THE GREENPRINT
For a Sustainable Future... the Westchester Way
The Westchester County Compact Plan
April 2004 Draft
The Greenprint for a Sustainable Future... the Westchester Way

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The Greenprint for a Sustainable Future, the Westchester County Compact Plan, was prepared by the Westchester County Department of Planning with funding assistance from the Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council. The Compact Plan builds on the planning activities conducted by Westchester County, the Historic River Towns of Westchester and on Patterns for Westchester: the Land and the People, the long range planning policy document adopted by the Westchester County Planning Board.

April 2004 Draft

Cover photo of Lyndhurst courtesy of Lyndhurst. Photo credit: James Bleeker
The Greenprint for a Sustainable Future
...the Westchester Way

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“You got to be careful if you don’t know where you’re going, because you might not get there.”
~ Yogi Berra

The Westchester County Compact Plan

Credit: City of Yonkers
The Greenprint for a Sustainable Future... the Westchester Way
1. Introduction

The Greenprint for a Sustainable Future is the Westchester County Compact Plan. Greenprint builds on the planning legacy in Westchester so as to assist the county, city, town and village governments in ensuring a sustainable future for years to come. The Plan provides the basis for participating municipalities to qualify for incentives granted by the New York State Legislation through the Hudson River Valley Greenway Act of 1991. The Plan follows the successful format utilized in Patterns for Westchester: the Land and the People, the County’s long-range planning policy document, to create an approach to regional economic development that promotes tourism while incorporating natural, cultural and historic resource protection and increasing Hudson River access opportunities.

Westchester is a county with unparalleled resources. Its Hudson River and Long Island Sound shorelines, river valleys, rugged wooded terrain, lakes and reservoirs give it a unique natural character. Its cities, distinctive villages and suburban and rural towns – 45 in all - give it vitality and variety. The county’s proximity to New York City and the combination of parkways, commuter rail lines, bus transit network, interstate and arterial roadways and airport facilities nurture an economic and cultural climate attractive to business and residential development. Long ago, Westchester County embarked on a course of parkland acquisition that continues to set a national example for preservation of natural resources. At the local level, municipalities in Westchester County have developed and time-tested innovative land use controls to maintain the quality of life the residents enjoy.
The Greenway area includes communities in Albany, Columbia, Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rensselaer, Rockland and Westchester Counties, as well as the portions of Greene and Ulster Counties outside of the Catskill Park, the portion of Bronx and Manhattan Boroughs adjacent to the Hudson River, and the Town and Village of Waterford in Saratoga County. Greenway programs apply to both “riverside” communities that border the Hudson River and “countryside” communities with no physical connection to the Hudson River but within the geographic boundary of the Greenway area.
A. What is the Greenway?

The Hudson River Valley Greenway Act of 1991 created a process for voluntary regional cooperation among 259 communities within 13 counties that border the Hudson River to promote the Greenway goal of “the preservation, enhancement and development of the world-renowned scenic, natural, historic, cultural and recreational resources of the Hudson River Valley.” The Act specifies five Greenway criteria through which this goal can be achieved. These criteria provide an overall vision for voluntary local Greenway plans and projects.

The Five Greenway Criteria

**Natural and Cultural Resource Protection:**
Protect, preserve and enhance natural and cultural resources including natural communities, open spaces, historic places, scenic areas and scenic roads.

**Regional Planning:**
Encourage communities to work together to develop mutually beneficial regional strategies for natural and cultural resource protection, economic development, public access and heritage and environmental education.

**Economic Development:**
Encourage economic development that is compatible with the preservation and enhancement of natural and cultural resources with emphasis on agriculture, tourism and the revitalization of existing community centers and waterfronts.

**Public Access:**
Promote increased public access to the Hudson River and important local resources through the creation of parks and the development of the Hudson River Valley Greenway Trail System and the Hudson River Greenway Water Trail with linkages to the natural and cultural resources of the Valley.

**Heritage and Environmental Education:**
Promote awareness among residents and visitors about the Valley’s natural, cultural, scenic and historic resources.
The 1991 Act also established the Greenway Communities Council, a New York State agency. The Council was created to work with local government to enhance local land use planning and create a voluntary regional planning compact for the Hudson River Valley. The Council provides community planning grants, compact grants and technical assistance to help communities develop a vision for their future.

Any municipality in Westchester County can become a Greenway Community by adopting a resolution indicating support of the five Greenway criteria.

**B. What is the Compact?**

One of the major objectives of the Greenway Act is the development and implementation of a regional strategy called the Greenway Compact. The Greenway Compact is a voluntary regional planning vision developed in a partnership among a county, its local communities and the Greenway Communities Council. The Greenway Compact differs from a typical comprehensive plan in that it specifically promotes the Greenway criteria, actively encourages regional cooperation and provides financial and other benefits for participating communities.

The Greenway has designated the counties as the basic planning areas for the development of the Greenway Compact. However, the development of the Greenway Compact Plan is still a b
tom-up process. Public and community participation in the development of the Greenway Compact is critical to the successful implementation of any compact strategy. Greenway Compacts need to reflect the interests and the concerns of local communities and provide a regional context for local planning efforts.

