

VILLAGE OF HILLBURN  
2020 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



**ADOPTED JANUARY 14, 2020**

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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The Hillburn Village Board of Trustees adopted this Comprehensive Plan on January 14, 2020.

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Appendix A Public Survey Results

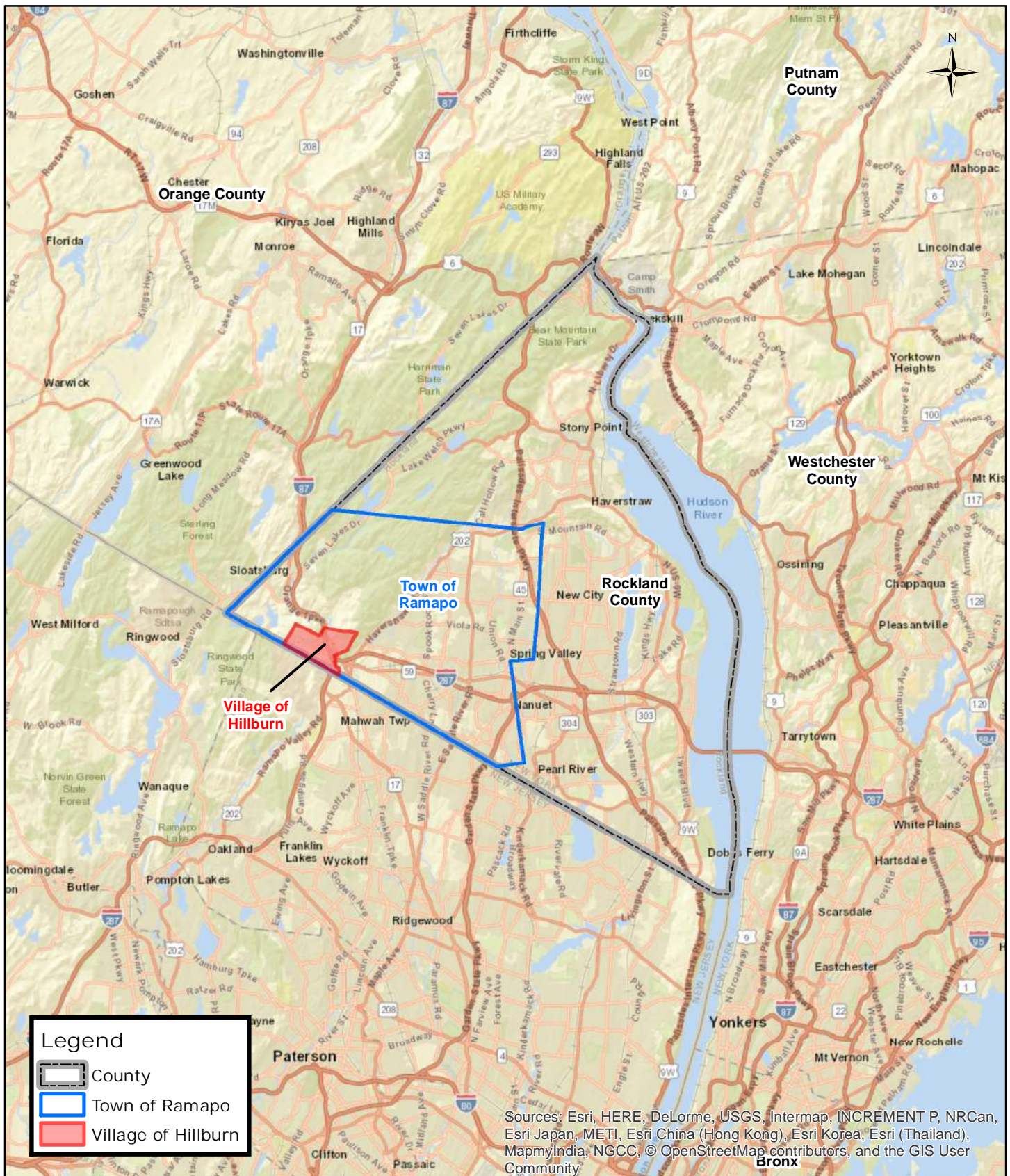
## I. OVERVIEW OF THE 2020 PLAN

### A. VILLAGE OF HILLBURN TODAY



The Village of Hillburn is an incorporated village within the Town of Ramapo, Rockland County, New York, and is about 2.2 square miles (**Figure 1**). Although it has a large area for a Village, the developed portion of the community is smaller and sits in the Ramapo River Valley at the base of surrounding state parkland (**Figure 2**). The Village has a rich history – it was formerly known as Woodburn and was a “company” community that was established by the Ramapo Wheel and Foundry Co. The evolution of the Village has been much influenced by its strategic location at the mouth of the “Ramapo Pass” which follows the Ramapo River through a valley within the Ramapo Mountains, part of the Hudson Highlands. A historic path existed along what is now NYS Route 59 (Orange Turnpike) through Hillburn along which colonial settlers traveled north to cultivate and inhabit lands where the pass widens into the agricultural regions of Orange County and beyond. By 1876, the Erie Railroad had already cut a path through the Ramapo River Valley generally parallel to the river and Orange Turnpike. NYS Route 17 came into existence in the early 1900s (part of an old auto trail called the Liberty Highway) and was designated as Route 17 in 1924. The route ended up bisecting the Village and paralleling NYS Route 59, traveling along the west side of the Ramapo River. The 1950s brought construction of the New York State Thruway (designated NYS I-87) through the Ramapo Pass, further separating portions of the Village from one another. Over the Village’s history, major utility transmission lines, pipelines, and other infrastructure were installed within Hillburn and through the pass. New York State Route 17, as it travels through Hillburn, was decommissioned as a state route upon the upgrade and creation of Interchange 15A along the NYS Thruway.





**Figure 1**

**Regional Location**

Source: ESRI Web Mapping Service;  
 NYS GIS Clearinghouse, Rockland County GIS  
 Scale: 1 inch = 25,000 feet

Village of Hillburn





Figure 2  
Village of Hillburn Aerial

Source: NYS Orthophotography, 2013  
Scale: 1 inch = 1,500 feet



Village of  
Hillburn



The Village of Hillburn is a close knit, small, stable community whose population has fluctuated only slightly over the past 17 years. In 2010, there were 951 persons residing in the Village, while it is estimated by the U.S. Census Bureau that there were 1,000 residents in 2017. In 2000, the population was 881 persons. In 2010, the median age of a Village resident, at 40.1 years, was older than the County as a whole (36.7 years) demonstrating that Village residents are “aging in place”. Comprehensive Plan Committee members have expressed that the Village is a wonderful place for senior residents to live, and generations of the same family have chosen Hillburn as their home. Housing in Hillburn is affordable relative to the Village and County and has a 63/37 percent mix of owners and renters. Housing in the village is primarily single-family detached dwellings (74.4 percent) and the majority of homes were constructed prior to 1939 (63.1 percent), providing evidence of the historic character of the community.

What is noticeable about Hillburn is that the Village does not have a “main street”. The Village’s “main street” could be considered 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue between its intersection with Rockland and Mountain Avenues, where the post office, the fire department, and Village Hall are clustered. The Village’s commercial needs have been met historically by the nearby Village of Suffern’s central business district. Its commercial needs are met outside the Village in nearby communities and shopping areas to which the Village has easy access. The Village is well positioned to major highways for access to employment and commercial centers – it is served by New York State Route 59, Interstate Route I-287/87, and “old Route 17”. A challenge of this Plan is to protect, maintain and balance the Village’s prized community character and small Village feel, while at the same time realizing the unmet opportunity and challenge to revitalize and reinvigorate the community by attracting young families, retaining seniors, introducing select commercial uses, and creating a limited “village center”. This Comprehensive Plan is dedicated to realizing those opportunities.

## **B. REGIONAL CONTEXT**

### **1. Hillburn - A Hudson River Valley Greenway Community**

The importance of the Hudson River Valley has been recognized at the federal level, and the region which includes Hillburn was designated the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area by the United States Congress to recognize the significance of the history and the resources of the Hudson River Valley to the nation. The cities, towns, and rural landscapes of the region display exceptional, surviving physical resources spanning four centuries. The Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area is managed by the Greenway Conservancy for the Hudson River Valley, and the Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council.

The Village of Hillburn is a participating member of the Hudson River Valley Greenway. The Hudson River Valley Greenway Act of 1991 (the "Greenway Act") created a process for voluntary



regional cooperation among 264 communities within 13 counties that border the Hudson River, to facilitate a regional strategy for preserving scenic, natural, historic, cultural and recreational resources while encouraging compatible economic development and maintaining the tradition of home rule for land use decision-making.



## Rockland

Eligible communities that wish to participate in the Greenway program pass a resolution indicating their interest in becoming a designated Greenway Community. Hillburn and the surrounding Town of Ramapo passed applicable resolutions and are designated "Greenway" communities on the official Hudson River Valley Greenway Community map.

The "Greenway criteria" serve as "the basis for attaining the goal of a Hudson River Valley Greenway". The criteria are:

- Natural and Cultural Resource Protection - Protect, preserve and enhance natural resources including natural communities, open spaces and scenic areas as well as cultural resources including historic places and scenic roads.
- Economic Development - Encourage economic development that is compatible with the preservation and enhancement of natural and cultural resources including agriculture, tourism and the revitalization of established community centers and waterfronts.
- Public Access - Promote increased public access to the Hudson River through the creation of riverside parks and the development of the Hudson River Valley Greenway Trail System.
- Regional Planning - Communities can work together to develop mutually beneficial regional strategies for natural and cultural resource protection, economic development (including



necessary public facilities and infrastructure), public access and heritage and environmental education.

- Heritage and Environmental Education - Promote awareness among residents and visitors about the Valley's natural, cultural, scenic and historic resources.

In developing the Vision and recommendations for this Plan, the location of the Village within this nationally significant region has been considered.

## 2. Hillburn – A Hudson Highlands Community

The entirety of Village of Hillburn is located within the Highlands region of the New England physiographic province. This region is home to diverse and environmentally sensitive natural resources. This Plan recognizes that Hillburn is a Highlands community, and that it is the Highlands which provides the unique environmental framework on which the Village's development pattern is superimposed.

The Highlands region was recognized in the passage of the Highlands Conservation Act, signed by President George Bush on November 30, 2004. The Act recognized this high value natural resource region that forms a greenbelt surrounding the New York City metropolitan region. The Act assisted the States of Connecticut, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania in conserving land and natural resources in the Highlands region through federal assistance for land conservation projects within it. The purposes of the Highlands Conservation Act are to:

- Recognize the importance of the water, forest, agricultural, wildlife, recreational, and cultural resources of the Highlands region, and the national significance of the Highlands region to the United States.
- Authorize the Secretary of the Interior to work in partnership with the Secretary of Agriculture to provide financial assistance to the Highlands states to preserve and protect high priority conservation land in the Highlands region.
- Continue the ongoing Forest Service programs in the Highlands region to assist the Highlands States, local units of government, and private forest and farm landowners in the conservation of land and natural resources in the Highlands region.

The landscape of the Highlands is unique and characterized by open high hills and ridges cut by deep narrow valleys that distinguish it from the surrounding rolling plains. The region is comprised of 108 municipalities in 12 counties –Hillburn is specifically identified as a Highlands municipality. Like the Hudson River Valley Greenway of which the Village is a part, this Plan recognizes and affirms the Village's position within the Highlands region. The vision, policies, and recommended land use strategies take into consideration the Village's unique setting within the Highlands region and the larger Hudson River Valley region.

### **C. THE PURPOSE OF THIS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

What is a comprehensive plan? A comprehensive plan is a document that describes a vision of a community's future and the goals and objectives that, through action taken by the Village Board of Trustees and other agencies, support that vision. While each citizen may have a particular vision for Hillburn, an adopted Comprehensive Plan reflects consensus that is achieved through a participatory public input process, and contains the land use, environmental and related policies that will guide the community in the actions it undertakes or reviews, until the Plan is reviewed again. Before a comprehensive plan can be adopted and implemented, the Village must carefully consider the environmental impacts of adopting the Plan in accordance with the regulations implementing the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA).

In the sections that follow, the Comprehensive Plan may recommend specific tools and solutions while in other sections, it may simply present a vision of Hillburn that guides the Village Board in the adoption of specific local laws and regulations to achieve it. The Plan can guide actions of the Village such as land acquisition and funding decisions.

New York State Village Law ("Village Law") regulates the preparation and adoption of a comprehensive plan. Section 7-722 defines a comprehensive plan as: *"...the materials, written and/or graphic, including but not limited to maps, charts, studies, resolutions, reports and other descriptive material that identify the goals, objectives, principles, guidelines, policies, standards, devices and instruments for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development of the village."*

Importantly, once a comprehensive plan is adopted by the Village Board of Trustees, all village land use regulations must be in accordance with a comprehensive plan adopted pursuant to this section.

### **D. COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS**

The Village Board of Trustees appointed a Comprehensive Plan Committee to oversee preparation of this Comprehensive Plan. Members that participated in this effort represent a diverse cross segment of the Village's population, businesses and boards, and included citizens, volunteers, board members, and members from representative Village organizations. Working with the environmental planning consultant retained to assist in this effort, the Committee reviewed all baseline data, participated in visioning efforts, and have directed the preparation of this Comprehensive Plan.

A public survey was conducted to solicit input from community residents and stakeholders. Postcards advertising the survey were distributed throughout the community and residents were able to respond to the survey either online or with a paper survey. Forty-four (44) residents responded to the survey and provided valuable input to inform the recommendations of this plan. The results of the survey are included in Appendix A of this document. Public hearings will be held to solicit additional comments, and the proposed changes will be reviewed in accordance

with the regulations implementing the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). Zoning amendments have been prepared concurrent with the Plan, and will be adopted with the comprehensive plan in order to effectuate the policies of this Plan.



## II. VISION STATEMENT

### A. A VISION FOR HILLBURN

Community visioning is the process of developing consensus about what future the community wants, and then determining what is necessary to achieve it. This vision statement captures what community members most value about Hillburn, and the shared image of what they want their community to become. It inspires everyone to work together to achieve the vision. As Yogi Berra said - "If you don't know where you are going - you might end up someplace else"! This vision statement gives the Village's boards, agencies, and organizations the long-term, comprehensive perspective and direction necessary to make rational and disciplined decisions on community issues as they arise. Boards in reviewing a plan or proposal will ask – is it consistent with the Vision? This vision statement has been crafted through a collaborative process that involved a wide variety of community residents, stakeholders and elected officials that participated on the Comprehensive Plan Committee. The vision statement was vetted through a survey that was administered to Village property owners in 2017-2018. Based on the input from the survey, and support received for key phrases in the Vision Statement, the Vision has been revised and updated.

**The Village of Hillburn** is a small, rural, historic, tranquil, affordable and traditional village, nestled within the Ramapo River Valley, ringed by a pristine mountain backdrop, yet strategically located at the edge of the bustling NYC metropolitan region and its employment centers. Its excellent quality of life is evidenced by the generations of families that have called it home. Local residents and businesses actively participate and support the organizations that contribute to the betterment of the Village. The Village is highly supportive of protecting and preserving its natural environment and historic resources. Over the next 10 years, the Hillburn community aspires to protect Hillburn's small Village Americana feeling, and ensure that new development and environmentally responsible businesses are allowed only where they protect Hillburn's sensitive natural resources, can be accommodated adequately by the transportation and utility infrastructure, and support the Village's tax ratable base.

Based on survey responses, key words and phrases that resonate with community members, and which they support include:

- protect natural resources (98 percent)
- quality of life (96 percent)
- historic (85 percent)
- active residents and businesses (79 percent);
- strategic location (76 percent);
- environmentally responsible businesses (73 percent);
- supporting tax ratables (70 percent);
- affordable housing (58 percent).

All other words and phrases received less than 50 percent support.

The goals and objectives that follow are intended to further define the manner in which the Vision for Hillburn can be achieved.

## **B. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

The goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan are intended to guide the Village in achieving its Vision, and to address issues presently confronting Hillburn. “Goals” are value statements that describe the aspirations of the community, and “objectives” are methods by which to achieve the goals. The goals and objectives were formulated through review of the conclusions of the baseline conditions analyses and the findings made by the Comprehensive Plan Committee in preparing this Plan.

### **COMMUNITY CHARACTER: Protect the existing historic, small Village feel of the Village of Hillburn.**

- Maintain and improve property values.
- Preserve and enhance features that reflect the existing character, history, and natural beauty of the Village.
- Support the community’s cultural diversity.
- Create and adopt design guidelines to maintain the small-scale character of much of the Village and enhance the architectural features currently found on older, historic buildings.
- Enhance visually the Village’s gateway entrances.
- Ensure that new development, including new and altered residential and nonresidential buildings, are architecturally designed to “fit” and be compatible with the Village’s high-quality residential neighborhoods and is reviewed and approved by the Village.
- Ensure that new development and alterations are designed in a manner consistent with and protective of the Village’s historic character by inventorying the historic buildings within the Village, and adopting a local landmark law to protect same, including any proposed demolitions.
- Protect the Village from zombie (vacant and abandoned) properties.
- Repeal and/or revise Chapter 110, Excavations and Topsoil Removal, and revise the zoning chapter in order to prohibit mining and quarrying.

- Conduct cultural resource surveys in conjunction with development applications to document any impacts to archaeological and historic resources, and coordinate findings with the State Historic Preservation Office or other archaeologists familiar with Hillburn.
- Implement landscaping standards to ensure all developments are revegetated in a manner that protects and promotes positive aesthetic qualities and utilizes native species.
- Implement lighting standards that balance the need for safety during evening hours with the intent to protect the dark night sky conditions.

**RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS: Expand residential opportunities in Hillburn.**

- Support the construction of additional single-family detached dwellings in appropriate locations.
- Explore developing the former reservoir property in a very limited manner for a senior residential development.
- Encourage the creation of senior citizen housing opportunities.
- Enforce property maintenance.
- Promote affordable home ownership opportunities within the Village.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Broaden the Village's tax base and employment opportunities by encouraging the orderly expansion and introduction of nonresidential uses in a manner consistent with the Village's small-scale character.**

- Promote economic development and support only those nonresidential uses that will not operate in a manner that impacts negatively the Village's residential neighborhoods, through generation of unacceptable levels of pollutant emissions, noise, traffic, night lighting, and other effects.
- Create a very limited Village Center retail area for Hillburn as a gathering place for existing and future Village residents which includes the Village's governmental and emergency services, the post office, and could introduce a deli which would operate in a manner that would not impact the surrounding residential neighborhoods.
- Encourage small scale local retail opportunities within the Village in existing nonresidential areas along Route 17 and also where nonresidential uses presently exist.
- Evaluate and eliminate unwanted uses that impact the health safety and welfare of Village residents and encourage environmentally sensitive businesses which will operate in a manner that protects the Village's natural resources.
- Uses the NYSDEC's enforcement resources available to the Village as an Environmental Justice community to achieve environmental compliance among the heavy commercial and industrial uses within the Village.
- Develop a review process whereby any change of use involving a nonresidential commercial, industrial or similar use must be evaluated by the Code Enforcement Officer or the Planning Board to ensure it is operated safely and in accordance with local and state regulations.
- Attract higher wage, environmentally friendly businesses along NYS Route 59 and the NYS Route 17 corridors.



- Allow a regional economic development area including shopping center on Route 59 or Route 17 in areas already developed for nonresidential uses, and in close proximity to the Route 15A interchange.
- Introduce additional uses in new nonresidential zoning districts, including arts and crafts retailers, a museum, native arts and history center, organic health food store, delis, restaurants, grocery store, retail uses, office uses that can serve Village residents.
- Explore the potential adaptive reuse of existing older residential buildings with frontage along Route 17 into restaurant, office or retail uses, provided that the existing residential building character is maintained.
- Support existing local businesses to the extent they are compatible with this Comprehensive Plan.

**NATURAL RESOURCES: Preserve and protect the natural landscape within which the Village is situated, including the Ramapo Mountains, ridgelines, stream corridors and wetlands, wildlife habitat and viewsheds.**

- When reviewing developments, require that the density or intensity of development reflects the environmentally sensitive features which may be present, by excluding these sensitive resources when determining development potential.
- Create a trail for walking, biking, fishing, and other recreational purposes that links the Village with the Ramapo River, adjoining trails, and major recreational facilities in the Village's vicinity by working cooperatively with existing landowners to acquire land and easements along one or both sides of the River.
- Require a 100-foot buffer on both sides of the Ramapo River to protect it in open space. Ensure that any development obtain the necessary Protection of Waters permit from NYSDEC, in addition to requiring a buffer.
- Protect the majority of the former reservoir property as open space and for mostly passive recreational uses.
- Protect the scenic mountains and ridgelines visible within the Village.
- Protect Split Rock and its environs.
- Review and revise blasting procedures and add the requirement for pre-blasting surveys and allow the Planning Board to limit or prohibit blasting as part of site and subdivision development review.
- Consider revising the steep slope provisions of the zoning chapter to reduce it to 15 percent.
- Consider designation of the Ramapo River Sole Source Aquifer as a Critical Environmental Area (CEA).

**UTILITIES: Expand and modernize utility infrastructure where it meets with and is consistent with the other goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.**

- Introduce green infrastructure stormwater controls which serve the dual purpose of greening the Village and controlling stormwater runoff.
- Protect the Village's groundwater.
- Support the completion of public sewer installation only in locations where it supports the Village's desired growth pattern.

- Ensure all fuel oil tanks contain appropriate containment to minimize potential spills into the groundwater which ultimately supplies drinking water serving the Village.

**TRANSPORTATION: Provide a safe, adequate and efficient transportation network that will serve the various types and intensities of traffic generated by the various land uses in the Village.**

- Obtain a grant and/or funding to conduct a transportation study to determine the potential to close the Route 17 access to I-287/87 for emergency purposes only. The study should come up with solutions to calm traffic along Route 17.
- Redesign Route 17 to reduce traffic speeds and enhance the appearance of the road.
- Incorporate a trail or pedestrian pathways into the Route 17 corridor.
- Calm traffic on Route 17 and Route 59.
- Design new streets as “Complete Streets” which incorporates pedestrian paths linking the Village neighborhoods together.

### III. LAND USE PLAN AND SUPPORTING FRAMEWORK

#### A. CONCEPTUAL LAND USE PLAN

The Conceptual Land Use Plan indicates the land use policy preferences for the various neighborhoods and areas that make up the Village of Hillburn. The Conceptual Land Use Plan is intentionally drawn to have generalized and non-specific boundaries, so that flexibility and discretion can be used at the time that the Village Board translates the conceptual land use areas into distinct zoning districts (**Figure CLU**).

#### 1. Open Space

The Open Space Land Use Area encompasses properties located within Harriman State Park, a segment of the Palisades Interstate Park system. This area is located within the easterly portion of the Village and contains Nordkop Mountain. The Open Space area also includes lands along the westerly flanks of that mountain that extend down towards the Ramapo River and Torne Valley Road. It also includes the large, 390+ acre Village-owned former reservoir site.

The Open Space Land Use Area incorporates properties that are owned at present by the Town of Ramapo and which are located along the Ramapo River. Here, several properties have been remediated from the illegal disposal of paint and associated contamination; the land can be accessed only from the Ramapo River, or from Bridge Street within the unincorporated area of the Town of Ramapo (north of Interchange 15A off of NYS Route 17). The land also contains water supply wells.

Lastly, the Open Space area encompasses the Rockland County Sewer District property where Split Rock is located. The site is largely undevelopable, given its extensive bedrock outcroppings and steep slopes. Should the property ever be released for private development, the Comprehensive Plan recommends that any development be consistent with the Open Space Residential land use category below, and that dwellings avoid development which would impact Split Rock and the 66 documented features associated with it. Blasting is to be prohibited in this area to protect Split Rock and associated features.

The intent of this land use area is for the land to remain as open space to be used for passive recreation. The potential exists to use some of these lands along the Ramapo River as additional points of river access, and to connect the lands as part of an overall trail system within the Village. The Village does not desire to see any private residential or nonresidential land uses introduced into the Open Space Land Use Area. When translated into zoning, it is anticipated that a new open space zoning district would be created to encompass these properties.



## 2. Open Space Residential

The Open Space Residential area encompasses mostly vacant land and low-density residential uses. This land use area encompasses mostly the higher elevations in the Village on the west side of the NYS Thruway. Several large tracts of land adjoining this area are in the ownership of the Town of Ramapo and Rockland County Sewer District No. 1 within this area. This area of the Village is mountainous, and much of it is constrained by steep slopes, shallow depth to bedrock, and lack of adequate transportation access. Further, due to the difficult terrain, centralized sewer and water service is not available, and it would be difficult to extend same to this entire area. This large land use area is contiguous to the State of New Jersey and Mahwah Township, and access, in some locations, would be better obtained from roads within that Township.

The intended primary land use for this area is open space and single family detached dwellings. The overall gross density would be no less than 1.5 acres per dwelling unit. However, as the zoning regulations require that environmental constraints be subtracted from lot area when determining density, the actual residential density of any development would be less.

The Village seeks to obtain any publicly owned parcels in the Open Space Residential Land Use Area, so that it controls both the ownership and ultimate land uses of these parcels. Regardless, the Village of Hillburn's land use regulations will ultimately control any development which may occur on these properties, especially if they are sold into private ownership. When translated into zoning, these areas would fall within the R-60 zoning district.

## 3. Low Density Residential

The Low Density Residential Land Use Area encompasses large portions of the existing residential neighborhoods within the Village. Specifically, it includes the larger residential properties (9,000 square feet and larger) found along Lake Avenue, Terrace Avenue, and Fifth Street. In addition, there are larger parcels also found along Boulder Avenue and the upper reaches of Sixth Street that would also fall into this category. Within the central area of the Village, lands are flat, and soils are conducive for building development. These areas are generally served by central water and sewer.

This area is intended for single-family detached dwellings. Two-family dwellings would be allowed but would require Planning Board review and approval and would require larger lots to accommodate two dwelling units. Because the lots on which these dwellings are located are relatively small with limited area to meet parking demand, accessory apartments are not envisioned for this area. Rather, a properly designed two-family dwelling, which requires a larger lot, would be more appropriate. Fire, police, and similar public Village buildings as well as public parks would also be allowed. Home occupations would be permitted, but depending on size and type, would be reviewed by the Planning Board to ensure the home occupation does not impact the residential neighborhood within which it is located and does not exceed a certain scale or intensity of use. When translated into zoning, this area would be zoned R-9. This Comprehensive Plan envisions expanding the R-9 area to encompass properties that are generally larger than

9,000 square feet in size, including lots along NYS Route 17, and Boulder Avenue. When translated into zoning, two R-9 districts could be created, to acknowledge that some of the properties that are 9,000 square feet and greater may still be relatively narrow and may not possess the lot width of the lots presently in the R-9 zoning district. Alternatively, zoning regulations could recognize the smaller lot width for some lots in this zoning district.

#### 4. Medium Density Residential

Like the Low Density Residential Land Use Area, the Medium Density Residential area encompasses large portions of the existing residential neighborhoods within the Village. Specifically, it includes generally the small to medium sized residential properties (6,000 square feet to 9,000 square feet) found along Second and Third Streets, some properties along NYS Route 17, and smaller properties along Fox Hollow Road and Sixth Street. In addition, there are smaller properties found along Rockland, Lake, and Mountain Avenues, closer to Fourth Street. Again, within the central area of the Village, lands are flat and soils are conducive for building development. These areas are generally served by public water and sewer.

In general, this area is intended for single-family detached dwellings. Two-family dwellings would be allowed but would require Planning Board review and approval. Because the lots on which these dwellings are located are relatively small with limited area to meet parking demand, accessory apartments are not envisioned here. Rather, a properly designed two-family dwelling, which requires a larger lot, would be more appropriate for this land use area. When translated into zoning, this area would be zoned R-6. Fire, police, and similar Village public buildings would also be allowed, as well as public parks. Home occupations would be allowed, but depending on size, would be reviewed by the Planning Board to ensure the home occupation does not impact the residential neighborhood within which it is located and does not exceed a certain scale or intensity of use. The Comprehensive Plan envisions expanding the R-6 area to encompass properties that are generally smaller than the 9,000 square feet in size that are presently zoned R-9. The R-6 and R-9 zoning districts would essentially allow the same uses, except that the bulk requirements would be different for each, based on pre-existing lot sizes, to try and reduce nonconformities and the need to obtain area variances.

#### 5. Village Center

The Village Center Land Use Area encompasses properties located in the “heart” of the Village, i.e., properties that front to Fifth Street, between Mountain and Rockland Avenues. This was the “traditional” center of Hillburn, evidenced by the presence of the Post Office and where, historically, commercial businesses occupied several properties along the street. Properties that would be included in this Land Use Area are Village Hall and Court, the Hillburn Post Office, and the Hillburn Fire Department. In addition, pre-existing multifamily dwellings are clustered in this location. This Land Use Area would allow the uses that are allowed within the Medium Density Residential Land Use Area and would also allow existing multifamily dwellings to continue, a deli and arts and crafts type uses. In the future, depending on the “success” of this area to be

established, the Village could contemplate additional limited retail uses which would not impact the character of the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

#### 6. Local Shopping

The Local Shopping Land Use Area encompasses properties located along Route 17 to the north of the Hillburn Youth Center. At present, it includes a combined synagogue and religious study rooms, a hardwood floor manufacturer, rug distributor, truck and heavy equipment repair use, and other industrial and heavy commercial uses. These properties abut residential properties along Boulder Avenue, and Fifth Street and Mountain Avenue, and due to the nature of their operations, are placing a burden on the neighborhoods as a result of noise and other detrimental operational characteristics. Based on aerial reviews, junked vehicles are being accumulated on some properties without any mitigation measures which would contain oils or other fluids which could enter surface or groundwater, which contributes to the Ramapo River Sole Source Aquifer. One of the operations has encroached into a residential zoning district, which is not permitted.

These properties are presently located within the existing Highway Commercial zoning district. This zoning district may have been appropriate when Route 17 was a major interstate thoroughfare. However, since the construction of Interchange 15A which reroutes traffic away from the Village, the desire is to transition areas of the Village to uses which are more appropriate to the local Village character, where these properties closely abut existing, long-standing residential areas. To that end, the Village proposes that the Local Shopping Land Use Area be established. This area, as well as other nonresidential land use areas that abut a residential neighborhood, would be required to maintain an adequate and significant buffer to screen views of nonresidential uses, and help mitigate operational impacts such as noise generation, odors, night lighting levels, and other emissions. The buffer will be a “no disturbance” zone, i.e., it must be retained in its natural state. In addition, additional screening and buffering, including landscaping and fencing, will be required when necessary, to protect adjoining neighborhoods from these uses.

The Local Shopping Center Land Use Area would allow offices, medical offices, retail uses, banks, restaurants, and similar uses that would cater to Village residents. Building would be limited to a maximum building size so as to fit with the Village’s character and would be subject to architectural review. While pre-existing uses would be allowed to continue until such time that the properties are converted to allowable uses, appropriate mitigation measures would be required to ensure that these existing heavy commercial and light industrial uses do not impact residential properties. The uses would be transitional and smaller scale, to introduce a less intense nonresidential zoning district between the Village’s residential neighborhoods and the Regional Economic Development area.

#### 7. General Commercial

The General Commercial Land Use Area encompasses properties that are located along NYS Route 59. This area includes older warehouse and industrial buildings situated between the

Metro North Railroad right-of-way and NYS Route 59. Various activities and uses are conducted in these multitenant buildings, including but not limited to fastener manufacturing, granite supplier, skylight manufacturer, food manufacturer, tape manufacturer, industrial equipment supplier, and other uses. Unlike the Local Shopping Land Use Area which is in close proximity to the Village's major residential neighborhoods, this area is generally situated away from residential uses, except for proximity to a small residential neighborhood by Blakeslee Place and Park Avenue. A combination of light industrial and general commercial uses would be allowed, including automotive uses. Medical offices and other professional services would also be allowed. There have been concerns and issues with the turnover of tenants in the larger buildings, and lack of disclosure about any change of use which may result in the storage of materials which require adherence to different fire and other code requirements. Further, tenants may place different demands on parking, and water and sewer services which are not being reviewed. The Village intends to develop a review process wherein tenant changes are monitored by the Code Enforcement Officer and, when necessary, site plans or amended site plans are submitted for approval. Further, additional disclosure is necessary to ensure that emergency service providers are aware of the materials and uses occupying these buildings, and that the health, safety and welfare of the Village is protected.

#### .8. Regional Economic Development

This proposed land use area is located within proximity to Interchange 15A of the New York State Thruway. It includes the Mt. Fuji restaurant, Interstate Waste Services, and the Chestnut Ridge Bus Garage. Given this area's location adjacent to a major regional interchange, the Village believes that the land could be put to better use. This area is proposed to be redeveloped with uses that would meet regional shopping and commercial needs – it could accommodate hotels, tourism business-related uses, neighborhood shopping, restaurants, personal service uses, and major medical facilities.

#### 9. Light Industrial

The Light Industrial Land Use Area encompasses the land area on either side of the New York State Thruway and the Metro-North Railroad right-of-way. This Land Use Area predominately is occupied with various major transportation rights-of-way, utility transmission lines and facilities, including Orange and Rockland Utilities, Rockland County Sewer District No. 1 facilities, the NYS Thruway, Suez New York (formerly United Water New York), Algonquin Gas Transmission, Consolidated Edison, and the rail rights-of-way. This Land Use Area is anticipated to remain the same in terms of the existing land uses, and the uses would continue to be allowed subject to special use permit and site plan approvals related to any expansions or alterations of these facilities. It is acknowledged that as public utilities, the Village may have limited authority to conduct reviews. However, given the significant visual and environmental implications these resources have on the community, the Village desires that these utility providers work cooperatively with the Village when designing and implementing program and facilities upgrades in order to improve the visual and environmental quality of Hillburn.



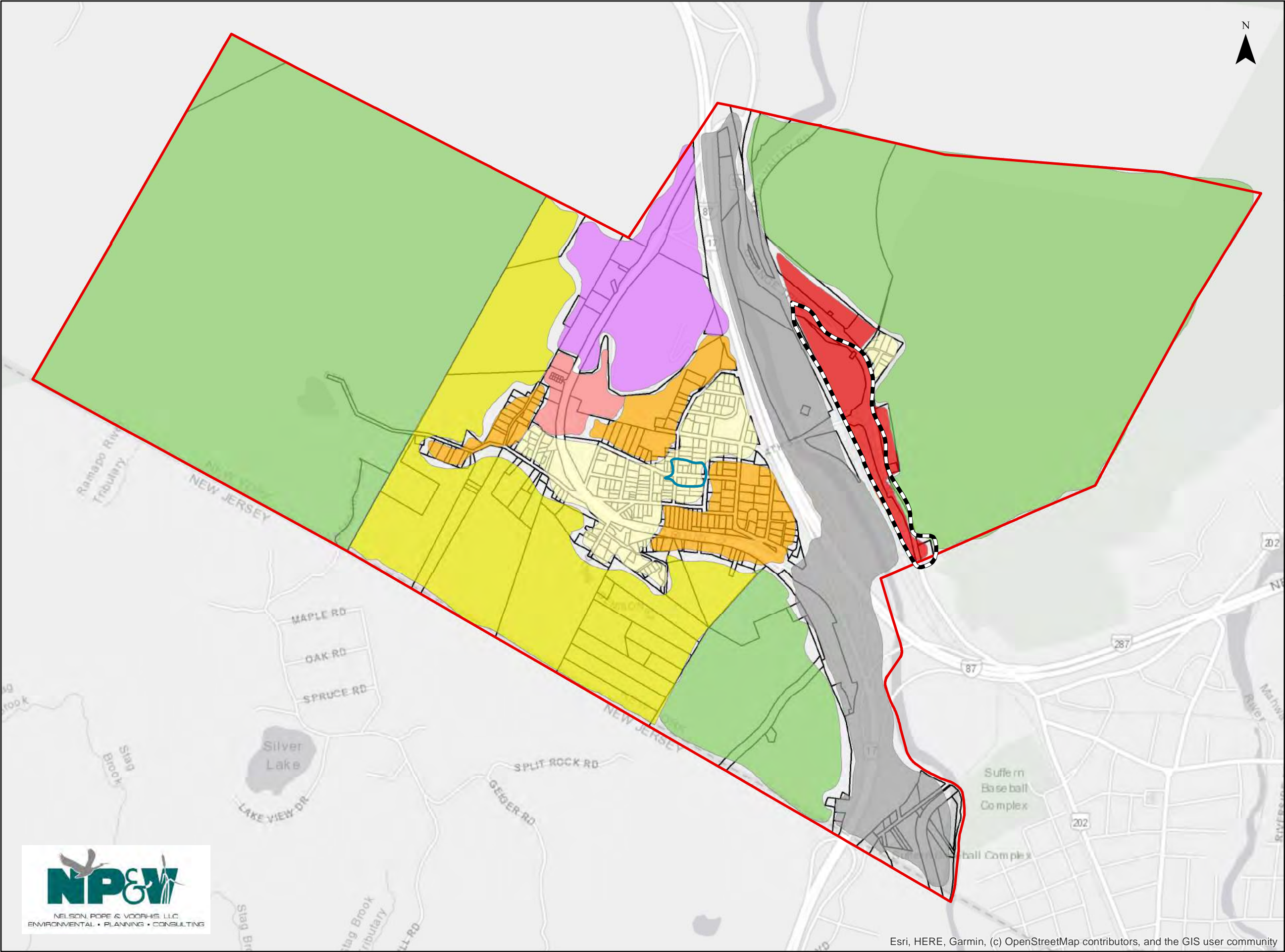
## 10. Transit Oriented Development (TOD)

The Transit Oriented Development Land Use Area would be located on the west side of NYS Route 59 and would encompass the collection of light industrial/heavy commercial buildings that are located between the highway and the railroad right-of-way. The TOD would be allowed in addition to the uses that would be allowed in the General Commercial Land Use Area. The TOD would require construction of a transit facility, e.g., a train station, train parking, or bus/train intermodal facility. It is recommended in the Plan that the transit facility encompass 50 percent of the floor area of the facility. In addition to the transit facility, the proposed development would be required to include a certain percentage of floor area dedicated to retail, personal service, restaurant, and similar uses – at a minimum, no less than 15 percent of the building should accommodate these uses, and they would be located on the ground level of the buildings adjacent to the Route 59 road frontage. The remaining 35 percent of total floor area would be dedicated to the construction of multifamily residential dwelling units; a certain percentage of the dwelling units would be required to be affordable, and made available first to Village residents, volunteers, and employees. For example, 20 percent of the dwelling units could be made affordable to residents earning 80 percent of the Village’s median household income. Hillburn residents, volunteers of the Village’s service providers, and relatives would get first opportunity to inhabit any affordable housing – in addition, the dwelling units would be substantially the same in size and amenities as the market rate dwelling units. The dwelling unit mix would include one-, two- and three-bedroom units. In general, the TOD would include more one and two-bedroom dwellings to meet market demand for young adults, seniors, and empty nester families. A recreational fee in lieu of land, or a recreation area, would be required, and the objective would be to dedicate the recreation area or fees for trail development. Adequate and safe sidewalk connections to the Village would be required, including over the Fourth Street Bridge and into the Village of Suffern. An improved streetscape and landscaping along Route 59 and Fourth Street would be emphasized to beautify this gateway into the Village.

Bulk requirements would be established during site plan review. It is recommended that the development not exceed more than 6 stories, where the buildings would have setbacks as the building height increases and “stepped” or “terraced” to ensure that shadows are not cast onto the park and residences at Blakeslee Place. It is anticipated that the lower 2-3 stories would be parking, a portion of which must be available to residents and tenants.

Given the significant development potential of these sites, it is recommended that the overall application be approved by the Village Board of Trustees, and that the Planning Board review and make decisions on the site plan and architectural details.

Any redevelopment of these sites would require that an evaluation be made regarding the need to remediate the properties, which are brownfield sites. Further, adequate soundproofing of all residential dwelling units would be required as the dwellings would adjoin the rail right-of-way.



Village of Hillburn

Comprehensive  
Plan

Figure  
Conceptual Land Use

Legend

- Hillburn
- Parcels
- Open Space
- Open Space Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Local Shopping
- General Commercial
- Regional Economic Development
- Light Industrial
- Village Center Overlay
- Transit Oriented Development Overlay

Source: ESRI Web Mapping Service;  
Rockland County GIS

Scale: 1 in = 1,400 feet



## B. SUPPORTING FRAMEWORK

This section discusses recommendations and measures which are intended to further accomplish the goals and objectives of this plan, and to support the Conceptual Land Use Plan.

### 1. Community Character

The community character framework of this Plan advocates sustainable placemaking – this framework is intended to preserve those aspects of the Village’s scenic beauty and history that are unique to it and the region. The Plan and this framework protects, preserves, and promotes Hillburn’s scenic and historic resources for this and future generations. From an economic perspective, the Town’s community character, and preservation of same, is also integral to preserving property values. The methods to accomplish the various objectives related to community character are set forth below.

<b>Community Character Framework</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Property Values</b>	<b><i>Maintain and improve property values.</i></b>
In order to sustain a viable village and government, property values must be protected and improved. An element of protecting property values is protecting community character through property maintenance codes, performance standards for nonresidential uses, and other means by which to protect the quality and peace of residential neighborhoods, and ensure that all properties are maintained so that a non-maintained property does not have a deleterious effects on its neighbors.	
<b>Protect Community Character Features</b>	<b><i>Preserve and enhance features that reflect the existing character, history, and natural beauty of the Village.</i></b>
There are features and attributes that make the Village unique, from its historic markers and historic buildings, to stone walls and architectural consistency of design. These features need to be protected and emulated whenever new development is proposed.	
<b>Cultural Diversity</b>	<b><i>Support the community’s cultural diversity.</i></b>
Hillburn has a unique history and traditions built upon its unique cultural diversity which encompasses many races and religions. The Village seeks to protect its existing cultural diversity.	
<b>Architectural Review</b>	<b><i>Ensure that new development, including new and altered residential and nonresidential buildings, are architecturally designed to “fit” and be compatible with the Village’s high-quality residential neighborhoods and is reviewed and approved by the Village.</i></b>
The Plan supports the review of building architecture and overall site design to ensure that the design fits with or improves the visual character for Hillburn. At this time, architecture is reviewed only to the extent that visual character is examined during SEQRA review of a development application. The Plan recommends that an architectural review board or the Planning Board be assigned the role of reviewing building design.	

<b>Community Character Framework</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Design Guidelines</b>	<b><i>Create and adopt design guidelines to maintain the small-scale character of much of the Village and enhance the architectural features currently found on older, historic buildings.</i></b>
To assist any Board in the architectural review of proposed alterations or new construction of residential and nonresidential buildings, the Village Board should commission the preparation of architectural review design guidelines. These guidelines would provide guidance to the boards responsible for reviewing development applications.	
<b>Historic Protection</b>	<b><i>Ensure that new development and alterations are designed in a manner consistent with and protective of the Village's historic character by inventorying the historic buildings within the Village, and adopting a local landmark law to protect same, including any proposed demolitions.</i></b>
<p>The Plan acknowledges the importance of the Village's history, and the need to protect the resources that contribute to it. At this time, the only method by which historic buildings are being preserved is through the SEQRA review process associated with development applications. Listing on the National Register or State Register of Historic Places does not offer protection to historic resources, except potentially for those actions which require state or federal permit review or funding. As development progresses in the Village, the loss of each individual historic property reduces the overall character of what makes the community uniquely Hillburn. The Plan specifically recommends that local historic preservation regulations be adopted to protect local, state and nationally designated historic buildings and places. Protection would be afforded to the buildings identified in the Historic Sites and Building Survey (Chuck Stead, 1977) performed for and on file at Village Hall. Also, this Plan recommends and specifically encourages Village leadership to work with landowners whose properties may be vacant to encourage redevelopment, e.g., allow the subdivision of a historic property, if it results in proceeds that can fund the preservation of an historic building and is in keeping with the neighborhood.</p> <p>A historic preservation board, or the planning board, must be given the authority to review activities that may impact a designated historic resource. This would include alterations that may be inconsistent with the historic attributes of a property or building.</p>	
<b>Gateways</b>	<b><i>Enhance visually the Village's gateway entrances.</i></b>
The Village has two primary gateways into the community – from NYS Route 59 exiting Suffern into the Village of Hillburn, and from Route 17 traveling into the Village. Along both these corridors, existing industrial buildings and utility transmission lines can detract from the community. Efforts should be made to secure funds and improvements which would add landscaping, sidewalks, street trees, and other streetscape elements to create attractive entries into the Village. Consider allowing landscape architects or contractors or other businesses to sponsor the creation and/or maintenance of a gateway in return for allowing a small attractive sign identifying the sponsor.	



