately adjacent to the Village outside the aquifer overlay, as these locations have been shown to be the most acceptable and environmentally suitable. These overlay districts would be clearly defined for the additional use of an Inn, and establish specific size, design, and siting performance standards for them. It is recommended that hotels, motels, resorts, and similar more intensive uses continue to be prohibited outside of these overlay areas. Inns should be limited in size with a 20-room limit, while still offering some flexibility for an increase or decrease in the room density based on the overlay location. An updated comprehensive plan could also outline that the allowable number of rooms be determined with the use of a bonus system that incentivizes provision of desired amenities, such as adaptive reuse, or use of green building technologies. Town-defined overlays should include specific architectural, environmental, and site design performance standards to help ensure any development is in keeping with the capacity of the Town, with community character, and to promote use of adaptive re-use of existing structures wherever possible. Furthermore, we recommend that the Village of Millbrook embark on a rejuvenated effort to identify ways the village can take advantage of its hospitality opportunities and coordinate efforts with the Town of Washington for the mutual benefit of the larger community. As part of its hospitality efforts, the Town should also define and regulate short-term rentals. This hospitality study offers the Town additional direction, strategies, and techniques that are consistent with the 2015 plan, but that also firmly establishes a community-defined direction for future hospitality uses in Washington.**

**Charge #1:** *"...amend the Comprehensive Plan to suggest definitions for hospitality uses, including AirBnBs, and to suggest locations in Town where such uses might best be located. Examine what was intended for hospitality in the Comprehensive plan. Consider input on the need (or lack of need) for hospitality from the community at large and judge whether the comprehensive plan is succeeding or failing on meeting that need. If the plan is failing the committee is charged with seeking improvements based on feedback from the community at large via a survey discussed further on."*

## RECOMMENDATION 1A

**Reaffirm, but update the 2015 Comprehensive Plan. An update should at a minimum reflect this effort and the findings of this community planning process.** This hospitality evaluation effort represents a considerable town-wide planning process that needs to be reflected in an updated Plan to recognize and memorialize the process and its results.

Public input does not support, nor do we recommend, changing the 2015 Plan's overall direction. The 2015 Plan did not differ from similar findings from the 1990's. Community input obtained as part of this planning process confirms the direction established in the 2015 Plan via vision, goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations. We propose an update to add policies and recommendations that specifically address how hospitality should be consistent with the 2015 Plan's vision, goals, objectives and policies. This is recommended because the 2015 Plan does not offer any direction or policy specifically related to hospitality uses in the Town. It is not that the 2015 Comprehensive Plan 'fails' in meeting that need. Rather, it is silent on specifically what hospitality is, what the need for hospitality uses in the Town are, and what the Town's performance expectations for those uses are.

Specifically, we recommend an update to the Plan as follows:

- **Summarize the planning effort.** Update the Introduction to add a new section that summarizes this planning process and memorializes this effort. This should specifically mention the various public engagement efforts undertaken, the mapping and natural resource evaluation that has been completed, and the economic studies presented. These are all valuable elements of the Town's planning

toolbox that can be helpful for future decision making in the Town. The maps, and map analysis especially, will be important to aid the Town in future planning efforts and adds considerably to the knowledge about the Town and its environment.

- **Summarize Findings.** Update the Introduction to summarize the findings of this hospitality evaluation effort.
- **Add an Appendix C (Hospitality Study).** We recommend adding this entire hospitality report submitted by the CP&EA consulting team, including all the public input results, findings and maps as a new Appendix to the updated plan. The new maps can be kept in this Appendix with the rest of the material, or alternately the Town may also update Appendix A to reflect all the new maps and map analysis in that location.
- **Update the Cover.** Develop a new cover page that reflects that it is the 2015 Town of Washington Comprehensive Plan, but updated with the 2022 Hospitality Study information, and add a new date of that adoption.
- **Define Necessary Terminology.** Add definitions for hospitality terminology and related uses to the Plan and zoning so that there is common understanding. At least the following definitions are needed:
  - "Short-term Rentals" could be defined as: The rental of any private residential dwelling or accessory dwelling unit, in part or in whole, for a period of typically less than 30 consecutive days. Commonly referred to as vacation rentals. Separate and distinct from month-to-month or yearly rental agreements under contract with the same tenant.
  - "Inn" could be defined as: Overnight accommodations for transient users having no more than 20 rooms unless an incentive bonus has been approved by the Town. May include permitted secondary accessory uses such as a restaurant and bar.<sup>1</sup>
  - "Event Space" could be defined as: An indoor or outdoor space typically rented for not more than a one-day period for the purposes of hosting a special event such as a wedding, reception, private party, meeting or similar activity, typically with catering services, as an accessory use to a permitted Inn.

<sup>1</sup> Note that the Village of Millbrook zoning does not allow for hotels/conference centers, but does allow for Inns, which are defined as having 20 or fewer rooms.

- Motels, hotels and bed and breakfast’s are already defined in the zoning.

## RECOMMENDATION 1B

**Update Section V (Goals) of the 2015 Plan to incorporate one or more new policies that address the kind of hospitality uses desired in Washington.** The 2015 Plan already recognizes that tourism has a role in Town and includes an objective to “*Promote tourism as an important regional economic driver and expanding market for the Village and Town*”. However, the Plan offers no details, and lacks specific mention of hospitality.

It is noted that the Plan does establish other policies related to land use (for example, it establishes a specific policy to not allow for expansion of public water and sewer infrastructure outside the Village of Millbrook) so adding one or more for hospitality is in keeping with the structure of the 2015 Plan. The Plan should be updated to clarify the desired direction to serve the Town in the future.

Since land use regulations must be consistent with a comprehensive plan (State Town Law 272-a (11))<sup>2</sup>, it is important that the Town’s Plan clearly state its policies to offer the necessary foundation for zoning. Regardless of whether the Town ultimately decides to allow for more hospitality or not, it is strongly recommended that the Plan be updated to establish a clear policy for that regulation. Without a clear policy related specifically to hospitality, the question as to whether you should allow it, and if so, where, and how, will continue to be unanswered. After conducting a year-long planning process, this is an opportunity to clarify that direction and establish policies that can be supported in zoning.

- **Establish a specific policy towards hospitality that reflects recent community input.** Update Goal 1 (Keep the Town Scenic and Rural and the Village the One Developed Center), Objective 1 (Maintain Existing Land Use Types Which Keep the Town Rural) to include a policy consistent with input gained from this effort such as:
  - Allow for limited hospitality uses that are small in size, intensity, and architectural scale; which are designed to blend into the traditional rural character and historic land use patterns; that preserve Washington’s natural

environment; and that are consistent with all other policies established in this Plan.

- **Coordinate with the Village of Millbrook.** Establish an additional policy to coordinate hospitality uses with the Village of Millbrook. In keeping with the findings of the 2015 Plan and of this hospitality study, a majority of the community feels that the Village should remain the commercial center of the Town. The Village is an already established commercial center with infrastructure to support these uses. Millbrook also already allows for Inns (with 20 rooms or less) in certain village locations. An updated Plan should reinforce the need for both Town and Village leaders to sit down and work out strategies for accommodating the desired hospitality needs of the area, including opening up new areas of the Village to allow hospitality uses and coordinating consistent terminology.

## RECOMMENDATION 1C

**Establish a set of strategies in an updated Plan that address the policies recommended above.** This study reaffirms the 2015 Plan but recommends adding policies and actions that establish direction for hospitality in Washington. Community input indicates that a majority of those involved feel there is a need for some hospitality uses in the Town. Equally important however, is that the same majority (along with those who do not want to see any additional hospitality in the Town) feel that there is a narrow range of scale, intensity, design, and location that would be acceptable for such uses. Clearly large hospitality uses are not desired: Only 7% of survey respondents indicated they feel 50+ rooms are appropriate for Washington. This compares to 73% indicating that 4 room hospitality venues were very appropriate, and 60% saying 10 rooms are very appropriate.

Locations available and desirable for expanded hospitality use are limited by both environmental sensitivities and community opinion about what is appropriate. Evaluation of environmental conditions in Washington shows many significant resources and sensitive locations that are not advisable for intense development. These include aquifer locations critical to supporting the Village of Millbrook’s water supply, key locations important to support biodiversity, and scenic areas important to the community. These also include wetlands and Class A quality streams, core forest areas, important areas for rare species, and

<sup>2</sup> 272-a (11) states that the effect of adoption of the town comprehensive plan is that a) all town land use regulations must be in accordance with a comprehensive plan adopted pursuant to this section.

farmland soils critical to continued agriculture. These resources are now mapped, and are known to be widespread in the Town. Together with a keen desire of the community to protect these resources, environmental conditions pose significant limitations to intense development of any kind.

In light of this, and to be consistent with the 2015 Plan, the foundation of these recommendations is not to allow 'any kind of hospitality, anywhere', but to focus allowance of certain hospitality uses only on a certain scale, in select locations, and with a well-defined set of development standards to ensure such uses perform to the expectations of the community.

The additional strategies offered below are recommended for inclusion in an updated Plan and are oriented toward supporting an amended zoning law which carefully regulates hospitality uses. The following are proposed additional strategies to be established in an updated Comprehensive Plan:

- **Create a Hospitality Overlay District.** To accommodate some new hospitality venues beyond Mabbettsville and in the most suitable locations as determined by this study, two hospitality overlay districts could be established: one in the Washington Hollow area and the other immediately adjacent to the Village, but outside the aquifer overlay. These would be very narrowly defined overlay districts allowing only limited-size Inns and their accessory uses, with specific size, design, and siting performance standards. Hotels, motels, and similar more intensive uses would be prohibited within these overlays and in all other zoning districts.
  - The purpose of the Overlay District would be to allow Inns as an additional use to the underlying zoning, and would provide the Town the ability to establish its own expectations as to size, design and lot siting for such uses. Any Comprehensive Plan or Zoning updates should clearly define that this district is only intended for the areas and uses outlined herein, and are not intended to be expanded to other areas of town or other uses which are not supported by this planning process.
  - The Town already has experience using overlay districts via your aquifer overlay and agricultural overlay. It also has established, but not mapped, other overlays. The hospitality overlay would allow for establishment of Inns (as defined above) in the

following locations as either a new or adaptive reuse of an existing structure.

- Outside the Village, the Washington Hollow area was a preferred location for new hospitality. This location is already a primarily commercial area now with a mix of uses, is where the Cottonwood is situated, and has access to existing main highways. It is envisioned that the overlay district for the Washington Hollow area would be limited roughly to parcels already within the RL-5 zoning district which have street frontage on Route 44, extending from the Town of Washington border east for some distance, possibly to Tyrrel Road but likely not further than the intersection of Sharon Turnpike.
- Adjacent to the Village, but outside of the regulated

### WHAT IS AN OVERLAY DISTRICT?

**Overlay zoning is a common regulatory tool which creates a special zoning district, placed over one or more existing (base) zones, which establish special rules in addition to those of the underlying district(s). Overlays are useful because they can be applied to multiple districts, or only a portion of a district, as may be needed for their exact purpose.**

**Overlay zones can be applied for many reasons, including to add additional zoning requirements, encourage (or discourage) specific types of development, require specific design standards, allow a particular use, limit development in an area of sensitive resources, or provide development incentives.**

**Overlay districts, when properly supported by local government policies within an approved comprehensive plan, would not be considered spot zoning. It is important that development be consistent not only with the established goals and objectives of an overlay, but with the long-term goals and strategies of the overall comprehensive plan.**

**The hospitality overlay recommended in this report is supported by the public planning process. As such, any Comprehensive Plan or Zoning updates considered from this report should clearly state the defined purpose and specific areas that are intended for the district, with specific rules and clear guidance from the Zoning.**

aquifer overlay and Millbrook Watershed. The Natural Resource Layers map offers insight as to where potentially environmentally acceptable areas might be for placement of another hospitality overlay district. East of the Village, land is constrained by several environmental features as well as being in the aquifer protection area. Parcels without significant environmental constraints do exist on the NW and SW edges of the Village along Route 343 that may be possible locations. A possible overlay area location would include properties on the south side of Route 82/343, across the street from Bennett College, extending from the area near College Lane southeast to the monument at the intersection of Old Route 82. However, it is recommended that further evaluation be done to consider possible locations for such an overlay in conjunction with the Village effort to accommodate these uses for a coordinated Town/Village effort.

- It is recommended that the Town implement these overlays in a phased approach, with an overlay first in the Washington Hollow area, followed by initiating coordination with the Village of Millbrook (See Recommendation 1B) to identify the second area if desired.

■ **Provide development standards for the Hospitality Overlay.** Development standards within the Hospitality Overlay should include:

- Allowing Inns via a special use permit.
- Limiting Inns to no more than 20 rooms. This ‘density’ is recommended because: a) support for larger-sized hospitality venues were not supported as per public input; b) a smaller venue is consistent with the 2015 Comprehensive Plan that seeks to maintain the small, rural character of the Town and prevent sprawl, expansions of infrastructure, or inclusion of growth inducing uses outside the Village; and c) is consistent with the 20-room size limit of Millbrook. Although the 20-room limit is an overall recommendation, some limited flexibility may be desired in setting the number of allowable rooms. Two options could be considered by the Town in establishing the room-density limits:
  - » Each of the three areas (two proposed overlay districts as described above and in Mabbettsville) could have different room limitations set in

consideration of the environmental features, access, size, character, and nearby land uses. Each of the three areas could have fine-tuned room maximums to reflect specific conditions in each.

- » The Town could also establish a policy in an updated comprehensive plan to offer an incentive bonus. An incentive bonus is a method, allowed pursuant to NYS Town law, to incentivize developers to provide specific amenities to the Town in return for an increase in the number of rooms allowed in an Inn. However, a key point is that an incentive bonus is not open-ended: An upper limit would be required to ensure the proper scale in each location. For example, an incentive bonus could be established to allow for no more than 50% increase above 20 rooms if one or more stated amenities were provided. Such amenities could be when an existing structure is rehabilitated instead of building new, when public recreation is allowed on premises, when larger or important areas of open space are permanently preserved, or when energy-conserving or renewable energy sources are provided on-site. Many communities incentivize developers to provide desired features by offering such a bonus.
- Requiring a set aside of open space when sited on larger properties. Consider applying conservation design principals to identify and preserve this open space.
- Encouraging adaptive reuse over new construction. Consider allowing the adaptive reuse of an existing structure for an Inn to be allowed with site plan review, while new construction would require a special use permit.
- Detailing architectural design standards.
- Requiring avoidance of sensitive environmental locations including fragmenting core forests and important aquifer locations.
- Limiting new hospitality uses to using private water and septic systems because the 2015 Plan seeks to avoid expansion of water and sewer infrastructure outside of the Village and creation of new water/



sewer infrastructure that would act as an inducement to further growth, Include an authorization for the Planning Board to require well pump testing to ensure adequate water supplies and to avoid adverse impacts on adjacent wells.

- Screening, landscaping, and signage expectations should be articulated for hospitality uses in this overlay.
- **Clarify hospitality accessory uses that are desired.** An updated plan should also identify the hospitality accessory uses desired by the community. As per community input, bars and restaurants were deemed acceptable secondary uses by more participants. Outdoor recreation or sports, hosted events, and spa/shops were strongly supported to supported by 57%, 53%, and 50%, respectively, and may be desired subordinate uses to hospitality uses. However, the community was not in favor of condominiums, single-family or tiny house residences as part of a hospitality use; camping/glamping or similar temporary lodging, and on-site residences (which could potentially be used as short-term rentals) were opposed or strongly opposed by the majority (58%, 52%, and 56% respectively). It is recommended that an updated comprehensive plan clarify the Town’s vision regarding these potential accessory uses to hospitality venues, and the allowable uses in the zoning be updated to reflect this vision. The Town may also consider providing specific use requirements or performance standards for these accessory uses to ensure that they are subordinate to the primary use and in keeping with the scale and intensity of the area. Such provisions may include a seating or table limit to an accessory restaurant, or guest/occupancy limits to an accessory event space.
- **Maintain Mabbettsville as a small, mixed-use Hamlet and continue size limits on non-residential uses in Mabbettsville.** Both the 2015 Plan and the Town’s zoning have very focused purposes for Mabbettsville and strictly controlled non-residential uses are promoted. This Hospitality Study did not find any evidence showing a desire on the part of the community to change strategies in Mabbettsville. Land uses in the HM, and area around Mabbettsville must meet both Town and Village aquifer and watershed protection requirements. A recognition of the role the Mabbettsville area plays in groundwater protection – especially for the Village of Millbrook, must

influence land use decisions in that area.