The development of a county comprehensive plan or other special-purpose county plan such as an open space or waterfront redevelopment plan can be compatible with the development of a Greenway Compact and may be developed either in conjunction with a Greenway Compact, or as the Greenway Compact. Occasionally, a county initially may focus on a sub-county area with related issues, rather than an entire county, when developing a Greenway Compact. The Compact strategy would then be extended to include the entire county during a second phase of development.

The Historic River Towns of Westchester (HRTW) communities voted to participate in the Greenway planning process in 1996. Since that time, HRTW, the County and the Greenway have worked together to build consensus and a shared vision for the

“Why should a Long Island Sound Community join the Hudson River Valley Greenway?”

Although the water meeting the shore may be saltier along the Long Island Sound, the interests, concerns and issues facing Sound Shore communities are not different from those facing the communities lining the Hudson River. The Greenway criteria and the principals of sustainable development are applicable to all municipalities in Westchester County, and not just because the Greenway is organized geographically based on counties. The Compact Plan sets forth a regional vision that can be related to both of Westchester’s waterfronts, as well as the many towns and villages located in the county’s interior. Every Westchester community should become a compact community. Becoming a compact community provides additional support to local plans and policies plus becomes a means to obtain new funding for comprehensive plans, trails and other local planning projects.
The Greenprint for a Sustainable Future... the Westchester Way

Westchester County Subregions

Bronx River Valley
Historic River Towns
North County Watershed

Central County
Long Island Sound

Major Urban Centers

BRONX RIVER VALLEY
HISTORIC RIVER TOWNS
CENTRAL COUNTY
LONG ISLAND SOUND
NORTH COUNTY WATERSHED

Westchestergov.com
waterfront communities. The HRTW communities are currently implementing their vision for community development. This process is facilitated by the incentives available to communities that participate in the Greenway Compact. The inclusion of the Historic River Town communities as part of the Hudson River Valley Greenway planning compact was an important first step in the overall objective of having all Westchester communities become part of the Greenway Compact.

The Hudson River shore communities that are now organized as HRTW make up one of the five subregions in Westchester that are identified in Patterns. Special strategies may be developed for each subregion as one means of implementing the Greenprint and Greenway visions. The other subregions are the Bronx River Valley, Long Island Sound, Central County and North County Watershed.

The award winning Historic River Towns of Westchester’s strategy was produced with the communities following a “bottom-up” approach.
C. Joining the Compact

A Greenway Community is not the same as a Greenway Compact Community. Once a city, town or village has become a Greenway Community by adopting a resolution indicating support for the five Greenway criteria, the municipality is eligible to become a Greenway Compact Community. This step requires that the municipality take action to include a reference to this Greenprint Compact Plan in its zoning ordinance and land development regulations. The language to be added to the ordinance must state that consideration will be given to the policies, principles and guides of the Compact Plan, as appropriate. This action ensures that the Greenway criteria and the Greenprint policies will be given consideration in the conduct of daily business in the community. A sample resolution is included in the Resource chapter of this Plan.

Becoming a Greenway Compact Community shall not limit the home rule authority of a municipality under State Law to make local land use and zoning decisions. The local action does not authorize any other entity to supersede the municipality's land use laws and regulations or to impose any requirements on the municipality nor does it prevent the municipality in its sole discretion from adopting a local law at a later date for the purpose of withdrawing from the Greenway Compact or Westchester County Greenway Compact Plan.

D. Benefits for Compact Communities

A Greenway Compact Community becomes eligible for benefits as established by the Hudson River Valley Greenway.

♦ State agencies must, "to the fullest extent practicable," coordinate their activities with Compact communities and conduct their activities in a manner consistent with the Greenway Compact.

♦ The provisions of the Greenway Compact must be made part of reviews conducted under the New York State Environmental Quality Review
Act and Historic Preservation Act.

♦ Compact communities may regulate the location and construction of boathouses, moorings and docks within fifteen hundred feet of their shorelines.

♦ Compact communities receive technical and financial assistance for community planning efforts. This includes up to 50% matching grants for basic community planning and for any changes to local planning and zoning regulations needed to enter the Compact.

♦ Compact communities have a potential 5% rating advantage over non-compact communities for receiving competitive state funding for Greenway projects.

♦ Compact communities have the opportunity to offer a streamlined environmental review process for activities which are consistent with regional Greenway plans.

♦ Compact communities are provided protection from law suits brought against communities because of the acquisition of land or the adoption of local land use regulations consistent with a regional Greenway Plan.

“The trouble with Oakland is that when you get there, there isn’t any there there.”
- Gertrude Stein
The Greenprint for a Sustainable Future, the Westchester County Compact Plan is the result of a bottom-up planning approach. The “Three Tiers” consist of:

- Hudson River Valley Greenway Plan
- Patterns for Westchester
- Subregion Strategies

The Plan’s goal is to achieve community consensus on important intermunicipal issues within this three-tier planning context. The first subregion strategy was developed in the HRTW subregion. Using subregion strategies, local communities can implement Greenprint policies through addressing the needs of a specific region in Westchester County.