<b>Community Character Framework</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b><i>Vacant Properties.</i></b>	<b><i>Protect the Village from zombie properties.</i></b>
<p>The NYS Department of Financial Services maintains a statewide Vacant and Abandoned Property Database for the registration of “vacant and abandoned properties” within the State. Mortgagees are to provide information on those “Vacant &amp; Abandoned Properties” (as defined in RPAPL § 1309) within their portfolio within 21 days of when they learned (or should have learned) of the occupancy status. Such information shall, at a minimum, include: (a) the current name, address and contact information of the mortgagee responsible for maintaining the vacant property; (b) whether a foreclosure action has been filed for the property in question, and, if so, the date on which the foreclosure action was commenced; and (c) the last known address and contact information for the mortgagor(s) of record. The law imposes a duty to inspect, secure and maintain vacant and abandoned properties on mortgagees or their servicing agents. The Village should actively review those properties which are not being maintained and ensure that these properties are being entered into the database system, and that the agents responsible for these properties maintain them. Further, the Village should consider enacting a zombie properties law to enforce maintenance by the owner/agent at the local level.</p>	
<b><i>Cultural Resource Survey</i></b>	<b><i>Require the preparation of a cultural resource (historic and archaeological) study to document a proposed development application’s impact on archaeological and historic resources.</i></b>
<p>Examples of the Village’s rich history are located throughout the Village, including on properties which are the subject of development applications. The Plan advocates for the Planning Board and other boards to ensure that all properties are reviewed for the potential presence of archaeological and historic resources in order to determine whether they are worthy of protection. A specific objective needs to be added to the zoning chapter identifying the need to review historic and archaeological impacts in conjunction with development application review.</p>	
<b><i>Landscaping Standards</i></b>	<b><i>Implement landscaping standards to ensure all developments are revegetated in a manner that protects and promotes positive aesthetic qualities and utilizes native species.</i></b>
<p>One of the most important elements of site or subdivision design is landscaping. Landscaping – a combination of trees, shrubs, and plants that are introduced after a site has been cleared – serves as a visual, green connection to nature and the environment. Residents, visitors, and others react positively to a community when surrounded by a beautiful landscape. Landscaping is essential to the health of a community and provides functions such as absorbing runoff, purifying air, regulating temperatures, and providing sinks for species. Landscaping is also an important visual buffer or screen, which can mitigate and improve the visual appearance of streetscapes and properties. It can promote civic pride in a community and bolster property values. The Plan recommends that landscape plans be specifically required in connection with development plans, and that native plants be incorporated into designs to the maximum extent. Landscaping will be required to be more than “lawn” areas - landscaped areas will be made an integral element of any project and will be elevated as an important component of</p>	

Community Character Framework	
Objective	Description
	any layout. Consistent with previous objectives, the priority of any landscape plan will be to preserve existing vegetation and trees to soften a development.
Lighting Standards	<b><i>Implement lighting standards that balance the need for safety during evening hours with the intent to protect the dark night sky conditions.</i></b>
	The Plan recommends that lighting standards be introduced to the zoning chapter to ensure that lighting plans are submitted as part of development applications, and that lighting plans meet the objective of minimizing light pollution. Light pollution is excessive and inappropriate artificial light. Attributes of light pollution include: the brightening of the night sky which impacts natural areas and habitats; light trespass in locations where light is not intended; and excessive brightness which causes visual discomfort. The zoning chapter would be amended to include standards promulgated by organizations such as the International Dark Sky Association. LED lighting should be controlled so that the color is “warm” and not stark white. Also, all lights should be shown on site plans, and wall-paks and flood lights should not be installed after the fact, especially those that are not cast downward or shielded. Any changes in light fixtures that were previously approved must be reviewed by the Planning Board.

## 2. Residential Neighborhoods

It is the intent of the Village to expand housing opportunities within the Village not only in a manner consistent with its existing character, but also to allow for some limited redevelopment of brownfield properties.

Residential Neighborhoods Framework	
Objective	Description
<b><i>Single-Family Housing</i></b>	<b><i>Support the construction of additional single-family detached dwellings in appropriate locations.</i></b>
	The Village of Hillburn’s housing stock is older and historically single-family detached in character. Some of the historic, older housing in the Village was constructed as two-family dwellings which accommodated the needs of the historic workforce when the Village was created. Today, most of the readily developable land which could accommodate housing has been utilized. Thus, remaining lands on which additional housing development could be constructed is generally constrained by a variety of environmental features, but especially shallow depth to bedrock and steep slopes. In addition, many remaining large tracts of lands are presently in some form of public ownership, including the Village of Hillburn, Town of Ramapo, New York State (parkland) and the Rockland County Sewer District. Should any of these public lands become available for private development, it is the Village’s intent that these constrained lands be developed with single family detached dwellings at a density which reflects the challenging nature of remaining lands consistent with the Open Space Residential Land Use Area.

<b>Residential Neighborhoods Framework</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Senior Housing Redevelopment</b>	<b>Explore developing the former reservoir property in a very limited manner for a senior residential development.</b>
<p>The Village of Hillburn owns an approximately 392-acre property on which a former reservoir had been constructed. A public survey was administered to garner ideas as to how the property could be utilized. At this time, transportation access is limited to the property, and wholesale development of the entire site would be difficult. A large portion of the property is constrained by wetlands, and it is anticipated that potential habitat exists for protected species. The Village controls the ultimate disposition of the property. At this time, limited senior citizen housing development is contemplated, with the majority of the property remaining in passive recreation and open space use.</p>	
<b>Senior Housing Opportunities</b>	<b>Encourage the creation of senior citizen housing opportunities.</b>
<p>Like the objective above, the Village is supportive of constructing senior citizen housing which would be prioritized for its own senior citizen population. This would also have the effect of freeing up existing housing for new family households. To that end, the Village would also, as part of a TOD development, require that a percent of the housing be set aside for senior citizens of the community, and other members. The Village is also receptive to opportunities which may introduce senior housing into appropriate locations within the community.</p>	
<b>Property Maintenance</b>	<b>Enforce property maintenance.</b>
<p>The Village seeks to maintain a quality community character for its residential neighborhoods. The issue of zombie properties is addressed under Community Character; this objective is geared toward ensuring that occupied residential properties are similarly maintained. In addition, there are residential neighborhoods in Hillburn that abut nonresidential properties which are not properly maintained, and which are having a negative impact on the quality of these residential neighborhoods. Nonresidential properties require inspection and monitoring to ensure that they are maintained in a way that does not encroach upon residential uses, whether by noise, air, or pollutant emissions. Additional setbacks, screening, and buffers need to be implemented to protect residential uses from neighboring nonresidential uses.</p>	
<b>Affordable Home Ownership</b>	<b>Promote affordable home ownership opportunities within the Village.</b>
<p>The Village supports a TOD concept which would set aside a certain percentage of housing as affordable, with priority given to existing Village residents, employees, and volunteers. Other opportunities may exist, e.g. small-scale senior housing development on Village-owned land or rehabilitation of existing deteriorated homes for single family ownership, and will be pursued by the Village Board.</p>	

### 3. Economic Development

It is the Village's goal to broaden the Village's tax base and employment opportunities by encouraging the orderly expansion and introduction of nonresidential uses in a manner consistent with the Village's small-scale character. The Village participants have expressed that to a large degree, they view the Village of Suffern's central business district as Hillburn's primary place to shop and congregate. In addition, given the limited amount of additional residential development anticipated within the Village given remaining environmentally constrained lands, and limited private lands available for development, the Village does not foresee a population expansion which would significantly increase the need for personal service and retail type uses. However, the Village also acknowledges that its excellent location, with ample highway access and a major highway interchange area serving it, provides some opportunities for larger scale, nonresidential development. In addition, the Village is well served by central water and sewer service. The Village believes it is important to bolster its shrinking ratable base through redevelopment opportunities which would benefit from available transportation and utility access. Nearby new residential developments could be served by the Village's expanding economy.

Economic Development Framework	
Objective	Description
<b>Performance Standards</b>	<b><i>Promote economic development and support only those nonresidential uses that will not operate in a manner that impacts the Village's residential neighborhoods through generation of unacceptable levels of pollutant emissions, noise, traffic, night lighting, and other effects.</i></b>
At this time, performance standards exist for activities within the Light Industrial Zoning District (see 250-16.D of the Zoning Chapter). However, nonresidential properties located in other zones, including the existing HC zoning district, can be just as disruptive. Performance standards will be applied to all nonresidential uses in the Village, regardless of zoning district.	
<b>Village Center Gathering Place</b>	<b><i>Create a very limited Village Center retail area for Hillburn as a gathering place for existing and future Village residents which includes the Village's governmental and emergency services, the post office, and could introduce a deli and limited, select types of retail uses which do not operate in a manner that would impact the surrounding residential neighborhoods.</i></b>
The public supports a limited number of uses which could be established within the "center" of the Village, located along Fifth Street, between Mountain and Rockland Avenues. Historically, there were several smaller businesses here that catered to local residents. The Village will create a small zone which will acknowledge the existing multifamily residences that are located here, and will also allow very limited nonresidential uses, which could include a deli or an artisan shop/gallery.	



<b>Economic Development Framework</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Local Shopping</b>	<b><i>Encourage small scale local retail opportunities within the Village in existing nonresidential areas along Route 17 and where they presently exist.</i></b>
<p>At present, there are no areas within the Village that are zoned for local retail and personal service uses that could cater to the Village residents and employees. The Village envisions establishing a transitional area along old Route 17 between its existing residential neighborhoods and the more intensive uses that exist and could occur closer to Interchange 15A. This area is envisioned to be developed for local shopping uses, with small scale/format buildings that could accommodate local retail, restaurant, and personal service uses.</p>	
<b>Environmentally Responsible Business</b>	<b><i>Encourage environmentally responsible businesses which will operate in a manner that protects the Village's underlying water and woodland resources.</i></b>
<p>Related to the first objective regarding performance standards, the Village desires to eliminate those uses which also impact the existing natural resource base. The Village is located over the Ramapo Sole Source Aquifer, and over its long history, there have been uses conducted along the River which have resulted in contaminants being introduced to the groundwater which is a major drinking water supply for the Village and County. As mentioned in the baseline inventory, a number of properties in the Village are brownfield sites with known contamination issues. Manufacturing and other uses which require hazardous materials and constituents will be eliminated as part of the performance standards developed for the Village. Most of the remaining vacant lands within the Village are not readily developable for large scale commercial and other nonresidential uses and would result in significant land disturbance to accommodate them, including but not limited to woodland clearance and blasting. The Village does not seek to expand large-scale nonresidential uses within the Village, but to encourage redevelopment of those properties which are situated in readily developable areas for uses which are consistent with this Plan.</p>	
<b>Higher Wage Opportunities</b>	<b><i>Attract higher wage, environmentally friendly businesses along NYS Route 59 and the old Route 17 corridors.</i></b>
<p>The Village seeks to rezone areas along NYS Route 59 and old Route 17 for purposes other than general commercial uses, which could include medical offices and other professional services which could attract cleaner, higher paying jobs.</p>	
<b>Regional Economic Development</b>	<b><i>Allow a regional economic development area including shopping center on Route 59 or Route 17 in areas already developed for nonresidential uses, and in close proximity to the Route 15A interchange</i></b>
<p>The Village sees the properties within proximity to the Interchange 15A area as significantly underutilized properties which could be developed for uses that require a more regional market, given the proximity to major transportation corridors and the availability of centralized utilities. The Village seeks to create a visitor-oriented, commercial experience which could include a hotel and destination type commercial use. A museum for native American arts and history center, a grocery store, office uses, and other similar uses are envisioned as examples.</p>	

<b>Economic Development Framework</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b><i>Increase Variety of Uses</i></b>	<b><i>Introduce additional uses within appropriate nonresidential zoning districts, including arts and crafts retailers, a museum, native arts and history center, organic health food store, delis, restaurants, grocery store, retail uses and office uses.</i></b>
As part of the public survey, residents were asked to identify the types of uses which could be accommodated within the Village. The participants seek to introduce a variety of uses, within appropriately zoned areas, which could accommodate more than the typical type of general and heavy commercial, light industrial uses which seem to dominate the Village, mostly as a result of its past location along an active state highway. With the decommissioning of Route 17 as a state highway, a greater variety of uses could be introduced which could be accommodated along this now local road.	
<b><i>Adaptive Reuse</i></b>	<b><i>Explore the potential adaptive reuse of existing older residential buildings with frontage along Route 17 into restaurant, office or retail uses, provided that the existing residential building character is maintained.</i></b>
Along Route 17, opportunities exist for small clusters of existing dwellings to be reused for mixed uses or select nonresidential uses, provided the residential character of the buildings are preserved. These could include restaurant, retail, or office type uses. Similar zoning has been in place in other communities where properties front to existing or former county and state highways.	
<b><i>Local Businesses</i></b>	<b><i>Support existing local businesses.</i></b>
As a general objective, the Village desires that its local residents support existing local businesses that cater to them in order for those businesses to flourish, which will keep employment opportunities in the Village, and will continue to support the Village's tax base.	

#### **4. Natural Resources**

The Natural Resources framework discusses the manner in which the Village will protect the natural resources that are found within the Village. It provides an expanded discussion of the intent of several of the objectives set forth in this Plan. The overall goal of the Village is to preserve and protect the natural landscape within which the Village is situated, including the Ramapo Mountains, ridgelines, stream corridors and wetlands, wildlife habitat and viewsheds. Any development must fit within the overall framework of protecting the Village's natural resource assets.

<b>Natural Resources Framework</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Environmental Constraints</b>	<b><i>When reviewing developments, require that the density or intensity of development reflects the environmentally sensitive features which may be present, by excluding these sensitive resources when determining development potential.</i></b>
As per Section 250-17M of the Village Zoning Chapter, certain environmental constraints are to be subtracted when determining the residential density or nonresidential intensity of any development. In addition, as part of any zoning revisions, there should be a statement that in addition to subtracting these environmental constraints, the reviewing board will also seek to minimize disturbance to same.	
<b>River Trail</b>	<b><i>Create a trail for walking, biking, fishing, and other recreational purposes that links the Village with the Ramapo River, adjoining trails, and major recreational facilities in the Village's vicinity, by working cooperatively with existing landowners to acquire land and easements along one or both sides of the River.</i></b>
The Village has long desired to establish a walking/hiking trail along the Ramapo River. Over the Village's history, the river corridor has been segmented and impacted by various utility transmission and transportation corridors, making it difficult to create a cohesive trail system. Regardless, opportunities still exist to introduce a trail which utilizes portions of the river corridor for such a system, and where additional connections using adjoining private land and public rights-of-way is necessary. During utility expansion proposal reviews, the Village should work to obtain an easement or access to the river. In addition, a regular working dialogue with the NYS Department of Transportation is necessary to achieve this objective, as much of the river is within state highway rights-of-way. Interestingly, review of aerial photos show that trails and paths already exist along the river corridor, as they also provide access to major utility installations and transmission lines. These same paths and trails could be multi-purpose and for the benefit of the public to gain access to the river.	
<b>River Buffer</b>	<b><i>Require a 100-foot buffer on both sides of the Ramapo River to protect it in open space. Ensure that developments obtain necessary Protection of Waters permits from NYSDEC, in addition to requiring a buffer.</i></b>
The Ramapo River is designated a Class A waterbody, given its use as a public drinking water supply. As a result, activities that occur within 50 feet of the bank of the river is subject to NYSDEC review and depending on the type of activity, a permitting process. The Village seeks to further protect the river by regulating land use activities and disturbances within the Village and requiring a minimum 100-foot undisturbed buffer between disturbance activities and the riverbanks.	
<b>Reservoir Property Use</b>	<b><i>Protect the majority of the former reservoir property as open space and for mostly passive recreation uses.</i></b>
The Village's approximately 392-acre former reservoir property is a significant natural resource. This parcel also includes a large 42-acre wetland complex that is regulated by both	

<b>Natural Resources Framework</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Description</b>
	the NYSDEC (Wetland ID SL-2) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the entire tract is within the range of rare animals and plant species. Much of the site is bedrock controlled. The wetland itself is identified as a freshwater forested/shrub wetland. Given the environmental sensitivity of this property, the Village seeks to retain the majority of the property for passive recreational uses, including hiking and mountain biking.
<b>Mountain Backdrop</b>	<b><i>Protect the scenic mountains and ridgelines visible within the Village.</i></b>
	Much of the mountainous land within the Village is in public ownership, including state parkland. However, the potential exists for certain public property owners to divest themselves of these properties, making them available for private development. The Village seeks to identify mountaintops and ridgelines within the Village which should be protected from development, where any disturbances would require Planning Board review.
<b>Split Rock</b>	<b><i>Protect Split Rock and its environs.</i></b>
	The Village of Hillburn seeks to protect Split Rock and its contributing features which encompass approximately 5 acres of land. It is an archaeologically significant ceremonial location for the Lenape, and it is situated on top of a prominent visible ridgeline in the Village. Hillburn will explore options to acquire the land from the Rockland County Sewer District, establish a conservation easement on the lands that are most important, or otherwise ensure that this archaeological and cultural feature is preserved as part of any future development.
<b>Blasting</b>	<b><i>Review and revise blasting procedures and provide the Planning Board the authority to limit the use of blasting during site and subdivision development review.</i></b>
	This objective is a restatement of an objective contained in the Village's previous Comprehensive Plan. The Village seeks to adopt its own regulations to control the extent and impact of blasting and minimize this activity in the Village. Although the Village regulates the storage, transport and use of explosives, it only indirectly controls the need and amount of blasting, and there are no regulations established for conducting pre- and post-blasting surveys to ensure that dwellings and buildings in the Village are not impacted. These regulations will be revised to protect existing buildings, many of which are old and more susceptible to blasting impacts.
<b>Steep Slopes</b>	<b><i>Consider revising the steep slope provisions of the law to reduce it to 15 percent.</i></b>
	This objective is a restatement of an objective contained in the Village's previous draft Comprehensive Plan. At this time, the threshold for deducting steep slopes from the determination of minimum lot area is 20 percent for non-residentially zoned properties, and 30 percent for residentially zoned properties. Based on the erosion control issues associated with disturbances to steep slopes, the Village desires to establish a lower threshold of 15 percent for all uses.



Natural Resources Framework	
Objective	Description
<b>Critical Environmental Area</b>	<b>Consider designation of the Ramapo River Sole Source Aquifer as a Critical Environmental Area (CEA).</b>
<p>As per the NYSDEC, local agencies may designate specific geographic areas within their boundaries as "Critical Environmental Areas" (CEAs). State agencies may also designate geographic areas they own, manage or regulate. To be designated as a CEA, an area must have an exceptional or unique character with respect to one or more of the following: a benefit or threat to human health; a natural setting (e.g., fish and wildlife habitat, forest and vegetation, open space and areas of important aesthetic or scenic quality); agricultural, social, cultural, historic, archaeological, recreational, or educational values; or an inherent ecological, geological or hydrological sensitivity to change that may be adversely affected by any change. Following designation, the potential impact of any Type I or Unlisted Action on the environmental characteristics of the CEA is a relevant area of environmental concern and must be evaluated in the determination of significance prepared pursuant to Section 617.7 of SEQRA. The Village desires to establish the Ramapo Sole Source Aquifer within its boundaries as a CEA.</p>	

## 5. Utilities Framework

All utility decisions in the Village must support the other goals and objectives of the Plan and the Conceptual Land Use Plan. For example, public sewer and water should be used when necessary to allow meaningful redevelopment opportunities. Conversely, public sewer and water should not be introduced in areas to develop properties at a density in excess of what is recommended by the Plan and allowed by the zoning regulations. Wherever practicable, "green" or low impact infrastructure practices should be pursued. The use of green infrastructure can reduce energy needs, the demand for potable water, and the cost of maintenance. Tree buffers can provide shade in the summer and insulate areas during the winter – this reduces the need for mechanical cooling and heating, thus reducing energy demand and requiring less maintenance. Rainwater harvesting can provide irrigation to landscaped areas, reducing water demand. Green infrastructure practices which utilize plantings to improve runoff absorption and reduce stormwater can also enhance the attractiveness of the surrounding environs.

Utilities Framework	
Objective	Description
<b>Green Stormwater Facilities</b>	<b>Introduce green infrastructure stormwater controls which serve the dual purpose of greening the Village and controlling stormwater runoff.</b>
<p>As per the NYSDEC website, stormwater is water from rain or melting snow that doesn't soak into the ground but runs off, eventually flowing into nearby watercourses. The combined concentrations of contaminants that drain from developed areas can threaten the water quality of water bodies, which in turn can degrade the quality of drinking water which are</p>	

<b>Utilities Framework</b>		
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Description</b>	
	<p>recharged by these water bodies, as well as damage habitats for species that depend on clean water for survival. Pollutants carried by stormwater can also affect recreational uses of water bodies by making them unsafe for swimming, boating or fishing. Current sustainable stormwater design practices recommend that stormwater runoff be treated “at the source”. A benefit is that runoff is then treated and ultimately recharges groundwater sources at the same point where it is discharged. Examples of green infrastructure stormwater techniques include but are not limited to: rain gardens, bioretention areas, vegetated swales/dry swales; green roofs; porous pavement; stream buffer restoration, stormwater planters and tree filters, and other techniques. In addition to managing stormwater and recharging the underlying aquifer, they can provide wildlife habitat, beautify neighborhoods, cool urbanized areas, and improve air quality. The Village supports these techniques as part of new developments and redevelopment to protect the Village’s water resources.</p>	
<b>Groundwater Protection</b>	<b>Protect the Village’s groundwater.</b>	
	<p>The Village’s groundwater supply resources are a major asset not only to the Village but to the region. Because a large portion of the Village sits atop a sand and gravel aquifer, the potential for pollutants to enter the system are greater due to the high permeability of the surficial geology of the community. Thus, runoff or spills from fuel oil tanks, or pollutants that can enter from street pavement in runoff and from inappropriate operations associated with industrial and heavy commercial uses, have a greater potential to impact the Village’s groundwater. To be able to properly protect the Village’s groundwater supply, a source water assessment plan needs to be prepared to identify all potential hazards to the groundwater system and identify methods to minimize any future impacts.</p>	
<b>Central Sewer Expansion</b>	<b>Support the introduction of central sewer to support the Village’s desired growth pattern.</b>	
	<p>The Village sewer service is provided by Rockland County Sewer District No. 1. The Village desires that centralized sewer service be used as a means of advancing its land use and redevelopment objectives, and not to introduce sewers into areas not intended to accommodate high levels of residential density or nonresidential intensity.</p>	
<b>Fuel Oil and Chemical Tank Containment</b>	<b>Ensure all fuel oil and chemical tanks contain appropriate containment to minimize potential spills into the groundwater which ultimately supplies drinking water serving the Village and region.</b>	
	<p>As part of any building permit, site plan, special use, or subdivision review, village officials and boards need to ensure that wherever fuel oil is used as a source of energy, that proper containment is installed to ensure that fuel oil and chemical spills are minimized to the greatest extent practicable. Toward this end, the land use regulations will be amended to ensure that proper controls are implemented.</p>	

## 6. Transportation Framework

It is the Village's goal to provide a safe, adequate and efficient transportation network that will serve the various types and intensities of traffic generated by the various land uses in the Village.

<b>Transportation Framework</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b><i>Route 17 Redesign</i></b>	<b><i>Redesign old Route 17 to reduce traffic speeds and enhance the appearance of the road.</i></b>
The Village should seek grants to redesign the right-of-way along old Route 17 in order to introduce pedestrian paths, crosswalks, a bike path, and close the remaining entrance from Route 17 onto the NYS Thruway, in order to limit heavy-duty vehicles and trucks from using the portion of Route 17 adjacent to existing residential neighborhoods, rather than using Interchange 15A. The entrance should be limited to emergency service use only.	
<b><i>Trails and Pedestrian Paths</i></b>	Incorporate a trail or pedestrian pathways into the Route 17 corridor.
The Village is surrounded by major recreational and open space assets which could be utilized by visitors to the Village and throughout the region. The Village will work to ensure that trail and sidewalk connections are designed as an interconnected system, and that they provide unfettered pedestrian access to major areas of the Village, as well as the parks surrounding the community and the Ramapo River and adjoining existing trails.	
<b><i>Traffic Calming</i></b>	<b><i>Calm traffic on Route 17 and Route 59.</i></b>
Although Route 17 in Hillburn no longer serves as a major arterial in the region, many of the local businesses, including trucks and heavy-duty vehicles still use Route 17 to access the New York State Thruway and I-287. In addition, NYS Route 59 is a major state route which provides access to southerly and easterly parts of Rockland County and New Jersey to the New York State Thruway. The Village desires to ensure that traffic travels at reasonable, safe operating speeds which are protective of pedestrians and property. Study and consider reduced speed signage where possible and other means, like speed bumps.	
<b><i>Complete Streets</i></b>	<b><i>Design new streets as "Complete Streets" which incorporates pedestrian paths linking the Village neighborhoods together.</i></b>
Complete Streets are inclusive designs that consider the needs of all users rather than heavily focusing on vehicles and motorists, and many techniques can be implemented to create complete streets. Some examples of complete street techniques include sidewalks, bike lanes, wide paved shoulders, special bus lanes, accessible public transportation stops, frequent and safe crosswalks, median islands, curb extension, and roundabouts. Complete Street design is a sustainable practice that can improve safety, encourage walking and bicycling which can improve health, lower transportation costs by providing more cost-effective options, and create strong and livable communities. All new streets and even driveways within private developments should be designed with Complete Streets objectives.	

## IV. BASELINE INVENTORY OF CONDITIONS

This section of the Comprehensive Plan presents the background information which informed the development of the Plan's recommendations, as embodied in the Vision, Goals and Objectives, and Conceptual Land Use Plan. An assessment of each topic resulted in the Comprehensive Plan Committee's identification of issues and opportunities.

### A. DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

#### 1. Populations Characteristics

The characteristics of Hillburn's existing and anticipated population have been evaluated in order to plan for the future needs of the community, e.g. demand for community facilities and services.

#### **Population**

**Table IV.A-1** presents historic and current population estimates for the Village of Hillburn, Town of Ramapo, and Rockland County from 1940 to 2010 based on the United States Census data. The Village of Hillburn has slowly and consistently lost population, from approximately 1,161 residents in 1940 to an estimated 951 residents in 2010.

The Town of Ramapo and Rockland County have witnessed increasing populations since 1940. The Town of Ramapo grew from approximately 18,007 residents in 1940 to 126,595 residents in 2010 while the population of Rockland County increased from 74,261 residents in 1940 to 311,687 residents in 2010. As the total number of housing units has not decreased significantly, the change in the Village's population is likely a reflection of a trend to smaller household sizes, and a population that is aging in place, with empty nester families inhabiting the Village.

Table IV.A-1 Population Trends									
	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	Change (2000-2010)/ Percent Change
Village of Hillburn	1,161	1,212	1,114	1,058	926	892	881	951	70/+7.9%
Town of Ramapo	18,007	20,584	35,064	76,702	89,060	93,861	108,905	126,595	17,690/+16.2%
Rockland County	74,261	89,276	136,803	229,903	259,530	265,475	286,753	311,687	24,934/+8.7%
Source: U.S. Decennial Census									



**Table IV.A-2** presents the general characteristics of the Village of Hillburn, Town of Ramapo, and Rockland County populations.

Table IV.A-2 General Population Characteristics: 2015			
	Village of Hillburn	Town of Ramapo	Rockland County
Total Population	872	131,648	320,688
Male	433	66,548	157,250
Female	439	66,100	163,438
Under 5 years	45	14,155	23,982
18+ years	661	84,571	231,749
65+ years	118	14,604	46,423
Median Age (years)	43.5	28.4	36.3
Average Household Size	2.92	3.74	3.17
Average Family Size	3.34	4.07	3.58
Persons 25 years+	597	71,617	201,901
HS Graduate or higher	89.9%	83.1%	87.3%
Bachelors or higher	24.5%	32.5%	37.2%
Median HH income	\$77,321	\$66,911	\$84,855
Median Family income	\$87,083	\$75,853	\$98,801
Per capita income	\$32,374	\$25,046	\$34,647
Source: 2015 ACS 5-Year Estimates: Demographic and Housing Estimates, Selected Economic Characteristics, Education Attainment			

According to 2010 Census estimates, the population of the Village included slightly more females than males, the Town population had slightly more males than females. The segment of the population under 5 years old is lower for the Village (about 5 percent), compared to the Town and County. As a percentage of the population, the Village's senior segment – ages 65 and older – was higher in the Village (about 15 percent) than the same segment in the Town and County.

The median age of a resident in Hillburn is significantly higher than the median age for both Ramapo and Rockland County. Village-wide, the median age was 43.5 years, while the County median age was 36.3 years; the Town has a median age of 28.4 years. Average household size, or the number of people who occupy the same housing unit, was largest in Ramapo with an average size of 3.74 persons, followed by Rockland County with an average household size of 3.17. The average household size of the Village was 2.92 persons. The Village family size (two or more people related by birth, marriage or adoption in the same housing unit) was largest at 3.34, the County family size of 3.58, and finally the Town family size of 4.07 which was the highest of the three jurisdictions.

**Table IV.A-2** also provides educational attainment data for the population that was 25 years and older in 2010 according to the American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. The percentage of the population with a high school degree in the Village exceeded that of the Town and County. The County had the highest percentage with a Bachelor's degree or higher at 37.2 percent. The proportion of the Village's population with a Bachelor's degree or higher was 24.5 percent, compared to the Town proportion of 32.5 percent.

The values for median household income, median family income, and per capita income were highest in the County, followed by the Village, and lowest in the Town. Median household income was \$77,321 for the Village compared to a Town median household income of \$66,911 and a Countywide household income of \$84,855. Additionally, the median family incomes for the Village, Town, and County were \$87,083, \$75,853, and \$98,801, respectively. Per capita income was more than \$7,000 higher in the Village at \$32,374 than the Town (\$25,046); the County had the highest per capita income (\$34,647).

### Households

Most households in the Village, Town, and County are family households (See **Table IV.A-3**) according to the 2015 Census Profile. Out of the 299 occupied housing units in the Village, 72.9 percent are family households, while the remaining households are either non-family households (27.1%) or people living alone (20.7%) and there are no people living in group quarters according to the Census. The percent of family households is higher for the Town than the County or Village, while the percent of non-family households is higher in the Village than the Town or County. This contributes to the lower household size in Hillburn.

Table IV.A-3 Population by Household Characteristics: 2015			
	Village of Hillburn	Town of Ramapo	Rockland County
Total Occupied Housing Units	299	34,566	98,806
Family Households	72.9%	83.6%	75.7%
Non-Family Households	27.1%	16.4%	24.3%
Living Alone	20.7%	14.4%	20.7%
Persons in Group Quarters	0	2,210	7,000
Source: 2015 ACS 5-Year Estimates Occupancy Characteristics			

### Workforce

**Table IV.A-4** provides information regarding the place of employment of workers ages 16 and older, according to the ACS 2010 5-Year Business Estimates. A majority of workers – 73 percent - of Village workers work in New York State. The remainder work outside the state of residence – it is likely that many residents work in New Jersey, given its close proximity to the Village. A higher proportion of Town and County residents work in New York State.

Table IV.A-4 Place of Work for Workers 16 Years and Older: 2015			
	Village of Hillburn	Town of Ramapo	Rockland County
Total Workers	408	51,364	142,565
Worked in state of residence	298	44,190	123,415
Worked in county of residence	210	33,063	84,101
Worked outside county of residence	88	11,127	39,314
Worked outside state of residence	111	7,174	19,150
Source: 2015 ACS 5-Year Estimates - Workers by Place of Work			

### Employment

**Table IV.A-5** presents statistics on the industry occupation of workers in the Village, Town, and County according to the 2010 Census Business Summary.

In the Village of Hillburn, the majority of workers were employed in the educational, health and social services industry (23.9%) and the manufacturing industry (12.3%). Other industries with a significant percentage of workers in the Village include the retail trade industry (10.4%) and public administration industry (10.4%).

The majority of workers in the Town were employed in the educational, health and social services industry (33.8%); an additional 12 percent were employed in the professional, scientific, management, and administrative services.

Countywide, the majority of workers were similarly employed in the educational, health, and social services industry (31.6%). Approximately 11.5 percent of Rockland County employees worked in the professional, scientific, management, and administrative services.

Across all jurisdictions, few workers were employed in the agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting and mining industries.

Table IV.A-5 Industry of Workers, Persons Aged 16 years and Older: 2015			
	Village of Hillburn	Town of Ramapo	Rockland County
Civilian Employed Population 16 Years Old and Over:	422	52,725	146,049
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, mining	0 (0%)	211 (0.4%)	393 (0.3%)
Construction	4 (0.9%)	3,018 (5.7%)	8,128 (5.6%)
Manufacturing	52 (12.3%)	2,972 (5.6%)	9,060 (6.2%)
Wholesale Trade	12 (2.8%)	1,647 (3.1%)	4,442 (3%)
Retail Trade	44 (10.4%)	5,757 (10.9%)	15,406 (10.5%)
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	35 (8.3%)	2,179 (4.1%)	5,988 (4.1%)
Information	4 (0.9%)	1,225 (2.3%)	4,106 (2.8%)
Finance, insurance, real estate and rental and leasing	16 (3.8%)	3,531 (6.7%)	10,203 (7%)
Professional, scientific, management, and administrative services	39 (9.2%)	6,327 (12%)	16,729 (11.5%)
Educational, health, and social services	101 (23.9%)	17,836 (33.8%)	46,192 (31.6%)
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services	39 (9.2%)	3,860 (7.3%)	11,693 (8%)
Other services except public administration	32 (7.6%)	2,623 (5%)	7,654 (5.2%)
Public Administration	44 (10.4%)	1,539 (2.9%)	6,055 (4.1%)
Source: 2015 ACS 5-Year Estimates Selected Economic Characteristics			

**Table IV.A-6** presents statistics regarding employment of County, Town and Village residents by major occupational category. The most common occupational category was management, business, science, and arts for the Village (32.2%), Town (41.5%), and County 44%). Other large occupational categories in Hillburn are service occupations (22.7%) and sales and office occupations (20.4%). Within the Town and County, sales and office occupations and service occupations employed a large percentage of workers.



**Table IV.A-6**  
**Occupation of Workers, Persons Aged 16 years and Older: 2015**

	<b>Village of Hillburn</b>	<b>Town of Ramapo</b>	<b>Rockland County</b>
Civilian Employed Population 16 Years Old and Over:	422	52,725	146,049
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	136 (32.2%)	21,866 (41.5%)	64,198 (44%)
Service occupations	96 (22.7%)	10,604 (20.1%)	27,091 (18.5%)
Sales and office occupations	86 (20.4%)	12,839 (24.2%)	34,254 (23.5%)
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance	41 (9.7%)	3,677 (7%)	10,273 (7%)
Production, transportation, and material moving workers	63 (14.9%)	3,739 (7.1%)	10,233 (7%)
Source: 2015 ACS 5-Year Estimates Selected Economic Characteristics			

## 2. Housing Characteristics

This Comprehensive Plan considers the existing housing stock in the Village of Hillburn, the anticipated housing stock, and anticipated housing needs for the future.

### ***Housing Unit by Units in Structure***

In 2015, the Village, Town, and County housing stock consisted primarily of single-family detached dwellings (see **Table IV.A-7**). Within Hillburn, 64 percent of housing units were single-family detached units, 13.4 percent consisted of two units, 12 percent were 3 or 4 units, and 7.7 percent were single family attached units. Within the Town and County, single family detached dwellings represented a lower percentage of the housing stock. The Village also had a higher percentage of two-family units, and 3-4 family units. The Town of Ramapo had a significantly higher percentage of buildings with 20 or more units.

**Table IV.A-7**  
**Housing Units by Units in Structure: 2015**

	<b>Village of Hillburn</b>		<b>Town of Ramapo</b>		<b>Rockland County</b>	
	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
Total Housing Units	350	-	37,023	-	104,442	-
1-unit, detached	224	64%	18,336	49.5%	60,139	57.6%
1-unit, attached	27	7.7%	2,840	7.7%	8,210	7.9%
2 units	47	13.4%	2,909	7.9%	6,843	6.6%
3 or 4 units	42	12%	3,793	10.2%	8,380	8%
5 to 9 units	0	0%	3,423	9.2%	7,713	7.4%

Table IV.A-7 Housing Units by Units in Structure: 2015						
	Village of Hillburn		Town of Ramapo		Rockland County	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
10 to 19 units	10	2.9%	1,736	4.7%	3,886	3.7%
20 or more units	0	0%	3,873	10.5%	7,842	7.5%
Mobile home	0	0%	101	0.3%	1,417	1.4%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0	0%	12	0%	12	0%
Source: 2015 ACS 5-Year Estimates Selected Housing Characteristics						

### ***Occupied Housing Units by Tenure***

**Table IV.A-8** provides data on occupied housing units by tenure. Approximately 75.6 percent of all occupied housing units in the Village of Hillburn were owner occupied, which is higher than the owner occupancy rates for the Town and County. The percent of renter occupied units were 24.4 percent for Hillburn, 41.5 percent for Ramapo, and 31.1 percent for Rockland County.

Table IV.A-8 Housing Units by Occupancy: 2015						
	Village of Hillburn		Town of Ramapo		Rockland County	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Owner Occupied	226	75.6%	20,237	58.5%	68,107	68.9%
Renter Occupied	73	24.4%	14,329	41.5%	30,699	31.1%
<b>Total Occupied Units</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>34,566</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>98,806</b>	<b>-</b>
Source: 2015 ACS 5-Year Estimates Selected Housing Characteristics						

### ***Tenure by Year Householder Moved Into Unit***

**Table IV.A-9** indicates the year that a householder moved into a housing unit. For the owner occupied units, the most common year a householder moved into the Village was in 1979 or earlier, and between 2000 and 2009. For the renter occupied units, the majority of householders moved into the unit in 2000 to 2014. There are no renter occupied units where the householder moved in 1979 or earlier within the Village. It is also estimated that no new householders moved into owner or renter occupied units since 2015.

Table IV.A-9 Year Householder Moved into Unit by Tenure: 2015			
	Village of Hillburn	Town of Ramapo	Rockland County
Total Occupied Housing Units	299	34,566	98,806
<b>Owner Occupied</b>	226	20,237	68,107
Moved in 2015 or later	0	32	258
Moved in 2010 to 2014	29	1,954	6,767
Moved in 2000 to 2009	61	7,065	22,487
Moved in 1990 to 1999	42	5,413	16,827
Moved in 1980 to 1989	25	2,672	9,006
Moved in 1979 or earlier	69	3,101	12,762
<b>Renter Occupied</b>	73	14,329	30,699
Moved in 2015 or later	0	229	635
Moved in 2010 to 2014	25	6,062	14,063
Moved in 2000 to 2009	27	5,404	11,275
Moved in 1990 to 1999	14	1,513	2,708
Moved in 1980 to 1989	7	687	1,297
Moved in 1979 or earlier	0	434	721
Source: 2015 ACS 5-Year Tenure by Year Householder Moved into Unit			

### Bedroom Mix

**Table IV.A-10** summarizes the bedroom mix for Hillburn, Ramapo, and Rockland County. The most common number of bedrooms is three-bedroom housing units in the Village (43.4%), followed by two bedroom housing units (24.9%). Ramapo and Rockland County had more equal distributions of three and four-bedroom units. The Village had a lower percentage of units with one bedroom (5.7%) compared to the Town and County.

Table IV.A-10 Bedroom Mix: 2015						
	Village of Hillburn		Town of Ramapo		Rockland County	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total Housing Units	350	-	37,023	-	104,442	-
No bedroom	10	2.9%	906	2.4%	2,946	2.8%
1 bedroom	20	5.7%	5,851	15.8%	15,157	14.5%
2 bedrooms	87	24.9%	6,850	18.5%	18,860	18.1%
3 bedrooms	152	43.4%	8,968	24.2%	27,821	26.6%
4 bedrooms	65	18.6%	9,034	24.4%	28,310	27.1%
5 or more bedrooms	16	4.6%	5,414	14.6%	11,348	10.9%
Source: 2015 ACS 5-Year Estimates Selected Housing Characteristics						

**Table IV.A-11** presents average household size by housing tenure in 2010. In Hillburn, the household size for owner occupied housing units (2.99 persons) was smaller than the Town or County. The household size of a renter occupied dwelling was also smaller (2.70 persons). In general, housing units in Hillburn are occupied on average by smaller households. This may be a reflection of the housing stock also containing more 2 and 3-bedroom units in Hillburn, than the Town and County which have higher percentages of four bedroom dwellings.

Table IV.A-11 Average Household Size by Tenure: 2015			
	Village of Hillburn	Town of Ramapo	Rockland County
All Occupied Housing Units	2.92	3.74	3.17
Owner Occupied	2.99	3.59	3.18
Renter Occupied	2.70	3.97	3.16
Source: 2015 ACS 5-Year Estimates Selected Housing Characteristics			

### **Median Year Structure Built**

Within the Village of Hillburn, the median year that a dwelling was constructed was 1939 which is significantly older than the housing stock in the Town and County. The age of the housing stock is also a reflection of the historic character of housing units in the Village, compared to the Town and County, where the age of the housing stock is of more recent and modern vintage.



Table IV.A-12 Median Year Structure Built: 2015			
	Village of Hillburn	Town of Ramapo	Rockland County
Median Year Structure Built	1939 - <sup>1</sup>	1970	1969
Source: 2015 ACS 5-Year Estimates Median Year Structure Built			

### **Median Housing Value and Rent**

The 2015 median housing value of an owner-occupied dwelling in the Village of Hillburn was \$317,700; in the Town the median value was \$400,500, and in the County the median housing value was \$419,100. The median housing value in the Village is lower than that of the Town or County perhaps a reflection of the age of the structure.

The median gross rent of an occupied housing unit in Hillburn was \$1,361 per month, which is higher than the rent paid in Ramapo and about the same as the rent paid in Rockland County. In Ramapo, median gross rent paid was \$1,264 and in Rockland County the gross rent was \$1,335.

Table IV.A-13 Median Housing Value and Rent: 2015			
	Village of Hillburn	Town of Ramapo	Rockland County
Median Housing Value	\$317,700	\$400,500	\$419,100
Median Rent	\$1,361	\$1,264	\$1,335
Source: 2015 ACS 5-Year Median Value, Median Gross Rent			

According to Trulia.com, the median sales value of dwellings for sale in February 2018 was \$325,000, based on six dwellings for sale. Housing in Hillburn can be very affordable, as there is a diversity of small to large homes, and older to newer housing stock. Housing values ranged from \$159,900 (3-bedroom, 1,056 square feet) to \$450,000 (4-bedroom, 2,219 square feet).

### **Assessed and Market Value of Homes**

Between 2008 and 2018, the assessed value of property in the Village of Hillburn has remained stagnant and or slightly decreased. This limits the ability of the Village to increase services without increasing the tax burden on residents or business owners. On average over the past ten years, the proportion of taxable assessed value compared to total assessed value is approximately 54%, however the most recent available records in 2017 show the current proportion is closer to 52%, lower than the 10-year average.

<sup>1</sup> The “-” indicates that the median falls in the lowest interval of an open-ended distribution.

Table IV.A-14 Total Assessed and Assessed Taxable Land Values			
Year	Total Assessed Value	Assessed Taxable Value	Percent of Taxable to Total Assessed Value
2008	\$ 31,550,736.00	\$ 17,977,726.00	57%
2009	\$ 32,924,891.00	\$ 16,768,526.00	51%
2010	\$ 34,534,052.00	\$ 16,744,426.00	48%
2011	\$ 29,906,825.00	\$ 16,308,976.00	55%
2012	\$ 30,209,543.00	\$ 16,630,805.00	55%
2013	\$ 29,982,332.00	\$ 16,521,541.00	55%
2014	\$ 30,395,527.00	\$ 16,640,234.00	55%
2015	\$ 30,554,783.00	\$ 16,625,086.00	54%
2016	\$ 30,505,598.00	\$ 16,222,586.00	53%
2017	\$ 30,276,435.00	\$ 15,753,892.00	52%

### 3. Summary

The Village of Hillburn's population has been declining slowly for some time. This may reflect that the Village's average resident is older, and that average household sizes are also lower than in the Town or County as a result of the population "aging in place". The Village also has a higher proportion of owner-occupied housing stock than in Ramapo or Rockland County. As the housing stock is older and consists of a higher percentage of two- and three-bedroom dwellings, its household size will be lower than the Town and County where there are more four-bedroom and greater dwelling units which is common for newer housing units. Real property data indicate that housing values in Hillburn are affordable compared to the Town and County. Housing in the Village is affordable relative to the Town and County. The Village does not have larger multifamily complexes, e.g., garden apartments, and renters occupy dwellings that were constructed as single-family dwellings which have been converted to multiple occupancy.

## B. NATURAL RESOURCES



*Inset - Map of the Highlands,*

[https://www.na.fs.fed.us/highlands/maps\\_pubs/highlands\\_map.jpg](https://www.na.fs.fed.us/highlands/maps_pubs/highlands_map.jpg)

The Village of Hillburn is situated within a region with a remarkable diversity of natural resources, geographic and ecological significance, and great natural scenic beauty. The Village is situated within the Hudson Highlands, which represents the “greensward” surrounding the New York City metropolitan region. Development has the potential to impact the natural resources of the Village, and land use planning policies need to consider the Village’s position in the landscape relative to these resources. The following narrative describes the rich environment not only within but surrounding the Village of Hillburn. This section describes state, county and regional plans which address these environmental resources, and an inventory of the resources located in Hillburn.

### 1. Regional Planning

#### ***Hudson Highlands***

The Town of Ramapo, including Hillburn and all of its incorporated villages, is located within the Highlands region of the New England physiographic province, and has diverse and environmentally sensitive natural resources. The Highlands region was recognized by passage of the Highlands Conservation Act, signed by President George Bush on November 30, 2004, and subsequent to the release of the New York-New Jersey Highlands Plan and Plan. These Plans acknowledged the high value natural resource region that forms a greenbelt around the New York City metropolitan region. The Act was intended to assist the States of Connecticut, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania in conserving land and natural resources in the Highlands region through federal assistance for land conservation projects within it.

The purposes of the Highlands Conservation Act are to:

- *recognize the importance of the water, forest, agricultural, wildlife, recreational, and cultural resources of the Highlands region, and the national significance of the Highlands region to the United States.*
- *authorize the Secretary of the Interior to work in partnership with the Secretary of Agriculture to provide financial assistance to the Highlands States to preserve and protect high priority conservation land in the Highlands region.*
- *continue the ongoing Forest Service programs in the Highlands region to assist the Highlands States, local units of government, and private forest and farm landowners in the conservation of land and natural resources in the Highlands region.*

The landscape of the Highlands is unique and characterized by a series of open high hills and ridges cut by deep narrow valleys that distinguish it from the surrounding rolling plains. This pattern of development is obvious in Hillburn, where the major roads including NYS Route 17, the NYS Thruway, and NYS Route 59, all trend in a north-south direction through the Ramapo River valley between the mountains surrounding it. The region is comprised of 108 municipalities in 12 counties.



***Inset - Excerpt from New York - New Jersey Highlands Regional Study: 2002 Update. USDA, 2002.***

As part of the Highlands Study and evaluations, the United States Department of Agriculture, U.S. Forest Service, assigned lands within the region a score of low, moderate and high conservation value for various types of natural resources. As described in detail in the 2002 New York – New Jersey Highlands Regional Study: 2002 Plan, a Conservation

Values Assessment model was developed to translate conservation priorities described in the document into geographic information. The geographic locations of the natural resources described in the Highlands Plan were mapped using geographic information system (GIS) technology in order to provide a picture of the relative resource conservation values across the region, highlighting areas that are a priority for conservation management. This assessment of expanded on a 1999 Priority Area Assessment conducted by the Regional Plan Association (2001).



