

TOWN OF CORNWALL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2025

TOWN OF CORNWALL,
ORANGE COUNTY, NEW YORK



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ADOPTED: _____

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Comprehensive Plan Purpose and Authority

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

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

B. Why Update Now?

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

C. Public Participation and Input

Public participation played a central role in developing the 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update. Building on the 2019 Plan, this update was shaped through an extensive community engagement process, spanning several months and designed to ensure that residents, businesses, and civic organizations had meaningful opportunities to contribute their ideas and priorities.

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

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

Community Survey

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

Visioning Workshops and other Public Forums

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

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

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

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

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

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

Integration with NY Forward & Regional Plans

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

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

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

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

Public Hearing & Adoption

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

Town of Cornwall Comprehensive Plan Vision Statement

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

Key objectives of the Plan are as follows:

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

II. SOCIO ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

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

A. Population Profile

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

Table II- 1: Population, 2000-2023

Year	Town of Cornwall (including the Village)	Village of Cornwall-on-Hudson	Orange County
2000	12,307	3,064	341,367
2010	12,646	3,018	372,813
2020	12,884	3075	401,310
2023	12,801	3,046	407,470

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

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

Table II- 2: Age Distribution within the Town

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

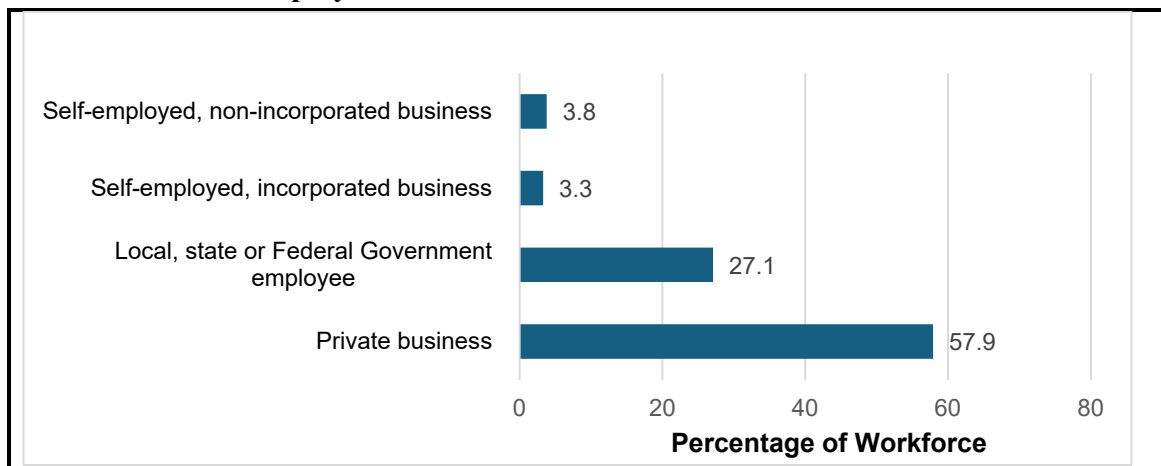
Source: 2023 American Community Survey

Table II- 3: Civilian Workforce Distribution by Industry

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

Source: 2023 American Community Survey

Table II-4: Town Employment Breakdown



Source: 2023 American Community Survey

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

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

Table II-5: Household Income Data

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

Source: 2023 American Community Survey

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

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

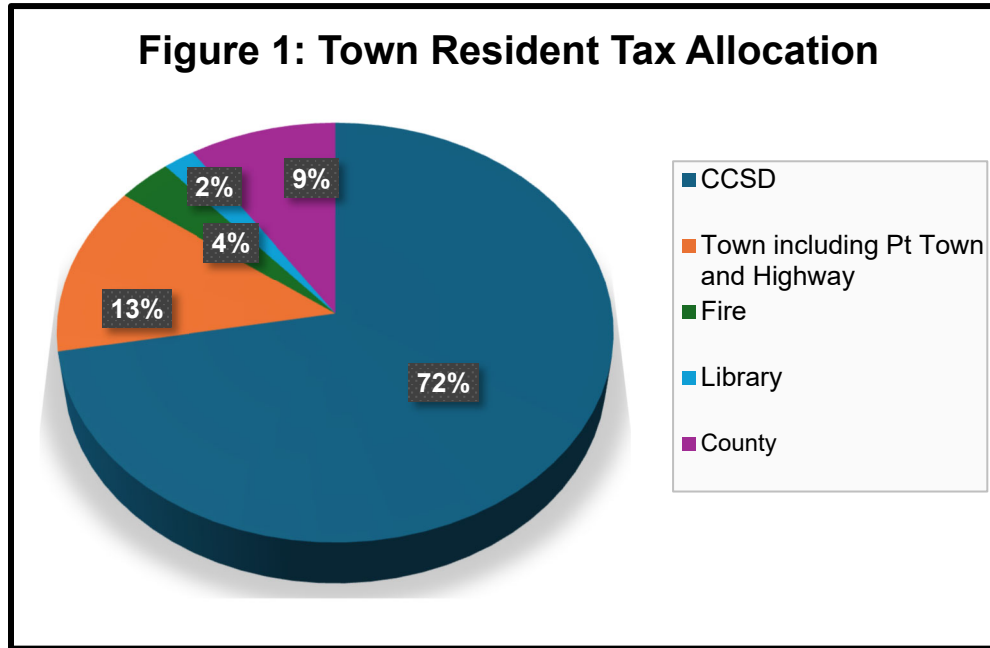
Income information alone does not paint a complete picture of the financial well-being of the Town’s residents without considering household expenses. Per the 2023 American Communities Survey, the Town has 5,366 housing units, 76% of which are owner occupied and 78% are single family, detached dwellings.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

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

B. Local Tax Allocation

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

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



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

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

III. CULTURAL, HISTORIC AND OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

A. Cultural and Historic Resources

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



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

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

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

Annual community events such as July 4th festivities including parades, games, rides, activities and fireworks, a Fall Festival, the RiverFest in Cornwall-on-Hudson, and other seasonal activities

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

promote community engagement and a deep sense of identity. The Town and Village are fortunate to have active groups of organizers, who give generously of their time and skills to conduct these events.

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

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

B. Open Space and Conservation

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

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

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

² Prepared in 2023 by the Orange County Department of Planning

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

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

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

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

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

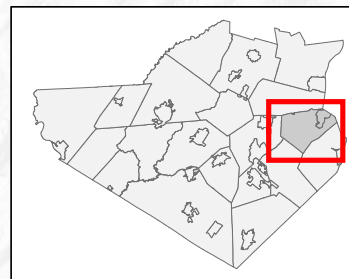
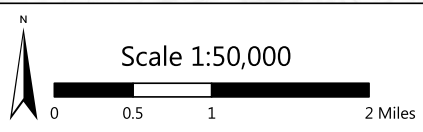
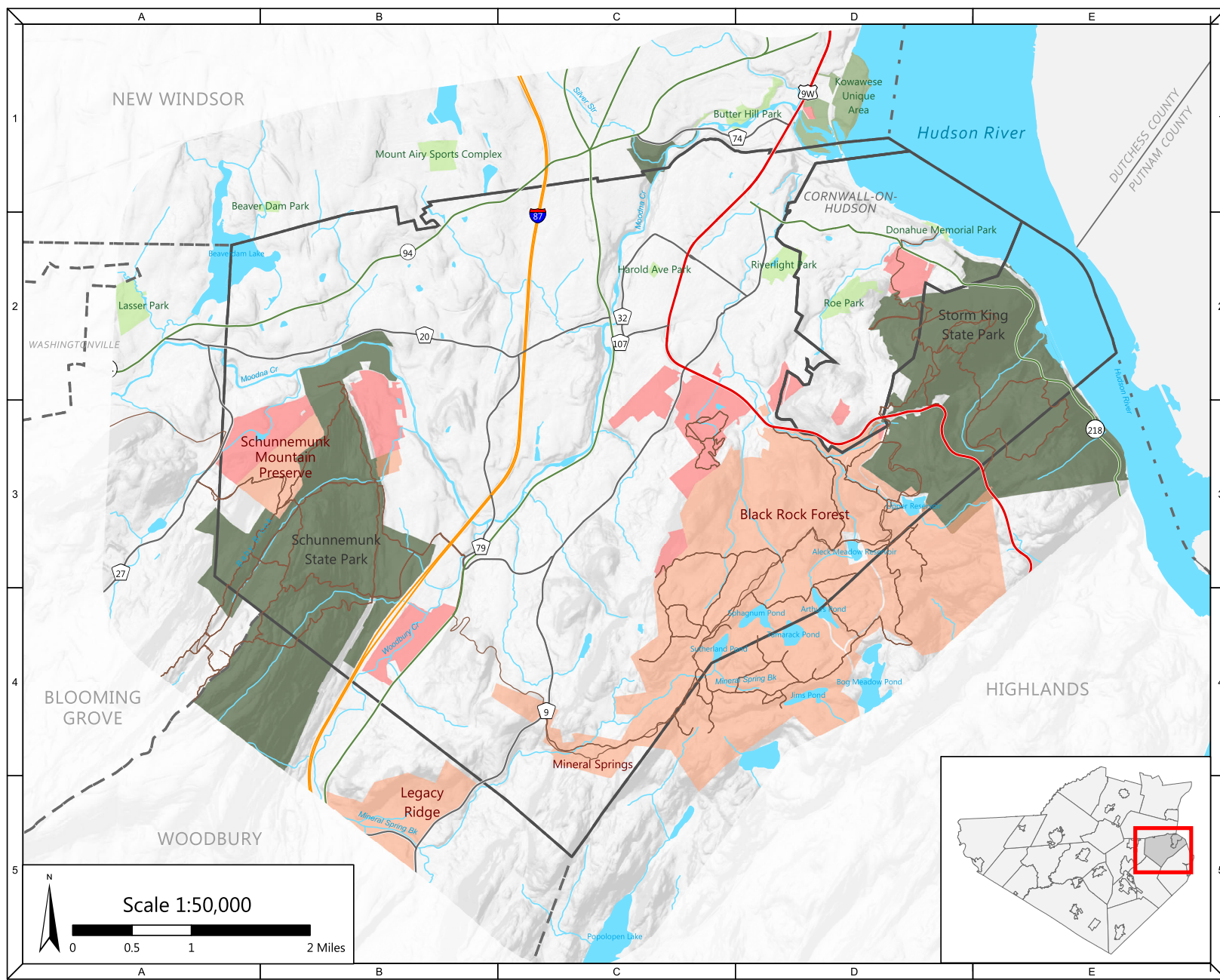
³ Partially in the Town of Highlands

NATURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY
Protected Open Space

- Protected Areas**
- Municipal Park
 - County Park
 - State Park
 - Public Nature Preserves
 - Conservation Easements

- Hydrology**
- Streams
 - Water Bodies

- Roads**
- Interstate
 - Federal Highway
 - State Route
 - County Road
 - Hiking and Walking Trails



DATA SOURCES: New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation, 2017; United States Geological Survey, 2017; New York State Dept. of Transportation, 2017; Orange County Dept. of Planning, 2018

Creating Natural Resources Inventories (NRIs) in Orange County Communities is a partnership project between OCWA and Cornell University Department of Natural Resources, with funding from the Environmental Protection Fund through the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Hudson River Estuary Program.

Orange County Department of Planning
 B. Freiman 6/19/2018

The Orange County Water Authority and the County of Orange make no warranty whatsoever as to the accuracy or completeness of any information depicted on this map. Data depicted here may have been developed in cooperation with other County departments, as well as other Federal, State and Local government agencies. The County of Orange hereby disclaims liability for any loss or damage resulting from the use of the information and/or representations contained herein.



C. Agricultural Lands

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

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

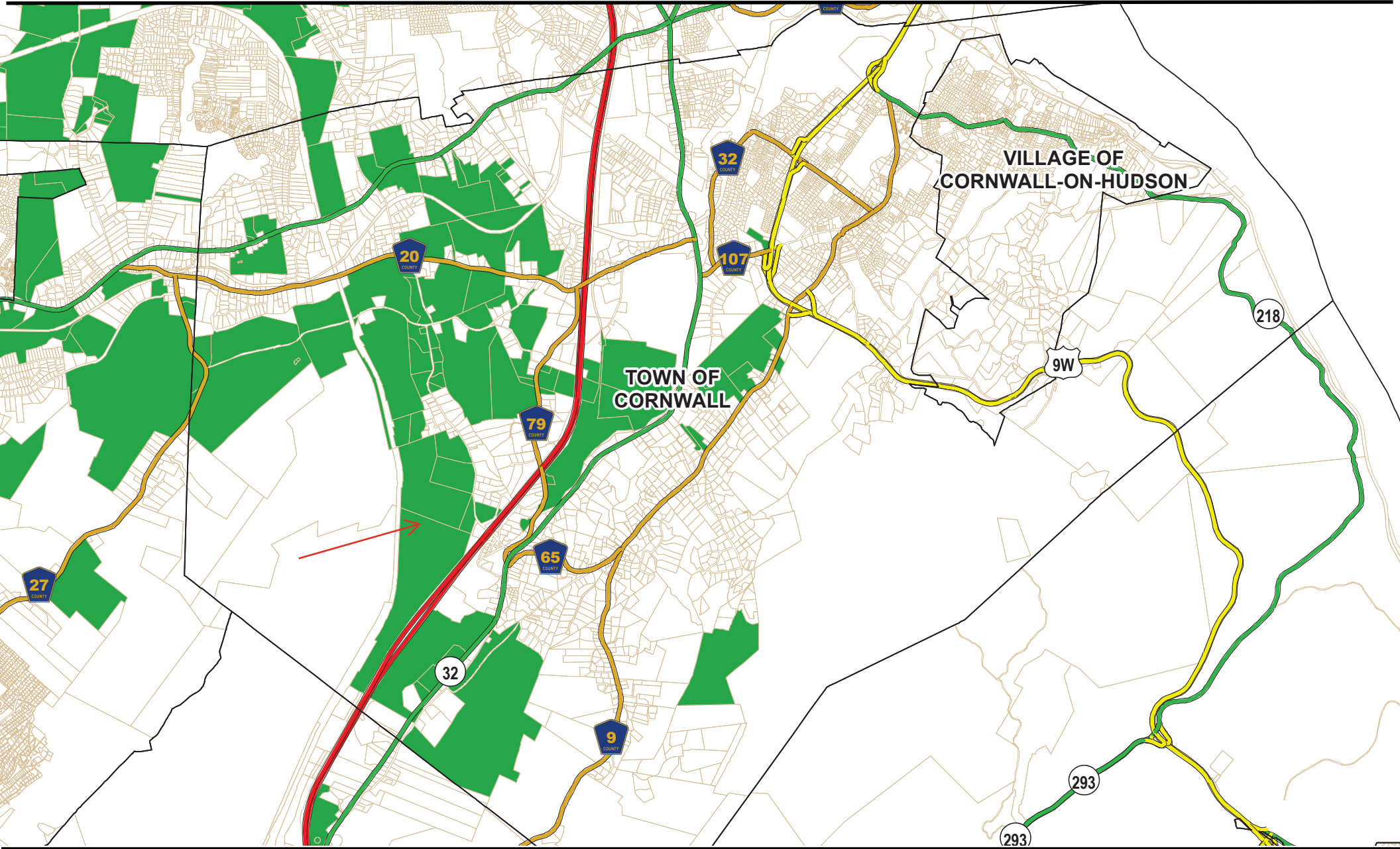
- **Maintain** and **Protect** the Town's cultural and historic resources and pursue future opportunities for preservation grants when available;
- **Promote** these important resources both locally and regionally in order to attract visitors and generate economic development opportunities.


E. Recommendations:

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

Figure 3: County Agricultural District Parcels, 2020

Data Source: OCGIS



 Parcels within Orange County Ag District #1

<https://cornwallny.gov/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=sAFUL3jnVLA%3d&portalid=13>. The map could be modernized with new clearer photos and made more user friendly with addresses or converted to mobile-friendly format. The walking tour could also be expanded to a driving tour with additional properties outside of the Main Street area; Jones Farm, the Moodna Viaduct, waterfront and other historical properties in the Town.

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



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

- Improve informational and directional signage, with unified branding, in order to help direct visitors to cultural and open space resources as well as appropriate parking locations, trail or bikeway connections and local businesses.
- Continue to encourage the permanent preservation of agricultural properties through cooperation with private preservation organizations and ensure Town Zoning and other policies are consistent with NYS Agriculture and Markets Laws.