A. Hudson River Valley Greenway

The Hudson River Valley Greenway consists of 259 communities within 13 counties that border the Hudson River. The Greenway Act or “plan” was created to facilitate the development of a regional strategy for preserving scenic, natural, historic, cultural and recreational resources while encouraging compatible economic development and maintaining the tradition of home rule for land use decision-making.

The goal of the Greenway plan is “the preservation, enhancement, and development of the world-renowned scenic, natural, historic, cultural, and recreational resources of the Hudson River Valley.” The “Plan” specifies five Greenway criteria through which this goal can be achieved. These criteria provide an overall vision for voluntary local Greenway plans and projects.
In addition to the Community Planning Guide, the Hudson River Valley Greenway has developed principles for economic development. These principles recognize that regional economic success depends on local economic strategies that add value at the regional and local level. The principles recommend local land use laws be adopted to give incentives to concentrate development in designated areas and to give clear guidelines to private landowners and developers to ensure that new economic activity occurs in areas designated for development. Clustering centers of economic enterprise in new and existing centers creates an opportunity to minimize “suburban sprawl.”

Suggested tools to encourage and reinforce the Greenway Principles for Economic Development include Greenway technical support, cluster development, planned unit development, and the incorporation of agricultural and tourism economic development strategies. State, county and local governments are recommended to support development projects that utilize existing buildings, promote higher densities and mixed land uses, and utilize existing infrastructure and its expansion whenever possible. Such action should be supported by grants for infrastructure that encourage planning and zoning consistent with these Principles.

Local governments are encouraged to participate in intermunicipal agreements and councils that enable them to integrate their economic development plans into a strategy that achieves, among them, compatible economic development and the provision of housing for present and future residents. State, county, and local government should advocate incentives and support for development that is consistent with, and supportive of, the cultural and historic fabric of the region, including historic preservation, community character and scenic and natural resources. Incentives for siting projects on brownfields and utilizing existing housing stock should also be promoted.
B. Patterns for Westchester

*Patterns* was developed as a policy framework to balance economic growth and environmental health. The goal of *Patterns* is to strengthen centers, improve the function of corridors and protect the county’s open space character. *Patterns* offers a range of strategies to help County and municipal governments promote tourism, nurture environmental health, economic growth and the quality of life in Westchester. These strategies are tailored to implement 12 policies titled, *Policies for 2000 and Beyond*. These same policies are the foundation for *The Greenprint for a Sustainable Future* and they provide an umbrella under which subregions may develop more specific strategies.

The following pages present the 12 policies for a sustainable future. Also presented are examples of how these policies are already being pursued in Westchester. Municipalities need to look no further than next door to access the diverse palate of innovative land use controls at work in Westchester. Many communities have taken the lead in specific areas. The opportunities are promising for a sharing of this experience. The *Greenprint* makes this sharing easier by incorporating as part of this Plan a “Local Planning Law Resource Guide.” The guide provides examples of regulations in Westchester’s cities, towns and villages that implement strategies to realize this Plan’s policies.

Two great opposing forces are pulling at Westchester’s development patterns, deeply complicating planning for the years leading into the 21st century. On the one hand, the County, cities, towns and villages find themselves pushed to pursue development needed to support local economies and to finance public services. On the other hand, government officials and county residents accept the necessity of regulations that protect air, land and water resources while recognizing that such regulations may also restrict development in some locations.

*Patterns* seeks to ease the tension between these forces through strategies that emphasize the historic planning framework of Westchester. A healthy balance between economic growth and a sound environment depends on directing growth to centers, reinventing developed corridors as multi-use places and factoring open space elements into the development process. The County will continue to foster the intermunicipal and regional approaches on which the planning for sustainable development depends.

~ *Patterns for Westchester, The Land and the People*
Westchester County Planning Board, New York 1996
1. Channel development whenever possible to centers where infrastructure can support growth, where public transportation can be provided efficiently and where redevelopment can enhance economic vitality.

**Hamlets:** Banksville, Bedford Village, Buchanan, Crugers, Cross River, Croton Falls, Hawthorne, Millwood, Montrose, Pocantico Hills, Purdys, Scotts Corners, Shrub Oak, Somers, South Salem, Valhalla, Van Cortlandtville, Verplanck, Vista

**Local Centers:**
Ardsley, Armonk, Baldwin Place, Bedford Hills, Briarcliff Manor, Bronxville, Chappaqua, Crestwood, Croton-on-Hudson, Dobbs Ferry, Eastchester, Elmsford, Goldens Bridge, Hastings-on-Hudson, Irvington, Katonah, Lake Mohegan, Larchmont, Larchmont Station, Mamaroneck, N. White Plains, Pelham, Pelham Manor, Pleasantville, Rye, Scarsdale, Silver Lake, Sleepy Hollow, Thornwood, Tuckahoe

**Intermediate Centers:**
Yonkers/Cross County, Mount Kisco, Ossining Village, Jefferson Valley, Peekskill, Tarrytown, Port Chester, Yorktown Heights,

**Major Centers:**
Mount Vernon, White Plains, Downtown Yonkers, New Rochelle
Enhance the appropriate functions of the county’s corridors by:

- Adapting already developed sections into efficient and attractive multi-use places
- Protecting the quality of scenic routes
- Making road and transit improvements that will reduce congestion and ease movement on travel routes.