The GIS-based Conservation Values Assessment model weighed the conservation value of these various resources in two ways. First, the model was based on achieving the following goals for each of the five general resource types:

- Maintaining an adequate supply of high-quality water;
- Conserving productive forest lands;
- Conserving areas of high biodiversity and habitat value;
- Conserving productive agricultural land; and
- Providing adequate recreational opportunities for natural, historic and cultural resource-based uses.

Individual resources within each of the five general resource areas were assigned a value ranging from 0 to 5 (highest value) based on parameters set forth in the Plan. The data for the Village of Hillburn have been superimposed over the area. **Figures 3 through 6** present the various values for the Village in the areas of:

- Forest productivity;
- Recreation;
- Water Quality;

A Composite Resource Value Map is presented in **Figure 7**. In considering any plans for development within the Village, the Composite Resource Value Map, as well as the preceding maps upon which it is based, should be reviewed in establishing areas which represent better options for resource protection, and areas which should be avoided. To a large extent, the highly valuable lands are already conserved as open space. **Figure 7**, along with other resource data, is to be considered in any recommendations that propose creation of a contiguous, meaningful open space network, within which land development should “fit”.

#### ***2014 Draft New York State Open Space Conservation Plan***

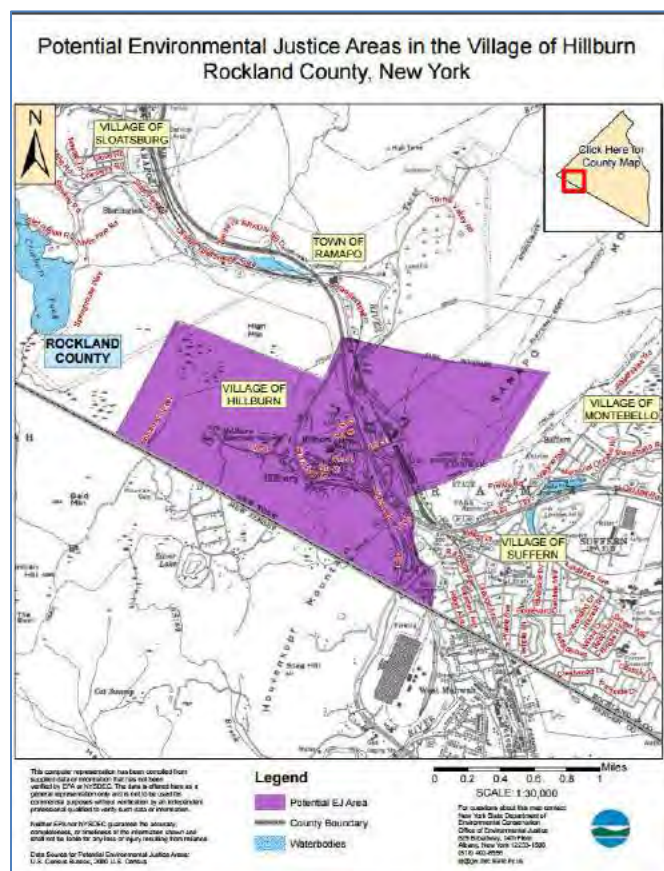
The fundamental purpose of the New York State Open Space Plan is to urge increased protection of the state's significant natural, scenic, recreational, historic and cultural resources and secure the benefits that accrue from protection of these resources, including: economic benefits; increased property values for adjacent lands; tourism; water quality protection; wildlife habitat protection; and, enhancement of natural resource based industries. A summary of the Open Space Plan is found here: [http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/lands\\_forests\\_pdf/ospsummary.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/lands_forests_pdf/ospsummary.pdf). Protection of the Ramapo River and Watershed is a high priority within the Open Space Plan. As noted in the Plan:

*Ramapo Mountains and Watershed – The Ramapo Mountains are Rockland County’s Highlands, and parts of the Ramapos are permanently protected within the 44,000-acre Harriman State Park. The Ramapo River Watershed is an*

irreplaceable regional water supply, recreational resource and key ecosystem in the Highlands. The Ramapo Valley Aquifer—listed as a federal Sole Source Aquifer in 1992—supplies a third of Rockland County’s public water supply and over two-million people derive all or part of their water supply from the Ramapo River Basin. The Forest Service has identified this as a Highlands Conservation Focal Area. Of special importance is a large property in the drainage basin of the Nakoma Brook, which is a tributary of the Ramapo River. This property is located in a “High Conservation Value” area identified in the federal Highlands Study of 2002.

The Village of Hillburn is within the targeted focal area, as much of the Village is within the designated sole source aquifer and the Ramapo Mountains watershed (see discussion further below).

### NYSDEC Environmental Justice Area



**Inset – Map of Environmental Justice Area, NYSDEC.**

The Village of Hillburn is identified as a potential Environmental Justice (EJ) Area, based on census tract data. Information regarding the Environmental Justice Program is found here: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/public/333.html>.

As stated on the website, the NYSDEC Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) serves as a vehicle to address environmental justice concerns in the environmental permit review process and across other DEC operations. OEJ runs several programs that benefit EJ communities and have developed numerous internal policies establishing criteria to guide DEC staff on how to consider impacts to EJ communities when carrying out their duties. DEC's Office of Environmental Justice offers Community Impact Grants to provide community-based organizations with funding for projects that

address various environmental and public health concerns. The program has a particular focus on low-income and minority communities that have historically been burdened by environmental problems. Those environmental problems include a large number of regulated facilities; contaminated sites; noise, air and water pollution; health problems and lack of green space and

waterfront access. The Community Impact Grants empower stakeholders to be actively engaged in finding solutions to the disproportionate burdens that EJ communities may experience.

Projects that have been funded include: research, community gardens, tree plantings, education and curriculum development, urban farming training, habitat restoration, water quality monitoring, air quality monitoring and more.

Operation ECO-Quality is a strategic partnership between the NYSDEC and a community that focuses on preventing small to mid-sized regulated facilities from violating New York State's Environmental Conservation Laws that may negatively impact the health of residents in environmental justice neighborhoods and the environment. The DEC's Environmental Conservation Officers (ECOs) and staff conduct enhanced outreach with community leaders and residents to get a better understanding of issues faced by EJ communities. Staff go to neighborhood facilities like auto body shops, dry cleaners and gas stations to educate them on how to achieve greater compliance with state laws. ECOs return periodically to ensure that facilities have fixed any outstanding problems. As part of the compliance process, ECOs also patrol areas with heavy diesel truck traffic and inspect trucks to ensure proper emissions standards.

The Office of Environmental Justice has a Green Infrastructure (GI) program designed to collect and provide information on GI resources, projects, research, technologies, funding sources and networking opportunities. Green infrastructure benefits environmental justice communities by providing cleaner water, flood protection, cleaner air, wildlife habitat, and places to recreate. Green infrastructure in urban environments is about finding creative ways to restore more trees and plant communities with associated natural processes, to manage water, improve the health, and revitalize neighborhoods.

### ***Rockland County***

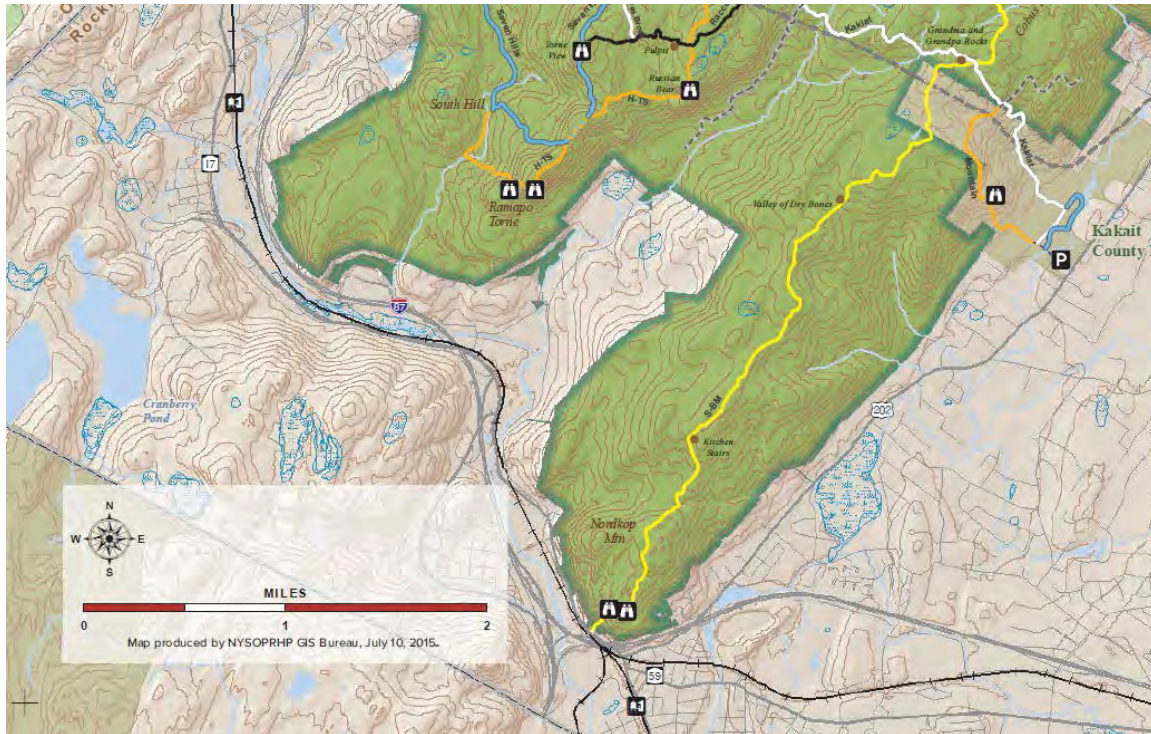
In the late 1990s, Rockland County funded an Open Space Acquisition Program. As part of this program, Rockland County acquired the lands located to the west of 6<sup>th</sup> Street for open space preservation. At this time, the County does not have a formal open space or natural resource plan.

## **2. State Park System**

### ***Harriman State Park***

The southern end of Harriman State Park is located within the Village of Hillburn. Harriman State Park was established in 1910, when the State of New York accepted land and monies from Mary Averell Harriman to establish the park, which would grow to encompass over 47,000 acres in

both Rockland and Orange counties. Nordkop Mountain is located on the east side of the Village, east of Route 59, and the 21.4-mile Suffern-Bear Mountain Trail begins at the base of the mountain.



*Inset – Harriman State Park Trail Map, NYSOPRHP, 2015.*

### 3. Geology, Soils and Topography

#### **Geology**

A community's geology, soils, and topography present opportunities and constraints to development patterns. Areas constrained by shallow bedrock are less likely to be developed due to the cost to remove these features to accommodate building development. Steep slopes also present challenges to creating the "pads" on which buildings can sit – larger building pads on steeper slopes will require more earthwork to accommodate the building. Soils can be deep and loamy and suitable for agricultural use, while wet soils can be indicative of wetlands which are unsuitable for development, and also regulated by outside state and federal agencies. The following describes geologic, topographic and soil conditions in the Village of Hillburn.

**Geology** can be defined as the science that deals with the earth's physical structure and substance, its history, and the processes that act on it. **Bedrock** is the parent material for the unconsolidated surficial material and soils laying atop it – bedrock is classified as igneous,



sedimentary, or metamorphic.<sup>2</sup> Bedrock that extends up out of the land's surface is an outcrop. The underlying bedrock within the Village controls the topography and terrain of large portions of the community.

The Village of Hillburn is located in the New York-New Jersey Highlands physiographic province (Highlands province). Physiographic provinces are areas with a characteristic geomorphology, with comparable terrain, rock type and geologic structure and history.

The Significant Habitats and Habitat Complexes of the New York Bight Watershed describes the Hudson Highlands as being *"distinguishable from the adjoining provinces by differences in geology, topography, and geomorphology (landforms). The entire physiographic area is noteworthy as a relatively undeveloped corridor of forests, wetlands, and grasslands of regional importance to breeding and migratory birds, resident amphibians and reptiles, and rare plants and communities within close proximity to the New York City metropolitan area. The principal significant habitat is the core area of unfragmented forest and wetlands within the Highlands physiographic province, extending from the glacial moraine (at about the location of Interstate 80 in New Jersey) northeast across the Hudson River to the New York-Connecticut border. This core habitat area has the highest concentration within the Highlands of species and communities of special regional emphasis dependent on large, unfragmented forest and wetland habitats."*<sup>3</sup>

As described in the Soil Survey of Rockland County, *"The northwestern part of the County is generally underlain by a heavily metamorphosed complex of Precambrian and Paleozoic sedimentary and igneous rocks. The outcrops are generally granite, gneiss, and schist...the basic pattern of hills and valleys reflects the structure and variation in composition of the underlying bedrock. Streams tend to follow the softer, more easily eroded rock units and zones that were more intensively fractured or faulted. This topographic pattern has been further modified by the intensive erosion of the continental glaciers that moved southward as far as Long Island and New Jersey. As the glaciers melted and retreated, they left a complex sedimentary covering of moraines, terraces, outwash plains, lakes and marshes."*

The geologic complexity of the Highlands region and the Village of Hillburn is shown in **Figure 8** and described in **Table IV.B-1**. The underlying bedrock has implications for development, in terms of its depth, hardness, rippability, and capacity to hold groundwater. In addition, certain bedrock materials are more soluble, and constituents including pollutants can make their way more readily into the soils and underlying groundwater. The "Amg" bedrock underlies most of the Village to the west of the Ramapo River valley. The Ramapo River valley and the more readily developable areas of the Village are underlain by "Qtcs" bedrock. The eastern third of the Village

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<sup>2</sup> Refer to <http://geomaps.wr.usgs.gov/parks/rxmin/rock.html> for description of rock types.

<sup>3</sup> *Significant Habitats and Habitat Complexes of the New York Bight Watershed*, USFWS, November 1997



is underlain by “Hg” bedrock, while a small portion of the Village adjoining Suffern is underlain by “Trhc” bedrock.

Table IV.B-1 Bedrock Lithology		
Unit	Lithology	General Description
Trhc - Hammer Creek Formation	Conglomerate	Conglomerate is a coarse-grained clastic sedimentary rock, composed of rounded to subangular fragments larger than 2 mm in diameter typically containing fine-grained particles in the interstices, and commonly cemented by calcium carbonate, iron oxide, silica, or hardened clay.
Amg - Interlayered amphibolite and granitic, charnockitic, syenitic gneiss	Amphibolite, gneiss	Amphibolite is a crystalloblastic rock consisting mainly of amphibole and plagioclase with little or no quartz. Gneiss is a foliated rock formed by regional metamorphism, in which bands or lenses of granular minerals alternate with bands or lenses in which minerals having flaky or elongate prismatic habits predominate. Generally less than 50% of the minerals show preferred orientation.
Hg - Hornblende granite and granite gneiss	Granite, granitic gneiss	Granite is a plutonic rock defined in the QAPF diagram as having Q between 20 and 60% and P/(A+P) between 10 and 65%. A gneissic rock with a general granitoid composition.
Qtcs - Garnet biotite quartz feldspar gneiss	Gneiss, quartzite	See description of gneiss above. Quartzite is a granoblastic metamorphic rock consisting mainly of quartz and formed by recrystallization of sandstone or chert by either regional or thermal metamorphism.
Source: USGS Mineral Resources On-Line Spatial Data, 2017.		

**Surficial geology** relates to the land’s form and the unconsolidated sediments that lie beneath it. **Figure 9** presents surficial geology for the Village of Hillburn. An explanation of these materials is provided in **Table IV.B-2**.

Table IV.B-2 Surficial Geology	
Name	Description
Bedrock	No overburden. Bedrock is at the surface along the southern edge of the Village
Outwash Sand and Gravel	Sand and gravel deposited by running water from the melting ice of a glacier, and flanks either side of the Ramapo River and its recent alluvium.
Recent Alluvium	Clay, silt, sand, gravel or similar unconsolidated detrital material, deposited during comparatively recent geologic time by a stream or other body of

Table IV.B-2 Surficial Geology	
Name	Description
	running water, as a sorted or semi-sorted sediment. Located along the Ramapo River.
Till	Derived from the underlying crystalline bedrock, are mostly stony and bouldery sands with some silt and little or no clay. Till covers most of the upland mountainous areas on the west and east side of the Village.
Source: Geotechnical Design Manual, Chapter 3, Geology of New York State, NYSDOT, 2013. See <a href="https://www.dot.ny.gov/divisions/engineering/technical-services/geotechnical-engineering-bureau/geotech-eng-repository/GDM_Ch-3_Geology_of_NY.pdf">https://www.dot.ny.gov/divisions/engineering/technical-services/geotechnical-engineering-bureau/geotech-eng-repository/GDM_Ch-3_Geology_of_NY.pdf</a>	

Note that the Village Zoning Law regulates and considers bedrock in determining development density and intensity. It states the following: *“Rock outcrops: applicable prior to development. Not more than 50% of the area of that portion of a parcel with rock outcrops in excess of 50 square feet may be counted as part of the minimum lot area of a parcel.”*

### Soils

**Soil** can be defined as “a natural body comprised of solids (minerals and organic matter), liquid, and gases that occurs on the land surface, occupying space, and characterized by one or both of the following: horizons, or layers, that are distinguishable from the initial material as a result of additions, losses, transfers, and transformations of energy and matter or the ability to support rooted plants in a natural environment”.<sup>4</sup> Soil characteristics have a strong relationship to land use suitability. Every land use, whether it involves the construction of roads or buildings, or production of agriculture crops or forestry, affects and is affected by soil characteristics. The ability of the land to accommodate a particular land use and infrastructure that will serve it is influenced by the suitability of soils to accommodate these activities. The United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), manages a web-based system called “Web Soil Mapper” where soil types for a particular area can be viewed. The Soil Mapper provides detailed characteristics and limitations of each soil type for different categories such as road and building construction, agricultural and silvicultural use. The Survey ranks the soils from slight to severe; severe soil limitations are not insurmountable but reflect the need to come up with engineered solutions to overcome soil limitations. Soils reflect an inherent level of suitability to unsuitability for particular uses. **Figure 10** illustrates the soil mapping units found within the Village, which is useful for general planning purposes. However,

<sup>4</sup> *Soil Taxonomy, A Basic System of Soil Classification for Making and Interpreting Soil Surveys, 2002.*

the soil survey should not be used in lieu of detailed soil testing during the review of site-specific development plans. Generally, there are 15 soil types within Hillburn.

Hydric soils are frequently flooded or waterlogged soils and are frequently an indicator of the presence of wetlands. The only soils in Hillburn that are considered hydric soils are the “Fh” soils, associated with the NYSDEC-regulated wetlands.

Soils present in the Village of Hillburn include those listed in **Table IV.B-3**. As is evident by the soil names, the majority of soils are bedrock controlled with rock outcrops and most of those lands are not developed or only marginally developed. The majority of the Village’s developed area are located on lands with soils made up mostly of sand and loam. Any future development on undeveloped land will be constrained by the presence of shallow depth to bedrock, and limited surficial soil depth. This has implications for the ability to install underground utilities and buildings with large building footprints.

**Table IV.B-3**  
**Soil Types Found in Hillburn**

Map Symbol	Soil Name	Acres	Percent
CkC	Charlton-Rock outcrop complex, rolling	29.04	2.0
CkD	Charlton-Rock outcrop complex, hilly	80.05	5.6
CoC	Chatfield-Rock outcrop complex, rolling	131.09	9.1
CoD	Chatfield-Rock outcrop complex, hilly	351.32	24.5
Fh	Fluvaquents and Medisaprists, ponded	36.27	2.5
HcA	Hinckley loamy sand, 0 to 3 percent slopes	30.18	2.1
HcB	Hinckley loamy sand, 3 to 8 percent slopes	24.63	1.7
HIF	Hollis-Rock outcrop complex, 35 to 60 percent slopes	181.32	12.6
HoC	Holyoke-Rock outcrop complex, rolling	28.15	2.0
HoF	Holyoke-Rock outcrop complex, very steep	96.98	6.8
PsC	Paxton fine sandy loam, 3 to 15 percent slopes, very stony	165.72	11.6
PsE	Paxton fine sandy loam, 15 to 35 percent slopes, very stony	46.96	3.3
Us	Udorthents, smoothed	176.74	12.3
Ux	Urban land	35.82	2.5
W	Water	16.61	1.2
Wc	Watchaug fine sandy loam	2.87	0.2
<b>Total</b>		<b>1433.73</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Rockland County Soil Survey, USDA.

### Topography

**Topography** is a measure of the elevations found in the community. Topographic elevations are measured in relation to mean sea level (msl) and are shown in **Figure 11**. The highest point in the Village is over 1,000 feet above msl - this point is located at the westerly border of the Village

and west of the former reservoir. The lowest points within Hillburn are located within the Ramapo River valley with elevations around 300 feet above msl. Most of the Village's developed areas are found within the valley, between 300-550 feet above msl. Land in Harriman State Park has elevations up to 850 feet above msl.

Slope is related to topography and can be measured as a percent that expresses the change in elevation over a measured distance. For example, a change in elevation of 10 feet over a distance of 100 feet, would be: *10 feet divided by 100 feet = 0.10 - or a ten percent slope*. The slope of land has implications for land management. Generally, lands with slopes greater than 20 percent are considered more constrained and may pose challenges to development. Uncontrolled disturbance to steep slopes and vegetation on slopes can result in:

- Increased stormwater runoff, erosion, sedimentation and siltation, including to nearby streams and an increase in potential flood issues;
- decreased stability of the slope which requires significant engineered solutions, increasing the cost of development and encroaching into areas with higher degree of potential failure. In extreme cases, slope failure can result in loss of property and life.

The slope ranges within the Village are shown in **Figure 12**. The Village of Hillburn regulates activities on slopes as per 250-17M of the zoning chapter wherein certain environmental constraints are subtracted from the gross area when determining the allowable density or intensity of development. Specifically, the following applies:

*"Steep slopes: applicable prior to development.*

*(a) Not more than 50% of the land area of that portion of a parcel may be counted as part of any minimum lot area if subject to the following:*

*[1] For residentially zoned properties, slopes over 30%.*

*[2] For non-residentially zoned properties, slopes over 20%.*

*(b) No construction shall be permitted on that portion of a parcel with a slope in excess of 40%.*

*(c) No portion of the land area of that portion of a parcel with a slope in excess of 50% may be counted as part of the minimum lot area of a parcel."*

**Figure 12** illustrates the slope ranges that are regulated by the Village in accordance with the above regulations. With the exception of the Ramapo River valley floor, much of the Village is constrained by steep slopes. However, there are limited areas that are less than 20 percent slopes which could be developed if designed in a creative and environmentally responsive manner. The

constraints imposed by steep slopes also suggests that the Village should focus on revitalizing existing developed areas in the valley which pose fewer topographic constraints.

#### 4. Water Resources

##### ***Watersheds***

The Village of Hillburn is located almost entirely within in the Middle Ramapo River Watershed (see **Figure 13**). The Ramapo River flows south into the Mahwah River, which drains to the Passaic River. From there, it enters Newark Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. A small portion of the easterly end of the Village, within Harriman State Park, flows directly to the Mahwah River Watershed.

Streams and riparian areas provide vital habitat for fish, amphibians, birds and reptiles, and are integral to clean water and erosion control. Excess nitrogen can feed algal blooms, which deplete water of oxygen, leading to fish kills and dead zones in waterbodies downstream. Organisms living in streams uptake and transform excess nitrogen and phosphorous into less harmful nutrients. Small streams assist in flood prevention by absorbing rainwater and snow melt and recharging groundwater which can be the primary source for a community's water supply system. Riparian buffers are vegetated areas that protect water resources from nonpoint source pollution, provide bank stabilization and aquatic and wildlife habitat. Streams and their associated riparian buffers provide natural beauty and maintain wildlife corridors. Streams within the Village are shown in **Figure 14**.

##### ***Streams***

All waters in New York State are assigned a letter classification that denotes their best uses. Letter classes - A, B, C, and D - are assigned to fresh surface waters. Best uses include: source of drinking water, swimming, boating, fishing, and shellfishing. The letter classifications and their best uses are described in regulation 6 NYCRR Part 701. **Table IV.B-4** summarizes best uses and **Figure 14** provides the classification of waters within the Village.

Table IV.B-7 Water Quality Classifications	
Classification	Description
AA	A source of water supply for drinking, culinary or food processing purposes; primary and secondary contact recreation; and fishing. The waters shall be suitable for fish, shellfish and wildlife propagation and survival.
A	A source of water supply for drinking, culinary or food processing purposes; primary and secondary contact recreation; and fishing. The waters shall be suitable for fish, shellfish and wildlife propagation and survival.
B	The best usages of Class B waters are primary and secondary contact recreation and fishing. These waters shall be suitable for fish, shellfish and wildlife propagation and survival.



Table IV.B-7 Water Quality Classifications	
Classification	Description
C	The best usage of Class C waters is fishing. These waters shall be suitable for fish, shellfish and wildlife propagation and survival. The water quality shall be suitable for primary and secondary contact recreation, although other factors may limit the use for these purposes.
D	The best usage of Class D waters is fishing. Due to such natural conditions as intermittency of flow, water conditions not conducive to propagation of game fishery, or stream bed conditions, the waters will not support fish propagation. These waters shall be suitable for fish, shellfish and wildlife survival. The water quality shall be suitable for primary and secondary contact recreation, although other factors may limit the use for these purposes.
(T)	Waters that provide habitat in which trout can survive and grow within a normal range on a year-round basis, or on a year-round basis excepting periods of time during which almost all of the trout inhabiting such waters could and would temporarily retreat into and survive in adjoining or tributary waters due to natural circumstances.
(TS)	Trout spawning waters are trout waters in which trout eggs can be deposited and be fertilized by trout inhabiting such waters (or connecting waters) and in which those eggs can develop and hatch, and the trout hatched therefrom could survive and grow to a sufficient size and stage of development to enable them to either remain and grow to adult trout therein, or migrate into and survive in other trout waters. When these conditions exist or have been met a water may be classified as a trout spawning water.
Source: 6 NYCRR Part 701, Classifications – Surface Waters and Groundwaters, 2016.	

The Village has a number of high-quality streams and surface waters. The Ramapo River and the unnamed stream which once fed the reservoir are classified as “A” streams due to their existing or past use of supplying potable water. The water quality of the streams on the westerly side of the Village can support trout populations.

Streams and small water bodies located in the course of a stream with a classification of AA, A, or B, or with a classification of C with a standard of (T) or (TS) and higher are collectively referred to as "protected waters," and are subject to the stream protection provisions of the NYSDEC Protection of Waters regulations. The NYSDEC regulates activities within 50 feet of any regulated stream. However, the NYSDEC does not protect disturbances to lesser and intermittent streams, which may be equally important to protecting water quality and recharging groundwater supplies. The Village of Hillburn has its own local regulations to protect wetlands within the Village under Chapter 240, Wetlands and Stream Protection, of the Village Code, and the regulations require that certain activities obtain a permit from the Planning Board. The regulations, however, do not define “stream” although they are regulated. Further, an exemption is provided to single family dwellings which could have potential to impact streams, and which should be reviewed. The Ramapo River is also a County-regulated stream. Rockland’s stream

conservation regulations, adopted in 1975 and updated in 2000, prohibit filling, dumping, construction, excavation, and other activities that undermine stream bank stability, normal flow, and channel integrity in the 100-year floodplain (as determined by the Federal Office of Emergency Management [FEMA]) or water recharge area.

### ***Stormwater Management***

**Figure 15** illustrates those areas of the Village that are within a designated small municipal stormwater sewer system (MS4) area. MS4s are regulated under the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Phase II Stormwater Rule which requires MS4s to develop a stormwater management program that will reduce the amount of pollutants carried by stormwater during storm events to waterbodies to the "maximum extent practicable". The goal of the program is to improve water quality and recreational use of waterways. As per the NYSDEC website, stormwater runoff is generated when precipitation from rain and snowmelt events flows over land or impervious surfaces such as paved streets, parking lots and rooftops and does not seep into the ground. Consequently, it accumulates and transports chemicals, nutrients, sediment or other pollutants and debris. If the runoff is not captured or it is discharged without first being treated, it can adversely affect water quality in the receiving lakes, rivers and estuaries.

The impact from stormwater runoff increases as the amount of impervious surfaces in a community increase. Urban stormwater runoff is identified as a major source in 37% of all waterbodies assessed as impaired in New York State. In another 40% of impaired waterbodies, urban stormwater runoff is a contributing source (though not the most significant source). In addition, for 35% of the waters with less severe minor impacts or threats, urban stormwater runoff is noted as a major contributing source of impact. The impact is especially significant, when stormwater runoff enters surface waters used for drinking water supplies. The Village of Hillburn regulates stormwater activities as per the regulations in Chapters 192, Sewers, and 198, Stormwater Management, of the Village Code.

The Federal Clean Water Act requires states to periodically assess and report on the quality of waters in their state. Section 303(d) of the Act also requires states to identify "Impaired Waters", where specific designated uses are not fully supported. For these Impaired Waters, New York must consider the development of a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) or other strategy to reduce the input of the specific pollutant(s) that restrict waterbody uses, in order to restore and protect such uses. In 2016, none of the surface waters in the Village were classified as Impaired Waters. The Lower Ramapo River and its tributaries are considered a Priority Waterbody and are identified as being "minor impacted".<sup>5</sup> Its use for water supply is "threatened", and its use for recreation and aquatic life is "threatened". Water supply use, aquatic life and recreational use in this portion of the Ramapo River are known to experience threats and minor impacts due to

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<sup>5</sup> [http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/water\\_pdf/wiramaporamapor.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/water_pdf/wiramaporamapor.pdf)

excess nutrients, pathogens, siltation and other pollutants from upstream wastewater discharges, urban/stormwater runoff and other nonpoint sources. Toxic contaminants from past industrial operations are also a concern.

### **Floodplains**

The National Flood Insurance Program (“NFIP”) was established with the Federal legislature’s adoption of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968. The NFIP is a program that enables property owners in participating communities to purchase flood insurance as protection against flood losses, while requiring State and local governments to enforce floodplain management regulations that reduce future flood damages. The Village of Hillburn regulates activities proposed within the 100-year floodplain as per Chapter 130, Flood Damage Prevention, of the Village Code. The Village does not appear to limit uses within the floodplain but requires a floodplain development permit to build within it. In addition, the Village Zoning Law does limit the density or intensity of new development by regulating how much of the area within the floodplain can be counted toward establishing development yield. Specifically:

*“Land under water: applicable prior to development. Not more than 50% of the land area of that portion of a parcel may be counted as part of any minimum lot area if subject to the following: ponds, locally designated wetlands; that portion of any stream and its upland area under the jurisdiction of the Rockland County Drainage Agency; within the Federal Emergency Management Agency's designated one-hundred-year flood area; within an area subject to a management or land use plan under the "wild, scenic and recreational river" designation; that portion of any freshwater wetland and its upland border so designated by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.”* (emphasis added)

By law, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (“FEMA”) can only provide flood insurance to those States or communities that adopt and enforce floodplain management regulations that meet or exceed minimum NFIP requirements. The NFIP requirements apply to areas mapped as Special Flood Hazard Areas (“SFHA”) on Flood Insurance Rate Maps (“FIRMs”) issued by FEMA. The SFHA is the area that would be flooded by the “base flood” (defined as the flood that has a 1 percent chance of occurring in any given year; also known as the “100-year flood”). The NFIP requirements include but are not limited to:

- Elevation of new and substantially improved residential structures above the base flood level.
- Elevation or dry floodproofing (made watertight) of new or substantially improved non-residential structures.
- Prohibition of development in floodways, the central portion of a riverine floodplain needed to carry deeper and faster moving water.
- Additional requirements to protect buildings in coastal areas from the impacts of waves, high velocity, and storm surge.

Although the Village of Hillburn's boundary appears on several maps, the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps that show floodplains within the Village are Map Panels 0068G and 0131G, Community Number 360683, with an effective date of March 3, 2014. The FEMA floodplains are shown in **Figure 16**. Floodplains are found in association with the Ramapo River, and the unnamed stream which flows parallel to 6<sup>th</sup> Street and Route 17.

### **Groundwater**

**Groundwater** can be defined as the water found underground in the cracks and spaces in soil, sand and rock. It is stored in and moves slowly through geologic formations of soil, sand and rocks called aquifers.

It is important to acknowledge that a portion of the Village is within the Ramapo River Aquifer Basin, which is a federally designated sole source aquifer (SSA) established under the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). The aquifer is delineated in detail on the U.S. Geological Survey Open File Report 82114, Geohydrology of the Valley Fill Aquifer in the Ramapo and Mahwah Rivers Area Rockland County, New York, Scale 1:24,000, and also shown in **Figure 17**. The SSA includes the aquifer recharge areas defined as the entire Ramapo River Basin, which encompasses all streamflow source areas including the Ramapo River tributaries near Hillburn, New York. Because the US EPA has determined that contaminants introduced in any of these areas have the potential to adversely affect the Ramapo River Basin Aquifer Systems, the designated Sole Source Aquifer includes the aquifer recharge areas and streamflow source areas encompassed by the Ramapo River Basin boundaries. Concern exists that industrial operations within the Village will impact the groundwater within the community.

## **5. Freshwater Wetlands**

Wetlands are some of the most productive ecosystems, and provide nesting, spawning, and breeding habitat for a diverse variety of wildlife and plants. They also perform vital ecosystem services, such as water filtration and storage, which can assist in reducing flood impacts and improve water quality by absorbing pollutants and reducing turbidity. Additionally, wetlands provide groundwater recharge; assist in maintaining base flow in streams and rivers and support ponds and lakes. They also provide opportunities for recreation, education and research, and provide natural open space. Freshwater wetlands are both water resources and ecological habitat.

The NYSDEC and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) regulate activities that occur within or adjacent to freshwater wetlands. NYSDEC-designated wetlands are generally 12.4 acres and larger. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) publishes a series of National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps that illustrate the location of smaller wetland systems - these wetlands are typically regulated by the ACOE. NYSDEC regulated wetlands and wetlands

identified by the USFWS (NWI wetlands) are illustrated in **Figure 14**. The largest wetlands are found in the western portion of the Village, where two large freshwater forested/shrub wetlands are located. The Hillburn Reservoir appears on the National Wetland Inventory maps but the reservoir has been drained and no longer exists. The unnamed stream along 6<sup>th</sup> Street has wetland vegetation and is also a freshwater forested/shrub wetland. Riverine and freshwater forested/shrub wetlands are found in association with the Ramapo River. Two freshwater emergent wetlands were once present but have since been filled for building and highway construction (construction of Interchange 15A).

NYSDEC regulates activities not only in freshwater wetlands but also within a 100-foot adjacent area in order to prevent or minimize impairment of wetland functions. Wetlands are categorized by the types of vegetation present. The regulations identify classifications of uses, procedures for conducting activities in wetlands and requirements for conducting activities in wetlands. The NYSDEC regulates activities within the wetland itself, and a 100-foot adjacent area immediately surrounding a wetland. Regulated activities which require a permit from the NYSDEC include but are not limited to: construction of buildings, roadways, septic systems, bulkheads, dikes, or dams; placement of fill, excavation, or grading; modification, expansion, or extensive restoration of existing structures; drainage, except for agriculture; and application of pesticides in wetlands.

As defined by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, freshwater wetlands are “areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions.” Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas. The ACOE determines wetlands based on vegetation, soils and hydrology, and regulates activities within the wetland – it does not regulate any adjacent area.

Importantly, the Village of Hillburn has its own local regulations to protect wetlands within the Village under Chapter 240, Wetlands and Stream Protection, of the Village Code. The Planning Board must issue a permit for certain regulated activities. While wetlands are defined, streams are not. Note that the Village presently exempts the following from regulation: *“Any activities regulated by this chapter that are located within 200 feet of a single-family detached residence or within 100 feet of other buildings are exempt from the provisions of this chapter.”* Some consideration should be given to limiting this exemption, as even disturbances associated with new single-family construction could significantly impact a wetland or stream.



## 6. Ecology

### **Hudson Highlands**

Plant and animal species in New York are distributed in areas which correspond closely with ecoregional boundaries. These areas are defined by similarities in soil, physiography, climate, hydrology, geology and vegetation. The study, "Significant Habitats and Habitat Complexes of the New York Bight Watershed" (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1997) provides a synopsis of the ecological characteristics of the Highlands region for general planning purposes. According to the study:

*"...the core habitat of the Highlands region contains continuous and relatively unfragmented forests, higher elevation ridges, and networks of relatively undisturbed wetlands in the valleys. The Highlands forest is dominated by upland hardwood forest types on the ridges and valley slopes, and forested wetlands in the valleys. The most common upland forest type is the dry-mesic (dry to moderately moist), mixed-oak forest dominated by red (Quercus rubra), black (Q. velutina), and white (Q. alba) oaks with lesser numbers of white ash (Fraxinus americana), red maple (Acer rubrum), sugar maple (Acer saccharum), chestnut oak (Quercus prinus), scarlet oak (Q. coccinea), hickory (Carya spp.), American beech (Fagus grandifolia), and tulip tree (Liriodendron tulipifera). Flowering dogwood (Cornus florida) and maple-leaved viburnum (Viburnum acerifolium) are dominant understory trees and shrubs, with hop hornbeam (Ostrya virginiana), ironwood (Carpinus caroliniana), and sassafras (Sassafras albidum) also present. Another common forest type, occurring primarily in ravines or cool north-facing slopes, is the mesic (moderately moist), hemlock-hardwood forest dominated by eastern hemlock (Tsuga canadensis) with red maple, sugar maple, yellow birch (Betula lutea), sweet birch (B. lenta), American basswood (Tilia americana), American beech, white ash, and tulip tree. The understory shrub and herbaceous layer is generally sparse under the hemlocks, with the exception of rhododendron (Rhododendron maximum) thickets in some places. A recent infestation of the hemlock wooly adelgid (Adelges tsugae) has killed many of the hemlocks in the Highlands and will likely result in a major change in the forest community in these areas. Another, more xeric (dry), forest type found on steep slopes and dry ridgetops is the chestnut oak forest with dominance by chestnut oak and associated species including scarlet, white, black, and scrub (Quercus ilicifolia) oaks, pitch pine (Pinus rigida), sweet birch, and hickories, with a shrub layer of heaths, including blueberries (Vaccinium spp.), mountain laurel (Kalmia latifolia), and black huckleberry (Gaylussacia baccata). On the exposed ridgetops, a pitch pine-scrub oak community is found, dominated by pitch pine with lesser numbers of sweet birch, red maple, gray birch (Betula populifolia), serviceberry (Amelanchier spp.), chestnut, scarlet, and white oaks, and a shrub layer of scrub oak in exposed areas, black huckleberry and various other shrubs in*

*protected areas, and grasses in open areas. Unvegetated rock faces and outcrops are found on all the ridges in the Highlands and talus slopes typically occur at the bases of steep cliffs.*

*In the valleys there are numerous forested wetlands; commonly, these are red maple swamps dominated by red maple with black gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*), ashes (*Fraxinus* spp.) and yellow birch, a shrub layer of highbush blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*), speckled alder (*Alnus rugosa*), spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*), buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*), swamp azalea (*Rhododendron viscosum*), and winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*), and groundcovers of skunk cabbage (*Symplocarpus foetida*), ferns, and mosses. Other less common forested wetlands found in the Highlands include hardwood-conifer swamps with red maple and eastern hemlock as co-dominants with a rhododendron understory, and floodplain forests along the rivers dominated by a variety of hardwood species...”*

The ecological significance of this area is directly related to its size and its contiguity. Species populations in the Highlands are indicative of undisturbed forest and wetland habitats and include wood turtle (*Clemmys insculpta*), timber rattlesnake (*Crotalus horridus*), red-shouldered hawk (*Buteo lineatus*), barred owl (*Strix varia*), warblers and thrushes, black bear (*Ursus americanus*), bobcat (*Lynx rufus*), and native brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*). The Highlands regional study conducted by the U.S. Forest Service estimated that roughly 50% of the area between the Delaware and Hudson Rivers, or about 500,000 acres, is important habitat based on the presence of species that are endangered, threatened, or of special concern.

The Highlands has gained prominence as an important breeding ground and stop over for neotropical migrant bird species. The study states:

*“For thousands of years, the ridges of the Highlands have been used as a visual guideline for songbirds and raptors during spring and fall migrations, with the forests and wetlands providing food and resting places for the migrants. The forests, wetlands, and successional habitats of the Highlands support about 150 species of breeding birds. Many of these species are generally associated with relatively unfragmented, undisturbed forest interior habitats. Examples include wood thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*), ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapillus*), and hooded warbler (*Wilsonia citrina*) which breed in the mesic forests, black-throated green warbler (*Dendroica virens*) and black-throated blue warbler (*Dendroica caerulescens*) which prefer the hemlock forests, Louisiana waterthrush (*Seiurus motacilla*) which breeds in riparian areas, and barred owl (*Strix varia*) and red-shouldered hawk (*Buteo lineatus*) which prefer the large wooded swamps. The New York State Breeding Bird Atlas indicates a thriving population of cerulean warbler in the deciduous forests of the Highlands, one of the few concentrations of this species in the state.*

*Golden-winged warbler (Vermivora chrysoptera), another rare breeder in the region, is locally common in the successional forests of the Highlands. The Highlands support 24 of the 29 middle and long-distance migrant birds whose numbers have declined significantly in the Northeast, as indicated by analysis of the breeding bird survey, and 26 of the 35 long-distance migrants ranked in a recent Partners in Flight study as of highest concern in the Northeast. These migrants include both successional and forest-nesting species."*

According to the study, there are 19 raptor species that utilize the Highlands seasonally or year-round, ten (10) of which breed in the Highlands region, including the regionally rare Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), northern goshawk, sharp-shinned hawk (*Accipiter striatus*), red-shouldered hawk, northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), short-eared owl (*Asio flammeus*), long-eared owl (*Asio otus*), barred owl, common barn-owl (*Tyto alba*), and, northern saw-whet owl (*Aegolius acadicus*).

At least 45 species of amphibian and reptile species, including several rare species, have populations in the Highlands. Among them is the timber rattlesnake, a regionally rare and vulnerable species listed as threatened in New York. Its populations in the Highlands are an important stronghold for this species in the region and include at least 30 known den sites in New York. Den sites tend to be in or near wooded rocky ledges with southern exposures. According to the study, important concentration areas occur in Sterling Forest and adjacent ridges. Copperhead snakes (*Agkistrodon contortrix*) cohabit many of the den and basking sites of the timber rattlesnake. The wood turtle is found in or near riparian habitat throughout the Highlands, especially near deep, low gradient streams in the spring and winter and, generally, in more terrestrial habitats in the summer. Amphibians in the Highlands include regionally rare salamanders such as the blue-spotted (*Ambystoma laterale*) and four-toed (*Hemidactylium scutatum*) salamanders, as well as eastern spadefoot toad (*Scaphiopus holbrookii*) and several populations in Harriman State Park of northern cricket frog (*Acris c. crepitans*), which constitute some of the northernmost known occurrences of this species.

According to the study, over 40 species of mammals, including several large and free-roaming mammal species, occur in the Highlands. Bears are generally found in the forested regions, specifically in the swamps and lowland forests. Dens occur in both wetlands and upland areas and almost all bear locations are within 650 feet of wetlands. Den site locations are generally greater than 1,600 feet from roads and occupied dwellings. Male bears have average home ranges of 70 square miles. Abandoned iron mines provide winter hibernacula for several species of bats, including the federally listed endangered Indiana bat, the species of concern small-footed bat, northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), which is now federally and state protected, little brown bat (*M. l. lucifugus*), eastern pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus subflavus*), and big brown bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*). The federally listed endangered Indiana bat is known to occur at three

abandoned mines in the Highlands. They include hibernaculum in close proximity to the Village's northern and southern borders.

The significance of preserving existing woodland has been elevated with the increased awareness of climate change. Cornell University's Climate Change website describes the importance of forested lands as the world experiences the worsening effects of climate change, and their own susceptibility to this change: *"One great concern is the continued ability of forests to absorb excess carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and store it. Trees are one of our best defenses against worsening climate change as they are effective storage units for carbon, the most common greenhouse gas causing global warming."* The United Nation's Climate Summit 2014 resulted in the New York Declaration on Forests, a non-legally binding political declaration wherein world leaders, including the United States, endorsed a global timeline to cut natural forest loss in half by 2020, and strive to end it by 2030. It also calls for restoring forests and croplands of an area larger than India. Meeting these goals would cut between 4.5 and 8.8 billion tons of carbon pollution every year – about as much as the current emissions of the United States.

In addition to the carbon sequestration benefits, forested areas: provide wildlife habitat; stabilize soils; slow storm water runoff; control noise pollution; aid in cleansing the air by intercepting airborne particles and pollutants such as carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen dioxide; lower surrounding air temperature through respiration and by providing shade; act as wind breaks to reduce the effects of wind; and help to increase real estate value by beautifying a property and the surrounding neighborhood.

Clearing of woodlands for development and other purposes fragments the forest, affects its habitat value, and has been implicated in the decline of migratory songbirds in the region. Many species require large areas of intact forest habitat. Forest fragmentation results in a reduction in habitat diversity due to invasion by invasive species, and increased wildlife mortality, predation, and parasitism. Wildlife mortality rates are higher when habitats are fragmented. Individual trees are also important within the Village. The Village Zoning Law controls vegetative clearing in 250-17E and F by regulating land disturbances and removal of trees.

#### ***National Audubon Society Important Birding Area***

The National Audubon Society has designated Harriman State Park and the nearby Sterling Forest as an Important Birding Area (IBA). The IBA supports a community of forest breeders, including the Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Northern Goshawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Northern Flicker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Acadian Flycatcher, Least Flycatcher, Yellow-throated Vireo, Brown Creeper, Winter Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Hermit Thrush, Wood Thrush, Blackthroated Blue Warbler, Cerulean Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler, Ovenbird, Louisiana Waterthrush, Hooded Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Purple Finch. Additional at-risk species supported at this IBA include the

Osprey (possible breeder), Bald Eagle (winters, eight individuals in 2003 and three in 2002), American Woodcock (probable breeder), Whip-poor-will (breeder), Olive-sided Flycatcher (possible breeder), Blue-winged Warbler (confirmed breeder), Golden-winged Warbler (confirmed breeder), and Prairie Warbler (confirmed breeder).<sup>6</sup>

### ***Significant Species***

In 2016, the NYSDEC Natural Heritage Program and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service were consulted to determine whether rare, threatened, endangered, or species of special concern are present in or in close proximity to the Village. In a response dated February 17, 2017, the NYSDEC listed the following species as being located in the Village of Hillburn:

- Timber rattlesnake (*Crotalus horridus*) – NYS threatened species, found both in the eastern and western portions of the Village;
- Northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), NYS and federal listed species that hibernate within five miles of the Village. Bats travel five miles or more from documented locations, so it is possible they are present in the Village.

