

This document provides specific strategies, policies and programs that will guide the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. The Detailed Strategies are organized by our 8 Goals:

1 Agriculture and Open Space

- 1.1 Agricultural Zone** -- To reinforce the importance of agriculture in Ancram, adopt a local “Right to Farm Law”, and rename the existing Rural Residential Zone to the Agricultural Zoning District.
- 1.2 Farmland Protection Plan** -- Use available NYS Ag and Markets grants to develop an Agricultural/Farmland Protection Plan which will recommend zoning revisions and programs that promote profitable agriculture and protect farmland.
- 1.3 Purpose Statements** — Zoning purpose statements should be expanded to recognize agriculture’s contribution to the town’s rural quality through open space, wildlife habitats, watershed purification, and natural resource preservation.
- 1.4 Open Space Development** -- In the Agricultural Zoning District, require “open space development designs” for all major and minor subdivisions that a) protect at least 60% of the parcel to be developed b) establish an average density of one dwelling per 3.5 acres, c) allow for a variety of lot sizes as small as ½ acre, subject to adequate water and septic and d) tailor standards for minor subdivisions and single house developments so they are more flexible and less complex. “Open space” should be defined to exclude things like lawns, roads, courtyards, driveways, leech fields and golf courses. Density incentives or other mechanisms should be put into place to encourage developers to exceed the 60% target for open space and connect open space whenever possible to create unfragmented agricultural or other open space lands.
- 1.5 Minimize Development on Farmland** -- To minimize the impact of new development on agricultural land, all structures should be placed outside of lands having prime farmland soils and placed on the edges of open farm fields. Non-farm structures should be located away from active farm fields, prime soils, soils of statewide importance, etc. Buffer zones between farmland and new residential uses should be established by the new residential user, not the farm.
- 1.6 Site Plan Review** – Improve the Site Plan Review standards and processes to steer all new residential and commercial development to areas within the lot which will minimize the negative effect on farms, farmland and open space. This process should be used to evaluate and permit non-farm uses located in the proposed agricultural zoning district so that they do not negatively impact farm operations and open space.
- 1.7 Farm Worker Housing** – Continue to allow farm worker housing as a permitted right subject to open space development design guidelines and site plan review, and simplify the process for obtaining approvals for farm worker

housing.

- 1.8 Agricultural Advisory Committee** -- Appoint an Agricultural Advisory Committee of farmers, landowners and town officials to work on developing the Agriculture & Farmland Protection Plan and advising the Planning Board and Town Board on agricultural matters on an ongoing basis.
- 1.9 Development Rights** -- Develop a program to support the purchase or lease of development rights on agricultural lands, and consider allowing the transfer of development rights from one parcel to another. Funding for these projects need not be drawn from Town funds, but could be raised privately via grants, voluntary contributions or from transfer taxes on property sales above the average value of sales in the town, if this process can be established. Direct agricultural protection efforts to those locations identified as being part of the core farmlands in Ancram, and encourage the use of agricultural easements placed on farmland by willing landowners.
- 1.10 Ag District 1** – In coordination with the County, review all land in County Ag District 1 to insure it includes all viable farmland and removes land that should not be included.
- 1.11 Density Control Schedule** -- Review and revise the Density Control Schedule to make it applicable to the variety of smaller lots permitted under open space development design guidelines. Allow for reduced road frontage requirements in order to creatively site new houses, and modify side yard and front yard setbacks as appropriate.
- 1.12 Farm Stands** - Promote farm stands as uses permitted by right in Ancram. Currently, zoning requires that farm stands can only have produce grown principally on the same lot. Change this section of zoning to promote farmers working together to sell local produce via farm stands.
- 1.13 Additional Farm Related Businesses** – Allow additional farm related business uses (such as, but not limited, to farm markets, farm equipment repair and small scale slaughterhouses) in the Agricultural Zoning District, subject to size limitations consistent with the rural character of the town. Require special use permits and site plan review using the standard NY State Ag and Markets site plan review process. Establish adequate buffers between new agricultural businesses and residential areas in the agricultural zone to protect the residential areas. These buffers should be the responsibility of the new agriculture-related businesses. New agriculture-related business uses should also be evaluated during the site plan review process based on supplemental regulations to ensure the:
 - 1.13.1 Nature, intensity, scope, size, appearance, and type of proposed use conform to existing ag structures and uses;
 - 1.13.2 Use is located in a way that does not interfere with ag operations or expansion;
 - 1.13.3 Use benefits agriculture, forestry or open spaces.
- 1.14 Agriculture-Related Home Occupations** -- Amend zoning section V (1) to allow a variety of agriculture-related home occupations. High impact home occupations such as farm machinery repair and sawmills should be subject to

special use permits.