**Historic Roads Preservation Ordinance:**

**HISTORIC ROAD** -- Any road of historical value or aesthetic interest by reason of its antiquity as a cultural or heritage resource to the Town, county, state or country may be classified as an historical road. Historic roads may be any specific highways, arterials, collectors, local roads or other transportation routes located within the Town which are found to contain historic qualities, as determined by one or more of the following categories:

A. **AESTHETIC ROUTES** -- These represent historic roads for which the primary rationale for development was the design and provision of a specific visitor experience. Aesthetic routes, such as parkways and park roads, have historically been intensively designed and developed for the purpose of leisure, recreation and commemoration. They typically follow the natural topography of the region. They are roads for which the alignment and details are key to the experience. Special materials, planting, lighting, well-preserved stone walls, rock outcrops, historic buildings and even building facades contribute to the character of these roads. Alterations to any component of these roads will significantly impact the historic integrity of the resource.

B. **ENGINEERED ROUTES** -- Roads designed for a specific transportation goal, such as the movement of people, goods and services, represent the largest category of roads. They will have a documented origin or authorization and construction date. These are roads that may have been developed to open isolated areas to commerce, link the nation or simply serve our communities - roads for which the aesthetic experience was often secondary. Their alignment and detail are important in their representation of technology and culture. Many city grid patterns and our first transcontinental highways are typical of this category.

C. **CULTURAL ROUTES** -- These routes evolved through necessity or tradition. While these roads may have a documented date of origin, they were developed without the intensive engineering and design practices associated with aesthetic and engineered routes. These may be routes that have evolved from Native American trails, colonial post roads or simply from convenient connections between villages.

~Town of North Salem Town Code~
Assure a diverse and interconnected system of open space to shape development, to provide contrast in the texture of the landscape, to separate developed areas and to relate to open space systems of the region.
Enhance use of Westchester County’s parks, beaches and recreation facilities by improving public access, by providing a variety of natural settings for passive enjoyment and by taking into account the need for recreation close to population centers and the interests of the County’s changing population.

RiverWalk is a proposed continuous trailway along the entire Hudson River shoreline in Westchester County, from the border with Putnam County on the north to the City of New York on the south. Efforts have been coordinated with the consortium of the 13 riverfront communities known as the Historic River Towns of Westchester (HRTW). RiverWalk is also a Hudson River Valley Greenway trail and will become a major component of the Hudson Valley trail system.

At many locations, RiverWalk utilizes existing established trails such as the Old Croton Aqueduct Trail and trail systems within public parks. The remaining sections cross over lands with restricted access, such as Metro-North Railroad property, lands of institutions and privately owned lands. RiverWalk is a multi-faceted trail that weaves through the Historic River Towns’ main streets and provides linkages to recreational, cultural and historic resources and to inland trail systems.

Funds from the Westchester Legacy Program, established by Westchester County Executive Andy Spano in 2001, have been used to acquire properties along the Hudson River, including a portion of the former Unification Church property in Tarrytown and part of the Graham School property in Hastings-on-Hudson. Each property will be traversed by a segment of RiverWalk. Municipalities are encouraged to complete sections of RiverWalk in their jurisdiction.
Nurture the economic climate of the county with use of municipal, County, State and Federal resources to improve infrastructure, housing and programs that attract and support business enterprise, with particular attention on intermunicipal impacts.

The Drum Hill Senior Living Community in Peekskill is an excellent example of adaptive reuse. The restored 1909 Greek Revival former Drum Hill School, was converted into an affordable, service-enriched independent living alternative. Daily activities, clubs and supportive services are available for each resident.
6. Preserve and protect the county’s natural resources and environment, including its ground water resources, water bodies, wetlands, coastal zones and significant land resources which include unique natural areas, steep slopes and ridgelines and prime agricultural land.

Protection of Natural Resources.

Notwithstanding other provisions of this chapter, all development regulated by this chapter shall be subject to the provisions of this section, which provisions are designed to protect and enhance the natural resources of the Village of Briarcliff Manor. These natural resources shall include but not be limited to steep slopes, wetlands, forests, water bodies, exceptional or unique views and various unique, unusual or specific surface or subsurface factors pertaining to the soil. Protection of these natural resources is considered to be in the best interest of the public health and welfare in that such action will help preserve the mental and physical health and well-being of the public by such activities as protecting the water supply, precluding pollution, enhancing wildlife and maintaining the perceived character of the Village.