In addition, the NYSDEC has indicated that a high-quality occurrence of chestnut oak forest has been mapped at Harriman State Park and adjacent areas and extends into the Village of Hillburn. This forest is considered to be of statewide significance due to its large size, predominately mature condition, diverse species composition and landscape context.

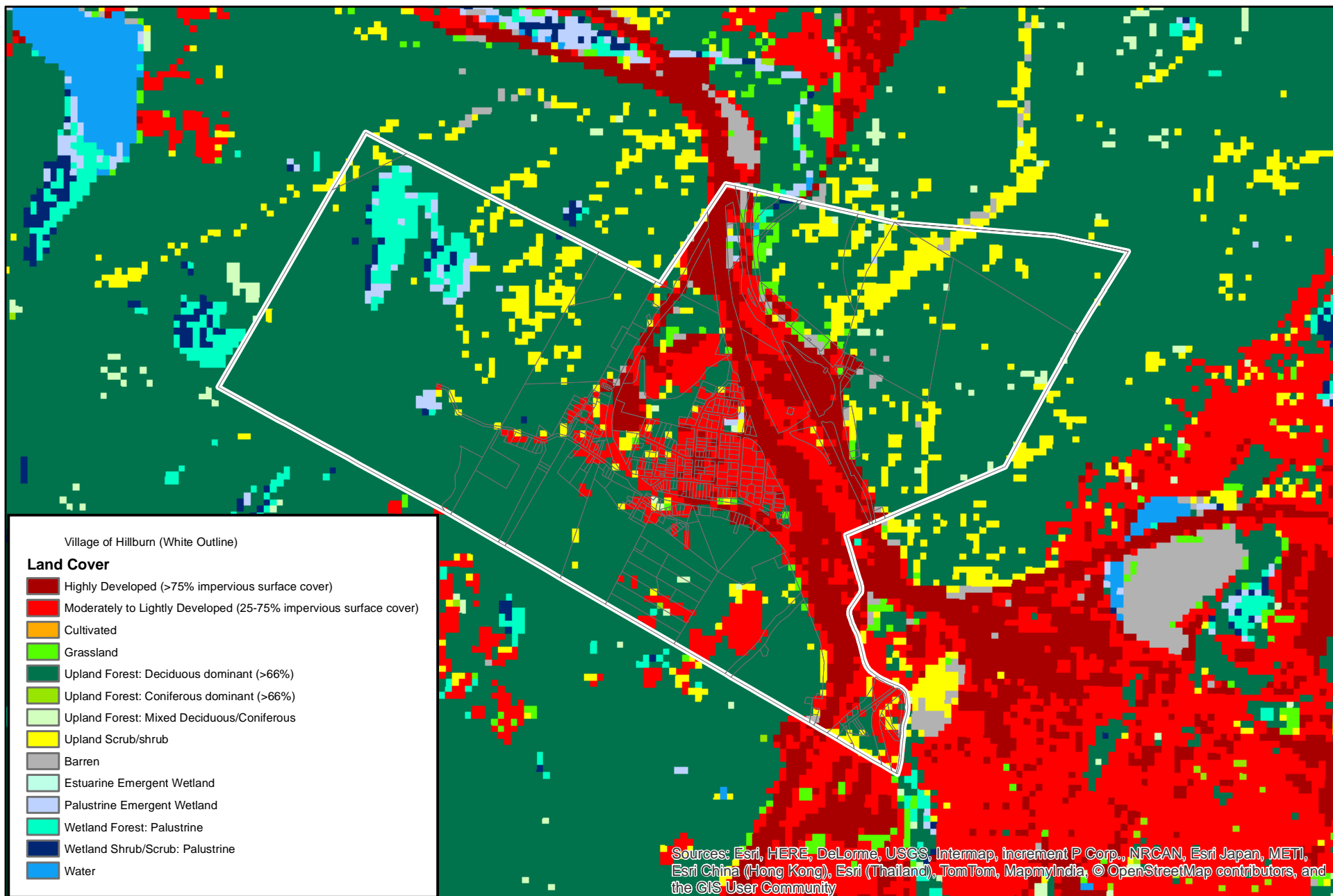
For most sites, comprehensive field surveys have not been conducted; the NYSDEC report only includes records from its databases. The agency cannot provide a definitive statement as to the presence or absence of all rare or state-listed species or significant natural communities. Depending on the nature of any proposed project and the conditions at the project site, further information from on-site surveys or other resources may be required to fully assess impacts on biological resources.

Although the Village of environmentally rich, there are no NYSDEC designated critical environmental areas in the Village, or the County.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://netapp.audubon.org/iba/Site/853>



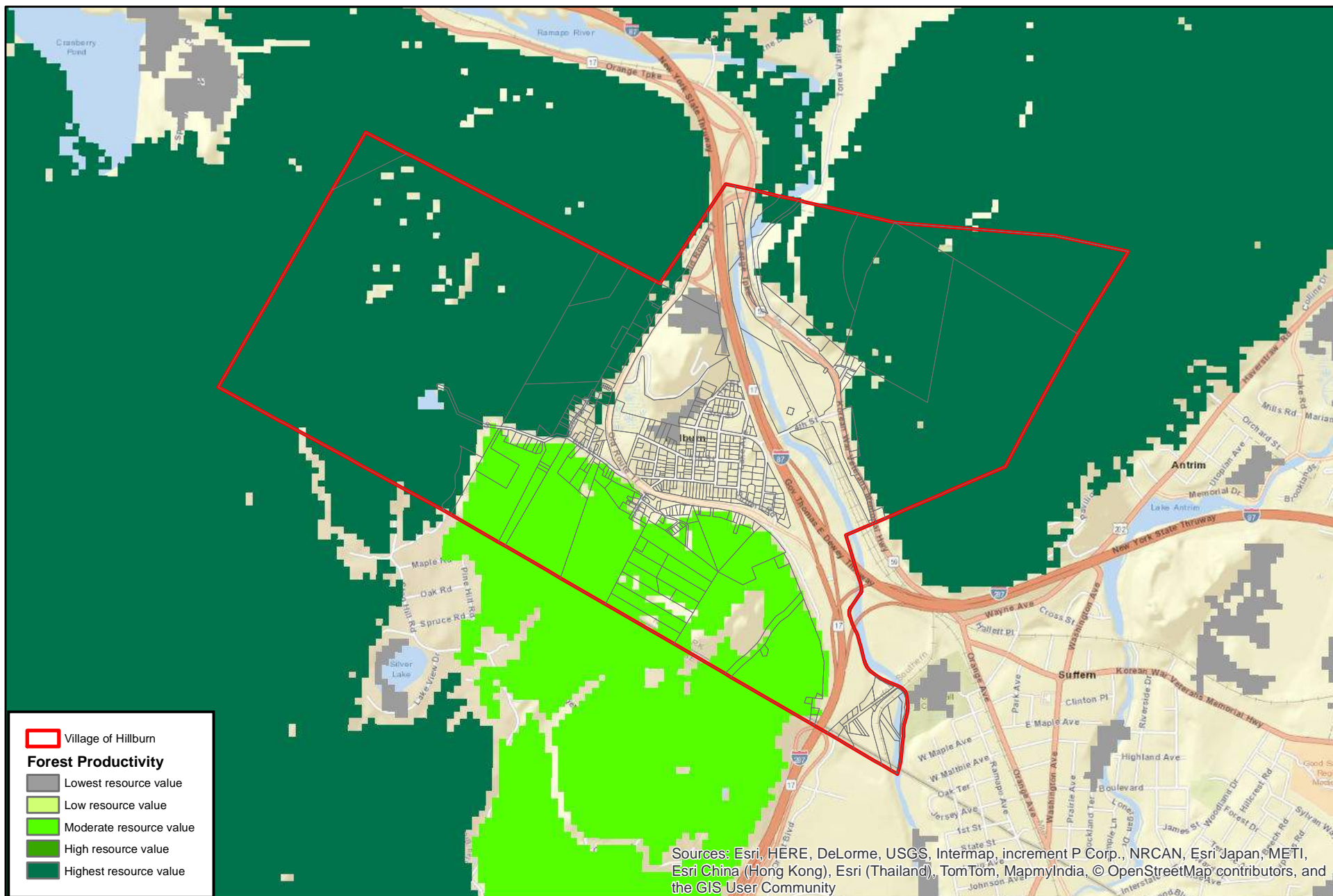


**Figure 3**  
**Assessment - Land Cover**

Source: base from ESRI wms,  
Highlands Assessment, Rutgers  
Scale: 1 inch = 2,000 feet



Village of  
Hillburn



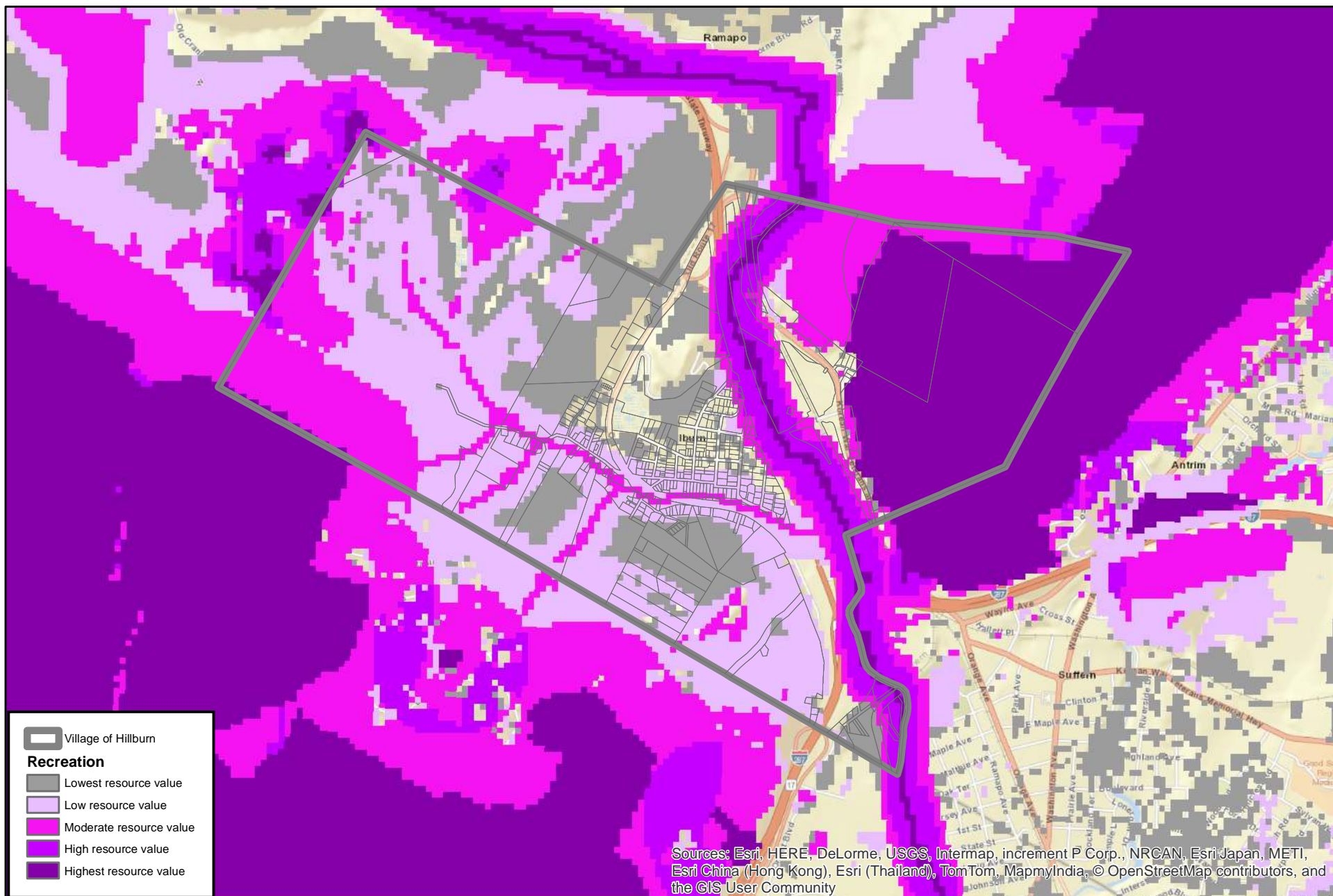
**Figure 4**  
**Assessment - Forest Productivity**

Source: base from ESRI wms,  
Highlands Assessment, Rutgers  
Scale: 1 inch = 2,000 feet



Village of  
Hillburn



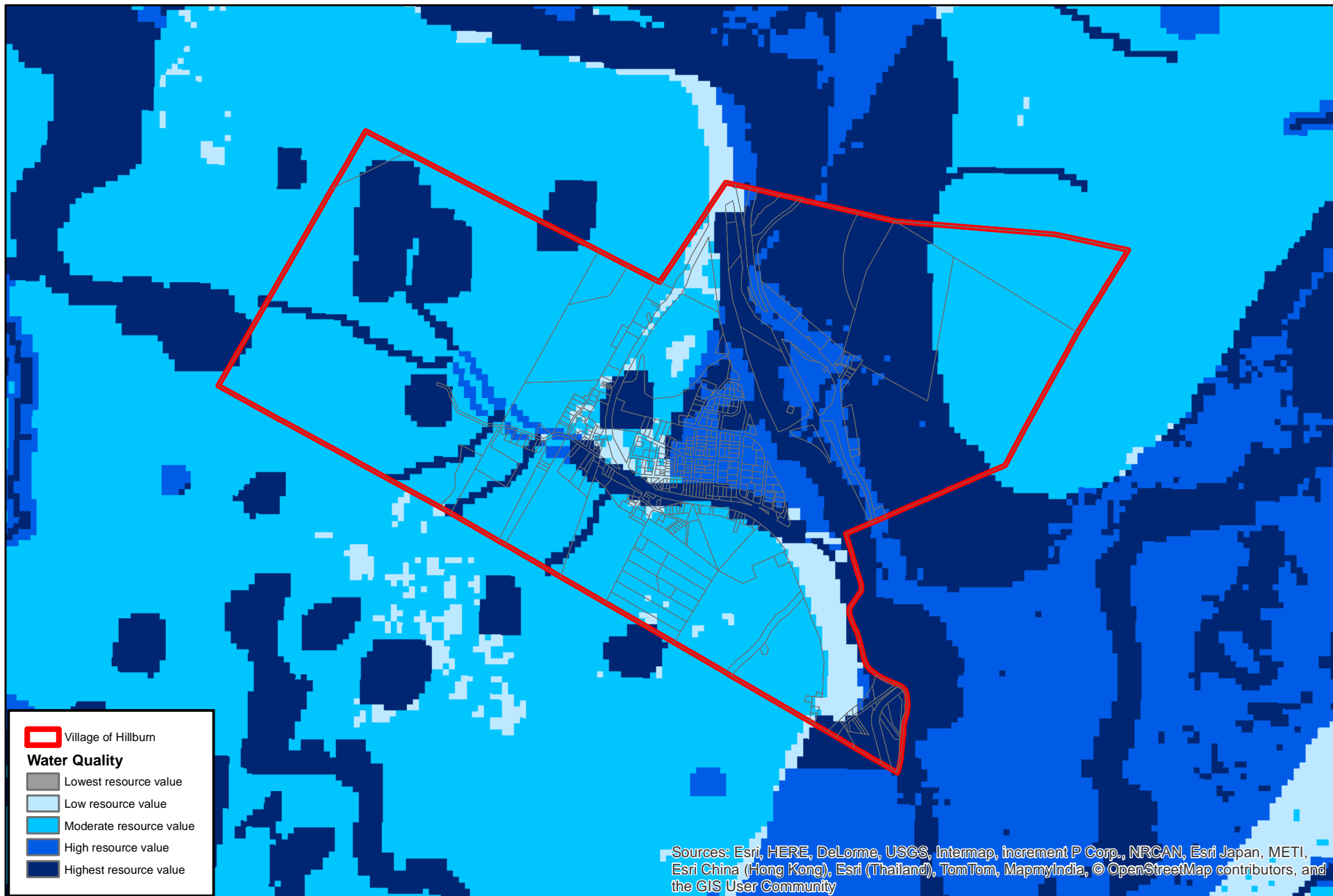


**Figure 5**  
**Assessment - Recreation**

Source: base from ESRI wms,  
Highlands Assessment, Rutgers  
Scale: 1 inch = 2,000 feet



Village of  
Hillburn

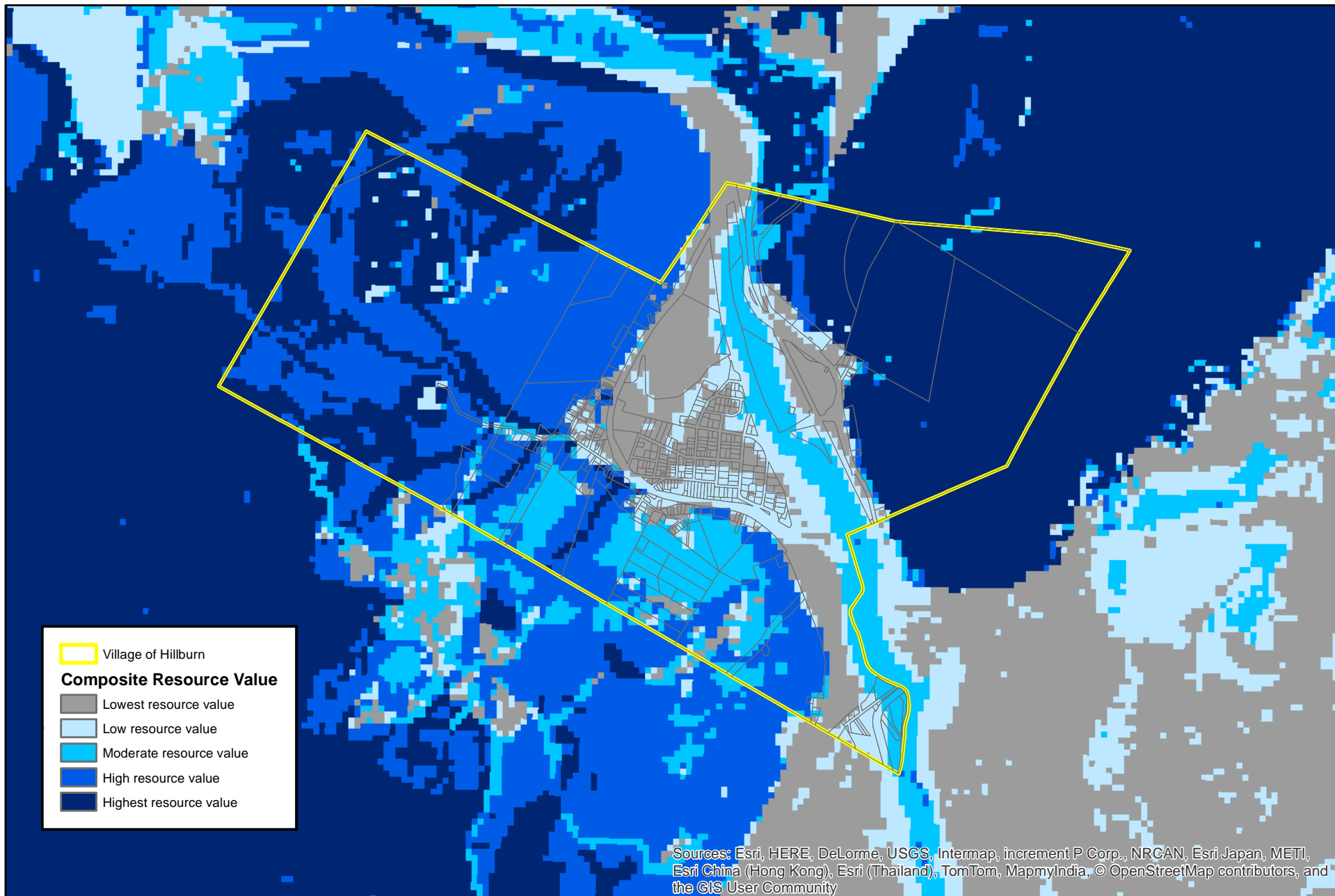


**Figure 6**  
**Assessment - Water Quality**

Source: base from ESRI wms,  
Highlands Assessment, Rutgers  
Scale: 1 inch = 2,000 feet



Village of  
Hillburn



**Figure 7**

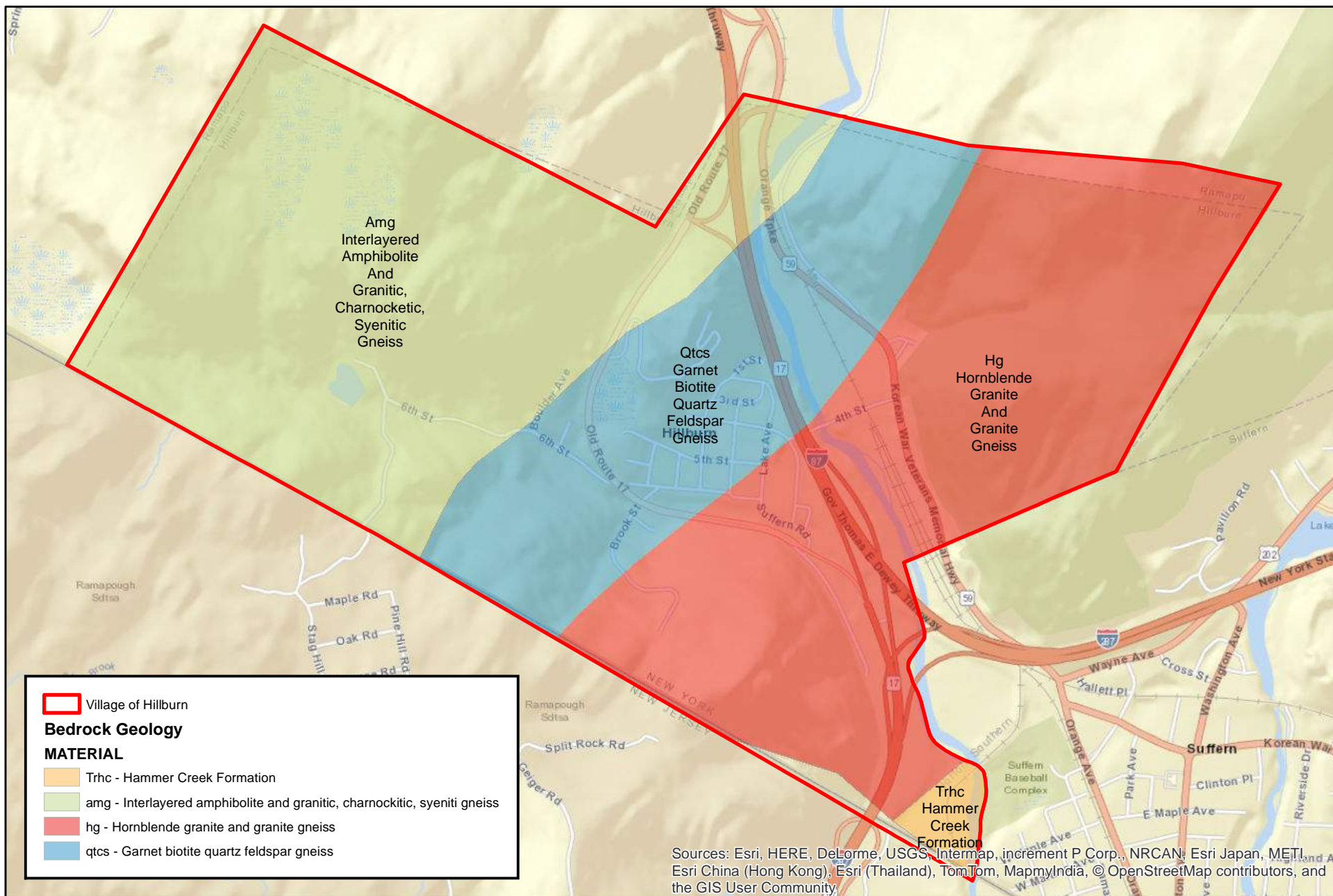
**Assessment - Composite Resources**

Source: base from ESRI wms,  
Highlands Assessment, Rutgers  
Scale: 1 inch = 2,000 feet



Village of  
Hillburn



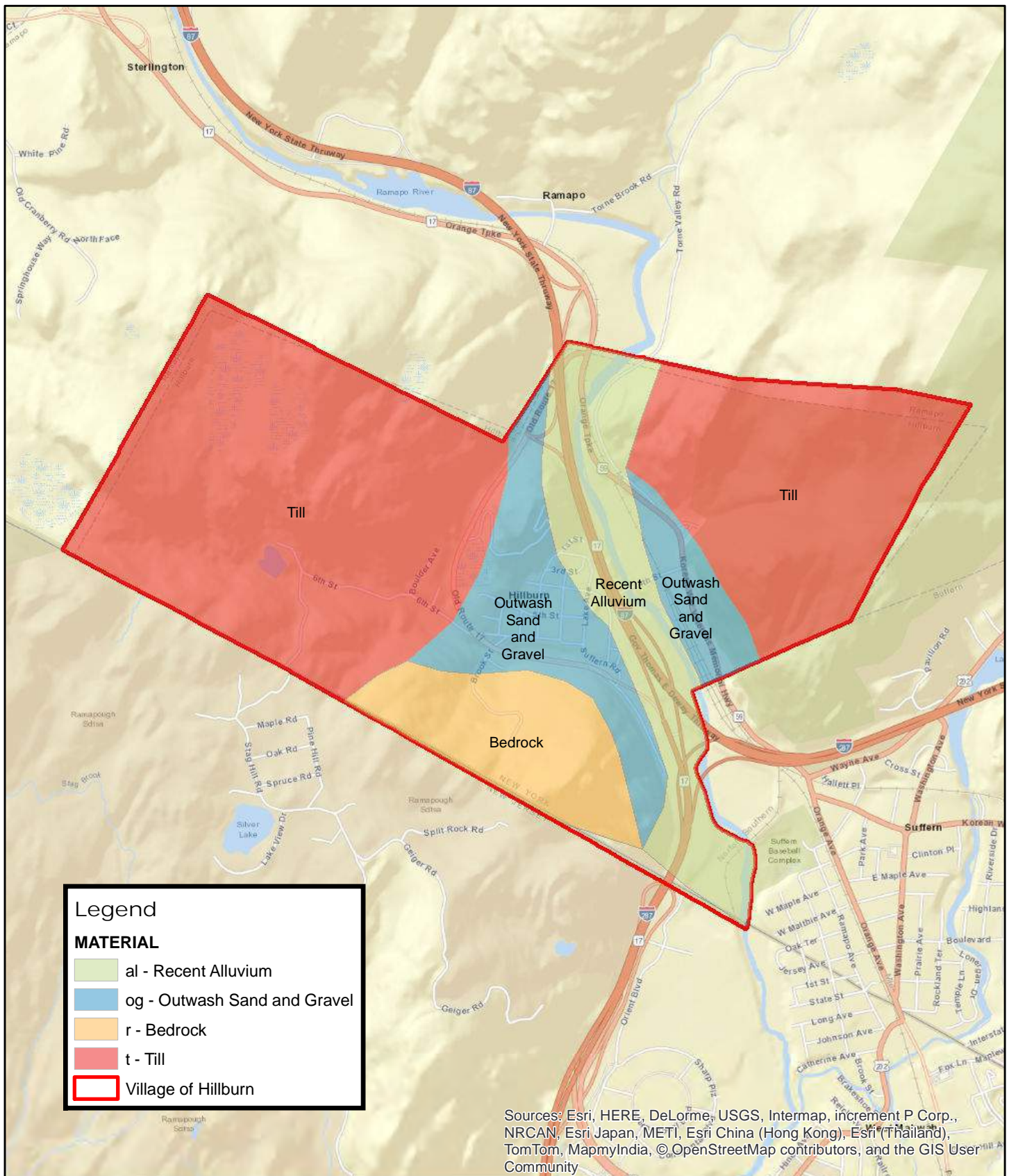


**Figure 8**  
**Bedrock Geology**

Source: base from ESRI wms, Fisher, et al, Lower Hudson Bedrock Geology, 1970  
Scale: 1 inch = 1,500 feet



Village of  
Hillburn



**Figure 9**  
**Surficial Geology**



Village of Hillburn



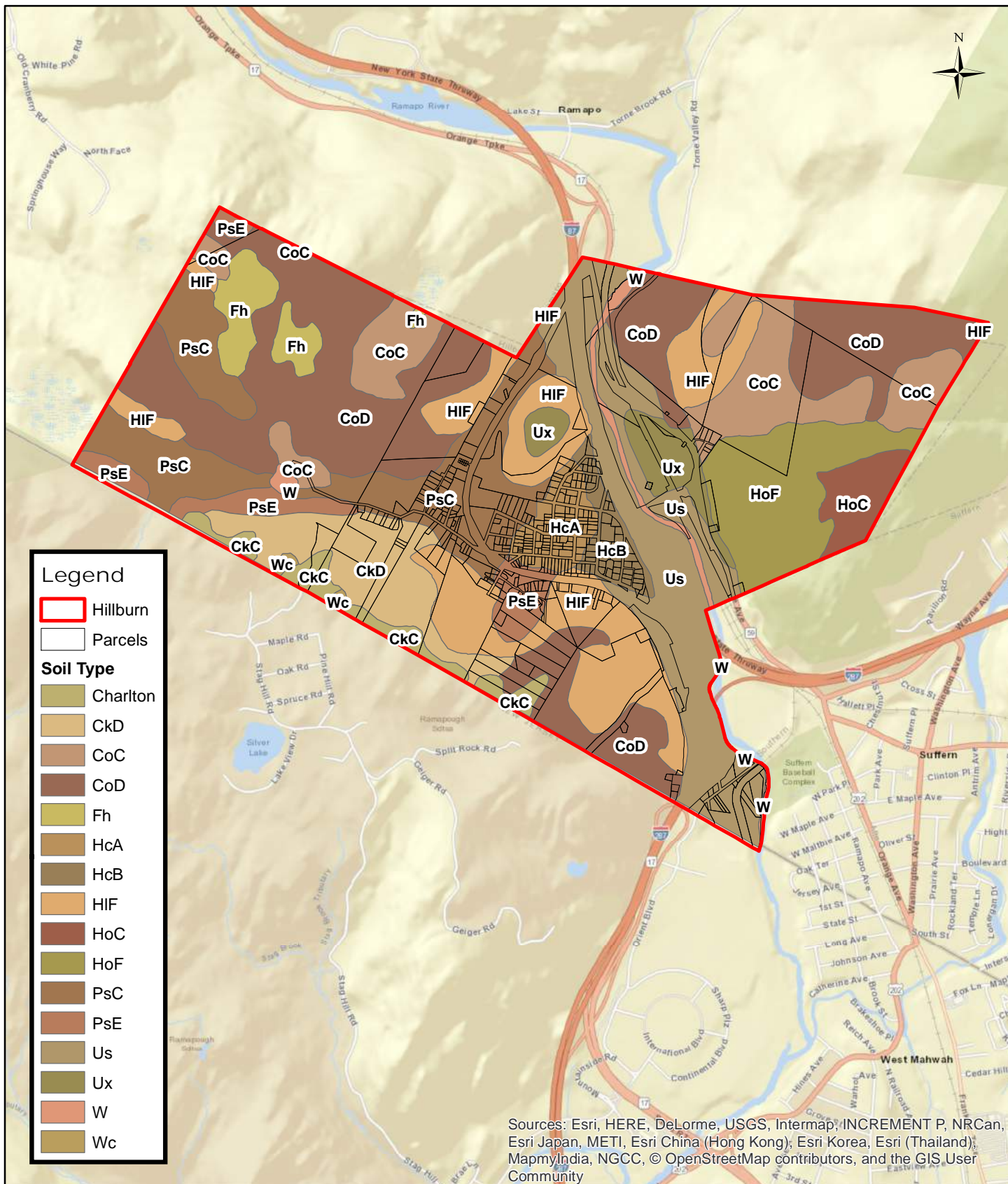
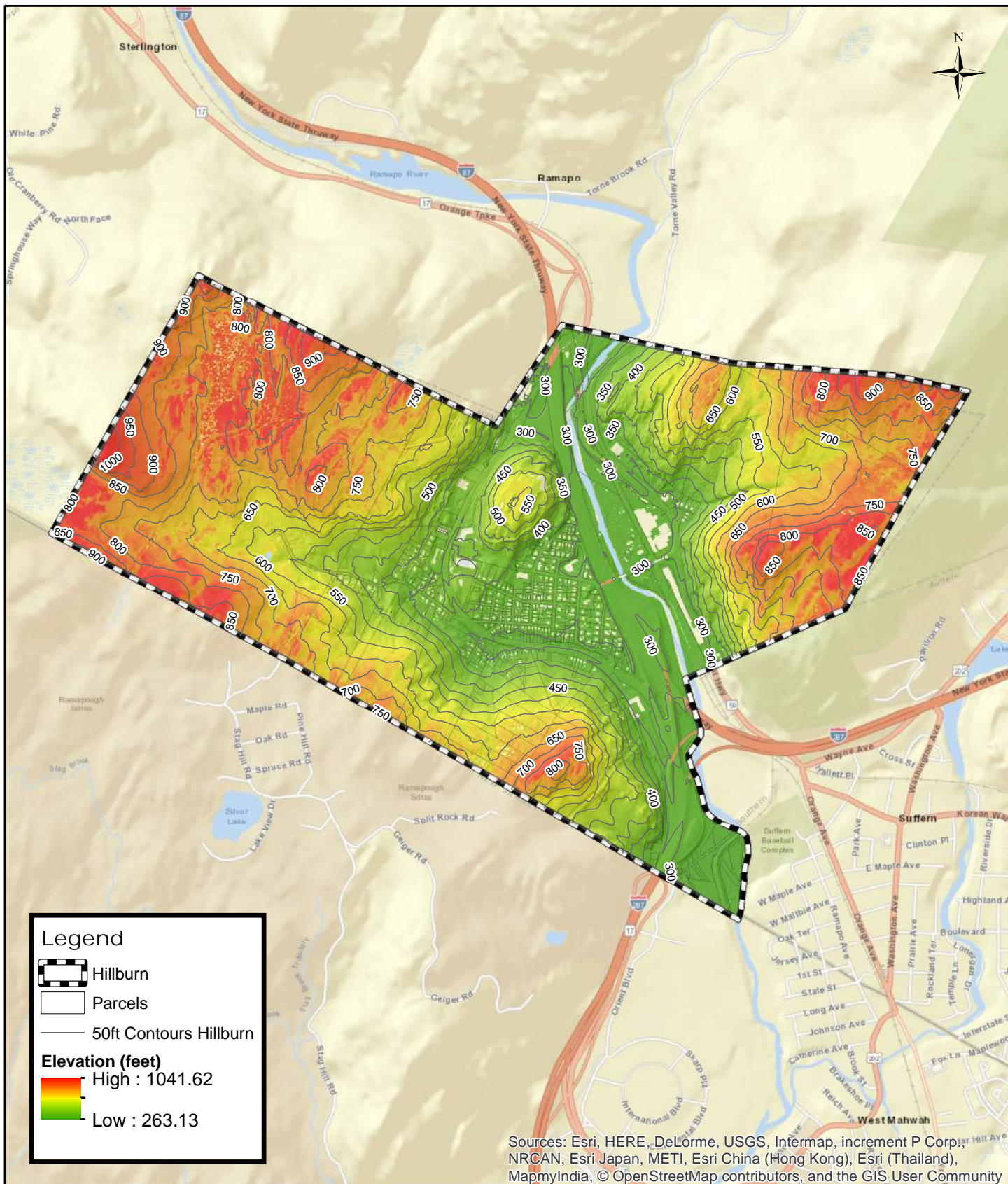


Figure 10  
Soils

Source: ESRI Web Mapping Service;  
Rockland County GIS, Web Soil Survey  
Scale: 1 inch = 2,000 feet

Village of Hillburn



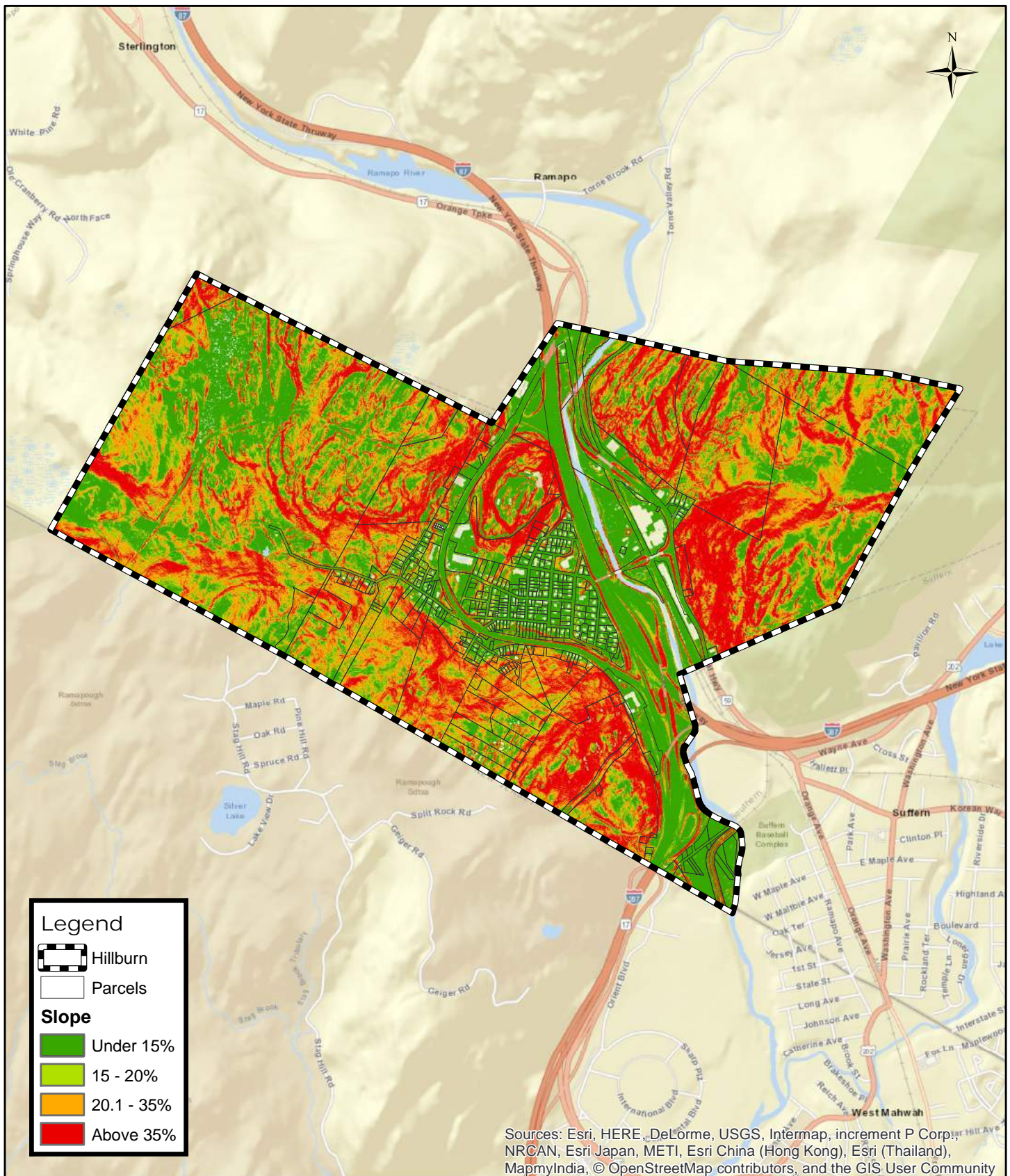


**Figure 11**  
Elevation

Source: ESRI Web Mapping Service;  
Rockland County GIS  
Scale: 1 inch = 2,000 feet

Village of Hillburn



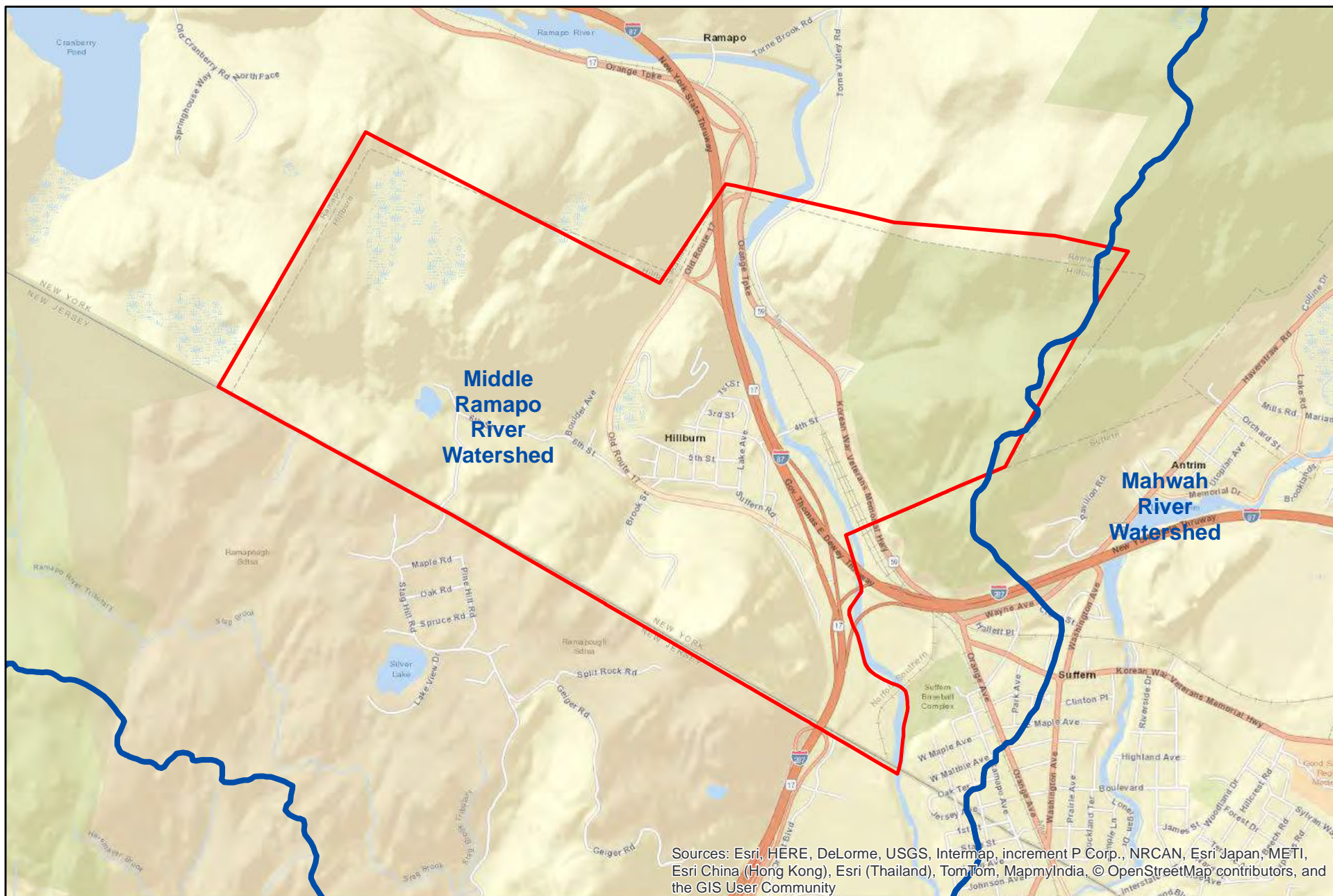


**Figure 12**  
Slope Ranges

Village of Hillburn

Source: ESRI Web Mapping Service;  
Rockland County GIS  
Scale: 1 inch = 2,000 feet





Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, USGS, Intermap, increment P Corp., NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

