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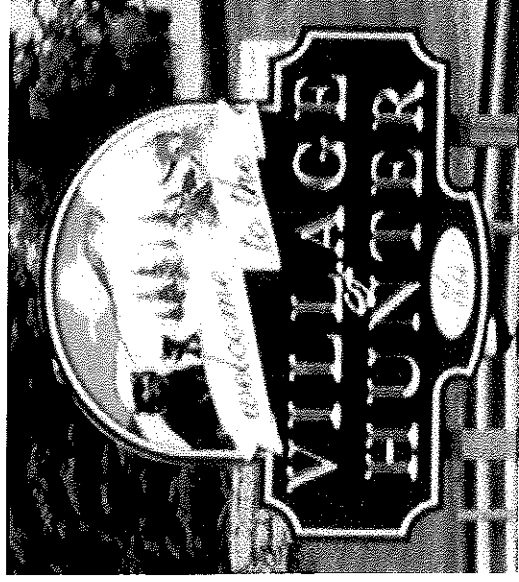
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Introduction

The purpose of the Village of Hunter Comprehensive Plan Update and Main Street Revitalization Plan is to define the goals, objectives and strategies which are most important in facilitating the revitalization of Hunter and its Main Street. To improve the chances for the Plan's success, this section identifies the actions and programs that need to be implemented by the Village of Hunter to put the goals and objectives into practice and to achieve the preferred land use patterns and development trends across the Village. The principles that guide these actions should be proactive and consistent with the goals, objectives and future land use pattern chosen by the community. In some cases, the actions recommended will require a commitment of funds and resources by local, state and county agencies and/or cooperation with developers, landowners, residents and adjacent communities. In all cases, the actions described about the revitalization of Hunter's Main Street will require a dedicated, long-term commitment of energy and motivation by all of the stakeholders of the Village of Hunter. The majority of information contained in the 2001 Draft Plan has been incorporated into this document as the existing conditions of the Village have not changed significantly with the exception of incorporating current demographic information.

Plan Implementation Strategy

As identified by the community, local leaders, the advisory committee and the consultant, these revised goals, objectives and strategies have been prioritized into two categories, Immediate and Incremental. “Immediate Goals” should be started as soon as possible and contain measures that can be implemented relatively quickly (0-3 years). “Incremental Goals” should be started as soon as possible but progress towards full implementation will naturally proceed at a slower pace (0-10 years). The “Immediate Goals” are intended to be the easiest to implement and should help to facilitate future development of the “Incremental Goals”. A description of each of the goals and objective’s action strategies has also been provided.

The proposed implementation program does not attempt to catalog all of the actions that could be undertaken. Since it is a long-term plan, many actions cannot or need not be undertaken all at once. Instead, the proposed implementation program focuses on the most important actions that are needed in the next few years. This strategy insures that the most pressing current concerns are addressed. It also establishes a strong foundation for deciding more specific actions in the future.

The top priority is identified first and is followed by a list of high priority actions that should be undertaken as part of the Village’s ongoing efforts to implement the Village of Hunter Revitalization Plan.

Where recommended, committees should be formed whose tasks will be to take the recommended revitalization tasks beyond the document phase. These committees are particularly important for the development of specific land use and economic development initiatives. The following Hunter Revitalization Group committees were recommended for formulation to directly address and implement various aspects of the Plan:

- Financing and Grants Committee
- DOT Route 23A Improvements Committee
- Existing Streetscape Evaluation Committee
- Zoning Ordinance Review Committee
- Tax Assessment Committee
- Beautification Committee
- Marketing and Public Relations Committee
- Historic Preservation Committee

There should be a significant amount of cross communication between these committees and the Village to ensure that all ideas and initiatives are consistent with the Plan’s continued implementation. The committees should meet independently at

Comprehensive and Revitalization Plan

regular intervals (monthly), or on an as-needed basis, and then collectively every quarter with Village representatives.

It is understood that the recommended revitalization strategies are continuous initiatives and will be subject to changing community needs and availability of funding. It is essential that the Village have its own internal capabilities to support and augment the working committees to seize opportunities as they arise.

In addition, the Village of Hunter Revitalization Plan should undergo a formal review every five years to make sure it remains consistent with the changing goals of the community. Village officials and the committees should look at what provisions have actually been implemented and gauge their relative success. The committee should also examine why or why not certain elements of the Plan were not adopted or implemented and make appropriate revisions.

Plan Adoption

The first step in the implementation process is formal adoption of the Comprehensive and Revitalization Plan by the Hunter Village Board. That should be followed as soon as possible by the adoption of a resolution by the Hunter Village Board designating the Revitalization Plan as the official Main Street area planning document for the community. The Plan should be published and distributed to all boards, interested citizens in the community and to other appropriate local, county and state agencies. It should be made clear to all the boards, committees and staff that all subsequent actions coming before the boards should be evaluated in the context of their consistency with the new Revitalization Plan. A Village newsletter should describe and report actions to be taken to implement the Plan.

Simultaneously, the Village Board must review the Revitalization Plan for conformance with the State Environmental Quality Review Act. An Environmental Assessment Form (Long Form) must be filed with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. The Village Board must find that the Revitalization Plan will not have a significant impact on the environment or, if it finds that the action may cause a significant impact, the Board must develop an Environmental Impact Statement for the project.

Although the Revitalization Plan has no legal status, it does provide an objective foundation for establishing a zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations and the basis for guiding subsequent actions directed by the public or private sector. The Village should begin the implementation of its planning program with the following actions within the first few years of the Plan's adoption:

- Publicize the Committee's work on the Revitalization Plan.

- Make presentations about the Plan to local organizations and civic groups.
- Commence work on establishing the Village of Hunter Zoning Local Law to include the provisions listed in the general recommendations below.
- Develop a Village Zoning Map to reflect the changes specified in the new zoning ordinance.
- Develop revisions to the subdivision and site plan review regulations as recommended in the sections below.
- Develop and adopt new policies and guidelines as recommended in the sections below.

SECTION I

PREVIOUS PLANS AND STUDIES

This Comprehensive Plan update is being developed by the Village of Hunter in order to respond to current conditions and changes occurring within the Village. It is based upon four previous planning reports addressing planning issues in the Village and represents new initiatives for the Village to follow in the long-term revitalization of the Village.



Catskill Mountains
As Seen From Hunter

Most importantly, this update directly recognizes the implications of the proposed new Village-wide sewer system, and the fact that the Village currently has no zoning ordinance to support future residential and/or commercial growth that such new infrastructure can potentially bring.

The 1974 Mountaintop Study Commission was formed by local government in the Catskills and was comprised of representatives from the Towns of Ashland, Halcott Hunter, Jewett, Lexington, Prattsville and Windham, and from the Villages of Hunter and Tannersville. In 1976, a Summary Report was prepared by the Greene County Planning Department for the Commission. The Commission was formed to enable municipalities to develop a unified response to proposed state and federal legislation and the newly created Temporary State Commission to Study the Catskills. The long-term policy direction established in this report was to emphasize hamlets, provide for growth, retain agricultural land, provide for economic development, conserve the natural environment, and protect the rural character. A short-term recommendation was that municipalities should adopt the model ordinances and codes that were prepared by the commission. However, no codes were adopted by the Village of Hunter as a direct result of this study.

In 1993, a Community Plan was developed for the Village¹. The intent of this document was to formalize the preferred land use and regulatory concepts and mechanisms to be used in guiding the long-term growth and development of the Village of Hunter.

¹ The Regional Plan Association. Village of Hunter Community Plan. New York, New York. 1993.

In 1996, the Village commissioned the infrastructure planning project², which was funded jointly by the Village and the New York Planning Federation. This report provided a program of infrastructure and related economic development activities, as well as a strategy to finance these improvements. One of the major recommendations of this study was that a comprehensive plan be prepared for the Village.

In the summer of 2000, the Village drafted its "Village of Hunter Comprehensive Plan". This was the Village's first, true comprehensive plan and sought to provide the Village with a solid policy foundation for the future growth and development of the Village. It established goals, objectives and general recommendations based upon public consensus.

² River Street Planning and Development. Infrastructure Planning Project Revitalizing Hunter. A Strategic Development Plan. Prepared for the Village of Hunter, Greene County. Troy, New York. 1996.

SECTION II INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

A. History of Hunter

While the Catskills were only occasionally used by Native Americans, later the region was settled by the Dutch, English, Irish and Germans. Its rich history includes logging, bluestone quarrying, leather tanning, wintergreen and blueberry harvesting, trapping, fishing, and mountain tourism, railroads, and even World War II pilot training⁵.

The Village of Hunter was first called Edwardsville, named after Colonel William Edwards who established the tanning industry. At this time, the Village of Hunter was described as little more than an “ivy swamp.” Edwards was a tanner who lived in both New Jersey and Massachusetts and who had devised a method of tanning hides by standing them in vats of tanning liquor to speed up the process of turning stiff hides into soft pliable leather. In 1790 the name of the community changed to Hunter in honor of John Hunter of New Rochelle. After surveying the area in 1816-17, seeing the vast stand of huge hemlock trees, the accessibility of water power, and the great Hudson River for transportation, Colonel Edwards encouraged others to invest and he built a huge tanning factory in Hunter. The tannery was built on the site of the Bronson sawmill and was the largest tannery in the world until Zadock Pratt’s tannery was built in Prattsville. Hunter existed as a tannery town until the hemlock trees, the rich source of tannin, were exhausted. Edwards moved on, following the supply of hemlock trees, and the village, through disuse, was lost for a time.



New York State Historic
Landmark

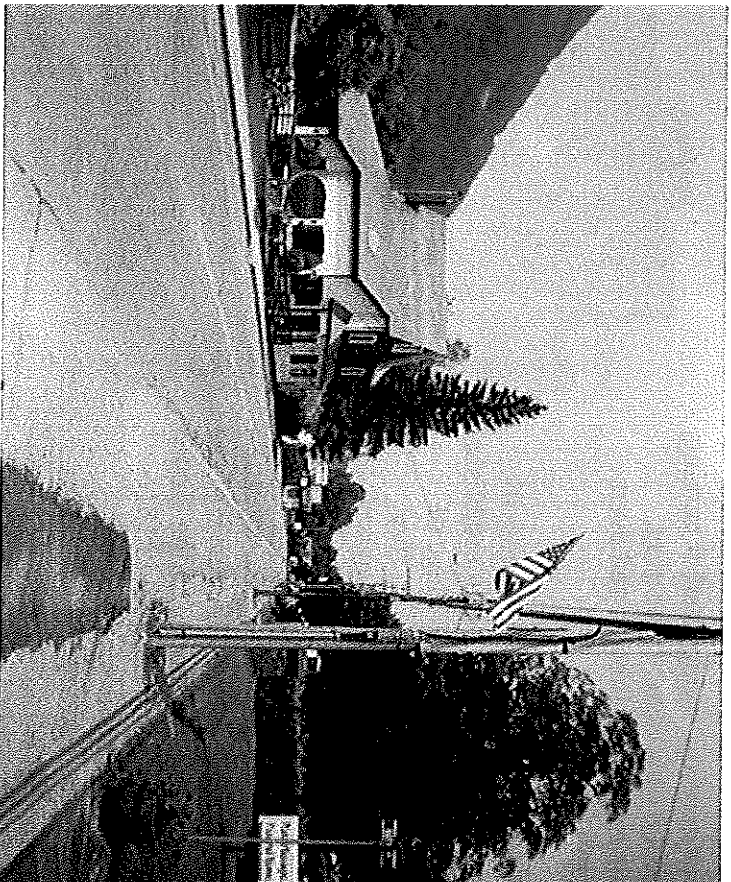
Almost one hundred years later, in 1894, Hunter was incorporated as a municipality with its own local government. Another significant event in the history of Hunter occurred in the 1950’s. At the time, Hunter was looking for a way to boost its sagging economy. Local contractor Orville Slutzky’s began excavation in the Fall of 1959. Hunter Mountain Ski Bowl (Hammerstein’s) opened in 1959, with two Savio chairlifts and snowmaking already in place. The Hammersteins failed after three years, and in

⁵ New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. Catskill Forest Preserve. Official Map and Guide. Albany, New York. 1997.

1962 Orville and his brother Israel took over and built Hunter Mountain into as nationally known resort⁴.

B. Community Characteristics

The Village of Hunter is 1.5 square miles in area and is located in the center of the Town of Hunter, Greene County, New York. In order to understand the issues that



Hunter Main Street

Sullivan Counties. The Village is situated at the base of the second highest peak of the Catskills, Hunter Mountain. Over 60% of the lands in the Catskill Park are privately owned with the rest being publicly-owned “forest preserve⁵.” The Catskill region is notable for its natural and cultural resources, as well as recreational opportunities.

Since the Northeastern United States is the most heavily populated tourist market in the country, it comes as no surprise that the Catskill region is one of New York State’s premiere destinations for tourists. Due to its proximity to major cities, the Catskills have become a convenient location for weekend trips. For instance, a New York City,

⁴ Hunter Promotion Association. (1999) *Catskill History*. [WWW document]. URL <http://www.albany.net/~hpa/history.htm>

⁵ New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. *Catskill Forest Preserve*. Official Map and Guide. Albany, New York. 1997.

Hartford, Connecticut or Springfield, Massachusetts resident only has to travel two hours to reach the Village of Hunter. The Capital District Region of Upstate New York is only located one hour north of the Village of Hunter making commuting to Albany for employment a possibility. Being located only a half-hour from the New York State Thruway, other employment centers are accessible such as nearby Kingston, Poughkeepsie and the 9W corridor. In 1997, tourism accounted for \$670 million dollars of the five county economy in the Catskill watershed. The tourism economy includes visitor spending on hotels, transportation, dining, shopping, entertainment and miscellaneous goods and services⁶. Residents in the Catskills benefit from tourism through job creation and through the enhancement of local recreational, entertainment and retail options.

The Catskills are located in the upper reaches of the watershed that provides drinking water to New York City (NYC). This location means that the communities in the Catskills could have an impact on the water quality of this drinking water supply. To protect this water supply, it is desirable to encourage development and practices that will not adversely impact water quality. The 1997 NYC Watershed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was generated by a five-year Filtration Avoidance Determination (FAD) for the City allowing it to avoid building an expensive water filtration plant if it could prove that environmental protection efforts could adequately preserve water quality. The New Infrastructure Program is part of the New York City Watershed MOA provides funds for specified municipalities in the west of Hudson reaches of the watershed for wastewater treatment plants. The Village of Hunter is one of those communities. NYC has agreed to pay for the construction of plants to control wastewater collection, treatment and disposal, but will not pay to foster growth in the watershed.