~Village of Briarcliff Manor Village Code
“With the lowest vacancies in the country, low housing production and rapidly-rising housing costs leaves Westchester in a challenging position to accommodate new economic growth, much of which will require housing construction to house workers moving here from outside the region.”

Marsha Gordon, President/CEO, Business Council of Westchester

Storm Water Protection

New York State Stormwater Management Design Manual provides designers a general overview on how to size, design, select and locate SMPs at a development site to comply with State stormwater performance standards. The manual also contains appendices with more detailed information on landscaping, SMP construction specifications, step-by-step SMP design examples and other assorted design tools.

Conservation Development Districts

Purpose and intent. The CD District is intended to permit single-family residential development at relatively low densities, consistent with the long-range planning objectives of the Village, which development is designed to maintain, preserve and enhance the natural and man-made environment of the lands within and adjacent to the district. In adopting this district, the Village Board of the Village of Mount Kisco declares its intent to encourage well-planned residential site development by establishing flexible zoning controls that are designed to assure maximum conservation and efficient utilization of land.

~Village/Town of Mount Kisco Town Code
The preservation and maintenance of trees is necessary to protect the health, safety and general welfare of the City of Rye because trees provide shade, impede soil erosion, aid water absorption, enhance air quality, yield advantageous microclimate effects, offer a natural barrier to noise, provide a natural habitat for wildlife and add to the aesthetic quality of the community.

~City of Rye City Code

The preservation and maintenance of trees is necessary to protect the health, safety, environment, ecosystems and general welfare of the inhabitants of the Town of Greenburgh. Trees provide necessary shade, green space and aesthetic appeal, impede soil erosion, aid water absorption and provide other environmental benefits and generally enhance the quality of life within the town. The destruction and damage of trees and the indiscriminate and excessive cutting of trees causes barren and unsightly conditions, creates surface drainage problems, increases municipal costs to control drainage, impairs stability of real property values and adversely affects the character of the community. This chapter seeks to address these conditions.

~Town of Greenburgh Town Code
Ridgeline Protection ~ Slopes and Ridgelines

Development, alteration or improvement of property containing a scenic slope or scenic ridgeline shall preserve the scenic qualities and natural appearance of the scenic slope, including but not limited to:

A. Minimizing the excavation and paving required for foundations and access to the slope or ridgeline site.

B. Minimizing the disturbance of vegetation to only that which is absolutely necessary for the development or improvement.

C. Minimizing the impact of development and improvement such that the natural elevations and vegetative cover of a scenic ridgeline shall be disturbed only if the crest of the ridge and the tree line at the ridge as viewed from legally accessible land remains uninterrupted either by positioning buildings and areas of disturbance below the ridgeline or by positioning buildings and areas of disturbance so that the roofline of the building is seen as a continuation of the natural tree line.

~Town of Somers Town Code
Aquifer Protection Districts

The purpose of the Aquifer Protection District is to protect, preserve and maintain the water supply recharge areas within the Town so as to preserve present and potential sources of water supply for the public health, safety and welfare.

~ Town of Cortlandt Town Code

Croton Plan Strategies to Protect Water

Best Management Practices

Selecting proper Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) is critical in order to reduce the pollutants generated from stormwater runoff. In selecting the most appropriate BMPs for a specific site, consideration should be given to the following:

- the site’s physical condition and development status;
- runoff control benefits provided by each BMP option;
- the pollutant removal capability of each BMP option under several design scenarios;
- the environmental and human advantages of each BMP option; and
- the long-term maintenance cost of the BMP.

Stormwater BMPs are generally grouped into four categories. These categories are based on the mechanism used to reduce the amount of polluted runoff. They include stormwater basins, infiltration, vegetation and pollution prevention (source controls).

~The Croton Plan
Westchester County Planning Department and Northern Westchester Watershed Committee
Farmland Preservation and Farmland Preservation Overlay District

The Town of Yorktown has determined that farms constitute a significant place in the history of the Town, provide a sense of the historical landscape, constitute areas of open space and contribute to the diversity of land uses and economic base of the Town. Several remaining farms in the Town embody these attributes and are located in areas which experience residential development pressures. The intent of this legislation is to promote the conservation, in whole or in part, of these farms to benefit the quality of life of all residents of the Town of Yorktown.

All existing farms of 30 acres or more within the Town of Yorktown are eligible for mapping of a Farmland Preservation Overlay District. The application of the overlay does not in and of itself change any current utilization of property for farm purposes but rather enhances the opportunity for preservation of some or all of the property for farm uses in the event of future development.

~Town of Yorktown Town Code

According to the State census of agriculture, horse farms comprise 4,000 acres of the total farmland acreage in Westchester, ranking second in the state for income generated from the breeding and sales of horses.
Coastal Zones/ Waterfront Development

It is the intent of the City of Rye that the preservation, enhancement and utilization of the natural and man-made resources of the unique coastal area of the city take place in a coordinated and comprehensive manner to ensure a proper balance between natural resources and the need to accommodate population growth and economic development. Accordingly, this chapter is intended to achieve such a balance, permitting beneficial use of the coastal resources while preventing loss of living estuarine resources and wildlife; diminution of open space areas or public access to the waterfront; erosion of the shoreline; impairment of scenic beauty; losses due to flooding, erosion and sedimentation; or permanent adverse changes to the ecological systems.