IV. MAIN STREET REVITALIZATION

A. Existing Conditions

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

B. Zoning

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

C. Parking

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

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

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

D. Goals for the Main Street / Downtown business district

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

E. Recommendations

- The Zoning Code should establish parameters for Planning Board review of architectural design of commercial projects along Main Street to ensure new projects and significant redevelopments are consistent with the character of the area and incorporate pedestrian design features such as large front display windows and location of parking to the rear or side of a building.
- Encourage mixed-use structures, with commercial development on the ground floor and residential apartments above, to increase housing options in the corridor. Currently, zoning only allows two units above commercial development. The town should remove this limitation in favor of a minimum floor area, so the number of apartments is based on the overall size of the building footprint.
- Ensure a broad and contemporary mix of uses and accessory uses are permitted in the zone. Consider including a "catch-all" provision in the GC Zone to allow uses, which may not be contemplated at this time, but which are similar to those currently permitted in the zone.
- When a business intends to open in an existing building with no exterior site changes, consider allowing a waiver of the Site Plan approval process in order to expedite new business development on Main Street. The appropriateness of such a waiver could be reviewed at a technical work session.
- Review zoning requirements for parking to ensure they are consistent with the character of a modern business district and not encouraging excessive pavement.
- Review means of parking enforcement along Main Street in order to ensure cars are not parked all day in spaces intended for stop-in business.
- The GC Zoning requirements should be amended to ensure setbacks are consistent with the character of the existing area. The minimum front setback requirement and floor area ratio should be removed from Use Group B and maximum building coverage be increased.
- Provide for defined, hardscape connections so that pedestrians, including those with mobility challenges, can safely navigate from the Hospital to the Village boundary.

- Coordination with Coach USA for a potential bus stop at Cornwall Plaza or Montefiore - St. Luke's Cornwall Hospital to benefit commuters and attract additional visitors to the Town.
- Continue to support and/or host downtown events to bring people downtown on nights and weekends such as art walks.
- Strengthen and enforce property management laws to improve the overall look of Main Street.

V. ZONING AND LAND USE

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

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

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

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

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

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

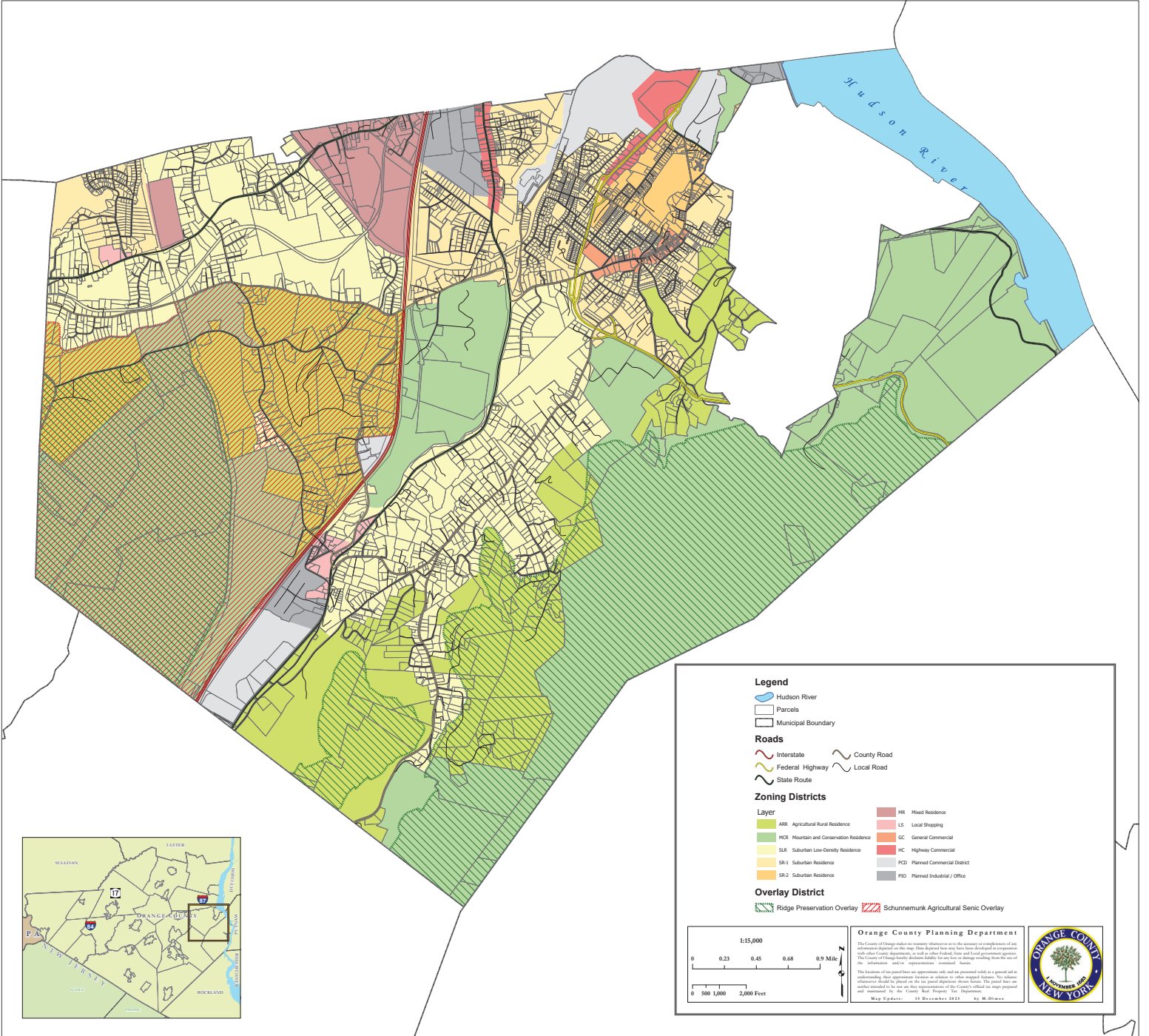
Uses permitted in the **ARR District** include agricultural operations, timber harvesting, public parks and playgrounds, outdoor recreation with no structures and operated at no charge (excluding operation of recreational vehicles), essential services, outdoor recreation including golf course, tennis courts, swimming pools, etc., wind turbines, bed and breakfast residences,

Town of Cornwall

Orange County, New York

OFFICIAL ZONING MAP

Date of Last Amendment: LL#2 of 2023, adopted TBA



Legend

- Hudson River
- Parcels
- Municipal Boundary

Roads

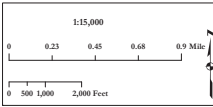
- Interstate
- Federal Highway
- State Route
- County Road
- Local Road

Zoning Districts

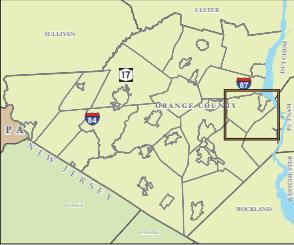
- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| ARB Agricultural Rural Residence | MR Mixed Residence |
| MCR Mountain and Conservation Residence | LS Local Shopping |
| SRA Suburban Low-Density Residence | GC General Commercial |
| SR1 Suburban Residence | HC Highway Commercial |
| SR2 Suburban Residence | PCD Planned Commercial District |
| | PDI Planned Industrial / Office |

Overlay District

- Ridge Preservation Overlay
- Schunemunk Agricultural Senic Overlay



Orange County Planning Department
 The County of Orange makes no warranty, absolute or as to the accuracy or completeness of the information depicted on this map. This department has not been developed in cooperation with other County departments, as well as other Federal, State and local government agencies. The County of Orange makes no representation or warranty for use for any purpose not intended by the information and/or representation furnished herein.
 The location of the parcel lines are approximate only and are presented solely as a general aid in understanding their approximate location in relation to other mapped features. No absolute accuracy should be placed on the parcel boundaries shown. Some parcel data are not shown to be used as any representation of the County's official tax maps prepared and maintained by the County Real Property Tax Department.
 Map Update: 11 December 2023 by M. Olmos



bed and breakfast inns, animal kennels, veterinary clinics, stables and riding academies, places of worship, cemeteries, radio and public communication towers, museums, and single family dwellings on a minimum of three acres.

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

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

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

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

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

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

dwellings, two-family dwellings, townhouses, and multi-family developments subject to special use permits.

- *Local/ Small Business*: This land use category is for small, local retail and service uses, restaurants, and gas stations located outside of Main Street, but generally intended for a local market and customer base. These areas are located along major commercial highway corridors such as State Routes 9W, 94 and 32 and zoned Local Shopping (**LS**) or Highway Commercial (**HC**). The LS Zone permits such commercial uses as offices, retail stores, dry-cleaners, personal services, shops for service of household appliances, restaurants, gas stations, bed and breakfast, social halls, health clubs and day care centers. While the HC Zone permits the uses allowed in LS, as well as auto repair and sales, funeral parlors, laundromats, earth operations, outdoor recreation, schools, discotheques/cabaret/ live entertainment, contractor yards, pawn shops carnivals/amusement parks, shopping centers, fast food/drive-in restaurants, light manufacturing, commercial [indoor] recreation and warehouses as an accessory to an office use. The LS District permits one apartment in a building above commercial uses while the HC zone permits two apartment units above commercial.

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

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

Uses permitted in the PCD Zone include agricultural operations, laboratories or offices for product testing and research, light manufacturing, offices, bed and breakfast (in existing structures), day care centers, planned industrial parks, printing plants, manufacturing and industrial processing, communication towers and places of worship. It is noted that portions of the PCD Zone are currently developed with New York Military Academy (NYMA) campus. The PIO Zone includes most of the above uses as well as fraternal, social halls and catering facilities, sale of automotive supplies and equipment, schools of special instruction, commercial forestry, earth operations (without onsite processing), wind turbines, animal kennels/ veterinaries, contractor or building supply yards, planned industrial parks, printing plants, manufacturing and industrial processing, communication towers and places of worship.

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

B. Goals for residentially zoned areas

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

C. Goals for commercially zoned areas

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

D. Recommendations

- Expand opportunities for accessory apartments within single-family homes or accessory structures, where the character of the structure can be maintained.
- Create a lot line realignment procedure for common applications seeking to adjust lot lines between property owners where no new development is proposed.
- Expand opportunities for apartments in the HC Zone by removing the limitation on the total number of apartments above commercial uses.
- Allow private outdoor recreation uses in the SLR Zone (currently only allowed in ARR) on lots of at least five acres, and expand the definition to include a broad range of uses such as driving ranges, field/turf sports/cross-fit, paintball, obstacle/ropes courses and similar uses. It is further recommended that Section 158-21O, be expanded from just health clubs to all outdoor recreation and include landscaped buffer requirements and limited hours of outdoor operation in residential areas.
- Expand opportunities for Bed and Breakfast Inns where utilities are adequate and lot size is adequate to buffer such uses from neighboring residences.

- Define special permit criteria for warehouses and other large industrial uses which include overall building size restrictions, design guidelines, and larger setbacks to protect surrounding residential properties.
- Revise special permit criteria for multi-family developments to include setback, development coverage, building height, design, suitable access and other requirements to ensure compatibility with surrounding land uses.
- Non-residential and multi-family uses in residentially zoned areas should be reviewed carefully by the Planning Board to evaluate the potential for land use conflicts. The zoning should incorporate buffer requirements and limitations on outdoor lighting, speaker systems and limit excessive pavement/ parking areas in residential areas.
- Permit a range of residential and mixed-use development options in the PCD Zone in a planned neighborhood design that emphasizes connectivity, protection of environmental resources and buffers to adjoining neighborhoods.
- Remove the NYMA campus property (tax lot 9-1-25.3), from the PCD Zone and rezone this property to HC, where schools are permitted, to encourage this property to remain a boarding school campus and encourage its enhancement and redevelopment. Revise the zoning to allow a range of accessory uses such as dormitories for students and staff, museums, dining halls, auditoriums and athletic facilities should be permitted in the zone. It is acknowledged that many, if not all of these facilities are currently provided on the site but are not currently permitted under zoning
- Combine the LS and HC Zones into a single Highway Commercial Zone given their similarity.
- Review the list of permitted uses in the HC Zone and add additional setbacks for special permit uses where they may abut residential uses.
- Create a definition for “farm” which is consistent with the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets definition. Expand permitted accessory uses to include ‘you-pick’ events, hayrides, retail sale of farm products, drying or processing of farm products ie; making cheese, jam, yarn, honey, wine/beer, bees wax candles or any similar uses to promote and support agricultural uses. Additional ag-supportive uses such as tasting rooms, farm dinners, catered event space should also be permitted by special permit of the Planning Board to ensure adequate access. utilities and protection of neighboring properties.
- Expand landscaping requirements in the zoning code for commercial developments including requirements for internal parking lot landscaping.
- Revise the Town’s Tree Preservation Law and Clearing and Grading Permit to provide clear instances of when approval is required before tree removal occurs.

VI. NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

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

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

A. Forests and Tree Preservation

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

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

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

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

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

B. Mountains, Ridges and Steep Slopes

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

These steeply sloped areas also provide hiking opportunities and the scenic backdrop that contributes to Cornwall’s unique character and generates eco-tourism. Steep slopes and cliffs can also form microclimates that can support unique and rare specimens of plants and animals⁴.

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

C. Water Resources Protection

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

⁴ Cornwall NRI, 2019

Cornwall flow into the Hudson River via the Moodna Creek and its tidal marsh⁵. Many of these streams are associated with freshwater or tidal wetlands, and mapped flood zones.

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

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

Wetlands

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



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

⁵ Cornwall NRI, 2019

Floodplains

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

Riparian Areas

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

Groundwater

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

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

D. Wildlife Habitat

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

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

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

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

E. Goals for natural resources and environmental conservation

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

F. Recommendations

- The Town should continue its preservation efforts in coordination with the Town's CAC and other local preservation organizations.
- Improve and enhance landscaping regulations, particularly in large parking areas and between developed areas and surface water resources.
- Encourage the use of pervious pavement where appropriate.

- Avoid clear cutting of trees and preserve mature trees on development sites. Encourage the planting of new trees where appropriate and feasible.
- Require vegetated setbacks along streams to protect the stream's riparian area and water quality.
- Improve public education regarding illicit discharges, turbid stormwater and water conservation on the Town's website and through the Town's CAC and building department.
- Limit or prohibit outdoor storage of chemicals, fertilizers and fuel, vehicle or machinery repair or other activities over or, in the immediate vicinity of the Town's aquifers and water courses.
- Reduce light pollution and off-site glare by requiring dark-sky friendly lighting including downward-facing, full cut-off light fixtures and light dimming or motion sensor requirements for overnight hours.

VII. SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE RESILIENCY

A. Overview

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

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

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

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

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

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

B. Goals for Sustainability and Climate Resiliency

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

C. Recommendations

Land Use and Green Infrastructure

- **Promote Smart Growth Principles:** Encourage compact, mixed-use development where infrastructure is available, and discourage development in floodplains to reduce exposure to climate hazards.
- **Conserve Natural Areas:** Protect and restore ecosystems such as wetlands, streams, floodplains, and forests which provide essential functions like floodwater absorption, shoreline stabilization, and carbon sequestration.
- **Protect the Tree Canopy:** Review landscaping requirements to increase tree canopy coverage, particularly in parking lots and along stream corridors and wetlands.

Infrastructure and Building Resiliency

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

Clean Energy and Greenhouse Gas Reduction

- Continue to pursue Climate Smart Community (CSC) certification: CSC is a New York State program that helps local governments take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate. The program offers grants, leadership recognition, and free technical assistance for making improvements that can save money

for municipalities. (additional information regarding the NYS Climate Smart Communities Program can be found here: <https://climatesmart.ny.gov/>).

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

VIII. COMMUNITY SERVICES

A. Existing Conditions

Police

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

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

Fire Protection

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

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

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

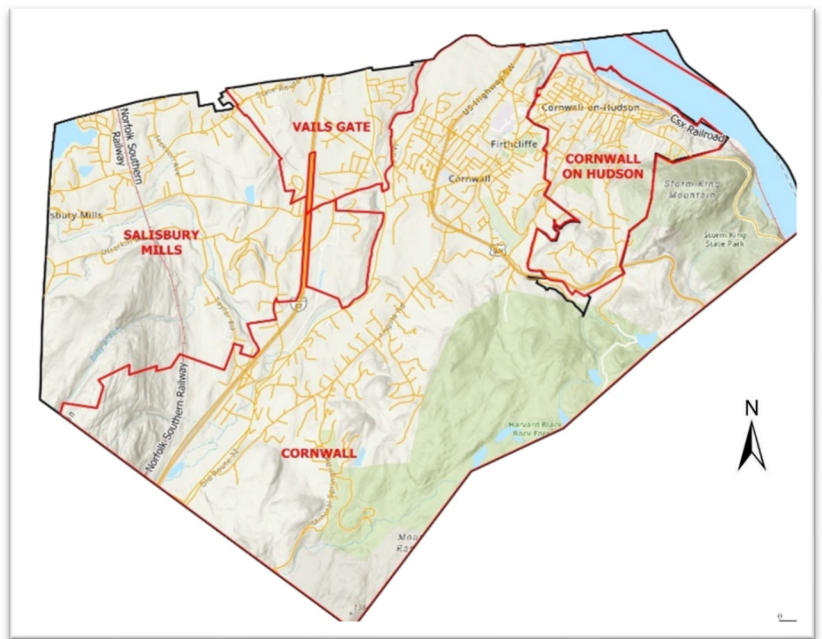


Figure 5: Fire Districts in the Town of Cornwall.