On a more local level, an important influence on the Village of Hunter is the ski resort of Hunter Mountain located just outside the Village boundary in the Town of Hunter. Hunter Mountain is referred to as one of the "Big Three" ski areas (Hunter Mountain, Ski Wildham, Belleayre) in the Catskill watershed due to their vertical drop, lift capacity, number of runs, skiable acreage and advanced and expert slopes⁷. The resort offers a vertical drop of 1,600 ft. with 53 trails. Hunter Mountain competes with larger resorts in the New England area as well as nearby Ski Windham, located in the Town of Windham. Hunter Mountain is therefore marketed as a day ski area and the closest "Big Mountain Experience" to NYC.

⁶ Hamilton, Rabinovitz, and Alschuler, Inc., Allee King Rosen and Fleming, Fairweather Consulting, The Saratoga Group, Shepstone Management, Sno. Engineering. West of Hudson Economic Development Study for the Catskill Watershed Corporation. Draft Final Plan for the Catskill Fund for the Future. Prepared for the Catskill Watershed Corporation. May 12. 1999.

⁷ Hamilton, Rabinovitz, and Alschuler, Inc., Allee King Rosen and Fleming, Fairweather Consulting, The Saratoga Group, Shepstone Management, Sno. Engineering. West of Hudson Economic Development Study for the Catskill Watershed Corporation. Draft Final Plan for the Catskill Fund for the Future. Prepared for The Catskill Watershed Corporation. May 12. 1999.

C. Demographics

1. Population

According to the 2000 census, there are 490 residents living in the Village of Hunter. This is an increase of 61 residents or 14.2% from the 1990 recorded population. The Town of Hunter has also seen a dramatic increase over the last ten years as well. Overall, Green County has experienced a 7.7% rise in population, from 44,739 residents to 48,195 residents. Table 1 displays the population of the Village compared to the Town of Hunter, Village of Tannersville and Greene County.

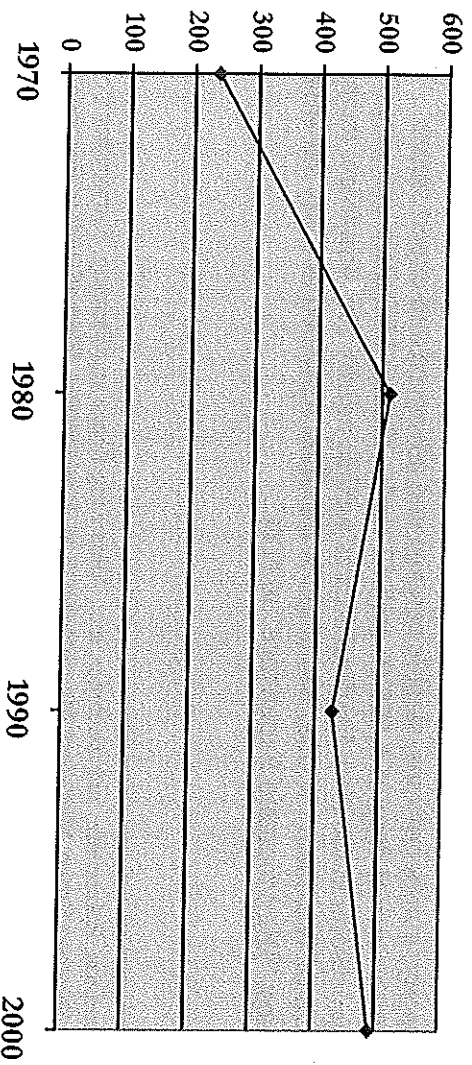
Table 1 : Population Comparison 1990 - 2000

	1990	2000	# change	% change
Village of Hunter	429	490	61	14.2%
Village of Tannersville	469	448	-17	-3.7%
Town of Hunter	2116	2721	605	28.6%
Greene County	44739	48195	3456	7.7%

Source: 1990 & 2000 Census

Chart 1 shows the population trends from 1970-2000 for the Village of Hunter. In 1990 the population declined, but has since rebounded in 2000.

Chart 1: Population Trends 1970-2000 for the Village of Hunter



Source: 1970 - 2000 Census

2. Age Distribution

Table 2 indicates that the Median Age of the Village of Hunter is higher than the county and significantly higher than the state. Typically, a rising median age typically indicates an increasing aging population, and a concurrent decreasing youth population.

Table 2: Median Age

Location	Median Age
Village of Hunter	43.7
Greene County	39.1
New York State	35.9

Source: 2000 Census

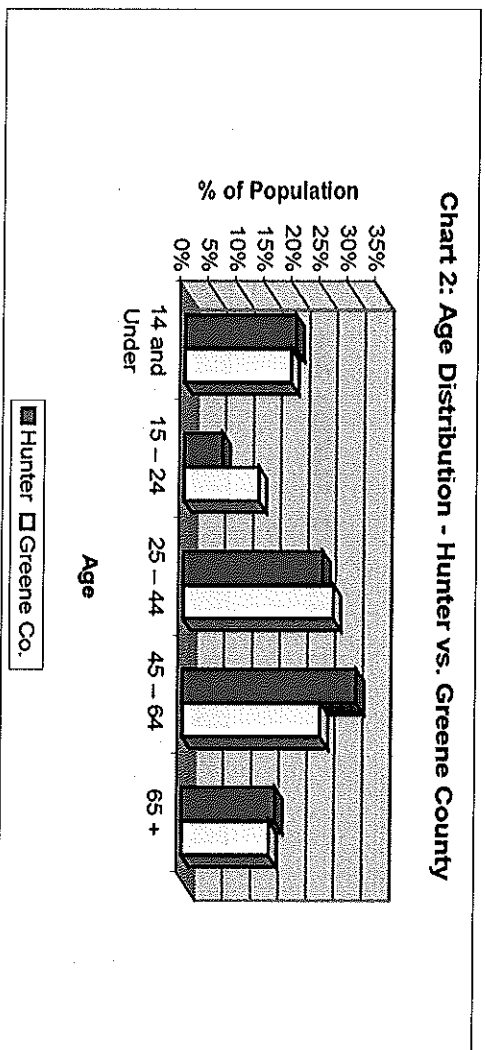
Table 3, “Age Distribution from the Village of Hunter, 1990-2000,” compares the age distribution of the village from 1990 to 2000. This table shows the age distribution for individuals 15 to 44 and 65 and older has remained relatively consistent between the 1990 and 2000 censuses. However, two significant “spikes” occur with the 14 and under category and the 45 to 64 year category. This trend is unusual when compared with other communities who generally see shifts located around a specific age range in a bell curve pattern. These two distinct separate spikes could be related to the influx of the older “baby-boomer” generation purchasing a second home in Hunter and claiming it as a primary residence for tax purposes. This would also be consistent with the spike in the 14 and under range because these individuals could conceivably have children of the 14 and under age range.

Table 3: Age Distribution for the Village of Hunter, 1990-2000

Age	1990	2000	% Change
14 and Under	77	98	21.4%
15 – 24	32	34	5.9%
25 – 44	125	123	-1.6%
45 – 64	109	153	28.8%
65 +	86	82	-4.9%

Source: 2000 Census

Chart 2 compares the age distribution between the Village of Hunter and Greene County. Overall, the distribution remains relatively consistent for all individuals with a slight spike in population for the 15 – 24 age range.



3. Education

As shown in table 4, when compared to Greene County and New York State, Hunter has a lower rate of residents who have not completed high school, and a lower rate of residents who hold an associates or graduate/professional degree. However, Hunter has a slightly higher rate of residents who hold high school diplomas and residents who hold bachelor’s degrees, with a significantly higher rate of residents who have attended some college but do not hold a degree. When compared with Greene County alone, a significantly higher percentage of residents in Hunter hold bachelor’s degrees (14% in Hunter compared with Greene County at 9%).

Table 4: Educational Attainment for Persons 25 Years of Age and Over

Attainment Level	Village of Hunter	Greene County	New York State
Less than 9th grade	3%	6%	10%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	8%	16%	15%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	37%	36%	29%
Some college, no degree	28%	18%	16%
Associate degree	4%	8%	7%
Bachelor’s degree	14%	9%	13%
Graduate or professional degree	7%	7%	10%

Source: 2000 Census

4. Income

As indicated in table 5, the median Village of Hunter has approximately 36% of households living near or below the low income range. This is significantly lower than the rate for Green County and New York State.

Table 5: Approximate Low Income Counts⁸

	Hunter	Greene County	New York State
Median Income	\$ 32,500	\$ 36,493	\$ 43,393
Low/Moderate Income	\$ 26,000	\$ 29,194.40	\$ 34,714.40
Households living near low income range	80	8,733	2,892,481
% of households living near range	36%	48%	41%

Source: 2000 Census

Table 6 shows poverty status for the Village of Hunter compared with Greene County and New York State. With 15.5% of the total population living at poverty status, Hunter's poverty rate is higher than both the county and state rates.

Table 6: Poverty Status Among Individuals

	Hunter	Greene County	New York State
Individuals	73	5,432	2,692,202
Percent of Total Population	15.5%	12.2%	14.6%

Source: 2000 Census

5. Employment

Of the persons who live in the village and work within New York State in 2000, 156 worked in Greene County, and 32 worked outside of Greene County. As shown in table 7, the largest employer of village residents were arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services, with 24% of the total employment.

⁸ Low income defined by Housing and Urban Development as 80% of the Median Household Income

Table 7: 2000 Industry Breakdown for Employed Persons 16 Years and Over

Industry	Persons	% of Total
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	46	24%
Educational, health and social services	31	16%
Retail trade	27	14%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	26	14%
Construction	18	10%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	9	5%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	9	5%
Other services (except public administration)	9	5%
Manufacturing	5	3%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	3	2%
Public administration	3	2%
Wholesale trade	2	1%
Information	0	0%
Total	188	100%

Source: 2000 Census

Table 8 compares unemployment in the Village of Hunter, Greene County, and New York State. On average, with 1.8% of the workforce unemployed, the unemployment rate for Hunter falls well below the county and State rates for unemployment.

Table 8: Unemployment Rates 2000

	Persons	% of Workforce
Village of Hunter	6	1.8
Greene County	1,330	3.5
New York State	640,108	4.3

Source: 2000 Census

6. Housing

A large proportion of the housing in the Village of Hunter is currently or will soon be in need of rehabilitation and repair. Of the 691 structures in the Village of Hunter (as of March 1990), almost 42% were built in 1939 or earlier and only about 19% have been built after 1985⁹. For this reason, programs that provide structural and facade improvements will be especially useful in the Village. One such program already exists through the activities of the Hunter Foundation. This organization aims to enhance the appearance of the Route 23A corridor in the Town of Hunter. Through the Foundation, blighted or distressed property is renovated consistent with a Victorian and Colonial style.

⁹ Greene County. Greene County Data Book - 1990. Population Characteristics. Cairo, New York August, 1993.

These structures soon become an asset to the community in terms of appearance and in terms of being viable to the point of contributing to the tax base. A recent example of their work is St. Mary's of the Mountain church at the eastern gateway to the Village. Hunter Foundation was formed in 1997 and is run entirely by volunteers. Funding is derived from donations, contributions and grants. Other programs for the rehabilitation of housing include the HUD administered Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program, the US Department of Agriculture Housing Preservation Grants, and grants administered by the New York State Housing Trust Fund Corporation.

As of 2000, the Village of Hunter contained 639 housing units. Approximately 63% or 401 of these units were reported as vacant units. Of the occupied units, 59% were owner occupied and 41% were renter occupied.

According to the US Census, the number of housing units in the Village of Hunter has decreased by 7% since 1990. Table 9 shows the change in housing rates from 1990 to 2000. One positive indication is that the occupancy rate in Hunter has increased by 11% and owner occupied units have increased by 19%. This indicates a more permanent population which coincides with the theory that a second-homeowner influx has occurred in Hunter.

Table 9: Housing Units 1990-2000

	1990		2000		% Change
	Units	%	Units	%	
Total housing units	682		639		-7%
Occupied	223	33%	238	37%	11%
Vacant	459	67%	401	63%	-7%
Owner Occupied	106	48%	140	59%	19%
Renter Occupied	117	52%	98	41%	-27%

Source: 1990 & 2000 Census

D. Land Use

1. General Land Use

Land use patterns in the Village of Hunter are illustrated by Table 10. Residential land use is the most prevalent use occupying 33.36% of the Village, followed by commercial (12.62%), community services (8.97%), recreation and entertainment (7.06%), public services (1.61%) and wild, forested, and conservation lands (0.08%)¹⁰.

¹⁰ GIS land use coverage received from New York state Office of Real Property Services.

Table 10: Allocation of Land Uses Within the Village of Hunter

Land Use	Area (sq. mi.)	Relative %
Commercial	0.16	12.62
Community Services	0.12	8.97
Public Services	0.02	1.61
Recreation and Entertainment	0.09	7.06
Residential	0.44	33.36
Vacant	0.47	36.35
Wild, Forested, Conservation	0.001	0.08

Source: 2000 Census

In general, very little development has taken place in the Village recently. A field visit to the Village conducted in the winter of 1999, revealed that there are 54 businesses in the Village of Hunter that are interspersed with residential development along Route 23A (Table 11). Two identifiable commercial districts are the plaza at the entrance to Hunter Mountain and the Main Street business district, located where the post office and Village Hall are located. Nearly half of this commercial development is comprised of restaurants/pubs, motels/bed and breakfasts, and ski shops/outfitters. These businesses (especially the latter) are largely seasonal and dependent on the tourism generated from Hunter Mountain. There are a large number of realtors for the size of the Village that attests to the development potential of the Village and the surrounding region. Other types of businesses found in the Village can be classified as garages/gas stations, beauty salons, fitness and recreation facilities, antique retail and other miscellaneous retail.

Table 11: Commercial Development in the Village of Hunter

Type of Commercial Use	Number
Motel/hotel/bed & breakfast	8
Garage/gas station and retail	3
Restaurant/pub	8
Realty	5
Ski shop/outfitter	9
Beauty	2
Antique	2
Fitness/recreation	2
Misc. retail	12
Other commercial	3
Total	54

Source: 2000 Census

The Catskill Mountain Foundation (CMF) has been purchasing property in the downtown business district and undertaking renovations for uses such as a theatre, art gallery, and bookstore, as well as office space and a training and leadership center. This private investment is creating one of the early “successes” that should help to trigger more investment and economic growth within the Village. However as the CMF is a not-for-profit, tax exempt entity, the long term benefits of its revitalization efforts to the tax base may be somewhat limited.

In general, there is not enough retail development in the Village of Hunter to support the needs of year-round residents. Village residents, as well as tourists, have no choice but to do their shopping in nearby communities such as the Village of Tannersville. Another important observation about the Village is the prevalence of seasonal commercial development that exists to support tourism at Hunter Mountain.