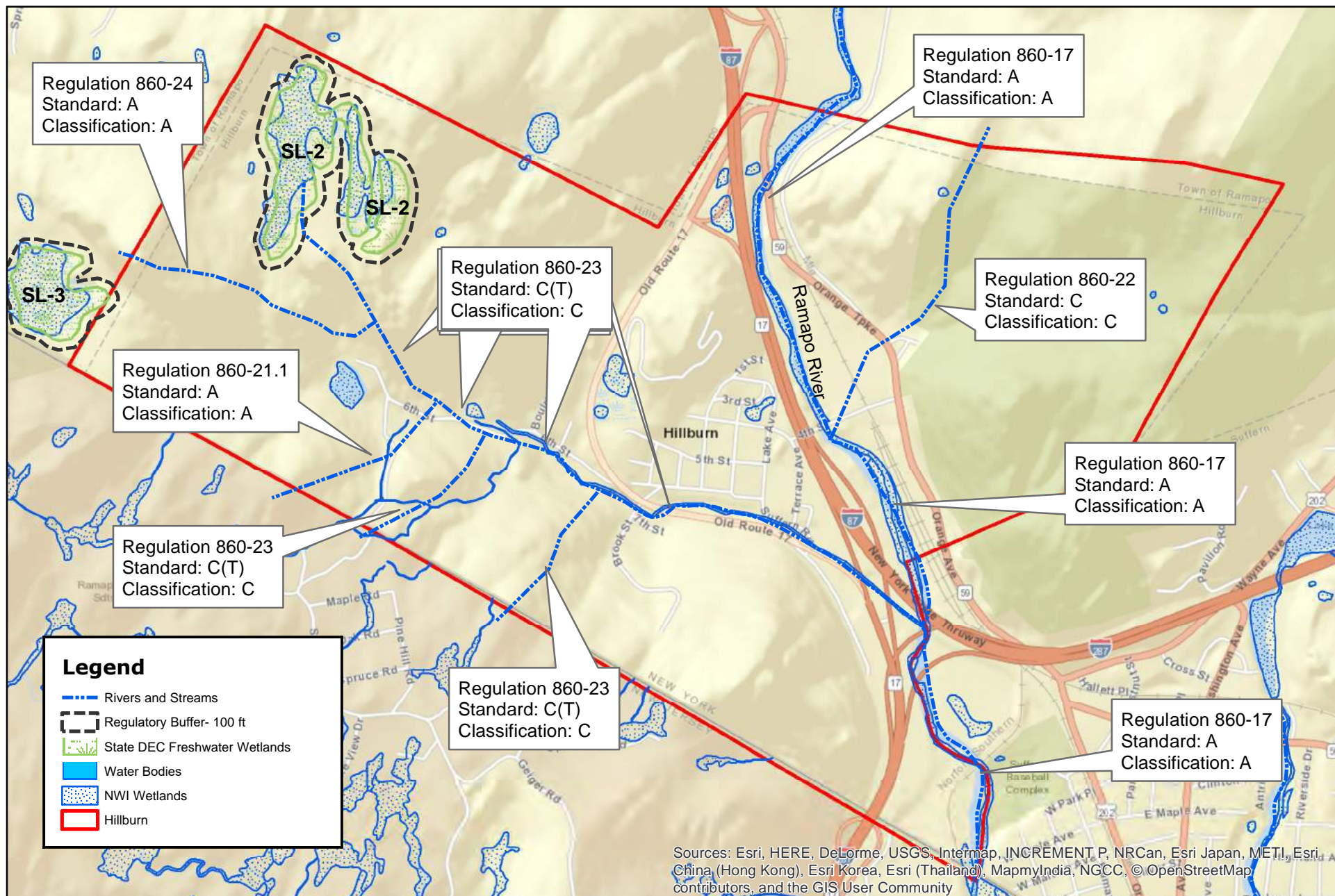
**Figure 13**  
**Watershed**

Source: ESRI wms; USGS HUC 12 watersheds  
Scale: 1 inch = 2,000 feet



Village of  
Hillburn





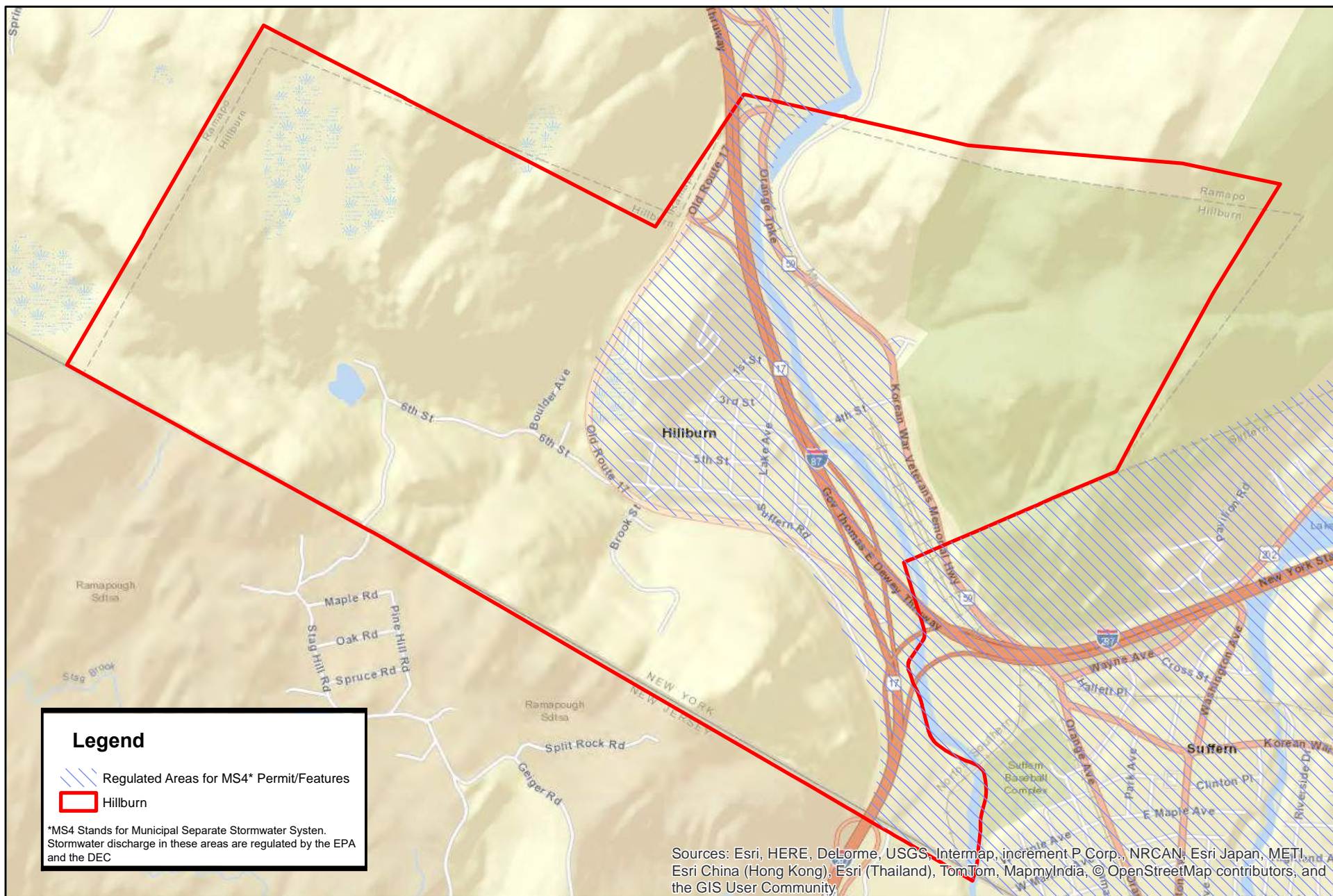
**Figure 14**  
**Wetlands & Streams**

Source: Base from ESRI WMS, Web Soil Survey,  
NYSDEC Wetlands from NYSGIS WMS  
Scale: 1 inch = 1,500 feet



Village of  
Hillburn



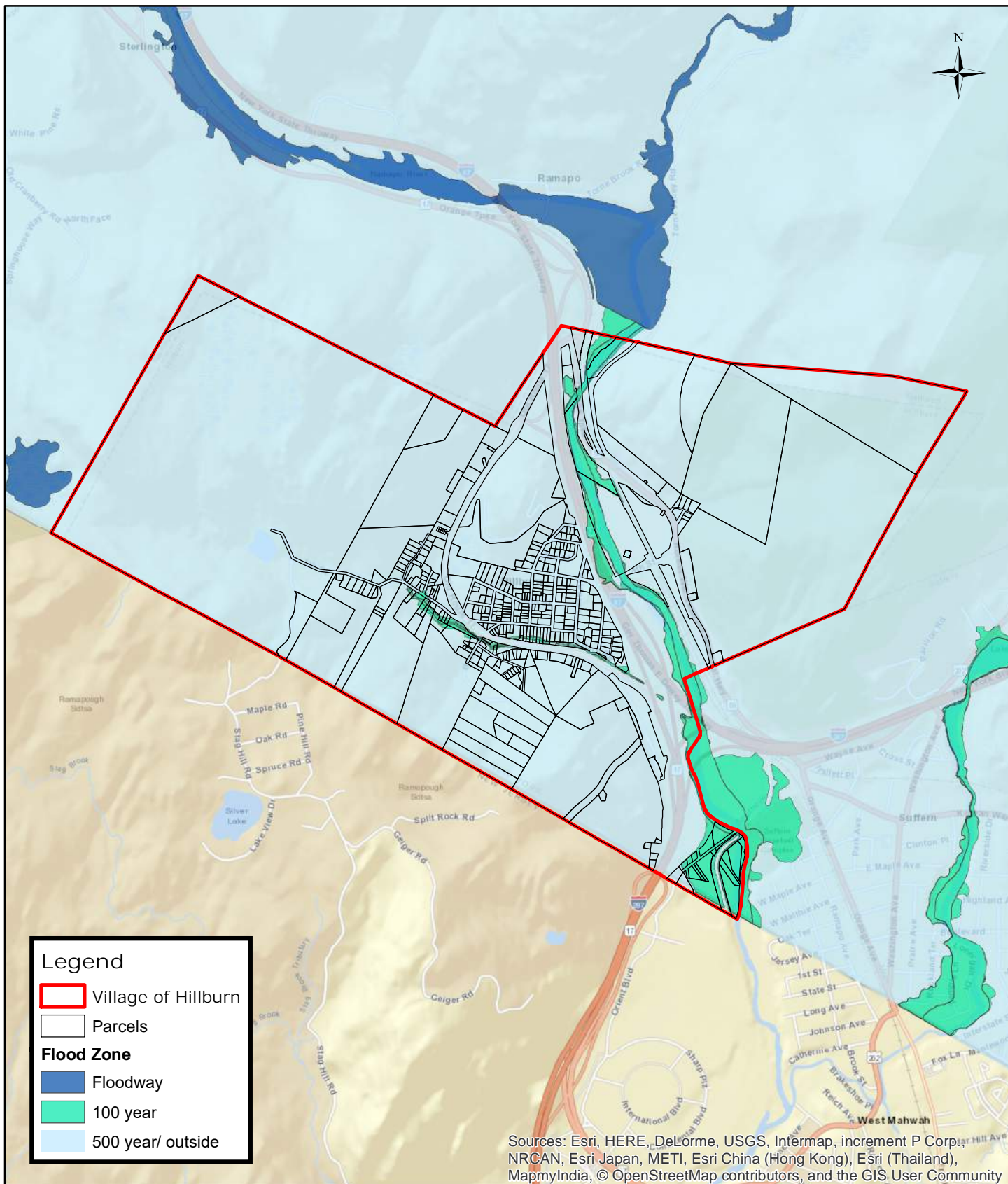


**Figure 7**  
**NYSDEC Regulated Areas For MS4\* Permits**

Source: base from ESRI wms,  
 Priority Waterbodies from NYSDEC  
 Scale: 1 inch = 1,500 feet



Village of  
 Hillburn

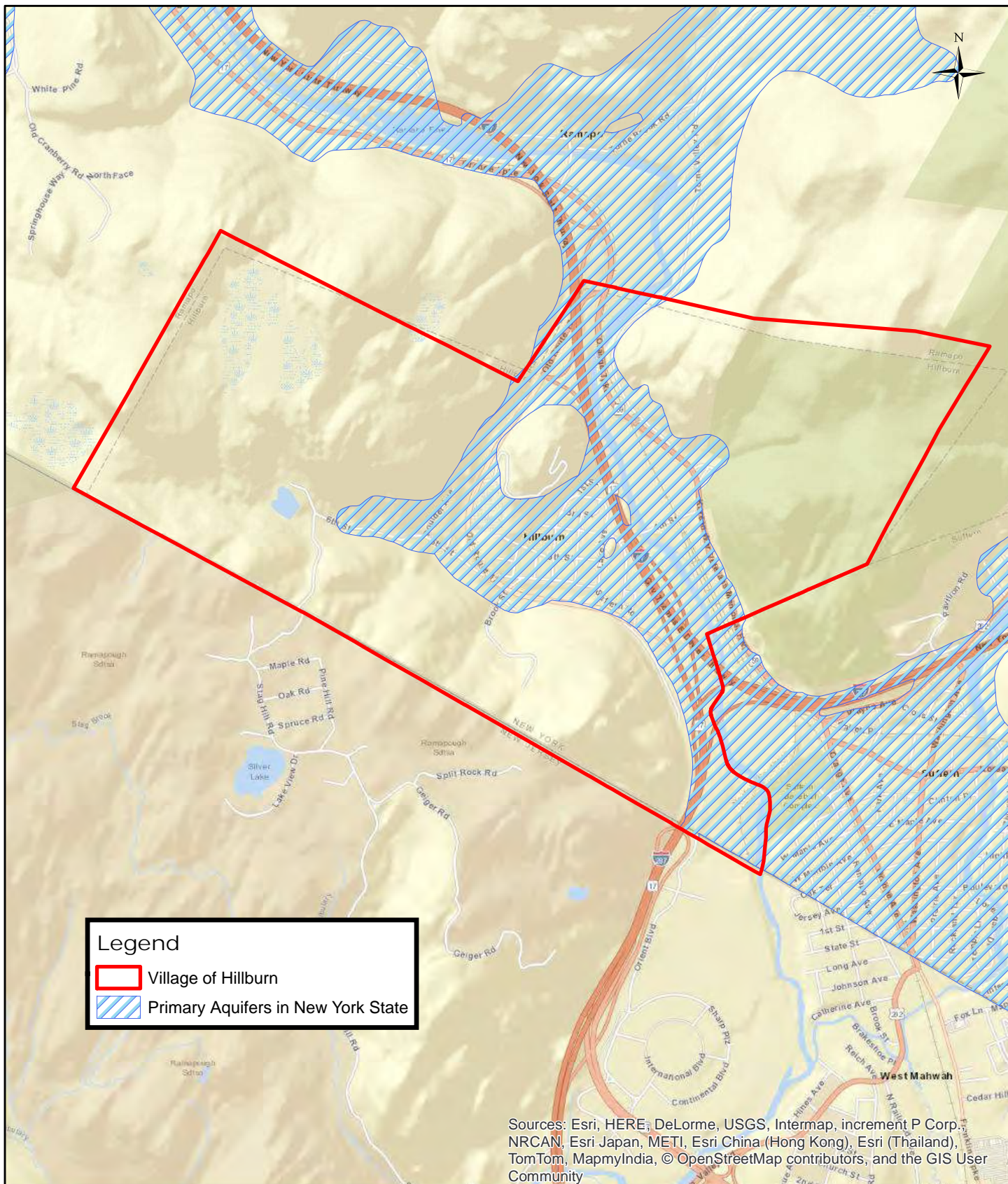


**Figure 16**  
FEMA Flood Hazard Areas

Source: ESRI Web Mapping Service;  
FEMA; Rockland County GIS  
Scale: 1 inch = 2,000 feet

Village of Hillburn





**Figure 17**  
**Ramapo River Aquifer**

Source: ESRI wms; NYS DOH & USGS, 2006;  
USGS OFR 82-114  
Scale: 1 inch = 2,000 feet

Village of Hillburn

## **C. LAND USE AND ZONING**

The land use pattern prevalent in the Village of Hillburn has evolved as a result of a variety of factors that relate to history, environment, and transportation infrastructure. In 1866, William Snow, George Coffin and George Church established the Ramapo Wheel and Foundry Company and purchased 20 acres of land from John Suffern to build a village for their employees.<sup>7</sup> This land was situated between the Ramapo Hills and Torne Mountain, with views of the Ramapo River. In 1882 the Village, then called Woodburn, applied for its own post office and found that another post office by that name already existed in New York. This, in 1893, Woodburn changed its name to Hillburn and became an incorporated village. The Village flourished through the 1900s as other businesses and services were added, until Ramapo Ajax, a railroad switch manufacturer, closed in the 1930s. While population has declined in the area, many of the Villages earliest residents remain. The construction of the New York State Thruway in 1955 bisected Hillburn, cutting off the Village center from the Ramapo River, east Hillburn and the villages of Suffern, Sloatsburg and portions of the Hamlet of Ramapo. Nestled in semi-isolation between mountains and the Thruway, Hillburn still retains many original buildings and much of the character of the company town. The Village's growth, to some extent, is constrained by the steep slopes and shallow bedrock that extend to the north, south and west of the Village. The floodplain along the Ramapo River and several large tracts of publicly owned and protected land further limits new development in the Village. The highway infrastructure throughout the Village also influences development patterns – NYS Route 17 and the NYS Thruway/ Route I-87, principal and major arterial roads, ring much of the denser residential core of the Village. As a result of this and the natural setting of Hillburn, the ability to accommodate certain types of development is constrained. Ultimately, the Village has enacted land use regulations that are intended to guide development based on the various factors identified above. This section evaluates the Village's existing land use pattern, and the land use regulations intended to guide this pattern. Also discussed are the land use policy documents of other agencies which influence the Village.

### **1. Comprehensive Planning**

#### ***Village of Hillburn***

The Village of Hillburn prepared a draft Comprehensive Plan in 2004. However, the Plan was not adopted by the Village Board of Trustees. Regardless, many of the land use regulatory recommendations were adopted by the Village Board of Trustees and incorporated into Chapter 250, Zoning, of the Village Code. The plan was designed to also serve as a draft generic environmental impact statement, as adoption of the comprehensive plan is an action subject to the regulations implementing the NYS Environmental Quality Review Act. The Plan, which is on file with the Village Clerk's office, included an analysis of background conditions related to land

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<sup>7</sup> Leese, Marianne B. *Hillburn, When it was Woodburn*. 1876.

use and zoning, environmental resources, transportation, community facilities, socioeconomic conditions, and cultural and visual resources. It has been some 13 years since the draft was prepared, and this Plan includes updated data with regard to the above resources. The Executive Summary, provided below, summarizes the primary recommendations of the 2004 Draft Plan – these recommendations were reconsidered during preparation of this 2020 Comprehensive Plan.

*The Comprehensive Plan is based on a set of goals and objectives that will enable the Village to achieve its desired land use pattern and unique sense of community described in its Vision. The goals are value statements that represent the end result if the objectives are followed and implemented. The objectives are more specific than the goals and provide a more specific strategy to meet the goals.*

Land Use Planning: *Guide population growth and development in Hillburn in a manner that maintains the Village's rural and historic character and village pattern of development.*

- *Prepare a Comprehensive Plan reflecting community values;*
- *Annually monitor and report on implementation efforts;*
- *Develop and maintain current and historic Village wide land use and comprehensive plan information;*
- *Establish areas of the Village intended for large lot, single family detached residential development;*
- *Coordinate on regional planning issues with local, county, and state government;*
- *Preserve environmentally sensitive areas that are significantly constrained to development as open space.*

Natural Resources: *Preserve the natural beauty of the Village including the Ramapo Mountains, ridgelines, open space, stream corridors, wildlife habitat, viewsheds.*

- *Preserve and protect the Village's forested landscapes by recommending the adoption of a tree preservation law;*
- *Acquire and improve Village parkland – reclaim the Village's 400-acre watershed property for recreational/parkland use;*
- *Remediate and reclaim Village Brownfield properties;*
- *Avoid blasting activities by limiting or prohibiting development in areas with shallow depth to bedrock;*
- *Protect the wetland and forest ecosystems;*
- *Protect ridgelines from development;*
- *Monitor the new Rockland County Sewer District No. 1 sewage treatment plant to ensure it does not discharge polluted air, effluent, or toxic waste into the environment;*
- *Preserve and restore stream corridors.*

Historic Resources: *Preserve the Village's cultural and historic resources that reinforce its unique identity and sense of place.*

- *Preserve and enhance features that reflect the existing character, history, and natural beauty of the Village;*
- *Support the community's cultural diversity;*
- *Preserve open space lands;*
- *Guide community growth so as not to adversely impact quality of life issues;*

- Maintain the self-sufficiency characteristics of the community;
- Maintain and improve property values;
- Maintain range of housing opportunities.

Economic Development: Broaden the Village's tax base and employment opportunities by encouraging the orderly expansion and introduction of nonresidential land uses in a manner consistent with the Village's small-scale character and in appropriate locations based on the nature and potential impacts associated with nonresidential uses.

- Attract higher wage, environmentally friendly business along NYS Route 59 and Route 17 corridors;
- Support existing local business;
- Increase local employment;
- Cooperate to combine municipal services and economic development projects for mutual benefit;
- Preserve and enhance the historic character of the Village.

Transportation: Provide a safe, adequate and efficient roadway network that will serve the various types and intensities of traffic generated by the proposed pattern of land use within the Village.

- Redesign Old Route 17 to reduce travel speeds and enhance the appearance of the roadway;
- Calm traffic on NYS Route 59 and Route 17;
- Maintain road leading to the new Rockland County Sewer District No. 1 sewage treatment plant to ensure a no cost host fee and use of the proposed onsite maintenance barn.

Aesthetic Resources: Protect the visual quality of Hillburn's natural environment and enhance the aesthetic and architectural quality of the buildings, roads, and structures that constitute the Village's built environment.

- Maintain an attractive appearance in the Village, particularly along New York State Route 59 and Route 17 and the entrances to the Village;
- Enhance Village entrances;
- Provide the Planning Board the authority to perform design review;
- Adopt design guidelines for the Village in order to maintain the small scale character of the Village and to encourage new development to include architectural features now found in the Village;
- Monitor the new Rockland County Sewer District No. 1 sewage treatment plant to ensure it is visually pleasing and unobtrusive.

Land Use Plan: The Land Use Plan has recommended a number of changes to the permitted land use regulations in the Village. The proposed land use plan is illustrated on Figure I-2, following page I-5.

Rural Residential: The most significant change in terms of density involves the proposed Rural Residential land use (one dwelling per 60,000 square feet) category for large vacant parcels generally west and south of the Village center that are currently zoned R-40 (one dwelling unit per 40,000 square feet). The decrease in density along with provisions allowing the Planning Board to require clustering is expected to result in a decrease in potential areas of impervious surfaces and will likely result in less disturbance to flora and fauna.



*Light Industrial/Office: Light Industrial/Office is recommended for part of the existing Light Industrial (LI) zone on NYS Route 59. The Comprehensive Plan also recommends stricter performance standards for uses within this land use area. New uses contemplated for this area are expected to generate less environmental impacts than the most intensive uses permitted under existing zoning.*

*Open Space and Recreation: A number of parcels throughout the Village are recommended for the Open Space and Recreation land use. The Land Use Plan recommends acquisition of lands along the Ramapo River in order to protect the River from development runoff and to maintain flood levels downstream. Elimination of potential development through purchase will also serve to maintain recharge to the aquifer by not introducing additional impervious surfaces.*

*Commercial/Limited Office: The Commercial/Limited Office land use is proposed for the NYS Route 17 corridor from the entrance to the NYS Thruway to the crossing of 6th Street across Route 17. This area is currently zoned Highway Commercial (HC). The Comprehensive Plan recommends the expansion and addition of retail, office, and employment opportunities and the conversion of the corridor to a more pedestrian friendly, boulevard like setting. Other areas in the Village proposed for the Commercial/Limited Office land use include three parcels in the eastern portion of the Village along NYS Route 59, south of 4th Street.*

*Geology: The Comprehensive Plan makes a number of strategic recommendations that may affect Hillburn's geology. The Plan recommends:*

- The Village should adopt a local law regulating blasting activities. Any person proposing to conduct blasting activities should secure a permit from the Village;*
- The site plan and subdivision regulations should allow the Planning Board to limit the amount of disturbance to bedrock where it would result in significant bedrock disturbance;*
- The Land Use Plan proposes reductions in density in bedrock controlled areas.*

*Topography: The Comprehensive Plan recommends that the Village consider revising its steep slopes ordinance to limit development on slopes greater than or equal to 15 percent for all properties in the Village.*

*Soils: The Comprehensive Plan recommends increasing limitations on construction within areas of steep slopes. The Comprehensive Plan recommends lower densities in bedrock controlled uplands. The Comprehensive Plan further recommends the Village adopt "zero net stormwater runoff" provisions in its site plan and subdivision regulations.*

*Groundwater: In order to protect the aquifer, the Comprehensive Plan makes the following recommendations:*

- The Village should consider designating the Ramapo River and/or the aquifer a critical environmental area (CEA) as defined by the regulations implementing the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA);*
- The Village should limit land uses involving substances or chemicals that could potentially impact the aquifer;*
- The site plan and subdivision regulations should be amended to require the installation of water quality devices to reduce pollutant loading to the river and aquifer;*

- Additional protection of streams and the Ramapo River in the Village.

Drainage Basins and Surface Water: The Comprehensive Plan has made the following recommendations that are likely to positively impact the quality of surface water:

- The Village should work cooperatively with the County and New York State to acquire land or easements along both sides of the River;
- Where property is not acquired, the Village should establish a 100-foot buffer along each side of the riverbank within which buildings, grading or filling will be limited;
- The Village should consider designating the Ramapo River and/or the aquifer a critical environmental area (CEA) as defined by the regulations implementing the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act;
- Adopt a freshwater wetland and stream protection local law that protects all freshwater wetlands and streams in the Village;
- Establish a permitting program for activities that occur within the wetland, stream or an associated buffer area;
- Protect streams that may be classified “D” and establish a minimum 25-foot buffer area adjacent to “D” streams and intermittent streams;
- As a design standard in the site plan and subdivision regulations, require development to preserve wetlands and stream courses in their natural state.

Air Resources: The Comprehensive Plan recommends adoption of local blasting regulations. The Plan has made recommendations for modifications to Old Route 17 that would likely result in a decrease in its potential level of service, also referred to as traffic calming. The Comprehensive Plan recommends reduction in densities in outlying areas which will result in a decrease in potential impacts to air quality in comparison to the existing zoning and land use regulation.

Significant Ecological Habitats: The Comprehensive Plan makes a number of recommendations that will likely limit future development impacts on flora and fauna. Recommendations include:

- The Village Board and Planning Board should be given the authority to require an applicant to cluster a development where it determines that a conventional development would otherwise be detrimental to the Village’s scenic or natural qualities;
- During the review of development applications, it is recommended that the development of any vacant property in excess of 20 acres be required to submit a biological inventory of animals and vegetation present or likely to be present as part of the SEQRA process. The determination of whether or not to conduct biological inventories on smaller properties should be made on a case-by-case basis;
- The Village should adopt an environmental constraints provision as part of the zoning law that would reduce residential or nonresidential density where the environmental constraints effectively limit the development suitability of properties in the Village.

Traffic: The Comprehensive Plan makes a number of recommendations regarding NYS Route 59 and Old Route 17. Recommendations include:

- Redesign Old Route 17 to reflect its collector function, provide for traffic calming, and to remove impervious surfaces;
- Calm traffic on NYS Route 59 and Route 17;

- Maintain road leading to the new Rockland County Sewer District No. 1 sewer treatment plant to ensure a no cost host fee and use of the proposed onsite maintenance barn.

*The Comprehensive Plan also recommends that the Village consider adopting appearance standards for uses along these corridors.*

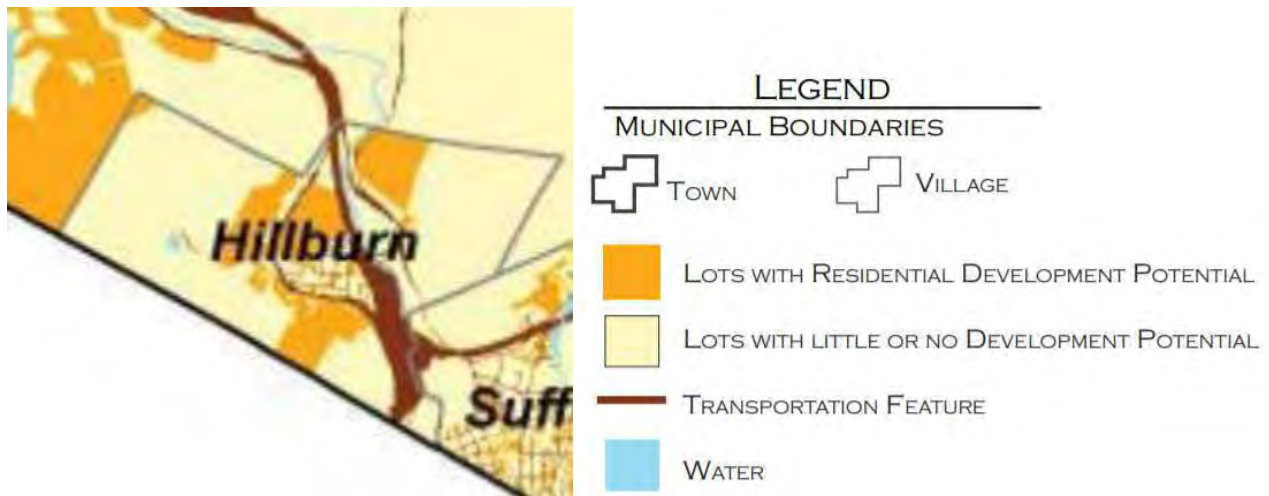
***Affordable Housing:** The Comprehensive Plan recommends that the Village provide increased opportunities to its current and future residents for affordable housing. The Village should strive to design affordable housing for low and moderate-income families that is attractive, is an asset to the community, and will visually blend with Hillburn's rural character. The commonly accepted definition of affordable housing is safe, decent housing that costs between 30 and 35 percent of a family's monthly income. The Comprehensive Plan recommends that Hillburn utilize an affordable housing definition based on 35 percent of a family's monthly income. The Plan also recommends that the majority of affordable housing be constructed as single-family homes and that the occupants or owners are selected from the Village's existing population before others are considered. Given the Village's aging population and the varied income of its residents, Hillburn should be better prepared to deal with the housing needs of the community and its changing population.*

***Cultural and Visual Resources:** The Comprehensive Plan recommends a local historic preservation law. The Plan further recommends that the Board of Trustees establish a landmark or historic preservation commission to administer the historic preservation regulations or that alternatively, the Planning Board function in the same capacity. The Plan further recommends that new construction or structural alterations to existing structures be compatible with a landmark or historic district's character, and that this effort should be carried out with the adoption of design guidelines.*

Many of the foregoing regulatory recommendations were adopted by the Village Board. The recommendations above have been reviewed, and any that remain relevant are restated in this Comprehensive Plan.

### **Rockland County 2020 Comprehensive Plan**

Rockland County, on March 1, 2011, adopted a plan entitled "ROCKLAND TOMORROW: Rockland County Comprehensive Plan." The plan was reviewed to determine whether the County had established any specific land use or other recommendations specific to the Village of Hillburn. Included in the County plan was a buildout analysis regarding development potential in the County. Specifically, the County plan states: "In 2007, the Rockland County Department of Planning launched a residential build-out analysis designed to provide a general estimation of the future residential growth potential in the County consistent with the existing zoning and development patterns. The analysis began by identifying a set of development constraints – existing structures, parks and institutions, water bodies, steep slopes, and wetlands – and applying them to the existing developable land to ascertain the theoretical build-out potential. The finalized analysis estimates there to be potentially 17,948 additional housing units to be developed based on current zoning and constraints....the areas with greatest build-out potential include western portions of Ramapo (including the Village of Sloatsburg), Stony Point, the Village of Pomona, the central and western portions of Orangetown, and the Village of Chestnut Ridge."



The major land use recommendations of the County plan are summarized as follows:

- *Concentrate Growth in Existing Centers.* Much of Rockland County's community character and cultural amenities are concentrated in its village and hamlet centers. These centers are largely served by existing water and sewer lines, and in some cases bus or rail transit, making them ideal locations for multifamily housing, municipal uses, and small businesses...The County should encourage investment in its centers by:
  - *Promoting a mix of uses including office, retail, and residential.* Multifamily residential uses are appropriate in downtown areas and can bring spending power that supports businesses and cultural uses. This type of housing typically produces very few school children, and therefore usually generates positive tax impacts. Multifamily housing is also ideal for seniors and young adults, two sectors of Rockland's population that are in need of more housing options.
  - *Identifying brownfields and greyfields.* Brownfields are defined as properties that are "unused, underutilized, or difficult to sell due to known or suspected environmental contamination," while greyfields include "abandoned or underutilized shopping centers, strip malls, and other areas with extensive paved surfaces." Unlike brownfields, greyfields typically do not require remediation and are often excellent candidates for redevelopment.
  - *Adaptive reuse of older historic and industrial buildings.* Another strategy for targeted infill development is adaptive reuse of older historic and industrial buildings, which allows the architectural details to be retained while the buildings are put to a productive use.
  - *Upgrading the infrastructure and amenities of Rockland's existing centers – including lighting, sidewalks, street furniture, bike lanes, shade trees, and utilities – should be a priority for the County and its municipalities.*
- *Recommendation #2: Preserve Existing Commercial and Industrial Areas...* Rockland's commercial and industrial uses are critical to its economic base, foster job growth, and – unlike traditional single-family developments – create a net tax benefit largely because they do not produce school children. The County does not have zoning or other land use regulating authority, and thus cannot directly prevent the conversion of commercial and industrial areas to residential use. However, working with the Rockland Economic Development Corporation (REDC), the Industrial Development Agency (IDA), and the Rockland Business Association (RBA), the County should identify prime candidate sites for attracting major commercial and industrial users, and encourage the affected municipalities to maintain the non-residential development potential for these sites through appropriate land use regulations.



- *Recommendation #3: Protect Rockland County's Existing Character and Quality of Life. Rockland County is known for its semi-rural setting, its natural resources and preserved open space, and – perhaps most of all – its location along the Hudson River, a major regional resource for tourism, recreation, and scenic beauty. A key priority in future land use is the conservation of the county's environmentally sensitive areas and the acquisition of open space.*
- *Recommendation #4: Promote Conservation Subdivision Design to Preserve Open Space and Sensitive Areas*
- *Recommendation #5: Facilitate Zoning That Encourages Affordable Housing for Seniors, Emergency-Service Volunteers and the Caregiver Work Force Finding adequate and affordable housing can be a challenge for many of Rockland's residents, but has proven especially difficult for three segments of the population: seniors, emergency-service volunteers, and the caregiver work force (including nurses, home health aides, and child-care workers).*
- *Recommendation #6: Foster Intermunicipal Cooperation. Towns and villages do not exist in a vacuum. Their actions at times have far-reaching effects on neighboring municipalities and beyond. As discussed throughout this Plan, many issues in Rockland County transcend municipal boundaries and fully addressing them requires a regional approach. The County will thus encourage intermunicipal communication and cooperation to ensure that land use, planning, and zoning policies among neighboring towns and villages are regionally-minded and mutually beneficial.*

The County plan does not incorporate specific recommendations directly related to the Village of Hillburn.

## 2. Existing Land Use Patterns

**Figure 18** illustrates the land use pattern within the Village of Hillburn. **Table IV.C-1** lists the acreages of the land uses within the Village. Note that the land use evaluation includes the land area for real property tax parcels within the Village (1,279 acres) while the total land area of the Village is approximately 1,442 acres. The difference between the two estimates, 162.7 acres, represents all land area within a street or highway right-of-way, such as the New York State Thruway and NYS Route 17. The land use categories were selected based on the types of uses that are identified in the Village's zoning regulations and the land use categories set forth in the tax assessment roll.

Table IV.C-1 Village of Hillburn Land Use			
Land Use	Parcels	Acres	% of Total
Vacant	88	300.2	23.46
Open Space and Recreation	7	289.1	22.60
One Family Year-Round Residence	209	63.0	4.92
Two Family Year-Round Residence	39	10.4	0.82
Three Family Year-Round Residence	4	1.3	0.10
Multifamily Residential	4	0.8	0.07
Multiple Residences	4	8.3	0.65
Education	4	5.7	0.44
Religious	3	0.6	0.05
Government	3	0.5	0.04
Dining Establishments	1	31.6	2.47
Retail Services	1	1.8	0.14
Multi-Purpose/Multi-Structure	1	0.5	0.04
Multiple Use or Multi-Purpose	1	0.1	0.01
Motor Vehicle Services	6	19.7	1.54
Manufacturing and Processing	3	46.8	3.66
Waste Disposal	5	6.6	0.51
Storage, Warehouse, and Distribution Facilities	16	20.9	1.64
Transportation	6	18.4	1.44
Utility	6	9.5	0.74
Electric, Gas and Communication	10	44.3	3.47
Water Supply	4	399.4	31.22
<b>Total Parcel Acreage</b>		<b>1279.5</b>	100.00
<b>Total Land Area of Village</b>		<b>1442.2</b>	
Source: Hillburn Real Property Tax Roll, 2016-2017. Any errors due to rounding.			

The land that once contained the Hillburn Reservoir constitutes the largest parcel in Hillburn at approximately 391 acres, 31 percent, according to land use category “Water Supply”. The reservoir was decommissioned in 2012 after the dam was deemed unsafe, and the Village is now connected to SUEZ New York for potable water. Vacant land constitutes the second largest category, with 300.2 acres, or 23 percent of the parceled acreage within the Village of Hillburn. In total, open space properties constitute 22.6 percent of the total land area, or 289.1 acres. A more detailed description of each land use category is provided below.

### ***Vacant***

Hillburn has several large vacant parcels on the perimeter of the Village boundary that are under public ownership and thirteen unowned vacant parcels in similar locations. There are only eight privately owned vacant parcels within the center of the village between Route 17 and the NYS

Thruway and the remaining 80 parcels make up the vast majority of acreage on the perimeter of the Village, especially within residential clusters along and south of Route 17.

Public and vacant parcels present an opportunity for future development in the Village of Hillburn. Vacant parcels total approximately 300 acres and the majority of these are not accessible via existing roads and are situated primarily to the south and west of Route 17. A contiguous cluster of 8 parcels at the southern point of Hillburn Village abuts Route 287 and constitutes approximately 30 acres total and can only be accessed via vehicle through Mahwah. These parcels were contaminated by paint disposal associated with the former Mahwah Ford plant.

The Village of Hillburn owns eight vacant parcels, six smaller parcels in the central village, between Route 17 and the NYS Thruway, and two large parcels accessible from the western branch of 6<sup>th</sup> Street near the Reservoir property.

The Town of Ramapo owns five parcels totaling 77.5 acres within the Village of Hillburn. A 20-acre parcel, accessible via the western branch of 6<sup>th</sup> street connects to the reservoir property via a parcel owned by Rockland County. Four town-owned parcels totaling around 57 acres are clustered to the north of the Village along Route 59 and Torne Valley Road and are vacant or the site of public supply wells.

Rockland County owns eight parcels, 41 acres, adjacent to village owned vacant land and accessible via the end of Brook Street. The sewer district owns approximately 78 acres - refer to **Figure 22** for public and quasi-public ownership patterns.

### ***Open Space and Recreation***

Open space parcels are lands that appear on the tax roll as “conservation” lands; these properties are located in the eastern and western most portions of the Village. New York State owns the parcels located to the east (288 acres), which are part of Harriman State Park. As mentioned above, the Village of Hillburn also owns the reservoir property to the west of the Village.

Recreational land is situated within the center of the Village. The Youth Center at the end of 5th Street contains recreational fields and Veterans Park is between 4th and 3rd Streets, and Rockland and Lake Avenues. There is also a small pocket park along Route 59 between Park Avenue and Blakeslee Place.

### ***Residential, One Family Detached***

This land use category includes one-family detached dwellings. A majority of the single-family homes in Hillburn are clustered in the historic center of the Village, in the valley between the NYS Thruway and Route 17, south of 1st Street and 4th Street and north of the Route 17/NYS Thruway South on-ramp. Another concentration of one family detached dwellings exists on the northwest

side of Route 17 along 6th Street and Boulder Avenue and a more spread out area of single family homes is located south of Route 17 as it curves around the Village, along Brook Street and 7th Avenue. The dwellings located in closer proximity to the Village Center, generally along 4th Street tend to be older, and reflect a more historic housing style. Some of these have been converted into two family homes.

***Residential, Two Family***

Two family residences are interspersed among one-family detached dwellings within the Village center, with a cluster located between 2nd and 3rd Streets. In addition, there is an enclave of two-family dwellings situated along the southern portion of Route 17 and north, off of NYS Route 59 on Park Avenue and Blakeslee Place.

***Residential, Three Family***

There are several three family residences located in the Village; two properties are along Suffern Road between Rockland and Lake Avenues. Another building is located along Mountain Avenue, and an additional building is found at the end of 1st Street.

***Residential, Multiple Residences***

There are a few parcels that contain multiple residences south of Route 17 along 6th and 7th Streets. These are large parcels that contain multiple detached buildings.

***Residential, Multifamily***

There is a small collection of multifamily dwellings on 6th Street between Lake and Mountain Avenues and on the corner of 5th Street and Mountain Avenue. Multifamily residences are located generally in buildings which may have been originally developed as one family detached dwellings but have been converted to accommodate additional dwellings.

***Mixed Use (Multiple Use)***

Residential mixed use consists of properties that are developed with buildings containing both residential and nonresidential uses. The Post Office on Rockland Avenue falls within this category.

***Retail***

There is a single retail use in the Village along NYS Route 59, north of Blakeslee Place (presently Fireplaces by Design).

***Dining Establishments***

The Village contains a single Hibachi restaurant (Mt. Fuji) and event venue at the top of a 30-acre mountain parcel accessible only from Route 17.



### ***Community Facilities***

Community facilities are governmental and similar uses that serve the general public. These properties are situated primarily within the Hillburn Village center and include the Hillburn Fire Station and Post Office on 5th Street and Rockland Avenue, the Village Hall on 5th Street and Mountain Avenue and the Hillburn Youth Center at the western most end of 5<sup>th</sup> Street.

### ***Education and Religious Uses***

Hillburn contains multiple churches: Brook Presbyterian, Lighthouse Worship Center, and St. James Mar Thoma Church. The Suffern Central School District offices are located at Mountain Avenue and 4th Street in a historic school building. The Yeshiva Viznitz, a synagogue and religious study rooms, is also located along old Route 17.

### ***Motor Vehicle Services***

The automotive commercial land use category applies to vehicle or motorcycle repairs or servicing; the parcels included in this category include Chestnut Ridge Transit school bus depot on the west side of Route 17 in the vicinity of Interchange 15A, Jan's Med-A-Car service station at the south side of the intersection of Route 17 and Route 59.

### ***Manufacturing and Processing***

The only strip of "light industrial" use is situated between Route 59 and the train tracks, north and south of 4<sup>th</sup> Street. The parcel to the north is considered an industrial park and houses such uses as Gotham Hydroponics and Good Quality Paper Goods. The southern parcel contains multiple buildings which house granite and tape manufacturers, frozen food manufacturers, party rentals and a fastener supplier.

### ***Waste Disposal***

This land use applies to properties associated with the waste transfer station located on Route 17 near Interchange 15A entrance and exit ramp from the NYS Thruway southbound.

### ***Storage/Warehouse/Distribution***

Sixteen parcels accessible via northern Route 17 are categorized as being storage, warehouse or distribution facilities. This includes a landscaping business where storage of materials occurs, and a car part distributor. These uses may also have accessory offices associated with them.

### ***Electric/Gas/Communication and Utility***

The Village has multiple infrastructure-related properties within its borders. An electricity transfer station located between the NYS Thruway and train tracks adjacent to the industrial park and the wastewater treatment plant south of the southernmost part of Route 17 contain the largest utility acreage within the Village. Gas lines to the northeast and northwest of the reservoir parcel and electricity transfer at the southernmost tip of the Village boarder also contribute to

these land uses. The Rockland County Sewer District No. 1 wastewater treatment plant is located south on NYS Route 17 near the NYS Thruway on-ramp and they own parcels extending up the mountain.

### Water Supply

The Village owned parcel on which the reservoir was located is identified by Rockland County and tax assessment data as being in water supply use, although this activity is no longer occurring. Several parcels of land in the ownership of the Town of Ramapo are identified as water supply properties, as water supply wells are located on them – these parcels are situated along the Ramapo River.

### 3. Zoning and Land Use Regulations

**Figure 19** illustrates the zoning districts that regulate land uses within the Village of Hillburn. **Figure 20** illustrates land use and zoning patterns, to determine the extent to which the land use pattern complies with the zoning regulations. **Table IV.C-3** provides a list of the uses allowed within each zoning district.

Table IV.C-3 Allowable Uses by Zoning District						
	Zoning Districts					
	R-60	R-9	R-6	LS	HC	LI
Minimum Lot Area (sf or acres)	60,000 sf	15,000 sf	6,000 sf	20,000 sf	20,000 sf	1 ac
<b>Land Uses</b>						
Agricultural land uses						
One family detached dwelling	P	P	P			
Two family detached dwelling		SU	SU			
Multiple dwellings						
Cluster development	SU	SU	SU	SU	SU	
Mixed Use Residential Above Commercial				SU		
Parks and playgrounds	P	P	P	P		
Libraries and parks	P	P	P	P		
Educational Institutions	P	P	P	P		
Public schools						
Cemeteries						
Community buildings, clubs, lodges and fraternal organizations	P	P	P	P		
Community facilities	P	P	P	P	P	
House of worship and related residences	P	P	P	P		

Table IV.C-3 Allowable Uses by Zoning District						
	Zoning Districts					
	R-60	R-9	R-6	LS	HC	LI
Minimum Lot Area (sf or acres)	60,000 sf	15,000 sf	6,000 sf	20,000 sf	20,000 sf	1 ac
Professional offices	SU	SU	SU	P	P	
Funeral homes		SU	SU		P	
Eating places and establishments serving alcoholic beverages					P	P
Retail business or personal service establishments such as grocery, drug, hardware stores, meat or food markets, barber and beauty shops, shoe repair shops, and the like				P	P	
Personal services				P	P	
Commercial recreation facilities			SU		SU	
Motels, hotels					P	P
Automobile service repair and filling station					P	
Light industry and industrial research					SU	P
Essential Services			SU		SU	
Clearcutting		SU	SU		SU	
Signs	SU			SU	SU	
Bus stations						
Home gardening	A	A				
Home occupations, professions and trades	SU	SU	SU			
Fences					P	
(Private) garages and parking/loading areas			A	A	P	P
Dish antennas						
Other accessory uses and structures	A	A	A	A	A	
Signs, not including billboards			A		A	
Signs and directory signs				A	A	

At present, there are three residential zoning districts in the Village, and three nonresidential zoning districts:

- R-60 Rural Residence, Low Density
- R-9 Residential, Medium Density
- R-6 Residential, Medium Density
- LS Local Shopping
- HC Highway Commercial
- LI Light Industrial

As can be seen in **Table IV.C-3** above, the R-60 district allows lot sizes with a minimum of 60,000 square feet, or approximately 1.5 acres. The R-9 district allows lot sizes of 9,000 square feet, or about a one-third acre lot. The R-6 district allows lot sizes of 6,000 sf. All lots allow one family detached in the R-60 district, and the R-9 allow construction of new two family detached dwellings while the R-6 district allows single family buildings built before 1988 to be converted to two family dwellings. Lot sizes are shown in **Figure 21**.

The Village zoning establishes that non-residential development occur along highways and major arterials. LS districts are not visualized on the zoning map, but performance standards for the district state that residentially zoned land adjacent to a state or county highway may permit shopping centers, retail, personal service and professional offices.