- 1.15 Land Use Laws** -- Amend local land use laws to reference NY Agriculture and Markets Law 25-aa and Town Law 283-a requirements for agriculture data statements, notices of intent, and disclosure statements. Ag Data Statements are required to be filed for certain land uses proposed within 500 feet of a farm operation located in an agricultural district. Notice of Intent are required when public funds are spent on certain capital projects located in an agricultural district, and can be considered as ag-impact statements. Disclosure Notices are required to be given to all prospective land buyers in an agricultural district prior to signing a purchase contract and are designed to notify property buyers about the sights, sounds, smells, and other aspects of agriculture in the area. Realtors should give out these statements, but the Planning Board could also give out these disclosures as part of their process.
- 1.16 Definitions** -- Define agriculture in the zoning law to be consistent with Section 301 of the NYS Agriculture and Markets Law. Current zoning does not include any definition.

2 Environment

- 2.1 Protect Groundwater Supply** -- To prevent the long term deterioration and depletion of the Town's groundwater supply, implement the recommendation of the 2008 NY Rural Water Association Ancram Groundwater Study to decrease the average residential density outside the hamlets from one residence per 3 acres to one residence per 3.5 acres.
- 2.2 Prevent Groundwater Contamination** -- To protect the Town's groundwater resources from surface contamination, implement recommendations regarding residential development and protection of hydrogeologically sensitive areas as presented in the 2008 NY Rural Water Association's Groundwater Protection Plan, including prohibiting all development, mining or commercial logging on or within 150 feet of streams, wetlands, floodplains and other hydrogeologically sensitive areas. Conduct further water studies as recommended, implement the public education recommendations included in the Groundwater Protection Plan report, and encourage environmentally sound agricultural "best practices" as recommended by the NY State Department of Agriculture and Markets.
- 2.3 Site Plan Review** -- Establish site plan review processes which will steer all new subdivisions and development within a parcel away from environmentally sensitive lands, which are identified on Map X.
- 2.4 Water and Wetland Buffers** -- Maintain the current 150-foot water and wetland buffers, and add a recommended minimum 25-foot streamside vegetation buffer which may be increased during site plan review if streamside terrain and slope require it. Streamside vegetation buffers should be natural vegetation and not lawns. Establish additional buffers to protect vernal pools, and review adequacy of vernal pool protection as part of the site plan review process for new development. Allow access to streams and wetlands for recreational uses.
- 2.5 Determining Building Lots** -- Reduce the number of buildable lots on a parcel based on the presence of defined environmental obstacles. Defined environmental obstacles should include water, wetlands and floodplains. Establish both a formula-based mechanism (such as: water acreage yields no

buildable lots; wetlands and floodplains yield 50% of allowed buildable lots; no environmental issues yield 100% of allowed buildable lots), and a “yield management” mechanism which would permit a developer to demonstrate, through site layout, perk and well tests, how many parcels, up to the average density of 1 home per 3.5 acres, can be accommodated on a given parcel while meeting all the Town’s open space development guidelines and water and wetland buffers.

2.6 Gravel Mining -- Update section V (A) (2) Excavation. This section should be consistent with and reference the New York State DEC mining law requirements and outline the specific standards for which the Town is authorized to review. Review and update existing regulations that establish mines as uses allowed subject to a special permit, and maintain scenic overlay standards related to mines. Develop town gravel mining standards as follows:

2.6.1 For mines that require a DEC permit, require a Special Use permit with supplementary regulations that address conditions over which the Town has authority as outlined in Title 27, MLRA §23-2703-2.

2.6.2 Exempt from regulation mining done by landowners on their own land, for their own use, in quantities less than 1,000 tons or 750 cubic yards, whichever is less, within twelve successive calendar months.

2.6.3 For all other mines that do not require a NYS mining permit (Title 27, §23-2705-8), require a special use permit with supplementary regulations designed to protect the community including but not limited to appropriate mapping, detailed mining and reclamation plan, traffic, visual and noise impact studies, and completion of a full Environmental Assessment Form. The Planning Board should seek legal and engineering advice to be paid for by the applicant via an escrow account.

2.7 Commercial Logging -- Establish commercial logging standards and a permitting process consistent with DEC logging guidelines for State owned lands including guidelines for days and hours of operation, truck traffic levels, noise levels, erosion control and clear cutting. Require site plan review for any logging operation over 5 acres or in situations which could negatively impact ridgelines or important scenic views.

2.8 Residential/Agricultural Solar and Wind Power – Revise zoning to allow solar and wind power for agricultural, residential, and small business use. Refer to NY State Board of Real Property Tax Law Section 487 and NYS Department of Ag and Markets guidance regarding agricultural wind, solar and waste energy systems. Evaluate solar and wind energy for Town facilities like the Town Hall, the fire house and the Town garage.

2.9 Commercial Solar and Wind Power -- Prohibit large scale commercial solar and wind installations in residential and agricultural districts as they are industrial uses and are inconsistent with the rural character of the Town.

2.10 Environmental Conservation Committee -- Appoint an Environmental Conservation Committee to advise the Town Board, the Planning Board, the ZBA and other town officials on environmental matters. The first assignment for this Committee could be to inventory and map environmentally sensitive sites in

Ancram which should be targeted for preservation.