Zoning currently limits the size of non-residential uses to 50% of the total square footage of floor space of all new residential buildings constructed in the HM district within 2 years. This rule would limit the size of hotels and motels here unless there was a very large housing building boom. Such size limitations are appropriate to maintain the desired character of Mabbettsville, but are also important since Mabbettsville is located in an important aquifer that is critical to the Village’s water supply where intense development is not appropriate.

Currently, hotel, motels, and bed and breakfasts are allowed in Mabbettsville and defined in the Town’s zoning. Given the community’s strong input that small hospitality venues were desired, hotels and motels as currently defined may not be in keeping with the community vision, especially considering zoning places no size limitations. Consider removing hotel and motels from the desired allowable uses and replace these uses with “Inn”, with the definition presented above limiting them to no more than 20 rooms. Inns align more closely to the direction for hospitality expressed by the community. The Town should also consider that in Mabbettsville, the size of an Inn may need to be smaller than a 20-room maximum, and should be dependent on lot sizes, location, site conditions, and environmental conditions.

- **Update Zoning Code Site Plan Review Section 485 (Standards for Review and Design).** This is a very important section that addresses siting, layout and design of new, non-residential developments. This section would benefit from having graphics and photographs to clearly illustrate the scale and character of new development desired by the Town. This section would also benefit the Town by being more definitive. For example, sub-section 6 (Building Design), item (a) says “Proposed building design shall recognize compatible building forms indigenous to the community and in particular of the historic character of the Town of Washington.” The design and permitting process becomes more difficult with such undefined guidance because there are no details offered.

It is further recommended that an updated plan call for an overall review of how the site plan review sections

addresses architectural review, identify what needs architectural review, what guidelines they would follow, and ensure there are standards to be incorporated for hospitality uses.

- **Develop architectural and design standards.** Architectural review is already part of the Town zoning process, and is required in Mabbettsville as well as in other review processes. While that is an important step, no specific architectural standards, details or criteria are offered to guide design and review of new proposals. The survey indicates 80% support for having architectural or site design standards in zoning for hospitality.

Currently hotels and motels are allowed only in the HM District in Mabbettsville with a special use permit and are required to be consistent with the historic architecture of the hamlet. That review requires an architect to evaluate the architectural compatibility of the proposed development with the historic character of the hamlet. Instead of delegating that evaluation to an architect, it is recommended that the Town establish its own architectural design standards.

This recommendation is further bolstered because the Zoning states that *"Historic architectural character may be established by the architectural consultant and the Planning Board by identifying exemplary existing structures and groups of structures in Mabbettsville and the surrounding area and/or by adopting design guidelines to supplement this Local Law."* Because the zoning currently does not incorporate these details and does not offer other criteria upon which developers can use or Planning Board can judge against, the architectural review becomes more subjective. It is strongly recommended that the Town follow through and develop its own specific design standards for non-residential uses, including hospitality, for all areas in the Town.

- **Utilize Visual Preference Input.** Specifically related to hospitality, use the photographic examples chosen in the open house and survey to help guide the direction of the architectural and site design standards.
- **Continue current rules for B&B's.** Currently Bed and Breakfasts are allowed in all zoning districts in the Town. Bed and Breakfasts are owner-occupied dwellings that provide overnight accommodations not exceeding 5

bedrooms for less than 30 days. Continue this practice because this is an existing hospitality use that addresses the desire for very small lodging opportunities.<sup>3</sup>

- **Develop a natural resource inventory to use in combination with the environmental resource maps in this report as a foundation for future decision making.**

A natural resource inventory (NRI) is a document that compiles and describes important, naturally occurring resources in the Town. It also includes cultural resources such as historic, scenic and recreational resources. The inventory provides the foundation for land use planning and decision making.

This hospitality study provided up-to-date maps on a variety of critical environmental resources in Washington. The Natural Resources Overlay Map presented in this hospitality study was developed to analyze potential buildable areas for hospitality uses and is not weighted. A full natural resource inventory however would provide more detail and allow the community to weigh and prioritize specific natural resources. We understand that the Washington Conservation Advisory Council is currently working to develop a full NRI. It is recommended that information from this study and the future NRI be used to create an environmental protection map. The NRI and environmental protection map should be appended to the updated comprehensive plan to further guide future development.

- **Use the environmental protection map to establish an Environmental Protection Overlay.**

Currently the zoning includes good development standards designed to protect the environment, but this is not applicable unless environmental resources are mapped. To elevate the importance of environmental protection and consistent with the 2015 Plan, it is recommended that this map be created. Use maps included in this Study and/or the recommended natural resource inventory to create this map.

- **Integrate resource maps with decision making.** As per the 2015 Comprehensive Plan, and reaffirmed by this hospitality study, the Washington community is committed to protecting its environmental resources. The recommendations made in this plan related to where

<sup>3</sup> Note that the Village of Millbrook zoning allows for bed and breakfasts in all zoning districts as well.

hospitality is appropriate are in part, based upon review of the natural resource maps. These and other detailed maps to be included in the NRI are critical in future land use decision making. They should be used to identify and understand resources during subdivision, site plan and special use permit review processes. They are critical to aiding the Planning Board effectively conduct required environmental reviews (SEQR), and are important to landowners/developers to understand parcel-level environmental sensitivities. Thus the maps should be integrated and part of the knowledge base upon which future land use decisions are made.

## RECOMMENDATION 1D

**Develop short-term rental regulations.** Short-term rentals are a use that fills some of the hospitality needs in the Town. They can be useful to meet the need and desire to have smaller hospitality opportunities. It is recommended that the Town establish regulations for short-term rentals. The following components are supported by the community and should be reflected in both the updated plan and zoning regulation:

- Define short-term rentals and create a policy regarding them in an updated plan.
- Include short-term rental regulations as a new section in the Zoning.
- Create a regulatory system that permits short term rentals but requires registration and a fee to operate in Washington.
- Update the Town's fee schedule to include a fee for short-term rental
- Include a violations and penalty section that establishes how complaints can be filed and followed up by the code enforcement officer. This should also include loss of short-term rental registration for multiple offenses.
- Establish noise standards to prevent nuisance noise.
- The Town may want to consider not allowing short-term rental venues from also being used as event spaces, or at least separate them as uses. As such, the Town should establish development standards for event venues.

- Require off-street parking on the property for all short-term rentals.
- In recognition that short-term rentals can result in adverse impacts, especially those related to affordable housing opportunities, the Town should carefully monitor short-term rentals and their impacts. If additional regulation of short-term rentals is deemed important, and to further implement the 2015 Comprehensive Plan direction, the Town should consider setting a reasonable limitation on the number of guests at a short-term rental so to minimize the chance of these becoming nuisances or to limit short-term rentals only to owner-occupied structures.

## RECOMMENDATION 1E

**Prohibit commercial campgrounds, glamping operations, and RV parks.** These were hospitality uses not felt to be appropriate for Washington by a majority of those engaged in the planning process. These uses are currently not allowed. Continue to allow for private camps. However, consider updating the zoning's definitions of 'camp, private' to clarify that these are non-commercial uses for personal use only. The Town may also consider adding allowance for private camps to include a tent or other temporary structures in addition to a dwelling, as currently defined.

## RECOMMENDATION 1F

**Additional Observations.** The following recommendations are not specifically hospitality-related, but arise from our analysis of the comprehensive plan and zoning:

- Both the Town of Washington and the Village of Millbrook should adopt the same updated Aquifer Protection Map developed for this study using new data from Cornell (See Aquifer Map in Appendix F) as the official watershed map of protection zones 1 thru 3. The Town of Washington should abandon the use of the older Town Aquifer Map so that both communities are referencing the same map.
- Fully implement the 2015 Plan. Follow through on the many un-implemented actions recommended in the

2015 Plan. The plan offers many very good actions and strategies that would help fine tune the Town’s zoning to more completely meet the goals of the Town.

**Charge #2:** “...the Town Board has always been sensitive to the real property tax base in the Town. There is probably a general awareness that more and more people are shopping online and that the need for traditional retail and commercial space has been declining. As that decline continues, the real property tax revenue generated by such properties may decline and will have to be made up elsewhere. In addition, there is probably a general awareness that more and more people can work remotely and possibly from home, and the need for traditional office space has been declining. This has become particularly evident during the COVID-19 pandemic. As that decline continues, the real property tax revenue generated by such properties may decline and will have to be made up elsewhere. The committee is charged with determining how hospitality could play a role in mitigating said risks to the potential erosion of the tax base, including property tax and a potential hospitality tax.”

**RESPONSE**

The CP&EA consulting team evaluated the economic impact of potential hospitality development in Town. It also examined the trends in traveler spending, hospitality employment, and the lodging market. The Trends Analysis indicates that rural areas like Washington are increasingly desirable places for families to visit, and that there will likely be continued tourism interest in such rural places. The Economic Impact study shows that small hospitality venues and associated accessory uses such as a restaurant and event facility could positively add to the tax base in terms of property taxes. Current occupancy taxes go to Dutchess County—the Town currently does not have its own mechanism for collecting occupancy taxes.

There is limited data to quantify what the long-term effects of COVID, remote-working and online retailers might have on the local retail economy and tax revenues. However, some diversification of the local economic portfolio should hypothetically help to insulate or offset the Town and Village from market changes. This diversification could come from hospitality uses, but could also come from other uses identified by the community as being needed such as cultural, entertainment, and recreation venues.

In order to help quantify what the potential economic offset might be from new hospitality venues, our analysis included potential development scenarios. These scenarios were based on the desired community vision of smaller scale hospitality venues, potentially with accessory uses such as a restaurant and/or event space. This scenario was modeled because it represented the “upper limit” of what the community seemed willing to support before support began to drop. A “high-end” boutique lodging facility was assumed for this analysis since it would potentially generate more revenue. Using this model, the assumed upper-limit of direct tax revenue which could be experienced by the Town for a combination Inn with restaurant and event facility would be approximately \$190,000 per year.

**Figure 6: Hospitality Model - Estimated Annual Tax Revenues**

Type of Use	Estimated Property Tax Revenue <sup>1</sup>
20-Room Inn	\$160,000
60-Seat Restaurant/Bar	\$27,000
Event Facility	\$6,250
<i>Total:</i>	<b>\$193,250</b>

<sup>1</sup> These figures do not represent the NET property tax gain the Town would experience, because the Town would presumably already be collecting tax revenue on the parcel before the hospitality use is established. Actual net revenue would be lower.

(See **Figure 6**) This would represent the “upper limit” of potential direct economic benefit from this one development. Assuming an annual town budget of about \$4,200,000 and \$2,800,000 in tax revenue, this would equate to approximately 4% of the town budget, and 6% of town property tax revenue.

It is important to note that the current property taxes collected by the town on this (hypothetical) property would need to be deducted from this in order to understand any net increase in revenue. The actual net revenue would likely be smaller. This model also does not quantify the ancillary benefits which the Town could experience from the estimated 22 to 26 full-time equivalent jobs, local business purchases and additional tourist activity.

While Dutchess County would potentially collect up to an estimated \$50,000 in lodging tax and \$87,000 in sales taxes

from this model scenario, it is not known what percentage of these revenues would be passed back to the Town, so these numbers were not included in the revenue.

If the Town were to establish its own occupancy tax on lodging/hotel stays, some additional revenue could be captured. Using the same model scenario above of the 20-room Inn, a 1% occupancy tax on the estimated \$1.2 million in room sales would equate to approximately \$120,000 in revenue. Combined with the estimated property tax, this model scenario could potentially generate up to about \$313,000.

**Charge #3:** "...the Town Board is concerned about the viability of businesses in the Town as a whole, but particularly in the Village of Millbrook and the traditional hamlets of Mabbettsville and Washington Hollow. The committee is charged with determining how hospitality could be of help to the business within the Millbrook Village and the said hamlets. The committee is further charged with considering a way for the Comprehensive plan (and then the Zoning Code) to be updated to better support these areas of the Town."

## RESPONSE

The recommendations included in this hospitality study do not include opening up a large portion of the Town for hospitality uses. That would not be consistent with the bulk of the 2015 Plan, nor with the input received from the community. It is recommended (see **Recommendation 1C** above) that additional hospitality uses be allowed in the Washington Hollow area and in suitable areas near the Village and that hospitality options continue to be allowed in the HM District in Mabbettsville. Concentration of some additional hospitality uses in those areas would continue to focus commercial attention on the Village, which would continue to be the desired location for shopping and restaurants.

## RECOMMENDATION 3A

- As noted above, the Town should coordinate with the Village of Millbrook to ensure consistency in zoning regulations to mutually support common community goals. The 2015 Plan and any update should continue the strong ties between the Town and Village and continue its

policies to maintain Millbrook as the commercial center of the Town. This desire, along with the finding that most people overwhelmingly favored new hospitality uses to be located in the Village, means that the Village should evaluate their land use regulations to determine how and where this can be accomplished.

- Since Village residents were an important part of this hospitality study, Millbrook should consider adopting this study and its results into their next comprehensive plan update.

**Charge #4:** "...if a property contains a unique structure of historic significance, even though that structure might not be on a registry of historic places, should the Comprehensive Plan be amended to support an adaptive reuse of such a structure? If so, what is the best way to do so?"

## RESPONSE

There was a high degree of support for adaptive reuse of buildings for hospitality. 66% of survey respondents supported this when structures are historic buildings or otherwise contribute positively to the architectural character and charm of the Town, and when properties/structures were formerly a hotel or Inn which has ceased operations. There was also support for adaptive reuse in other situations, such as when a structure has been vacant or otherwise underutilized.

Perhaps more importantly in response to this charge, the 2015 Comprehensive Plan already supports adaptive reuse. This is reflected in the following statement from page 40: Goal 1, Objective 1, Recommendation 4 that states "Encourage reuse and rehabilitation of existing buildings and sites rather than new development whenever possible."

## RECOMMENDATION 4A

- **Emphasize that adaptive reuse of certain structures would be encouraged.** The 2015 Plan already supports adaptive reuse. However, in development of hospitality policy (see Recommendation 1b, above), add that it

is a policy of the town to support adaptive reuse of existing structures that are historic, that contribute to the architectural character and charm of the Town, when properties/structures were formerly a hotel or inn which has ceased operations, and when structures have been vacant or otherwise underutilized and in those circumstances where such adaptive reuse is consistent with the scale, intensity and location desired for hospitality.

Consider incentives, such as a density bonus or allowing a rehabilitation with site plan review and not as a special permit use as described above.

**Figure 7: Summary of Report Recommendations**

Priority Recommendations	Page
Update the 2015 Comprehensive Plan to reflect the effort and public input collected as part of this planning process. This should include a summary of the effort, public outreach and findings. A new cover page to the Plan should be added to reflect the update, and this report should be added to the Plan as an Appendix.	15
Define necessary terminology regarding different hospitality uses, including Inns and Short-term Rentals.	15
Coordinate with the Village of Millbrook on an effort to identify ways in which the Village could accommodate additional hospitality uses to benefit the larger community.	16
Update Section V (Goals) of the Plan to establish specific policies toward hospitality that reflect recent community input, describing the desired size, intensity, architectural scale and appropriate locations for future hospitality uses within the Town.	16
Create Hospitality Overlay Districts which permit Inns (limited to no more than 20 rooms) in the Washington Hollow area and in environmentally suitable areas immediately adjacent to the Village of Millbrook to accommodate some limited new hospitality venues, with performance/environmental/development standards. Prohibit hotels, motels, resorts and similarly intensive hospitality uses in areas outside of these overlay areas.	17
Limit Inns to 20 rooms but consider options to fine tune this density by location and/or by offering a density bonus to incentivize Inns that provide for additional amenities desired by the community.	18
Define hospitality uses and hospitality accessory uses which may be allowed by right or by special permit.	19
Allow for Inns with room limitations and development standards in Mabbettsville instead of current allowance of hotels and motels.	19
Continue the current size limitations on non-residential uses within the hamlet of Mabbettsville.	19
Update Zoning Code Site Plan Review Section 485 to incorporate architectural and site design standards and remove ambiguity in requirements.	19
Develop architectural and site design standards which are built from the public responses to the visual preference example images used in the open house and community survey outreach efforts.	20
Continue the current rules for the use and operation of Bed & Breakfasts (B&B's) within the Town.	20
Develop a Natural Resource Inventory and include as an adopted part of an updated comprehensive plan.	20
Create a map to activate the current Environmental Protection Overlay.	20
Develop short-term rental regulations which require registration and fees to operate, include a structured complaint process, penalties for violations, loss of registration for multiple violations, and reasonable limitations on performance such as number of guests and off-street parking. Longer-term, consider the need for limiting short-term rentals to owner-occupied structures to mitigate the loss of longer-term rental properties available on the market.	21
Coordinate the aquifer protection area between the Town and the Village by adopting the same Aquifer Protection Map for both municipalities, using the latest data and protection zones 1 thru 3 established by Cornell.	21
Prohibit commercial campgrounds, glamping operations and RV parks.	21
Complete the implementation of the remaining 2015 Comprehensive Plan recommendations.	21
Encourage adaptive re-use of existing structures in lieu of new construction where feasible.	23

**APPENDIX A of  
Hospitality  
Report:**

FOCUS GROUP NOTES

Available at the Town of  
Washington Website at  
[www.washingtonny.org](http://www.washingtonny.org)



**APPENDIX B of  
Hospitality  
Report:**

OPEN HOUSE FINDINGS

Available at the Town  
of Washington Website  
at

[www.washingtonny.org](http://www.washingtonny.org)

# **APPENDIX C of Hospitality Report:**

TOWN WIDE SURVEY REPORT

Available at the Town of  
Washington Website at  
[www.washingtonny.org](http://www.washingtonny.org)

# **APPENDIX D of Hospitality Report:**

HOSPITALITY TRENDS ANALYSIS

## Traveler Spending

Tourism is an important part of the New York State economy. According to an annual report prepared for Empire State Development by Tourism Economics, visitors to the state spent nearly \$73.6 billion across a wide range of sectors in 2019, including \$21.4 billion (29.1%) on lodging (**Table 1**). Total visitor spending increased by 2.5% over the previous year and by a cumulative 17% since 2015.