~City of Rye City Code
Encourage a range of housing types that are affordable to renters and homebuyers, with each municipality addressing its needs for affordable housing as well as a share of the regional need.

"Affordable housing located near where people work benefits the environment by reducing traffic which improves air quality.”

~Dr. William Cassella, Former Chairman 
Westchester County Planning Board

Financing was provided by Westchester County, New York State, conventional loans and developers' equity to build Stone Creek for municipal workers, school district employees, volunteer emergency workers and town residents of the Town of New Castle.
Support transportation alternatives that serve the needs of workers, consumers and residents and that improve air quality by enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of public transportation and reducing solo-driving.

Westchester’s SMART COMMUTE Program is available free of charge to all employers and building owners/managers in the county as part of Westchester County and the New York State’s commitment to reducing congestion on roadways and improving air quality. The program is designed to encourage and support companies whose employees are looking for alternatives to getting to work rather than driving alone. Reducing congestion will help keep Westchester a great place to live and work.

The Westchester County SMART COMMUTE Team can fully explain how to implement programs such as:

- Flex-Time/Compressed Work Week
- Telecommuting
- Carpooling/Vanpooling
- Walking/Bicycling
- Parking Management Strategies

The SMART COMMUTE program can show how to encourage employees to use alternative commute methods with services such as:

- Developing an on-site Commute Program
- Zip Code Employee Survey
- Commute Information Rack Program
- Transportation Services Guides
- Regional & Local Transit Availability
- Transportation Information Kits for New Employees
9. Enhance the quality of life for Westchester residents by protecting the county’s educational, cultural and historical resources and factoring them into land use decisions.

The Tarrytown Board of Trustees hereby finds and declares that it is desirable to take measures to provide for the creation of historic districts and landmark sites and structures in furtherance of the following public purposes, which are found to promote the economic benefits, the cultural and educational advantages and the general welfare of the Village of Tarrytown:

(1) To provide for the protection and enhancement of structures which are illustrative of the growth and development of our nation, our state and our village and which are of particular historic or aesthetic value to Tarrytown.

(2) To recognize and ensure the preservation of those elements of the village’s past which represent many and varied architectural, artistic and cultural achievements which cannot be duplicated or otherwise replaced.

(3) To promote the use of historic districts and landmark sites and structures as a means of providing enjoyment and unique educational benefit by perpetuating the physical evidence of Tarrytown’s past.

(4) To stabilize and improve property values of such districts, sites and structures and otherwise promote their reuse.

(5) To protect and enhance the village’s attractions to tourists and visitors.

(6) To foster civic pride in those elements of the village’s past which give Tarrytown its unique character and set it apart from other communities.

~Village of Tarrytown Village Code
10. Maintain safe and environmentally sound systems for the removal or treatment of waste consistent with land use policies; strengthen programs to reduce the waste stream.

11. Support capital improvements for physical facilities that enable the County to deliver social and public safety services in an efficient, economic and humane manner.

12. Join neighboring jurisdictions in the Hudson Valley, Connecticut and New York City in planning initiatives aimed at sound land use, transportation, development and conservation policies.
C. Subregion Strategies

The subregion strategy is a comprehensive review of resources, analysis of opportunities and compact implementation plan prepared with the local communities. The subregion strategy fosters a local-regional vision creating community consensus and an action plan for the future.

The first step in the planning process in each subregion is to undertake a comprehensive inventory of tourism and economic development resources. A broad range of resources may need to be looked at including: historic and cultural sites; downtown amenities; parks; open spaces; trailways; views and vistas; access to the waterways and lakes; and how all these potential tourism resources are linked. It is also important to establish the planning context by examining the population of each subregion, local regional economies, tourism activities, and local planning initiatives. Through this review, the opportunities and constraints to future tourism and economic development activity in the region will be better understood.
1. Subregion Strategy Framework

The primary goal of the strategy is to strengthen tourism and economic development activities in each subregion. The strategy will also be designed to specifically address Greenway criteria and principles, and will be prepared so that it is consistent with the key policies of Patterns. The subregion strategy can be created in a six-step process, which considers the following:

- Access
- Preservation
- Development/Redevelopment
- Regional Identity
- Cooperation/Coordination
- Balance

2. Community Conversations and Consensus

Community input is essential if the subregion strategy is to reflect community views and aspirations. A “bottom-up” approach to planning should be employed. This can be achieved through community conversations which bring local representatives together from neighboring communities to share ideas about a plan for the future. A regional conference can also be convened to offer residents and business leaders from across each subregion a unique opportunity to meet and discuss strategies. Obtaining consensus early in the planning process is very important, particularly with regard to “What” should be addressed in the plan and “How” more pressing issues can best be resolved.