Similar to commercial development within the Village, the type of residential development also reflects the tourist industry. As discussed further in Section 6, a large proportion of the homes located in the Village are “second homes” for Hunter Mountain skiers or other ski areas. Residential housing is interspersed with commercial development along route 23A and “fingers” out along Windham Road, Garfield Avenue, Glen Avenue, and Scribner Hollow Road. The majority of housing is single-family units. Older single-family homes are located at the base of the mountain, while some newer homes are located on the north side of the Village offering excellent views of the ski mountain. Other types of residential housing are somewhat limited but include an apartment complex, multi-family units, condominiums and townhouses.

Land use regulation within the Village is accomplished through a Land Use Law or resolution and a Uniform Ordinance Code (1956) that regulates items such as streets, sidewalks, sewer disposal, snow emergencies, and unmowed frontage. To date, no zoning ordinance has been adopted by the village. Adoption of a zoning ordinance would provide several benefits to the Village. First, a zoning ordinance is key to encouraging revitalization because it protects land uses. Businesses and commerce do not want to be sited where there is a threat of incompatible land uses. Secondly, zoning allows for a more orderly pattern of land use. For example, commercial uses can be clustered into commercial districts that allow consumers to easily carry out multiple shopping tasks within the same general vicinity, thereby encouraging further consumer spending. Zoning also helps prevent overcrowding and helps to promote efficient utilization of infrastructure. Perhaps of greater importance zoning helps to protect and increase the value of existing properties while spurring new development.

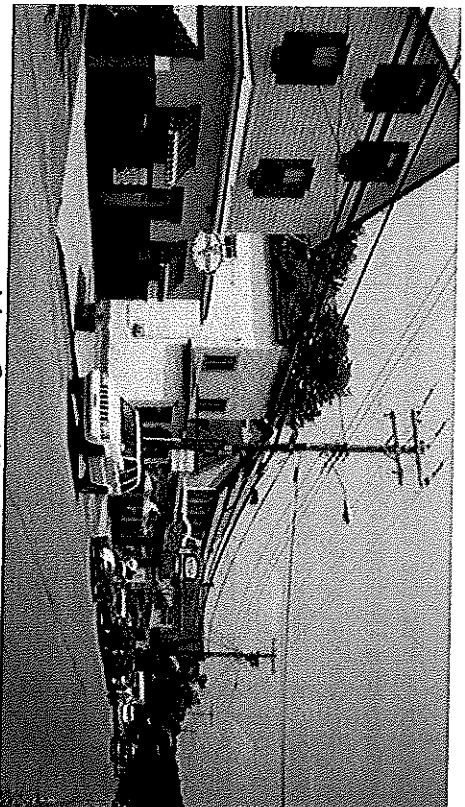
2. Development Potential

An analysis of the digital land use coverage indicates that just over one-third of the Village remains vacant. A large proportion of this vacant land is concentrated at the west-end of the Village north of Route 23A. Vacant land is also located along Glen Avenue, Boti Drive, and at the east end of the Village, north and south of Route 23A. Much of the vacant land in the Village has moderate slope limitations, yet is severely constrained with respect to the ability to support a septic tank absorption field. However, a limited amount of plant reserve capacity will become available for new development with the construction of a proposed wastewater treatment plant. Given that special design and construction techniques are utilized for steep slope construction, it is conceivable that some vacant land would be developable. The vacant land at the west-end of the Village and along Glen Avenue and Boti Drive is well suited to residential development and will offer scenic views of the mountain and ski resort. At the east end of the Village, there is potential to build on the existing commercial development and creating another commercial center and an inviting eastern gateway to the community.

E. Economic Development

1. Economic History of Hunter

The economy of the Village of Hunter is inevitably linked to that of the Catskill region. As previously mentioned, in 1997, tourism within the Catskill watershed accounted for \$670 million dollars. The tourism economy includes visitor spending on hotels,



Main Street Hunter

transportation, dining, shopping, entertainment, and miscellaneous goods and services. Residents in the Catskills benefit from tourism through job creation and through the enhancement of local recreational, entertainment, and retail

options. A recent economic report by the Catskill Watershed Corporation (1999) described the economy of the Catskill region as diversified (service, manufacturing, and agriculture sectors), but small in scale. Some key barriers to economic development in the region are a lack of infrastructure, a shortage of well-located tourist facilities, and a lack of amenities such as dining, entertainment, and retail. The report stated that enhancement of the hamlets and Villages is a major element in an economic development strategy for the Catskill watershed.

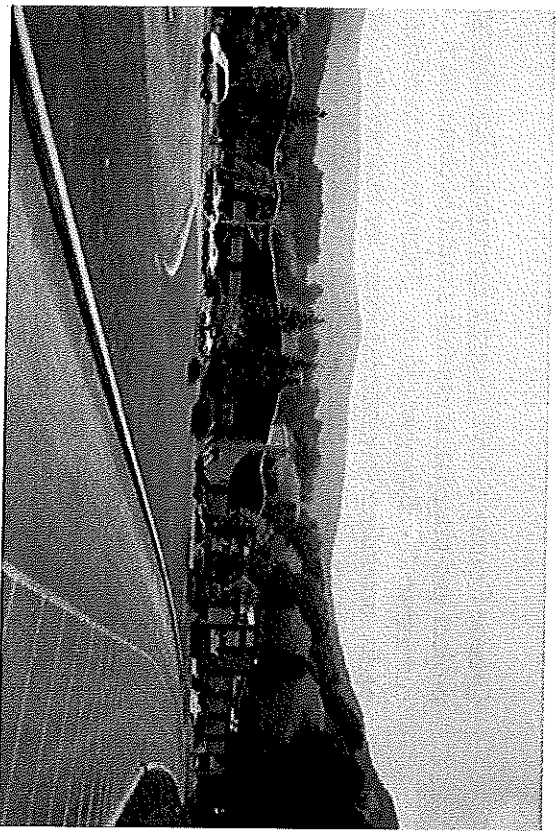
Greene County's 1998 Overall Economic Development Plan identified key project and program areas that should become the focus of the County's economic development efforts. These areas were the promotion of industrial parks, providing low interest loans for businesses, improving education and training, expanding community facilities such as infrastructure and main street projects, encouraging tourism and cultural facilities, and improving community appearance. Currently, economic development within the County is heavily influenced by monies that become available through the NYC Watershed Memorandum of Agreement.

The Greene County Promotion Department is responsible for promoting tourism in Greene County. This department is a promotional arm of the County legislature that produces publications to help market the County within the northeastern United States. Funding for this organization comes from the County Legislature, a grant from the "I Love NY" fund, and private sector participation and contributions. The marketing program of the Greene County Promotion Department is currently targeting nature tourism (biking, hiking, camping), sporting events such as triathlons, and heritage tourism (agriculture and historic). To differentiate themselves from other parts of the Catskills, the "Great Northern Catskills" theme and logo was developed. The Greene County Promotion Department participates regionally in the Catskills Association for Tourist Services (CATS), the redevelopment of the canal corridor, the Hudson Valley Tourism Association, and the Hudson Valley Tourism Development Council. Last year, funds were received from the Catskill Fund for the Future, via CATS, and then dispersed among the counties of Ulster, Delaware, Sullivan, Greene and Schoharie and their respective local municipalities. It is anticipated that the Catskill Fund for the Future will help Greene County "get out there" in terms of reaching their target audience.

Another important potential influence on the Village of Hunter is the recent development activity in the Route 9W corridor. Some larger businesses moving into the corridor are RV Sales and Services (currently based out of Albany), Fernlea (a Canadian greenhouse company), and potentially the US Generating Company. The 9W corridor is a desirable location because of its proximity to Exit 21B off the New York State Thruway. The siting of these

large businesses are expected to create jobs within the corridor. The Village of Hunter is situated such that it is within commuting distance of this corridor.

Historically, the largest influence on the economy of the Village of Hunter is the ski resort of Hunter Mountain located just outside the Village boundary in the Town of Hunter. Hunter Mountain is referred to as one of the "Big Three" ski areas (Hunter Mountain, Ski Windham, Belleayre) in the Catskills and is marketed as a day ski area and the closest "Big Mountain Experience" to New York City. In the off-season, Hunter Mountain offers a "Hunter Mountain Sky Ride," a chair lift ride that offers views of the Northeast. Summer and fall festivals showcase a wide spectrum of ethnic gatherings including Germanic, Celtic and Native American Cultures, as well as traditional Country and Western.



Hunter Mountain

In recent years, Hunter Mountain has floated various development proposals including the exchange of undeveloped land on the western slope of its mountain for certain State owned land on Hunter Mountain. This proposal, however, met with opposition from environmental organizations and has not advanced.

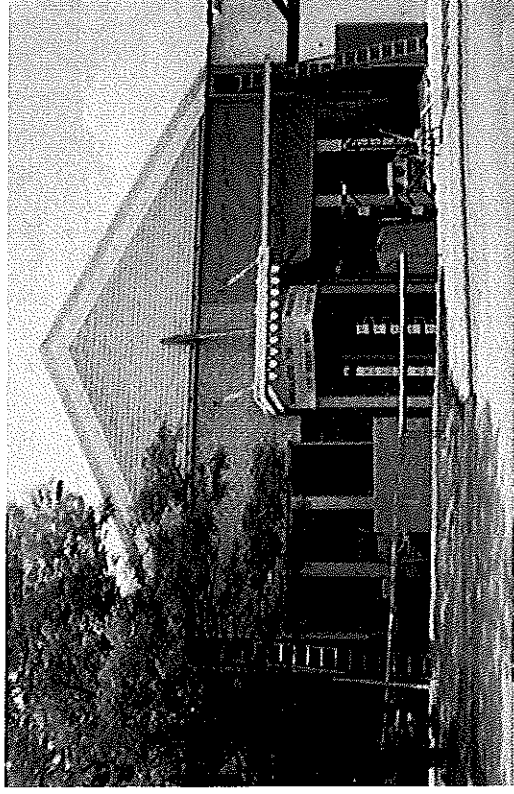
Expansion of Hunter Mountain would significantly affect the local economy, particularly to the extent that such expansion would result in the mountain becoming more of a year round destination. There are several significant obstacles to such expansion including:

- The extremely high capital cost of expansion. Industry-wide skier visitation numbers have flattened out in recent years, however, this has been affected by the growing populations of snowboarding and snow tubing which may make up to 30% of all visitors. It is not known whether projected revenues are sufficient to support a major expansion at Hunter Mountain.

- Hunter Mountain has for a number of years been engaged in a lengthy permitting process with the Department of Environmental Conservation regarding the amount of water that may be withdrawn from the Schoharie Creek for snowmaking purposes. It is not known what effects, if any, the results of this process may have on the resort's ability to make snow.
- Hunter Mountain currently experiences labor shortages and, when labor can be found, the provision of adequate housing can be a problem. It is not known what effect labor supply might have on an expanded facility.

For these reasons, expansion of Hunter Mountain is by no means assured and the community should consider other means of diversification.

An important development for the economic growth of the Village is the recent re-



Hunter Movie Theatre (currently under restoration)

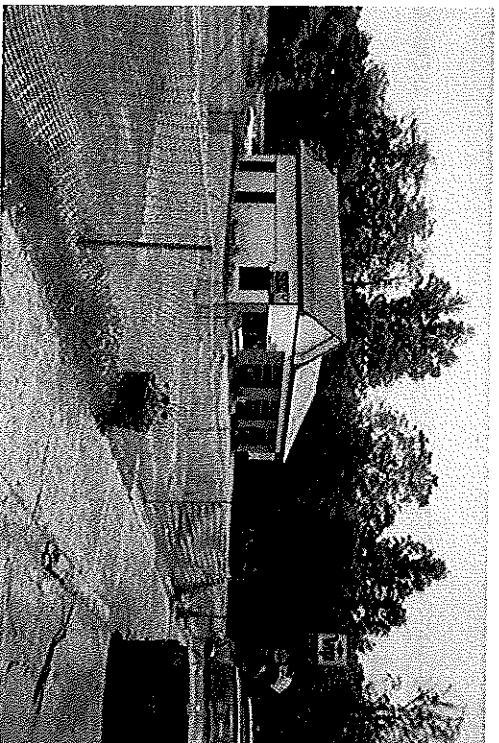
establishment of the Town of Hunter Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber is currently located in the Ruider Finn building (across from the Village Hall) and is staffed by volunteers. To date, the

Chamber has 80 members that help to fund the organization through donations. While a website has already been developed for the Chamber, other plans include a "walking map" of points of interest to be found in the Town of Hunter, an economic development strategy and the pursuit of additional funds through fundraising activities and grants. The Chamber of Commerce is the logical body to seek funding through the Manufacturing and Business Program of the Catskill Fund for the Future.

Another important player within the Town and Village of Hunter, in terms of tourism and economic development, is the Hunter Promotion Association. Recognizing that the Town and Village economy was almost entirely dependent upon the presence of Hunter Mountain, the Association was formed four years ago to draw more business and tourism to the area. With 65

members, the Association provides winter, summer and fall events such as the 'Black Bear Festival: which is a celebration of the folklore, lifestyles and natural and art history of the area. The Association has already partnered with the Catskill Mountain Foundation and Catskill Watershed Corporation and looks forward to coordinating regionally with inter-county associations.

In general, the economy of the Village is heavily dependent upon the presence of Hunter Mountain and the skiers and tourists that it attracts. The presence of Hunter Mountain is an asset to the Village and the Village should continue to capitalize on its proximity to this resort by encouraging additional commercial and residential development. However, an economic strategy that focuses on a single industry is not a sustainable one. The Village needs to diversify its economy by encouraging cultural amenities such as film and the visual and performing arts, antique markets, organic and niche food markets, and light manufacturing.