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

Ambulance Service

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

Cornwall Public Library

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

Public Schools

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

Table VIII-1: Cornwall Central School District Enrollment Trends

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

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

Transportation Network

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

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

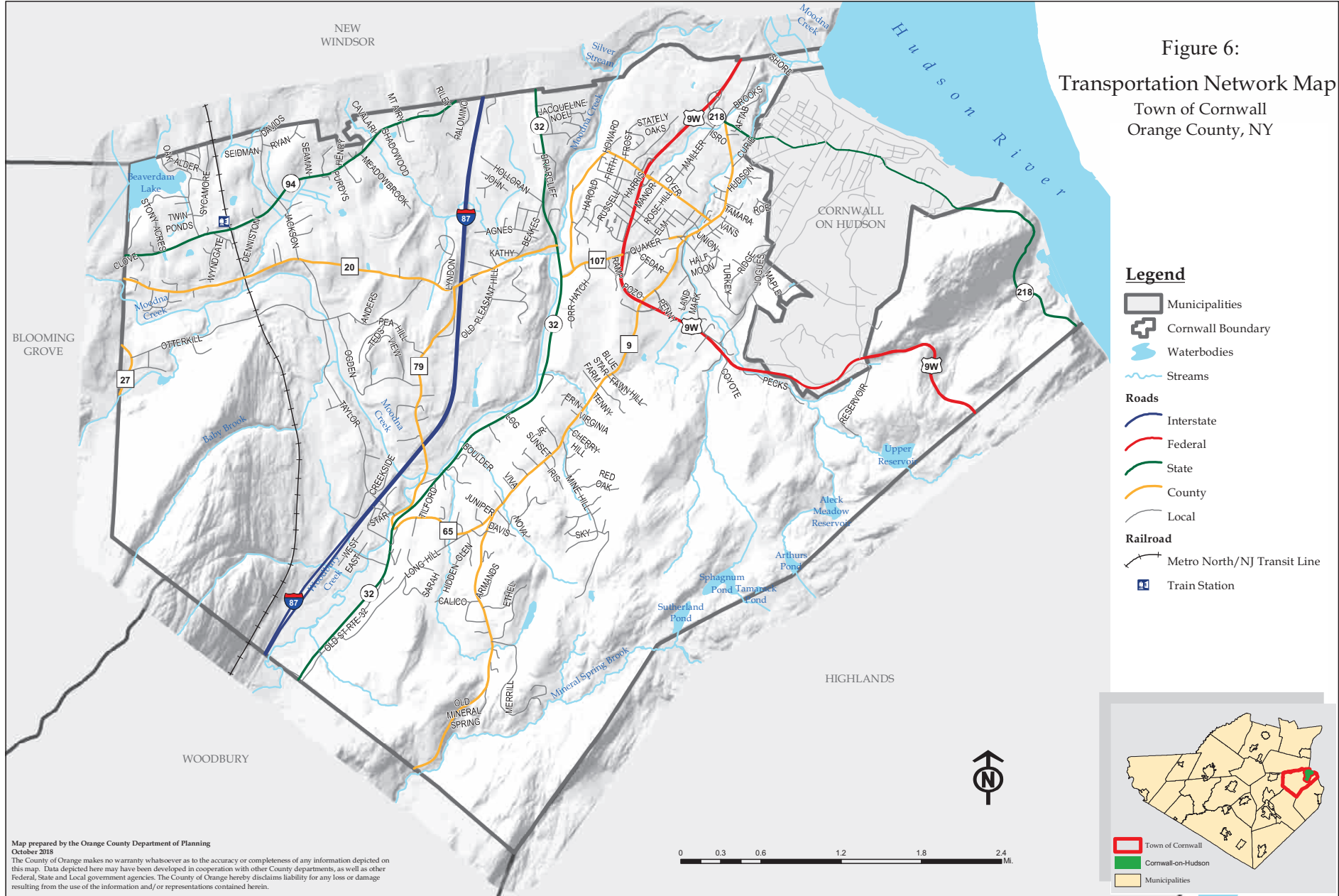
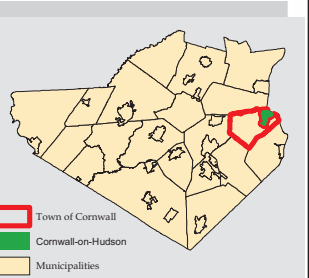


Figure 6:
 Transportation Network Map
 Town of Cornwall
 Orange County, NY

- Legend**
- Municipalities
 - Cornwall Boundary
 - Waterbodies
 - Streams
 - Roads**
 - Interstate
 - Federal
 - State
 - County
 - Local
 - Railroad**
 - Metro North/NJ Transit Line
 - Train Station



Map prepared by the Orange County Department of Planning
 October 2018
 The County of Orange makes no warranty whatsoever as to the accuracy or completeness of any information depicted on this map. Data depicted here may have been developed in cooperation with other County departments, as well as other Federal, State and Local government agencies. The County of Orange hereby disclaims liability for any loss or damage resulting from the use of the information and/or representations contained herein.

0 0.3 0.6 1.2 1.8 2.4
 Miles



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

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

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

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

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

Bikeways and Pedestrian Facilities

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

Camp LaGuardia and expand access to several municipalities⁶ terminating at the Huson River. The plan also recommends conversion of the Cornwall Branch O&W Rail right-of-way into a trail connecting the Salisbury Mills/Cornwall Trail Station to Storm King Art Center. This segment would also directly connect the Bikeway to Cornwall High School. OSI is spearheading broader, regional efforts, known as their Growing Greenways Plan, to develop the unified, primarily off-road trail network that would span more than 250 miles and connect more than 20 communities throughout Ulster, Sullivan, and Orange Counties.

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

Solid Waste

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

Water Service

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

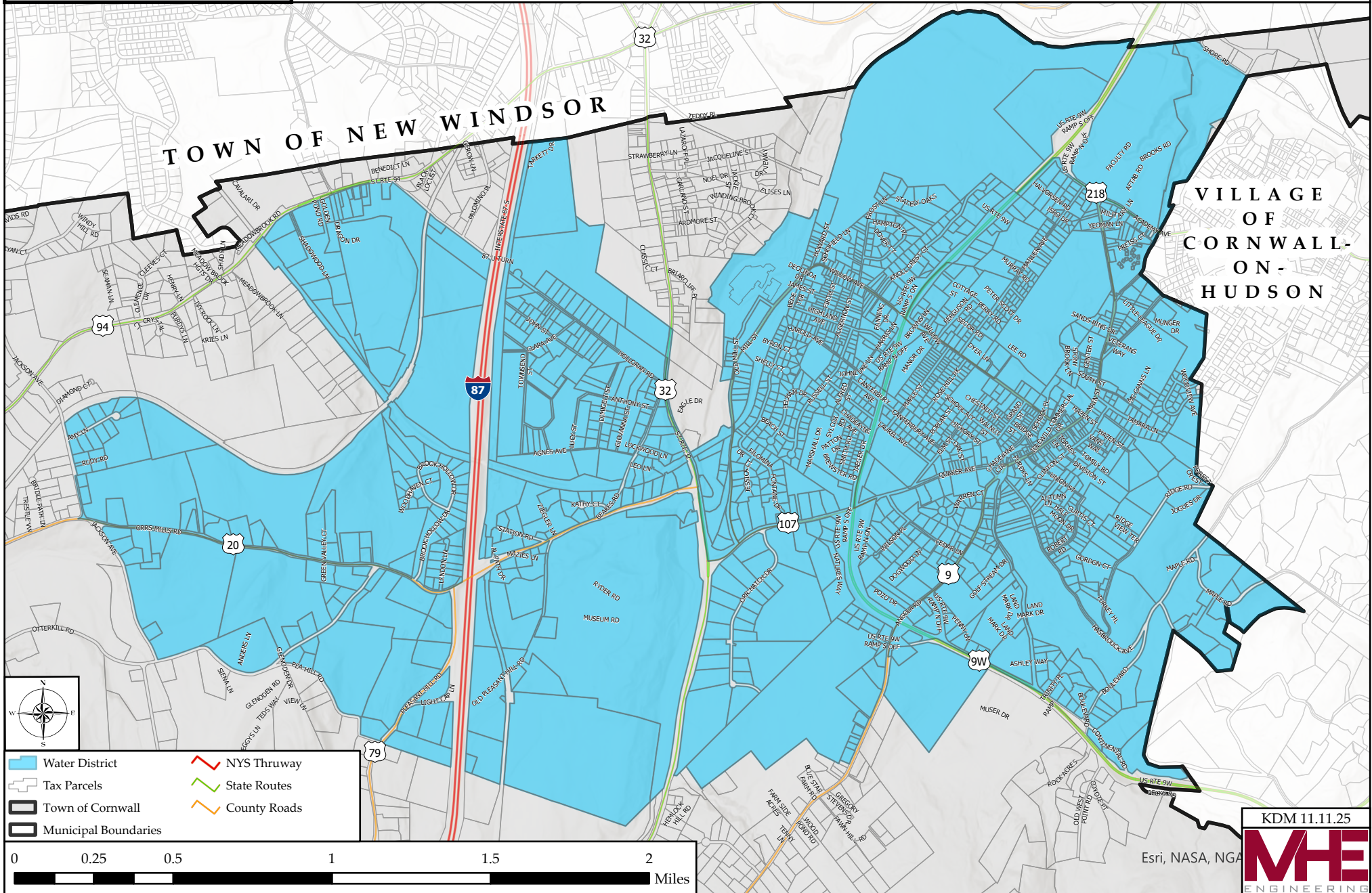
- The Cornwall Water District serves portions of the Town outside the Village of Cornwall-on-Hudson. This district, and all related infrastructure is owned and operated by the Village of Cornwall-on-Hudson. The district is supplied by the Taylor Road wells located in Mountainville and Black Rock Forest Reservoirs. The system is capable of producing up to 3.9 million gallons of water per day and has combined 900,000 gallons of storage capacity⁷. When needed, it can use a water tap from the NYC Catskill Aqueduct for up to 1.5 mgd.

⁶ *County Bikeway Vision. Orange County Department of Planning, 7/25/2023*

⁷ *Village of Cornwall-on-Hudson Annual Water Quality Report, 2024*

**Figure 7:
Cornwall Water
District****

**This map is based on addresses that receive water utility bills from the Village of Cornwall-on-Hudson's Water Department. Exact boundaries could not be verified at this time. Additional properties may be within the District but are not receiving bills and thus are unknown and not shown. Tax parcel boundaries shown in this map are for informational/reference purposes only and are not a substitute for a field survey. This map is not a legal document and should not be used as such, including uses to convey title. Users are responsible for verifying tax parcel boundaries through other means such as deeds and legal surveys.



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

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

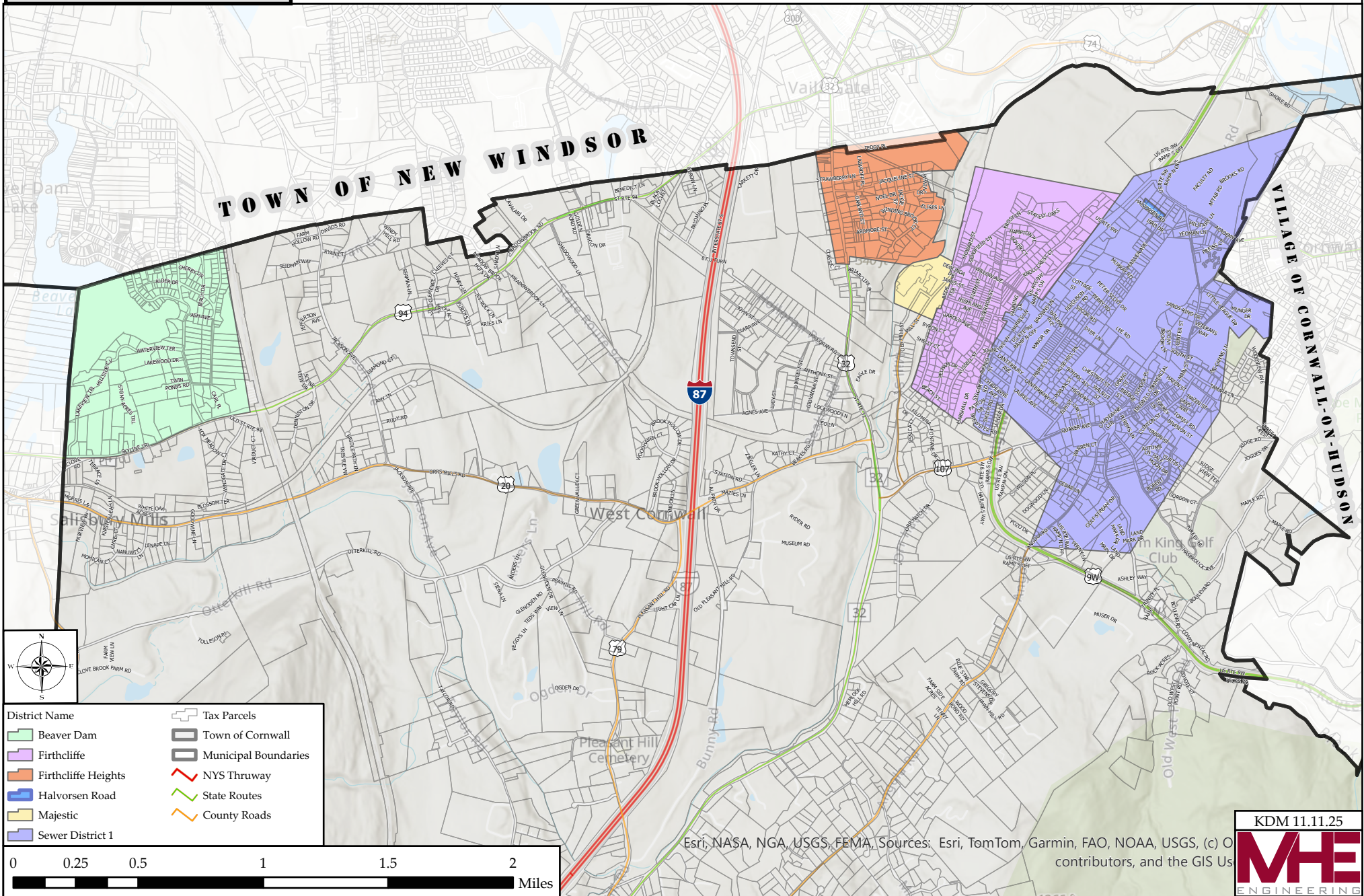
Sewer Service

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

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

**Figure 8:
Cornwall Sewer
Districts**

Tax parcel boundaries shown in this map are for informational/reference purposes only and are not a substitute for a field survey. This map is not a legal document and should not be used as such, including use to convey title. Users are responsible for verifying tax parcel boundaries through other means such as deeds and legal surveys.