	Dollars in Millions						% Change, 2019-20
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	
Total	\$63,077	\$64,790	\$67,630	\$71,820	\$73,620	\$33,940	-53.9%
Lodging Only	\$18,714	\$19,330	\$19,960	\$21,210	\$21,390	\$9,690	-54.7%
% On Lodging	29.7%	29.8%	29.5%	29.5%	29.1%	28.6%	-
Food & Beverage Only	\$14,502	\$15,370	\$16,170	\$17,140	\$17,860	\$9,320	-47.8%
% On F&B	23.0%	23.7%	23.9%	23.9%	24.3%	27.5%	-

*Source: Tourism Economics and Empire State Development Corporation*

Domestic visitors account for roughly 70% of traveler spending in New York State each year. About 2% comes from Canadian visitors, and the remainder is derived from international visitors. A 2021 report from the Office of the State Comptroller notes that international visitors have a greater impact on the local economy than domestic travelers because their average spending per visit is nearly three times higher.<sup>1</sup>

Tourism activity generates business sales, employment, personal income, and tax revenue. The total economic impact includes not only direct spending, but also the indirect and induced impacts.<sup>2</sup> When these “downstream” impacts are considered, statewide traveler spending in 2019 supported nearly \$118 billion in business sales.<sup>3</sup> Most of the sales are to industries that directly serve visitors, like food services and lodging. Other industries – such as finance, insurance and real estate, transportation, business services, recreation and entertainment, even manufacturing – also profit, as they in turn sell goods and services to tourism-related businesses and their employees.

The COVID-19 pandemic had a devastating and unprecedented impact on the tourism sector in 2020. Statewide visitor spending declined by more than half, to \$33.9 billion, and the total economic impact

<sup>1</sup> Office of the State Comptroller, Report 2-2022, *The Tourism Industry in New York City*, April 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Economic impact studies typically calculate the sum of the direct, indirect, and induced impacts. Here, the *direct impact* is the direct effect of visitor spending to purchase goods and services from a business, such as a hotel or restaurant. The indirect and induced impacts, often referred to as the “multiplier effects,” consider the spending by directly-impacted businesses on goods and services from *other* businesses (e.g., suppliers, vendors, service providers), plus the third wave of impact created as the wages generated from employment are subsequently used by households to purchase goods and services.

on business sales dropped to \$59.1 billion. With inbound travel from other countries severely restricted, spending by domestic visitors accounted for nearly 90% of all visitor spending.

**Table 2** presents estimates from Tourism Economics on annual traveler spending in Dutchess County. Data is provided on the Hudson Valley – defined here as the counties of Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Ulster, and Westchester – for comparison.

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	% Change, 2019-20
<b>DUTCHESS CO.</b>	<b>Dollars in Thousands</b>						
Total	\$527,965	\$568,301	\$601,563	\$642,263	\$674,200	\$417,800	-38.0%
Lodging Only	\$107,121	\$120,104	\$127,420	\$139,827	\$145,700	\$98,800	-32.2%
% On Lodging	20.3%	21.1%	21.2%	21.8%	21.6%	23.6%	-
Food & Beverage Only	\$129,662	\$143,439	\$153,888	\$164,012	\$173,600	\$127,400	-26.6%
% On F&B	24.6%	25.2%	25.6%	25.5%	25.7%	30.5%	-
<b>HUDSON VALLEY</b>	<b>Dollars in Thousands</b>						
Total	\$3,821,704	\$3,950,042	\$4,096,414	\$4,848,830	\$4,973,500	\$2,942,000	-40.8%
Lodging Only	NA	\$954,602	\$982,928	\$1,069,754	\$1,081,400	\$692,700	-35.9%
% On Lodging	NA	24.2%	24.0%	22.1%	21.7%	23.5%	-
Food & Beverage Only	NA	\$1,115,558	\$1,163,117	\$1,278,717	\$1,326,900	\$944,200	-28.8%
% On F&B	NA	28.2%	28.4%	26.4%	26.7%	32.1%	-
<i>Source: Tourism Economics and Empire State Development Corporation</i>							
<i>* Includes the counties of Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Ulster, and Westchester.</i>							

In 2019, visitors to Dutchess County spent \$674.2 million, including \$145.7 million (21.6%) on lodging and \$173.6 million (25.7%) on food and beverage. Total visitor spending increased by 5.0% over 2018, and by nearly 28% since 2015, surpassing the rate of growth statewide.

As a result of the pandemic, annual traveler spending in Dutchess County declined by 38.0%, to \$417.8 million, in 2020. The loss was not nearly as severe as it was statewide or in the Hudson Valley overall. Within the region, visitor spending declined by at least 40% in Orange, Rockland, and Westchester counties, while dropping 25% in Putnam County and 29% in Ulster. Dutchess, Putnam, and Ulster may have received some benefit from the exodus of urban dwellers out of New York City at the onset of the pandemic, when affluent families relocated to short-term rentals and second homes in small towns and rural destinations upstate.

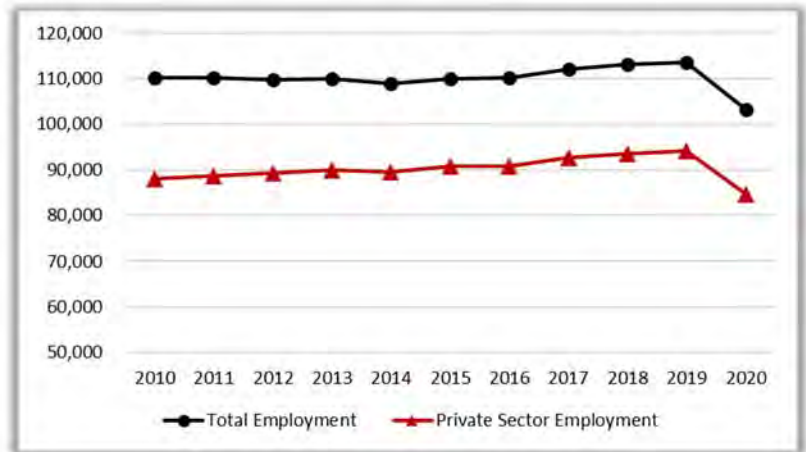
In fact, the Hudson Valley, the Catskills, and the Adirondacks all experienced a surge of interest from in-state residents looking for uncrowded places within driving distance. The Adirondacks' Regional Office of Sustainable Tourism (ROOST) reported that visitation from within New York State jumped to 79% in 2020. There was also an increase in average party size, attributed to family and friends traveling together, and a rise in the average length of stay, whether visitors spent their nights in hotels, motels,

B&Bs, or short-term rental properties. Outdoor recreational activities were the main driver of visitation to the Adirondacks.<sup>4</sup> Similar data is not available for Dutchess County or the Hudson Valley.

## The Dutchess County Economy

As shown in Figure 1, employment levels in Dutchess County since 2010 have been relatively stable – until the pandemic, at least. From 2010 to 2019, total employment increased by approximately 3,500 jobs, or 3.2%, while private sector employment grew by 7.1%. Job growth statewide was 14.4% and 17.6%, respectively.

Figure 1: Annual Average Employment, Dutchess County



Between 2019 and 2020, the County lost more than 10,000 jobs due to government-mandated lockdowns, business cutbacks, reduced demand, and measures taken to minimize the spread of COVID-19. Most of the losses occurred between February and April 2020. Unemployment rates in Dutchess County soared, from 3.9% in January and February to 15.4% in April, and remained in the double-digits until August 2020. Rates did not return to pre-pandemic levels until November 2021 (3.5%).

The Dutchess County economy is driven by a diverse array of industries and businesses. Government accounts for about 18% of the jobs and includes public school districts and public health services. The largest industries with respect to employment are education and health services, retail trade, leisure and hospitality, and professional services. Among the County's major employers are Mid-Hudson Regional Hospital, IBM, GlobalFoundries, GAP Inc., Central Hudson Gas & Electric, and Nuvance Health, which operates Vassar Brothers Medical Center in Poughkeepsie and Northern Dutchess Hospital in Rhinebeck. Most of the largest employers are in and around population centers on the west side of the County.

Dutchess County is also home to several prominent private schools and colleges, such as Bard College in Annandale on Hudson; Marist College, Vassar College, Dutchess Community College and Oakwood Friends School in Poughkeepsie; the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park; and the Millbrook School in Millbrook. In addition, the area's towns and villages support numerous small- and mid-sized businesses that offer goods, services, and job opportunities.

<sup>4</sup> Adirondack Almanack, "ROOST releases 2020 Leisure Travel Study results," July 5, 2021, <https://www.adirondackalmanack.com/2021/07/roost-releases-2020-leisure-travel-study-results.html>.

## The Leisure and Hospitality Sector

Tourism does not fit neatly into a single industry category. Rather, tourism is a *group* of industries that provide various goods and services to people traveling to other locations for leisure, social, or business purposes. Some industries, like retail trade, restaurants, transportation, and professional and business services, serve local customers as well as travelers. Analysis of tourism employment, however, nearly always involves an examination of the leisure and hospitality sector, which is made up of two industry classifications: arts, recreation and entertainment, and accommodations and food services.

Leisure and hospitality businesses in Dutchess County employed an average of 12,242 workers, or about 13% of the private sector employment, in 2019 (Figure 2). Most of these jobs, 72%, were in food services and drinking places, while 11% (1,356) were in accommodations (Table 2).

Following a period of continuous growth from 2010 to 2015 and relative stability over the next few years, the County's leisure and hospitality sector shed 26.0% of its payroll employment, compared with a loss of 9.1% across all industries, between 2019 and 2020. On a percentage basis, the decline in employment was much greater in the arts, recreation and entertainment industry (-41.5%) than in accommodations and food services (-22.6%). Museums, indoor fitness centers, and entertainment venues throughout the state were closed for months, and social distancing mandates restricted capacity at places that were able to reopen. Employment in accommodations alone declined 23.3%.

As Figure 3 indicates, the Hudson Valley experienced consistent growth in leisure and hospitality employment from 2010 to 2019. Jobs in the leisure and hospitality sector reached 89,950, or 11.7% of

Figure 2: Leisure and Hospitality Employment, Dutchess County

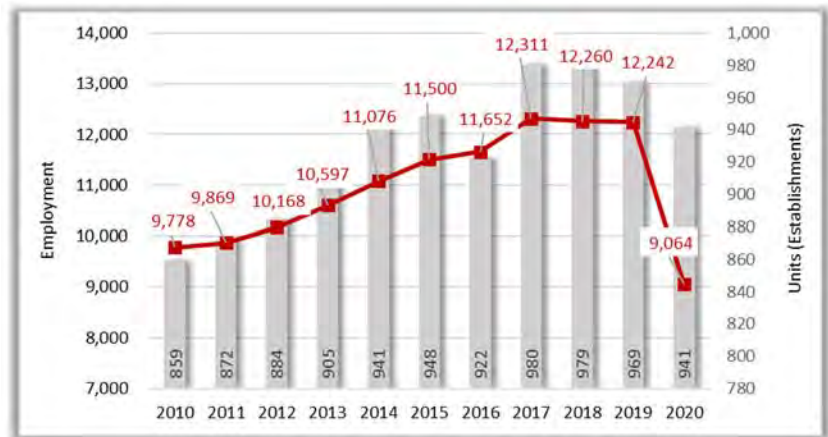
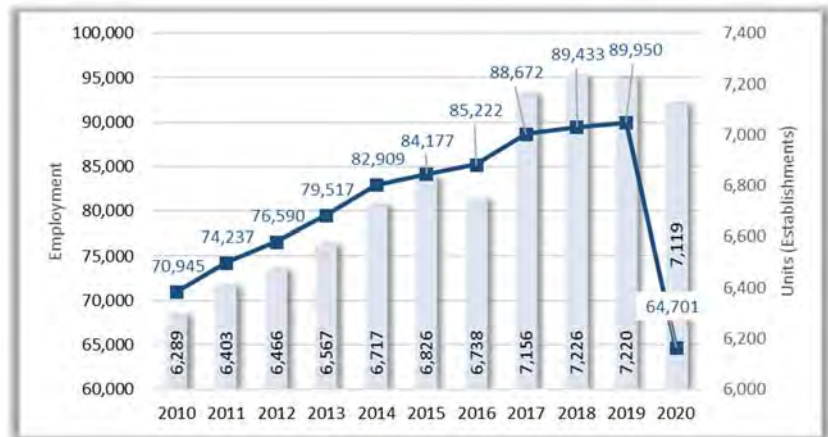


Figure 3: Leisure and Hospitality Employment, Hudson Valley

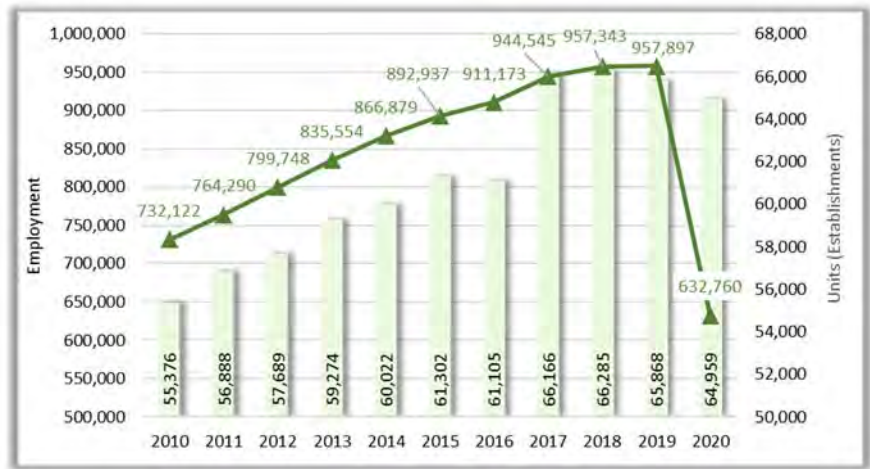


private sector employment, in 2019. Most of these jobs were in food services and drinking places; 8,705 or about 9% were in accommodations.

The following year, the Hudson Valley lost 9.7% of its payroll employment across all industries due to the pandemic. Leisure and hospitality employment declined by more than

25,000, or 28.1%, essentially erasing all of the region’s job gains of the last decade. Jobs in accommodations alone decreased by a third.

**Figure 4: Leisure and Hospitality Employment, New York State**



Statewide, leisure and hospitality businesses employed an average of 957,897 workers in 2019 (**Figure 4**). Of these, 103,016 or 11% of them worked in accommodations.

Job losses in the leisure and hospitality sector statewide were particularly severe due to the influence of New York City. According to the Office of the State Comptroller’s report on the City’s tourism industry, the number of visitors dropped off by 67% after a ten-year period of record growth.

Employment across all industries in New York State declined by 10%, while the leisure and hospitality sector lost 33.9% of its employment base from 2019 to 2020. Jobs in accommodations alone declined 41.6%.

Preliminary data for the second quarter of 2021 (the most recent available) indicate that overall leisure and hospitality employment in Dutchess County, the Hudson Valley, and New York State has increased. Federal aid to businesses, the

availability of vaccines, and pent-up consumer demand have provided a much-needed boost to the sector (and to the retail industry as well). Employment levels have not yet returned to where they were prior to the pandemic, however. Moreover, the accommodations industry, which relies exclusively on travel demand, is still in the early stages of its recovery.