Vacant Gas Station Along Main Street

Community appearance is an issue in the Village of Hunter, that in part contributes to the lack of business development. Many buildings are in poor repair and the streetscape needs improvement. Currently, there are two organizations that are trying to improve the appearance of the Village. One group is the Village Beautification Committee. To date, the activities of this group have been a community trash pick-up day and the selling of window flower boxes to businesses and residents. The Committee plans to address uniform signage and there is a long-range plan to place banners throughout the Village and Town of Hunter. A second organization that is trying to improve the appearance of the Village, as well as the surrounding Town, is the Infrastructure Committee of the Hunter Promotion Association. This committee plans to address the need for sewers, lighting, streetscape improvements, recreation and signage. Already, the Village applied for and received a \$100,000 grant from the State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation for improvements to Dolans Lake Park. The Committee intends to take advantage of funds available through the Catskill Fund for the

Future to concentrate on the improvements needed for streetscapes, sidewalks, and utilities. The following outline further illustrates these efforts:

- Construction of a new wastewater treatment facility and collection system funded through the NYCDEP New Infrastructure Program. (In design);
- Construction of a new drinking water filtration plant and replacement of a deteriorated distribution system funded through the NYS DWSRF. (In design);
- The relocation and construction of a new Village DPW garage from the Park to a the outskirts of the Village. (Completed);
- Construction of a 2000' bicycle path and 120' pedestrian bridge over the Schoharie Creek to connect a waterfront park to the business district. (Completed);
- Construction of a new recreational pavillion, bathhouse, and public grille adjoining the business district. (In design);
- Restoration of sidewalks, curbing, period lighting, drainage, parking areas, and pedestrian amenities within the business district. (In design);
- Creation of a Village architectural review board;
- Development of a revised Comprehensive Plan to guide business growth;
- Creation of a micro-enterprise economic development revolving loan fund for businesses within the Village. (Application pending with NYS Small Cities Program); and,
- Construction of a bicycle pathway connecting the business and Village centers of Tannersville and Hunter (In design)

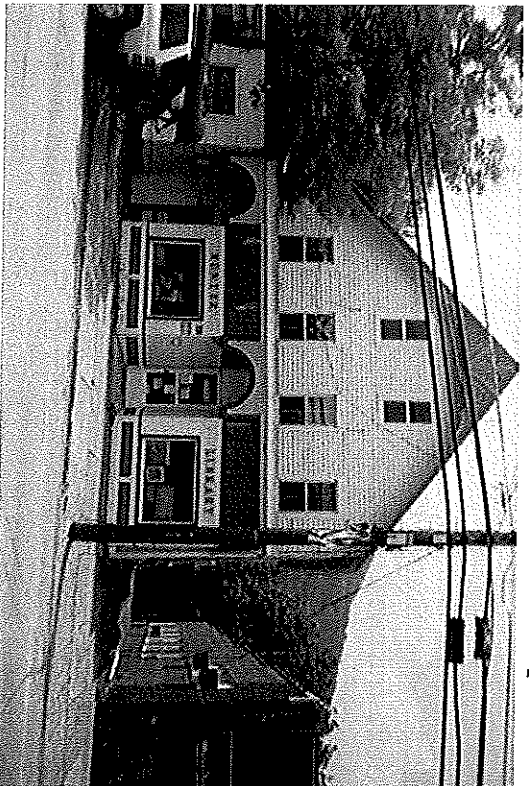
Either the Village Beautification Committee or the Hunter Promotion Association (Infrastructure Committee) could take on the responsibility of a Main Street Association to undertake activities such as façade and signage improvements, development of a “design theme” and accompanying guidelines for streetscape improvements (sidewalks, street furniture, ornaments) and façade treatments. Many of these activities are being done as a part of the Waste Water Upgrade Project and by NYS DOT. Although the 1996 Infrastructure Report recommended that a revolving loan fund for façade and signage improvements be established, the Village in 2002, applied for CWC façade funding but was denied. However, a promising source of funding for these activities would be the Catskill Fund for the Future under either the “Hamlets and Villages” Program or the “Tourism, Skiing, Recreation and the Arts” Program. The Village of Hunter would qualify for the latter due to its proximity to Hunter Mountain.

Another issue related to the appearance of the Village is the utilities that line the downtown business district. The 1996 Infrastructure Report recommended

that these utility lines be placed underground. The Village recently took steps to investigate funding opportunities for placing electric, telephone and television cable lines underground. The Village estimates that this task would cost approximately four million dollars. A response from the New York State Department of State to the Village recommends three potential sources of funding: 1) Catskill Fund for the Future, 2) United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development Office, 3) United States Housing and Urban Development Office. While these sources may help to alleviate some of the financial burden of undertaking a utilities relocation project, it is unlikely that the total amount required will be received from these grant sources alone. Given the financial situation of the Village currently, it is unlikely that the Village will be able to proceed with this initiative in the near future, unless additional funding sources can be found.

To some extent, the economic development of the Village has been "kick started" by the efforts of the Catskill Mountain Foundation (CMF). The CMF was founded only a year ago and has already made significant in-roads to revitalizing the economy of the Village of Hunter. CMF's initiative within the Village essentially target three areas: 1) cultural amenities (film and performing and visual arts), 2) organic farming and related business and activities, and 3) an Elder Hostel program.

The CMF has purchased the Hunter Theatre which shows Hollywood films and there are plans for the old ski repair shop building (beside the existing theatre) to be converted to a theatre to show foreign and independent films. Expansion and retrofit of these buildings, as well as the nearby Post Office building, would also provide room for a lobby, cafe, gallery to showcase artwork, workshop space, and a stage for the performing arts. Just east of the existing theatre, the former supermarket building is currently being leased to the CMF and being used as a not-for-profit bookstore and art gallery. This store opened in mid-November 1998 and sells a large



Hunter Library

variety of new books. Sales have exceeded expectations. There are plans to move the sale of heavily discounted books to the sidewalk to draw potential customers to store.

Across the street from the Village Hall, the “red barn” or “Ruider Finn” building, as it is now often referred to, has been purchased and renovated. Multiple uses have been slotted for this building. Currently the building is being used as office space for the Town of Hunter Chamber of Commerce and Catskill Mountain Foundation. In addition, this site is being used for off-site conference/training center for a world-wide public relations firm based in New York City, as well as a leadership training center. These uses are creating positive economic spin-off effects for the local restaurants and hotels. Other planned uses of this property are a farm festival and musical concerts.

Another major thrust of the Catskill Mountain Foundation strategy is the development of an organic green market, with one location being the Ruider Finn building. The Catskill Watershed Corporation’s recent economic development study identified the opportunity within the agricultural arena for the Catskill name to become synonymous with fresh, natural farm products. In addition, agricultural tourism, including farmer’s markets, festivals, dairies, museums and other activities have become a growth industry. The Catskill Mountain Foundation has been doing extensive advertising for the organized green market and plans to hold these events on weekends in June, Thursday to Monday in July and weekends from September to Thanksgiving.

A future initiative of the Catskill Mountain Foundation is an Elder Hostel Program that provides activities for retirees. Week long courses would be offered on topics such as regional history, literature, and the performing and visual arts. It is hoped that these courses could be offered mid-week when there has traditionally been less tourist traffic. A possible location for these activities is the planned multi-story art complex at the location of the theatre. As with other initiatives planned by the CMF, restaurants, hotels, bed and breakfasts and other businesses would benefit from this additional tourist traffic in need of meals and lodging. It is a recommendation of this Plan that the CMF and the Village more closely coordinate their activities with each other as economies of scale can be achieved in working together.

2. Main Street Approach to Revitalization

Hunter is not alone in its efforts to attempt to revitalize its Main Street. All over the country, communities have been struggling to save their historic buildings and downtown areas. Since 1980, the National Main Street Center has been working with communities across America to revitalize their downtown districts. Rooted in historic preservation, the Main Street approach was started to save historic commercial architecture and the core of America’s

traditional towns, but has evolved in a powerful economic development tool for communities as well.

For Hunter, the Main Street approach would be a way to boost the community's retail trade and to improve the overall appearance of the downtown area. The program is designed to be locally driven, and all initiatives stem from local issues and concerns. The Main Street approach is centered on four points: organization, promotion, design and economic restructuring. First, organizing entails the program itself, building partnerships, developing partnerships and developing effective management and leadership. Second, promotion consists of advertising the downtown as a unique place to shop, live and work. Promotion also includes business working together to establish uniform business hours and common efforts to display a positive unified image of a community working together. Third, design goals are a focus to improve the visual quality of the downtown area and rehabilitation of older buildings and facades. Also, the program focuses on improving the signs and window displays of the Main Street area to improve the image of the downtown. The fourth element, economic restructuring has the goal of maintaining, strengthening, and diversifying the economic base of the community. This includes market analysis, business retention and recruitment efforts. This is an essential component to economic development because it builds on existing businesses as the foundation of the economy.

The Main Street Program is an excellent example of public and private revitalization effort. Since its creation, 17 states and over 300 communities have adopted the Main Street program. Successful Main Street communities have enjoyed the creation of new businesses, greater investment in the community, refurbished store fronts and rehabilitated buildings, and an overall greater sense of community and pride.

3. New York State Perspective

The State of New York has recently taken interest in revitalizing the downtown and urban areas. Through the Quality Communities Principle, New York State has refocused efforts on revitalizing downtown communities. There are seven directing principles to guide quality community effort and are used to guide the allocation and administration of State resources. The principles related to downtown revitalization are:

- Revitalize Our Downtowns and City Centers: Keeping existing developed areas economically vibrant and environmentally healthy and breathing life into abandoned downtown areas is critically important to the quality of life of New Yorkers

- **Encourage Sustainable Development:** Sustainable development is guided by policies and practices that integrate economic goals with objectives of community well being and environmental protection.

New York State has recognized the many advantages to revitalization of urban areas including reduced unemployment and higher property values. Using existing infrastructure and services also reduces the financial burden on the government of creating new blocks with new infrastructure. Downtown areas provide many benefits to business due to the mix of services and amenities all within walking distance. Further significant is that downtown revitalization reduces development pressure on existing open space, reducing sprawl. While the concept of urban revitalization is gaining momentum among urban areas, the State agrees that there is no single plan that can be automatically applied to all cases. Urban revitalization has been most successful when communities capitalize on the “traditional strengths” which are present. According to New York State, these strengths include historic architecture, pedestrian friendly spaces, cultural events, and an active street life. The State also points out that while there is no specific plan suitable for all locations, each successful community has some commonalities. Each community has “created a coherent vision for their future, exercised an ability to implement consensus-based action, and found the means to sustain the initial momentum and enthusiasm over time.”

F. Existing Physical Conditions

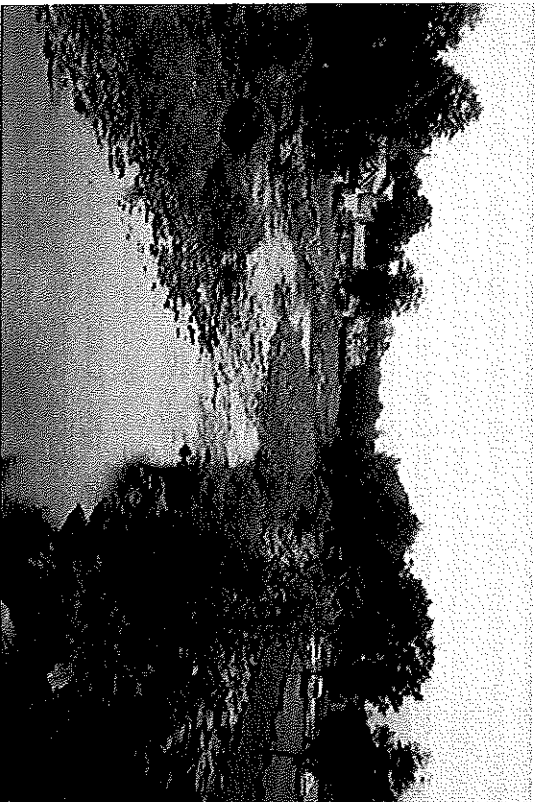
I. Water Resources

Schoharie Creek is the largest watercourse in the Village of Hunter and parallels Route 23A. This creek flows to the Schoharie Reservoir and forms part of the drinking water supply for New York City. This stream is a major asset to the Village both in terms of aesthetics and in terms of recreational opportunities.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) classifies freshwater streams according to the uses for which they are best suited. According to the NYSDEC, the best usage of Class A waters is as a source of water supply, primary and secondary contact recreation and fishing. Class A waters are also suitable for fish propagation and survival. The best usage of Class B waters are primary and secondary contact recreation and fishing. Class B waters are also suitable for fish propagation and survival. The best usage of Class C waters is fishing. These waters are suitable for primary and secondary contact recreation and fish propagation and survival.

The best use of Class D waters is fishing. These waters shall be suitable for fish survival and primary and secondary contact recreation. A suffix of "T" denotes that the stream supports trout propagation while a suffix of "S" means that the stream supports trout spawning. The Schoharie Creek is classified as C(TS) from the west end of the Village to about Glen Avenue. From this point, upstream to the eastern boundary of the Village the stream becomes the

B(TS)
classification.



Schoharie Creek

bass and yellow perch. Other species have included carp, minnows, suckers, catfishes, killifishes, sculpins and sunfish¹¹.

The presence of these fisheries resources is important to the Village to attract recreational anglers who contribute to the local economy of the Village by spending their tourism dollars. During the spring in Greene County, the DEC stocks tributaries of the Schoharie Creek in the Town of Jewett, Lexington, and Hunter with spring yearling brown trout.

While the stream is an asset to the community, during precipitation events the Schoharie Creek is prone to flooding. Floodplains are those low lying land areas adjacent to bodies of water that accommodate increased volumes of stream flow during major storms. This area corresponds to the highest level of flooding that, on average, is likely to occur every 100 years. In other words, there is a 1% chance that this flood will occur in these areas each year. These areas are delineated on Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRMs) available from the Greene County Soil and Water Conservation District.

¹¹ All of these species may not be present today.

Although it is recognized that the floodplain is better suited to uses such as pasture, recreation, and wildlife management, it is important to protect the existing structures that are now located in the floodplain. The Village of Hunter has floodplain regulations in place and is therefore eligible to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program. This program enables individual property owners in flood prone areas to acquire flood insurance coverage at affordable rates. New structures within the floodplain should be elevated at or above the base flood elevation, if located within the floodplain at all.

Individual wastewater treatment plants serve several condominium or hotel users in the Village of Hunter. However, the majority of households use on-site septic systems to dispose of their waste. Where there is inappropriate design, installation practices and/or lack of maintenance, on-site septic systems can become a source of non-point source pollution. In 1998, a Technical Working Group formed to study the Catskill Watershed Corporation (CWC) Septic System Rehabilitation and Replacement Program concluded that the number of failing systems in the West of Hudson Watershed could not be accurately determined. However, this group also noted that because the majority of previously installed systems were of conventional design, it could be anticipated that a large number of the existing systems are substandard and thus more likely to fail. It is estimated that the percentage of substandard systems exceeds 50%, which equates to approximately 12,500 systems in the West of Hudson Watershed. The elimination of failing or potentially failing systems and their consequent impacts on the water quality of the Schoharie is the primary impetus behind the construction of the new wastewater collection, treatment and disposal system in the Village.

In terms of water quality, the scheduled construction of a wastewater collection, treatment and disposal system in the Village will be beneficial by eliminating the need for on-site septic systems. Requiring new users to connect to the new plant and encouraging existing users to do so is recommended.

Storm water runoff, or overland flow, is another source of non-point pollution that can be controlled to prevent pollutants from driveways, parking lots, and roads from being washed into the local watercourse. See Section 8.3 for a discussion of storm water drainage in the Village.

The Catskill Fund for the Future (CFF), under the Tourism, Skiing, Recreation and the Arts Program, will provide matching funds for stream clean-up efforts. Funds can be provided to initiate an Adopt-a-Stream program where local companies and institutions provide matching funds and in-kind contributions to remove litter and debris from local streams and rivers. Funds

can also be used for promotional events to raise public awareness of the importance of stream stewardship and tourism.