The HC zoning district is the primary commercial zone within the Village, and it encompasses properties primarily located north along Route 17 from the entrance of the NYS Thruway to the crossing of 6<sup>th</sup> Street. This district allows any use permitted in the local shopping district except for residential uses, and adds hotels, auto sales and services building contractor ships, printing and publishing and funeral parlors. Large scale commercial recreation, bus or truck garages, small scale and low intensity industrial uses, food distribution and warehouses are allowed by special permit. Performance standards protect adjacent residential uses through screening and lighting requirements.

The LI district allows light manufacturing, research and development, assembly, processing, wholesaling, packing, distribution or warehousing as well as automotive and mechanical repair, garden nurseries, restaurants and hotels. These districts are clustered between the NYS Thruway and Route 59 and are permitted only within a completely enclosed building unless a special permit is sought to store equipment or building materials outdoors. Special permits also apply to rail and truck freight terminals and microbreweries. Performance standards refer to vibration, smoke, odors, glare, waste, noise, and fire hazard thresholds.

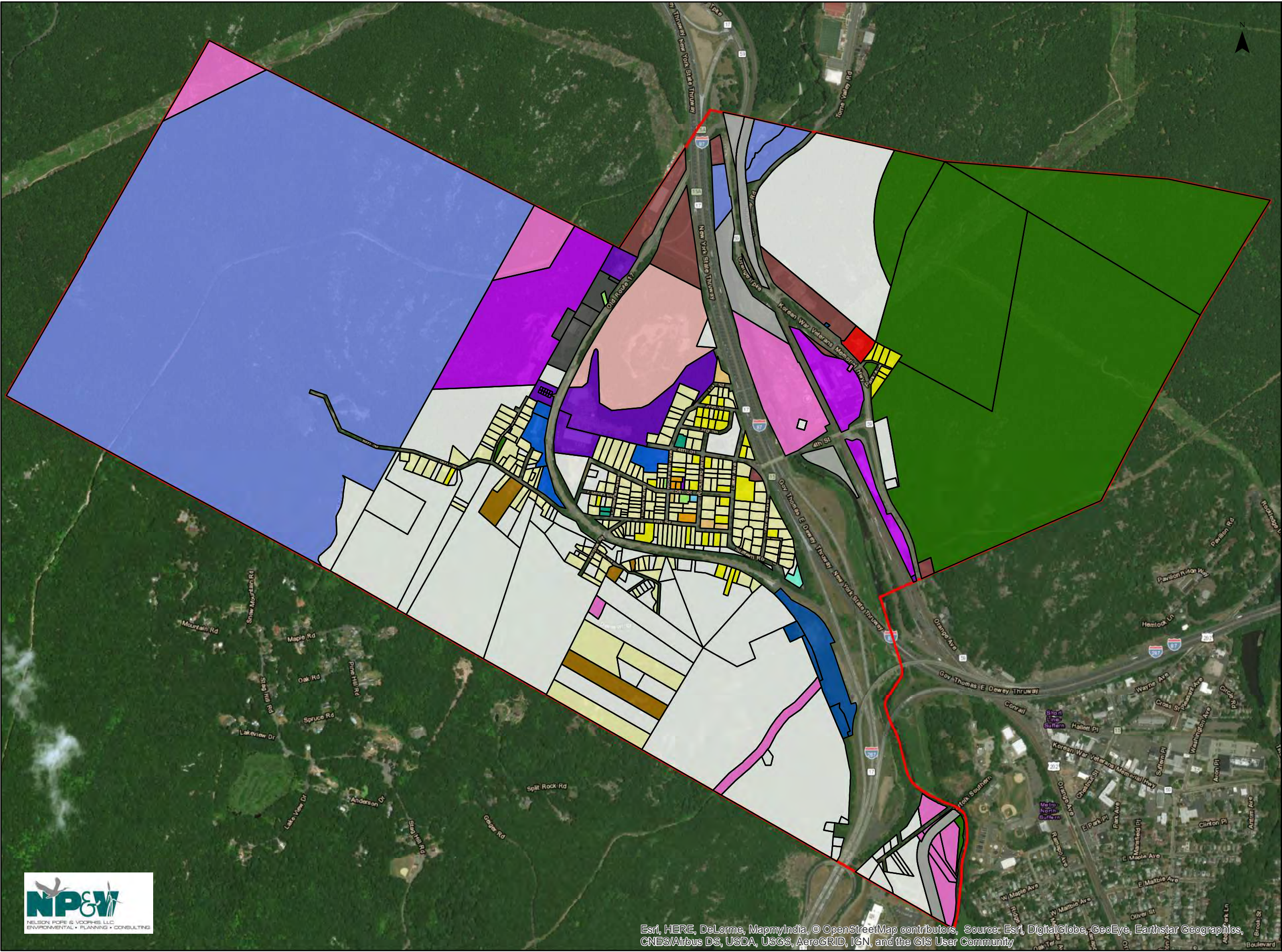
#### 4. Land Use and Zoning Issues and Opportunities

To date, the Comprehensive Plan Committee has discussed the following with regard to potential refinements and revisions to the land use plan and regulations for the Village:



- The Village wants to allow a mix of housing types, but multifamily development may no longer be appropriate for this small-scale community except as part of a planned development along Route 59.
- While the Village has considered the concept of a new downtown, there are no areas to accomplish this at the scale originally envisioned.
- Accessory apartments on small lots are problematic, as there is insufficient space for on-site parking.
- The center of the Village, where apartments presently exist, and where there is a concentration of Village services including Village Hall and the fire department, could sustain a deli, but not a whole new downtown as it would be incompatible with surrounding residences. Existing apartments would be allowed to continue as a use in this location.
- The CPC views Suffern as its primary downtown – there needs to be enhanced pedestrian linkages to this commercial center.
- The NYS Thruway, Route 59 and Route 17– if a village downtown cannot be supported – the CPC would like to see a professional office buildings, including medical offices along these corridors.
- There is still a desire to remove lanes along Route 17 and capture the space for redevelopment.
- The waste transfer station is a nonconforming use – the Village should receive a benefit for hosting this use.
- The land on which the reservoir was located could be used for a senior, assisted living or continuing care retirement community – the Village does not support construction of single-family dwellings on this parcel. One to two acres could be dedicated to this use, otherwise surrounded by open space. Research is required to determine whether safe and adequate access can be gained from a new road or from Mahwah, NJ.
- The Village would like to acquire or control, through zoning, the excess land owned by the Rockland County Sewer District that extends from the treatment plant up to the top of Houvenkopf Mountain also known as Mount Independence – the land should be acquired for open space protection given its scenic and visual prominence, the presence of Split Rock on the parcel, difficulty constructing on bedrock controlled lands, inaccessibility, and lack of utilities. Lands that are in public ownership are shown in **Figure 22**.
- With regard to LI and HC uses – allow for breweries, a bar, little shops, and a commuter hub – Port Authority and DOT potential ownership – could get from the train to the BRT – go across the Tappan Zee – looking for a place to coordinate from the train - doing it in Hillburn is seen as favorable. The Route 59 could be a location for a transit-oriented development.





Village of Hillburn

Comprehensive  
Plan

Figure 18  
Existing Land Use

- Parcels
- 2016 Land Use**
- One Family Year Round Residence
- Two Family Year Round Residence
- Three Family Year Round Residence
- Multi Family Residential
- Multiple Residences
- Multi-Purpose/Multi-Structure
- Multiple Use or Multi-Purpose
- Retail Services
- Dining Establishments
- Education
- Religious
- Government
- Transportation
- Motor Vehicle Services
- Electric, Gas and Communication
- Manufacturing and Processing
- Utility
- Storage, Warehouse & Distribution Facilities
- Waste Disposal
- Water Supply
- Open Space and Recreation
- Vacant

Source: ESRI Web Mapping Service;  
Rockland County GIS

Scale: 1 inch = 1,020.713328 feet

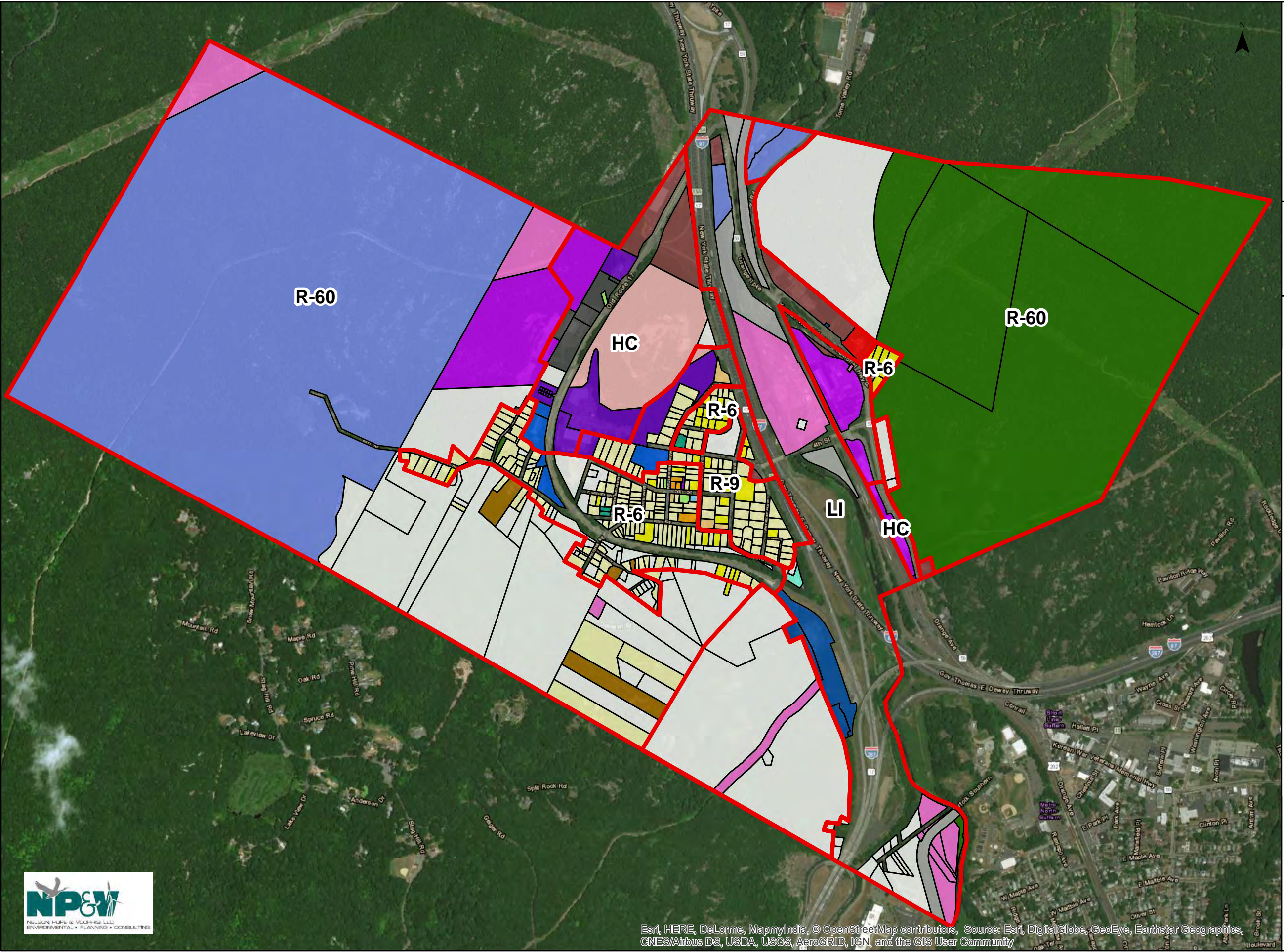
Esri, HERE, DeLorme, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community











Village of Hillburn

Comprehensive  
Plan

Figure 20  
Existing Land Use  
& Zoning

- Zoning Districts  
 Parcels
- 2016 Land Use**
- One Family Year Round Residence
  - Two Family Year Round Residence
  - Three Family Year Round Residence
  - Multi Family Residential
  - Multiple Residences
  - Multi-Purpose/Multi-Structure
  - Multiple Use or Multi-Purpose
  - Retail Services
  - Dining Establishments
  - Education
  - Religious
  - Government
  - Transportation
  - Motor Vehicle Services
  - Electric, Gas and Communication
  - Manufacturing and Processing
  - Utility
  - Storage, Warehouse & Distribution Facilities
  - Waste Disposal
  - Water Supply
  - Open Space and Recreation
  - Vacant

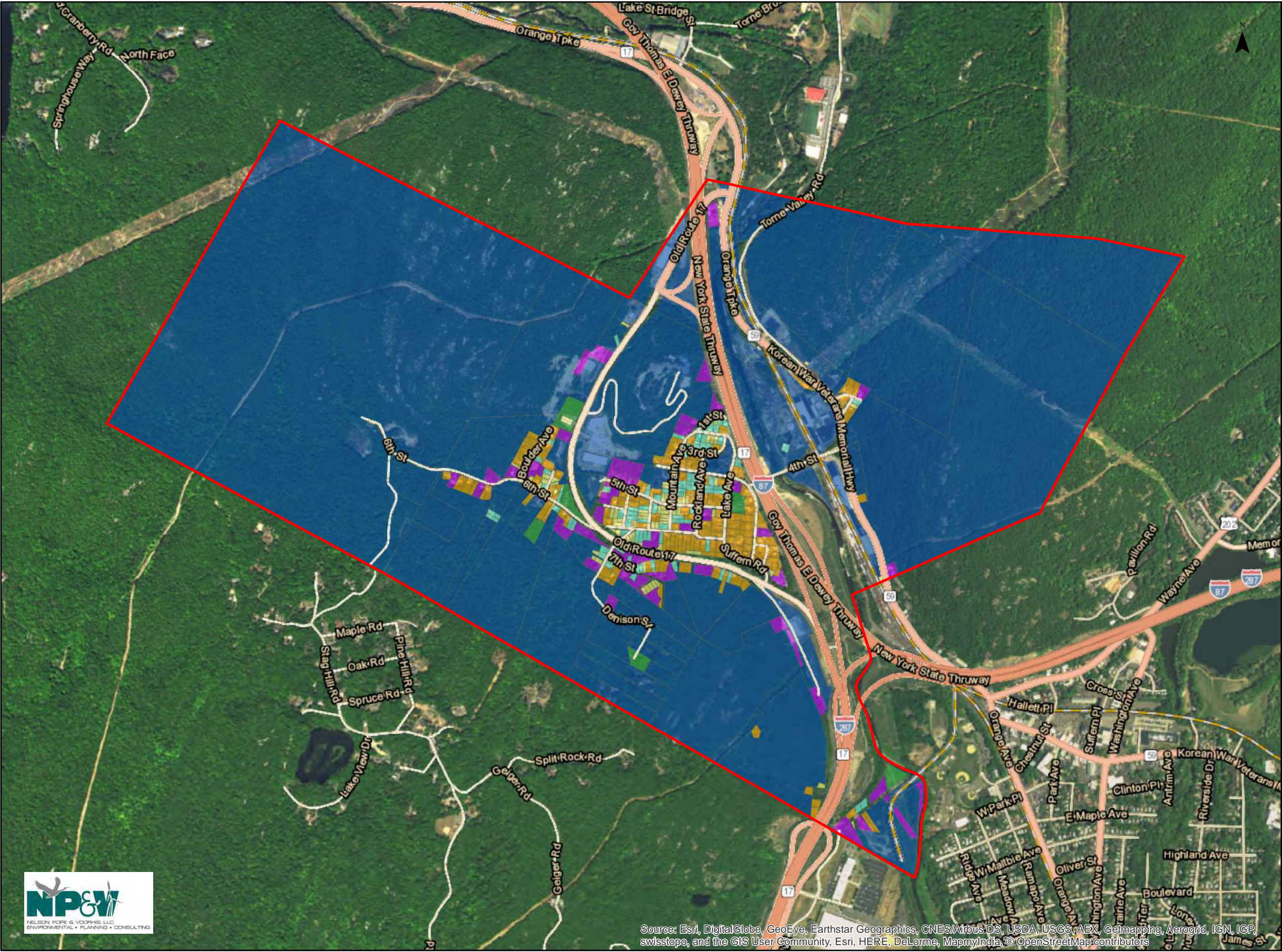
Source: ESRI Web Mapping Service;  
Rockland County GIS

Scale: 1 inch = 1,021 feet



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Village of Hillburn

Comprehensive  
Plan

Figure 21  
Lot Size

- Legend**
- Hillburn
- Lot Size**
- Under 6,000 sf
  - 6,000 - 8,999 sf
  - 9,000 - 19,999 sf
  - 20,000 - 43,559 sf
  - 43,560 - 59,999 sf
  - 60,000+

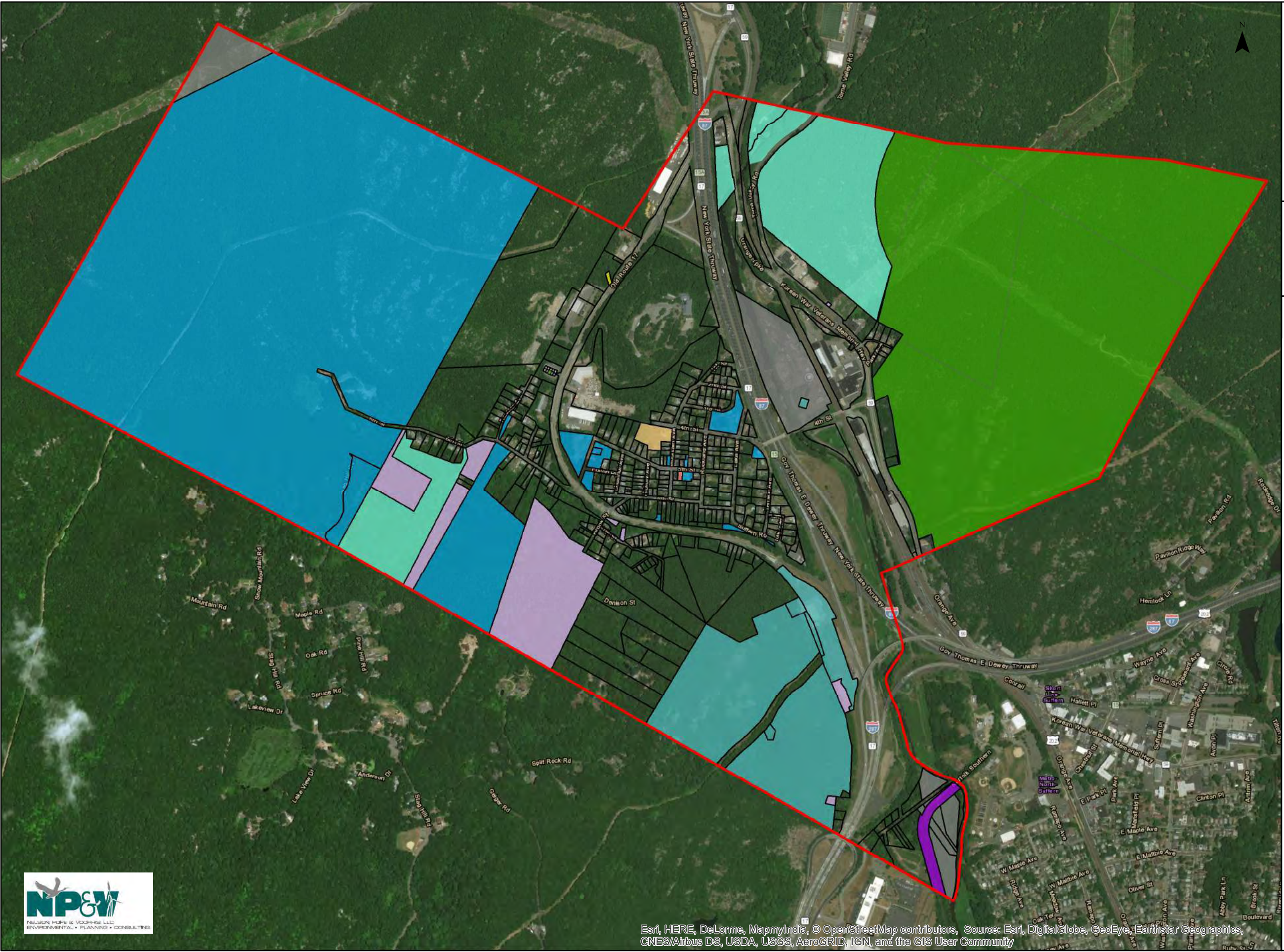
Source: ESRI Web Mapping Service;  
Rockland County GIS

Scale: 1 inch = 1,200 feet

Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community, Esri, HERE, DeLorme, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors







Village of Hillburn

Comprehensive  
Plan

Figure 22  
Public Land

Legend

- Hillburn
- Parcels
- Publicly Owned Land**
  - State Of New York
  - Sewer District
  - State Of New Jersey
  - Rockland County
  - Town of Ramapo
  - Village Of Hillburn
  - Orange & Rockland Utility
  - Rockland County Historical Society
  - Ramapo Central School District
  - Hillburn Fire Department Inc.



Source: ESRI Web Mapping Service;  
Rockland County GIS

Scale: 1 inch = 0.2 miles



## **D. HISTORIC, CULTURAL AND SCENIC RESOURCES**

The character and charm of the Village of Hillburn is based to a large extent on its unique history. “History” can be defined as a “narrative” or “story” of events about a place. Hillburn’s early history is a testament to the unique natural environment upon which it thrived. The rich landscape of wood and water provided refuge to both the Native American tribes and settlers, while the Ramapo Pass offered a natural travel corridor through the Ramapo Mountains. Historic buildings and structures are remnants of past events that continue to provide the community with its own unique sense of character. In order to preserve the Village’s unique sense of place, those resources, and the history these resources embody, need to be identified. It is a primary goal of this Plan to preserve and protect the cultural and historic resources which reinforce the Village’s unique identity, support its scenic character and are a source of pride for all Village citizens. The summary below only encapsulates key moments, buildings and places in the Village’s history, which is far richer and deserving of its own book.

### **1. Pre-Contact History**

The Delaware and Munsee or Minsi (“also Lenni Lenape”) are a group from the Algonquin speaking people. The name Delaware came from the river which the people were centered – their territory also included the Hudson, Susquehanna and Potomac.<sup>8</sup> The Lenni-Lenape are the ancient root of many other American Indian nations. The Lenape homeland included all of New Jersey, northern Delaware, eastern Pennsylvania, and southeastern New York<sup>9</sup>. According to the History of Rockland County (Green, 1886), the County was inhabited by the Ramapough Lenape Indians who settled among the Mahwah and Ramapo Rivers<sup>10</sup>. After the revolutionary war, the Ramapough Lenape found solitude in the Ramapo mountains along the border of New York and New Jersey, some became landowners, and members of the Ramapough Lenape People still remain, living in Hillburn, Stag Hill in Mahwah and in Ringwood NJ.

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.munseedelawareindiannation-usa.us/>

<sup>9</sup> <http://nanticoke-lenapetribalnation.org/about/>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.ramapoughlenapenation.org/history>



*Photo courtesy of David Johnson.*

Of importance to the Village and the tribe is Split Rock, a large glacial erratic located on top of Houvenkopf Mountain. Throughout North American, native tribes revered hills and mountains which provided them with a panoramic view of their homeland within the Ramapo River and larger Passaic River watershed. It sits on a hill and provides a panoramic view of the lower Hudson Valley to New Jersey and Manhattan Island<sup>11</sup>. The rock is at present located on lands owned by the Rockland County Sewer District and is considered sacred by

the Lenape Indians where they have practiced tribal ceremonies. In the Lenape religion, all the objects and varied phenomena of nature both animate and inanimate were but the outward attributes of powerful spirits.

Split Rock and its environs have been evaluated in detail by Mr. David Johnson who has an extensive archaeological and anthropological background in evaluating Native American ancestral sacred and ceremonial stone landscapes<sup>12</sup>. Although the goal of the investigations has been to determine which Native American stone features are associated with mapping areas of higher permeability within the groundwater, it is important to consider these features are multifunctional to Native Americans. To Native Americans water is an integral component of all three worlds and is associated with life cycles, since water is life. Therefore, it would be logical for Native Americans in all regions to investigate groundwater resources as a spiritual component of the underworld. Even if they could not physically touch deep groundwater sources, they were still important within their concept of the underworld and origin concepts associated with “Mother Earth”. Ethnographic analogies are also important; thus, the stone features are also associated with cultural and spiritual beliefs. Johnson’s report prepared for the site focuses on the correlation between areas of higher permeability within the groundwater and stone features, and identifying stone features which are characteristic of ancestral Native American First Nations’ Sacred and Ceremonial Landscape archaeological sites throughout North America.

Mr. Johnson, together with Chief Dwaine Perry of the Ramapough Lenape Nation, and Hillburn Comprehensive Plan Committee members, conducted an evaluation of the Split Rock site in 2018

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<sup>11</sup> *The Dutch purchased Manhattan Island from the Lenape in 1626.*  
<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/true-native-new-yorkers-can-never-truly-reclaim-their-homeland-180970472/>

<sup>12</sup> *He has received various awards for his work, including a National Geographic Research and Exploration award. His reports have been accepted into the Smithsonian Institution’s National Anthropological and Archaeological Library. He is most well known for his research in Peru and Chile associated with the Nasca Lines and their association with groundwater movement.*



and 2019. During these investigations Johnson documented 10 areas of higher permeability and 66 stone features all located on one or more concentrated flows. All of the stone features are consistently associated with ancestral Native American Ceremonial Landscapes and are still an important component of their cultural and spiritual beliefs. Throughout glaciated areas, large glacier erratics have cultural and spiritual importance to Native American First Nations<sup>13</sup>. Throughout the Western Hemisphere, Ancestral Native Americans have consistently located important cultural and spiritual sites where there are unusual or unique geological and hydrological features. In addition to the large glacier erratic(s), there are several smaller stone features which are consistently associated with this type of site. They include but are not limited to stone cairns, effigies, short low walls and platforms. Consistently, Johnson has located areas of higher permeability within the groundwater that intersect large glacier erratic sites. At Split Rock three concentrated flows intersect the site.

Particularly interesting at the Split Rock site is its orientation - the fracture is oriented at basically 122.4° SE, which is the same direction of Winter Solstice Sunrise on December 21st and Summer Solstice Sunset on June 21st. In addition to these events, Pleiades also sets through the split on December 21st.

## 2. Industry and Settlement

Located in the Ramapo Mountain region just north of the New Jersey border, the area that would become Hillburn was slow to develop. In 1773, John Suffern settled nearby and established a tavern and small farm; the Village of Suffern, located a few miles southeast of Hillburn, gradually developed around his land. Due to its location at the southern end of the Ramapo Pass, the region was of strategic importance during the Revolutionary War; George Washington used Suffern's home as a military headquarters. Sidman's Bridge was located in Hillburn – a historical marker notes its former location. It was around Sidman's Bridge that the American Revolutionary Army encamped along earthworks and a fort, and was also referred to the Post at Ramapough and the Post in the Clove.<sup>14</sup> Hillburn was a strategic location referenced in the Revolutionary War history.

During the 1790s, John Suffern expanded his commercial enterprise in the area by building a sawmill on the Ramapo. His son, James Suffern, built an ironworks, the area's first substantial industry, near the sawmill in 1848. Four years later, he added a rolling machine to the operation. Most of the output of the small ironworks was sold to the nearby Erie Railroad, which had completed its line to Piermont in 1841 and added a second track in 1853. The works employed about 25 men, and a small community began to develop nearby. Suffern abandoned the works in 1872.

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<sup>13</sup> *Indigenous peoples.*

<sup>14</sup> *Historical Papers, Issues 12-13, Historical Society of Newburgh Bay and the Highlands.*

In 1795 J.G. Pierson & Brothers relocated their nail manufacturing company to the base of Torne Mountain, where Hillburn now stands. Taking advantage of the plentiful timber, flowing water for steam power and the transportation corridor of Ramapo Pass, Pierson expanded the company to include a cotton mill, and renamed the company in 1822 to the Ramapo Manufacturing Company.

Ramapo Manufacturing Company dissolved with the brothers' passing in 1850, just one year before the Erie Railroad, laid along the Ramapo Pass, was completed. These enterprises had been strong economic drivers in the area, harnessing the proximity to agriculture and commercial trade, and around 1872 George Coffin, George Church and W.W. Snow purchased 20 acres of land from John Suffern to establish a village they called Woodburn for the foundry workers. Over the next four years, roads, homes, a school and a church were built, water was supplied to every home and even a brass band was formed. In 1882, upon applying for a post office, the village found that a place with the same name existed elsewhere in New York and changed its name to Hillburn.

In 1900, much of the foundry operations had moved to Mahwah, but a railroad switch manufacturer called Ramapo Ajax remained in Hillburn until the mid-1930s. The closing of this establishment marked a slow decline in population for the village, however, many of the original residents remained.

According to the nomination form for the Ramapo Central School District<sup>15</sup> Administration building, *"a sizeable black population had developed in Orange and Rockland Counties; in 1870, they had the state's 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> highest percentage of African Americans. As in many older Hudson Valley communities, the region's black population dated back to the colonial period. The managers of the Ramapo Ironworks recruited black workers from the region to fill the labor-intensive positions."* With the influx of these new jobs, Hillburn's community began to grow steadily, and many established homes in the "Hollow".

By 1873, after about 15 houses were completed in Hillburn, the community decided it was time to build a small community hall. Built with local donations on land given by James Suffern, the building served as a church, school and Sunday school. A new school district was created in 1880 in response to the hamlet's growth and a dedicated one room school building was constructed. Hillburn's African-American community centered on Brook Chapel, a Presbyterian Church built in 1877. In addition to its use as a church and Sunday school, the small log building was used as a school during the week. In 1889, the school district allocated funds to construct a new two-room

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<sup>15</sup> The School District, since preparation of that form, is now known as the Suffern Central School District.

frame school next to the Brook Chapel. The Brook Chapel is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places, described further below.

The early 1900s also brought the creation of NYS Route 17, bisecting the village and paralleling NYS Route 59, which was built along the old Ramapo Pass. In 1955, the view of the Ramapo River from Hillburn was forever altered by the construction of the NYS Thruway, further separating portions of the Village from each other.

### 3. Significant Historic Events

In 1943, 11 years before the landmark Supreme Court case *Brown v Board of Education*, Thurgood Marshall brought and won a desegregation challenge to the Village of Hillburn. Marshall represented the parents of colored children in the Village who attended a separate elementary school known as Brooks School while white children attended Hillburn Main School. While the Brooks School building is no longer in existence, the Main School Building, built in 1912 is in use by the Suffern Central School District for administrative purposes.

### 4. Archaeologically Sensitive Areas

The State Historic Preservation Office identifies areas that are “archaeologically sensitive”. These areas are generally within a certain radius of a known archaeological site. The gray areas in the Historic Resources figure are identified as “archaeologically sensitive” – much of these areas are focused along the Ramapo River, which would have been a major resource used by prehistoric groups. Consultation with SHPO should occur for any projects proposed within these areas to ensure that the developments will not impact significant archaeological resources. The size of the circle around which the archaeological is centered indicates the find was significant. Further, additional archaeological investigations should be conducted for the large vacant upland tracts in the Village, as these areas have also been documented to have potential archaeological significance.

### 5. National Register of Historic Places

Within the Village of Hillburn, two properties are listed on the National Register of Historic Places – Brook Chapel (09NR06016), and the Ramapo<sup>16</sup> Central School District Office (15NR00034).

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<sup>16</sup> Now the Suffern School District.

## Brook Chapel



The following narrative is taken from the nomination form submitted to the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) in determining that the site was eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

*"Brook Chapel is a light frame edifice that was constructed in 1893 and expanded to achieve its existing*

*footprint in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, as which time the exterior assumes its present Gothic Revival character. The 1893 building consisted of an L-shaped gable roofed unit, to which subsequently was added a shallow shed-roofed section across the rear elevation to house service facilities, and a front annex - the latter being the current front of the church. The exterior of the building is defined by the steeply pitched roofs, an open belfry, and stained glass windows; the frame is sheathed with horizontal wood novelty siding and fish-scale shingles, the corners of the building trimmed with plain boards. Interior finish work is largely modest and in the worship space includes an early form of beaver board, which sheathes the walls and Gothic-arched ceiling, and oak slip pews reused from a church in Ringwood, NJ." The narrative statement of significance indicates that Brook Chapel was "one of two Presbyterian churches built near the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century to serve the residents of the Hillburn area. The nominated building was erected for use of Hillburn's non-white population, specifically members of the Ramapough Lenape Indian Nation. This ethnic group, the origins of which have been considered in various works including David Cohen's 1974 book *The Ramapo Mountain People*, shares a long association with the two-state Ramapo Mountain region, and established communities in Mahwah and Ringwood, NJ, and Hillburn, NY. It should be noted that the conclusions offered by such historians is not entirely in keeping with this group's own perception of its origins; the group claims a largely Native American ancestry, while historians have long portrayed a mixed-race ethnicity. Brook Chapel was founded by Samuel Edward De Freese, Sr. (1818-1983), who, having arrived in Hillburn from Orange County in 1875, immediately recognized the need for a church to serve the "colored" inhabitants of the hamlet, who had no place to worship previously. De Freese Sr., with assistance from the Reverend George Ford, succeeded with a handful of other Ramapo Indians in gaining acceptance into the Ramapo Presbyterian Church in 1877. Shortly thereafter, as the congregation's numbers grew, a log chapel was constructed, continuing in use until he nominated building was erected in the 1890s. Since its dedication in 1893, Brook Chapel has served as the center of Hillburn's Ramapo Lenape Indian Nation, the nexus of this community's religious and social activities. As such, it was nominated as a Traditional Cultural Property."*



## Suffern Central School District Administration Building



Main School built in 1912, is a two-story hollow tile and concrete building covered in stucco and set on a raised basement. A large central archway dominates the buildings symmetrical, five-bay wide façade (east elevation); a false stone and keystone pattern decorates the arch. A hyphen connects the historic school with two circa 1960 flat-roofed, one-story brick additions. Hillburn's Main School is significant at the state level under Criterion

A in the areas of Law and Social History as the focus of a prominent school desegregation battle in 1943. According to the narrative supporting the National Register nomination: *"Developed by the managers of the local ironworks, Hillburn grew during the late nineteenth century. The community's white residents lived in Hillburn's numerically ordered streets, while the black community lived in the hollow to the west. By 1888, the local school district included a white and black school. In 1912, Main School was built to replace the white community's aging frame school. The light filled, airy concrete and hollow tile school with eight classrooms presented a marked contrast to the small frame Brook School for black students. Over the next several decades, discontent over the unequal, segregated education facilities grew within Hillburn's black community. Both local action and an NAACP appeal failed in 1931, as segregated schools were legal under New York law. When the discriminatory law was overturned in 1938, Hillburn's school board failed to act.*

*In 1943, the Suffern High School a new centralized school which would house 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades for the district, was completed. The change left enough room for all Hillburn's elementary students to attend Main School, but the school board made no move to integrate the Main and Brook Schools. Empowered by improved economic conditions, models of strong female leadership in the community, and examples of successful school boycotts across the northeast, Hillburn's black community decided to take a stand against the school board. A coalition of black parents reached out to the NAACP for legal assistance and coordinated a strike against Brook School. Thurgood Marshall, the young head of the NAACP's legal department, assisted the community with a petition against the school board and appeal to the New York State Board of Education. Just over a month after the strike began, Commissioner George D. Stoddard ruled that Brook School should be closed and that all students, regardless of race, should attend Main School. The decision brought a swift end to one of the last, if not the last, formally segregated schools in New York State. After a few years, integration became a reality at Main School. The events were widely*

*covered by regional, state and national media and the result was a small, but important victory for the NAACP. The battle inspired a bill, a poem, and encouraged white and black activists in the New York region to fight de facto neighborhood segregation in other communities.”*

### Other Properties



Although not listed on the National Register, 41 Fourth Street is a residence identified as eligible for listing.

Listing on the National Register of Historic Places does not protect a building from being altered in a manner which adversely impacts the character of the site or demolishing it. In addition, while SEQRA affords some level of review to a site which is undergoing site plan, subdivision or

special use permit review, sites that are not subject to local land use and SEQRA review are not protected. The best way to protect local landmarks is to adopt a local law identifying and protecting historic buildings and structures.

## 6. Historical Markers

Various historical markers are located throughout the Village, and shown on **Figure 23, Historic Resources**. In general, the Village wishes to preserve remaining historic buildings and structures, rather than relying on a marker documenting what has been removed. To that end, the Comprehensive Plan supports creation of a local historic preservation board, or providing that authority to the Planning Board, in order to protect these important resources before they are lost.



This marker can be found in the park located in the vicinity of Blakeslee Place and Park Avenue. It dedicates the Park to Jean Starr, a life-long resident of the Hillburn community.



This marker can be found along Torne Valley Road, memorializing the Revolutionary War encampments of 1776 and 1777. Entrenchments had been constructed to protect the Ramapo Pass.



This marker is located along old Route 17, marking the location of the Revolutionary War Post at Ramapough or Sidman's Bridge. Interestingly, it is in direct line with the other marker along Torne Valley Road. Troops were encamped along the Ramapo River in these locations – these historic sites have been disturbed by the numerous transportation and infrastructure “improvements” within the Ramapo Pass.





The Thurgood Marshall Memorial Tablet located in front of the Suffern Central School District Administrative Building.



A plaque found by Veterans Park, with a relief of the Snow Mansion which was located in proximity to the pond. A hitching post from the house was preserved in the park.



A marker notes the former location of a historic truss bridge which was removed in 2000.



## 7. Historic Survey

This Comprehensive Plan includes and incorporates the 1997 Historical Sites and Structures Survey prepared by Chuck Stead, and on file at Village Hall. The survey documents the historic properties and buildings within the Village. Any action which is subject to a village board's review should be assessed to determine its potential impact to the resources collected in this building survey.

1997

R/H 145/2/0

The Historical Society of Rockland County  
HISTORIC SITES AND STRUCTURES SURVEY  
Undertaken in connection with The County of Rockland  
and Rockland Biocultural, Inc.

Name of Building/Structure: RAMAPP Block: 16A Lot: 94  
Town: Hillburn Street Address: 30 Sixth St.

Check if site exists on the following:  
☐ Colonial/Stone Region ☐ Division/Trail Use ☐ Other Trail Use ☐ Other Use  
 Done: Source: Census, Jack & Susan

Rate your overall impression of building/site: (1=poor, 2=fair, 3=good, 4=excellent)  
 PLACE PHOTO HERE



*Building 1890 - This Single Victorian is a (original) clapped with fluted decorative gables.*



## 8. Scenic Resources

During preparation of the Comprehensive Plan, a public survey was administered, and residents and property owners were asked to describe the most attractive places within the Village. **Figure 24** illustrates these locations. These resources help define the community identity unique to the Hillburn. There are many of these distinct places, but those that stand out the most to community residents are noted below. The locations that were named the most significant scenic resources include:

- Veterans Memorial Park and its pond, and various monuments and markers to war soldiers and heroes, and remains of the Snow Mansion;



- the Ramapo River, wedged between the NYS Thruway and rail right-of-way and transmission lines in the Village, very much plays a part of the Village's identity;





- Mount Fuji, and the mountain on which it is located, in part because of its visibility, but also the economic benefit it adds to the community;



- Suffern Central School District Administration Building, a National Register of Historic Places for its significance in law and history, as a battle won to end segregation;



- The Mountains ringing the Village, which provide the scenic backdrop to all of the Village's neighborhoods. Ridgelines are an important scenic resource which the Village seeks to protect.





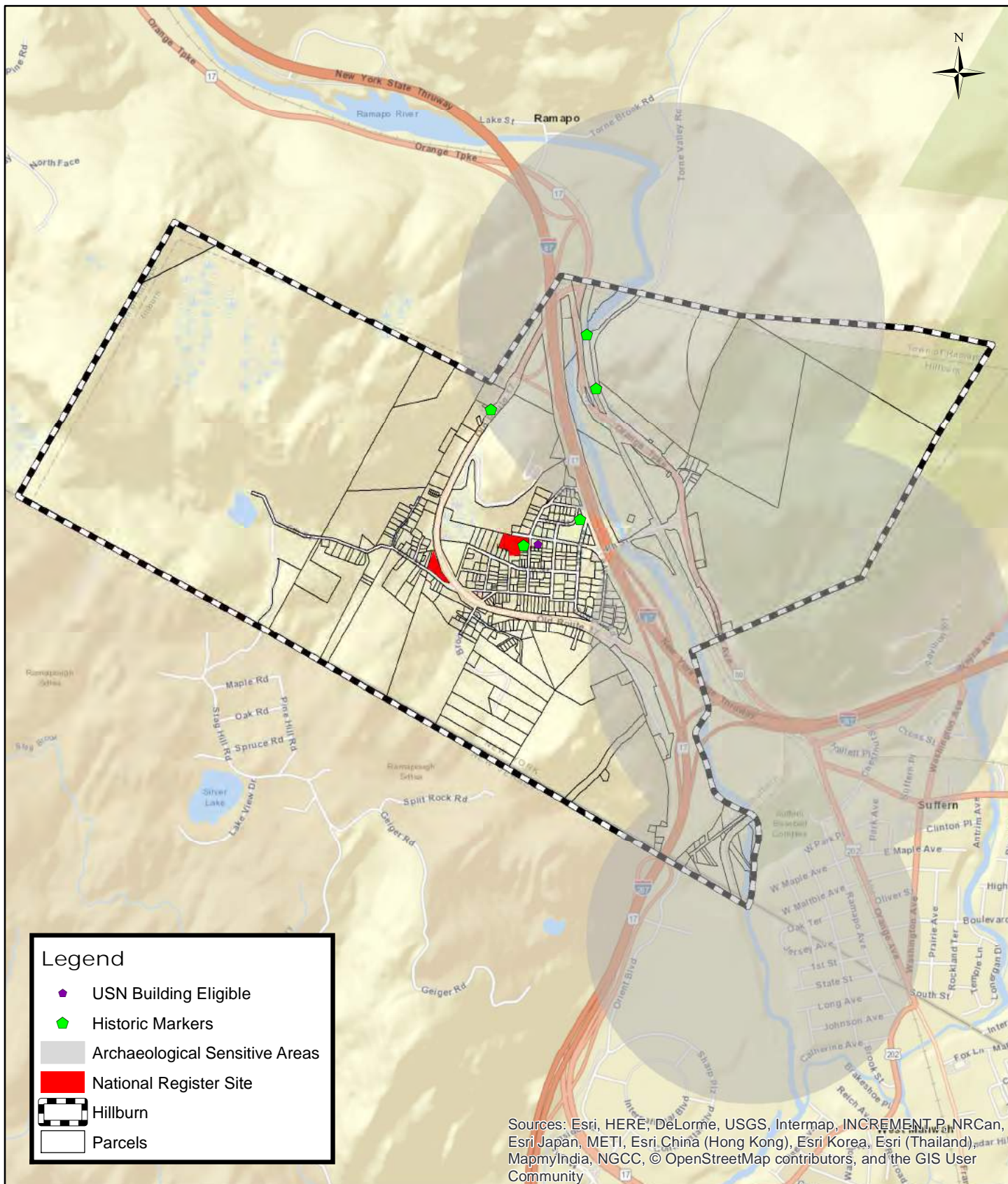


Figure 23  
Historic Resources

Source: ESRI Web Mapping Service;  
Rockland County GIS; Village of Hillburn  
Scale: 1 inch = 1,881.157026 feet

Village of Hillburn



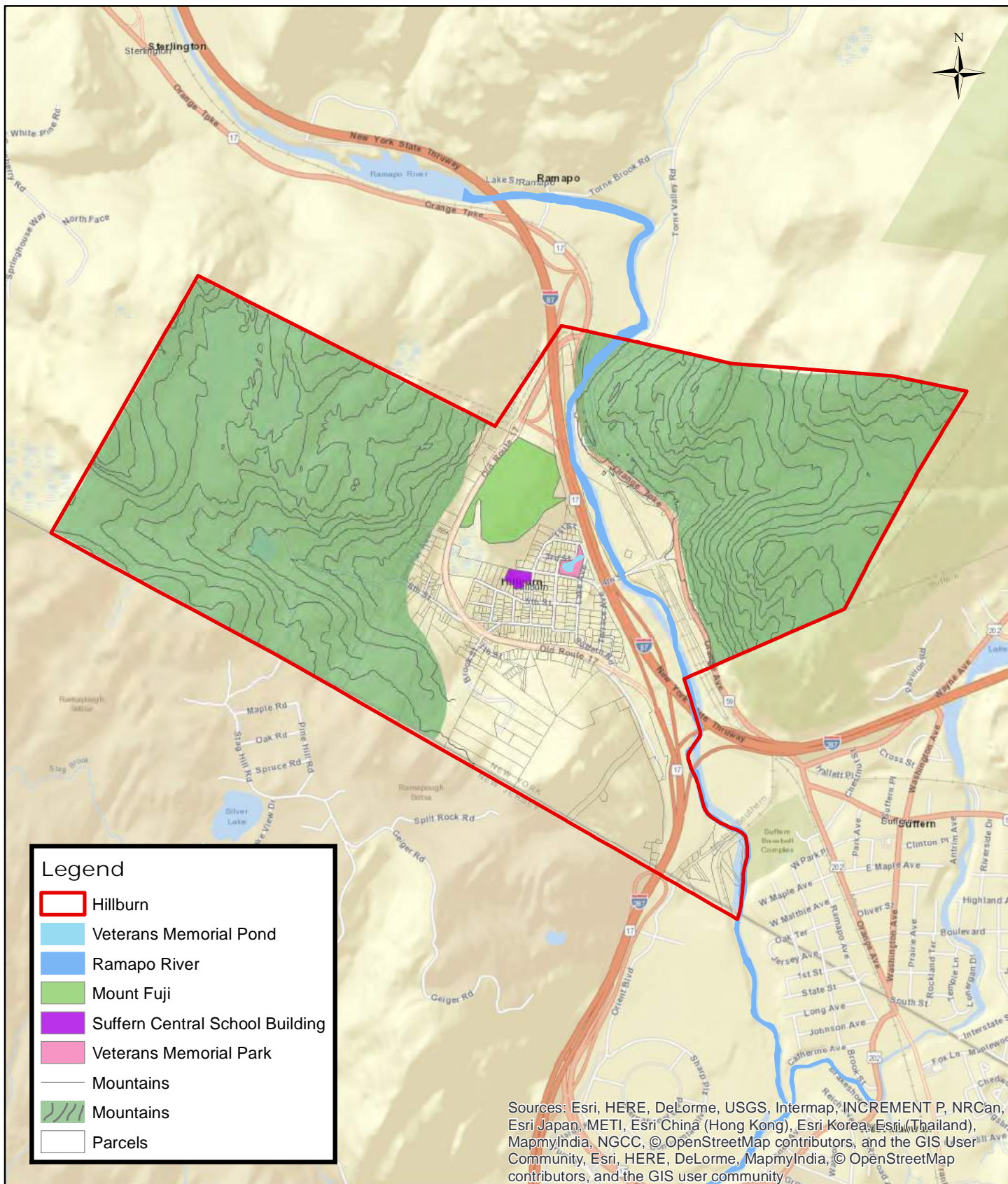


Figure 24  
Scenic Resources

Village of Hillburn

## **E. TRANSPORTATION**

### **1. Transportation Planning**

#### ***Complete Streets***

On August 15, 2011, the Senate Bill S5411A regarding Complete Streets was signed by the Governor and amended the current highway law to add section 331. The Complete Streets addition was intended to achieve a cleaner, greener transportation system and to consider the needs of all users including pedestrian, bicyclists, motorists, users of public transportation, and citizens of all ages and disabilities. This law requires that all state, county, and local transportation projects that are undertaken by the Department of Transportation and projects that receive federal and state funding are subject to this law and must utilize complete street design features in planning, design, construction, reconstruction, and rehabilitation of streets. The legislation is intended to provide health benefits from increasing active forms of transportation while decreasing congestion and air pollution.