**TABLE 3: Accommodations Industry Employment**

	Dutchess County	Hudson Valley*	New York State
2015	1,301	8,136	92,536
2016	1,353	8,284	94,556
2017	1,547	8,833	100,001
2018	1,396	8,661	102,504
2019	1,356	8,705	103,016
2020	1,040	5,762	60,181
% Chg, 2019-20	-23.3%	-33.8%	-41.6%
Q2 2021 (prelim.)	1,047	5,220	56,266

Source: NYS Department of Labor, Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages

\* Includes the counties of Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Ulster, and Westchester.



## The Dutchess County Lodging Market

A comprehensive travel market research study was conducted in 2018 by Young Strategies, Inc. for Dutchess Tourism, the County's officially designated destination marketing organization. Among the objectives of the study were to update lodging market research and identify opportunities to increase occupancy and room demand. The consultants also conducted a survey of visitors, asking about their destinations, the activities in which they participated, and spending during their trip.<sup>5</sup>

The study characterizes lodging demand in Dutchess County as being driven by a leisure travel market totaling 50.8%, with business travel accounting for 42.5% and group travel for 10.6%. At the time of the report's completion, the County had 42 hotel/motel lodging properties with approximately 3,020 rooms; this did not include 222 rooms in bed-and-breakfast establishments (B&Bs) and inns. The analysis offered the following information:

- Since 2013, five new hotel properties had opened in the County, resulting in the addition of 259 rooms, a 9% increase. Three of these properties were chain-affiliated; the other two were small independent hotels that opened in Fishkill and Beacon.
- As of November 2018, 300 hotel/motel rooms in the County (9.9%) were in six properties developed between 2010 and 2018, 813 rooms (27.0%) were in eight properties developed between 2000 and 2009, and 356 rooms (11.8%) were in three properties built in the 1990s. A total of 1,551 rooms (51.4%) were in 25 properties dating from 1989 and earlier.
- By geography, 50% of the hotel/motel rooms were in the South/Fishkill area, 39% were in the Central/Poughkeepsie area, and 11% were in the North/Eastern/Other area. The South/Fishkill area had experienced more lodging development than the other two areas of the County. Nearly two-thirds of the rooms in B&Bs and inns were outside Fishkill and Poughkeepsie, in the northern and eastern areas of the County.
- By property classification, 36 rooms in the County (1.2%) were "Luxury," 144 (4.8%) were "Upper Upscale," 741 (27.8%) were "Upscale," 529 rooms (17.5%) were "Upper Midscale," 904 rooms (30.4%) were "Midscale," and 566 rooms (18.7%) were "Economy." These segments are grouped primarily according to average room rates, although the study does not define them.
- Lodging data was purchased from STR, a data research company that serves the global hospitality industry, to review room supply and demand and occupancy trends in Dutchess County over a six-year period. According to STR, the County's room supply expanded from

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<sup>5</sup> The report, *Dutchess County, NY: Comprehensive Travel Market Research and Strategic Planning*, is available online at <https://dutchesstourism.com/PDF/Dutchess%20Final%20Report%20PRESENTED%20updated%203-21%20WB.pdf>.

951,814 in 2012 to 1,013,501 in 2017,<sup>6</sup> an increase of 6.5%. STR room demand, or total room nights sold, also increased, from 558,277 to 658,865, but at a much higher rate of 18.0%. Occupancy trends were equally positive, as annual occupancy rose from 58.7% in 2012 to 65.0% five years later (the rate was 68.1% in 2019). The County outperformed the nation with respect to occupancy in 2015 and 2016 and was within a few percentage points of the nation in the other years covered by the STR data.

- Looking at *monthly* occupancy trends from 2014 through 2017, the highest rates in Dutchess County consistently occurred during the summer months (June through August), followed closely by October. Over the four-year period, occupancy rates averaged 75.9% in June, 77.0% in July, 79.1% in August, and 78.9% in October. Conversely, the lowest rates of occupancy were December through March, when rates dipped below 60%, to as little as 45% in the month of January.

The visitor survey described in the Young Strategies study identified the top 3 primary destinations of recent visits to the County as Hyde Park, Poughkeepsie, and Rhinebeck. Millbrook was a distant fifth. Asked about other communities that travelers visited, however, Millbrook ranked seventh, with 18% of leisure overnight visitors, 22% of leisure day trippers, and 21% of business travelers reporting a visit.

The top activities in which visitors said they participated included fine or local culinary dining, driving/sightseeing, visiting a historic site or museum, shopping, visiting a farmers' market or u-pick, and attending festivals/events. The survey also found that the County makes almost three times as much money per party on overnight visitors as on day trip visitors. The consultants concluded that the primary focus of Dutchess Tourism marketing efforts should be the overnight segment.

### **Current and Proposed Lodging**

The Lodging Facilities in Dutchess County Map shows where hotels, motels, B&Bs, and inns are currently located within Dutchess County. As Young Strategies observed in its 2018 study, most rooms – and the larger hotels/motels - are in the South/Fishkill and Central/Poughkeepsie areas. Nearly all the chain hotels are in Fishkill and Poughkeepsie as well.

An effort to update the lodging inventory in December 2021 identified a total of 3,167 rooms and a minimum of 353 suites distributed across 81 properties.<sup>7</sup> We did not distinguish between hotels/motels and B&Bs and inns; however, 38 properties (about 47%) have 12 rooms or less, and these tend to be B&Bs and inns. Conversely, 21 properties (26%) have more than 75 rooms or suites.

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<sup>6</sup> These figures reflect the total number of rooms multiplied by the number of days in the month.

<sup>7</sup> Suites were counted only if they were enumerated separately.

According to a March 2020 news article in the *Poughkeepsie Journal*, three hotels and an inn opened in Dutchess County in 2019. One of them was Homewood Suites by Hilton, located on Route 9 in the Town of Poughkeepsie. The article noted that there are “seven hotels within a three-mile stretch of Route 9 in Poughkeepsie, and an eighth is set to debut in June.”<sup>8</sup>

The *Poughkeepsie Journal* reporter interviewed several stakeholders to get feedback on whether there is a need for the new accommodations. In support of hotel development, local officials, hotel managers, and business leaders cited an increase in tourism spending, an occupancy rate higher than the national average, and the County’s inventory of older facilities. Dutchess Tourism estimated that the County received 5 million visitors in 2018.

Several lodging projects in the works, the article noted, are “upscale options, otherwise known as full-service or high-end, that offer more than just a warm bed and hot coffee. Some hotels in the works include spa services, hot tubs, gyms and event spaces.” (Mirbeau Inn and Spa, classified by STR as a “luxury” hotel, opened in Rhinebeck in 2019.) These facilities would fill a different niche than the chain hotels in Poughkeepsie and Fishkill.<sup>9</sup>

The Dutchess County Planning Department produces a Major Projects Report every year that compiles information about proposed development projects. The report is used by local officials, the private sector, and the public at large to monitor development activities.

It is important to note that the projects listed in the report are merely proposed and will not necessarily be built. As the report introduction explains: “Many of these projects are in the early stages of the planning and approval process, and all projects stay in the report until they are either fully constructed, withdrawn by the sponsor, denied by the municipality, or not resubmitted following approval expiration.”<sup>10</sup> (For more information on the criteria used for inclusion in the Major Projects Report, please refer to the full report online.)

Active major projects that include lodging, as of December 2020, are listed in Table 4. (Note: The 2021 Major Projects Report has yet to be issued.) Some of the projects were proposed more than a decade ago. Others, like the Vassar Inn and the hotel on the campus of the Culinary Institute of America, appear to be moving forward. If these fifteen projects all came to fruition, 950 rooms would be added to the County’s current inventory.

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<sup>8</sup> “Why Dutchess is seeing a boom in hotel development and where the need exists,” *Poughkeepsie Journal*, March 5, 2020.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development, *2020 Major Projects Report*, January 2021, p. 4. The report is available at

[https://www.dutchessny.gov/Departments/Planning/Docs/2020\\_Major\\_Projects\\_Report.pdf](https://www.dutchessny.gov/Departments/Planning/Docs/2020_Major_Projects_Report.pdf).

**TABLE 4: Proposed Projects With Lodging, Dutchess County**

Project	Location	Access Road	Rooms	Date of Entry
Carvel Property Development	Pine Plains	Ferris Lane	NA	Oct 2019
Boutique Hotel – Hudson Valley Office Furniture	Poughkeepsie	Main Street	79	Oct 2019
Heinchon Place Mixed Use Development	Pawling	Main Street	40	Sep 2019
South Road Crossings	Poughkeepsie	US 9	120	Jun 2019
Vassar Inn (at Vassar College)*	Poughkeepsie	College Ave	50	Apr 2019
Rhinebeck Villas LLC	Rhinebeck	NY 9G	60	Feb 2019
Rock Ledge Country Inn	Rhinebeck	Ackert Hook Rd	12	Dec 2017
Harlem Valley Homestead	Dover	Old Forge Road	40	Nov 2017
Hilton Homewood Suites	Poughkeepsie	Thomas Watson Drive	113	Jun 2017
Old Stone Farm Conference Center	Clinton	NY 9G	20	Sep 2016
Continental Commons	Fishkill	Van Wyck Lake Road	90	Jun 2015
Grasmere Farm Hotel	Rhinebeck	US 9	110	Jul 2013
St. Andrew's at Historic Hyde Park	Hyde Park	US 9	137	Feb 2007
LaGrange Town Center	LaGrange	NY 55	58	Sep 2006
Silo Ridge	Amenia	NY 22	21	Feb 2003

Source: Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development.

\* According to the Vassar College website, the Inn has received final approval from the Town of Poughkeepsie and is expected to open in fall 2023.

## The Lodging Industry During the Pandemic

As described in the discussion of leisure and hospitality employment, the COVID-19 pandemic had a profound impact on the lodging market. Business closures, reduced business travel, and anxiety about contagion resulted in a dramatic downturn in the demand for rooms. The average U.S. hotel occupancy rate slumped to 25% in April 2020, the lowest on record. Some hotels temporarily closed their doors; others eliminated access to amenities such as spas, pools, and fitness centers and reduced food and housekeeping service. Full-service hotels that depend on group travel fared the worst, as meetings and conferences were cancelled or postponed indefinitely.<sup>11</sup>

STR declared 2020 “officially the worst year on record for U.S. hotels.” Although monthly occupancy rates improved after April, the lodging industry ended the year with an average occupancy rate of 44%, a decline of 33% from 2019.<sup>12</sup>

With large numbers of Americans receiving vaccinations and significant pent-up demand for travel, the lodging industry had rebounded from the worst effects of the pandemic by spring 2021. According to STR, the U.S. hotel occupancy rate was 57.5% in April 2021, the highest since the beginning of the

<sup>11</sup> “The New Math of Hotels,” *American City Business Journals*, July 30, 2020.

<sup>12</sup> “STR: 2020 officially the worst year on record for U.S. hotels,” STR press release, January 20, 2021, <https://str.com/data-insights/news/press-releases>.

pandemic, and reached 69.6% in July 2021, the highest rate since August 2019.<sup>13</sup> An updated forecast released by STR and Tourism Economics in November 2021 projects that U.S. hotel demand will near full recovery in 2022.<sup>14</sup>

Subsequent monthly occupancy rates have continued to approach pre-pandemic levels. This has been driven primarily by the leisure segment of the travel market, however, as business travel has yet to return. A November 2021 report by the U.S. Travel Association projects that while domestic leisure travel will surpass pre-pandemic levels in 2022 and beyond, domestic business travel will not fully recover until 2024.<sup>15</sup> Hotels in urban markets frequented by business travelers, and hotels that rely on group travel, will likely struggle to recover.<sup>16</sup>

## Short-Term Rentals

A September/October 2019 newsletter produced by the Dutchess County Planning Federation describes the “challenges and possibilities” of short-term rentals (STRs) in communities. The authors define a short-term rental as “a dwelling unit, or portion thereof, that is rented for a short duration (typically less than 30 days) to transient guests (such as tourists, not someone looking for permanent housing).” They point out, however, that these properties can take on many different forms - e.g., a spare room, an accessory apartment, an entire house – and the owner may or may not be on-site. In addition, the property may serve as the owner’s primary or secondary residence or exclusively as an investment, with its main purpose being a short-term rental.<sup>17</sup>

Thanks to online platforms such as Airbnb and VRBO, among others, short-term rentals have grown exponentially in many communities, leading to concerns about noise, parking, building and property maintenance, transient guests, and other issues, especially when the owner is not on-site. In areas where an increasing number of homes are being purchased by investors as short-term rentals, people looking to buy a house in which to live may find themselves with fewer properties to choose from or may get priced out of the housing market altogether. Competition with existing hotels, motels, B&Bs, and inn is another issue as the number of STRs continues to multiply.

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<sup>13</sup> “STR: U.S. hotel performance for April 2021,” STR press release, May 19, 2021, and “STR: U.S. hotel performance for July 2021,” STR press release, August 18, 2021, <https://str.com/data-insights/news/press-releases>.

<sup>14</sup> HospitalityNet, “Forecast: U.S. hotel demand and ADR will near full recovery in 2022,” November 8, 2021, <https://www.hospitalitynet.org/news/4107419.html>.

<sup>15</sup> “Travel Forecast,” U.S. Travel Association, November 15, 2021, <https://www.ustravel.org/research/travel-forecasts>.

<sup>16</sup> “Insider’s view: JLL hotel executive talks business-travel recovery, threat of distress in 2022,” *Albany Business Review*, January 5, 2022, <https://www.bizjournals.com/albany/news/2022/01/05/insiders-view-jll-hotel-executive.html>.

<sup>17</sup> Dutchess County Planning Federation, “Understanding Short-Term Rentals: The Challenges and Possibilities of STRs in Our Communities,” *Plan On It* e-newsletter, September/October 2019, <https://www.dutchessny.gov/Departments/Planning/Docs/SeptOct2019eNewsletter-ShortTermRentals-printerfriendly.pdf>.

Airbnb has had an agreement with Dutchess County since 2017 to collect and remit the applicable hotel occupancy tax on behalf of the hosts. As the Planning Federation article explains, the County contracts with Host Compliance, a “a web-based service that helps identify short-term rentals and notify hosts of their obligation to remit the tax. As part of that contract, we receive aggregate data about the number of STR listings identified in Dutchess County [across all online platforms that facilitate STRs], which has aided in our understanding of the local picture of short-term rentals.” As of August 2019 – a single point in time - there were 947 short-term rental units in the County, 87% of which were for the entire dwelling unit, as opposed to a room or part of a unit. Every municipality in the County had short-term rental listings, with the largest number found in the City of Beacon (151), followed by the Town of Rhinebeck (90). The Town of Washington had 42 STRs, while the Village of Millbrook had 13.

## Travel Trends

Airbnb combined a comprehensive analysis of its booking data with consumer research to reveal key U.S. travel trends in 2021. This summer, the company reported, the most popular type of travel is “families flocking to remote destinations from their big city homes,” a change from the “smaller groups visiting big cities” that has characterized June through August travel on Airbnb in the past. Family travel increased from 27% of nights booked in summer 2019 to 31% in 2021. Moreover, 42% of the nights booked by families were in rural areas, up from 32% in 2019. Short-term rentals offering proximity to mountains, lakes, and national parks all experienced a spike in bookings.<sup>18</sup>

Longer stays are also on the rise. Nearly half (45%) of the nights booked on Airbnb in 2021 were for at least one week, compared to 38% two years ago. In addition, long weekend stays of three to four days grew by one-third over the number in 2019. Airbnb reports that based on bookings for 2022 as of September 30, 2021, long-term stays are their fastest-growing trip length and family trips are their fastest-growing trip type.<sup>19</sup>

Expedia Partner Solutions, a partnership brand of Expedia Group, has also reported on its research of travel trends in the pandemic era. Among its findings:

- Travelers are booking trips closer to home and avoiding long-distance international travel. Travel by car is perceived as safer than flying.
- There is demand for three types of travel: 1) Family leisure trips, driven by the desire for a change of scenery and an opportunity to create family experiences together; 2) Visiting family and friends as a way to minimize risk; and 3) Romantic trips, also for a change of scenery.

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<sup>18</sup> Airbnb, “Airbnb Report on Travel & Living,” May 2021, <https://news.airbnb.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2021/05/Airbnb-Report-on-Travel-Living.pdf>.

<sup>19</sup> Airbnb, “Travel revolution in data,” November 9, 2021, <https://news.airbnb.com/travel-revolution-in-data/>.

