

Goals define what we intend to achieve. Strategies define how we plan to achieve these Goals. The eight goals listed below and the strategies to achieve them will help the Town of Ancram achieve its 2030 Vision:

Goal 1. Agriculture and Open Space: Encourage farming and the rural, small town, scenic character of Ancram by promoting the profitability and productivity of our town's current farms, attracting new farming ventures, protecting farmland, and preserving open space and important scenic views.

Strategies:

a: Use NY State Department of Agriculture and Markets funding to develop an Agriculture & Farmland Protection Plan that outlines programs and policies to support farms, farming, agricultural open space and environmentally sound farming practices. Adopt a local right-to-farm law.

b: Use an enhanced site plan review process and zoning to promote open space development that protects farmland, open space and important scenic views. Focus on the layout of new developments to avoid active agricultural areas and farmland soils.

c: To better reflect the desired land use outside the Hamlets, rename the Rural Residential Zoning District to the Agricultural Zoning District and allow agriculture-related commercial uses in the Ag Zoning District, subject to review and permit procedures to be developed during the zoning revision process.

d: Revise zoning controls in the Ag Zoning District from a *minimum* lot size to an *average* density system to provide for flexibility, smaller lots and maintenance of large contiguous open spaces suitable for farming. Require that 60% of a developed parcel be maintained as open space.

e: Take full advantage of the NYS Agricultural Districts in Town, ensure they include all viable farmland, and ensure Ancram follows Ag and Markets laws and requirements.

f: Develop density and tax incentives to encourage developers and landowners to protect open spaces and farmland.

Goal 2. Environment: Develop policies and programs to protect groundwater, watersheds, streams, wetlands, woodlands, ridgelines and wildlife habitats. Protect clean air and “dark skies,” and encourage the use of alternative energy sources.

Strategies:

a: To protect groundwater resources, implement the 2008 NY Rural Water Association Study recommendations. This includes shifting to an *average* density of one dwelling per 3.5 acres outside the hamlets from the current 3 acre *minimum* lot size. Prohibit all building, mining and logging on or within 150 feet of water, wetlands, flood plains and on other areas of hydrogeologic sensitivity. Consider buying or leasing the development rights in critical areas of hydrogeologic sensitivity to protect them. Promote use of environmentally sound agricultural “best practices” as recommended by the NY State Department of Ag and Markets.

b: To avoid exceeding the development capacity of a parcel, review and reduce, if necessary, the number of buildable lots on a parcel according to the presence of defined environmental obstacles like wetlands and water which make lots unbuildable.

c: To protect scenic views, ridgelines and rural character, establish visual impact analysis standards and visual impact mitigation recommendations, based on DEC and Greenway guidelines, applied by the Planning Board during site plan, special permit and subdivision reviews.

d: Update Ancram’s zoning and other land use laws to ensure new development minimizes negative impacts to visual and scenic resources and other natural resources, and require new development to provide visual buffers to protect existing development.

e: Establish site plan review requirements for development on slopes greater than 15% to control storm water runoff, erosion, and negative impacts to slopes and ridgelines.

f: Establish mining and logging regulations consistent with DEC requirements and standards, exempting small scale mining by farmers on owned land for their own use.

g: To maintain rural character, reduce the number of driveways by allowing for front loaded roads, shared driveways, shared access ways, and limited use of flag lots during development to minimize impacts to the environment and community character.

h: Adopt standards and guidelines for small scale solar and wind energy installations for residential, agricultural, small business and community uses. Prohibit large scale commercial installations.

Goal 3. Community Character: Promote a strong sense of community through communication, an open exchange of information and building consensus on important decisions facing the Town. Actively support volunteer activities and community efforts to preserve the town's historic places and landscapes.

Strategies:

a: Increase Town government transparency, communication and participation by regular, expanded newspaper, website, email and newsletter coverage of Town policies, programs, laws, and activities; by establishing an annual town meeting to discuss long term issues; by encouraging open discussion; by posting Town financial and other information on the website; and by updating the Town government ethical conduct law.

b: Reinforce and expand existing community initiatives to identify, catalogue and preserve the Town's history and historic places and seek funding through historic preservation grants from private, state and national sources.

c: Assess impact on historic resources as part of subdivision, site plan and special use permit approvals.

d: Enhance Ancram's gateways with specially designed welcome signs.

Goal 4. Community Services: Provide community services and recreational facilities and opportunities to meet the needs of all age groups.