3. Analysis of Waterfront Access

A significant resource in the region, and the greater Hudson Valley area, is waterfront access. Westchester County is uniquely blessed in the Hudson Valley by having borders on the Hudson River and Long Island Sound as well as several inland waterbodies. The waterfronts in Westchester County on the Hudson River and Long Island Sound offer numerous recreational, commercial and environmental opportunities important to tourism and economic development. The waterfronts also provide the municipalities with regional identity and offer an important link between the communities. A detailed analysis of Westchester County waterfronts should study the following factors:
“God bless the grass that grows through the crack. They roll the concrete over it to try and keep it back. The concrete gets tired of what it has to do, It breaks and it buckles and the grass grows thru, And God bless the grass. ~ Pete Seeger

- Existing Land Uses
- Key Waterfront Destinations
- Access & Movement Opportunities
- Current & Proposed Development Activity
- Long-range Planning Objectives

4. Mutual Discovery about Planning Opportunities

Obtaining community consensus about planning opportunities is a meaningful endeavor. Achieving this consensus can primarily be accomplished by work-shopping with the communities and discovering together development and redevelopment opportunities. A regional workshop could be convened in each subregion. This workshop would provide a forum for the communities to jointly explore implementation opportunities, some of which have been utilized successfully in other parts of the Hudson River Valley.

5. Develop Model Greenway Strategies

A key step in Compact Plan implementation will be the formulation of strategies which are geared toward strengthening Greenway criteria and principles of natural and cultural resource protection, economic development, promotion of region planning, enhancing access to the Hudson River and Long Island Sound and heritage and environmental education. Following through on the policies of Patterns, the subregion strategies should center on the three major building blocks of Westchester County – centers, corridors and open space. They should also be designed to further the six-principle planning framework endorsed by the communities at the start of the strategy development process.
6. Regional Endorsement

The endorsement of the subregion strategy by both local and regional officials will enhance the opportunities for the eventual implementation of the plan’s recommendations.

The HRTW has developed a subregion strategy. The HRTW performed the six tasks outlined to development HRTW subregion plan. Creation of a Subregional Strategies is optional, not a commitment that must be done. Subregions may opt to build on existing plans or plans in development that address the needs of the subregions, such as the Croton Plan, the Bronx River Parkway Corridor Management Plan, and the Long Island Sound WAC plans.
A. Local Planning Law Resource Guide

One of the best resources available for a sustainable future is right here in Westchester. Forty-three municipalities in Westchester regulate land use with their own “tool belt” of land use laws. It’s not so easy, however, for one municipality to find out about the laws in the other 42 communities. As part of this Compact Plan, the Westchester County Department of Planning compiled an online guide that can be used to quickly and easily look many of these local ordinances. The "Local Planning Law Resource Guide" also proves just how many of Westchester's communities have a remarkable range of innovative land use regulatory tools in place. These locally developed controls address everything from business and tourism promotion tools such as sidewalk cafes and historic districts to the environmental protection of trees and ridgelines. Others include practical approaches to cluster housing, child-care facilities and development density bonuses.

Posted on the County’s web-site and included on the resource compact disk of Greenprint, the guide compiles the text of 349 individual ordinances that, if put on paper, would be over 700 pages long. The compilation allows local officials, planners, residents and business owners to easily search by subject or municipality to find if someone has already found a way to address their problem or answer their question. And the best aspect is that these proven tools are in place locally, not off in a distant part of the country where the legal basis may be very different.

“Each of our cities, towns and villages is unique, but we all want to make our communities safe, attractive and economically healthy. This guide makes it easier for local officials and citizens to discover, research and compare the variety of land use regulations in places throughout the county and to find tools that may work for them.”

Andy Spano
Westchester County Executive
B. Reports

*Located on compact disc*

**Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area Management Plan**
Prepared for the Hudson River Greenway Communities Council and Greenway Conservancy for the Hudson River Valley; June 2002

**Community Planning Guide**
Hudson River Greenway Communities Council

**Patterns for Westchester: The Land and the People**
Westchester County’s long range planning policy document; 1995

**Historic River Towns of Westchester (HRTW) Subregion Strategies**
Tourism & Economic Development Plan; 1997
Present and Future; 1998
Building Livable Downtowns; 1999
Growing Smarter Together; 2000

**Sign Manual & Plan for the Historic River Towns of Westchester**
Proposed design sign standards for roadside directional sign for use in the Historic River Towns of Westchester; includes visual standards, sign layout grid formats, fabrication and material specifications as well as the conceptual plan for the subregion; April 2002

**Westchester County Databook 2001**
Features 250 pages of descriptive data covering more than a dozen broad subject categories ranging from Westchester’s physical attributes and municipal organization to demographic and business statistics; provides a reliable statistical resource for specific or general information regarding Westchester County.