- Families are mixing work and play while on vacation. This has become easier as companies have delayed returning to the office and employees have embraced remote work. Zoom and other technologies have allowed people to work from anywhere.
- Consistent to what Airbnb reported, travelers are heading to coastal and rural areas with access to lakes, mountains, and beaches where they can socially distance and enjoy outdoor recreation.<sup>20</sup>

Many of these travel trends seem to be here to stay. Despite the availability of vaccinations, worries about the Delta variant, and then the Omicron variant, continue to influence the travel choices of individuals and families. People are showing greater interest in rural destinations, outdoor recreation, and short-term vacation rentals; VRBO reportedly had its most successful year ever.<sup>21</sup> Beaches and national parks have experienced record levels of visitation. In contrast, international bookings remain far under pre-pandemic levels, as travelers hold off on visiting locations overseas.<sup>22</sup>

Independent research conducted by Destination Analysts in December 2021 indicates that while the Omicron variant has impacted their travel plans, Americans are not completely deterred by the virus. Overall travel sentiment has improved: “Over 30% of American travelers expect to take more leisure trips in 2022 than 2021 and the average American traveler plans to spend \$3,912 on their travel this year. In Q1 of 2022 alone, 46.0% say they will take at least one leisure trip and 11.1% say they will take at least one business trip.” Asked about their highest priorities, the majority of travelers listed spending time with loved ones, enjoying nature, going to new places, and avoiding crowds. Only 21% indicated that staying close to home was a priority. Travel experiences in which there was particularly strong interest among American travelers included enjoying scenic beauty, warm weather outdoor activities, going to beaches, road trips, visiting National Parks, and cuisine and food experiences.<sup>23</sup> Data collected by Destination Analysts a few weeks earlier found that rural communities remained a key destination.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Expedia Partner Solutions, “COVID-19 Travel Trends & Recovery Resources,”

<https://expediapartnersolutions.com/resources/research/report/covid-travel-trends-recovery-resources>.

<sup>21</sup> “U.S. Travelers are Back in the Saddle Again. But They’ve Adapted to a New Reality,” *NPR*, October 9, 2021, <https://www.npr.org/2021/10/09/1036555480/pandemic-travel-industry-tourism-vacations>.

<sup>22</sup> “Fall Travel Trends: Have You Heard of ‘Trip Stacking’? (You Will),” *New York Times*, September 3, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/03/travel/travel-trip-stacking.html>.

<sup>23</sup> Destination Analysts, “Update on American Travel Trends & Sentiment—Week of January 3rd: What’s In Store for Travel in 2022,” January 3, 2022, <https://www.destinationanalysts.com/blog-update-on-american-travel-trends-sentiment-week-of-january-3rd/>.

<sup>24</sup> Destination Analysts, “Update on American Travel Trends & Sentiment—Week of November 29<sup>th</sup>,” November 26, 2021, <https://www.destinationanalysts.com/blog-update-on-american-travel-trends-sentiment-week-of-november-29th/>.

# **APPENDIX E of Hospitality Report:**

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF POTENTIAL HOSPITALITY  
DEVELOPMENT



# ECONOMIC IMPACT OF POTENTIAL HOSPITALITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE TOWN OF WASHINGTON, NY

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## Introduction and Summary of Findings

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The Town of Washington is evaluating changes to its land use regulations related to future hospitality development. As a part of that review, the Town seeks to understand the potential fiscal and economic impacts associated with desired types of hospitality development. Generating additional tax revenue, and new customers for local businesses, are important considerations in determining what new uses might be allowed.

Respondents to a survey conducted in the early months of 2022 generally favored allowing more hospitality development within the Town, with limitations, by a margin of about two to one. Uses favored in the survey included lodging establishments with no more than 20 rooms, and accessory uses such as a bar and restaurant or hosted event venue. Input received during an open house meeting was consistent with these results. These uses can take many forms.

- **Lodging.** Lodging in a range from one to 20 guest units can include short term rentals (often listed through AirBnB or VRBO), guest cottages and cabins, bed and breakfast establishments, and boutique hotels or inns. Combinations are common, as when a bed and breakfast or inn may offer some rooms in the main structure, and have additional cottages on the property.
- **Eating and drinking establishments.** Restaurants may stand alone or be incorporated into the other hospitality uses being contemplated. For example, a farmhouse may be converted to a restaurant while the barn serves an event venue. Less formal arrangements are also possible, such as farm-to-table dining outdoors or under a tent.
- **Event venues.** Event venues can be newly constructed or repurposed buildings such as historic homes, barns, or industrial buildings. They may also be outdoor or tented spaces used seasonally. Weddings and social events are the most common market, with most bookings on weekends in warmer months or around the holidays. Some facilities also pursue a business market for meetings, training session, or retreats, which are more likely to book weekdays.

Without an actual project to test, a likely scenario was prepared for each of the three hospitality types, which was then modeled to examine impacts such as typical investment, rates and patterns of utilization, employment generation and wages, venue revenues and expenditures, and tax generation.

- A 20-room boutique hotel or inn, providing luxury tier accommodations, will have the greatest level of investment along with economic impacts to the Town. The scenario developed for this analysis would have a total investment in excess of \$10 million, with annual revenue of more than \$1.2 million. It would create up to eleven full-time equivalent jobs, generating nearly \$50,000 in annual lodging tax and over \$160,000 in property taxes. The business would be expected to make purchases of \$560,000, some of which could be captured locally.
- A 60-seat full-service restaurant, marketed to upper-income residents and visitors, would be expected to require an initial investment of \$1.6 million. It would employ eleven to 15 people. With sales of close to \$1.1 million, it would generate about \$87,000 in sales taxes and \$27,000 in property tax. It would spend \$450,000 annually on food, supplies, and services, with the potential for some of these purchases to be made from local businesses.
- An event venue would have the least economic impact in terms of direct spending and tax revenue. The total investment for the model project was \$350,000, generating \$6,250 in

property taxes. Facility rentals without catering provided by the same business do not pay a sales tax in New York. Operating only when booked, the business would not be expected to have full-time employees, instead using contract labor as needed. Annual revenues would be \$250,000. Minor purchases of supplies and services could be captured by local businesses.

Hospitality development will impact the Town directly through additional property tax it collects on incremental increases in value, resulting from new investment. It will benefit indirectly as other jurisdictions see a similar increase in property taxes collected, along with sales and lodging taxes. There will be an overall increase in economic activity, with new visitors and spending at local businesses. Costs to the Town will need to be considered on an individual project basis, however, at the small scale that is being considered, there should be negligible need for off-site improvements or public services.

## Market Opportunity

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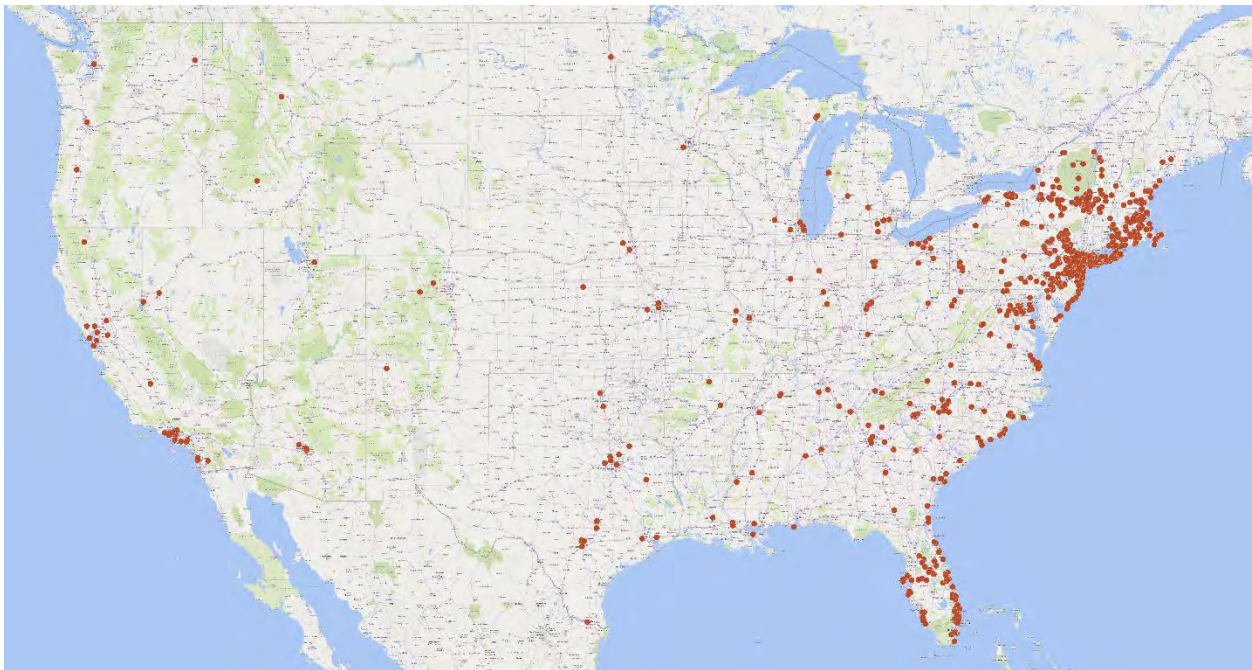
The Town shares in the strong tourist economy within Dutchess County. Millbrook is a quaint village with several tourist-oriented shops and restaurants in its downtown, while businesses like Canoe Hill Market, JSK Cattle Company, Hoofprint Cheese Company, Locust Hill Market, Millbrook Vineyards and Winery, Innisfree Garden, the Cary Institute, and multiple horse boarding farms and riding stables are located within the Town.

### *Visitors to the Town of Washington*

Place Dynamics used mobile device tracking data, obtained from Placer.ai, to examine the Town's tourist market. For the purposes of the analysis, a tourist was defined as a person who is traveling at least 50 miles from their usual home. Data was collected for all of the Town and Millbrook.

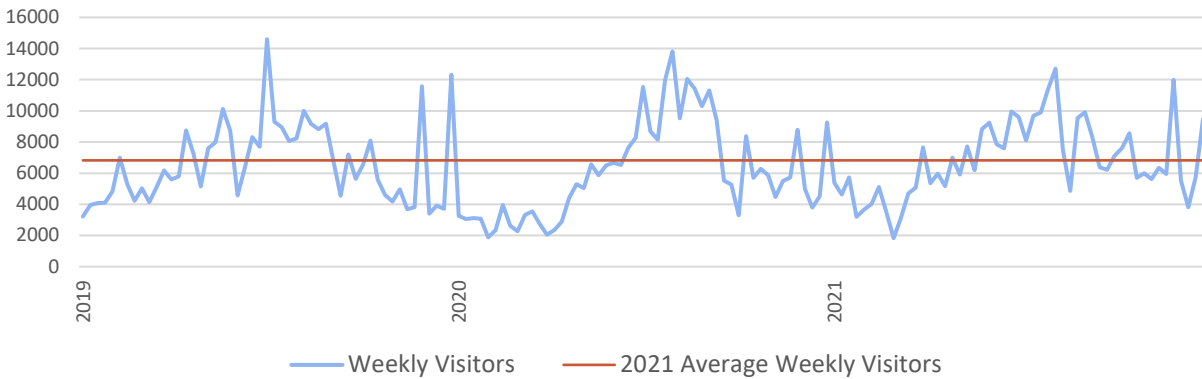
With its proximity to major metropolitan areas like New York City, Albany, New Haven, Hartford, and Springfield, the Town has a very large market within a short drive. About two-thirds (66.3 percent) of visitors are drawn from 50 to 100 miles from the Town, while 19.0 percent originate from a distance of over 250 miles. Although the potential for overnight stays increases with distance traveled, the density of attractions and character of the area will generate overnight stays from people living just a short distance away.

2021 Origins of Visitors to the Town of Washington – Foot Traffic Sample



The Town of Washington had an estimated 347,925 visitors in 2021, or an average of 6,822 per week. Visits are seasonal, however, peaking in summer and again around the holiday season. It is also heaviest on weekends, with Saturday and Sunday accounting for 45.5 percent of total volume, and Friday contributing 17.3 percent.

### Weekly Visitors to Town of Washington



The typical visitor is affluent, with an average household income of \$160,400. About three quarters are white and non-Hispanic, while one in ten is Hispanic. Persons of Asian ethnicity are the next-largest group at about seven percent of the total. About 20 percent of visitor households have children under 18, which is half of the U.S. average.

#### Lodging Sector Overview

Hotel chains favored by the Town’s visitors tend to be upper midscale to upper tier brands. Several other top tier brands (Hilton Grand Vacations, Kimpton Hotels, The Ritz-Carleton, etc.) appear with lower percentages of guests drawn from this population, but that is to be expected as there are also fewer hotels in these chains. Overall, visitors to the Town can afford, and prefer to stay at top quality accommodations.

#### Hotel Brand Preferences Among Visitors to the Town of Washington

HOTEL BRAND	PERCENT	HOTEL BRAND	PERCENT
Hampton Inn	24.6	Holiday Inn	13.0
Courtyard by Marriott	21.9	Holiday Inn Express	13.0
Hilton Hotels & Resorts	19.7	DoubleTree by Hilton	12.6
Hilton Garden Inn	16.7	Best Western	12.5
Marriott Hotels & Resorts	16.6	Westin Hotels & Resorts	12.1
Residence Inn by Marriott	14.7	W Hotels	11.9

In April of 2022, Dutchess County hotels averaged a 70.4 percent occupancy rate with an average daily rate (ADR) of \$127.67. This rate is reflective of the properties reporting data, which tend to be the branded hotels. The county has many small inns and boutique hotels that are often likely to charge higher rates. If their data were available, it would likely skew the average daily rate higher. There are approximately 3,020 rooms in 42 hotels or motels located in Dutchess County, while there are an additional 222 rooms in 38 small inns or bed and breakfast establishments.

There have been 26 short-term rentals listed in Millbrook’s 12545 postal code, in the twelve months ending in April of 2022. Data is only available by postal code, rather than village, town, or county. Occupancy has averaged 49 percent in that time, peaking at 73 percent in July of 2021, with a low of

17 percent in March of 2022. The average daily rate (ADR) ranged from \$230 to \$336, with an average of \$270. Listed rental properties had an average of 2.4 rooms and 5.1 guests per stay.

*Visitor Spending*

Visitors spend well above average on most types of goods and services. Their market potential index for all types of restaurants is 137. The market potential index sets national average expenditures at 100, and values higher than that indicate a greater propensity to spend on the good or service. The market potential for spending on alcohol in bars and restaurants is 149, and it is 167 for entertainment-related fees or admissions. Spending level are also high for retail and service categories often found in tourist destinations, such as apparel, household furnishings, pets, toys and games, and personal care services.

Research conducted on behalf of the Empire State Development Corporation estimates that in 2019 the average domestic traveler to the New York City area (a broad region including outlying areas), spent \$458 per day, with 28.2 percent spent on lodging and 21.9 percent spent on food and beverage (\$129 and \$100 respectively). If these numbers are adjusted for inflation, current spending could be estimated at \$146 for lodging and \$113 for food and beverages.

*Small Events Market*

The Town has an interest in understanding potential impacts of facilities that host events, such as weddings and other banquets, or business and organizational meetings. There are two general event types. Social events include weddings, other family events, and social, military, educational, religious, and fraternal (SMERF) group events. Business events might include corporate retreats, general business meetings, training, and conferences. The greatest spending is often associated with weddings, with 2021 average spending of \$266 per person, and the average event hosting 105 guests, according to the *2021 Real Wedding Survey*, conducted annually by The Knot. Lodging is not included in these averages. Other average expenses that may be captured locally include:

- Venue .....\$10,700
- Photographer .....\$2,500
- Caterer .....\$75 per guest
- Cake.....\$500
- Hair and make-up.....\$250
- DJ.....\$1,400
- Florist .....\$2,300

Business meetings may cost \$70 to \$100 per person for a single-day event, with meetings including an overnight stay in a range from \$400 to \$500 per person per night, including lodging. Overnight stays would require on-site accommodations, so that a facility with only 20 guest rooms would be limited in its ability to host these events. Social events other than weddings will have a cost similar to single-day business events. Examples might include family reunions or holiday parties hosted by individuals or organizations.

## Estimated Impacts

Estimated impacts were based on a representative project for each of the three potential uses. These included a 20-room boutique hotel or inn, a 2,000 square foot restaurant with seating for 60 diners, and a 2,000 square foot hosted event space with capacity for 100 guests. Although each type was assessed individually, there is a potential for a development project to include some combination of these activities. In those cases, the impact could be approximated by combining the estimates.