Parks and Recreation

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

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

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

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

B. Goals

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

C. Recommendations

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

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

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

IX. IMPLEMENTATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

31	Establish a process for keeping performance securities for public improvements current to ensure that sufficient funds exist to permit the Town to complete public improvements if necessary.	Code Amendment	Immediate	Town Board
32	Amend the zoning to allow the Planning Board to request and approve architectural design plans where appropriate for developments requiring special permit approval.	Zoning Amendment	Immediate	Town Board
33	Consider extension of and modifications to the HC District to support the planned expansion of NYMA.	Zoning Amendment	Per request from applicant and with additional plans & analysis	Town Board/ Planning Board
Chapter 6 - Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation				
34	Continue preservation efforts in coordination with the Town's CAC and other local conservation organizations.	Policy	On-going	Town Board
35	Improve and enhance landscaping regulations, particularly in large parking areas and between developed areas and surface water resources.	Policy	Short Term	Planning Board
36	Encourage the use of pervious pavement or other materials that reduce stormwater runoff where appropriate.	Policy	On-going	Planning Board
37	Avoid clear cutting of trees and preserve mature trees on development sites. Amend the Tree Preservation Law to clarify instances of when tree removal is permitted.	Policy/ Code Amendment	Immediate	Planning Board
38	Require vegetated setbacks along streams to protect the stream's riparian area and water quality.	Zoning Amendment	Immediate	Town Board/ Planning Board
39	Improve public education regarding illicit discharges, turbid stormwater and water conservation on the Town's website and through the Town's CAC and building department.	Policy/ Program	On-going	Town Board / Building Department
40	Limit or prohibit outdoor storage of chemicals, fertilizers and fuel, vehicle or machinery repair or other activities over or, in the immediate vicinity of the Town's aquifers and watercourses.	Zoning Amendment	Short Term	Town Board/ Planning Board
41	Reduce light pollution and off-site glare with dark-sky friendly lighting including downward-facing, full cut-off light fixtures and light dimming or motion sensor requirements for overnight hours.	Zoning Amendment	Short Term	Town Board/ Planning Board

Chapter 7 – Sustainability & Climate Resiliency				
42	Encourage compact, mixed-use development where infrastructure is available, and discourage development in floodplains to reduce exposure to climate hazards.	Policy	On-going	Planning Board
43	Protect and restore ecosystems such as wetlands, streams, floodplains, and forests which provide essential functions like floodwater absorption, shoreline stabilization, and carbon sequestration.	Policy	On-going	Town Board / Planning Board
44	Review landscaping requirements to increase tree canopy coverage, particularly in parking lots and along stream corridors and wetlands.	Zoning amendment	Short Term	Town Board / Planning Board
45	Encourage, incentivize and educate the public regarding more efficient and carbon neutral construction methods, innovative, clean heating and cooling and energy management solutions.	Policy	Short term	Town Board
46	Identify and prioritize essential infrastructure (water and sewer system infrastructure, emergency services including back-up power supplies, essential evacuation roads, communication systems, etc.) at risk of damage from severe storms and implement fortification or relocation strategies.	Program	Short term	Town Board/ Emergency Service Providers
47	Address flood risks to roads, culverts, and bridges by upsizing culverts, raising bridge elevations where necessary, and using resilient design standards for new construction.	Policy	On-going	Town Board
48	Continue to pursue NYS Climate Smart Community (CSC) certification.	Policy/ Program	On-going	Town Board
49	Consider conversion of municipal vehicles to zero-emission vehicles.	Program	Long term	Town Board
50	Encourage non-reflective rooftop solar panels outside of the Ridge Preservation Overlay, particularly on large commercial buildings.	Policy	On-going	Town Board
51	Permit larger-scale solar installations on previously disturbed or otherwise unusable land, such as brown fields or combined with active agricultural uses, such as goats or cattle (agrivoltaics).	Zoning Amendment	Short term	Town Board
Chapter 8 – Community Services				
52	Formalize a community engagement process and institute protocols to involve the public in policy and community development decisions, while also	Policy	Short Term	Town Board

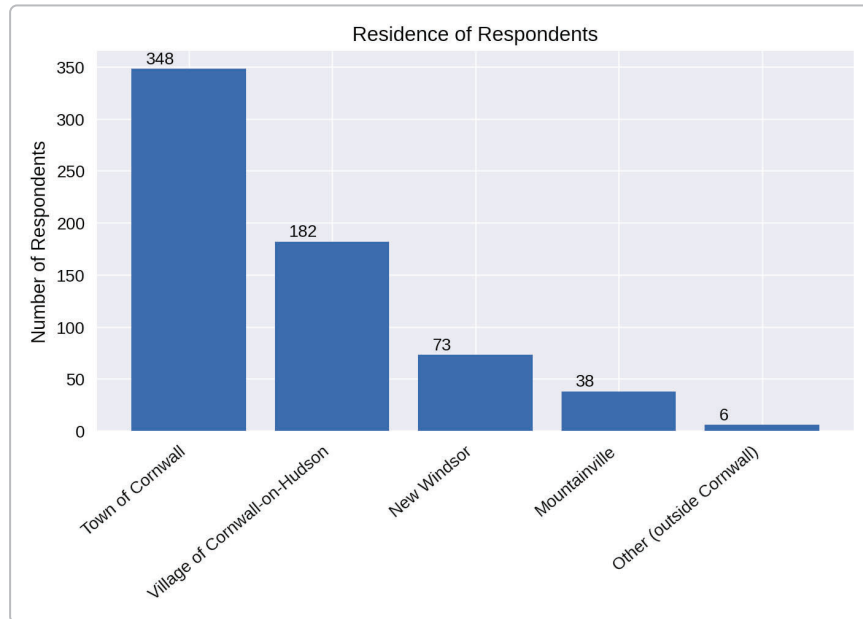
	providing a platform to educate the public and receive ongoing feedback.			
53	Support regional trail improvements planned by OSI and Orange County.	Policy	On-going	Town Board
54	Work to promote crosswalk and other pedestrian safety improvements at key areas of the Town.	Policy	Short term	Town Board/ Orange County
55	Advocate for improvements to the Port Jervis line and lobby for improved rail service.	Coordination	On-going	Town Board/ MTA
56	Pursue signage within the rail station to direct travelers to key locations in the Town.	Capital Improvement	Short term	Town Board/ MTA
57	Actively work to eliminate infiltration and inflow (I&I) into existing sewer lines with focus on the Firthcliffe Heights District and Wastewater Treatment Plant once the project is completed for Sewer District #1.	Capital Improvement	Short term	Town Board/ Town Sewer Department
58	Coordinate with the County, and other agencies as needed, to improve road safety and planning for long-term sustainability and environmental threats to critical roads.	Policy	Long term	Town Board/ Orange County
59	Provide additional restroom facilities at Riverlight Park.	Capital Improvement	Short term	Town Board
60	Seek to provide multi-modal, non-motorized trails connecting to existing public lands, trail systems and other destinations.	Capital Improvement	Long term	Town Board
61	Establish available indoor public facilities in order to support the development of winter space recreational activities for all ages in inclement weather.	Capital Improvement	Long term	Town Board/ Town Recreation Department
62	Pursue locations for additional multi-use sport fields	Policy	Short term	Town Board
63	Evaluate improvements to drainage at Laurel Crest Park.	Capital Improvement	Long term/ On-going	Town Board/ Town Building and Grounds

APPENDIX A:
Community Input Survey

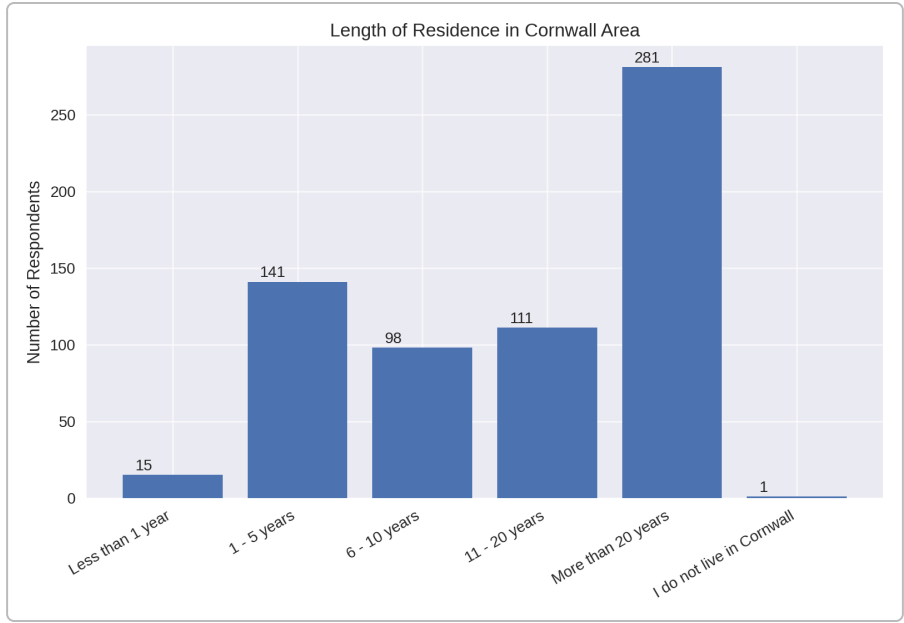
Please note AI tools were used to synthesize the community survey results to visualize the data. Community input was also obtained during several other community events and forums in order to obtain a broad array of input from a wide range of community members. The results were reviewed by the members of the Comprehensive Plan committee prior to its release to ensure accuracy of the results. More information can be found in the Town's Current State Assessment at: <https://cornwallny.gov/How-Do-I/Find/Town-Reports>

Cornwall Comprehensive Plan Survey Results (2025)

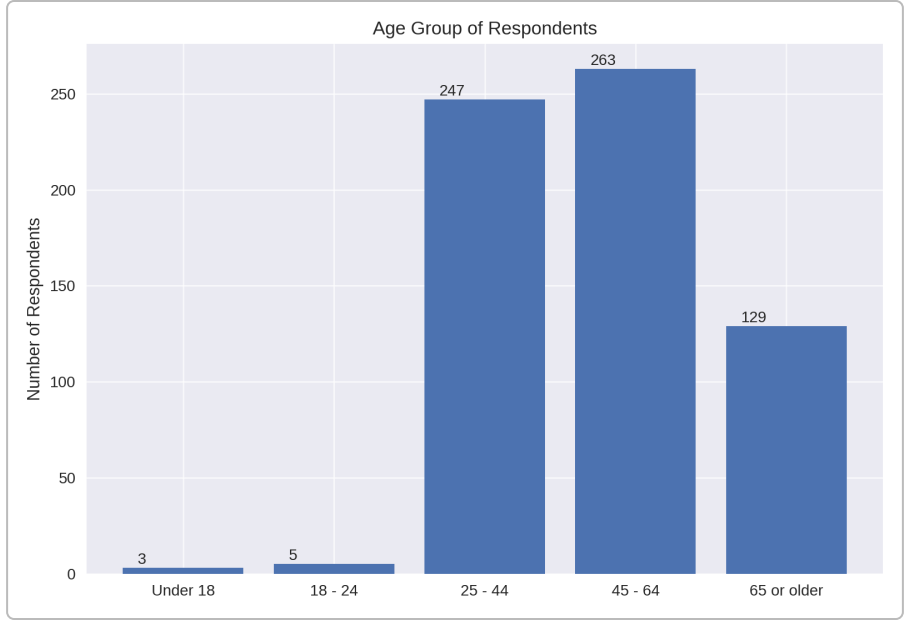
Demographic Profile of Respondents



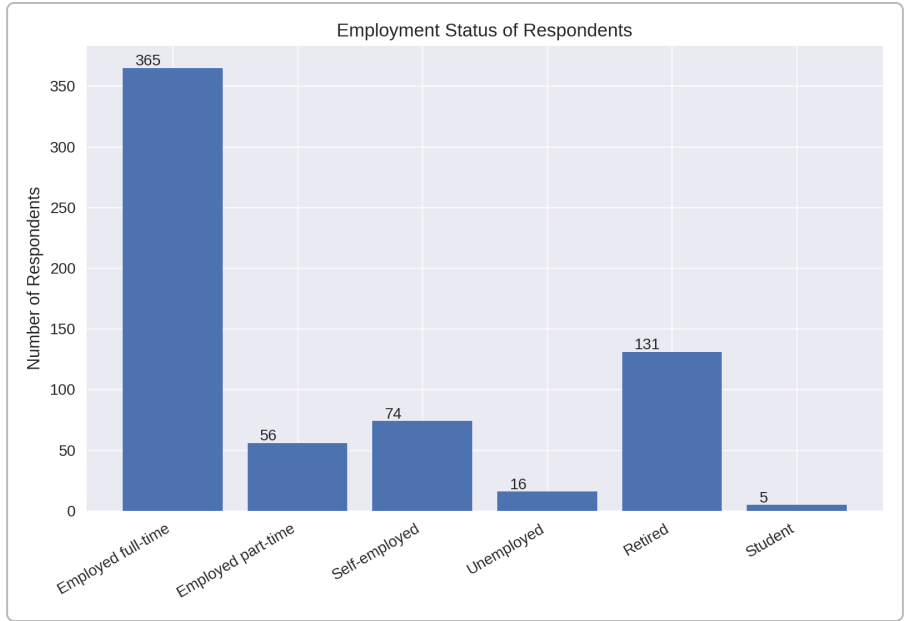
Residence of Respondents. A majority of survey respondents (348 individuals) live in the Town of Cornwall itself, while about 182 live in the Village of Cornwall-on-Hudson. A smaller portion live just outside Cornwall, including 73 from New Windsor and 38 from Mountainville, with a handful (6 respondents) residing in other nearby areas. This indicates the survey captured input primarily from local residents (Town and Village).



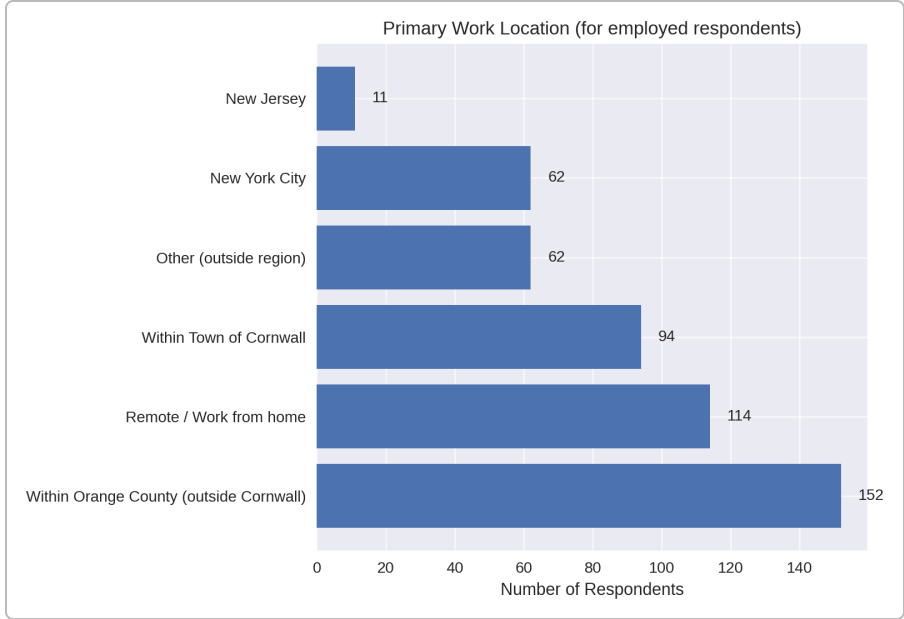
Length of Residence in Cornwall Area. The community is well represented by long-term residents. Nearly **281 respondents (43%)** have lived in the Cornwall area for over 20 years, and another 111 (17%) for 11–20 years. A sizable group (141 respondents, 22%) are more recent, with 1–5 years in the area. Only a small number are brand new to Cornwall (15 people under 1 year), and just 1 respondent indicated they do not live in Cornwall.



Age Group of Respondents. The survey skewed toward older adults. Over half of respondents (263 or 41%) are aged 45–64, and 247 (38%) are 25–44 years old. Seniors (65 or older) made up 129 respondents (20%). Few young adults participated (only 5 respondents 18–24, and 3 under 18), which suggests youth were underrepresented in the feedback.

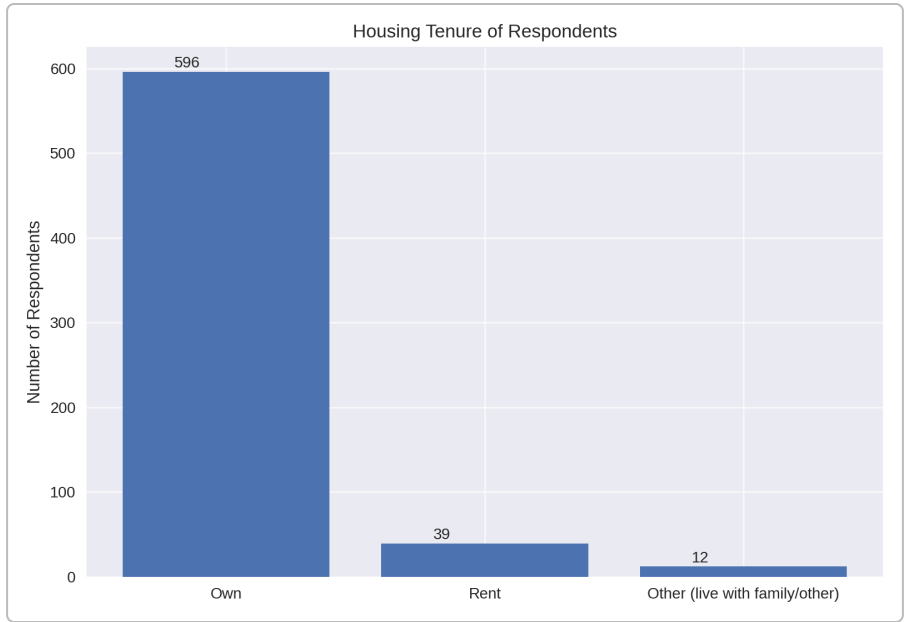


Employment Status of Respondents. The community's working status shows a diverse mix. The largest group is full-time employed (365 respondents, ~56%). A significant retired population is evident as well (131 people, ~20%), reflecting Cornwall's older demographics. Smaller numbers are self-employed (74), part-time employed (56), unemployed (16), or students (5). This indicates many respondents are working professionals or retirees, with relatively few currently in school or job-seeking.