2. Wetlands

Wetlands are recognized as an important ecological resource that provides a number of functions and values that are beneficial to society such as stabilizing soils, altering stormwater runoff, improving water quality, providing fish and wildlife habitat, and offering passive recreational opportunities.

3. Topography

The determination of an area's suitability for development is partially dependent on the slope of the land. The greater the slope, the greater the difficulty in developing the land. During construction, vegetation is removed and the potential for erosion increases. Where steep slopes exist, special design and construction techniques are required. For this analysis, a slope greater than 25% was considered unsuitable for development. A range of slopes and their corresponding suitability for development is provided in Table 12 below.

Table 12: Slope and its Corresponding Suitability for Development¹²

Slope	Suitability for Development
0-8%	Slight Limitations
9-15%	Moderate Limitations
16-24%	Severe Limitations
>25%	Unsuitable for Development

Table 13 shows the range of slopes found in the Village. An analysis of a digital slope coverage using a geographic information system, showed that over half (55.55%) of the area in the Village has "moderate" (9-15%) slopes. The remaining area contains "slight" slopes (0-8%) and slopes which are unsuitable for development (>25%). There are no "severe" (16-24%) slopes in the Village. The majority of vacant land has moderate slopes and is concentrated in the west end of the Village north of Route 23A. Currently, there is very little road access to this area.

¹² GIS slope coverage obtained from New York City Department of Environmental Protection.

Table 13: Area of Land in Each Slope Constraint Category, Including Land Which is Vacant

Slope Category	Area (sq. mi.)	% of Total Area	Vacant Land (sq. mi.)
Slight	0.37	27.00	0.06
Moderate	0.76	55.55	0.33
Severe	0	0	0
Unsuitable	0.24	17.30	0.08

4. Forested Lands

Historically, numerous trades have made use of the Catskill Forest—furniture makers, lumberjacks, charcoal producers, hoop makers (used to hold barrels together), and wood acid manufacturers. At one time there was very little forested land at all in the Catskills. For instance, historical records show that by the 1840’s the supply of hemlock trees in the Catskills had been depleted to the point that major tanneries in the Catskills to re-establish their businesses in Pennsylvania and elsewhere. Today the forest has rebounded, in part, due to the protection offered by the Catskill Forest Preserve. The Forest Preserve is the State-owned land within the Catskill Park. Since its creation in 1885, the preserve has grown from 34,000 acres to almost 300,000 acres¹³. These lands are constitutionally

protected as forever wild. Although no forest preserve land is located in the Village of Hunter, much surrounds it contributing to the recreational amenities the Village has to offer.

5. Wildlife

Mammalian species in Greene County include coyote, deer, snow-shoe and cottontail rabbits, bear, bobcat, fisher, mink,



Source: Hunter Mountain Ski Bowl

¹³ New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. Catskill Forest Preserve. Official Map and Guide. Albany, New York. 1997.

muskrat, beaver, porcupine, and red squirrel. The major game bird species are the ruffed grouse, ring-necked pheasant, duck species, Canada goose, woodcock, and wild turkey. The presence of these wildlife and fisheries resources is important to the local economy of the Village of Hunter. Hunters, anglers, and those individuals engaged in wildlife-related passive recreation, such as bird watching or wildlife photography, generate income through the purchase of local goods and services.

6. Locating Suitable Lands for Development

The discussion above has characterized the natural resources found in the Village of Hunter. The presence of these resources is important to the Village in terms of maintaining a healthy environment, strengthening the local economy and creating a community in which it is desirable to live and work. Therefore, development that minimizes the impacts on the natural resources within the Village should be encouraged. One way to control where and how land is developed is through the preparation of a zoning ordinance and map.

Preparation of this local municipal document should be a high priority for the Village of Hunter in order to safeguard the natural resources that are an asset to the area.

G. Infrastructure

1. Water

The Village of Hunter's water supply and distribution system is privately owned by Hunter Water Supply Corp, with the Severn Trent Company providing operating services. The source of water for the Village is three wells located on Ethel Court, Main Street, and Hunter Highlands Drive and a surface reservoir on the Hunter Mountain. From these sources, the permitted supply is 756,000 gallons per day (gpd). Currently, water use fluctuates throughout the year with the highest monthly average demand of 500,000 gpd during the ski season (peak demand can equal 1,000,000 gpd) and 200,000 gpd other times of the year. The former water company owner estimated that approximately 100,000 gpd of water is lost from the system due to leaks in the water mains. In addition, at the east end of the Village the water pressure drops to a low of 17-23 psi, while 35 psi is normally considered acceptable. Hydrants are needed on some streets in 8-9 locations.

Given these shortfalls within the water supply system, a leak detection survey and upgrades are planned by the water company.

The Hunter Water Company currently has a filtration avoidance determination for the surface supply. The avoidance determination was issued for five years. As a result, a storage tank and filtration system are planned for this source for the future.

2. Wastewater Management

Through the New Infrastructure Program (NIP) under the NYC Watershed Memorandum of Agreement, the Village of Hunter will be constructing a new wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) and collection system. The WWTP will provide tertiary treatment. Specifically, its treatment "train" will involve flow equalization, primary clarification, activated sludge basin, secondary clarification, continuously backwashed upflow, dual sand filters, chlorination, dechlorination and discharge.

In Hunter, subsurface disposal was deemed infeasible due to site characteristics and land ownership patterns. As a result, effluent will be discharged to the Schoharie Creek. A waste assimilative capacity analysis was performed by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to determine the amount of discharge that could safely be handled by the Schoharie Creek, taking into consideration other discharges located in the watershed.

Under the Memorandum of Agreement, NYC will pay for the construction of plants to control wastewater with the goal of protecting water quality in the watershed. However, the City will not pay to foster growth in a municipality. The new plant will provide for an average daily capacity of 326,000 gpd. Ten percent or 33,000 gpd will be available for new development. This additional capacity is the equivalent of ninety-nine 3-bedroom year-round homes, one hundred seventeen 2-bedroom vacation homes, or 322,000 square feet of commercial development or some combination thereof (Table 10)¹⁴.

¹⁴ New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Division of Water, Bureau of Wastewater Facilities Design. Design Standards for Wastewater Treatment Works. Albany, New York, 1988.

Table 14: Number of Hypothetical New Development Units that the Additional Wastewater Treatment Plant Capacity (33,000 gpd) could support

Type of New Development	Number of Units
3-bedroom year-round home	99
2-bedroom vacation home	117
Commercial development	322,000 square feet
Any combination thereof	

In terms of the figures above, only a small amount of on-ground construction can be supported by the additional capacity to be provided by the new WWTP. It is recommended that the plant reserve capacity be allocated for future development through the adoption of a Village Sewer Ordinance and zoning regulations.

Within the proposed Hunter Service Area, there are six existing State Pollution Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) permitted WWTP's:

- Colonel's Chair Block 8,
- Liftside,
- Camp Layaltown,
- Forester Motor Lodge,
- Whistle Tree Development, and
- Hunter Highlands.

These will have the option of upgrading to tertiary treatment with five of the six tying into the new municipal system. Private residences and businesses will be required to pay a sewer use fee to cover the cost of plant operation and maintenance. The private residence sewer use fee will be subsidized by New York City and will be capped at approximately \$100 per year. The fee will be adjusted after year three for the Consumer Price Index. A sewer use law will likely be used to ensure that private residences and businesses connect to the new wastewater collection system.

3. Storm Drainage

In the Village, storm water is discharged to the Schoharie via surface swales. Anecdotal evidence suggests that there are some capacity shortfalls within this system indicating that some improvements are needed. Upgrades to the storm drainage system invite the opportunity to implement Best Management Practices (BMP's), such as settling ponds, grassy swales, and rock filters, for

control of both water quantity and quality. As mentioned in Section 3 of this report, control of non-point source pollution is vital to maintaining the water quality of the Schoharie Creek and the NYC drinking water supply, as well as maintaining a healthy environment that supports local tourism.

It is important for the Village to be aware of the requirements of New York City's regulations to implement storm water management controls under certain conditions when new development is undertaken. The NYC Department of Environmental Protection and the Catskill Watershed Corporation (CWC) will pay for certain costs relating to the preparation of Storm water Pollution Prevention Plans (SPPP's) required by the NYC regulations beyond that which is required by state and federal storm water standards. Called the "Future Storm water Control Program," this program targets *new* development. The NYC regulations specify the factors that trigger the preparation of an SPPP. For instance, an SPPP is required if a project clears two or more acres, at least part of which is within 100 feet of a watercourse or wetland. State rules require an SPPP if five acres or more are cleared.

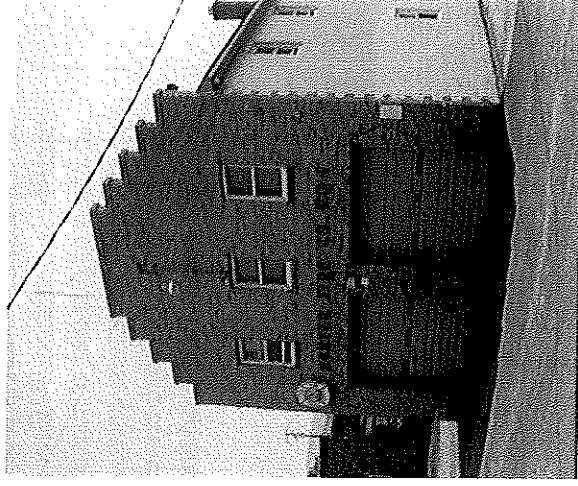
Further, as was recommended in the 1992 Infrastructure report¹⁵, the design and construction of the wastewater treatment system is being coordinated with that of the storm sewer, water service, and any streetscaping improvements in the Main Street area to minimize disruption to the area.

4. Police Services

The Village of Hunter does not have a police department of its own. Rather, the police departments from the Town of Hunter, Greene County sheriff's Department, and the New York state Police adequately serves the Village.

5. Fire Protection

The Village of Hunter Fire Department, located on Bridge Street, is entirely staffed by volunteers. These volunteers received training through Greene County.



Hunter Fire Department

¹⁵ River Street Planning and Development. Infrastructure Planning Project Revitalizing Hunter. A Strategic Development Plan. Prepared for the Village of Hunter, Greene County. Troy, New York. 1996.

Currently, their equipment includes two hose trucks, one tank truck (transports water), a step van to carry equipment and utilities, a brush truck that carries backpacks to extinguish brush fires, as well as a 1909 parade vehicle. The department has a capital reserve fund for the purpose of purchasing a new truck. The Village has a co-operative agreement with the Town of Hunter to service an area outside the Village of Hunter that is approximately 1.5 miles by 3 miles. In addition, the Village fire department will serve as back-up for the Town of Jewett, Village of Tannersville, Town of Windham, and the Town of Lexington. The department reports that the hydrant system within the Village of Hunter is inadequate due to lack of pressure. Funding for new water mains is required to remedy this problem. In terms of timing, this replacement is being done in coordination with the construction that is required to install the new sewer mains.

6. Waste Disposal

Unlike the majority of surrounding municipalities, the Village of Hunter provides door-to-door trash pick-up. This service is provided once a week to residents that purchase municipal trash bags from a designated local retailer. There is no charge for recyclable material that includes glass, plastic, cans and paper. If residents do not wish to participate in the municipal trash pick-up program, they may deliver their refuse directly to the waste transfer station, the closest of which is located on Lusic Road in the Town of Hunter. This facility is operated by Greene County Solid Waste Management and in addition to general refuse, they accept an extensive list of recyclable material: appliances, batteries, cans, cardboard, glass, newspaper, office paper, metal, soft plastic, tires, magazines. Solid waste from all the Greene County transfer stations goes to Adirondack Resource Recovery plant in Hudson Falls, New York.

7. Parks and Recreation

Within the Village itself, the major recreational asset is Dolans Lake Park. This facility contains a swimming area with a 75 foot beach, concession stand, parking lot, restrooms, picnic tables and chairs. A basketball court is located on County Route 83. Recently, the Village received \$100,000 from the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation toward improvement of the park. Following the recommendations of the 1996 Infrastructure report, the first phase consists of relocating the municipal salt storage sheds (Village public works facility). Other plans for the area are a bicycle pathway/walkway, a volleyball court, two bocce ball areas, two tennis courts, additional picnic tables, and basketball courts, and a pedestrian bridge

in order to get over the lake. Many of these activities have already be completed to date.

In addition to Dolans Park, the Village owns a small ½ acre park on Route 23A next to the Stinch House Bed and Breakfast and is two lots west from Hunter Elementary School. Historically, this property contained the municipal building before it burned down. After the fire, the property was commissioned as a park the property was cleaned up, trees were planted and a



Dolans Park

gazebo placed on the property. Village maintenance of the park is limited to mowing the lawn once a week. From Route 23A, it is difficult to notice that the property is in fact a municipal park since there is no signage. Currently, the Village is in the process of decommissioning the park. With the recent purchase of the adjacent property to the east, there are tentative plans to build a municipal center housing the fire station, Village Hall, and Village Court.

Another community recreation resource is Hunter Elementary School. At this location, the recreation facilities are one basketball court, one baseball field, one soccer field, and the Robert Leathers Playground. Community use is permitted if insurance is provided. The 1998 Greene County Recreation Plan stated that “additional space and furnishings are desired.” This recommendation corresponds to the description of the school given in Section 10.8.

In addition to these facilities, the Village has identified the need for a children’s swimming pool, ice rink, day camp, and a bike path that would link to Tannersville. The Village could pursue grant funding from the Catskill Fund for the Future to provide these facilities. Amenities such as these will be

important for improving the quality of life within the Village and will be instrumental toward attracting and maintaining residents year round.

Being located within the Catskill State Park means access to many recreational opportunities such as backcountry camping, 300 miles of trails, fishing and hunting. Soon, access to these recreational resources will be enhanced. The Catskill Fund for Future, administered by the Catskill Watershed Corporation, will be allocating funds toward the implementation of the Catskill Forest Preserve Public Access Plan.

8. Health Facilities

The Village of Hunter lacks medical facilities. No physicians are available in the Village or nearby Tannersville, Haines Falls or the Town of Hunter. While medical clinics are available in Hensonville and Jewett, they are not always staffed with certified medical doctors. If residents need a doctor, the closest hospitals are located in the cities of Hudson, Kingston, and Albany. Although the Village would like to attract a physician to the area, no steps have been taken to do so.