- 2.11 Steep Slopes** -- Development on steep slopes over 15% can be permitted subject to site plan review and with guidelines and standards which control stormwater run-off and visual impacts on ridgelines. All land use laws in Ancram should be updated to reference NYS DEC and Federal stormwater requirements. All commercial land disturbances greater than 1 acre require preparation of a State Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan, as does all residential development that disturbs more than 5 acres. Establish erosion and sedimentation control standards that incorporate NYS DEC best management practices. Work to minimize impervious surfaces, and avoid compaction of soils over large areas in areas of hydrogeological vulnerability.
- 2.12 Ridgeline Protection** – Avoid placing structures along ridgelines. Establish ridgeline protection standards and guidelines to protect the natural beauty of the area. Locate structures so rooflines do not extend above the existing treeline. Encourage voluntary use of the NY State DEC guidelines for assessing and managing visual impacts of development. If no trees exist, then rooflines should not extend above the ridge line. Use selective tree removal instead of clear cutting to the maximum extent.
- 2.13 Lighting Standards** -- Establish municipal, residential and commercial lighting standards in zoning to minimize the negative visual impact of excessive glare and light. Include lighting standards in the site plan review process to reduce light pollution and glare. Commercial lighting should be on poles no higher than 18 feet and all should use full cut-off (shielded) lighting fixtures. Lighted signs should have exterior lights mounted to concentrate beams of light, rather than internally lighted signs. Authorize the Planning Board to require timers and other mitigation to reduce night-time light pollution impacts. Consider establishing maximum illumination levels by zoning district: the hamlets could be 8 lux (0.8 footcandles) and the rural areas could be 3 lux (0.3 footcandles). Any parking lot should minimize glare to nearby properties. Final lighting standards should be consistent with NYS Safety Codes.
- 2.14 Scenic Corridor Overlay** -- Revise the boundaries of the Scenic Corridor Overlay Zone to reflect sight lines and reflect terrain features, and not be a fixed distance off Route 22.
- 2.15 Visual Impact Analysis** -- Establish visual impact analysis standards based on DEC policy for the Planning Board to apply during the site plan review process. NYS DEC provides a model for this in its Visual Assessment Policy. When development has the potential to impact visual resources of importance to the Town, the Planning Board or Zoning Board of Appeals should require use of the DEC Visual Environmental Assessment Form during the SEQRA process to help evaluation of visual impacts. Projects undergoing site plan review or special permit approval should be required to do an inventory of aesthetic resources on site, determine the extent of visibility of the project, determine if the project will have a significant negative impact on the aesthetic character, and mitigate impacts. New development should be required to provide adequate visual buffers to protect existing development. The Town should:
- 2.15.1 Encourage use of screening, relocation, camouflage, low profiles, or downsizing visible structures.

- 2.15.2 Encourage avoiding placement of buildings in the middle of large open areas. Place structures along the edges.
 - 2.15.3 Promote protection of mature and historic trees, and other unique features such as stone walls.
 - 2.15.4 Promote commercial building design and siting that is consistent with historic and traditional architecture and development patterns in the area, including setbacks, building styles, scale, rooflines, and signage.
- 2.16 Flood Plain Zoning District** -- Include the Floodplain district on the official zoning map and prohibit uses such as golf courses and country clubs in floodplains to minimize the potential for groundwater pollution.
- 2.17 Scenic Protection Plan** -- Review the Scenic Resource Protection Plan to determine which of the roads it had recommended to become scenic corridors and byways should actually be designated as such.
- 2.18 Purpose Statements** -- Ensure that all Ancram's land use laws include purpose statements that detail the important role the aesthetic/visual character plays in the town, as visual and scenic resources are highly valued by residents.
- 2.19 Water Resource Protection** -- Amend local land use laws so that the development review process includes an assessment of and evaluates potential impacts to groundwater resources. Authorize the Planning Board to require groundwater studies to consider the location, yield and quality of wells if necessary. Consider buying land, or purchasing or leasing development rights, to protect certain areas of hydrogeological vulnerability
- 2.20 Subdivision Regulations** -- Review and revise the Town's existing Subdivision Regulations to ensure that natural, cultural, and historic resources are preserved. Use of building envelopes, more emphasis on the relationship between the environment and rural character, and ensuring that all time frames and administration are consistent with NYS Town Law are all aspects that should be reviewed and revised.
- 2.21 Roads and Driveways** -- When new roads are being proposed in a development or subdivision, allow for the use of front-loaded roads, shared driveways and shared access ways. These tactics prevent multiple curb cuts to the existing road and can be very effective in protecting open spaces and rural character.
- 2.22 Flag Lots** -- Allow for limited use of flag lots under certain circumstances. Zoning and subdivision should very clearly state the siting standards for such configurations so that they protect farmland and open space, and do not hasten conversion of farmlands or result in other unintended consequences. When done correctly, flag lots can effectively protect natural resources, open space, and character of an area by setting structures off the road, and limiting a uniform look of subdivisions.
- 2.23 Fuel Storage** -- Change zoning use category "fuel storage and distribution" as allowed in the Business and Industrial districts from permitted by right with site plan review to requiring a special use permit with site plan review. These uses have high potential to be polluting, and these districts are located in the densest locations within Ancram. Special care should be taken in siting these for safety and potential pollution reasons.
- 2.24 Natural Habitats** -- Incorporate into land use laws the review and protection of

critical natural habitats by requiring a biodiversity assessment before a major subdivision is presented for consideration. New projects should avoid fragmenting forestlands, and should protect vernal pools and their associated upland habitats. In areas such as the Drowned Lands Swamp area, the Town should recognize that conditions may warrant a wetland buffer in excess of the 150-foot minimum required by current Town zoning. Depending on the species present, vernal pools may need up to 750' of undisturbed forestlands to maintain proper ecological functioning.