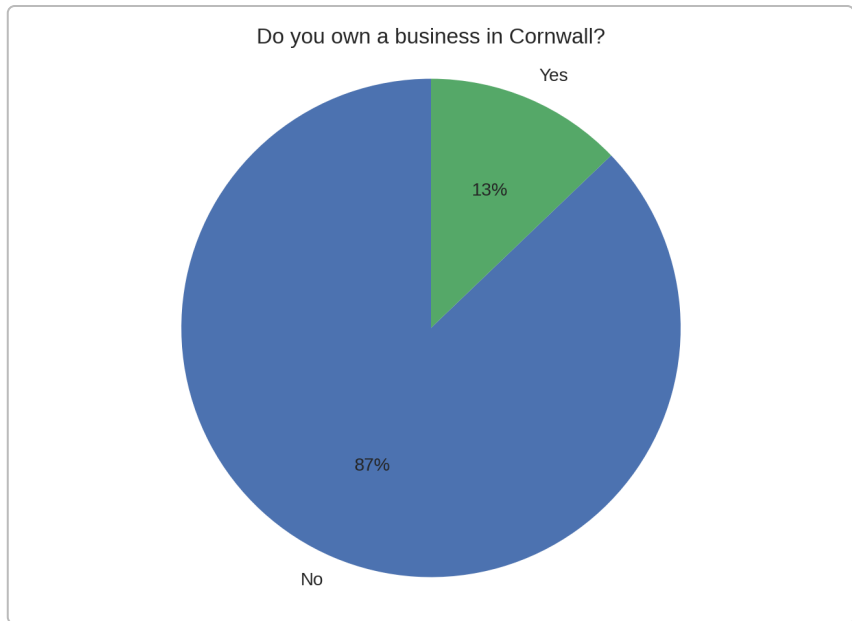


Primary Work Location (for those employed). Among respondents who are employed, work locations vary, though most work relatively locally. The **most common work location is within Orange County but outside Cornwall (152 people)**. A substantial number work remotely/from home (114, reflecting modern telework trends). About 94 work **within Cornwall Town**, and 62 commute to New York City. Another 11 work in New Jersey. Roughly 62 respondents listed other work locations (e.g. neighboring counties like

Rockland or Westchester). In summary, about half of employed respondents work in the region (Orange County or Cornwall), a quarter telecommute, and a smaller share commute to NYC or beyond.

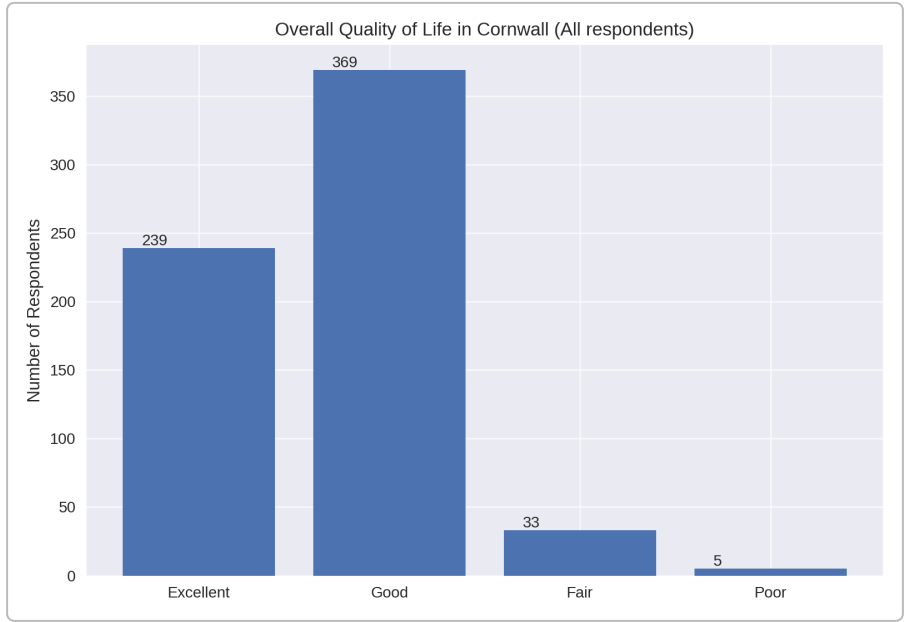


Housing Tenure of Respondents. An overwhelming majority of participants are homeowners. **596 respondents (92%) own their residence** in Cornwall, whereas only 39 (6%) rent. A small number (approximately 12 people) indicated other living arrangements, such as living with family. This highlights that the survey largely heard from homeowners, with relatively few renters represented.

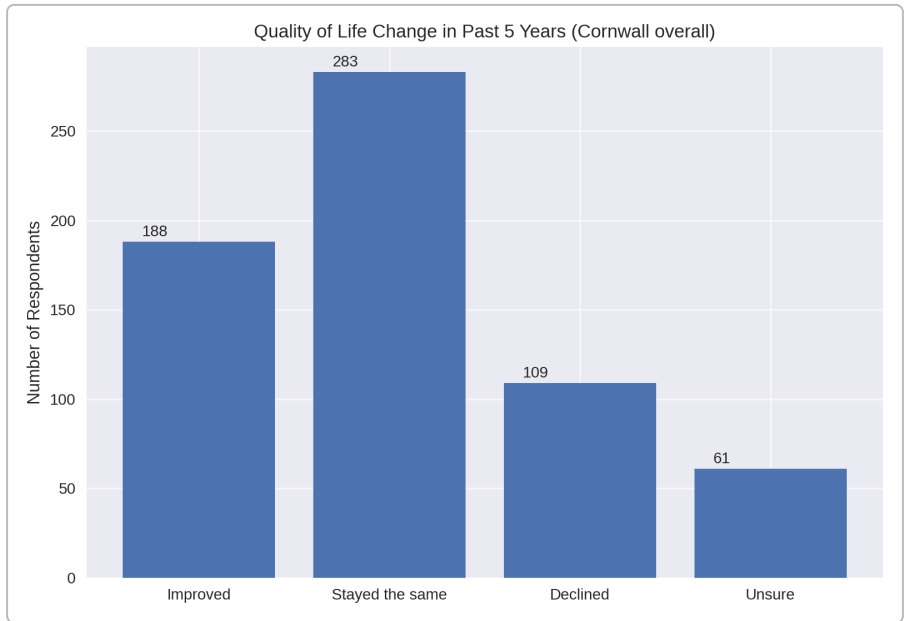


Local Business Ownership. A minority of respondents are local business owners. Only **83 respondents (about 13%)** said they own a business in Cornwall, whereas **564 (87%)** do not. This suggests most participants were residents rather than business owners. Nonetheless, business perspectives are present, albeit in the minority.

Quality of Life in Cornwall

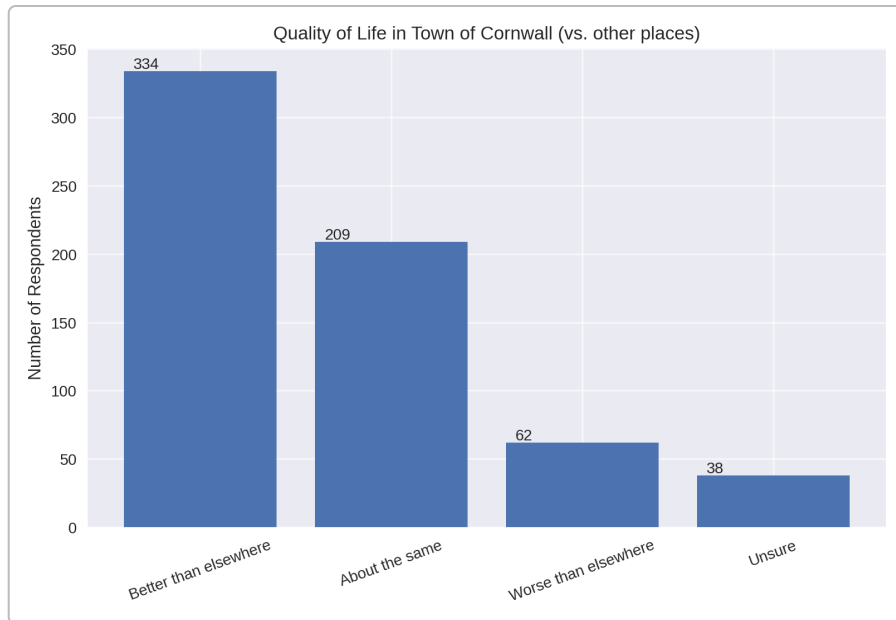


Overall Quality of Life Rating (Cornwall). When asked to rate the overall quality of life in Cornwall, feedback was very positive. Nearly 94% rated it "Good" (369 responses) or "Excellent" (239)*. Only 33 people felt it was "Fair" and a mere 5 rated it "Poor." This indicates a broadly favorable view of Cornwall's quality of life among respondents.

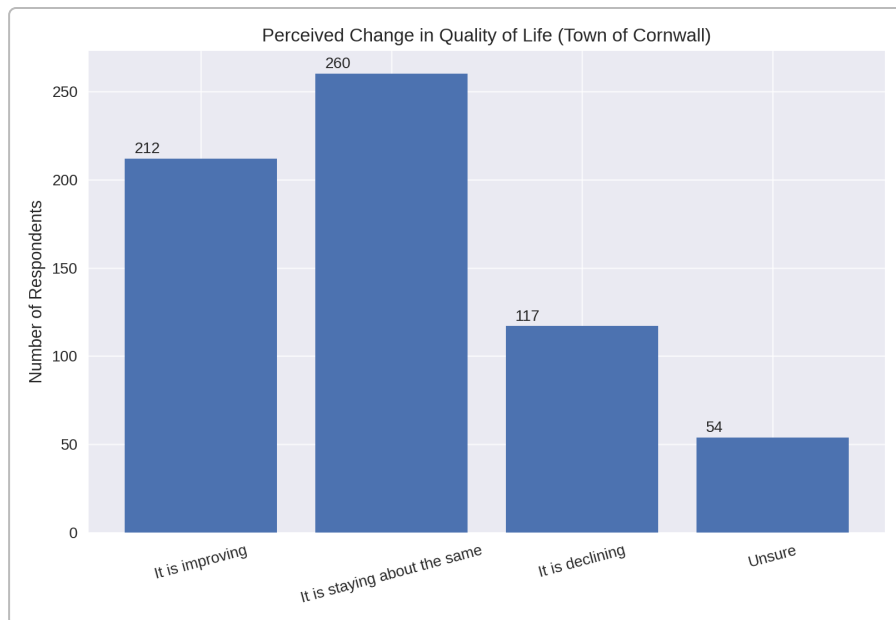


Perceived Change in Quality of Life (Past 5 Years). Opinions on recent trends were mixed, with a plurality seeing little change. 283 respondents (44%) felt quality of life "stayed the same" over the past five years. About 188 (29%) believed it improved, whereas 109 (17%) felt it declined*. The remainder (61 people) were unsure. So while the

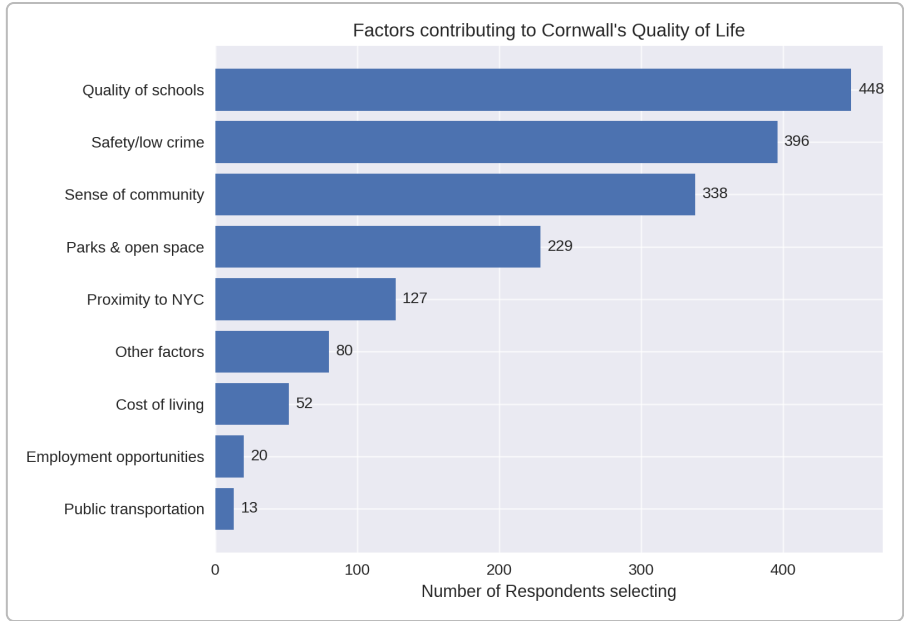
community generally feels life in Cornwall is good, about one in six see a decline in recent years, and roughly one in three see improvements.



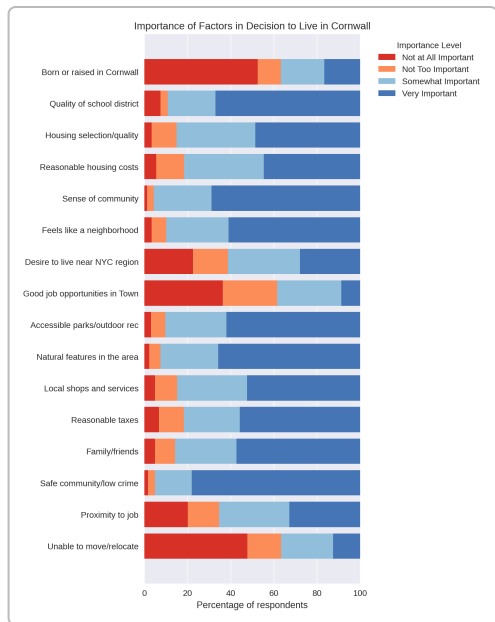
Cornwall vs. Other Places. Many respondents feel Cornwall compares favorably to other places they've lived. Over **330 people (52%)** said the overall quality of life is **better in Cornwall** than elsewhere, and another 209 (32%) said it's **about the same**. Only 62 respondents (10%) felt Cornwall is worse than other places they've experienced. This suggests Cornwall is held in high esteem relative to other communities. A small portion (38 respondents) weren't sure or had no basis to compare.



Quality of Life Trend in Town of Cornwall. When focusing on the Town of Cornwall specifically, opinions about the trajectory were split. A **plurality (260 respondents, ~40%)** said quality of life in the Town **"is staying about the same."** Meanwhile, **212 (33%)** felt it **"is improving,"** and **117 (18%)** perceived that it **"is**



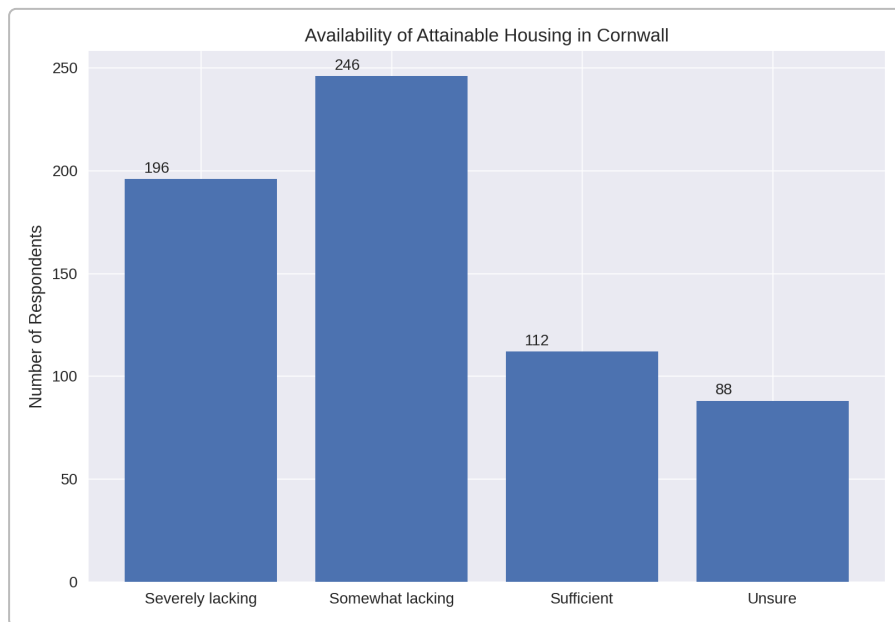
Top Factors Contributing to Quality of Life. The most selected strengths were **“Quality of schools” (chosen by 448 respondents)** and **“Safety/low crime rate” (396)** – underscoring that good schools and a safe environment are highly cherished. The **“sense of community”** was also very prominent (338 selections), highlighting Cornwall’s friendly, communal atmosphere. Many appreciate Cornwall’s **parks and open space (229)** and its **proximity to NYC (127)**, which offers small-town life with access to the city. Other factors noted include reasonable cost of living (52) and local shops/services (these had fewer selections), while **“Employment opportunities” (20)** and **“Access to public transportation” (only 13)** were least cited – reflecting perhaps that Cornwall’s job opportunities and transit options are limited. About 80 people wrote in **“Other”** factors, such as small-town charm, local history, or specific amenities, indicating additional unique qualities valued by some residents.