9. Social Services

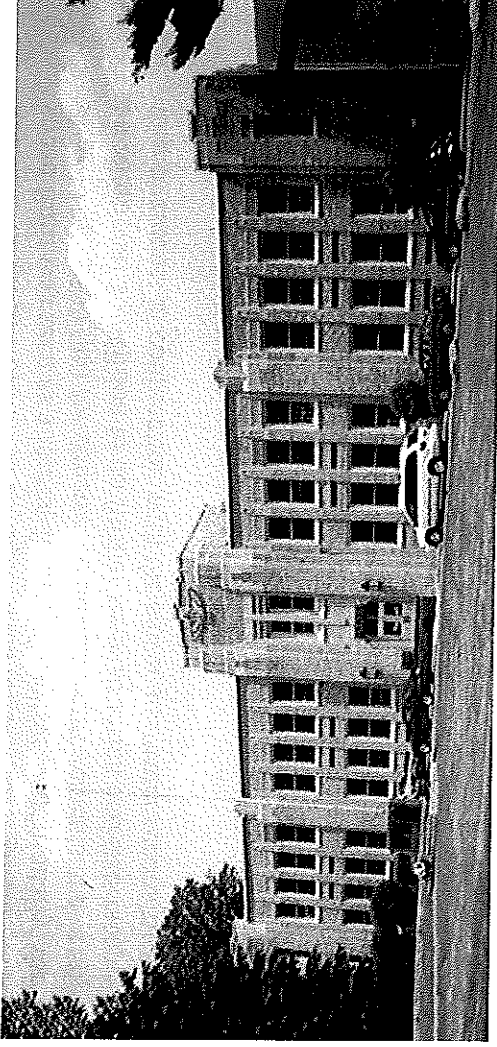
Mountain View Apartments is the Village's Housing and Urban Development (HUD) assisted housing. Fifty-six units are located on Main Street and Maple Avenue.

10. Cultural Facilities

The Greene County Council on the Arts runs a Children's workshop for music and art or theatre and dance at the Hunter Elementary School for ages 3-7. Cultural events within the County are promoted by the Greene County Council through a community arts calendar and quarterly newspaper. The NYS Council of the Arts provides approximately \$25,000 a year to the Council for redistribution within Greene County. As mentioned in Section 7 (Economic Development), there are plans to build another theatre and provide space for the performing and visual arts, as well as an Elder Hostel.

11. Schools

The Village is located within the Hunter-Tannersville School District. The elementary school (K-5) is located on Main Street in the Village of Hunter,



Hunter Elementary School

while the local high school (6-12) is located in the Village of Tannersville. As of May 1999 the grade school had an enrollment of 262 students. While the school building is well maintained, the 1930's infrastructure is deteriorating. To provide an option for expansion, the school board recently purchased the adjoining property. Conceptual plans for expansion include 6 more classrooms and a cafeteria. If expansion proceeds, the 6th grade may be moved from Tannersville to the Village of Hunter and pre-school may be added as well. If these additional grades are added, the capacity of the current grade school building (299 students) will be exceeded.

12. Highway Access

Nearby exits from the New York State Thruway make possible further connections to New York State as well as other regions in the Northeast. For this reason, the Village of Hunter is accessible to tourists and commutation by Village residents to major centers is possible. New York State Route 23A provides the linkage from the NYS Thruway and becomes Main Street in the downtown business district of the Village. The New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) reconstructed Route 23A in the early 90's, and currently there are no plans within the NYSDOT 12-year Capital Program for major reconstruction of this portion of the highway. Along Main street, the

road width is approximately 44 feet which will accommodate two traffic lanes, each 12 feet wide, and a 10 foot wide parallel parking lane on either side of the street. The speed limit along Route 23A in the downtown business district is 35 miles per hour (mph). This speed limit changes to 45 mph near Garfield Avenue (west) and near Ferraro Road (east). The change near Ferraro Road was requested approximately two years ago to enable a gradual decrease in speed from 55 to 35 mph. This request for a gradual decrease in speed limit was seen as a tourist-friendly initiative. Additionally, the Village already has \$500,000 for streetscape design improvements and is applying for an additional \$5 Million to do further reconstruction and streetscape improvements in conjunction with the sewer and water reconstruction.

13. Parking

Currently, there is no public parking lot in the Village. A wide (10 foot) shoulder on either side of Main Street currently meets parking needs. Along Route 23A, within the Village, there are approximately 55 businesses. At a ration of four parking spaces per 1,000 square feet¹⁶ of business, approximately 220 parking spaces are needed to accommodate current parking needs. Currently, the wide shoulder along Route 23A meets this need. However, given the recent initiatives in the downtown business district, there may soon be a need for a public parking lot. This lot should be sited within walking distance of the downtown business district, but should not be located on Main street so as to detract from the appearance of the downtown business district and needlessly occupy potential retail space.

¹⁶ American Planning Association. Off-Street Parking Requirements. Planning Advisory Service. Report Number 432. May, 1991.

SECTION III

RECOMMENDATIONS

Community

GOAL: TO IMPROVE AND ENHANCE THE COMMUNITY FACILITIES.

Objective: To ensure this Plan's timely and successful implementation.

Recommendations:

1. Present the Plan to the Village board for adoption.
2. The Village Board should appoint the Hunter Chamber of Commerce Revitalization Committee to implement this Plan.
3. Schedule annual meetings between the Town Board, Village Board, and local merchants to discuss revitalization efforts. Specifically review and evaluate efforts, and, if necessary, revise approaches in question. Wherever possible, pool resources with other entities to achieve the greatest benefit with the least cost.
4. Join organizations and subscribe to publications dedicated to village economic development.
5. Create a committee to coordinate the available volunteer skills and formulate a volunteer database to include; organization name, contact information, areas of interest, volunteer history, number of people available, and particular skills available and equipment.
6. Develop a comprehensive list of all youth, adult and senior groups, organizations, etc. including contact information. Contact a representative of each group to determine the types of efforts each group is interested in and capable of doing.
7. Actively monitor and take advantage of grant opportunities.
8. Monitor, evaluate and update this Plan every five years.
9. Organize several days of Village "walk-throughs" highlighting all the recommendations in this Plan.

10. Continue to conduct regular monthly meetings.

Objective: To carry out the recommendation of the 1996 Infrastructure report regarding Dolans Park.

Recommendations:

1. Establish a Dolans Park Improvements Committee to oversee and coordinate all redevelopment activities.

Objective: To maintain communication with the community and with potential informational and financial resources.

Recommendations:

1. Appoint liaisons from the Hunter Revitalization Committee to attend meetings of the following organizations: Village Board, School Board, Town Planning Board, Town Board, and Architectural Review Board. These liaisons will report on the Committee's efforts and, in turn, bring back information from these organizations.

Objective: Improve the downtown's appearance.

Recommendations:

1. Conduct a Visual Preference Survey to determine a visual theme for the Village.
2. Develop a local clean-up program and maintenance plan. Sponsor free waste disposal/pick-up days during the bi-annual clean up. Provide for free pick-up of all non-hazardous waste.
3. Develop a design vocabulary and standards to be utilized for lights, plantings, planters, benches, signs, and trash receptacles.
4. Purchase banners for the downtown that are consistent with findings of the Visual Preference Survey.

5. Coordinate efforts with utility companies to consolidate poles and wires of overhead utilities to the greatest extent possible.

Objective: Improve the entryways to the Village.

Recommendations:

1. Develop a gateway plan that provides distinctive signage and landscaping for important entries into the Village.
2. Improve the appearance of the bridges and the gateways in the community. Provide for safe pedestrian passage.

Objective: To pursue funding for additional recreational facilities such as a children's swimming pool, ice rink, day camp, and a bike path.

1. Have the grants and funding committee identify, and complete annual applications to local, county, and state agencies seeking grant assistance.

Objective: Consolidate and improve signage.

Recommendations:

1. Identify and describe areas where signage violates parameters.
2. Enforce existing sign code especially the parameters for density, consolidation, and appearance.
3. Review and amend existing sign regulations. Provide illustrations of signs that are preferred for the community.

Land Use

GOAL: ***TO PROMOTE INCREASED COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN ORDER TO REVITALIZE THE COMMUNITY AND DIVERSIFY THE ECONOMY.***

Objective: To promote and direct appropriate future residential and commercial development and re-development within the Village to areas either currently served by existing infrastructure or to areas that will be served by future sewer and water infrastructure.

Recommendations:

1. Directly encourage the establishment of a commercial zoning district along Main Street from the Bridge Street/Garfield Avenue area to Scribner Hollow Road.
2. With the exception of the existing Hunter Mountain Resort, and other pre-existing commercial or recreational uses, encourage predominantly residential uses only on the south side of the Schoharie Creek, and in the undeveloped areas on the north side of Main Street.

Objective: To provide consistent enforcement of all Village land use regulations.

Recommendations:

1. Consistently attend Town Planning Board and Village Board meetings. Make elected officials aware of issues and concerns.

Objective: Establish and adopt a new zoning ordinance and design guidelines that address and maintain the unique character of Hunter, and that encourage existing and new residential and commercial development.

Recommendations:

1. Develop a new Zoning Ordinance and Map for the Village.
2. Work with the Village on drafting new building design guidelines that emphasize and encourage further unique designs. The guidelines need not focus on a single architecture, but rather on the diversity of existing architecture in the community.
3. Identify new sections of the revised New York State Building Code that will impact Village residents and developers.
4. Develop a Site Plan Review law.

Economic Development

GOAL: TO CONTINUE TO FUNCTION AS A RESORT VILLAGE WHILE PURSUING STRATEGIES TO DIVERSIFY THE ECONOMY OF HUNTER.

Objective: The strengthening and diversification of the local economic base.

Recommendations:

1. Communicate regularly with the county economic development agency representatives to keep each other apprised of available programs and recent efforts.
2. Develop a revitalization slogan, i.e.: *Hunter, NY; Buy Local, Shop Main Street.*
3. Develop and maintain an Economic Profile by analyzing, publishing and marketing community data useful to business and industry such as demographics, labor market conditions, manufacturing directory, available land and commercial buildings, finance programs, taxes, and local regulatory requirements.
4. Work with local officials and business groups to prepare unimproved and/or vacant sites for development by making them "Shovel-Ready."
5. Work with the local, County and State tourism agencies to develop and distribute multi-media marketing and promotional efforts.

Objective: Retain existing business throughout the Village.

Recommendations:

1. Support business expansions that result in living wage jobs.
2. Support a "Buy Local" initiative. Produce and distribute a "Buy Local" card providing discounts at participating merchants.

3. Prepare promotional brochures about the community and the Business District businesses. As new private investments are made, notify the public of new and expanding businesses.
4. During warmer months, open sidewalk space to provide outdoor eating and shopping.
5. Create a courtyard market space where activities such as farmer's markets could take place.
6. Produce specialized marketing products (such as one day discount shopping and restaurant coupons) to be distributed by the larger employers.
7. Attract investors and increase the willingness of Village, County and local financial institutions to prepare a creative financing package.
8. Invite representatives of regional and state economic development agencies to Hunter to introduce them to the Village and familiarize them with the revitalization effort and its goals.

Downtown Revitalization

***GOAL:
TO PROMOTE THE CONTINUED REVITALIZATION,
USE AND DESIRED DEVELOPMENT OF THE
VILLAGE OF HUNTER'S MAIN STREET AREA.***

Objective: To increase the number of people frequenting the Main Street area of the Village of Hunter.

Recommendations:

1. To redesignate traffic flow patterns on Klein Avenue and Riverside Drive to promote traffic exiting Hunter Mountain Resort to pass through the Main Street commercial district.

Objective: To identify businesses which add value to available resources, supply existing businesses with needed products, or require products produced by existing businesses.

Recommendations:

1. Inform all business and industry owners of this effort, its goals, and the importance of their participation in the implementation of this Plan. Develop a Business Improvement District.
2. In conjunction with business owners, inventory all businesses/industries for materials or goods they purchase and produce, sources of needed materials and goods, destinations of produced goods and materials, and willingness to acquire or sell these items locally if markets were available.
3. Develop a leasing strategy to attract viable businesses. Include a cover letter describing the opportunities for the particular store type, a copy of the retail building inventory from this plan, a description of the quality store spaces available, local financial programs available, and the general demographics of the community.
4. Encourage group advertising for Main Street Businesses through newspaper ads, mailers, etc.
5. Prepare and distribute the principles of good storefront design and maintenance. These standards could become part of building leases.
6. Based on inventory, identify prospective businesses that could make use of locally produced goods/materials and could supply existing businesses with goods/materials currently purchased elsewhere
7. Retain the services of an economic development specialist or marketing specialist to develop a detailed joint marketing plan for the Village and Town.

Objective: To improve the structural and aesthetic quality of existing commercial buildings.

Recommendations:

1. Work with local banks to promote the existing low-interest loan program for structural and aesthetic improvements.

2. Investigate utility grant programs that fund the rewiring buildings for advanced telecommunications uses or needs to make downtown buildings more attractive for a diverse business base.
3. Coordinate and promote efforts with the Greene County Economic Development Corporation to offer financial assistance to commercial property owners along Main Street.
4. Encourage present commercial property owners to maintain their properties and structures. Offer annual awards (based upon resident and visitor voting) for Most Improved Business and/or Best Maintained Business.
5. Provide property owners a set of resource tools to maintain the architectural integrity of Main Street structures.

Objective: Develop programs for local businesses to encourage pride in the Main Street.

Recommendations:

1. Meet semi-annually with the small business employers that have shown steady business growth and dedication to beautification of their businesses to offer some kind of public recognition, for example, luncheons, award dinners, special community events, etc.
2. Offer programs such as façade improvement programs, painting programs, etc.
3. Secure alternative funding sources for grants for façade programs.

Objective: To support a structural rehabilitation/reconstruction effort.

Recommendations:

1. Identify vacant and/or underutilized properties and make this list available to potential buyers/leasers.
2. Investigate the formation of a collaborative effort consisting of area contractors and supply companies that, in exchange for free publicity/advertising, volunteer labor, equipment, and materials to improve substandard buildings on Main Street.

Parks and Recreation

GOAL: *TO IMPROVE AND ENHANCE THE EXISTING PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IN THE VILLAGE OF HUNTER.*

Objective: To make the Schoharie Creek behind Main Street more of a focus in the community and provide improved access to this important resource.

Recommendations:

1. Develop a Waterfront Revitalization Plan.
2. Develop and maintain visual and physical access to the creek via landscaping, open space, and stream front uses such as sitting areas and trails.
3. Develop an interpretive trail system that links all areas of interest in the community.

Objective: To improve the use of space, aesthetics and to diversify the recreational opportunities at Dolan's Lake Park.

Recommendations:

1. Develop an open space and recreation plan for Dolan's Park.
2. Examine the feasibility of exposing Village streams that were culverted in past years.

Infrastructure

GOAL: *TO ENSURE THAT THERE IS ADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT EXISTING AND ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE VILLAGE.*

Objective: To pursue funding opportunities for stormwater controls for both new and existing development.

Objective: Additional sewage capacity should be made available for future development based on the Village Sewer Use Ordinance and new zoning regulations.

Objective: Encourage existing water company owner(s) to undertake a leak detection survey of their existing water systems as soon as possible.

Objective: To coordinate the design and construction of the new wastewater treatment and distribution system with that of the stormwater, water service and any streetscaping improvements suggested in this plan.