### *Economic impact of a lodging establishment*

To assess the economic impact of new hotel rooms on the community, the analysis considers the case of a 20-room boutique hotel or inn. This could be developed as part of the adaptive reuse of some structure in the Town, or as new construction. All rooms might be provided within the footprint of a single building, or in a combination of the main building and other structures on the site. Aside from evening receptions or morning breakfast, there will be no food service, and there will be no meeting rooms. The project is designed to attract a higher-income clientele usually staying at a luxury hotel.

- **Project investment.** Several properties are currently listed for sale, of a type that might be considered for a boutique hotel or inn. These include vacant land and historic homes that might be altered to function as an inn, through remodeling and addition, and/or creating additional lodging in cottages or outbuildings on the site. Land costs range from \$10,000 to \$20,000 per acre. Existing historic homes range in price from \$7.5 to \$14.5 million.

A newly-constructed hotel would offer some advantages over renovation, in that it could more easily define public and private spaces, and accommodate large guest suites. The average size for a hotel room in the United States is 325 square feet, while luxury suites average 430 square feet. For the purpose of this analysis, 500 square foot space is used, which would result in a need for 10,000 square feet of space for a 20-room property. Another 20 percent is allocated for reception, lounge, business center, fitness room, offices, maintenance, and other uses. This results in the need for a 12,000 square foot building. The 2022 estimated construction cost for a luxury hotel in New York is \$557 per square foot, which would yield a building cost of \$6,684,000. HVS conducts an annual survey including new construction, and can be used to establish benchmark costs for all aspects of hotel development.

Benchmark and Estimated Project Development Costs per Room

	LAND	BUILDING AND SITE PREP	SOFT COSTS	FF&E	WORKING CAPITAL	DEVELOP. FEES	TOTAL
HVS median cost	\$73,129	\$417,589	\$87,401	\$56,391	\$20,708	\$20,611	\$675,829
Percent of total	11%	63%	14%	9%	3%	1%	100%
Project estimate	\$50,000	\$334,200	\$72,600	\$46,700	\$15,600	\$5,200	\$524,300
Total project cost							\$10,373,400

- **Employment.** Staffing levels will vary based on season and occupancy, as well as the use of contract support (such as for maintenance or laundry services), and characteristics of the property. The following is a general breakout of positions that might be created with a new 20-room boutique hotel.

Estimated Boutique Hotel Staffing

OCCUPATION	NUMBER (FTE)	MEDIAN WAGE
Lodging manager	1	\$76,100
Hotel, motel, and resort desk clerks	3-5	\$32,260
Maids and housekeeping cleaners	3-5	\$34,530

- **Revenue.** Hotel revenue was estimated using an average annual 67 percent occupancy, with a \$250 average daily rate. This rate, nearly double the current rate for all hotel properties, is justified by the property type and level of anticipated quality. With a total of 4,891 room nights, the hotel would be expected to generate \$1,222,750 in annual revenue.
- **Expenditures.** Expenditures will vary greatly based on characteristics of the property and its financing. The following estimates are prepared using industry benchmarks based on data for all U.S. hotels. Labor costs average 21 percent of hotel revenue, with the higher figure here reflecting the comparatively small number of rooms provided. Portions of the labor expense, such as desk clerks, are a somewhat fixed cost usually spread out over more than 20 rooms.

Estimated Boutique Hotel Expenditures

COST CATEGORY	BENCHMARK	ESTIMATE
Direct costs	6%	\$73,400
Labor costs	28%	\$343,200
Other indirect costs	46%	\$562,500
Operating margin	20%	\$244,500

A hotel of this size can be expected to contract for multiple services that a larger hotel may internalize. Examples include laundry services, maintenance and landscaping, marketing (including support such as graphic design and web design), accounting, and other business services.

- **Tax generation.** The modeled boutique hotel or inn will pay two primary forms of local tax; a property tax and a lodging tax. The lodging tax is currently set at 4.0 percent, payable to the county. Based on the projected revenue, the hotel would be expected to generate \$48,900 in lodging taxes. With an assessed value of \$7,684,000, and assuming a location in the



Millbrook CSD, the annual property taxes collected (0.2084 per \$1,000) would be about \$160,000.

*Economic impact of a restaurant*

Estimates of potential impacts related to restaurant development are based on a hypothetical 2,000 square foot full-service restaurant with seating for 60 diners. This is a type and scale of restaurant that might easily be housed in a retrofitted farmhouse or barn, or newly-constructed building.

Many formats could be considered, ranging from casual or family dining to fine dining, or concepts such as farm-to-table menus, a brewpub, tavern, or bakery-deli. There would also be an opportunity for patio or lawn seating during warmer months, and an innovative operator could be expected to take advantage of a rural setting to offer unique experiences such as themed dinners or live entertainment on an outdoor stage. To keep the analysis simple, and more conservative in its assessment of the impacts of restaurant development, enhancements such as these are not considered.

- **Project investment.** Development costs to build new or retrofit an existing structure are likely similar, as acquisition and retrofitting existing space will require significant updates, and possibly the construction of an addition for a commercial kitchen. New construction will allow a more efficient design, while an existing historic structure could create marketing appeal.

Nationally, the median cost to open a restaurant is about \$450 per square foot, but varies widely based on location, concept, size, design, and other considerations. That figure is an average of both leased and purchased or constructed spaces. Restaurants that lease space will have a lower startup cost, but leasing is probably not an option in the Town. In the eastern United States, the cost to construct a single story commercial building ranges from \$301 to \$361 per square foot, with costs in the Hudson Valley expected to be higher as it is a rural location likely to need additional site work. An estimate for a restaurant in the Town might look as follows.

Estimated Restaurant Startup Costs

COST CATEGORY	BENCHMARK	ESTIMATE
Land	Three to five acre site	\$500,000
Building and site work	Construction at \$400 per square foot	\$800,000
Kitchen	Equipment, ventilation, plumbing, etc.	\$80,000
Furniture, fixtures, equipment	Tables, plating, POS, tech	\$90,000
Soft costs	Design, permits, professional services	\$80,000
Working capital	Initial supplies, expenses, contingency	\$50,000
Total		\$1,600,000

- **Employment.** Staffing patterns will depend on the meals for which a restaurant is open. The hypothetical restaurant modeled here is expected to be open for lunch and dinner service,

seven days per week. Restaurant staffing often includes a large number of part-time employees. The numbers here reflect full-time equivalent positions.

Estimated Restaurant Staffing

OCCUPATION	NUMBER (FTE)	MEDIAN WAGE
Food service manager	1	\$71,480
Chefs and head cooks	1	\$56,030
First-line supervisors, food prep.	1	\$42,200
Cooks, restaurant	3-5	\$33,980
Waiters and waitresses	5-7	\$33,920

- **Revenue.** The median restaurant has sales of \$325 per square foot, with those in the upper quartile achieving an average of \$535 per square foot. The Town’s market has an affluent customer profile, with above-average spending on food away from home. It can be expected that a new restaurant in a rural setting will cater to this market, resulting in sales higher than the median. The figure for the upper quartile was used, resulting in estimated annual revenue of \$1,070,000. The estimated revenue works out to sales of \$17,833 per seat, compared to an average of \$15,667 for all restaurants in the top quartile.
- **Expenditures.** Estimated expenses for the hypothetical restaurant correspond to national benchmark figures, with the exception that labor costs are shown to be higher than normal, based on required staffing.

Estimated Restaurant Expenditures

COST CATEGORY	BENCHMARK	ESTIMATE
Occupancy costs	10%	\$100,000
Labor costs	30%	\$441,250
Cost of goods sold	30%	\$300,000
Operating costs	15%	\$150,000
Operating margin	15%	\$78,750

The hypothetical restaurant shows a relatively low operating margin, but assumes that it will hire a manager and lead chef. In practice, many restaurants are managed by the owner, or even combined chef/owner, so that these salary expenses can increase the operating margin.

- **Tax Revenue.** Local governments will receive both a sales tax and a property tax from new restaurants in the Town. Dutchess County taxes sales at a rate of 8.125 percent, resulting in expected sales taxes totaling \$86,900. Using the same property tax rate as used for a hotel

(0.2084 per \$1,000), restaurant property assessed at \$1,300,000 would be expected to generate \$27,000 in annual property taxes.

### *Economic impact of a hosted event space*

It has become a very common practice for rural property owners to build or convert existing spaces to rent as event spaces. One of the most common approaches has been to convert barns to host mostly social events like weddings and family events. A typical barn may have 1,000 to 2,000 square feet of usable space, and offer a unique environment for 100 to 200 guests. Most have very seasonal bookings and tend to operate only on weekends. A small number of operators will also pursue the market for corporate meetings and retreats.

The example developed for this analysis assumes a property owner in the Town chooses to convert a 30-foot by 50-foot (1,500 square foot) barn into an event center. The barn will have the ability to seat 100 guests with a dance floor, or up to 125 with no dance floor. A 500 square foot addition would be needed to provide a catering kitchen, restrooms, and changing room.

- **Project investment.** Because the property is already owned, there are no acquisition costs. Development costs include renovations to the existing barn, construction of the addition with restrooms and a catering kitchen (intended for basic preparation and warming, not cooking), and site work such as parking and landscaping. These costs are estimated at \$300,000, with an additional \$50,000 spent on furniture and fixtures, supplies, marketing, professional services, insurance, and other costs. The total initial investment comes to \$350,000.
- **Employment.** Facilities of this type usually do not have full-time employees. Business administration functions, and even event activities are often performed by the owner. Temporary help may be used for preparation, service, and clean-up. The owner commonly only provides the venue and furnishings, while the event organizer independently contracts for services such as catering and entertainment.

Temporary help is estimated at two persons each working 16 hours for each event, at a rate of \$15 per hour. These individuals will be responsible for preparing, maintaining, and cleaning up the facility. Meal service will be provided by the caterer. For a total of 50 events, annual payroll will total \$24,000.

- **Revenue.** Most similar venues book the majority of their events on weekend days between April and October, with the potential for additional bookings around the holiday season. Comparably simple event spaces in the Hudson Valley are charging \$2,500 to \$7,500 per day, with pricing depending on day, season, and the number of guests. More elaborate facilities in the area are charging as much as \$20,000 per day.

The proposed facility is expected to host 50 events through the year, with most scheduled on Saturdays and Sundays in warmer months. The average facility rental fee is \$5,000, with total revenue of \$250,000.

- **Expenditures.** Because a facility of this type is not operated on a fixed schedule, and tends to have no employees aside from the owner, its expenses are related to occupancy costs, overhead, and contracted labor. Debt service and utilities are the main occupancy costs. Overhead will include some professional services, maintenance services, marketing, and insurance. Costs for supplies and labor will be directly tied to the number of events booked.

- **Tax Revenue.** Tax revenues directly generated for representative development project will be limited to property taxes. In New York State, when a separate caterer is hired to serve the event, the banquet facility rental is not taxed. Services provided by the caterer are taxed. If both the room and catering are provided by the same entity, both the room and the catering are taxed. Property taxes paid on a \$300,000 improvement to the property will be about \$6,250.








# **APPENDIX F of Hospitality Report:**

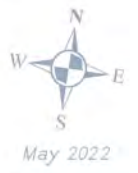
MAPPING OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

# Town of Washington

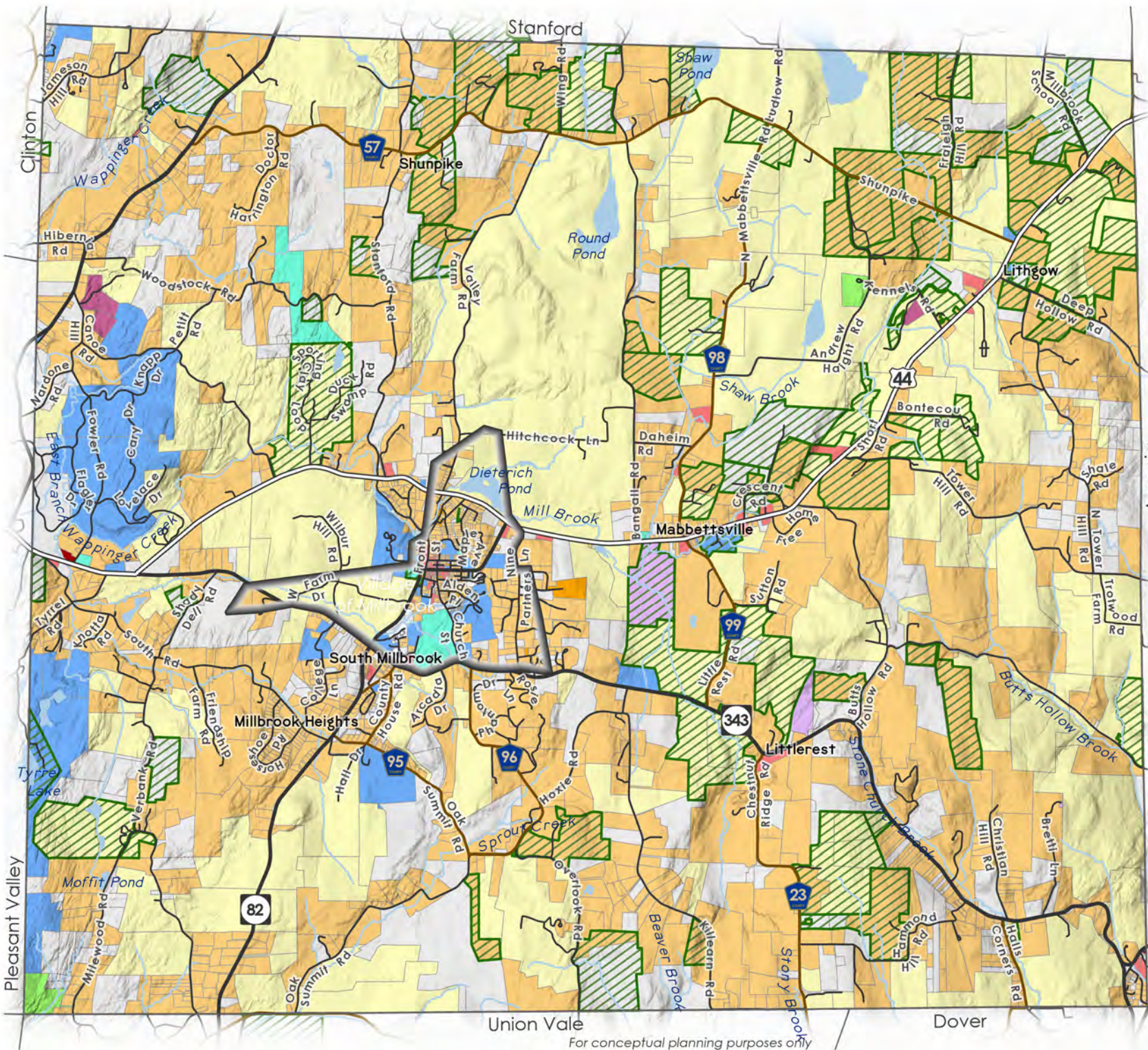
## Dutchess County, NY

### Land Use

-  Village of Millbrook
-  Conserved Land
-  Rivers and Streams
-  Surface Water
- Property Classification**
-  Agricultural
-  Residential
-  Apartments
-  Commercial
-  Motels and Inns
-  Recreation
-  Community Services
-  Industrial
-  Public Services
-  Private Forest
-  Vacant