- 2.25 Local Type 1 List** -- Consider developing a local Type I list for SEQRA purposes. SEQRA allows municipalities to establish their own Type I list. This list would identify those uses that are more likely to have negative environmental impacts. Major subdivisions of 10 or more lots, non-agricultural buildings over 20,000 square feet in size, and industrial developments are examples of uses that might be considered for this list. Type I actions would require applicants to fill out the Full Environmental Assessment Form during the SEQRA process.

3 Community Character

- 3.1 Improve Communications** -- To improve and expand communications and encourage community participation in town government, establish a regular monthly email update process, initiate a quarterly, mailed-to-the-home, Town/Community/Fire District newsletter and establish a Town and community bulletin board both on the web site and in a prominent location to advertise events and activities.
- 3.2 Annual Town Meeting** -- Improve the Community's dialogue with Town government by establishing an annual or semi-annual town-meeting day to talk about longer term issues and concerns not suitable for discussion at monthly Town board meetings.
- 3.3 Open Government** -- To promote open government, expand the Town web site to include information about town activities and all town information now available to the public at Town Hall or the County level like the annual Town budget, monthly Town financial reports, monthly building department reports, property tax assessment information, voter registration information, etc. In addition, all Town applications and forms should be made available and downloadable from the Town web site.
- 3.4 Encourage Participation in Decision Making** – To help achieve consensus on important issues facing the Town, Town Officials should encourage an inclusive, open discussion, listen with respect to all points of view, focus on the facts rather than opinions, and make decisions based on the long term vision and goals of the Community, tempered by the realities of day-to-day budget constraints.
- 3.5 Preserve Town History** -- To preserve and communicate the Town's history and traditions, expand support for the Town historian and other historic preservation efforts and encourage a complete inventory of all the Town's historic places and historic structures to be conducted by the Town Historian. Define procedures for and require a historic resource "assessment" as a regular part of all subdivisions, special use permits and site plan reviews. Use the environmental assessment process under SEQRA to review and mitigate impacts to historic

and archaeological resources, and amend the site plan section of zoning to include an inventory and assessment of a project's impact on historic resources.

- 3.6 Incentives for Historic Preservation** – Consider establishing local incentives for historic preservation. Consider property tax rebate incentives to encourage private property owners to carry out stabilization, rehabilitation, and improvements to historic structures that are part of the Town Inventory of Historic Places. Other incentives can include an historic landowner recognition program (awards, certificates, plaques, etc.) or use of façade easement programs if property owners decide to pursue them. If requested by a property owner, the Town should consider holding a historic easement on a structure to ensure that the historic qualities are preserved permanently.
- 3.7 NYS Historic Preservation Office** -- Request an advisory opinion from the NY State Historic Preservation Office when a project has potential impacts to historic and archaeological resources, as needed.
- 3.8 Historic Preservation Laws** -- Local land use laws should reference and require compliance with applicable State and federal laws related to protection of historic and archeological resources including Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, Section 14.09 of the State Preservation Act of 1980 and SEQRA, Part 617.
- 3.9 Map/Inventory Historical Places** -- Fully develop a Geographic Information System (GIS) map showing historic and cultural places in the Town. The inventory should include all historical markers, cemeteries, and other historical and cultural sites. Consider making this inventory a full historical survey. This would identify all properties that may be eligible to be placed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. This information can be used on the Town web site and in a Town marketing and business development brochure to promote economic development.
- 3.10 Support Volunteers** -- To provide needed community services, continue to provide financial support to encourage and assist Town and Community volunteer activities.
- 3.11 Ethical Conduct Law** -- To clarify expectations regarding Town government operations and conduct by town officials, update and implement the Town's ethical conduct law to address conflicts of interest, open meetings and other appropriate topics. Establish a Town ethical conduct committee as envisioned in the current Town ethics law.
- 3.12 Community Gateways** -- Enhance the community gateways or “welcome” signs, with landscaping, lighting, and special signage. Gateways can establish a theme and can include signs, sculptures, or historic objects.

4 Community Services

- 4.1 Identify Needed Community Services** -- Appoint a Task Force to identify additional community services needed, with a special emphasis on meeting the needs of seniors, children and teens.
- 4.2 Identify Needed Recreational Services** -- Appoint a Task Force to identify additional recreational facilities needed for all ages. One role this task force should play is to evaluate and develop a Community hiking/biking trail system,

secure private property owner agreement to participate in it, use NY State insurance programs for these kinds of activities to protect the Town and participating property owners from liability, and seek funding from State agencies and private organizations to implement it. Create a plan showing potential pathways in an interconnected system of open space corridors to offer recreational opportunities and protect environmentally sensitive areas. Preserved open spaces should be connected via trails. These projects, when approved, should be included in the Town's Capital Plan.