Strategies:

a: Appoint task forces to identify and develop formal plans to define, fund and meet the services and recreational needs of the community, with special attention to the needs of seniors and teens. Identify and use grant funding available through private, State and Federal sources to implement these plans.

b: Develop a town-wide pathway/hike/bike trail system for recreation and connection of important protected open spaces.

c: Ensure access for emergency services and Town highway department vehicles in considering and approving development

projects.

Goal 5. Town Infrastructure: Maintain adequate and appropriate Town buildings, roads, signs, traffic control and bridges, scaled to meet the needs of a small, rural community. Improve the information systems and management processes supporting all town departments.

Strategies:

a: Establish a Financial Analysis Advisory Committee to assist the Town Board to identify and evaluate long term capital spending needs and establish a Five-Year Plan, updated annually, to meet those needs. The Plan should cover all current Town-owned properties, roads and equipment, and cover future needs.

b: Adopt and use Cornell's Rural Road Design Standards for all new Town roads, and the NY Association of Towns Highway Superintendent Manual for the management of the Town highway department.

c: Limit curb cuts and use access management techniques for new development to increase road safety and maintain rural road character.

d: Establish a Highway Advisory Committee to assist the Highway Superintendent with management and planning issues related to maintaining town roads.

e: Evaluate on an on-going basis the feasibility of sharing services with neighboring towns and the county, and implement shared services where it minimizes costs and taxes.

f: Invest in the computer hardware and software to provide all town departments adequate management tools and information.

Goal 6. Town Centers: Enhance the appearance and safety of the hamlets, with Ancram the top priority. Provide for safe roads, crossings, intersections and traffic flows, and control heavy truck traffic.

Strategies:

a: Focus on the revitalization of the hamlet of Ancram to stimulate economic development in the Town. Use Federal, State and private funding sources to help implement Comprehensive Plan and CDBG recommendations to support revitalization efforts.

b: 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.

c: Offer tax incentives and support grant applications to assist in building improvements.

d: Establish commercial design standards to ensure new or renovated commercial buildings are consistent in scale and design with the small town, rural character of the Community.

e: Resolve the intersection problems, address the deteriorating buildings, and plan for future waste-water treatment, so Ancram can be established as an attractive and primary Town Center.

f: Involve all Ancram center “stakeholders” including the Ancram Preservation Group, The Mill, the Fire District and all business and private property owners in the planning process.

Goal 7. Economic Development: Encourage home-based businesses, small retail businesses, and other economic activities consistent with our rural, small town character, supported by reliable telecommunications services.

Strategies:

a: Establish an Economic Development Committee to create a business development and marketing plan to help attract new businesses and jobs to Ancram. Identify business opportunities unique to Ancram, and try to attract and establish businesses which will draw visitors to our Town.

b: Promote agriculture-related, small retail, building trades, home maintenance, construction, home based businesses and historic, arts and leisure activities of a size and scale consistent with the Community’s small town rural character.

c: Allow for expanded commercial areas and mixed-use commercial/residential uses subject to commercial design standards, and size and scale restrictions which will protect the small town, rural and scenic character of the Community.

d: Consider offering tax and grant incentives to attract small businesses to the hamlets.

e: Provide for review and possible approval of light manufacturing and other businesses not specifically permitted in zoning through a “floating zone” capability, subject to safeguards to protect the Town’s

scenic, rural character.

f: Work with the County and neighboring communities to enhance telecommunications and utility infrastructure.

Goal 8. Housing: Improve the supply of affordable housing, housing for seniors and control large-scale residential development, consistent with the Community's desire to protect farmland, open space and the rural character of the Town.

Strategies:

a: Allow for smaller, more affordable lots in the Hamlets and the Agricultural Zoning District. Where water and septic conditions allow, permit ½ acre lots in the hamlets. In the Ag Zoning District, allow lots as small as ½ acre if water and septic are available, subject to maintaining an average density of one dwelling per 3.5 acres for the entire parcel and complying with the proposed 60% “open space” design requirements.

b: Create more affordable rental units by allowing apartments in single family homes and accessory buildings like garages and barns, subject to site plan review and special use permits.

c: Allow small scale garden apartments, senior citizen housing, nursing homes and continuous care senior facilities, subject to site plan review and special use permits.

d: Allow multi-family dwellings with a maximum of 4 units subject to site plan review and special use permits.