Prepared by  
**Upstate GIS**  
 Community Planning and Environmental Associates

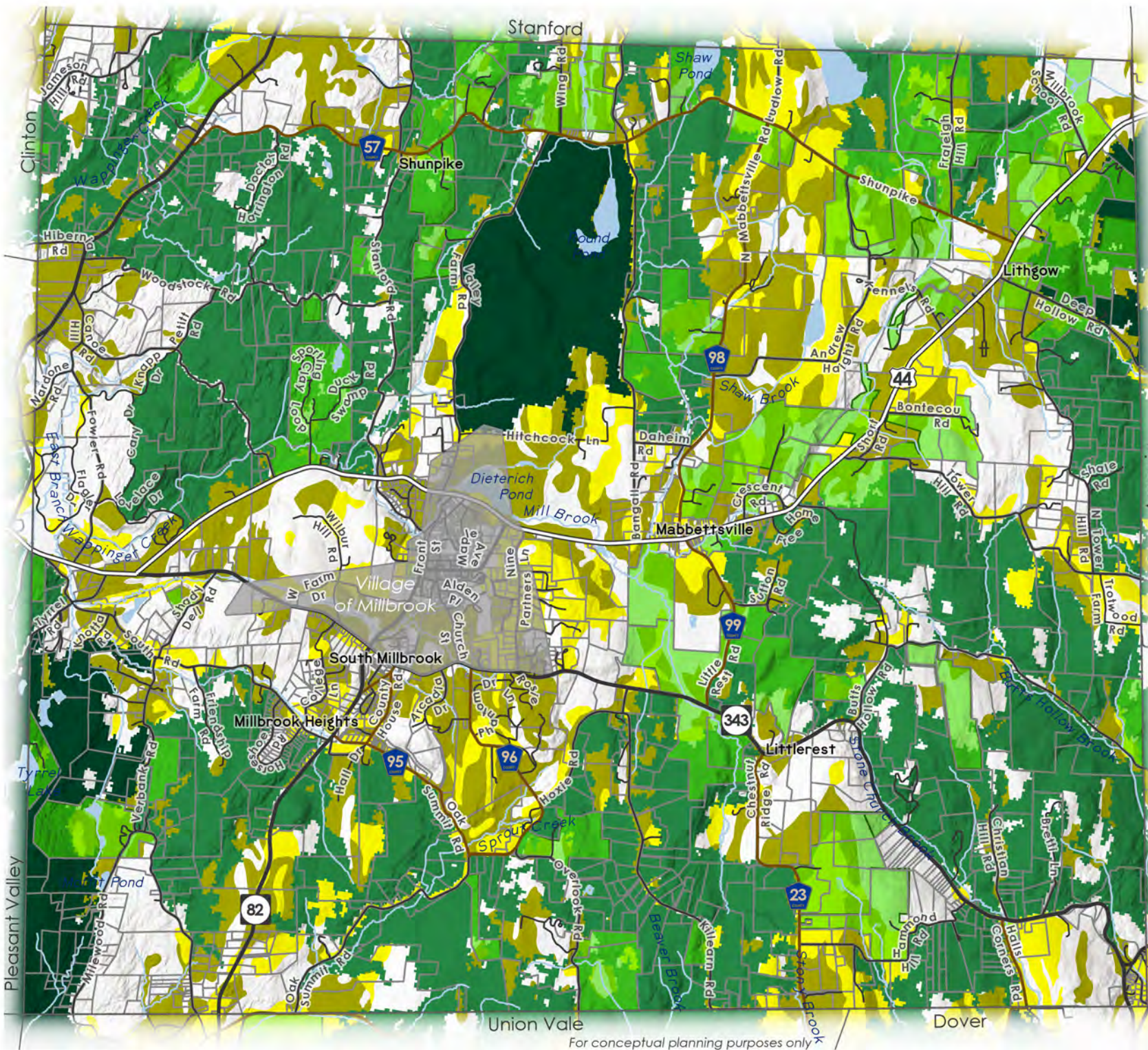


For conceptual planning purposes only

# Town of Washington

Dutchess County, NY

## Agricultural and Forest Resources



- Tax Parcels
- Village of Millbrook
- Conserved Land
- Rivers and Streams
- Surface Water
- Prime Farmland Soil
- Farmland Soil of Statewide Importance
- Hudson River Estuary Program (HREP) Top 60% Forests
- HREP Top 10% Forests



For conceptual planning purposes only




# Town of Washington

Dutchess County, NY

## Aquifers

-  Tax Parcels
-  Village of Millbrook
-  Conserved Land
-  Rivers and Streams
-  Surface Water

## Aquifer Protection Areas

-  Zone 1: Permeable deposits directly overlying the aquifer
-  Zone 2: Less permeable deposits located upgradient from the aquifer
-  Zone 3: Contribute to a stream which may subsequently be induced to contribute to the aquifer through infiltration

Amenia

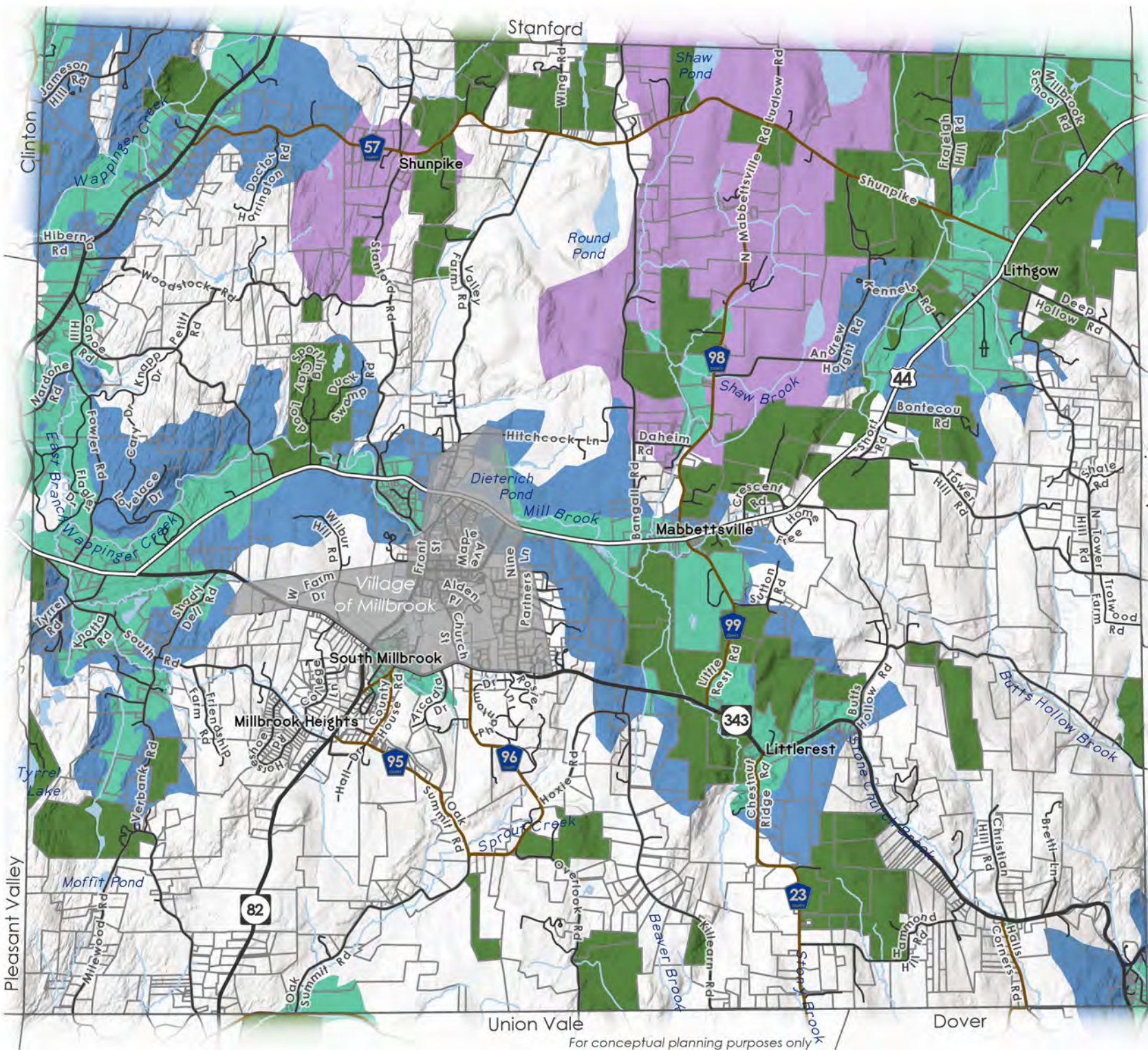


May 2022

Prepared for



Prepared by



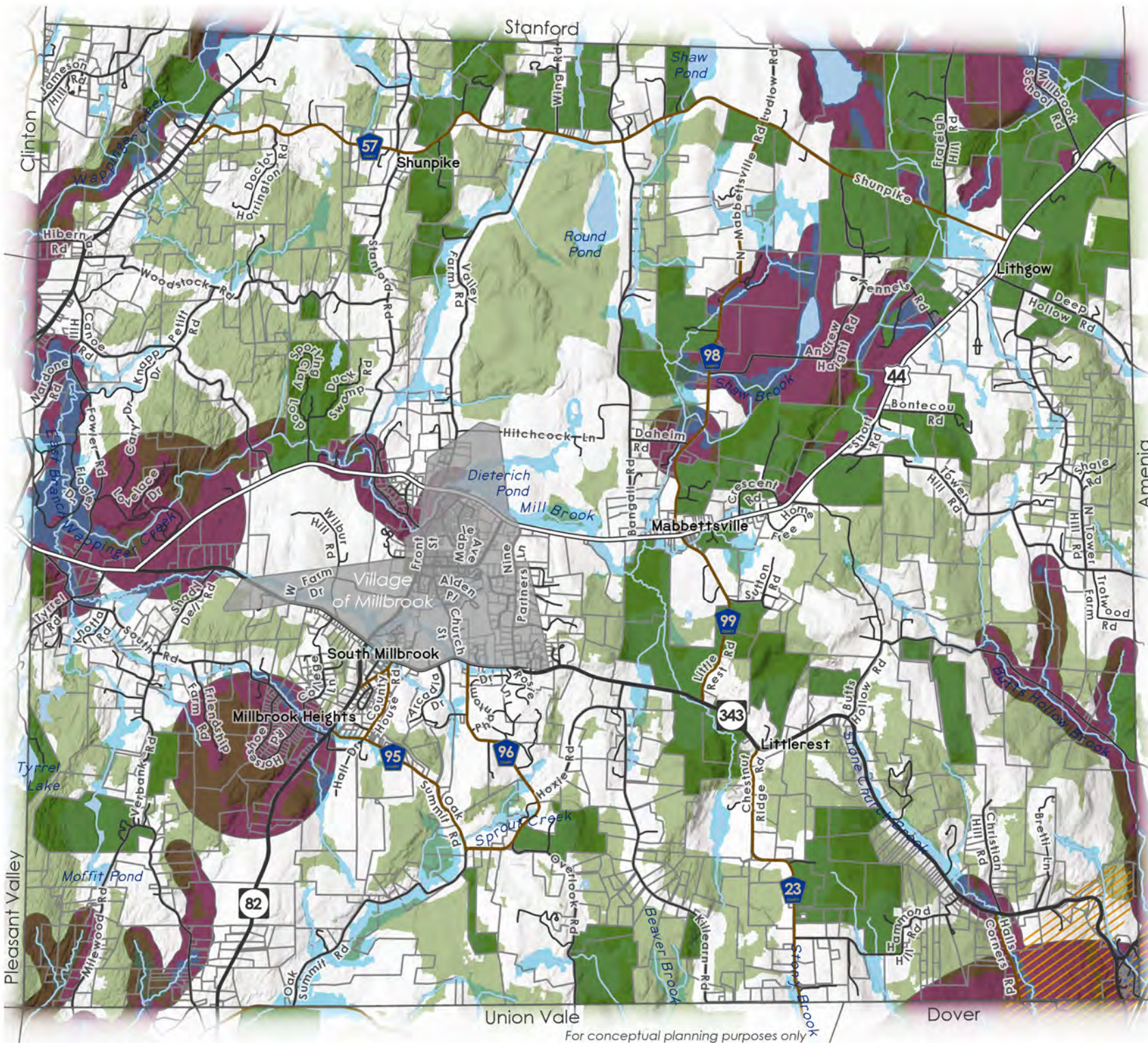
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# Town of Washington

Dutchess County, NY

## Habitat Resources



- Tax Parcels
- Village of Millbrook
- Conserved Land
- Rivers and Streams
- Surface Water
- Significant Biodiversity Areas
- Important Areas for Rare Species
- Riparian Buffers
- Core Forest Areas



Prepared by  
**Upstate GIS** Community Planning and Environmental Associates

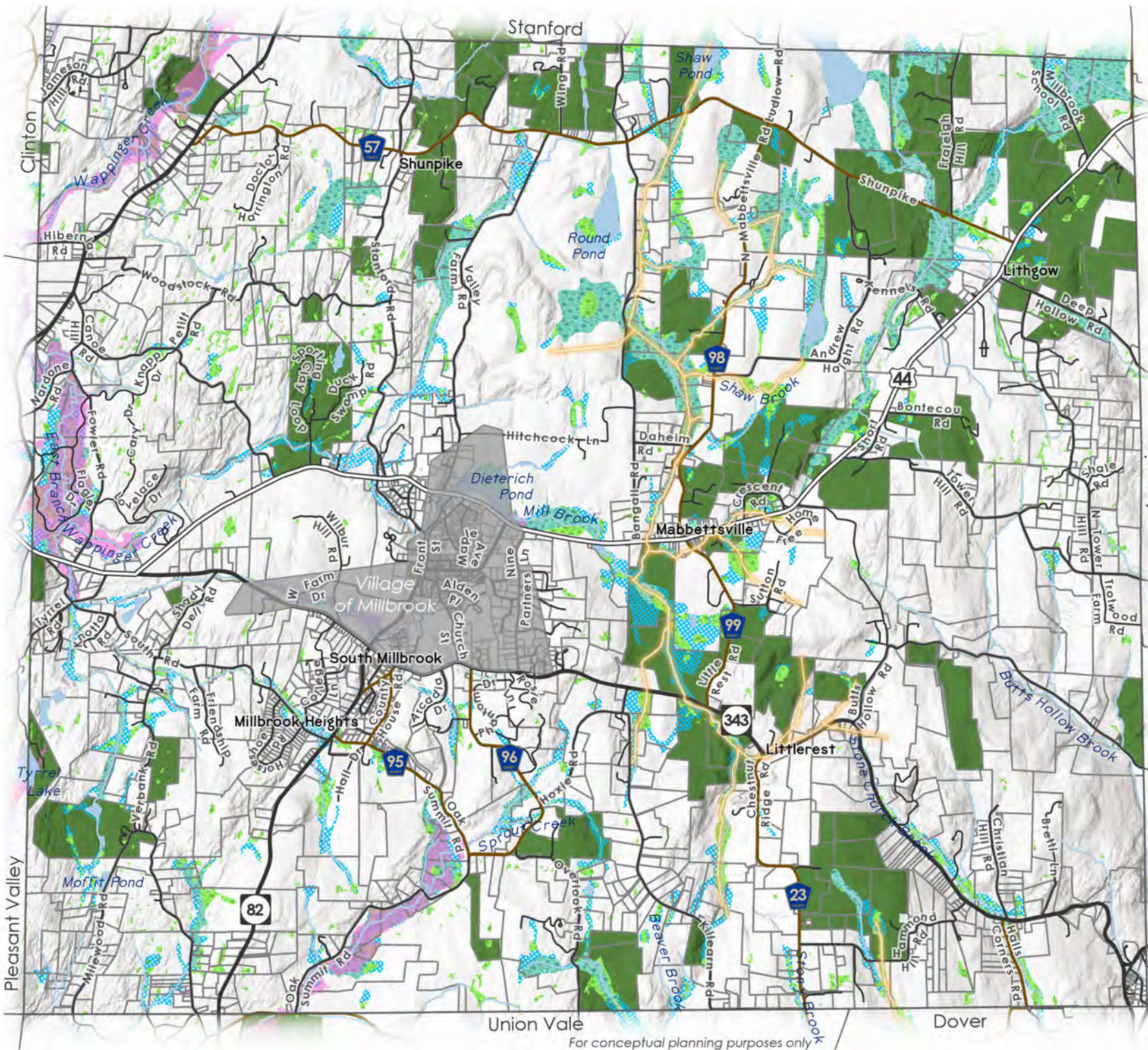


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# Town of Washington

Dutchess County, NY

## Water Resources



- Tax Parcels
- Village of Millbrook
- Conserved Land
- DEC Class A Streams
- Rivers and Streams
- Surface Water
- Flood Hazard Areas
- NYSDEC Regulated Wetlands
- USFWS NWI Wetlands
- Hydric Soils

Amenia



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# Town of Washington

Dutchess County, NY

## Resource Layers

- Tax Parcels
- Village of Millbrook
- Conserved Land
- DEC Class A Streams
- Rivers and Streams
- Surface Water
- Non Buildable Land\*

## Resource Layers

- High Overlap
- No Overlap

\*Non Buildable: Wetlands and watercourses, slopes exceeding twenty percent (20%), and flood hazard areas as mapped on the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map