- 4.3 Community Services Plan** -- Develop formal Community Services and Recreation Plan, estimate financial resources needed to implement these plans, and identify and secure sources of grant funding to support the implementation of these Plans.
- 4.4 Emergency Preparedness Plan** – Create a process to ensure that Town residents are protected with an updated Emergency Preparedness Plan and disseminate the contents of that plan to the Community.
- 4.5 Road Safety** -- Create a process to ensure that emergency services and the Town Highway Superintendent are consulted prior to the Planning Board or Zoning Board of Appeals approving a development proposal to ensure that potential emergency service and road safety issues are evaluated and mitigated.
- 4.6 Per Lot Recreation Fee** -- Consider establishing a per lot recreation fee for new subdivisions to support new recreation programs in town.
- 4.7 Dump Hours** – Encourage the County to extend the hours for the local transfer station. Offer facilities for more recycling opportunities.

5 Town Infrastructure

- 5.1 Financial Analytic Advisory Committee:** Appoint a Financial Analytic Advisory Committee to work as a “staff” for the Town Board, Highway Department, Fire Commissioners and others to help identify all long term capital needs of the Community, and determine how and when to accomplish them. This Committee should also be “tasked” to develop the skills, experience, process and contacts to assist all Town agencies to plan and analyze large capital projects, and to support each specific requirement as needed and as requested. Members of this Board should be appointed for terms similar to those of Planning Board members, and should become the Town's “institutional memory” on financial planning and management issues.
- 5.2 Capital Plan** -- Develop a Five Year Town Capital Plan, and update it annually. Identify the financial requirements to fund the Capital Plan, and possible funding sources. The Five Year Capital Plan should cover buildings, roads, equipment and other Town and Fire district capital expenditures, including planning for future highway department needs.
- 5.3 Town Law 272-a** -- As per Town Law 272-a, ensure all government agencies consider this Comprehensive Plan when implementing capital projects in Ancram.
- 5.4 Shared Municipal Services** – Pursuant to NY State initiatives to minimize costs and taxes, establish a task force to evaluate, on an ongoing basis, further sharing or consolidating all municipal services (such as highway department functions, fire, assessment, ZEO/building Inspection, etc) with neighboring

communities and the County.

- 5.5 Waste Treatment** -- Any future consideration of public waste treatment in hamlets should include all alternative options such as cluster systems, small centralized community systems, sequencing batch reactors, alternative collection systems to reduce costs, small and decentralized wastewater management systems, constructed wetlands, and other technologies. All may be more cost-effective than traditional sewer systems.
- 5.6 Highway Advisory Committee** -- Appoint a Highway Advisory Committee to work with the Highway Superintendent on identifying and planning for highway budgets, staff, equipment, facilities and other requirements related to Town roads.
- 5.7 Rural Road Standards** -- Adopt and use The NY Association of Town Highway Superintendent Manual and Cornell's Rural Road Standards for the town's road management program. Review and update town's municipal and subdivision road standards, and ensure that they reflect rural road standards. Consider adopting the low-volume road classification and maintenance standards advocated by the Local Roads Research and Coordination Council (Manual: Guidelines for Rural and County Roads, December 1992) and the AASHTO Guidelines for Geometric Design of Very Low-Volume Local Roads, 2001.
- 5.8 New Town Roads** -- Establish a policy for how, and under what circumstances, the Town will review and accept new roads as official town roads.
- 5.9 Traffic Impact** – Authorize the Planning Board to require traffic impact studies whenever a project is likely to add more than 100 cars a day to local roads.
- 5.10 Access Management Techniques** – Update development standards to apply access management techniques to new development. Access management serves to reduce the number of curb cuts on roads. Proper access management can prevent costly highway improvements, can improve safety, reduce congestion and delays, and make pedestrian travel safer. Some basic access management principles are:
- 5.10.1 Access through a shared road or driveway.
 - 5.10.2 Site parking areas to the rear, or side.
 - 5.10.3 Use of landscaping to establish visual and physical boundaries between parking lots and people.
 - 5.10.4 Including landscaped islands within parking lots.
 - 5.10.5 Limiting access to a site with preferably one controlled point.
 - 5.10.6 Use of street trees wherever possible.
- 5.11 Cul-De-Sacs** -- Minimize use of cul-de-sac roads. Cul-de-sacs should only be used when no other alternatives exist. Should a dead-end road be necessary, use a "T" end or a "hammerhead" design instead of a cul-de-sac. Where a cul-de-sac is the only alternative, reduce the "bulb" width to no more than 45 feet and limit the number of units with access to that cul-de-sac to 6. In all cases where a cul-de-sac road is used, provide for adequate access and turnaround space for fire, highway and emergency vehicles.
- 5.12 Roadside Tree & Vegetation Management** – Recognize that most property owners do not want town, county, state or electrical company crews to cut trees or vegetation along roads adjacent to their properties. Establish a policy that local, county and state highway departments and electric company crews

should consult with property owners before cutting trees and vegetation along roads. Minimize tree vegetation trimming subject to the needs of road safety and protection of overhead electrical lines, and minimize road widening efforts because both road features contribute to rural character. Special care should be taken to protect historic, old and mature trees.