Complete Streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users of roads. The New York State Department of Health prepares reports detailing traffic accidents within Rockland County. The most recent report for Rockland County describes traffic accident data from 2007. Within Rockland County there were a total of 2,552 emergency room visits, 192 hospitalizations, and 19 deaths due to traffic accidents in 2007. By incorporating Complete Streets practices, Rockland County and the Village of Hillburn can attempt to increase safety on the roadways.

Complete Streets are inclusive designs that consider the needs of all users rather than heavily focusing on motorists and there are many different techniques that can be utilized to create more complete streets. Some examples of complete street techniques include sidewalks, bike lanes, wide paved shoulders, special bus lanes, accessible public transportation stops, frequent and safe crosswalks, median islands, curb extension, and roundabouts. Implementing Complete Streets can improve safety, encourage walking and bicycling which can improve health, lower transportation costs by providing more cost-effective options, and create strong and livable communities.

### **2. Census Data**

#### ***Commuting Patterns***

The U.S. Census Bureau collects data on commuting or “journey to work” characteristics, including the “means of transportation to work” through the American Community Survey (ACS). While the trip to work data does not encompass all travel trips made by people within the Village of Hillburn, the data can assist in understanding the modal preferences and patterns of people within the Study Area for one of the largest users of transportation: commuters. **Table IV.E-1** below demonstrates commuting data from the 2010 and 2015 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates for the Village of Hillburn.



According to the 2010 and 2015 Five-Year American Community Survey Estimates, the number of workers aged 16 and over declined in the Village of Hillburn by approximately 25 percent from 547 workers in 2010 to 409 workers in 2015. The most common means of transportation to work for both 2010 and 2015 was to drive alone, followed by carpooling and then public transportation. The percentage of workers that drove alone to work remained fairly steady around 70 percent of commuters with only a slight increase of 3.35%. The percentage of people carpooling decreased significantly but was still the second most common means of transportation to work. Use of public transportation and walking to work both increased between 2010 and 2015, while bicycling and other means of transportation remained at zero. The percentage of people working at home also increased from zero to 5.1 percent according to 2015 estimates.

Table IV.E-1 Means of Transportation to Work			
Means of Transportation	2010 ACS 5-Yr Est.	2015 ACS 5-Yr Est.	Percent Change
	Percentage	Percentage	
Workers 16 years old and over	547 workers	409 workers	-25.23%
Drove alone	71.7%	74.1%	+3.35%
Carpooled	20.7%	11.5%	-44.44%
Public Transportation	5.9%	7.1%	+20.34%
Bicycle	0%	0%	-
Walk	1.8%	2.2%	+22.22%
Other Means	0%	0%	-
Worked at Home	0%	5.1%	Cannot be defined
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.1%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>-</i>
<i>Source: 2010 5-Year ACS, 2015 5-Year ACS Commuting Characteristics</i>			

### Travel Time to Work

The American Community Survey collects data regarding residents' travel time to work and this data is recorded in the ACS five-year estimates. The travel time to work data for Hillburn is shown in **Table IV.E-2**. Within Hillburn, the average travel time to work increased from 24.4 minutes in 2010 to 27.5 minutes in 2015 (a change of 3.1 minutes). In 2010, a commute time between 30 and 44 minutes was the most common with nearly 28 percent of residents, followed by commutes times of 10-19 minutes (25.5%), 20-29 minutes (20.7%), under ten minutes (12.6%), over one hour (7.1%), and finally 45-59 minutes (6.8%). According to the 2015 ACS estimate, a commute time of 10-19 minutes was the most common (32.5%), followed by 30-44 minutes

(22.5%), 20-29 minutes (16.8%), over one hour (13.9%), less than ten minutes (10.6%), and finally 45-59 minutes (3.9%).

Between 2010 and 2015, a commute time of over one hour increased the most with an approximately 95.77 percent increase. A commute time of 10-19 minutes also grew significantly, while all other categories decreased. The 45-59 minute commute category experienced a nearly 43 percent decrease while the 20-29 minute and 30-44 minute groups both experienced an approximately 18 percent decrease. The less than ten minute commute time group decreased approximately 16 percent from 12.6 percent of the population in 2010 to 10.6 percent of the population in 2015.

Table IV.E-2 Travel Time to Work			
Travel Time	2010 ACS 5-Yr Est.	2015 ACS 5-Yr Est.	Percent Change
	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage
Less than 10 minutes	12.6%	10.6%	- 15.87%
10 – 19 minutes	25.2%	32.5%	+28.97%
20 – 29 minutes	20.7%	16.8%	-18.84%
30 – 44 minutes	27.6%	22.5%	-18.48%
45 – 59 minutes	6.8%	3.9%	-42.65%
60 minutes and over	7.1%	13.9%	+95.77%
Total	100%	100.2%	-
Mean travel time (minutes)	24.4	27.5	+ 3.1 minutes (+12.7%)
Source: 2010 5-Year ACS, 2015 5-Year ACS			

### 3. Roads

#### ***NYS DOT Functional Classification***

In New York, roadways are grouped into “functional classes” by the New York State Department of Transportation according to the level and character of service they provide. A roadway’s classification defines its importance within the overall network and is used to determine which roads are eligible for federal funding under the Federal Highway Administration Surface Transportation Program. The New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) prepares Functional Class Maps for the entire NY State roadway system. Within the system, there are six

classifications of roads: Principal Arterial Interstate, Principal Arterial Expressway, Principal Arterial, Minor Arterial, Major Collector, Minor Collector, and Local. However, within Hillburn there is only a combination of Principal Arterial Interstates, Principal Arterials, Minor Arterials, Major Collectors, and Local Roads. All roadway classifications are Federal Aid eligible, except for Local roads. Additionally, the NYSDOT Functional Class Maps also classifies urban areas and the entire Village of Hillburn is within a designated urban area. Within the Village of Hillburn there are nearly 13 miles of roads; however, approximately 5.28 of these miles are classified by the New York State Department of Transportation. **Table IV.E-3** below and **Figure 25, NYS DOT Functional Classifications** indicate the hierarchical classification and location of roads within the Town.

**Principal Arterial Interstate:** Out of the 5.28 miles of roadways with functional classifications, approximately 1.46 miles (28%) are classified as Principal Arterial Interstates. The sections of the New York State Thruway 87 and US Interstate 287 that are within the Village are both classified as Principal Arterial Interstates. The New York State Thruway 87 runs primarily north-south throughout the Village and includes three lanes in either direction with lanes separated by a median. Interstate 287 is located in the southeast corner of the Village and contains an interchange between I-287 and NY 87 within the Village.

Table IV.E-3 Functional Classification of Roads		
Functional Class	Miles	Percent
Principal Arterial Interstate	1.46	28%
Principal Arterial	0.42	8%
Minor Arterial	0.64	12%
Major Collector	2.76	52%
<b>Total Roads with Functional Classification</b>	<b>5.28</b>	100%
<i>Source: NYS Functional Class Viewer and GIS Analyses</i>		

**Principal Arterial:** Approximately 8 percent of the classified roadways are considered Principal Arterials including the segment of Route 59 (Orange Turnpike) that is south of Fourth Street. Within Hillburn this roadway is primarily one lane in both directions and provides access to retail facilities located along Orange Turnpike.



**Minor Arterial:** Approximately 12 percent of classified roads or 0.64 miles of roadways are considered Minor Arterials. The segment of Route 59 (Orange Turnpike) that is north of Fourth Street is classified as a Minor Arterial.

**Major Collector:** Major Collector was the most common classification for roadways within Hillburn. Route 17, Fourth Street, Sixth Street, Mountain Avenue, Brook Street, and segments of 287 are classified as Major Collectors.

#### ***NYS DOT Traffic Data***

One factor that contributes to the determination of a roadway's classification is its average daily traffic volume. The NYSDOT's Engineering Division collects traffic volume data for 8,000 – 10,000 locations per year, including several road segments within the Village of Hillburn. The AADT estimation process allows the user to be 95% confident that the estimated AADT is within +/- 10% of the actual value. The traffic counts, or estimated Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT), for these roads was last updated in 2015 and are shown in **Figure 26, NYS DOT Average Annual Daily Traffic Count**.

Approximately 6.25 miles of roads within the Village of Hillburn have associated AADT values. Interstates 87 and 287 have the highest AADT values ranging from nearly 50,000 vehicles to over 110,000 vehicles. Route 59 (Orange Turnpike) also experiences heavy traffic with nearly 13,000 vehicles per day. Route 17 experience a variety of traffic levels ranging from 3,300 to nearly 6,000 vehicles per day. Fourth Street is also fairly well traveled with an AADT value of nearly 2,000 vehicles due to it providing a connection between Orange Turnpike and the area of the Village that is west of 87. Mountain Avenue and Sixth Street experienced AADT values of around 550 vehicles.

#### **4. Passenger Rail Service**

The Village of Hillburn is accessible by rail transportation through the New Jersey Transit Main/Bergen-Port Jervis Line. Although there are not any train stations within the Village of Hillburn, the Sloatsburg and Suffern Railroad Stations are located just outside the Village. The Suffern Train Station is about 5 minutes to the southeast of Hillburn and is located on Chestnut Street in Suffern. The Sloatsburg Train Station is about 4 miles northwest of the Village or an approximately ten-minute drive. The Main/Bergen-Port Jervis Line provides service between Port Jervis and Hoboken, New Jersey with numerous stops in both New York and New Jersey which increases connectivity between Hillburn and the surrounding area.

#### **5. Bus Transportation**

Rockland County operates the Transport of Rockland (TOR) local bus service which provides 10 bus routes throughout the County. TOR Route 93 provides service from Pearl River to Sloatsburg

and includes a station in Hillburn at Mountain Avenue and 4<sup>th</sup> Street, as well as bus stops in Pearl River, Nanuet, Hillcrest, Rockland Community College, Suffern, and Sloatsburg. On weekdays and Saturdays, Route 93 provides 13 eastbound services and 14 westbound services. On Sundays, there are 9 eastbound and westbound services at the Hillburn Station.

Additionally, just outside the southeast boundary of the Village of Hillburn there are multiple TOR bus routes operating from the Suffern Railroad Station including Routes 59 and 93, Loop 3 and the Tappan ZExpress. TOR Route 59 provides service to Nyack, Palisades Center, Nanuet Mall, Spring Valley Transit Center, Monsey, Rockland Community College, Airmont, and Suffern. The Tappan ZExpress (TZx) is a commuter bus service in Rockland County that provides service to locations in Rockland County, as well as some locations in Westchester in order to provide access to major activity centers and Metro-North Train Stations. Loop 3 is a Rockland County bus route that provides service between Suffern/Chestnut Street to Spring Valley and makes 13 stops including at apartment complexes, medical services, Suffern Library and Rockland Community College.

Rockland County also operates the TRIPS (Transportation Resources, Intra-county, for Physically disabled and Senior citizens) bus service for seniors over 60 years old and residents with physical, mental, developmental or intellectual disabilities. The TRIPS service is available on weekdays and Saturdays by appointment. The purpose of TRIPS is to provide services for individuals who cannot utilize municipal fixed route services.

## 6. Air Transportation

The Village of Hillburn does not contain any airports within the Village but residents can utilize airports in both New York and New Jersey. In New York, the Stewart International Airport is located approximately 35 miles north of the Village in New Windsor. Stewart International Airport is operated by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. Randall Airport is about an hour drive or 45 miles away from Hillburn. Randall Airport is a public use airport located in Orange County. Westchester County Airport is approximately 33 miles east of Hillburn. This airport is served by four passenger airlines including American Airlines, Cape Air, Delta, Jet Blue, United, and Tradewind Aviation.

Residents can also utilize airports in New Jersey including Lincoln Park Airport and Teterboro Airport. Lincoln Park Airport is located in Lincoln Park New Jersey and is approximately 25 minutes or 20 miles south of the Village of Hillburn. Lincoln Park Airport is a privately owned, public use airport that is categorized as a general aviation reliever airport. Additionally, Teterboro Airport is located approximately 22 miles south of Hillburn in Teterboro, New Jersey. Teterboro is also considered a reliever airport with the purpose of removing smaller and slower aircraft from regional airports to reduce air traffic at major airports.

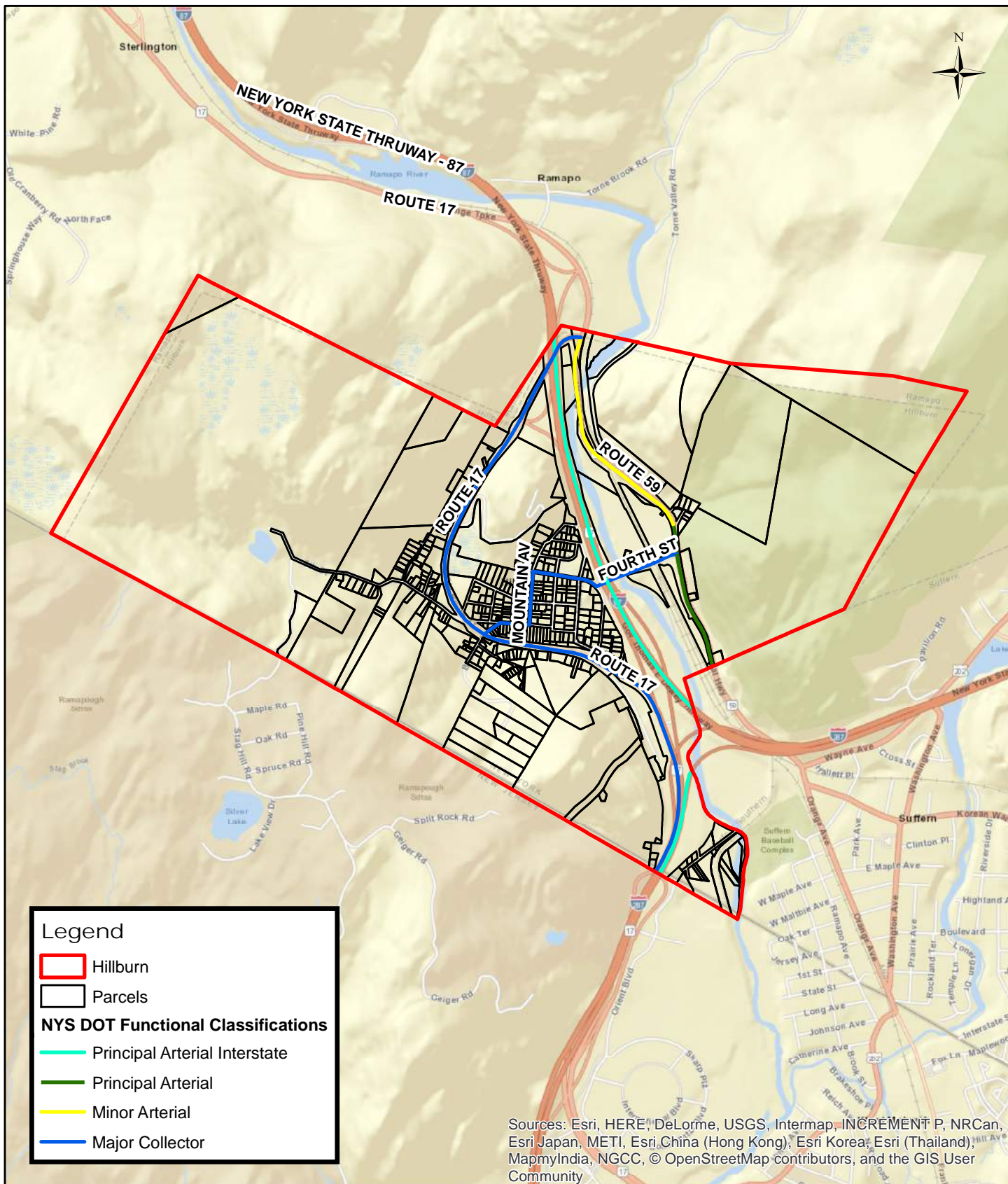
## 7. Pedestrian

Within the Village of Hillburn, many streets feature pedestrian amenities, such as sidewalks. Segments of Orange Turnpike, Fourth Street, Fifth Street, Sixth Street, Terrace Avenue, Rockland Avenue, Mountain Avenue, and Lake Avenue contain sidewalks; however, the condition of the sidewalks varies throughout the Village. Some roads or segments of roads that do not contain sidewalks have wide shoulders which could be improved with sidewalks to improve walkability. According to Walk Score, the Village currently has a score of 12 which indicates that the Village is car-dependent and almost all errands require a car.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> <https://www.walkscore.com/score/village-of-hillburn-ny>





**Figure 25**  
NYS DOT **Functional Classifications**

Source: ESRI Web Mapping Service;  
Rockland County GIS; NYS DOT  
Scale: 1 inch = 2,000 feet

Village of Hillburn

## **F. COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES**

The Village of Hillburn residents, businesses owners, and visitors rely on community service providers that provide an important and critical component of Village day-to-day operations. The quality of life within any community is defined in part by the quality of services afforded to its citizens. Community facility locations within the Village are shown on **Figure 27**.

### **1. Governmental Services**

#### ***Village Government***

The Village of Hillburn is an incorporated village within the Town of Ramapo, Rockland County, New York. This 2.2 square mile community is located in the northwestern corner of the Town of Ramapo. Hillburn is bounded by the Palisades Interstate Park System to the northeast, the Village of Suffern to the east, Mahwah, New Jersey to the South, and the unincorporated Town of Ramapo to the west.

Hillburn Village Hall is located at 31 Mountain Avenue, Hillburn. Governmental services are administered by a Mayor, and the Village is governed by two Town Trustees. The Village has a Clerk-Treasurer, Deputy Clerk/Court Clerk, Clerk-Typist, Village Justice, Acting Village Justice, Village Attorney, Village Engineer, Village Planner, DPW Supervisor, and a Building/Fire Inspector. Hillburn Village Court is also located at 31 Mountain Avenue.

The administration of the day-to-day function of the Village is performed through a combination of Village and Town-administered programs and services. Village functions include but are not limited to: the enactment of local laws; building inspection and code enforcement; site plan and subdivision review; board of appeals, highway maintenance of local roads, garbage and trash pickup, tax assessment, billing and collection, and; senior citizen programs. The Town of Ramapo administers policing. The Ramapo Police Department is located in Town Hall on NYS Route 59 in the Village of Airmont.

#### ***Department of Public Works (DPW)***

Water in the Village of Hillburn is supplied by Suez water. The Village of Hillburn Department of Public Works is responsible for the maintenance of the water supply infrastructure within the Village, and DPW employees read the water meters.

The Village is part of the Rockland County Sewer System. An advanced wastewater treatment plant capable of processing 1.5 million gallons per day was built within the Village near the intersection of Route 17 and Suffern Road. Sewer construction within the Village is complete and 70 percent of the residences within the Village of Hillburn are connected to the system as of April 2017. It is anticipated that 100 percent will connect. The system consists of four pump stations

and a force main. Two of these pump stations are located within Village boundaries, one on the fourth street bridge, and one on Torne Valley road

The Department of Public Works plows and maintains the Village roads within the Village of Hillburn. Larger road maintenance projects, such as resurfacing, are provided by a subcontractor. The New York State Department of Transportation maintains and plows Routes 17 and 59 within the Village. There were some discussions with New York State that the Village would take over maintenance of these roads, however, the Village does not have the proper equipment to allow this at the present time. In addition to road maintenance and cleaning, the Village DPW cleans and maintains Memorial Park, the Youth Center Park and a small play area located in East Hillburn at the intersection of Park Avenue and Blakeslee Place.

The Village provides pick up for the recycling of bottles, paper and cardboard on Mondays, and collects bulk trash every third Monday. Regular trash collection is contracted out to Menichetti Carting with collections on Monday and Thursday.

### ***Federal Facilities***

The United States Postal Service maintains an office at 27 Rockland Avenue.

## **2. Fire Protection**

Fire services for the Village are provided by the Hillburn Fire Company, which is located at 37 5<sup>th</sup> Street, and is within Fire District #5. The Department has not reported any difficulty in responding to calls. The District has two fire engines, a pumper/rescue, brush truck and approximately 25 volunteer members available to respond to calls. It is anticipated that within ten years a new fire house and a replacement for the brush truck will be needed

## **3. Ambulance Protection**

Ambulance services are provided by the Ramapo Valley Ambulance Corps, located on Route 59 in the Village of Airmont. It is anticipated that the Corps will continue to serve the Village. The Village has not expressed any issues or problems with existing ambulance service. The Ramapo Valley Ambulance Corps is the primary provider of services to the Village. It is a volunteer service, although during the day paid Emergency Medical Technicians are employed by the Corps. Rockland Mobile Care provides specialty transportation services, such as transportation to dialysis appointments or transfers between medical facilities.

## **4. Medical Services**

Good Samaritan Hospital is located in the Village of Suffern. Good Samaritan Hospital, is a non-profit, 286-bed hospital providing emergency, medical, surgical, obstetrical/gynecological and acute care services to residents of Rockland and southern Orange Counties in New York; and



northern Bergen County, New Jersey. The hospital serves these communities as an Area Level II Trauma Center.

Good Samaritan Hospital provides regional specialty services, including comprehensive cancer treatment services, and the first and only cardiovascular program in the lower Hudson Valley area which includes open heart surgery, a cardiac catheterization laboratory, emergency angioplasty, electrophysiology studies, and a pacemaker clinic. Good Samaritan offers a Wound Care Center, maternal/child services, including a high level II special care nursery and the Children's Diagnostic Center, which utilizes services of pediatric subspecialists from Westchester Medical Center.

The hospital also provides social, psychiatric and substance abuse services for the area and kidney dialysis services through its Frank and Fannie Weiss Renal Center. Good Samaritan Hospital's Certified Home Care Agency provides home health care service to the residents of Rockland and Orange Counties, New York.

#### 5. Police Protection

The Village of Hillburn does not have its own local police force. Protection services are provided by the Town of Ramapo, the Rockland County Sheriff's Office and the New York State Park Police - Palisades Region. Troop F of the New York State Police patrol the state highways within the Village.

##### ***Town of Ramapo Police Department***

Police protection in Hillburn is provided by the Town of Ramapo Police Department, located at 237 Route 59 in the Village of Airmont, New York. The Police Department serves 126,000 residents in the Town of Ramapo and its force consists of 105 police officers. The Town of Ramapo Police Department has responsibility for patrolling the portion of Route 17 within the Village boundaries, and patrols 68 square miles within the Town of Ramapo. The services provided by the Police Department include patrol, a detective bureau, a youth bureau, a community response team, records division, community policing, two DARE officers, two resource officers and an Honor Guard.

The force includes canine officers, a sketch artist, detective bureau, plainclothes bureau, and a bicycle unit. Patrol officers are equipped with Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs), and Narcan for emergency treatment of opioid overdoses. Officers of the Ramapo Police Department are assigned to the Special Investigation unit at the Rockland District Attorney's office and an officer, and sergeant are assigned to the Rockland County Intelligence task force. A lieutenant and sergeant and four or five officers are trained in accident investigation units. The Police Department conducts a police youth academy twice a year, has a summer intern program, an adopt a cop program which is geared towards third graders, wherein each elementary school has

an officer assigned to them who visits the school, and goes on field trips with students to get them acquainted with police officers. There is a pedestrian safety program. The department provides Spanish, Creole, Hungarian, Polish, and Arabic interpreters.

***Rockland County Sheriff's Office and NYS Police***

The Rockland County's Sherriff's Department is a police agency at the County level and is responsible for the protection of county properties, roads, thoroughfares, holdings and interests. The New York State Police Troop F, with headquarters in Middletown, NY, are primarily responsible for patrolling NYS Route 87/287. Although they do have the power to patrol and enforce laws on all roads in New York State they primarily rely on the Ramapo Police Department to handle enforcement in the Village of Hillburn.

New York State Police – Palisades Region provide police services within Harriman State Park.

**6. Schools**

Public educational services, from pre-kindergarten to Grade 12, are provided by the Ramapo Central School District. The Ramapo Central School District office is located at 45 Mountain Avenue, Hillburn, however there are no public schools in the Village of Hillburn, and students attend schools located in Suffern, New York. For the 2015-16 academic year, a total of 4,868 children were enrolled in Ramapo Central's elementary, middle school and high schools; of these 3,324 attend schools utilized by the Village of Hillburn. The district serves students residing in the Rockland County communities of Airmont, Hillburn, Montebello, Sloatsburg, Suffern, Tallman, and part of Monsey.

The schools in the district are as follows

- Viola Elementary School, 557 Route 202, Suffern, NY 10901, K through 5<sup>th</sup> Grade
- Pre-Kindergarten Early Learning Program available for all Ramapo Central residents turning 4 years old by December 2017.
- Richard P Connor Elementary: 13 Cypress Road, Suffern, NY 10901 K through 5<sup>th</sup> grade
- Suffern Middle School: 80 Hemion Road, Suffern, NY 10901, 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade
- Suffern Senior High: 49 Viola Road, Suffern, NY 10901: 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade

Enrollment trends for the schools serving the Village of Hillburn in the Ramapo district are illustrated in **Table IV.F-1** and show a decline in enrollments. Students entering kindergarten have declined by 43 from the 2011-2012 school year to the 2015-2016 school year, a decline of 28 percent. Overall K-12 student enrollment has declined from 3517 students in 2011-2012 to 3324 students in 2015-2016, a decline of 5.5 percent.

Table IV.F-1 School Enrollment Trend –Students Attending Suffern School District						
Grade	2011- 2012	2012 – 2013	2013- 2014	2014- 2015	2015- 2016	Change 2011 - 2016
Pre-Kindergarten (full day)	432	414	420	388	366	-66
Kindergarten	154	128	141	112	111	- 43
First Grade	142	152	129	144	115	- 27
Second Grade	149	149	147	125	150	+ 1
Third Grade	153	151	150	146	124	- 29
Fourth Grade	145	157	155	145	145	0
Fifth Grade	172	146	152	157	152	- 20
Sixth Grade	366	359	316	344	355	- 11
Seventh Grade	378	367	353	313	354	- 24
Eighth Grade	374	379	360	349	324	- 50
Ninth Grade	388	386	371	358	366	- 22
Eleventh Grade	350	377	372	393	370	+ 20
Tenth Grade	381	383	398	372	365	- 16
Twelfth Grade	365	332	371	365	387	+ 22
Ungraded Elementary	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ungraded Secondary	0	6	8	8	6	+ 6
Total K – 12 enrollment	3,517	3,466	3,423	3,323	3,324	- 193
Source: NYSED, 2017.						

## 7. Library Services

Library services are provided by the Suffern Free Library, a new facility located at 210 Lafayette Avenue in Suffern. The mission statement of the library states “the Suffern Free Library, at the heart of our community, shall provide resources, services and programs to support learning and enhance discovery so that all succeed”. The library loans books, music, videos, provides ereaders and digital recordings of books, and offers many programs for the community. The Library is a member of the Ramapo Catskill Library System.

## 8. Village Parks and Recreation

The facilities at the Hillburn Youth Center, located at 77 5<sup>th</sup> Street include a gymnasium and other multi-purpose rooms. A playground and ballfield are located on the grounds. The Center offers an after-school program, arts and crafts and an enrichment program, an exercise club, an indoor soccer night, basketball night, teen night and a summer camp program

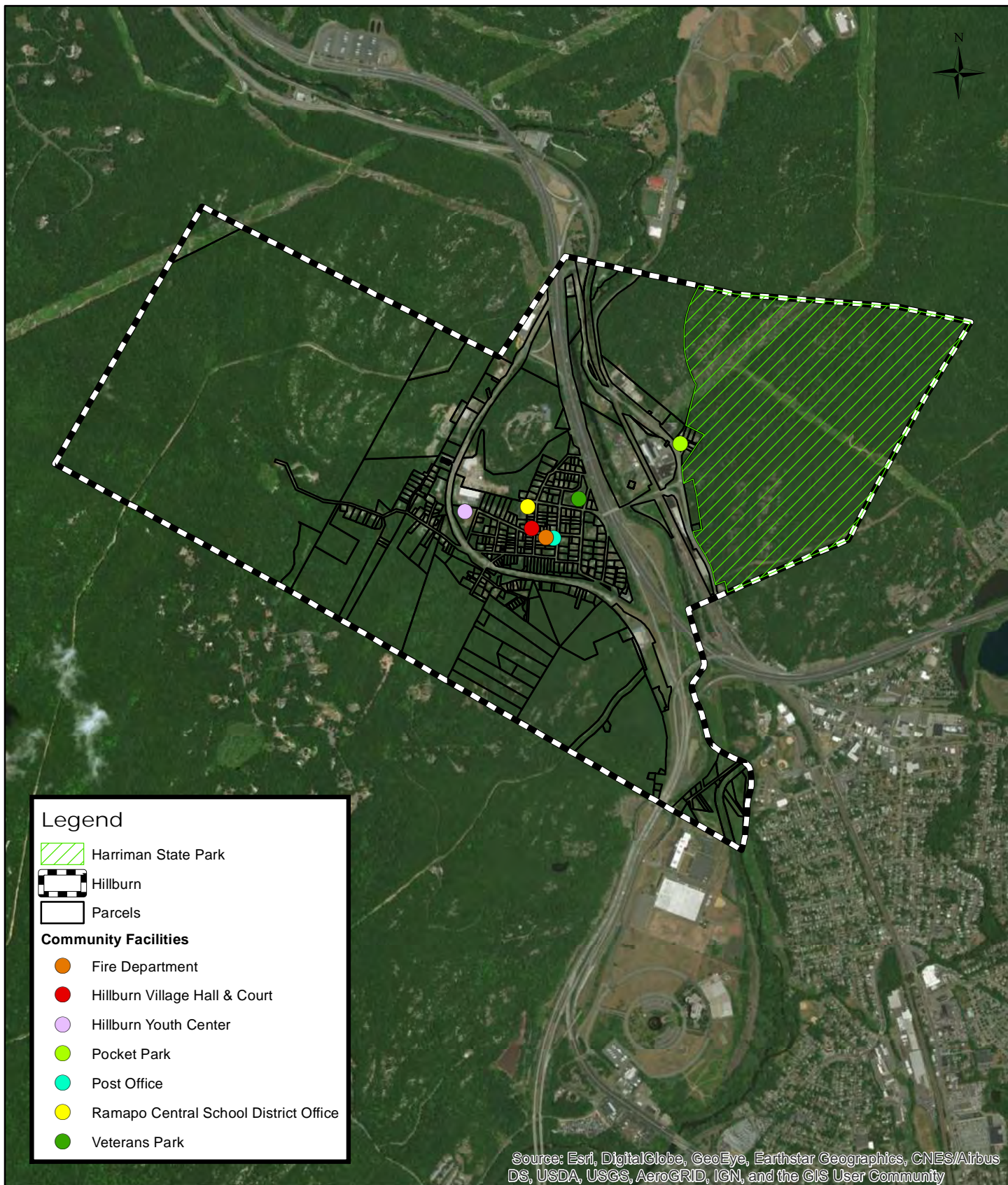
Veterans Park, located on the northwest corner of Fourth Street and Lake Avenue, is the Village’s only public park. The park’s amenities include a veterans’ memorial, a small pond with a fountain, gazebo and park benches.



A small Village play area is located at the intersection of Park Avenue and Blakeslee Place in East Hillburn.

#### 9. State Parks

Harriman State Park borders the Village of Harriman, and a portion of the park is located within Village boundaries. Harriman State Park is the second-largest park in the New York State Parks system, and has extensive hiking trails, lakes, reservoirs, streams, two beaches, two public camping areas, camping areas, scenic roadways, and a diversity of wildlife species.



## V. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

Once the Comprehensive Plan has been adopted, it is the Village Board's responsibility to implement the Comprehensive Plan. While the precise timing will depend upon available resources, etc., this general schedule provides a framework by which the community can track its progress. This section of the Comprehensive Plan lists the action items to be pursued upon adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. The time horizon for this Comprehensive Plan is 10 years. Short-term (S) actions should be implemented within 1-2 years of the Comprehensive Plan's adoption, medium-term (M) actions should be pursued within 3-5 years of adoption, and long-term (L) actions are to be pursued over the next 6-10 years. Ongoing actions (O) are those actions which will recur, e.g., the Planning Board may undertake an action item every time there is a new development application.

All actions involve input and or action by the Hillburn Village Board, and may also involve other local, county or state agencies. Many of the recommendations propose revisions to the Village's zoning law.

VILLAGE OF HILLBURN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX		
Recommendations and Objectives	How To Accomplish	Timeframe
<b>Community Character</b>		
Maintain and improve property values.	Adopt property maintenance codes and ensure that all properties are maintained so that a non-maintained property does not have deleterious effects on its neighbors.	S
Preserve and enhance features that reflect the existing character, history, and natural beauty of the Village.	There are features and attributes that make the Village unique, from its historic markers and historic buildings, to stone walls and architectural consistency of design. These features need to be protected and emulated whenever new development is proposed.	O
Support the community's cultural diversity.	Hillburn has a unique history and traditions built upon its unique cultural diversity which encompasses many races and religions. The Village seeks to protect its existing cultural diversity. This should be considered in all Board decisions.	O
Ensure that new development, including new and altered residential and nonresidential buildings, are architecturally designed to "fit" and be compatible with the Village's high-	Create an Architectural Review Board in the zoning chapter.	S



VILLAGE OF HILLBURN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX		
Recommendations and Objectives	How To Accomplish	Timeframe
quality residential neighborhoods and is reviewed and approved by the Village.		
Create and adopt design guidelines to maintain the small-scale character of much of the Village and enhance the architectural features currently found on older, historic buildings.	Develop architectural design guidelines.	S-M
Ensure that new development and alterations are designed in a manner consistent with and protective of the Village's historic character by inventorying the historic buildings within the Village, and adopting a local landmark law to protect same, including any proposed demolitions.	Create a Historic Review Board as part of the zoning chapter.	S
Enhance visually the Village's gateway entrances.	Obtain funding and add improvements which would add landscaping, sidewalks, street trees, and other streetscape elements to create attractive entries into the Village.	S-M
	Allow landscape architects or contractors or other businesses to sponsor the creation and/or maintenance of a gateway in return for allowing a small attractive sign identifying the sponsor.	S-M
Protect the Village from zombie properties.	Actively review the NYS Department of Financial Services Vacant and Abandoned Property Database for properties which are not being maintained and ensure that these properties are being entered into the database system, and that the agents responsible for these properties maintain them.	O
	Consider enacting a zombie properties law to enforce maintenance by the owner/agent at the local level.	S
Require the preparation of a cultural resource (historic and archaeological) study to document a proposed	Planning Board will require as part of development applications, and will consult with the State Historic Preservation Office during the review process	O

VILLAGE OF HILLBURN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX		
Recommendations and Objectives	How To Accomplish	Timeframe
development application's impact on archaeological and historic resources.	A specific objective is to be added to the zoning chapter identifying the need to review historic and archaeological impacts in conjunction with development application review.	S
Implement landscaping standards to ensure all developments are revegetated in a manner that protects and promotes positive aesthetic qualities and utilizes native species.	Add landscape standards to the zoning chapter.	S
Implement lighting standards that balance the need for safety during evening hours with the intent to protect the dark night sky conditions.	Add lighting standards to the zoning chapter.	S
<b>Residential Neighborhoods</b>		
Support the construction of additional single-family detached dwellings in appropriate locations.	Should any of these public lands become available for private development, it is the Village's intent that these constrained lands be developed with single family detached dwellings at a density which reflects the challenging nature of remaining lands consistent with the Open Space Residential Land Use Area.	O
Explore developing the former reservoir property in a very limited manner for a senior residential development.	This will be considered by the Village of Hillburn at the appropriate time for senior housing.	L
Encourage the creation of senior citizen housing opportunities.	As part of a TOD development, require that a percent of the housing be set aside for senior citizens of the community, and other members. The Village is also receptive to opportunities which may introduce senior housing into appropriate locations within the community.	M-L
Enforce property maintenance.	Nonresidential properties require inspection and monitoring to ensure that they are maintained in a way that does not encroach upon residential uses, whether by noise, air, or pollutant emissions.	O
	Require additional setbacks, screening, and buffers to protect residential uses from	S

VILLAGE OF HILLBURN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX		
Recommendations and Objectives	How To Accomplish	Timeframe
	neighboring nonresidential uses as part of the zoning chapter.	
Promote affordable home ownership opportunities within the Village.	Allow a TOD concept which would set aside a certain percentage of housing as affordable, with priority given to existing Village residents, employees, and volunteers.	M-L
	Rehabilitate existing deteriorated homes for single family ownership.	O
<b>Economic Development</b>		
Promote economic development and support only those nonresidential uses that will not operate in a manner that impacts the Village's residential neighborhoods through generation of unacceptable levels of pollutant emissions, noise, traffic, night lighting, and other effects.	Nonresidential properties in all nonresidential zones can be disruptive. Performance standards will be applied to all nonresidential uses in the Village, regardless of zoning district.	S
Create a very limited Village Center retail area for Hillburn as a gathering place for existing and future Village residents which includes the Village's governmental and emergency services, the post office, and could introduce a deli and limited, select types of retail uses which do not operate in a manner that would impact the surrounding residential neighborhoods.	Create a small zone which acknowledges the existing multifamily residences that are located here, and which allows very limited nonresidential uses, which could include a deli or an artisan shop/gallery.	S
Encourage small scale local retail opportunities within the Village in existing nonresidential areas along Route 17 and where they presently exist.	Establish a transitional area along old Route 17 between its existing residential neighborhoods and the more intensive uses that exist and could occur closer to Interchange 15A. This area is envisioned to be developed for local shopping uses, with small scale/format buildings that could accommodate local retail, restaurant, and personal service uses.	S
Encourage environmentally responsible businesses which will operate in a manner that protects the Village's	The Village is located over the Ramapo Sole Source Aquifer, and over its long history, there have been uses conducted along the River which have resulted in contaminants	O

VILLAGE OF HILLBURN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX		
Recommendations and Objectives	How To Accomplish	Timeframe
underlying water and woodland resources.	Discourage expansion of large-scale nonresidential uses within the Village, and encourage redevelopment of those properties which are situated in readily developable areas for uses which are consistent with this Plan.	
Attract higher wage, environmentally friendly businesses along NYS Route 59 and the old Route 17 corridors.	Create a visitor-oriented, commercial experience which could include a hotel and destination type commercial use. A museum for native American arts and history center, a grocery store, office uses, and other similar uses are envisioned as examples.	O
Introduce additional uses within appropriate nonresidential zoning districts, including arts and crafts retailers, a museum, native arts and history center, organic health food store, delis, restaurants, grocery store, retail uses and office uses.	With the decommissioning of Route 17 as a state highway, a greater variety of uses will be introduced which could be accommodated along this now local road as part of the zoning amendments	S
Explore the potential adaptive reuse of existing older residential buildings with frontage along Route 17 into restaurant, office or retail uses, provided that the existing residential building character is maintained.	Consider zoning small clusters of existing dwellings to be reused for mixed uses or select nonresidential uses, provided the residential character of the buildings are preserved. These could include restaurant, retail, or office type uses. Similar zoning has been in place in other communities where properties front to existing or former county and state highways.	M
Support existing local businesses.	Local residents should support existing local businesses that cater to them in order for those businesses to flourish, which will keep employment opportunities in the Village, and will continue to support the Village's tax base.	O
<b>Natural Resources</b>		
When reviewing developments, require that the density or intensity of development reflects the environmentally sensitive features which may be present, by excluding	As per Section 250-17M of the Village Zoning Chapter, certain environmental constraints are to be subtracted when determining the residential density or nonresidential intensity of any development. As part of any zoning	S



VILLAGE OF HILLBURN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX		
Recommendations and Objectives	How To Accomplish	Timeframe
these sensitive resources when determining development potential.	revisions, there should be a statement that in addition to subtracting these environmental constraints, the reviewing board will also seek to minimize disturbance to same.	
Create a trail for walking, biking, fishing, and other recreational purposes that links the Village with the Ramapo River, adjoining trails, and major recreational facilities in the Village's vicinity, by working cooperatively with existing landowners to acquire land and easements along one or both sides of the River.	Opportunities exist to introduce a trail which utilizes portions of the river corridor for such a system, and where additional connections using adjoining private land and public rights-of-way is necessary.	O
	During utility expansion proposal reviews, the Village should work to obtain an easement or access to the river.	O
	Establish a regular working dialogue with the NYS Department of Transportation to achieve this objective, since much of the river is within state highway rights-of-way. Review of aerial photos show that trails and paths already exist along the river corridor - these same paths and trails could be multi-purpose and for the benefit of the public to gain access to the river.	O
Require a 100-foot buffer on both sides of the Ramapo River to protect it in open space. Ensure that developments obtain necessary Protection of Waters permits from NYSDEC, in addition to requiring a buffer.	Further protect the river by regulating land use activities and disturbances within the Village and requiring a minimum 100-foot undisturbed buffer between disturbance activities and the riverbanks as part of the zoning.	S
Protect the majority of the former reservoir property as open space and for mostly passive recreation uses.	The Village seeks to retain the majority of the property for passive recreational uses, including hiking and mountain biking.	O
Protect the scenic mountains and ridgelines visible within the Village.	Identify mountaintops and ridgelines within the Village which should be protected from development, where any disturbances would require Planning Board review.	S
Protect Split Rock and its environs.	Hillburn will explore options to acquire the land from the Rockland County Sewer District, establish a conservation easement on the lands that are most important, or otherwise ensure that this archaeological and	O

VILLAGE OF HILLBURN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX		
Recommendations and Objectives	How To Accomplish	Timeframe
	cultural feature is preserved as part of any future development.	
Review and revise blasting procedures and provide the Planning Board the authority to limit the use of blasting during site and subdivision development review.	Adopt regulations to control the extent and impact of blasting and minimize this activity in the Village. Although the Village regulates the storage, transport and use of explosives, it only indirectly controls the need and amount of blasting, and there are no regulations established for conducting pre- and post-blasting surveys to ensure that dwellings and buildings in the Village are not impacted. These regulations will be revised to protect existing buildings, many of which are old and more susceptible to blasting impacts.	S
Consider revising the steep slope provisions of the law to reduce it to 15 percent.	Revise the zoning to establish a lower threshold of 15 percent for all uses.	S
Consider designation of the Ramapo River Sole Source Aquifer as a Critical Environmental Area (CEA).	Designate the Ramapo River Sole Source Aquifer as a CEA.	S
Utilities		
Introduce green infrastructure stormwater controls which serve the dual purpose of greening the Village and controlling stormwater runoff.	Introduce these infrastructure features during review of new development applications and site plan alterations and amendments.	O
Protect the Village's groundwater.	Conduct a source water assessment plan to identify all potential hazards to the groundwater system and identify methods to minimize any future impacts.	S, M
Support the introduction of central sewer to support the Village's desired growth pattern.	Use centralized sewer as a means of advancing its land use and redevelopment objectives, and do not to introduce sewers into areas not intended to accommodate high levels of residential density or nonresidential intensity.	O
Ensure all fuel oil and chemical tanks contain appropriate containment to minimize potential spills into the groundwater which ultimately supplies	As part of any building permit, site plan, special use, or subdivision review, village officials and boards will ensure that wherever fuel oil is used as a source of energy, that	M

VILLAGE OF HILLBURN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX		
Recommendations and Objectives	How To Accomplish	Timeframe
drinking water serving the Village and region.	proper containment is installed to ensure that fuel oil and chemical spills are minimized to the greatest extent practicable. Toward this end, the land use regulations will be amended to ensure that proper controls are implemented.	
<b>Transportation</b>		
Redesign old Route 17 to reduce traffic speeds and enhance the appearance of the road.	Seek grants to redesign the right-of-way along old Route 17 in order to introduce pedestrian paths, crosswalks, a bike path, and close the remaining entrance from Route 17 onto the NYS Thruway, in order to limit heavy-duty vehicles and trucks from using the portion of Route 17 adjacent to existing residential neighborhoods, rather than using Interchange 15A. The entrance should be limited to emergency service use only.	O
Incorporate a trail or pedestrian pathways into the Route 17 corridor.	Ensure that trail and sidewalk connections are designed as an interconnected system, and that they provide unfettered pedestrian access to major areas of the Village, as well as the parks surrounding the community and the Ramapo River and adjoining existing trails.	M, L
Calm traffic on Route 17 and Route 59.	Ensure that traffic travels at reasonable, safe operating speeds which are protective of pedestrians and property. Study and consider reduced speed signage and other means, e.g., speed bumps, where possible.	O
Design new streets as "Complete Streets" which incorporates pedestrian paths linking the Village neighborhoods together.	Examples of complete street techniques include sidewalks, bike lanes, wide paved shoulders, special bus lanes, accessible public transportation stops, frequent and safe crosswalks, median islands, curb extension, and roundabouts. All new streets and even driveways within private developments will be reviewed in order to be designed with Complete Streets objectives.	O

## **PUBLIC SURVEY RESULTS**



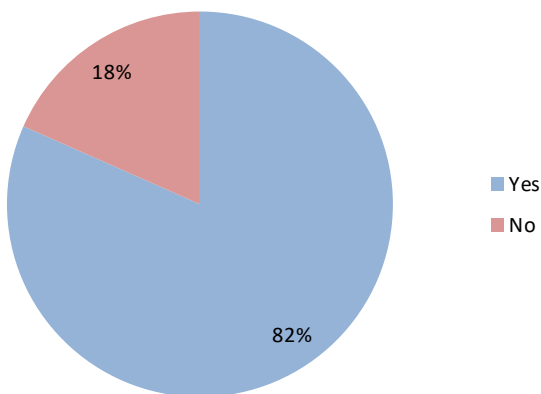
VILLAGE OF HILLBURN  
SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESPONSES  
Comprehensive Plan- Fall 2017

The following provides a summary of responses received to the Hillburn Comprehensive Plan Update survey. A total of 52 people participated in this survey.