Objective: To enhance the general streetscape.

Recommendations:

1. Increase the number and extent of street trees in conjunction with NYS DOT improvements.
2. Promote clean and clear sidewalks during all seasons.

Objective: To provide for the safety of pedestrians.

Recommendations:

1. Enhance or create crosswalks and install pedestrian crossings.
2. Repair sidewalks and make all handicapped accessible.
3. Adopt a pedestrian right-of-way. Mark roads as appropriate.

Objective: To increase awareness of municipal parking opportunities.

Recommendations:

1. Place signs at Village entrances and on the streets that lead to the parking lots. Signage should enhance the streetscape and be consistent with all Village resource signage.

2. Establish surface parking lot design and improvement standards to be applied to all new and existing off-street parking lots.

Objective: To evaluate layout of existing parking areas for adding pedestrian improvements.

Recommendations:

1. Provide access between buildings from parking areas to the downtown that has adequate lighting and is attractive for pedestrians.

Objective: To provide better access to public transportation and access between communities.

Recommendations:

1. Examine the transit options from New York City with the Greene County Planning Department.
2. Request an update of the Greene County Transportation Plan.

Historic Preservation

GOAL: ***TO PROMOTE A SENSE OF COMMUNITY PRIDE,
RETAIN THE CHARACTER AND PROTECT THE
HERITAGE OF THE COMMUNITY BY PRESERVING,
MAINTAINING AND ENCOURAGING THE REUSE OF
HISTORIC STRUCTURES.***

Objective: Establish a local historic commission to carry out a historic resources survey and place significant historic properties on the County, NYS and National Register of Historic Places. Such a commission could also survey and research Native American resources in the Village.

Recommendations:

1. Identify buildings in need of protection of architectural heritage.

2. Develop a set of general guidelines for buildings identified as historically significant in the Historic Preservation District.
3. Examine other areas of the Village to expand existing or create new historic districts.

SECTION IV

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Strategy #1:

Plan Implementation

The proposed implementation program does not attempt to catalog all of the actions that could be undertaken. Since it is a long-term plan, many actions cannot or need not be undertaken all at once. Instead, the proposed implementation program focuses on the most important actions that are needed in the next few years. This strategy insures that the most pressing current concerns are addressed. It also establishes a strong foundation for deciding more specific actions in the future.

Where recommended, committees should be formed whose tasks will be to take the recommended revitalization tasks beyond the document phase. These committees are particularly important for the development of specific land use and economic development initiatives. Several of the following Hunter Revitalization Group committees are already in place and should serve as sponsors for implementing various aspects of the Plan:

- Financing and Grants Committee
- Dot Route 23A Improvements Committee
- Existing Streetscape Evaluation Committee
- Zoning Law and Code Review Committee
- Tax Assessment Committee
- Beautification Committee
- Marketing and Public Relations Committee
- Historic Preservation Committee

There should be a significant amount of cross communication between these committees and the Village to ensure that all ideas and initiatives maintain continuity with the plans continued implementation. The committees should meet independently on regular intervals (monthly), or on an as-needed basis, and then collectively every quarter with Village representatives.

It is understood that the recommended revitalization strategies are continuous initiatives and will be subject to changing community needs and availability for funding. It is essential that the Village have its own internal capabilities to support and augment the working committees to seize opportunities as they arise.

In addition, the Village of Hunter Comprehensive Plan should undergo a formal review every five years to make sure it remains consistent with the changing goals of the community. Village officials and the committees should look at what provisions have actually been implemented and gauge their relative success. The committee should also examine why or why not certain elements of the Plan were not adopted or implemented and make appropriate revisions.

Plan Adoption

The first step in the implementation process is the presentation of the Plan to both the public and the Village Board. The next step is formal adoption of the Revitalization Plan by the Hunter Village Board. That should be followed as soon as possible by the adoption of a resolution by the Hunter Village Board designating the updated Comprehensive Plan as the official planning document for the community. The Plan should be published and distributed to all boards, interested citizens in the community and to other appropriate local, county and state agencies. It should be made clear to all the boards, committees and staff that all subsequent actions coming before the boards should be evaluated in the context of their consistency with the new Comprehensive Plan. A Village newsletter should describe and report actions to be taken to implement the Plan.

Simultaneously, the Village Board must review the updated Comprehensive Plan for conformance with the State Environmental Review Act. An Environmental Assessment Form (Long Form) must be filed with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. The Village Board must find that the Revitalization Plan will not have a significant impact on the environment or, if it finds that the action may cause a significant impact, the Board must develop an Environmental Impact Statement for the project.

Although the Comprehensive Plan has no legal status, it does provide an objective foundation for revising the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations and the basis for guiding subsequent actions directed by the public or private sector. The Village should begin the implementation of its planning program with the following actions within the first few years of the Plan's adoption:

- Publicize the Committee's work on the Revitalization Plan.
- Make presentations about the Plan to local organizations and civic groups.
- Commence work on creating the Village of Hunter Zoning Ordinance including the provisions listed in the general recommendations below.

- Develop new subdivision and site plan review regulations as recommended in the sections below.
- Develop and adopt new policies and guidelines as recommended in the sections below.

Several other key actions must occur to keep the Plan moving forward. A detailed description of these actions are explained in the following text.

Strategy #2

Market Analysis

A comprehensive market analysis is an important part of efforts to improve the local business climate. The market analysis identifies consumer needs and determines what type of retail and service establishments a downtown can sustain. The analysis should include a business and customer base analysis. In addition to providing general demographic information, a comprehensive customer base analysis is helpful in determining buying power and customer habits. Based on this information, you may identify the need to recruit a grocery store, organize a farmer's market, support existing businesses in targeted retention and expansion efforts, or some alternative development.

Aspects of a market analysis include:

- Determining the trade area.
- Completing a physical business inventory.
- Surveying resident retail needs and current shopping patterns.
- Identifying competition or programs, projects, and developments that impact retail in your town.

Trade Area Determination

The first step in the market analysis is to determine the relevant geographic areas. The downtown trade area can be defined by physical parameters and demographic data based on observations, consultation with community members, and census tract information. Each community's trade area can be broken down into several different groups. For instance, Trade Area A should consist of the boundaries of your downtown and households with it since that is the focus of your revitalization effort. Trade Area B could be defined as the remainder of the town, businesses and residents outside of the downtown, and Trade Area C could be comprised of business sectors and residents in contiguous communities, those surrounding your town. It can be helpful to map the trade area for use as a visual reference.

Physical Business Inventory

The physical business inventory complements the commercial space inventory. After mapping the trade area, the group should catalog the existing retail and services available in each trade area. A business inventory worksheet is available in the Appendix (Table A-3). This inventory provides data concerning existing businesses, thus allowing for a preliminary assessment of the goods and services that are lacking as well as those that are over-provided in the community. For instance, the inventory may reveal an enormous unmet demand due to the absence of a supermarket.

Surveying the Public

The group can survey residents and shoppers to determine their retail needs and shopping patterns, as well as their general perceptions of the downtown. Survey information complements the inventory in determining market gaps; identifying existing businesses that do not meet customer needs; and identifying the goods and services residents feel the area lacks.

Survey questions may focus on:

- Respondent's preferences for new retail and service businesses.
- Current shopping habits; where, for what, how often.
- Demographic information.
- A listing of the types of shops they would like to see in the town.

Your organization can develop a comprehensive survey or one or a series of one-page surveys. If a lengthy, more detailed survey design is chosen, then it is best distributed by mail or some other means that allows respondents adequate time for completion. A simple survey is best conducted in a brief (three to five minutes) face-to-face interview, which allows for clarification. Whatever format is chosen, you should target a wide audience in order to capture all demographic groups. For a mail survey, this may require distribution to all three designated trade areas and for face-to-face interviews, surveys should be conducted at various locations and at alternative times.

Presentation and Public Awareness Education

After completing basic downtown analysis, the information should be clearly summarized in both written and graphical form. A summary provides participants with a basis for objectively evaluating the data, and helps define a framework for future decisions. Key outcomes of this evaluation include a series of identified weaknesses that must be overcome as well as strengths and opportunities that can be capitalized upon.

Generating Ideas

The first task is to identify potential projects. Do not worry about feasibility at this point, this is a wish list. However, it should be a realistic wish list, guided by the “where are we now” analysis you’ve already performed. The point of brainstorming is to explore a range of options, to produce a number of ideas from which a selection of best ideas can be chosen later in the process of project development.

Evaluating Ideas

This is the point in which to evaluate which of the projects makes the most sense. Each proposed project should be evaluated according to: (1) local capacity to see the project through to completion, and (2) the risks and returns associated with a project. After determining the most viable projects, you will want to draw up an action plan for project implementation.

Evaluating Community Capacity

There are five components of capacity that communities may want to carefully consider. If there are instances that the community does not seem to have capacity, you may want to think about what help may be available.

1. Human Resource Capacity
 - a. Does the project fit your organizations vision?
 - b. Are local leaders willing to act?
 - c. How much time is required of individuals?
 - d. What is the local attitude toward the project?
 - e. Will the group have political clout in this area?
 - f. Is there, or can there be, an adequate organizational structure?
 - g. Will neighboring communities cooperate?
2. Entrepreneurial Capacity
 - a. Is the local environment conducive to entrepreneurship (risk taking)?
 - b. Does there exist the local capacity to promote downtown development?
 - c. Are there adequate resources to promote the activity?
3. Business Recruiting Capacity
 - a. Is the community competitive with its peers?

- b. Does the community have the capacity to develop homegrown businesses?
 - c. Are there steps the community can adopt to help existing businesses?
4. Financial Capacity
- a. Can we fund this project locally?
 - b. Does someone have grant writing skills (this includes the time to tack both private and public funding sources)?
5. Infrastructure Capacity
- a. Can the community address the needed infrastructure improvements identified in the community inventory?

Costs, Benefits, Risks and Returns

After examining the capacity to initiate particular projects, the next step in feasibility evaluation is to estimate risks and returns that each project offers. Projects should be analyzed in terms of their expected costs and payoffs.

First, projects should be evaluated with respect to returns and benefits. These benefits can include:

- Expanding or retaining the local economic base.
- New jobs and income in the community.
- Strengthened community pride.
- The creation of additional capacity.
- Larger local tax base.
- Providing new opportunities to residents.

When evaluating risks and costs, the group should consider both social and economic aspects.

Social costs are large when projects fail, leaders lose status in the community and project support may quickly fade. When evaluating projects, it is important to think how failure will affect both project participants and community members as a whole.

Economic costs are also relevant, and can include loss of investments and the cost of infrastructure.

It is possible, however, to minimize potential risks by spreading project ownership more broadly throughout the community (i.e., broadening the

number of local participants), or implement several smaller projects instead of one large one (i.e., not putting all of the eggs in one basket).

In general, while considering each project keep in mind that:

- Projects should work together to accomplish the goals articulated in the vision.
- Beginning one project may depend on completing another.
- Long-term community support may require a number of immediate successes first.
- Project coordination, in terms of timing and difficulty, should be designed to make the best use of time and resources so community benefits are maximized.

Responsible Parties

After establishing what to do, the group needs to figure out not only who will do it, but also what resources they will need. This involves:

- Identifying the people and groups committed to implementing each step of the action plan; this requires clarifying roles and responsibilities, as well as leadership development, and a schedule for the completion of each task.
- Identifying resources needed, including those within as well as outside the current capacity of the community (i.e., financial support).

A strategic plan worksheet and a communications plan of action worksheet may be useful while initially defining your plan of action. However, a more detailed plan and activities journal are recommended.

Time Frames

When scheduling each individual aspect of the project's four overarching factors should first be considered.

- **Project Schedule:** When should the project begin?
- **Project Duration:** How long do you estimate it will take to complete the project from start to finish?
- **Critical Path:** What projects or events must take place in order for this particular project to succeed?
- **Time of Payback:** When will the community realize the positive effects of the project?

Mobilizing Resources

While time and commitment are the most important resources for small town revitalization efforts, it is a fact that downtown programs cannot be sustained without money. Thus, it is necessary for downtown groups to raise money to support their efforts. The amount of money that must be raised will, of course, depend on the scope of the effort. For example, if ambitions are modest, it might be possible to raise the necessary resources locally, either through in-kind donations, or local fund raising efforts. If, however, the community has grander goals, such as total streetscape rehabilitation, then outside funding sources are essential.

While it is outside the scope of this manual to provide step-by-step fund-raising activities, there are a number of actions that can be undertaken to develop the necessary financial backing. These range from simple promotional activities that might generate a few thousand dollars for signage and landscaping, to rather complex grants that will enable the community to repave Main Street. Perhaps your group can start small, and develop larger projects once the community can see the early results.

With respect to local fund-raising, several small-scale activities are possible.

- **Membership Donations:** Allow local residents to become members of the organization by making a small contribution, such as \$10.
- **Hold a Community Day:** Arrange a festival. Solicit local music and other entertainment, making sure there are plenty of activities for children. Charging food and other vendors a fee for space can raise money.
- **Historic or Holiday House Tours:** If you have a historic preservation commission, arrange tours of historic facilities. Charge admission.
- **In-kind Contributions:** As noted above, it is important to have early indications of success. Flowers and new planters, for example, can generate excitement in the program. Donations of these items are common. But make sure to publicly acknowledge donors, and perhaps provide a plaque on recognition.

It is important to generate resources locally, but most small towns cannot afford big projects. Thus, if the revitalization group has grand ambitions about downtown projects, outside funding is essential. Funding is available at both the state and federal levels, as well as through private foundations. We list general categories of potential funding below. Detailed information about some of the main funding sources can be found in the Appendix.

Grants are monies given to the downtown group, local governments, or other agencies to carry out projects or planning activities. One of the most common sources for downtown projects is the Community Development Block Grant. Eligibility requirements may either preclude or require funding through certain entities, such as governments or non-profits, so grants must often be channeled through other organizations. Often requires local matching. Potential sources include municipal, county, state and federal government, as well as private foundations.

As a cautionary note, the grant-writing process can be quite arduous. We have provided some basic guidelines in the text box and reference materials are in the Appendix.

Loans are available to fund specific projects. Interest rates are often below market rates. Individual businesses can usually apply. Once again, these loans are available from a variety of sources.

Property owners can tap into the federal government's *Rehabilitation Tax Credit* program to help rehabilitate old and historic buildings.

A tax credit differs from an income tax deduction. An income tax deduction lowers the amount of income subject to taxation. A tax credit, however, lowers the amount of tax owed. In general, a dollar of tax credit reduces the amount of income tax owed by one dollar.

Evaluating Progress

The implementation plan is a vital step in downtown revitalization efforts. Yet many communities have developed plans that were soon relegated to a bookshelf and never looked at again. To prevent this from happening in your community, you need to be constantly using your plan as a reference. Make sure that your actions are guided by your vision.