- 5.13 Speed Enforcement** -- Work with the County Sheriff and NYS Police to enhance speed enforcement along State and County highways through town.
- 5.14 Regional Transportation** -- Work with Columbia and Dutchess Counties to provide an enhanced transportation system with stronger emphasis on walking paths and trails, shared roadways for pedestrians and bikes, and public transportation.

6 Town Centers

- 6.1 Ancram Revitalization** -- Involve all Ancram “stakeholders” including the Ancram Preservation Group, the Mill, the Fire District and all business and private property owners in the revitalization planning process. Review and implement recommendations of the Community Development Block Grant Project related to the revitalization of our hamlets, improving the 82/7 intersection problem in Ancram and the problem of the deteriorating buildings in the center of Ancram. Evaluate the feasibility of implementing sewer options and alternatives for the buildings in the center of Ancram.
- 6.2 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funding** – Apply for annual CDBG technical assistance funds to support community development planning efforts, and apply for major CDBG funding available to support town center improvements, housing renovation and affordable housing activities.
- 6.3 Rename Hamlet Zones** – Amend zoning to create hamlet zoning districts named Ancram, Ancramdale, and Boston Corners with uses and development standards specific to each hamlet in order to maintain the unique character of each.
- 6.4 Hamlet Boundaries** -- Make only minor changes to hamlet boundaries, adjusting them slightly to follow parcel boundaries; consider expanding the hamlets by several hundred yards if possible based on terrain and environmental constraints, to provide for additional affordable lots.
- 6.5 Commercial Zones** -- Consider increasing the size of the “commercial zones” in the hamlets, and review what commercial uses will be permitted in these zones to ensure they are appropriate for Ancram and of a size and scale appropriate for the small, rural nature of the hamlets.
- 6.6 Parking** -- Identify locations that may be suitable for a municipal parking lot in Ancram. Should a Town parking lot be created, ensure that it is adequately screened from the road with landscaping. Preferably, place parking lots to the rear of buildings.
- 6.7 Building Improvement Grants** -- Look into façade improvement grants, low interest loans, incentives, and other programs to help property owners improve buildings. Identify and document problem properties and work with property owners to improve the use and appearance of residential, commercial, or mixed-use buildings throughout the Town.
- 6.8 Deteriorating Buildings** – Should any deteriorating buildings in Ancram be

demolished or moved, the vacant lots should be cleared of debris and re-seeded or landscaped to improve the aesthetic character of the lot until it developed again.

- 6.9 Design Standards** -- Establish commercial development design standards to ensure new buildings are built in a manner consistent in scale and design to the traditional nature of Ancram's hamlets.
- 6.10 Intersections** -- Work with DOT and the County transportation department to improve the Routes 7/82 and 8/3/82 intersections with grade, alignment, signaling and speed posting changes. Conduct a traffic engineering study of these intersections to detail strategies for improvements.
- 6.11 Highway Noise** -- Enact highway noise restrictions per Section 386 of the New York State Vehicle & Traffic Law to control noise from "jake brakes". An outright prohibition of the use of engine brakes, commonly referred to as "jake brakes," is not encouraged as it may violate Federal regulations regarding interstate commerce. Also work with the NY State DOT to reduce speed limits on 82 South toward Ancram, and move the lower speed limits further out of town than the current 35 MPH zone.

7 Economic Development

- 7.1 Economic Development Committee/Plan** -- Establish an economic development committee to assist the town in implementing the economic development related sections of this plan, to help market Ancram and attract new businesses and jobs. This committee should develop an Economic Development Plan designed to recruit new businesses, to attract and retain employment opportunities, and create and maintain a vacant land and building inventory to identify and promote potential redevelopment sites. In the short term, businesses should be recruited that the local market can support, while we explore the development of attracting or developing unique businesses which are logically suited to the area and the assets of the Community. Because we do not have the local population needed to support retail businesses, we need to create plans to attract, develop or expand retail businesses which will serve as a "draw" for people to visit Ancram. Work with neighboring towns and the County to develop economic plans and programs.
- 7.2 Mixed Commercial/Residential Uses** -- Expand the Hamlet Business Districts and mixed-use commercial/residential uses in the Hamlet Business Districts, consider allowing small scale commercial operations in the Agricultural Zoning District subject to special use permit and site plan review, and consider establishing design standards compatible with our community's rural character for all commercial developments.
- 7.3 Incentives** -- Consider tax or density incentives to attract retail and restaurant businesses and home-based businesses to the commercial zones in the hamlets.
- 7.4 Telecommunications** -- Work with the County and neighboring towns to improve telecommunications services. Foster improved telecommunications and utility infrastructure, including cellular, broadband services, fiber optic, Wi-Fi, DSL, high speed Internet, and/or cable access connections. Identify locations on public land that may be technically and aesthetically feasible for placement of

transmission tower structures. Participate in State-level programs aimed at improving telecommunication technologies in rural areas. In hamlet areas, encourage co-location of services: for example allow cellular utilities to be placed on the top of or within existing structures.