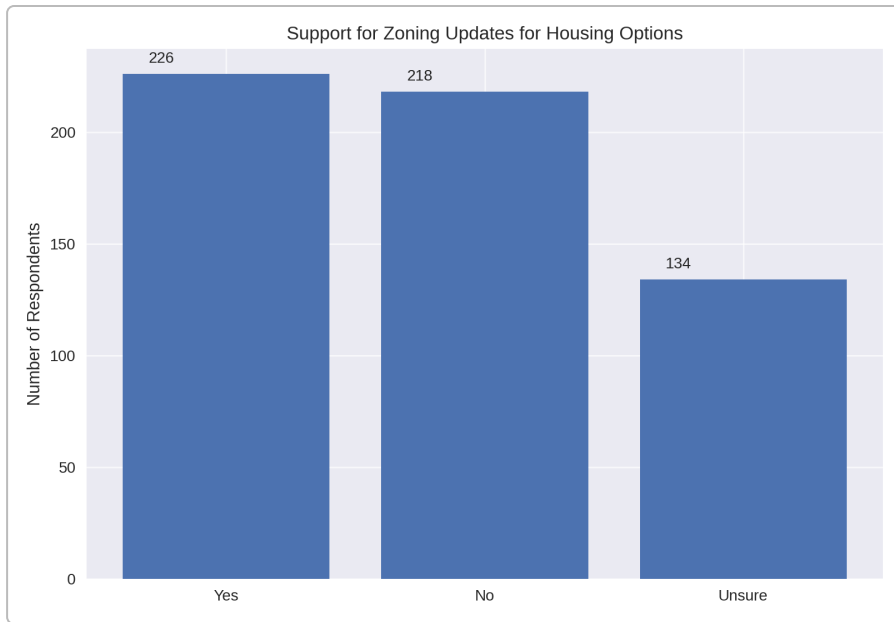
Importance of Various Factors in Choosing to Live in Cornwall. Respondents rated a series of factors on how important each was to their decision to live in Cornwall. The stacked bar chart shows the distribution of opinions for each factor (from “Not at all important” in red to “Very important” in blue). Some clear insights emerge: Factors like “**Safe community/low crime,**” “**Quality of school district,**” and “**Sense of community**” have large blue sections – meaning a strong majority rated these as *Very important* reasons for living in Cornwall. For example, **over 80%** considered Cornwall’s safety and community feel as very important in their choice (the long blue bars for those factors). **Natural features and parks/outdoor recreation** were also widely valued (many blue and light-blue segments). On the other hand, factors such as “**Good job opportunities in Town**” or “**Desire to live near NYC**” have extensive orange/red segments – indicating that many found those *not important* in their decision. Notably, “*Born or raised in Cornwall*” splits the community: a portion were lifelong residents (for whom that was obviously very important), while others moved here for different reasons (hence a red segment for those to whom that factor didn’t apply). In summary, **safety, schools, community, and Cornwall’s natural setting** were very important to most, whereas **job opportunities in Cornwall or being unable to relocate** were not significant factors for the majority.

Housing and Development

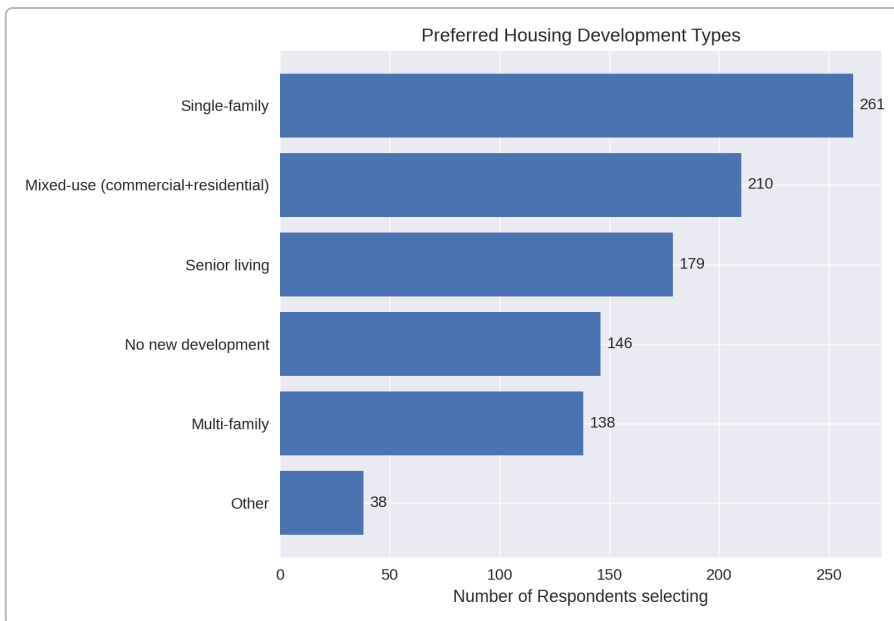
Housing affordability and development options were key issues explored in the survey:



Attainable Housing Availability. Most respondents feel Cornwall lacks sufficient affordable/attainable housing. Over **440 respondents (69%)** described attainable housing availability as “*Lacking.*” In fact, **196 (30%)** said it is “*Severely lacking,*” and **246 (38%)** said “*Somewhat lacking.*” Only 112 people (17%) believe the supply is “*Sufficient.*” The rest (88, about 14%) were *Unsure*. This indicates a strong perception that Cornwall needs more affordable or attainable housing options.



Support for Zoning Updates to Enable Diverse Housing. The community is divided on how to address housing needs. A slight majority of those with an opinion favor action: **226 respondents (45%) answered “Yes,”** they would support zoning changes to allow more housing options like townhomes, apartments, and senior housing. However, **218 (43%) said “No,”** opposing such updates. A notable segment – **134 people (roughly 27%)** – are *unsure*. Excluding the undecided, about 51% of those who expressed a stance would support zoning reforms versus 49% against. This nearly even split highlights that housing development is a sensitive issue with no clear consensus in the community.

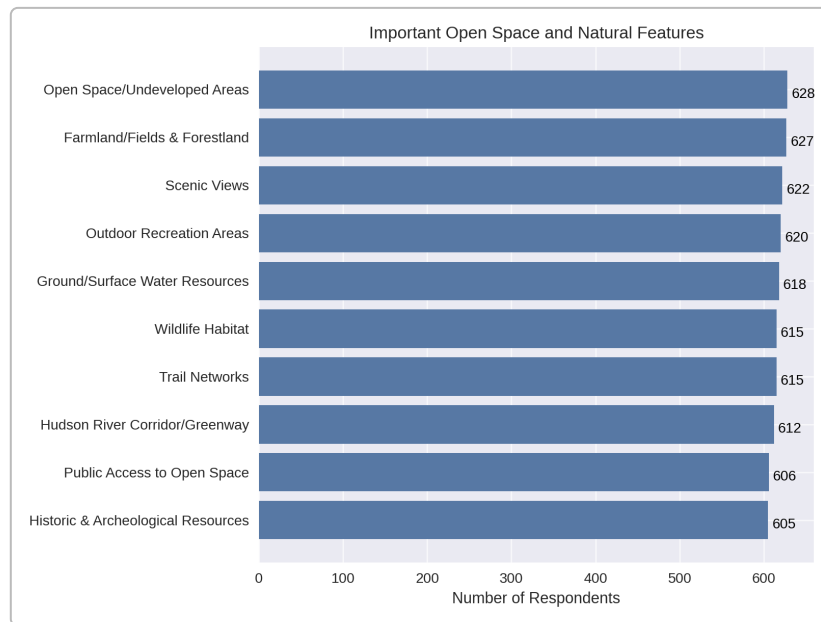


Preferred Housing Development Types. When asked which types of development they would support, respondents showed a preference for traditionally scaled housing. The most popular choice was **single-family housing (261 votes)** – indicating many favor continuing Cornwall’s single-family home character. There is also substantial support for **mixed-use development** that combines commercial and residential

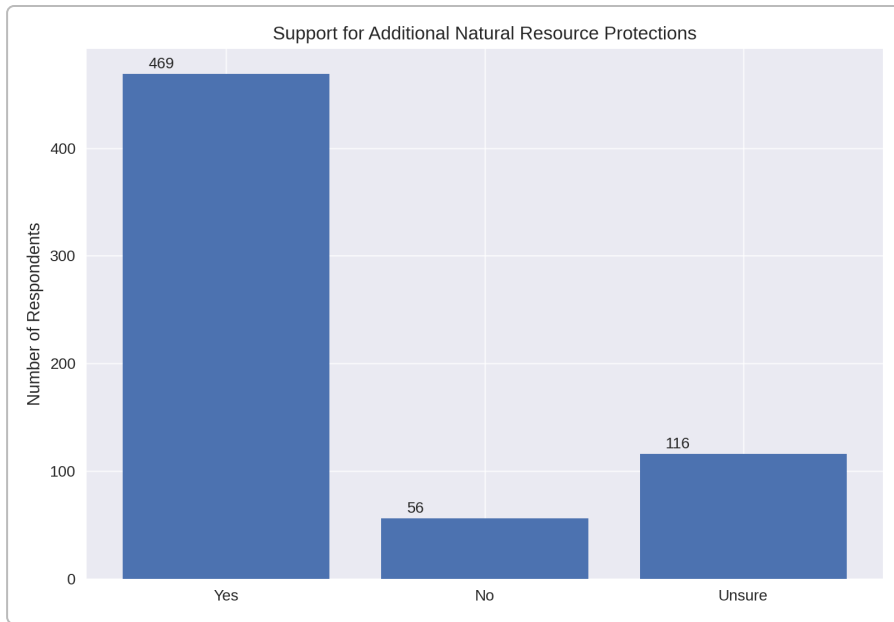
uses (210 selections) and for **senior living communities** (179). Interest in **multi-family housing** (like townhomes or apartments) was lower (138 picks). Notably, **146 respondents** chose **“No new development,”** preferring to slow or stop development altogether. A small number (38) provided other suggestions (for example, some wrote in desires for **“affordable housing”** specifically or preferences for preserving open space instead of development). These results show a community somewhat open to a mix of housing – especially integrated mixed-use and senior housing – but still heavily inclined toward single-family homes and cautious about growth.

Environmental and Open Space Priorities

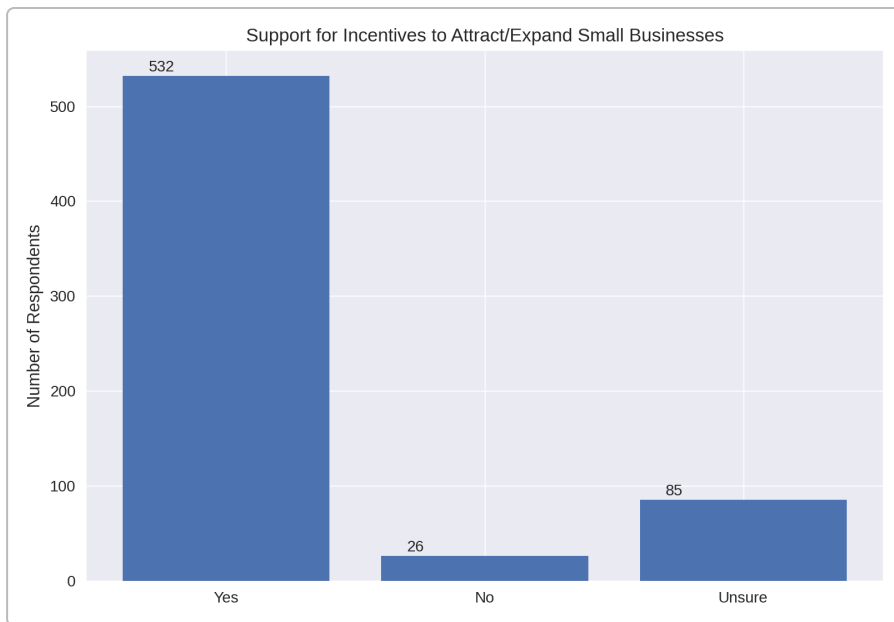
Cornwall’s natural environment and open spaces emerged as cherished assets:



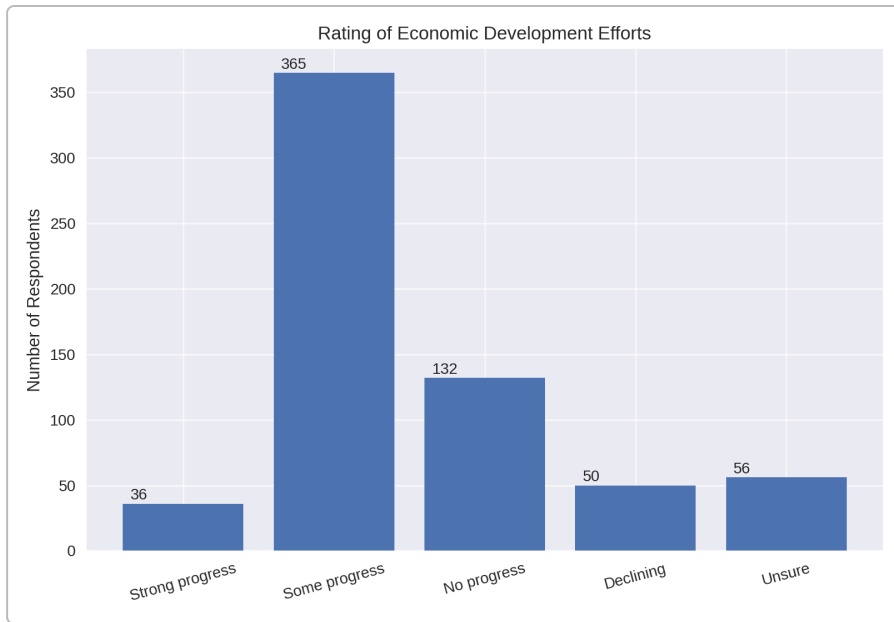
Important Open Space and Natural Features. **Virtually everyone** agreed on the importance of Cornwall’s environmental features – the bar chart shows extremely high support (over 600 respondents each) for preserving **undeveloped open spaces, farmland/forest, scenic views, wildlife habitat, and water resources**. For instance, *628 people* marked Open Space, *627* farmland, *622* scenic vistas, *615* wildlife habitat, etc. Even the features with slightly lower (but still high) support – *Historic resources (605)* and *Public access to open space (606)* – were selected by over 90% of respondents. These near-unanimous responses highlight that **conservation of Cornwall’s natural environment is a top community priority**.



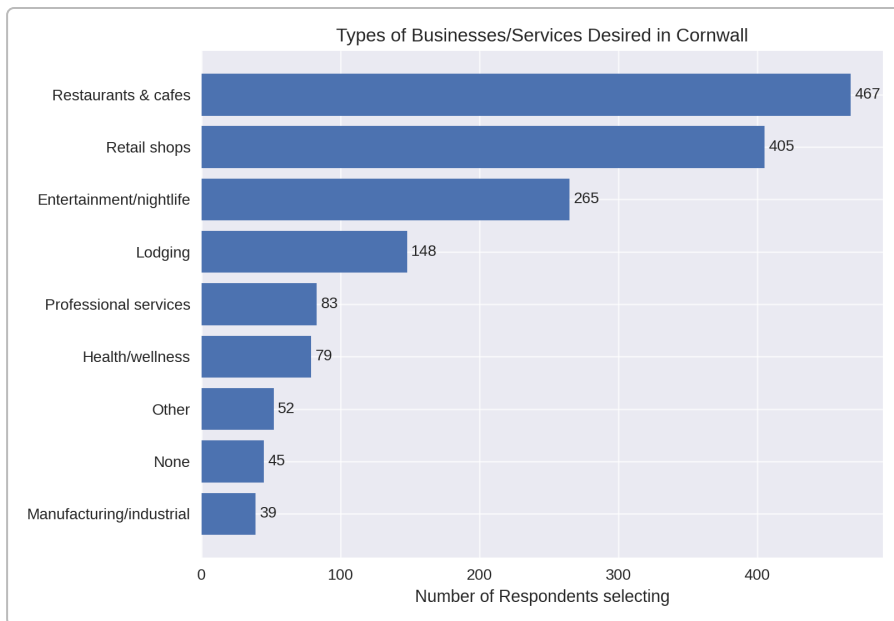
Support for Natural Resource Protections. In line with the above, an overwhelming **469 respondents (approximately 82%)** said *Yes*, they would support additional regulations to protect natural resources (such as stricter environmental rules). Only 56 people (10%) opposed this idea, and 116 (around 20%) were unsure. The clear mandate is that the community favors stronger measures to preserve the environment.