A number of questions can be entertained in order to determine the trials and tribulations of your efforts, the successes and failures thus far, and actions left to be taken according to your strategic plan. Here are some suggested considerations:

- Is a working strategic plan in place?
- Has broad support been sought?
- Did you adequately determine what type of help you needed for your project?
- Did you adequately assess your financial needs?
- Do you understand and project the motivations, interests, concerns, and commitment of the community?

- Have your successes been celebrated?

Strategy #3

Visual Preference Survey

The Visual Preference Survey is a tool which enables participants to identify the physical attributes they feel best reflect their vision for the community. Although there are a number of variations, each type of Visual Preference Survey asks participants to rate design preferences based on a series of images. These preferences can be as general as “streetscape design” or as specific as “designs for public drinking fountains.”

Images can be shown individually (i.e. “how would you rate this image?”) or as a side by-side comparison (i.e. “which image do you prefer more?”). After participants rate the entire series of images, the rating is tallied for each. Images are shown again to participants and the average the rating for each image is indicated. Participants are invited to comment on the findings. This can result in a great deal of conversation and debate.

Many communities have added a component to their Visual Preference Survey which asks the participants to indicate on a map where they feel specific elements should be located. Such a component could ask participants where public utilities, pedestrian crossings, or commercial development should occur.

Strategy #4

Streetscape Improvements

The goal of the proposed streetscape improvements is to enhance both the pedestrian and vehicular experience in the village. This goal will be met through the creation of more comfortable pedestrian spaces, better definition of pedestrian and vehicular spaces, expanded ground plane material palette and additional street trees, lighting and sight furnishings.

The downtown streetscape should receive the most detailed treatment. The ground plane could be enhanced through installation of new 5-7’(±) wide concrete sidewalks directly adjacent to the storefronts. Between the new sidewalk and street, a 3’(±) wide utility zone of decorative pavement should be installed. New concrete or granite curbs can provide separation between pedestrians and vehicles and form an attractive, durable edge. In addition to these improvements, bump-outs should be installed at each intersection. The bump-outs accomplish several things. Their primary function is to provide a safe, visible area from which pedestrians can cross the street by preventing

parked vehicles from encroaching at crosswalks. Secondly, this space functions as a passive zone where benches and other site furnishings can be placed outside of pedestrian traffic moving along the concrete sidewalk. Dry-laid brick or concrete pavers are recommended for the bump-outs and utility zones given their durability and ease of removal, if future work or repairs are required. Also, dry-laid pavers provide virtually unlimited patterns and a wide selection of colors. A range of colors and products can be selected to form a palette that works with existing building colors and materials in the corridor. This palette can then be used to design a varied, yet coordinated ground plane. Crosswalks can be installed at all intersections to clearly delineate safe crossing areas for pedestrians. Pavers or other decorative pavement are recommended to differentiate crosswalks from the asphalt road surface. If pavers are used, they should be set in mortar on concrete to ensure longevity. Street trees should be planted 100' O.C. wherever possible, providing shade, softening the landscape and lending a sense of pedestrian scale. Light fixtures will be installed 50' O.C. to provide a safe, attractive nighttime experience.

Outside of the commercial area of Main Street, concrete sidewalks should be provided. Crosswalks will be provided at street crossings to provide safe crossing areas for pedestrians. A planting strip of lawn and shade trees spaced 100' O.C. separates pedestrians and vehicles along this busy section of Main Street. Curb cuts along the highway commercial section of Main Street should also be revised and consolidated wherever possible to regulate traffic entering and exiting businesses in this area. This consolidation in combination with the new walks and the addition of street trees will greatly enhance the appearance of this area and allow pedestrians to walk safely and freely from the commercial area to downtown.

In addition to streetscape improvements, an access management plan should be developed to better integrate the shared use of existing and new driveways. The ultimate goals would be to reduce the number of curb cuts onto Route 23A, and increase the potential for additional on-street parking along Main Street.

Strategy #5

Improving Downtown's Appearance

Downtown groups should try to provide an intimate and distinct character for the downtown. For instance, they may create a warm feel to the downtown by building a pedestrian friendly atmosphere or by highlighting its historic charm and architecture. Such efforts include responsibility and action by a number of local groups, including planning boards, chambers of commerce, cultural societies, community associations, individual business owners, residents, shoppers, and visitors. Each group's role will vary and more than likely those

who live and own property in the community will offer the most direct assistance. Regardless, the first goal should be to unite all camps so that revitalization is a joint process.

Clean-up

To make downtown attractive, creating and maintaining cleanliness is an essential step. This is the first impression of your downtown that visitors will get as they pass through. To look good both public and private spaces must be clear of debris. In order to ensure that the downtown is kept in pristine condition, regular maintenance is a must. Possible actions in a local clean-up program include:

- Identify problem areas.
- Define a public space maintenance plan.
- Honor merchants who clean up their own spaces; from plaques to tax breaks.
- Research government façade rebate programs.
- Declare a community pride day with organized clean-up efforts completed by volunteers.
- Install garbage cans and recycling bins in strategic locations throughout downtown; volunteer groups can be rewarded by reaping the benefits of recycled goods.
- Offer incentives such as scholarships and trophies to individuals who display leadership and commitment to the effort.
- Design an “adoption” plan for maintaining the cleanliness of public areas: target groups may include scout troops, community clubs, entire schools or individual grades, religious organizations, businesses, and so forth.

Store Windows and Building Facades

There are many tactics for making buildings look lively, whether occupied or vacant. Several are low cost, but require the cooperation of the property owner.

- Decorate and light the windows of vacant buildings while they are waiting to attract new tenants; display a video illustrating local attractions or annual events or a documentation of the on-going rejuvenation process.
- Have volunteer organizations adopt windows and stores for holiday decoration; encourage local retailers to donate materials for display.
- Showcase the downtown art scene in otherwise vacant windows; this can be the work of professionals, amateurs, or beginners of any age.
- Consider using the sides of buildings for murals that represent the business or community as a whole.

- Encourage physical improvements, such as: planters and flower boxes, benches, and awnings. These items may be sought from local nurseries, gardeners, carpenters, banks, etc., as a pure donation or rewarded by a plaque (placed on a bench, sidewalk, or planter) or even exchanged for a reciprocal favor.

Beautification and Safety

Spaces between buildings, along streets, and specific design features can be improved to make downtown visually dramatic, convenient, and safe. Once again, the cooperation of a variety of community members through the donation of goods or volunteer activities may be essential to the success of any number of these projects. Keep in mind though that many of these suggestions can be costly.

- Plant trees to enhance beauty and shelter pedestrians; consider both low cost and low maintenance.
- Create vest pocket parks in open spaces between buildings.
- Install and use exterior lighting; antique lamp posts, trees decorated with white lights, or a lighted water fountain can create a beautifully dramatic, yet safe atmosphere.
- Raise crosswalks as speed bumps for safety and to keep walking areas dry; paint lines bright colors to increase the safety of both pedestrians and motorists.
- Plan greater density to minimize travel.
- Offer seating by providing benches and picnic tables where appropriate.

Signage and Directional Assistance

Presentation of what the downtown has to offer by way of signs, banners, and maps can be effective marketing tools.

- Survey streets, storefronts, government buildings, and public areas in order to identify the need for improved signage.
- Coordinate and commission attractive signs that identify and link travelers, by car as well as by foot, to the community's high traffic destination points.
- Design and hang banners that promote local events, such as festivals, exhibits, and combined retail sales.
- Consider decorating streetlights or electric poles with banners or flags that represent the season or history of the community; an effective way to obtain such items is through a craft fair competition in which the winners are honored by display of their products.

- Offer rewards to encourage local business signage improvement efforts. Recognize unique presentations or plans, a shared style that will promote synergy throughout the downtown.
- Design and give away a map illustrating downtown routes and local attractions. This can be funded by donations from businesses, groups and organizations, which are rewarded by inclusion on the map and possibly advertising space.

Parking and Traffic Flow

Congestion and inadequate parking can discourage downtown travel. Your group should examine the amount, type, use, and location of parking spaces as well as traffic routing. Any changes should be incorporated into the design and implementation of downtown projects. Remember that the goal is to turn motorists into pedestrians and to encourage walking throughout the downtown.

Strategy #6

Improving Local Business Practices

As retail markets evolve, small business owners face a relatively simple problem: adapt or fold. Confined to relatively small spaces and lacking access to large sums of capital, local businesses are often unable to compete with large retailers with respect to variety or “one-stop” convenience. Still, many small retailers thrive in the shadow of retail giants. This section offers some strategies small retailers can easily adopt in order to remain competitive.

The downtown groups should set some goals on how they hope to improve the practices of local downtown businesses. For example, they may want local merchants to attend a training session in improved business practices. Or, they may want to develop a handout describing some of the key ideas developed below. This program could be conducted by members of the local business community, or by merchants from other areas.

Identifying Existing Niches and Potential Niches

For many communities, niches already exist. In these instances, the challenge is to improve organization and visibility. The first step is to collect data pertaining to the business district strengths and the economic activity that draws people to those businesses. The second step is to organize this information into a comprehensive promotional and marketing campaign.

It is also possible to create a new niche for your downtown. New niches can be successful, but their development demands broader participation and

investment by all community members. When exploring this option, keep in mind that needs and risks can be lessened to some degree if an existing niche is used to develop another. In this regard, developing a new niche means capitalizing customers that are already drawn downtown. For instance, if downtown activity is based on the local restaurant scene then an entertainment niche may be pursued which appeals to a similar customer base. The following ideas can help you define potential niches.

Strategy #7

Retain and Expand Existing Businesses

Retention before recruitment! Existing businesses are the building blocks of downtown. If current businesses are struggling no efforts to strengthen them are put into place, then customer loyalty may continue to dwindle, and so will the credibility of the downtown as a viable market for new businesses. Any business requires an adequate market, space, and support facilities, as well as a sense of local upward momentum. There are several key steps that can be taken by local leaders to help improve the local business environment.

- Convene a forum where businesses can enter a discussion among one another an establish a means for developing ideas and acting on them. This could include conducting business visitations or collective discussion on issues related to downtown businesses.
- Keep track of when leases expire. When a lease is coming up, contact businesses ahead of lease termination to intercept any potential business losses.
- Talk to your existing retailers. This way, you can find out their complaints as well as find out what kind of retailers they would like to see filling the vacancies, and what retailers they fear.
- Consider implementing a Business Retention and Expansion Program. Such a program interviews local businesses to help identify their needs and resolve business-specific problems if possible.
- Access such avenues as a regional revolving loan fund as a revenue source for upgrades at existing facilities.
- Utilize resources fully by finding off-peak and off-season uses, including those resources privately and publicly owned. This may involve developing a joint strategy with business owners of local leaders in order to ensure the best and most viable uses.
- Develop an internship program between the educational system and local businesses. This provides students with hands-on training and experience in a variety of fields, while providing businesses with low-cost employment.
- Several home micro-businesses may exist in your community, and yet it is difficult to know what and who they are or how to offer assistance.

The downtown group could host a discussion on the resources available to micro-businesses and possible networking opportunities.

Recruit and Develop New Businesses

In addition to working with existing businesses, the downtown group may want to help local efforts to recruit new businesses. Recruiting may be new to your community, it may have been tried in the past (either successfully or unsuccessfully), or it may be on-going. Regardless, it is important to determine what works and what doesn't work when negotiating with established firms or attempting to define the viability of new businesses.

Know Your Visitors

Understanding the demographic and geographic origins of community visitors is the first step. For businesses to capture the potential spending of visitors, they must know who is coming or passing through town. This allows businesses to expand their products and services to meet unique needs.

To achieve this understanding, the group may want to develop a brief visitor survey. Surveys can be distributed at restaurants, motels and the entrances to local attractions.

Improve Local Hospitality

Visitors appreciate good service. Retailers that stress hospitality have had good success at capturing tourism dollars.

Strategy # 8

Promotion

Hunter must present a unified image in order to keep investors, consumers and visitors coming. This image should be based on the quality and value of local goods, a unique physical environment, and the community's present and historical culture. This mix of ingredients in varying combinations is what makes no two places exactly alike. An understanding of this uniqueness is the key to community pride and the motivation for concerted action. The overall objective is to reshape perception of downtown as the center of activity.

Promotional image building highlights the downtown in a positive manner. Downtown organizers should create events and activities that reveal many different views and aspects of the community. Efforts should focus on developing community pride, and heightening awareness of what is distinctive about the community and its downtown. This will contribute to the

attractiveness of the community for current and potential residents and business owners.

Some examples that community leaders might draw on include an open house for a newly renovated downtown building or a general promotional advertisement about the downtown. Special events can be started to draw people downtown, including things like arts and crafts show a street carnival, or a music concert.

Creating a new mage of the downtown involves promotional activities that build upon the downtown's economic and cultural offerings. The key is to create a healthy mix of retail promotions, special events and festivals, and public relations. The following suggestions are steps in that direction:

Create a Heritage Day or Festival

Heritage day's celebrate and share the community's character. Involve a broad variety of groups, including varying segments of the local population and their interests. The point is for the community to remember and enjoy its distinctive character and therefore the focus should be on those who have or have had a stake in the forming and functionality of the community.

Heritage celebrations should have flexible content and structure. It could be a full day, an evening, or even a weeklong activity. Many rural places hold heritage festivals in autumn, a season that is synonymous with the harvest. There is no set season, though, when such an events should be held, mainly it should not conflict with other major town-wide activities...it could even be built around an existing event, such as a July 4th or Labor Day picnic. If the event is unique to Hunter, then you may want to consider a special name.

Business community support is required, as is a significant volunteer component. Participation should be diverse and no group should dominate. The planning and steering committee of the event must seek widespread participation. It is also desirable to keep presentations personal and interactive so that a wide range of people will feel welcome and will to participate.

Complementary Activities

Complementary activities help a community discover its unique history and character, while using that distinctiveness to breed economic and social livelihood into the downtown. Complementary activities should be light, fun and locally driven. Community members provide the organizing energy and talent, while capitalizing on the unique resources of the area and adding to the viability of downtown. Some ideas include:

- Produce a community play.
- Display community photographs or local artist's views of things distinctive about the downtown, possibly presented as a contest and sales event.
- Storytelling of the history, colorful characteristics, or major events of the downtown.
- Create community pathways, possibly involving a series of walks and talks centered on history, nature, or adventure.

Community Brochure

Producing a brochure that highlights some of the distinctive features of the community helps attract new businesses and tourists. The brochure should be simple, displaying some photographs, providing a map with points of interest, and even offering historical stories. If no formal brochure already exists then the group may want to target a brochure audience. If a similar is already available, such as a tourism brochure. Then an additional advertising tool that specializes in capturing a particular group may be desirable. For instance, a business or real estate directory for business development purposes or a walking/cycling tour for recreation.