- 7.5 Web Site** -- Promote local businesses on the town web site, and encourage local businesses to advertise on the town web site.
- 7.6 Building Trades** -- Stimulate the construction and building trades with the affordable housing programs outlined as part of Goal 8 below.
- 7.7 Agricultural Jobs** -- Stimulate expansion of agricultural jobs via implementation of the Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan.
- 7.8 Size and Scale of Businesses** – Establish zoning regulations which require all commercial activities to be evaluated based on their size, scale and appropriateness. Prohibit big box stores, large industrial operations and all other businesses which are of a scale, size or design not consistent with the small, rural, scenic character of the Town.
- 7.9 CDBG Funding** -- Apply annually for available CDBG funding for economic development planning grants and projects and establish a strong relationship and reputation with the CDBG program.
- 7.10 Floating Zone** – Review and strengthen provisions and standards in current zoning regarding the “floating zone” concept to provide flexibility in allowing and siting commercial businesses compatible with the rural, scenic character of the Town. The “floating zone” provision could be used to permit the establishment of commercial businesses not envisioned in Zoning. Expand the floating zone performance standards to require dedicated open space, and design and layout standards that will ensure consistency with open space, environmental and other goals and policies of the Town. Design and layout standards include but are not limited to screening, buffering, protection of slopes, ridgelines, minimization of traffic impacts, and maintenance of connections with other existing open spaces and unique habitats.
- 7.11 Mining** -- Remove “extraction” from the “manufacture, fabrication, extraction...” line in the use schedule and make it its own use category since extraction (mining) is already defined and regulated separately.
- 7.12 Commercial Design Standards** -- Establish design standards for all commercial uses. These should include, at the least, architectural style guidelines, screening, building form, and signage guidelines to ensure new and renovated commercial and mixed-use development (where allowed) retains the small town, historic, and rural character of the Town.
- 7.13 Home Occupations** -- Split home occupations into two categories: “low impact” (no employees other than the homeowner), which should be permitted by right with no review, and “major home occupations” (up to three employees or requiring major vehicle or equipment storage on the property), which should require a special use permit.
- 7.14 Ancram Mill** – Anticipate needs for either expansion or cutbacks at the Ancram Mill, and charge the Ancram Economic Development Committee with developing approaches and alternatives to deal with either eventuality.

8 Housing

- 8.1 Implement Average Density Zoning** – In the Agricultural Zoning District (outside the hamlets) eliminate the three acre minimum lot size zoning requirement and replace it with an average density zoning system which will permit flexible lot sizes as small as ½ acre subject to 1) a parcel average of one dwelling per 3.5 acres and 2) the availability of adequate water and septic. As an example, if you own 35 acres, you could build on up to 10 lots, and the lots could be any size you wanted them to be, assuming adequate water and septic are available.
- 8.2 Open Space Development Design** – Implement “Open Space” development requirements in the Agricultural Zoning District based on the average density of one dwelling per 3.5 acres and requiring protection of at least 60% of the parcel as “open space.” Define how “open space” will be determined to provide for large contiguous open space areas suitable for agriculture, and set standards for open space, cluster and conservation development designs.
- 8.3 Site Plan Review** -- Develop and adopt a Site Plan Review Process covering all types of development that steers development away from certain areas like environmentally and hydrogeologically sensitive areas, farmland, open space, scenic views, ridgelines and other features that contribute to our rural character. This review process should cover both major and minor subdivisions, but be designed to be more flexible and less complex for minor subdivisions.
- 8.4 Density Bonuses** – In addition to offering density bonuses and/or incentives to encourage developers to increase open space beyond the 60% target, consider offering an incentive when developers offer at least 20% of the homes in their development as “affordable homes” to qualified Ancram residents.
- 8.5 Major Subdivisions** -- Require traffic impact studies, hydrogeological (water/wetland) sensitivity analyses, biodiversity assessments and the use of access management techniques for all major (over 4 lots) subdivisions.
- 8.6 ½ Acre Hamlet Zoning** -- Revise zoning in the hamlets to combine the R1 and R2 Zones as shown in the “Proposed Hamlet Zone Map” attached. Allow a minimum lot size in the hamlets of ½ acre provided that adequate water and septic can be supplied.
- 8.7 2-4 Family Homes** – Town-wide, permit the construction of or conversion of single family homes to two to four family homes, septic and water permitting, subject to special use permits and a two story height limit.
- 8.8 Expand Hamlets** -- Expand the hamlets by several hundred yards if possible to expand the availability of smaller, affordable lots, and have hamlet boundaries follow the lot lines of parcels in the hamlets.
- 8.9 Parcels of 6-7 Acres** -- Outside the Hamlet districts, allow all parcels between 6 and 7 acres one minor subdivision to create two lots, provided the resulting parcels are over 1/2 acre, and adequate water and septic are available.
- 8.10 Accessory Apartments** -- Allow one accessory apartment in single family dwellings and in accessory buildings like barns and garages, septic and water permitting, town-wide, subject to special use permits and site plan review.
- 8.11 Garden Apartments and Senior Housing** – Amend zoning to allow for garden apartments and senior citizen housing in the hamlets, subject to site plan review process, special use permits and protection of open space. Include definitions in zoning for both housing types. Establish design standards to require senior housing and garden apartments to have a single family housing appearance similar to other residences in the hamlets.
- 8.12 Nursing Home, Assisted Living and Continuous Care Facilities** – Establish

provisions and standards in zoning to accommodate nursing home, assisted living and continuous care facilities.