Environmental Sustainability Initiatives. Open-ended suggestions and multiple-choice responses indicate strong community backing for sustainability programs. For example, **stormwater and flood mitigation, open space conservation, and tree planting/green spaces** were each selected by over 400 respondents as environmental initiatives that should be pursued. Many also support expanding **renewable energy (solar/wind)** and **recycling/composting programs** (each over 200 selections). Only 19 people said "None" – meaning almost everyone sees value in at least one sustainability initiative. (This detailed chart from the survey is not pictured here, but the data show broad support for "green" initiatives.) Additionally, **79%**

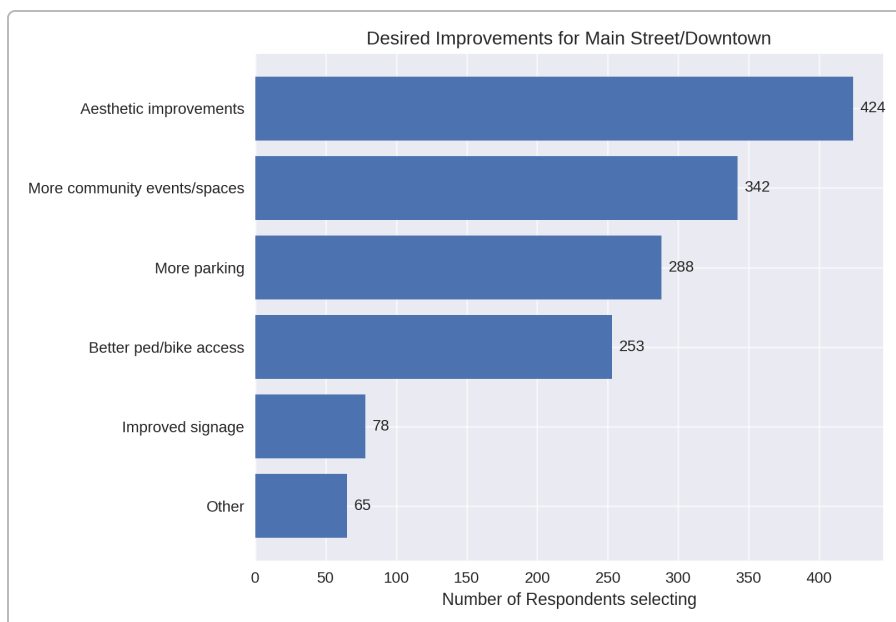


Rating of Economic Development Efforts. When asked to rate Cornwall’s efforts at economic development, most felt progress has been modest at best. The majority, **365 respondents (59%)**, chose “*Some progress.*” Meanwhile, **132 (21%)** saw “*No progress,*” and 50 (8%) even felt things are “*Declining*” economically. Only 36 people (6%) rated economic development efforts as “*Strong progress.*” A further 56 were unsure. This suggests a general sentiment that economic initiatives have been limited – many see little to moderate improvement, and a significant number feel Cornwall’s economic development has stalled or worsened in recent years.

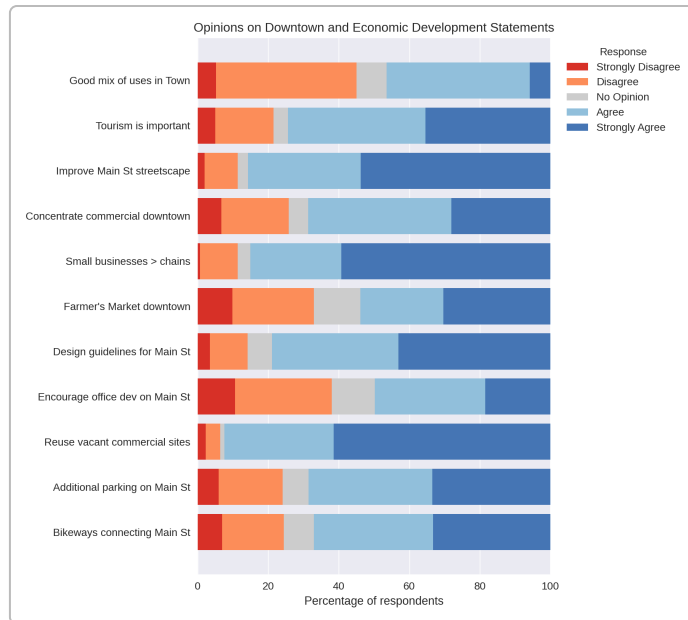


Desired Business and Services. The community showed clear preferences for the types of businesses they want to see in Cornwall. The top choices were **Restaurants & cafes (467 votes)** and **Retail shops (405)** – indicating a strong appetite for more dining options and shopping in town. Many also want to see improved **entertainment and nightlife (265)**, such as theaters or venues for evening activities, and more **lodging**

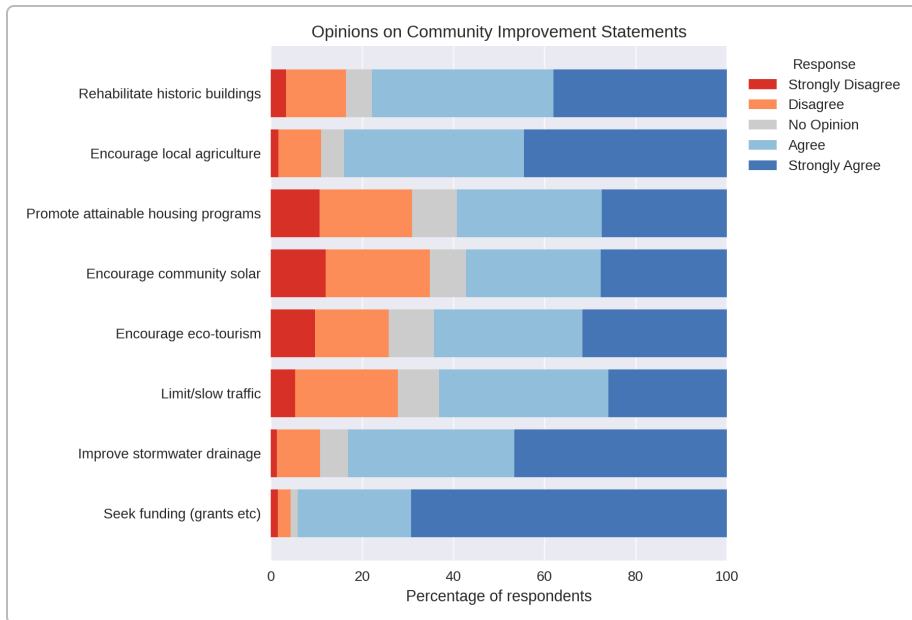
like a hotel or B&B (148 votes), perhaps to support tourism. On the other hand, very few want more industrial or manufacturing development (only 39 selections). **Professional services (83)** and **health/wellness businesses (79)** were lower priorities as well, possibly because those needs are being met or less visible. Notably, *45 people* said Cornwall needs **“None”** of these – perhaps those satisfied with the status quo or preferring no commercial growth. Only 52 provided other suggestions (for example, some mentioned desire for a **grocery store** or **community co-op** in the “Other” field). Overall, residents clearly crave a more vibrant Main Street/downtown with **food, retail, and entertainment** options, rather than more offices or factories.



Improvements for Main Street/Downtown. There is strong consensus on steps to revitalize Cornwall’s Main Street and business districts. The most popular idea (selected by **424 respondents**) is to make **aesthetic improvements** – things like better facades, signage, lighting, landscaping – to enhance Main Street’s appearance. Also highly supported were having **more community events and public gathering spaces downtown (342)** and adding **more parking (288)** to support local businesses. Improved **pedestrian and bicycle access (253)** – such as safer crosswalks, bike lanes, sidewalks – is another priority. In contrast, only 78 people felt **signage & wayfinding** needed improvement, suggesting current signage is less of a concern than the broader look and functionality of downtown. (65 respondents wrote other ideas, e.g. *“recruit specific anchor businesses”* or *“utilize vacant buildings”*.) In summary, the community envisions a **more attractive, pedestrian-friendly Main Street with ample parking and regular community events** to draw people in.



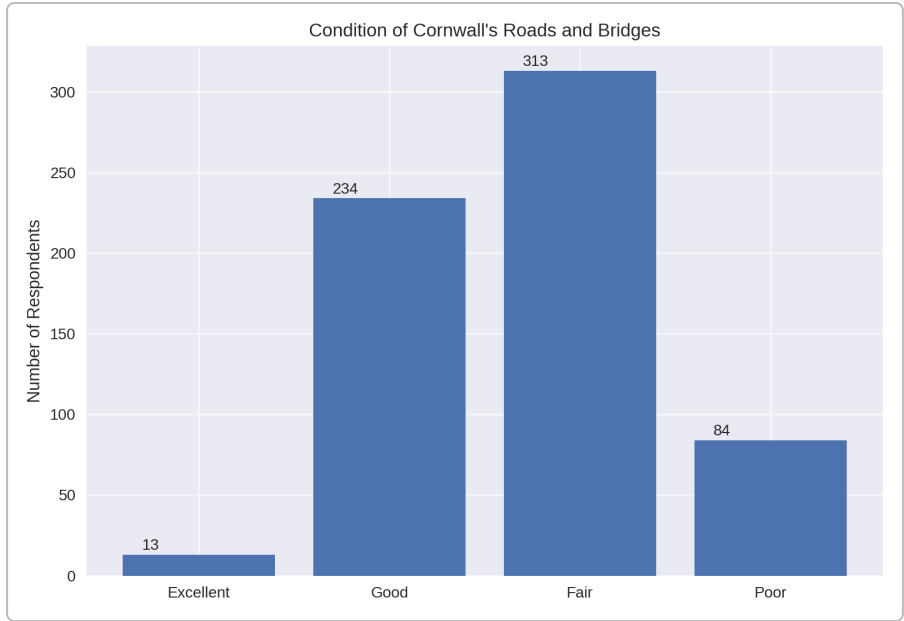
Opinions on Downtown and Economic Development Statements. The survey presented a series of statements about development and downtown, and respondents indicated their level of agreement. Key takeaways include: **Broad agreement** that *“Promoting tourism is economically important”* (the large blue sections for *Agree/Strongly Agree* on that statement). There was also strong support for focusing commercial development downtown – most agreed *“Commercial development should be concentrated in the Main Street area”* and that *“The Town should improve the downtown streetscape.”* Many also *strongly favor small businesses over chains* and want to see the *Farmer’s Market in the downtown* area – these statements had a majority *“Agree”* or *“Strongly Agree.”* On encouraging office development on Main Street or design guidelines for downtown character, opinions were positive overall (light blue/blue bars), though with some neutral responses. One statement drew significant disagreement: *“There is a good mix of commercial, institutional, government, and office development in the Town”* had a lot of orange (Disagree) – implying many feel the current mix of uses is **not** yet optimal. In summary, residents strongly support initiatives to **enhance downtown Cornwall – through beautification, events, tourism, and concentration of small businesses** – and they largely disagree that the Town’s commercial mix is already adequate, signaling appetite for improvement.



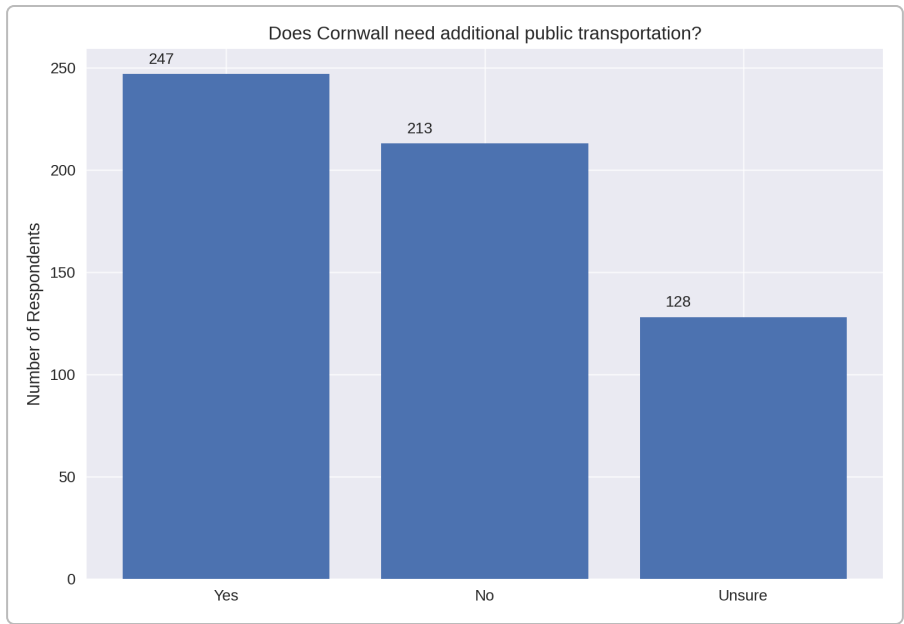
Opinions on Community Improvement Statements. Another set of statements covered wider community initiatives, and respondents showed **overwhelming support** for many of them. In particular, there was near-unanimous agreement that *“The Town should seek funding (grants, etc.) to fund desired improvements”* – the bar for that statement is almost entirely blue. There was also **very strong agreement** that *“The Town should promote and encourage local agriculture”* and *“rehabilitate historic homes/buildings,”* as well as to *“promote attainable housing opportunities.”* Green initiatives like *“encourage community solar”* and *“encourage eco-tourism”* were also met with broad agreement. Notably, *“limit/slow traffic where possible”* received a lot of support (many blue bars), reflecting concerns about speeding and safety. The only statement with a sizable mixed response was perhaps regarding traffic – but even there, most agreed traffic calming is needed. Essentially, respondents signaled *“Strongly Agree”* across a host of proactive ideas – from preserving history and farming to expanding housing programs and environmental projects. The consensus is that the Town **should be proactive and pursue a wide array of community improvements** (and seek external funding to do so).

Infrastructure and Public Services

The survey addressed infrastructure (roads, transportation) and community services (safety, parks), yielding the following insights:

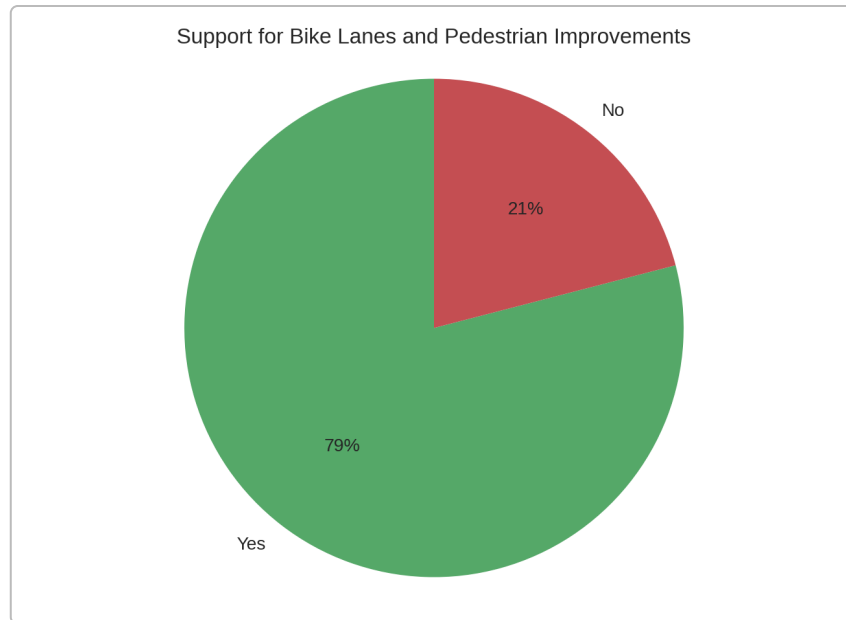


Condition of Roads and Bridges. Residents clearly see room for improvement in local infrastructure. A majority rated Cornwall's road and bridge conditions as just **"Fair" (313 responses)**. Another 234 people said "Good," typically meaning acceptable but not great. Very few (only 13) consider the roads "Excellent." Notably, **84 respondents (13%)** bluntly rated road conditions "Poor." These ratings show that roughly two-thirds view infrastructure as mediocre or worse. Improving road maintenance and bridge conditions is therefore a need recognized by many residents.