**2 )**

*The Village of Hillburn is a small, historic, tranquil village, nestled within the Ramapo River valley, ringed by a pristine mountain backdrop, yet strategically located at the edge of the bustling NYC metropolitan region and its employment centers. Its excellent quality of life is evidenced by the generations of families that have called it home. Local residents and businesses actively participate and support the organizations that contribute to the betterment the Village.*

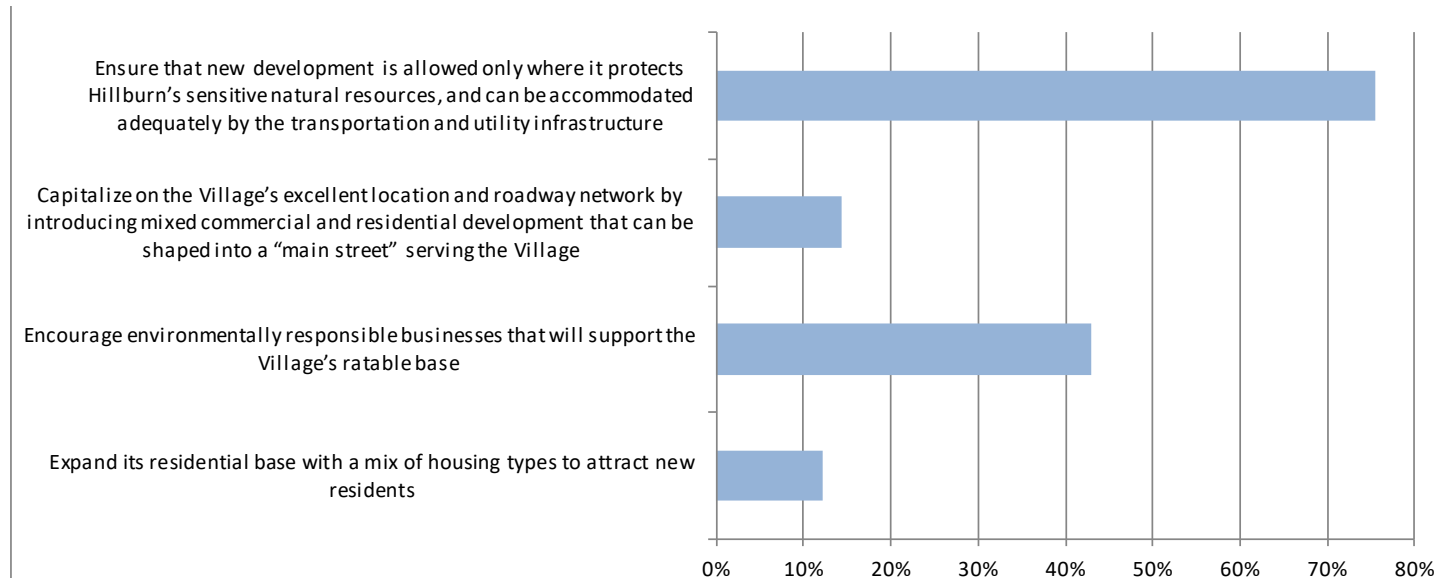
**Do you believe this overall Vision statement is still relevant and appropriate?**



50 residents responded to this question out of 52 respondents. A majority- 82 % or 41 residents agree that the vision is still relevant and appropriate.

**3)**

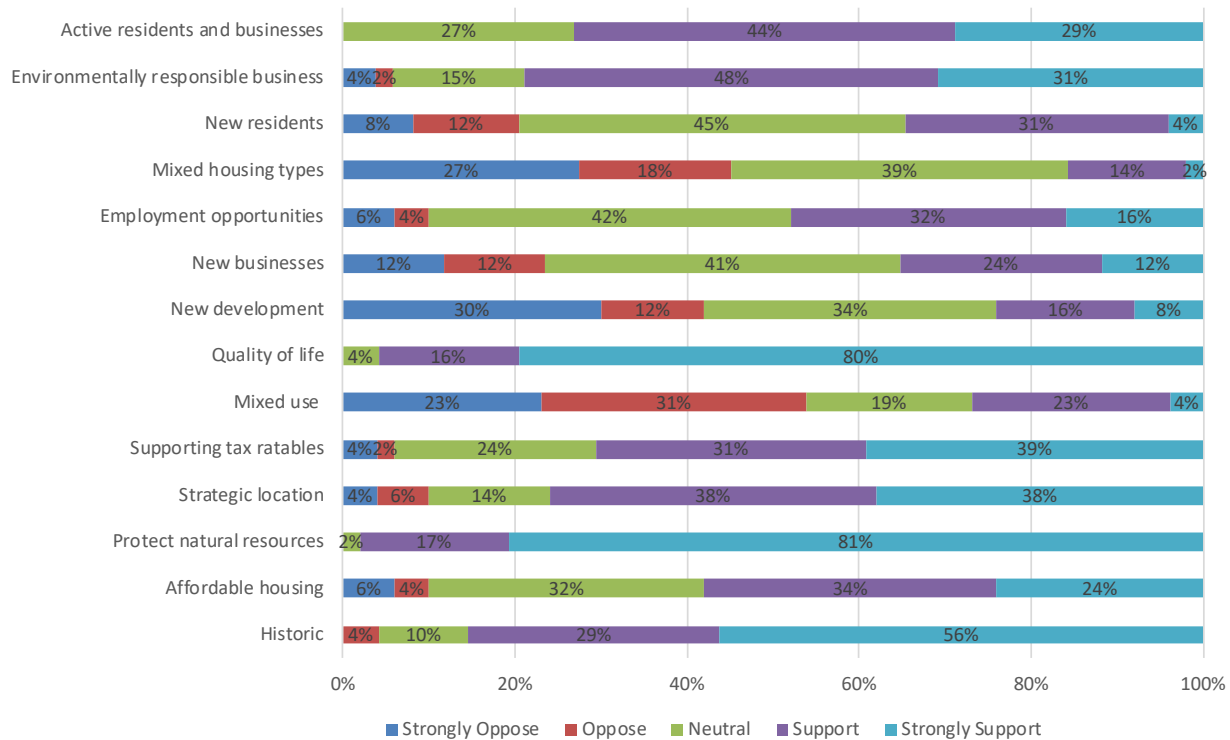
**Of the four items listed in the Village of Hillburn Vision today, please indicate which should be included in the new vision statement:**



Of 52 responses, 76% (38 people) want to ensure that new development is allowed only where it protects natural resources and can be easily accessed. Additional comments from residents indicate concern that commercial development is eroding quality of life, wanting the community to continue to feel small and controlling the industry in Hillburn more strictly. Respondents also noted a concern with mixed housing types.

4)

**Which elements of the Vision Statement do you believe are important to the future of Hillburn. Please rate from 1-5 with 1 being “Strongly Oppose” and 5 being “Strongly Support”**



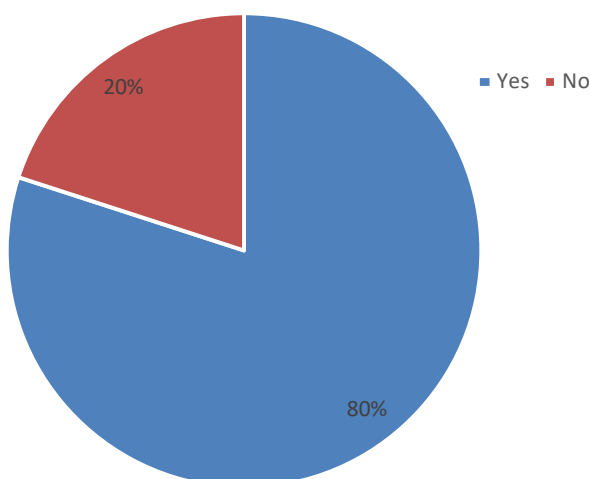
All 52 respondents answered this question, 98% of which support, or strongly support the quality of life element of the Vision Statement and 98% support, or strongly support protection of natural resources. Residents indicated that important elements of the Vision Statement involve the history and strategic location, environmental responsibility and active residents and businesses.

More divided elements of the Vision Statement include support for mixed use, which had 55% opposing or strongly opposing; New development which had 42% opposing or strongly opposing and 34% neutral.

5)

A goal of the last comprehensive plan was to: Broaden the Village’s tax base and employment opportunities by encouraging the orderly expansion and introduction of nonresidential land uses in a manner consistent with the Village’s small-scale character.

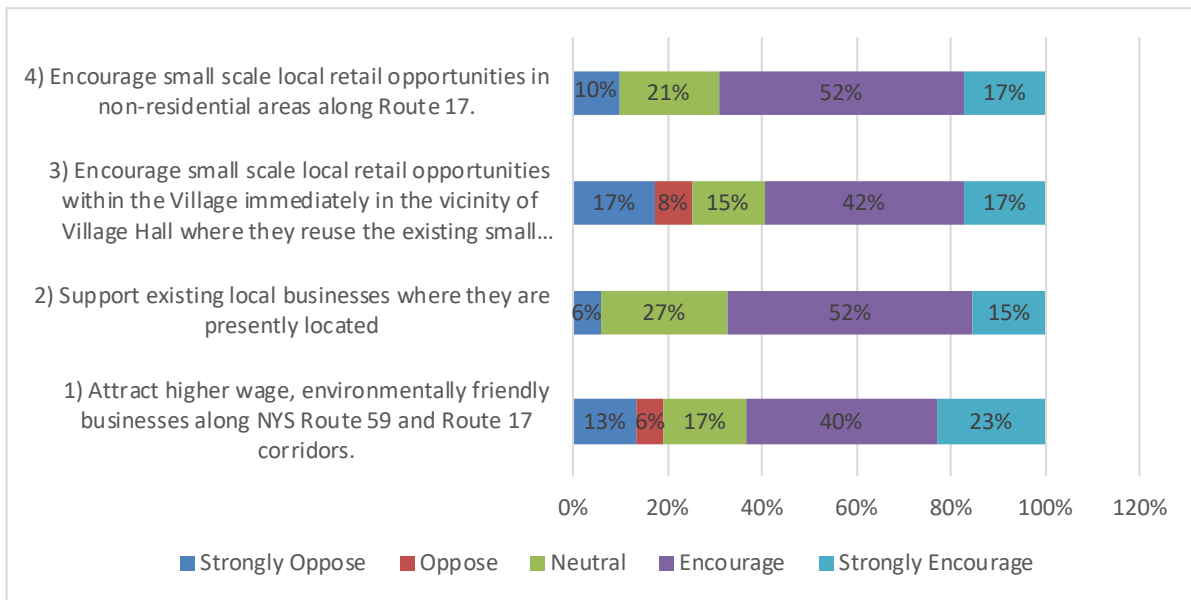
**Do you believe this goal is still relevant?**



51 respondents answered this question with 80%, or 40 responses indicating that this goal of the previous comprehensive plan is still relevant

6)

**Where could nonresidential uses be located, to support economic development with the Village.  
Rate 1 for “Strongly Oppose” and 5 for “Strongly Encourage”**

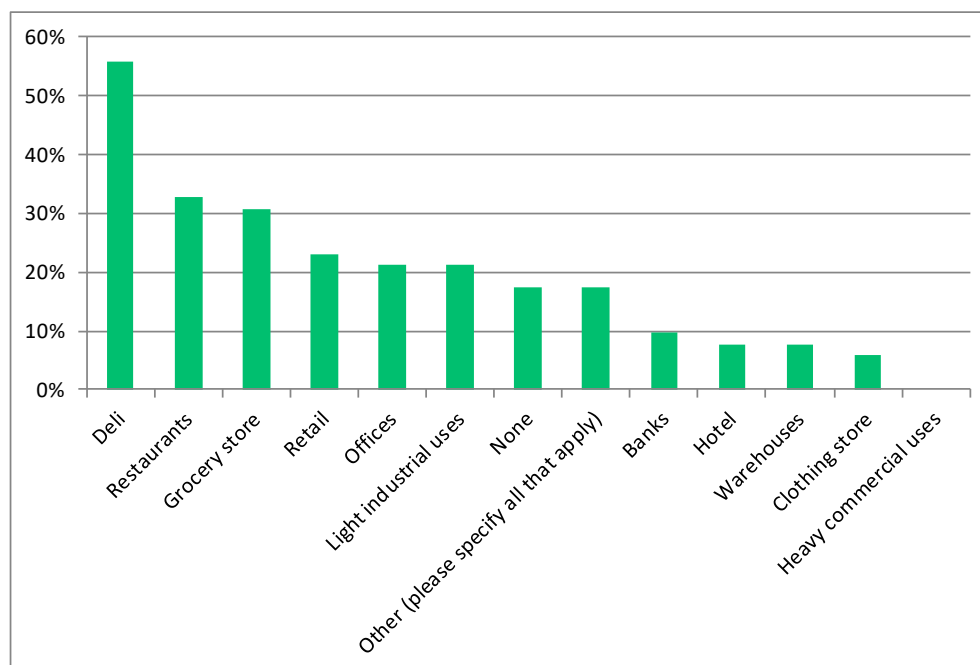


All 52 respondents answered this question, and a significant majority of those respondents felt favorably about locating economic development within the village with 68% favoring small scale retail along Route 17, 59% favoring small scale retail near Village Hall, 67% encourage/strongly encourage existing local businesses where they are and 63% favor centering businesses along Route 59 and 17.

Respondents most opposed (25% oppose/strongly oppose) encouraging retail within the Village immediately in the vicinity of Village Hall and attracting higher wage, environmentally friendly businesses along Routes 59 and 17 (19% oppose/strongly oppose).

7)

**What types of uses should be encouraged somewhere in the Village to promote economic development?**

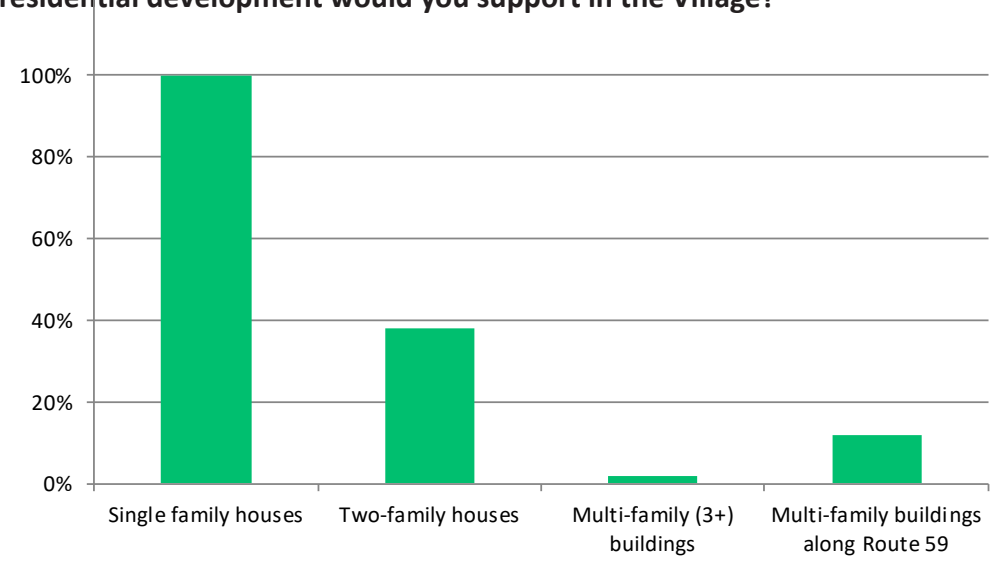


Of 52 responses, the most popular use that residents feel should be included in Hillburn is a deli (56%, 29 responses). The next most popular use are restaurants (33%, 17 responses) and a grocery store (31%, 16 responses).

Other ideas include favoring small businesses that sell arts and crafts, a museum or native arts and history center and an organic health food store.

8)

Which types of residential development would you support in the Village?

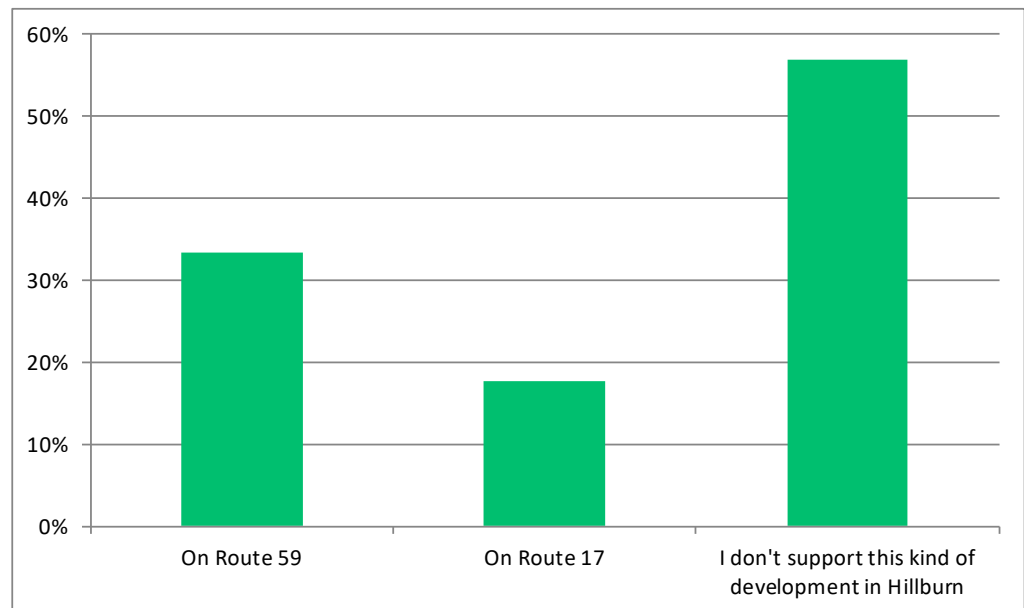


50 people responded to this question with the majority (100% or 50 people) support single family houses. If given the choice, residents would prefer to see multifamily buildings along Route 59. Comments from residents urge that Hillburn should stay single family and small scale, though one comment does mention townhomes.

9)

A Transit Oriented Development is when a mixture of residential and commercial/retail uses are developed around a public transit hub such as a train or bus station. Would you support this kind of development (select if yes)

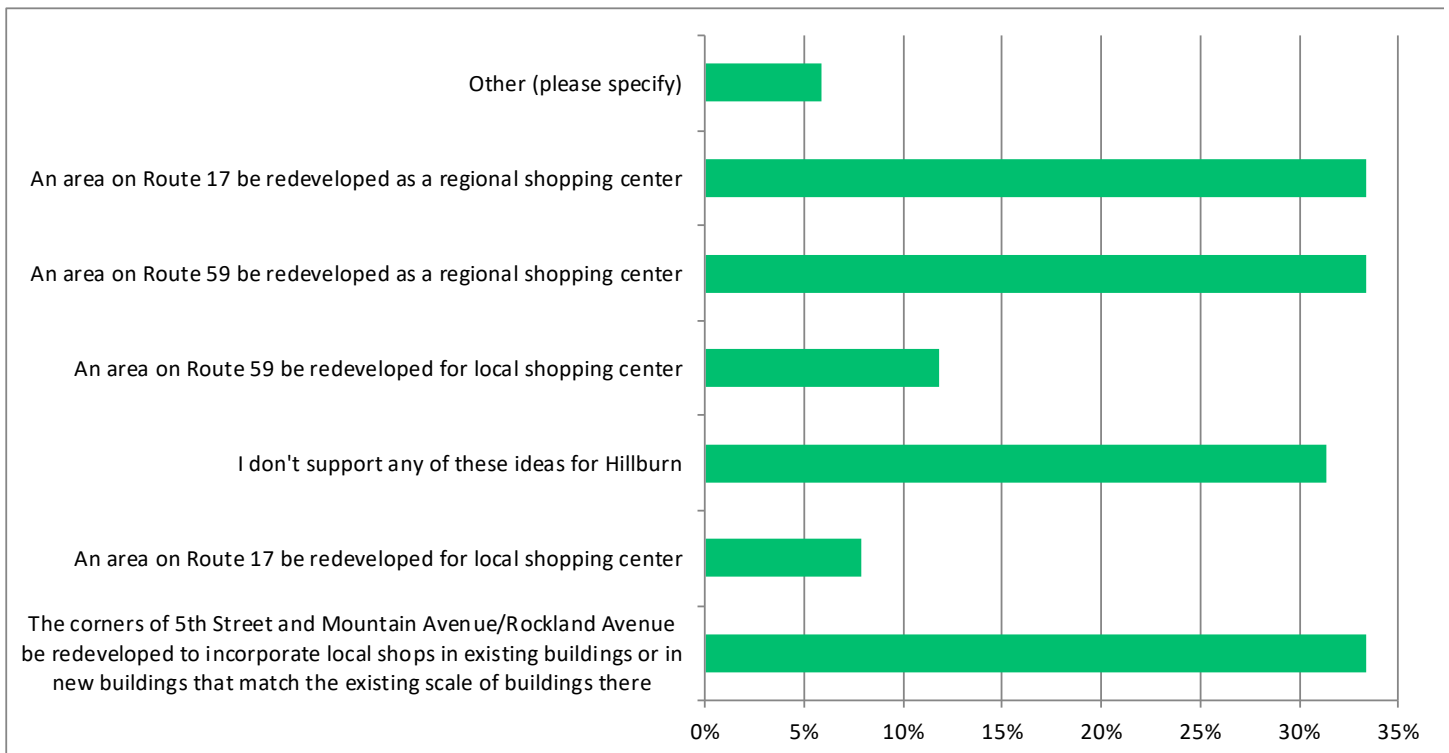
51 people responded to this question with the majority (57% or 29 people) not supporting a TOD. Of the 51% who would support it, 33% would prefer to see a TOD on Route 59 and 18% would prefer to see it on Route 17.





10)

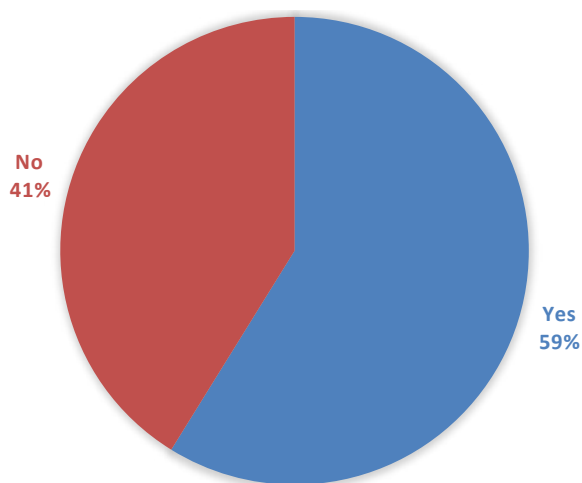
Would you support any of the following?



51 people responded to this question with many respondents choosing multiple options. The most popular development option is for a regional shopping center, either on Route 59 or on Route 17 (33% or 17 responses for each). 33% of responses indicate that the corners of 5th Street and Mountain Ave be redeveloped, and 31% do not like any ideas presented.

11)

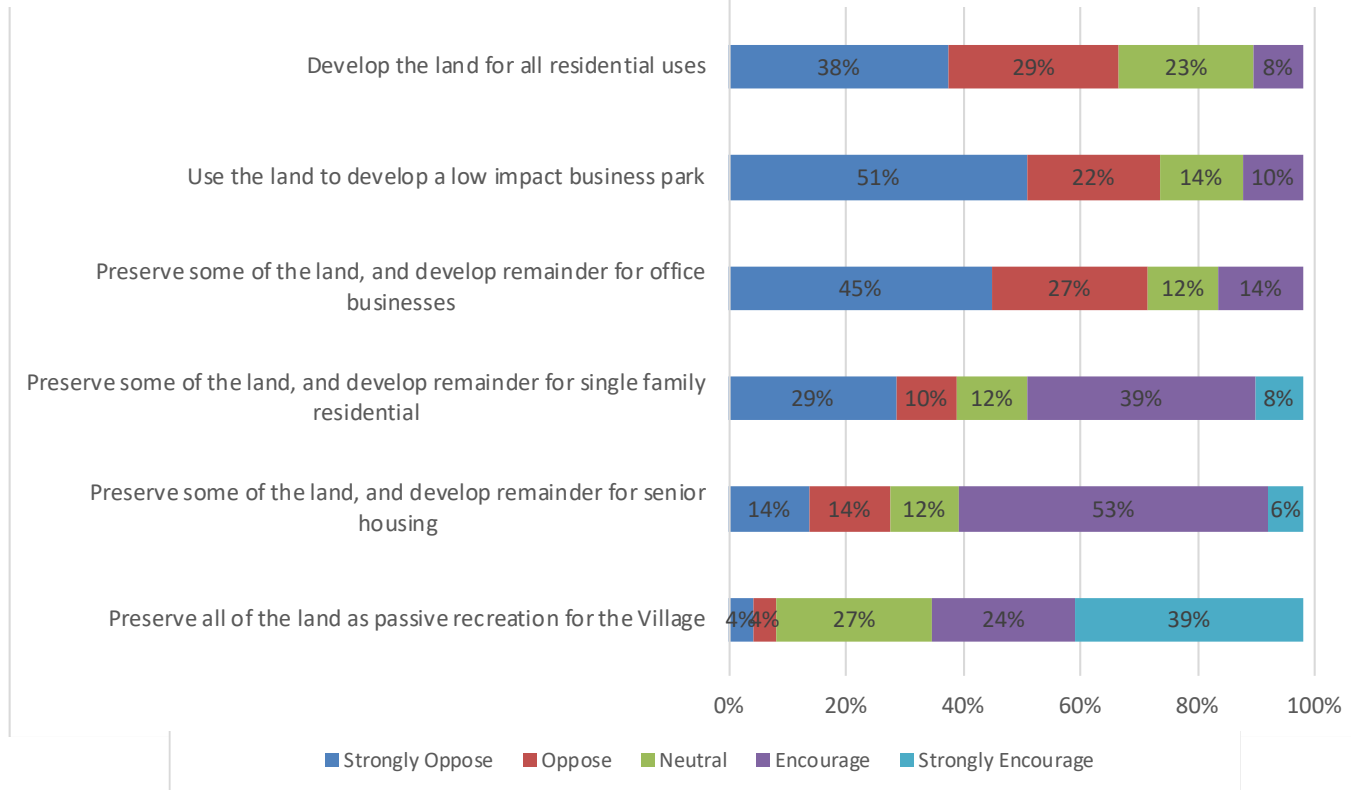
Would you support converting some areas with existing residences on Route 17 into restaurant, office, retail or other commercial uses, provided the residential building style character is maintained?



With 51 people responding to this question, a slim majority would support converting some residences to commercial uses.

12)

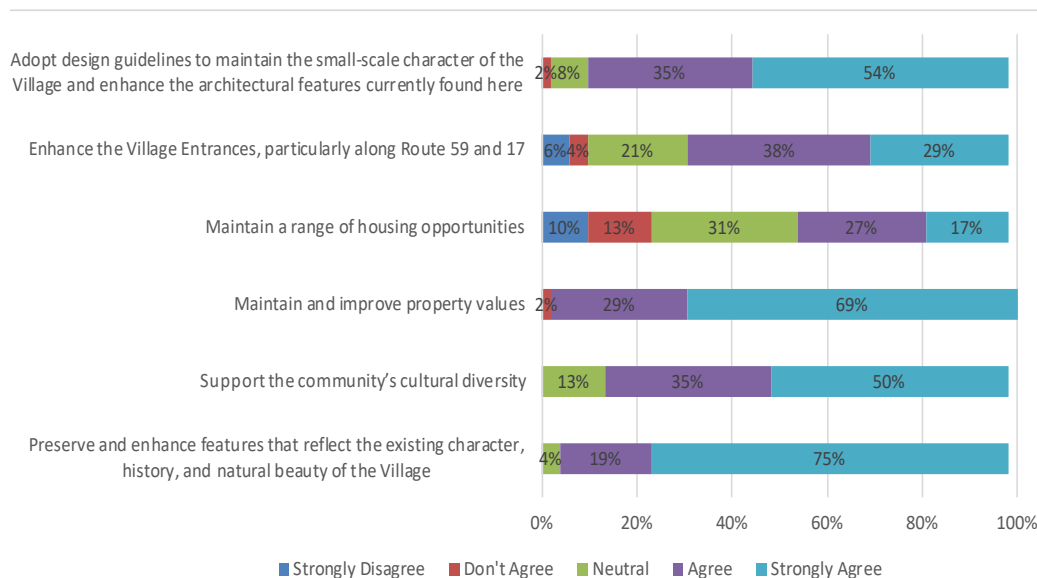
Rate the following possible uses for the reservoir property from 1-strongly oppose to 2- strongly support, or offer alternatives below:



52 people responded to this question, with the majority of respondents preferring the land be preserved in some way, and opposing or strongly opposing a business park, offices or developing the land for all residential use.

13)

How do you feel about the objectives for Historic Resources and Community Character from the previous comprehensive plan?

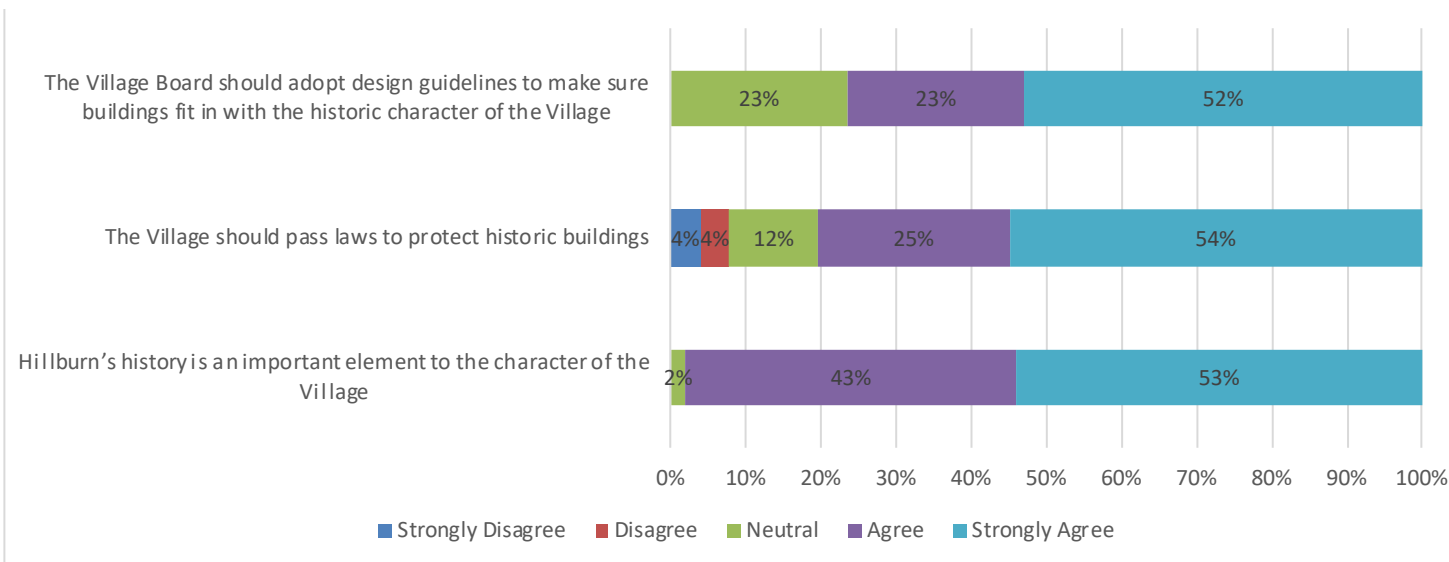


51 people responded to this question and almost every respondent supports maintaining property values, supporting the community's cultural diversity and preserving and enhancing the character of the Village.

More divided concepts include maintaining a range of housing opportunities

14)

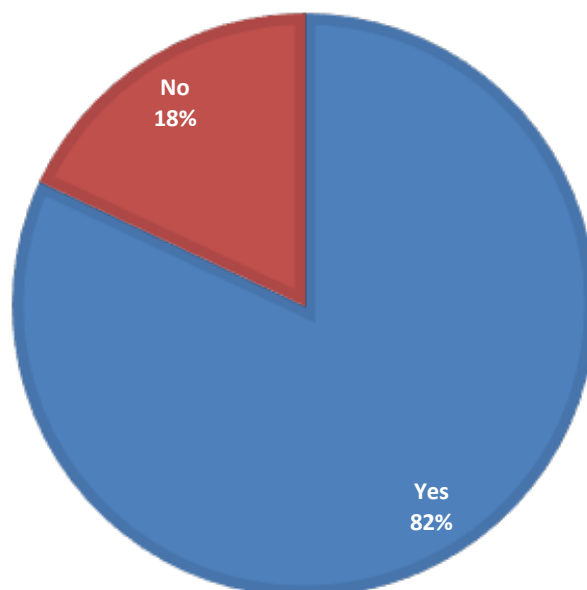
The Village of Hillburn has a long history, and many buildings and places in the Village still exist that are witness to this history. Rate these statements from 1- don't agree, to 5- strongly agree



52 people responded to this question, with most strongly agreeing with each statement given.

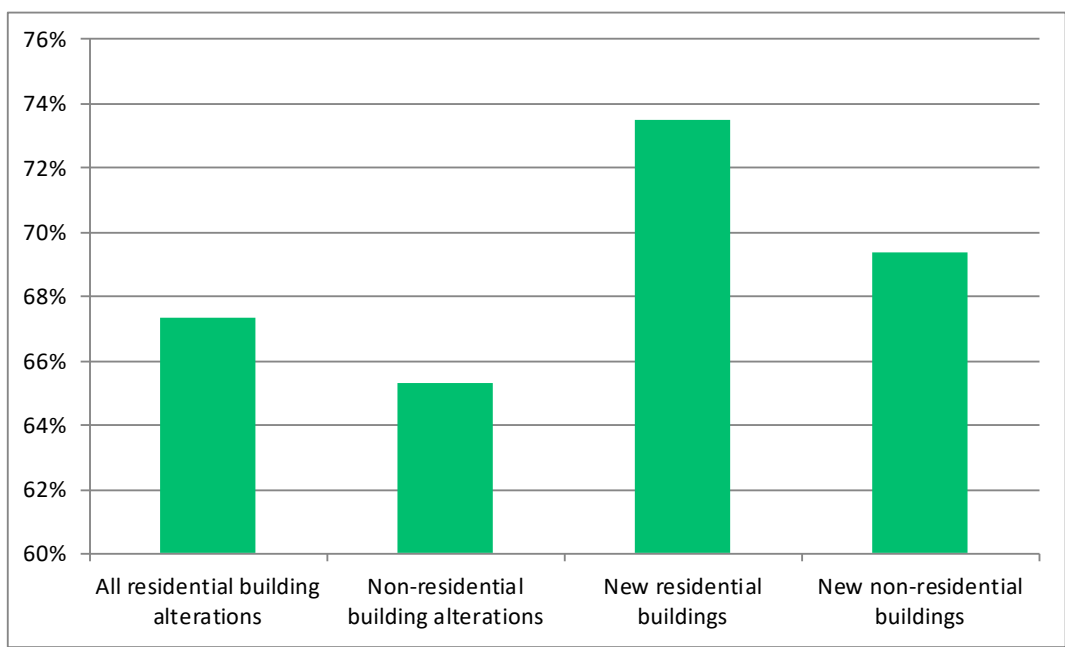
15)

The Village is considering establishing an architectural review board which would review and approve the proposed design of new development or alterations. **Would you support creation of a new architectural review board, or give the Planning Board the authority to conduct architectural review, for purposes of improving the scenic character of the Village?**



16)

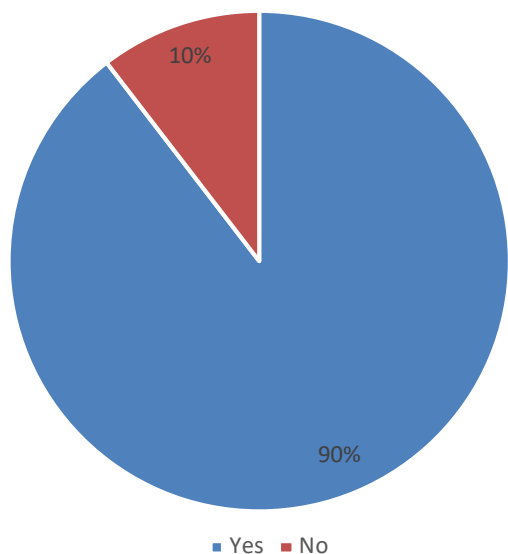
If an Architectural Review Board in Hillburn is created, or if the Planning Board is given this responsibility, what do you believe are important to regulate (choose all that apply):



49 people responded to this question and largely supported giving an architectural review board regulatory power. 73% or 36 respondents agreed that new residential buildings should be regulated, 69% or 34 respondents think that new non-residential buildings should be regulated, while 69% (33 people) thought that all residential building alterations should be regulated as well.

17)

Would you support creation of a new Historic Review Board, or give the Planning Board the authority to conduct historic review, for purposes of protecting the historic buildings in the Village?

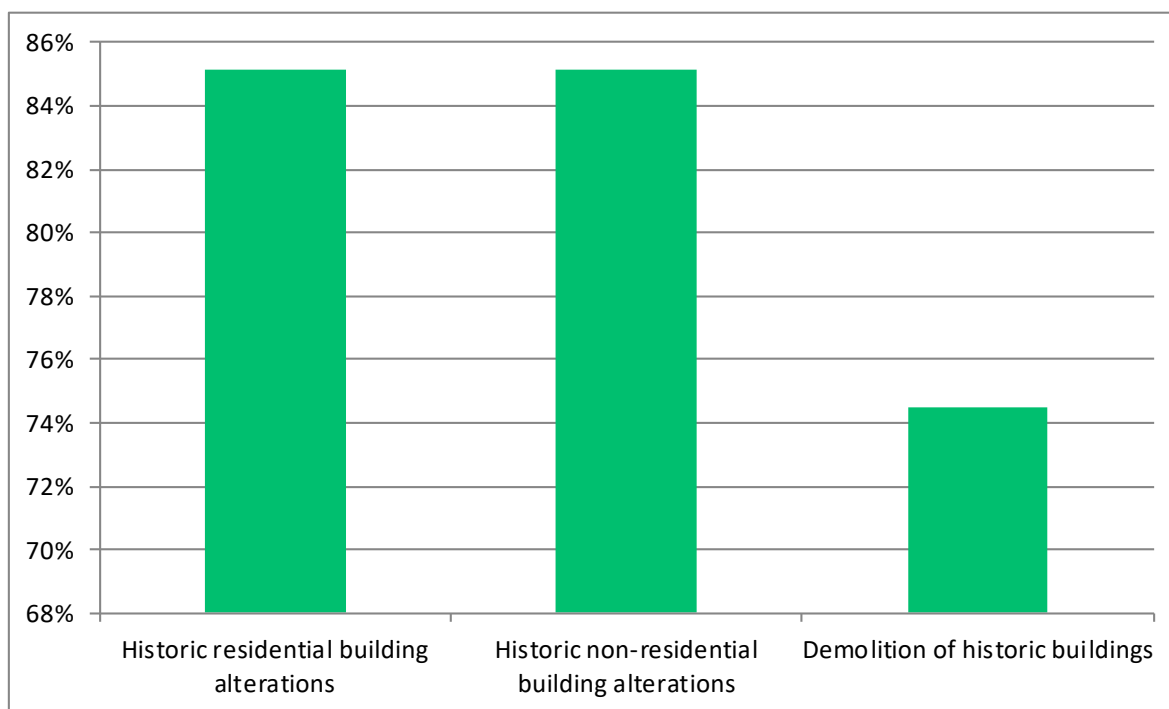


49 people responded to this question with 43 (90%) agreeing that the Planning Board should be given authority to conduct historic review



18)

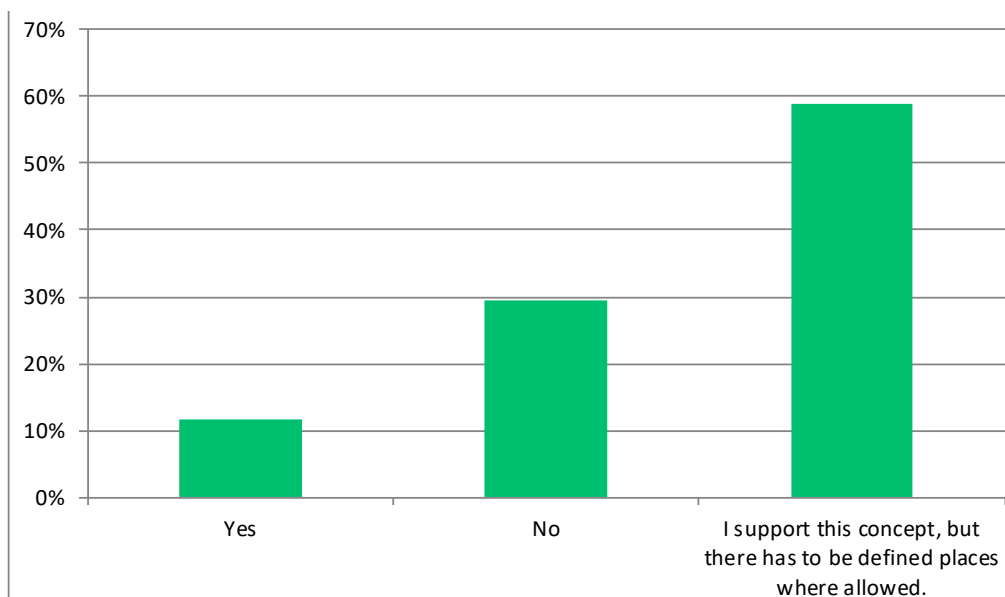
If a Historic Review Board in Hillburn is created, or if the Planning Board is given this responsibility, what do you believe are important to regulate (choose all that apply):



47 people responded to this question in support of regulating historic buildings. A larger majority, 85% or 40 respondents felt that historic residential and non-residential building alterations should be regulated, and 74% believe that the demolition of historic building should be regulated.

19)

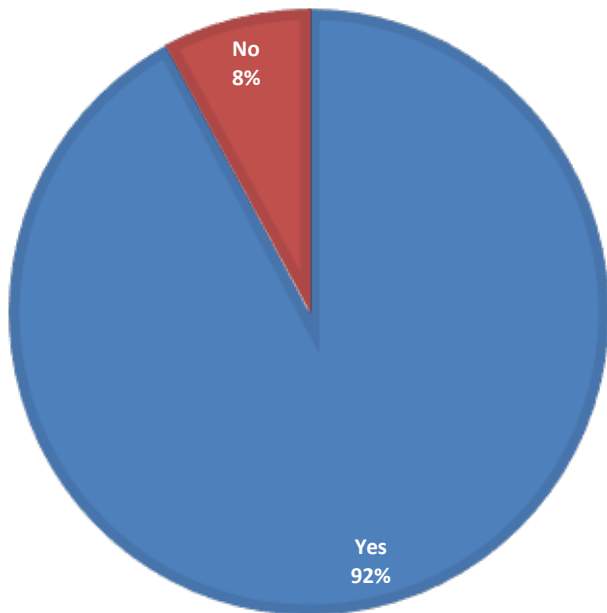
Would you support allowing the adaptive reuse of historic buildings, wherever they are located?



Of 51 people who responded to this question, the majority (59% or 30 people) support the concept but would want defined places where it would be allowed.

20)

Do you support creation of a trail along the Ramapo River for walking, biking, fishing, and recreational purposes that is linked to planned or existing trails to the north and south of the Village?



Of the 52 people who responded to this question, only 4 people do not support this trail system while the remaining 48 (92%) do support it.

21)

Tell us your top 3 favorite scenic or historic areas in the Village!

The most commonly mentioned areas are:

- 1) Veterans Memorial Park/ The Fountain/ The Pond
- 2) Thurgood Marshall School
- 3) Ramapo River
- 4) Mountains, including Mount Fuji

22)

What do you believe are the three most significant issues that the Villages needs to address immediately?

The most commonly mentioned issues are:

- 1) Keeping the Village small, single family residential
- 2) Street and bridge improvements
- 3) Dealing with vacant homes
- 4) Buildings being converted to religious uses
- 5) Affordable Housing

23)

What assets do you believe the Village hs and should be promoting or enhancing?

The most commonly mentioned assets are:

- 1) Small town feel
- 2) Rich history
- 3) Community/ Youth Center
- 4) Rural, peaceful, traditional, multigenerational Village

# **We Want to Know Your Vision for Our Village!!**

The Village Comprehensive Plan Committee needs your input for a Village-wide survey!

**Pick Up a Hard Copy from Village Hall**

**OR**

Log on to

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Hillburn>

The survey is completely anonymous.

**Use the Code From the Card**

**You Received in the Village Newsletter**

**so that we know a Village resident or property owner took the Survey.**

If you have more than one person in your house taking the survey, use the same number on the card.

**Lost Your Code?**

**No Problem!**

**Bring your survey to Village Hall to  
get a new one!**

Hillburn is reviewing its land use regulations and policies and your input is vital to this effort!

**Survey is open until January 24th!**