8.13 Manufactured Housing – Continue to permit manufactured housing subject to guidelines for single family homes.

8.14 Mobile Home Parks -- Eliminate mobile home parks as a permitted use.

8.15 CDBG Funding -- Apply for CDBG funding for affordable housing acquisition and housing renovation efforts.

8.16 Densely Populated Areas in the Agricultural Zoning District – Identify densely populated areas in the Agricultural Zoning District, such as Rhoda Lake, Carson Road, Four Corners Road and Four Roses Road, and establish setbacks more appropriate for the lot size configurations in these areas. The setbacks established for these areas should be consistent with the setbacks now in the Hamlets.

9 General Recommendations

9.1 Zoning Revisions Committee -- Appoint a Zoning Revisions Committee to bring the Town's zoning and subdivision laws into alignment with this revised Comprehensive Plan, and to identify all town laws pertaining to land use and consolidate them in a single Land Use Laws document, which should be updated annually.

9.2 Consistency in Laws -- Review and update Town Zoning law to ensure consistency between the local regulations and NYS laws related to administration and procedures.

9.3 Annual Zoning Review -- After the Zoning Revisions Committee has done its work and the revised zoning is adopted, the Town Board should establish a Committee which includes the Chairs of the Planning Board and ZBA and the ZEO to annually review the zoning regulations and recommend changes, if necessary and appropriate, to the Town's zoning laws.

9.4 Zoning Purpose Statements -- Review purpose statements in zoning Section I (C) and the declaration of policy within the subdivision law to ensure that the Vision and Goals of this Comprehensive Plan are addressed.

9.5 Use Definitions -- Make sure that each use allowed and identified in the use schedule and throughout the regulations is defined in the zoning law.

9.6 Fee Schedules -- Establish a fee schedule that adequately covers expenses related to the normal review of a project (not to include hiring of professionals for project review.)

9.7 Fines and Penalties -- Establish and enforce appropriate fines and penalties for violating town laws which are consistent, at a minimum, with NYS minimum guidelines.

9.8 Update Fees -- Review and update all town fees no less frequently than every other year.

9.9 Grant Writing -- Retain the services of a professional grant writer as needed to aid in funding the initiatives recommended in this plan.

9.10 Special Use Permits -- Consider authorizing the Planning Board to issue special use permits. Currently the Zoning Board of Appeals is authorized to do this review. However, when the planning process requires an application to have

both site plan approval and a special use permit, it would be more efficient to have one board do the review and approval. It is recommended that the Planning Board take on all project review and approval roles and the Zoning Board of Appeals concentrate on its appellate roles related to variances and appeals.

- 9.11 ZEO Enforcement** -- Provide ZEO with the authority and tools to enforce town zoning, subdivision and property maintenance laws.
- 9.12 Subdivision Parcel Management** -- Develop an improved tracking system for long term subdivision parcel management.
- 9.13 Geographic Information /System (GIS)** -- Expand use of GIS tools in all town departments. Ensure that the Planning Board, ZBA and Building Inspector/ZEO office use the Geographic Information System (GIS) maps (on paper or on computer) developed for this Comprehensive Plan to better understand the resources at each site as they are reviewing development proposals.
- 9.14 Revise Comprehensive Plan** -- Review and update the Comprehensive Plan every five years or more frequently, as needed.
- 9.15 Board, Committee and Task Force Procedural Guidelines** -- Establish process guidelines and bylaws for town appointed boards like the Youth Commission, the Planning Board and the ZBA and for Town appointed committees and task forces. These guidelines should address, at a minimum, minute-taking, public notices of meetings, open meeting law requirements, budget approval processes, and committee member conflicts of interest, and be consistent with the NYS Open Meeting Law.
- 9.16 Hunting Preserves and Shooting Clubs** – Establish standards related to operating hours, size and scope of operations and noise levels to protect neighbors from disruption from hunting preserves and shooting clubs.
- 9.17 Manage and Track Plan Progress** -- The Town Board should establish implementation priorities, milestones and performance measures for each strategy to track progress, establish an annual plan implementation status review, and create a plan implementation coordinating committee to help establish and maintain the momentum needed to accomplish the goals and strategies.
- 9.18 Property Assessment Process** – Consider appointing a Property Assessment Review Committee to work with the Tax Assessor to communicate property assessment processes and procedures to the Community, to determine if the town should revalue all properties annually to maintain 100% equalization rates and to establish guidelines for maintaining current and fair assessment for all properties over time.
- 9.19 Outside Wood Burning Furnaces** – Consider establishing standards and guidelines for the use of outdoor wood burning furnaces in the hamlets and other densely populated areas to prevent smoke pollution from impacting nearby neighbors.