May 2022

Prepared for



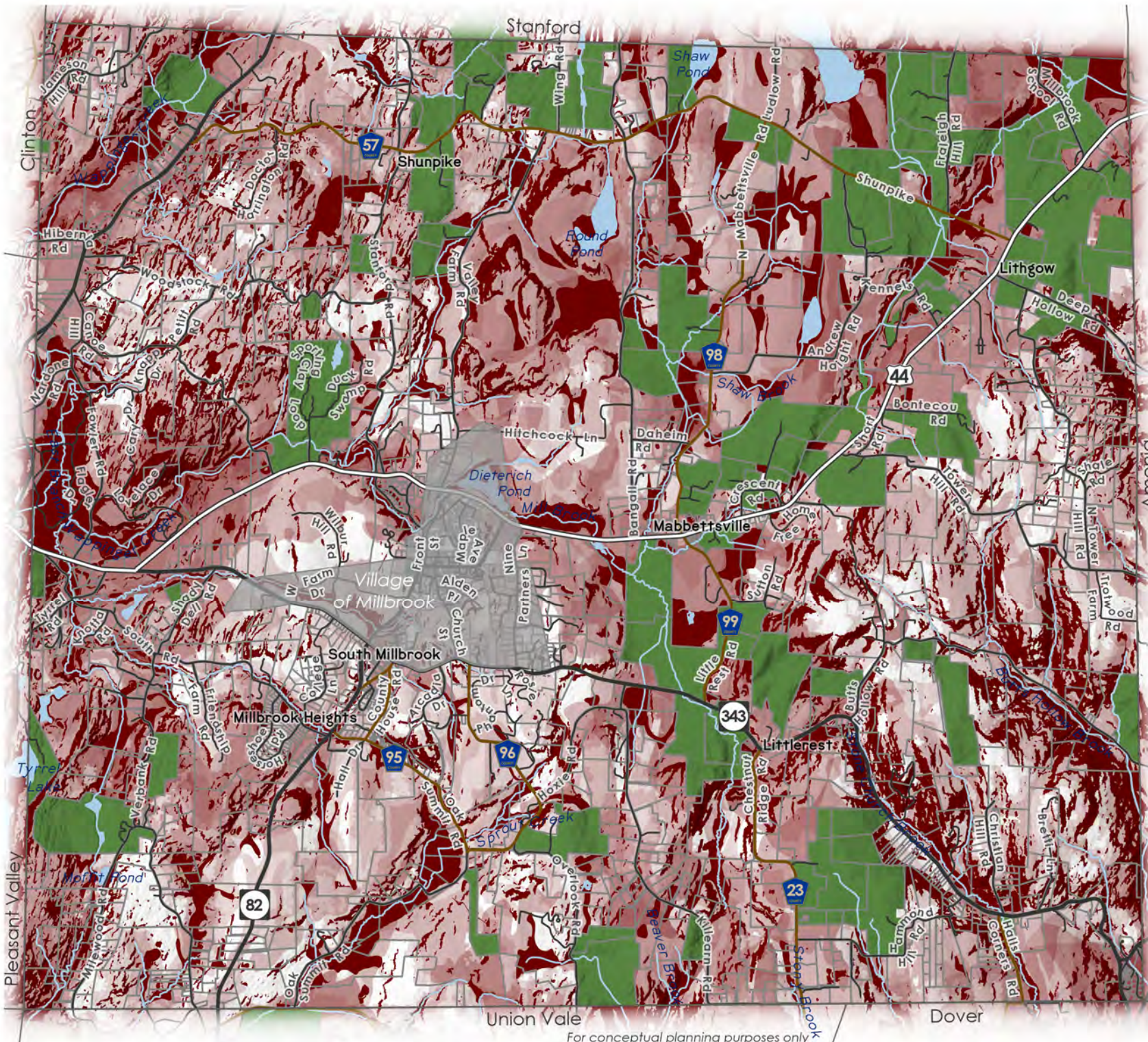
Town of Washington

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Community  
Planning and  
Environmental  
Associates

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# **APPENDIX G of Hospitality Report:**

MAPPING OF EXISTING TRAFFIC VOLUMES

# Town of Washington

Dutchess County, NY

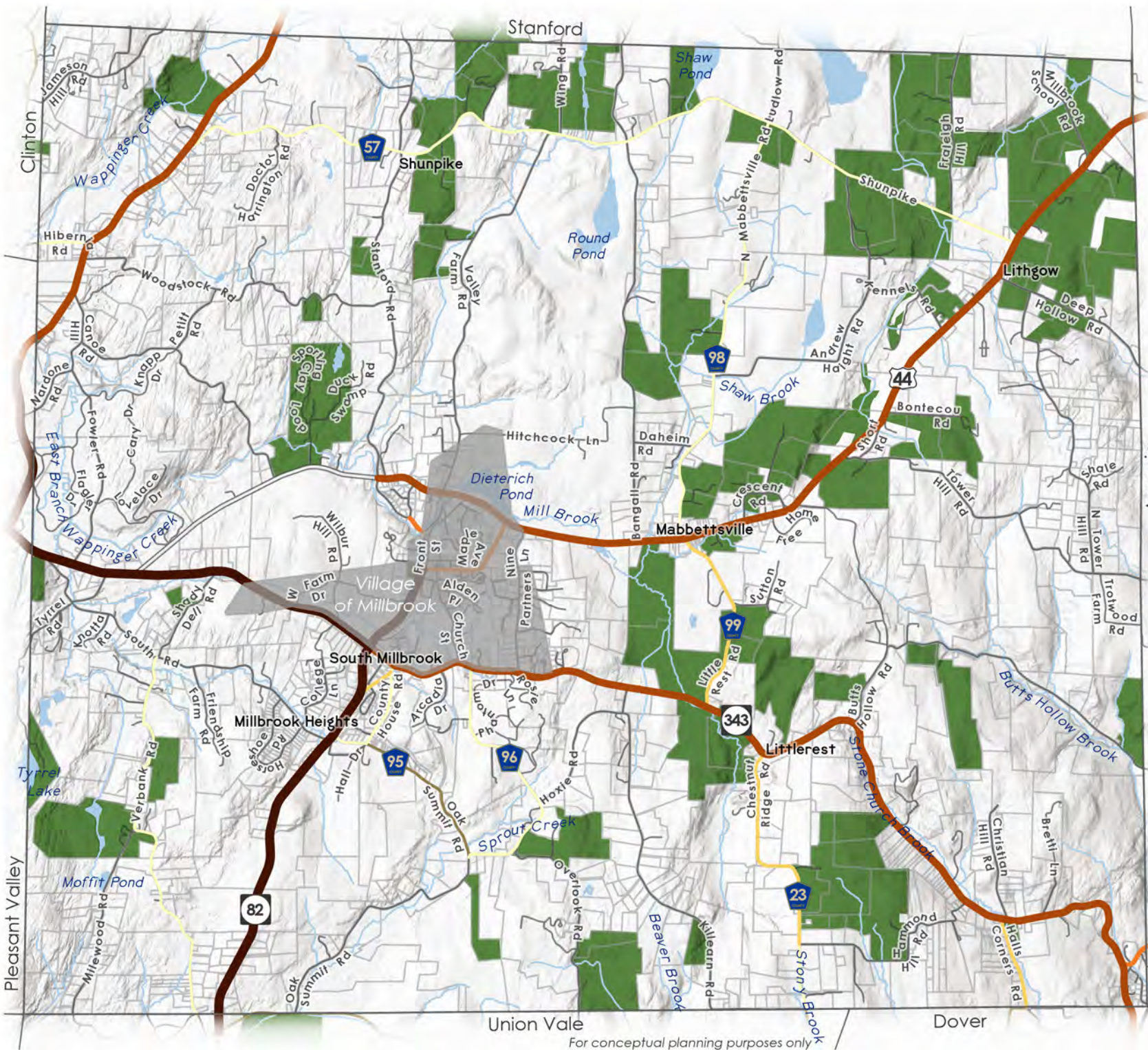
## Traffic Volume

- Tax Parcels
  - Village of Millbrook
  - Conserved Land
  - Rivers and Streams
  - Surface Water
- Annual average daily traffic (AADT)**
- 4,001 - 11,000
  - 2,501 - 4,000
  - 1,001 - 2,500
  - 500 - 1,000
  - 224 - 500

Amenia



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**APPENDIX H of  
Hospitality  
Report:**

MAPPING OF VIEWSHEDS

# Town of Washington

Dutchess County, NY

## Viewsheds and Buildable Land

-  Tax Parcels
-  Village of Millbrook
-  Conserved Land
-  Rivers and Streams
-  Surface Water
-  Scenic Roads
-  Buildable Land\*
-  Buildable Land within Viewshed of Scenic Roads

\*BUILDABLE LAND: That portion of a lot exclusive of all wetlands and watercourses, slopes exceeding twenty percent (20%), and flood hazard areas as mapped on the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map



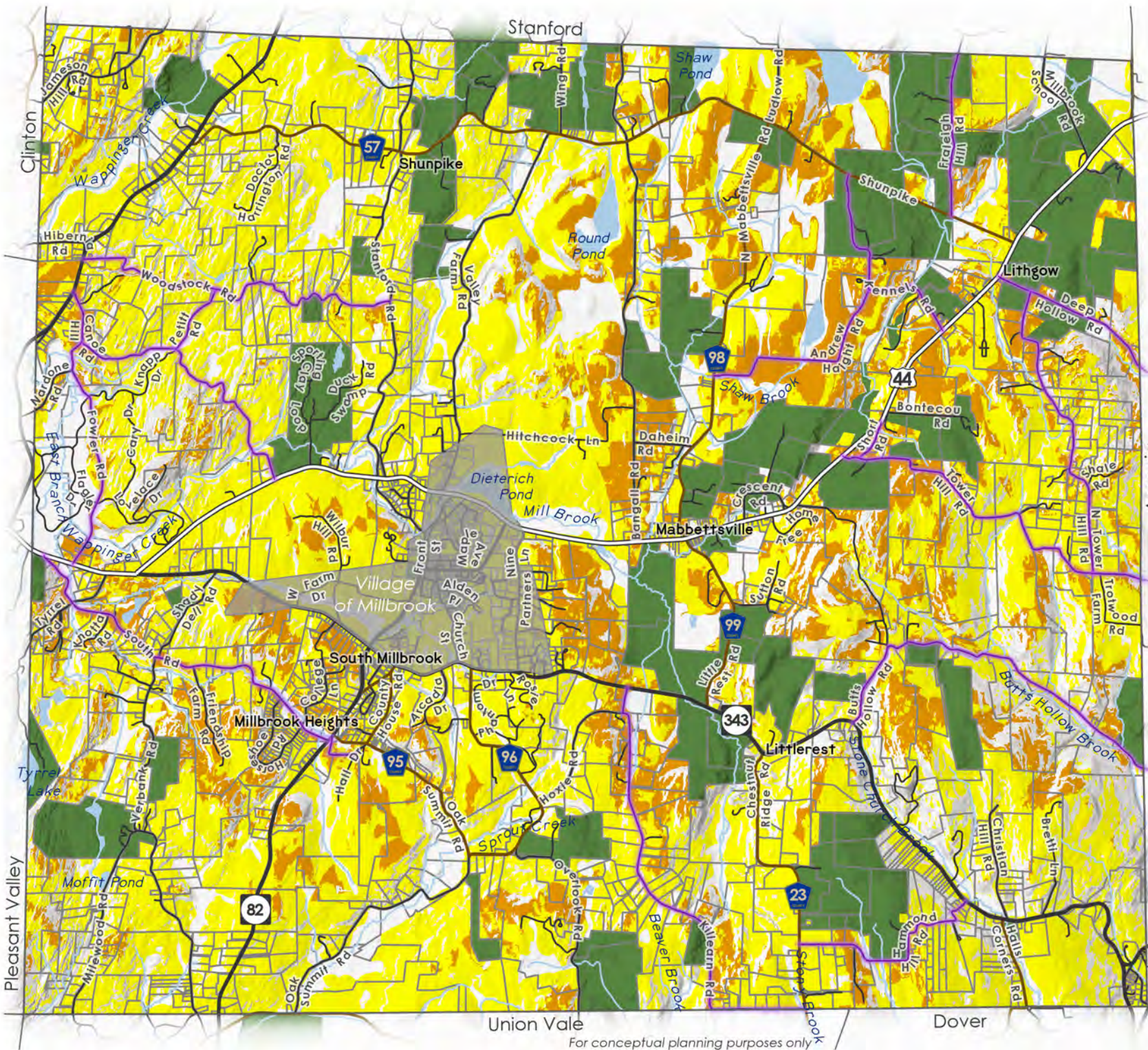
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# **APPENDIX I of Hospitality Report:**

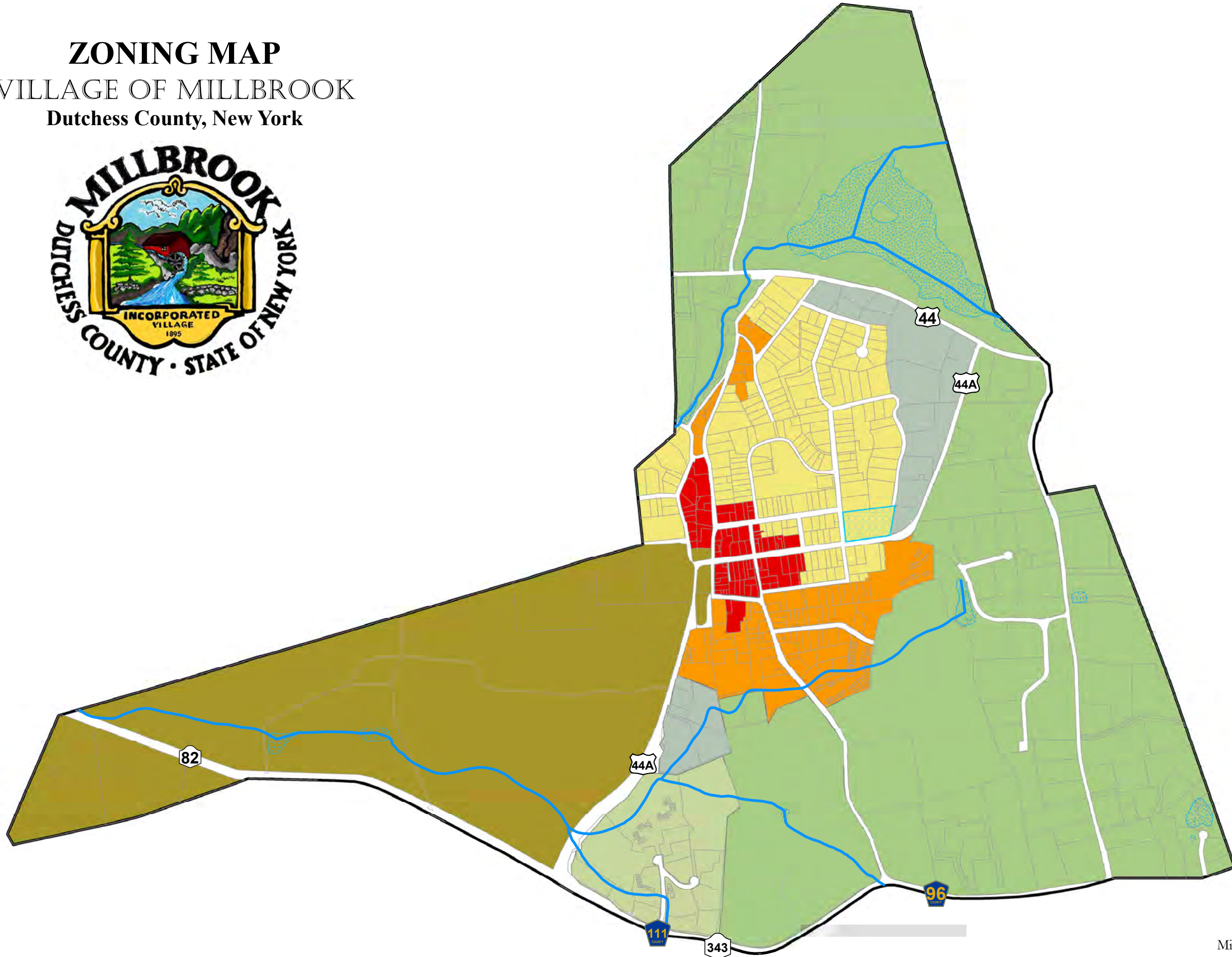
MILLBROOK VILLAGE ZONING MAP



# ZONING MAP

## VILLAGE OF MILLBROOK

Dutchess County, New York



### Legend

- MAJOR STREAMS
- SIGNIFICANT WATERBODIES
- PARCEL BOUNDARIES
- MUNICIPAL BOUNDARIES
- Zoning Districts**
- BCD, BENNETT COLLEGE DISTRICT
- GB, GENERAL BUSINESS
- R, RESIDENTIAL
- RLD, RESIDENTIAL LOW-DENSITY
- RMF, MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- RT, TRANSITIONAL RESIDENTIAL
- RU, RURAL
- THORNE CENTER OVERLAY ZONE

Map Prepared By Dutchess County  
Department of Planning and Development  
October, 2020

Zoning District boundaries are enacted by the Municipalities. These maps are based on information supplied by the Municipalities, per agreement with Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development. Zoning district lines are updated at the pleasure of the Municipality. Check with local municipal officials for most recent boundary delineations.