**James A. Coon Local Government Technical Series,**
New York State Department of State, Division of Local Government Services
Local Laws and Agricultural Districts: How Do They Relate?; 1999

Conducting Public Meetings and Public Hearings; 1995

Legal Aspects of Municipal Historic Preservation; 2002

Zoning Board of Appeals; Includes Statutory Changes, Effective July 1, 1994

Adopting Local Laws in New York State

Land Use Moratoria; 1999

Creating the Community You Want: Municipal Options For Land Use Control; 1998

Guide to Planning and Zoning Laws of New York State; 2003

Site Development Plan Review; 1998


Zoning and the Comprehensive Plan; 1999

Zoning Enforcement; 1998

**Local Open Space Planning Guide**

Prepared jointly by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the Department of State in collaboration with the Hudson River Valley Greenway, New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets and the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. 2003
C. Forms and Applications

Hudson River Valley Community Sample Resolution
Hudson River Valley Compact Community Sample Resolution

Grant Applications:
Hudson River Valley Greenway Community Grant

D. Internet Resources

Westchester County
www.westchestergov.com

Hudson River Greenway
www.hudsongreenway.state.ny.us/index.htm

Scenic Hudson
www.scenichudson.org

Sustainability Institute
www.sustainer.org/

Sustainable Communities Network
www.sustainable.org/
Cornell Cooperative Extension

Soundkeeper
www.soundkeeper.org

Sound Waters
www.soundwaters.org

Federated Conservationists of Westchester County Inc.
www.fcwc.org

Hudson Basin River Watch
www.hudsonbasin.org

Riverkeeper
www.riverkeeper.org

The Hudson River Watertrail Association
www.hrwa.org
“I think that I shall never see A billboard lovely as a tree. Indeed, unless the billboards fall, I’ll never see a tree at all.”  
~ Ogden Nash   - Song of the Open Road, 1945

Beczak Environmental Education Center Inc.  
www.beczak.org/home_page.htm

Save the Sound  
www.savethesound.org/default.htm

Croton Watershed Clean Water Coalition  
www.newyorkwater.org

Westchester Land Trust  
www.westchesterlandtrust.org

Lower Hudson Coalition of Conservation Districts  
www.lhccd.org

Bronx River Alliance  
www.bronxriver.org

Teatown Lake Reservation  
www.teatown.org

Cornell Cooperative Extension  
www.cce.cornell.edu/

EPA Green Communities  
www.epa.gov/greenkit/index.html

LWRP: NYS Local Water Revitalization Program  
www.dos.state.ny.us/cstl/lwrp.html

NYS Quality Communities Clearinghouse  
www.dos.state.ny.us/qc/home.shtml

Historic Hudson Valley  
www.hudsonvalley.org/

National Trust for Historic Preservation  
www.nationaltrust.org/

Westchester County Tourism  
www.westchestertourism.com/

Hudson Valley Tourism  
www.travelhudsonvalley.org/
Westchester County Water Agency
The Water Agency was created to ensure the provision of adequate and safe drinking water and also to preserve the County’s precious drinking water supply.
www.westchestergov.com/planning/WaterAgency/default.htm

New York State Department of Agriculture Markets
www.agmkt.state.ny.us/

American Planning Association
www.planning.org

New York Metro Chapter of APA
www.nyplanning.org/

The Library of Congress Map Collections
memory.loc.gov/ammem/gmdhtml/gmdhome.html

Smart Growth America - This comprehensive website, dedicated to promoting Smart Growth, features an image database, advocacy tools and a comprehensive collection of reports.

Car Free Cities
www.carfree.com/

BrownfieldSource
BrownfieldSource.org is the comprehensive online resource for brownfields news and information. Designed for local government users and the general public, the site provides instant, free access to news, events, and published materials related to fundamental topics in brownfields cleanup and reuse, including: economics, community, environment, redevelopment, government, law, and innovation.
http://www2.brownfieldsource.org/

Building Technologies Program
Features information on energy efficient building types, as well as how to implement them.
www.eere.energy.gov/buildings/index.cfm?flash=yes

The Lincoln Institute
The Lincoln Institute of Land Policy is a nonprofit and tax-exempt educational institution established in 1974. Its mission as a school is to study and teach land policy, including land economics and land taxation. The Institute is supported primarily by the Lincoln Foundation, which was established in 1947 by
the Cleveland industrialist John C. Lincoln.
www.lincolninst.edu/index-high.asp

New York Planning Federation
www.nypf.net

New York New Jersey Trail Conference
www.nynjtc.org/

General Code
www.generalcode.com
Online municipal codes for many Westchester County municipalities and others across the country.

Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area
www.hudsonvalleyheritagearea.com/

The Hudson River Valley Institute
www.hudsonrivervalley.net/

EPA Model Ordinances to Protect Local Resources
www.epa.gov/owow/nps/ordinance/index.htm

Adobe Acrobat
www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Division for Sustainable Development
www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdissues/energy/enr.htm

The Conservation Fund
www.conservationfund.org

Local Government Commission
www.lgc.org

Preservation League of New York State
www.preservenys.org/

New York State Scenic Byways Program
www.dot.state.ny.us/scenic/scenic.html

America’s Byways (National Scenic Byways Program)
www.byways.org/
E. Contacts

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Capitol Station
Room 254
Albany, NY 12224
“The true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit.”

-Wesley Erwin Henderson