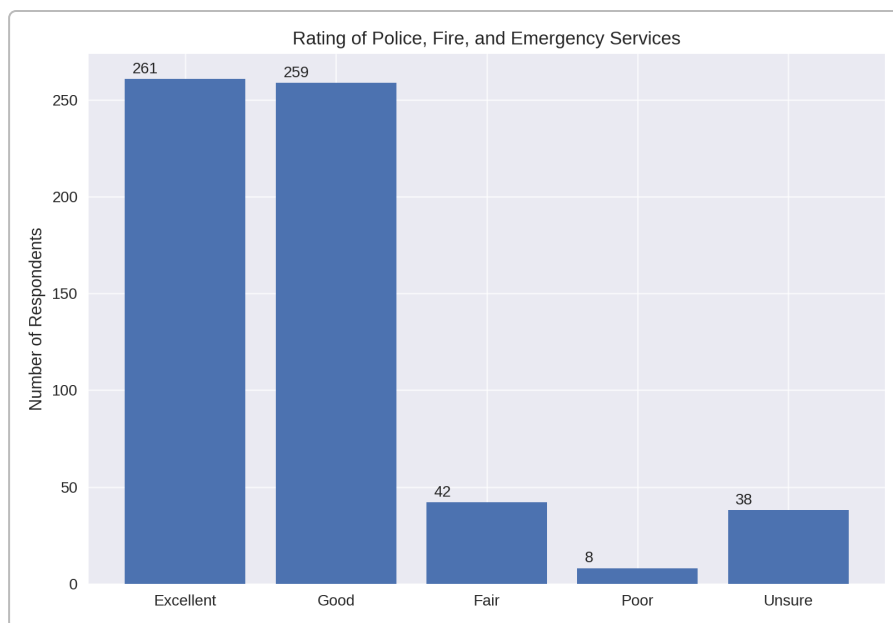


Need for Public Transportation. Many respondents feel Cornwall would benefit from better public transit options. **247 people (41%) answered "Yes,"** Cornwall *needs additional public transportation*. In contrast, **213 (36%)** said "No," and **128 (21%)** were unsure. So among those with an opinion, about 54% favor more transit. Comments suggest interest in things like local bus or shuttle services, especially for seniors and

commuting, as current options are limited. While not an overwhelming mandate, there is a significant contingent desiring improved transit connectivity.

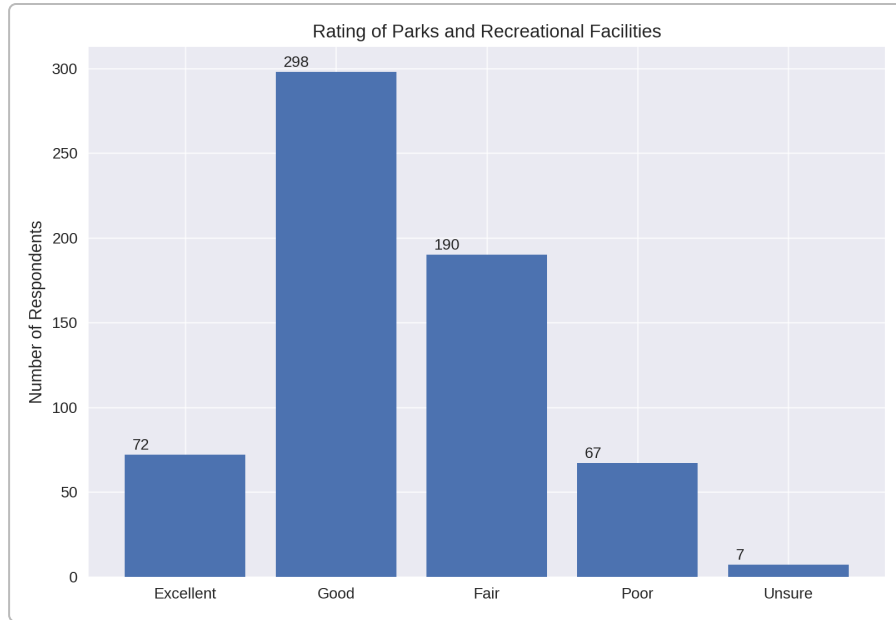


Support for Bike/Pedestrian Improvements. There is **strong support (79% yes)** for making Cornwall more bikeable and walkable. When asked if they would support adding bike lanes and pedestrian-friendly street improvements, **498 respondents** said Yes. Only 132 (21%) were opposed. This aligns with earlier findings that better sidewalks, trails, and traffic calming are desired. Residents clearly back investments in **safer bike lanes, crosswalks, sidewalks, and other measures to encourage walking and cycling**, which would improve quality of life and potentially reduce local traffic.

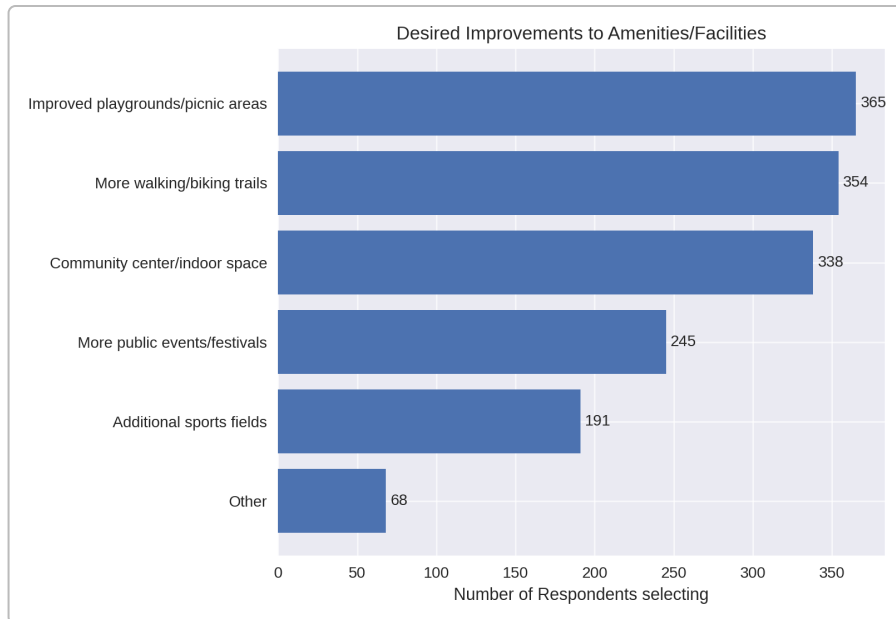


Rating of Police, Fire, Emergency Services. Cornwall's first responders received positive ratings. **520 respondents (80%)** consider police, fire, and EMS services **"Good" (259 responses) or "Excellent" (261)**.

Only 42 rated them "Fair" and a mere 8 "Poor." 38 were unsure (perhaps not having needed the services). These results indicate a high level of satisfaction with public safety services. The community feels well-served by its police and fire departments, with very few exceptions.

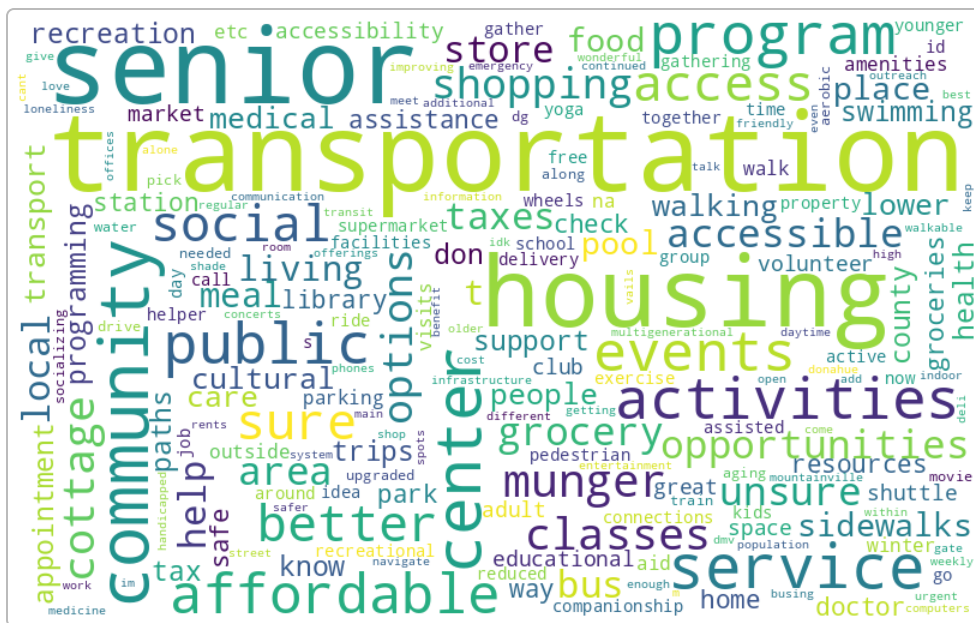


Rating of Parks and Recreation Facilities. Parks and recreation amenities were also viewed favorably, though with some room to grow. **298 people (46%)** rated Cornwall's parks and recreational facilities as "Good," and **72 (11%)** as "Excellent." On the other hand, **190 (29%)** said "Fair," and **67 (10%)** "Poor." A handful (7) were unsure. So, while a majority find the facilities adequate or better, roughly 4 in 10 see the quality as only fair or worse. This suggests moderate satisfaction; many enjoy the parks but would welcome improvements (better maintenance, more facilities, upgrades to playgrounds, etc.).

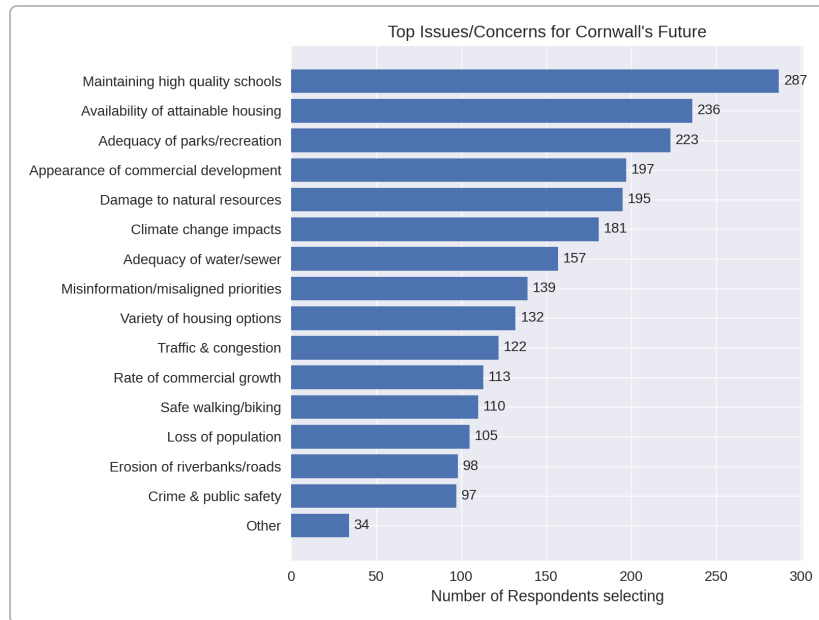




Open-ended: Programs for Families/Youth. Residents see a need for more activities for children and teens. The word cloud for programs benefiting families and young people shows big words like “**program,**” “**activities,**” “**sports,**” “**summer,**” “**teen,**” “**youth,**” “**community center,**” and “**events.**” Many suggested expanding **youth sports leagues, summer programs/camps, after-school activities, and teen centers or hangout spots.** The words “teen” and “kid” appearing prominently indicate focus on pre-teens and teenagers – respondents mentioned things like a **youth center, skate park, arcade, more school clubs, and family events.** Overall, the community is asking for **more structured programs and safe spaces for young people,** to enrich youth engagement in Cornwall.



Open-ended: Services for Seniors. In terms of senior needs, the key words were “**transportation,**” “**housing,**” “**affordable,**” “**shopping,**” “**medical,**” “**social,**” and “**center.**” This signals that respondents want to support seniors with **better transportation/shuttle services, affordable senior housing options, easier access**



Key Future Challenges/Concerns. Finally, the survey asked which issues are most important for Cornwall to address in the next five years. The community's top concerns are clear: **"Maintaining high quality schools" was the #1 issue (287 votes)**, underscoring education's importance even in a comprehensive plan context. Next was the **"Availability of attainable housing options" (236 votes)**, echoing earlier housing affordability concerns. **Parks/recreation adequacy (223)** and **protecting natural resources (195)** also ranked very high, again reflecting the value placed on environment and quality of life amenities. Also notable were **"Appearance of commercial development" (197)** and **"Climate change impacts" (181)** – the former suggests people worry about how new development looks and fits Cornwall's character, and the latter that residents are mindful of climate-related threats (flooding, storms). **Infrastructure** issues made the list too: *water/sewer adequacy (157)* and *traffic congestion (122)* were mentioned by many. Interestingly, **"Misaligned needs & priorities due to misinformation" (139)** appeared as a concern – implying some feel that better communication and factual information in the community is needed to align efforts (perhaps a nod to divisive narratives or lack of awareness on issues). Lower on the list, but still of concern, were **population loss (105)**, **erosion of riverbanks/roads (98)**, and **crime/public safety (97)** – the latter being relatively low, consistent with the general sense of Cornwall as safe. Only 34 chose "Other" – most key issues were captured in the provided categories. In summary, residents want the Town to focus on **schools, housing affordability, parks and environment, managing development, infrastructure, and truthful communication** – these are the challenges they believe most critical for Cornwall's next five years.

Conclusion

In summary, the Comprehensive Plan Survey results illustrate a community that **deeply values its small-town quality of life – its good schools, safety, natural beauty, and sense of community – while also recognizing areas for improvement.** Residents broadly support initiatives to preserve and enhance these valued aspects: they favor protecting open spaces, investing in parks and trails, and maintaining public safety services. At the same time, they see needs for **more attainable housing, a more vibrant downtown with shops and eateries, better youth and senior amenities, and infrastructure upgrades.** Opinions on growth and development are somewhat mixed – for instance, there is cautious support for diversified

housing and clear support for small businesses and tourism, but also a desire to keep Cornwall's character (emphasis on design guidelines and concentrating development in the village center).

The data show strong consensus on many priorities (e.g., environmental conservation, improving Main Street aesthetics, supporting local agriculture, slowing traffic, seeking grants for improvements). Where the community is divided – notably on zoning for new housing – the plan will need to balance those viewpoints, perhaps by educating residents (as misinformation was flagged as an issue) and finding middle-ground solutions (such as well-designed mixed-use projects that provide housing but fit Cornwall's character).

Ultimately, the survey reveals a community eager to **proactively plan for the future**: residents want the Town to pursue projects (from stormwater fixes to new community facilities) and not remain stagnant. They are willing to support changes – adding sidewalks, encouraging tourism, updating zoning – as long as those changes align with Cornwall's core values of community, environment, and heritage. These findings provide a clear roadmap for the Comprehensive Plan: **focus on maintaining what people love about Cornwall, address the practical needs (housing, infrastructure) that will sustain those qualities, and leverage the strong public support for initiatives that improve community life for all ages.**

Appendix B:

Inventory of Town properties on the National Register of Historic Places

HISTORIC SITES WITHIN THE TOWN OF CORNWALL (OUTSIDE THE VILLAGE)

The properties below are listed on the National Register of Historic Places by the NYS State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (SHPO). For more information please visit the following website: <https://cris.parks.ny.gov/Login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2f>

RESOURCE NAME	LOCATION	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Carney-Gatfield House	375 Angola at Mine Hill Rd	Also identified as Carvey-Gatfield House built c. 1805
Cornwall Friends' / Quaker Meeting House	9W and Quaker Ave	Built 1790, oldest religious building in Cornwall
Isaac Cocks House	Old Pleasant Hill Road	Built c. 1795, on SKAC property
Mountainville Grange	Rt 32, north of Star Road	1902 meeting hall, currently Arc of Learning
Hand, Elias, House	(behind the above meeting hall)	Built in 1830
Woodruff House	2333 Rt 32	Fieldstone house built c. 1790
Walter Hand House	520 Angola Road at Juniper Glenn	Gothic revival built in 1870
Canterbury Presbyterian Church	Clinton St at Tomily Road	Built in 1826, services last held in 2004, currently used as a dance/ music school
Sands-Ring Homestead	Main St at Hudson	Built in 1732, owned by the town along with the adjacent cemetery
Clark, A. J., Store	Main St at Bridge Street	Italianate style brick, mixed use bldg built 1875
Cromwell Manor (aka David Cromwell House)	Angola Road	Main house is Greek Revival built in 1820
Pigott, Patrick, House (Angola Lodge)	Angola & 9W	Built in 1860
Wood, Wilford, House	58 Pleasant Hill Road	Built in 1890
Scribner House	19 Roe Avenue	Built in 1892, several modifications / additions to original building
Brewster, Oliver, House	66 Willow Ave (house and barn)	Gothic revival built c. 1850.
Sutherland, David, House	70 Angola Road	Stone farmhouse built 1770-1780
Hatch Mansion	SKAC	French chateau built in 1935
Brooks, Samuel, House	115 Pleasant Hill Road	Clapboard, gothic revival built in 1860.

Sayer, Mary Van Duzer, House	99 Taylor Rd, at Coventry Ln	Fieldstone federal style farmhouse built in 1832
Sutherland, Daniel, House	32 Angola Road	Built in 1886, clapboard, stick style with gabled roof
Kellogg House	Old Pleasant Hill Road	Built in 1795
A. Walsh House	Rt 94	Built in 1842
Firthcliffe Firehouse	196 Willow Avenue	Built c. 1900 by Charles Firthcliffe who owned a local textile mill