

Town of Warwick
Orange County, New York
Park and Recreation Plan

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Acknowledgments

This plan was prepared with the assistance, direction and cooperation of the Town of Warwick Recreation Committee and the residents of the Town of Warwick.

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1. Introduction

1.1 What is a Park and Recreation Plan?

Community parks provide an important means to protecting valuable natural resources and preserving safe, scenic areas for resident use and enjoyment. There has also been a growing recognition of the important role outdoor recreation plays in people's lives. In an increasingly busy, technological era, access to outdoor recreational facilities is regarded as an important quality of life asset. Outdoor recreation is known to provide a healthy outlet for everyday pressures, as it gives people opportunities for socializing, exercising, and decompressing from stress.

A Park and Recreation Plan is an important community planning tool. A community develops a Park and Recreation Plan to evaluate the existing condition of its parks and recreational resources and identify what changes it would like to see in the future. Through an ongoing public participation process, community residents are invited to provide feedback on what types of resources they would like to see at their local parks (e.g., ball fields, playgrounds, basketball courts, etc) and what other types of recreational resources (such as trails) they would like to see developed and where. A Park and Recreation Plan can function as a detailed blueprint to guide future park and recreational development.



1.2 This Park and Recreation Planning Process

Through its Park and Recreation Plan, the Town is looking to assess the conditions of its community parks, identify current and future needs, and establish a planning framework to meet those needs, including partnerships and funding sources that would minimize taxpayer investment. Once completed, the Plan will guide future parkland acquisition and recreational development in the Town of Warwick.

The Town has chosen to develop an overall Park and Recreation plan on a Town-wide basis to better serve the need for park or recreational needs in all neighborhoods of the Warwick. Through a close examination of the existing park systems, the Town is looking to provide a more appropriate balance in the way recreational resources are distributed across the Town.

1.3 Public Participation

The foundation of a good Plan is the incorporation of public input early and often throughout the Plan's development. To ensure that a plan is founded upon common goals and objectives, it is imperative that feedback be obtained from the community. Three methods were used to solicit community input during the Warwick planning process: an online recreation needs survey; stakeholder questionnaires; and a public visioning open house workshop. The feedback obtained through these public outreach efforts formed the basis for the recommendations developed as part of this planning process.

1.3.1 Online Recreation Needs Survey

The second opportunity for residents to provide feedback is the online resident survey, which was accessible from November 28, 2005 through and including December 12, 2005. Postcards with information on how to login and how non-internet households could obtain a paper copy of the survey were sent out to resident households during the third week of November. As of December 2005, approximately 475 households had accessed the online survey while another 70 had requested paper surveys. A total of 544 surveys were completed, resulting in a response rate of approximately 5%.

The online resident survey included 20 questions, mostly multiple choice and drop-down menu style. The intent of the survey was to get specific information from Town residents on what types of activities they or members of their household currently participate in at the local parks and what types of activities they would like available in their community.

The results from the online resident survey are summarized in Section 5 while a more complete summary of the results can be found in Appendix F, Public Outreach.

1.3.2 Stakeholder Questionnaires

A stakeholder is any group or individual that has a stake in or may be impacted by the outcome of a planning process. In general, stakeholders represent local governments, residential communities, business associations, and other local organizations, such as nonprofits, school districts, committees, or special interest groups.

In developing this Park and Recreation Plan, an attempt was made to obtain feedback from local athletic league and club organizers, passive park and trail users, community groups, and local government and school district representatives. Informational packets were forwarded to a list of approximately 38 stakeholders. These individuals represented civic organizations, outdoor groups, athletic and sports leagues, and recreation groups. In addition, local government representatives, local elected officials, volunteer committee members, representatives from the school districts included within the Town, and select Orange County and New York State agencies were identified as stakeholders. In addition to invitations to the Public Visioning Open House, stakeholders also received questionnaires that outlined several specific questions regarding park and recreation use in the Town.

The results from the stakeholder questionnaires are summarized in Section 5.

1.3.3 Park Visioning Open House Forums

Approximately 150 Town and Village residents attended three park visioning open house forums held at the Warwick Town Hall, the Florida Senior Center, and the Greenwood Lake Senior Center on Wednesday, November 30, 2005.

Each forum had a display of five storyboard exhibits depicting Warwick's local parks--two of the Town's parks and one for each of the three villages. Through photographs and summaries, the exhibits identified the character and resources at each park. A Draft Park and Recreation Map identified the location of the parks and other recreational resources, including County and State parks, open space areas, and existing and proposed trails.

Open house attendees were invited to provide feedback on what they felt is needed at their local parks, such as additional ball fields, new playgrounds, more basketball courts, etc. They were also asked to identify what other recreational facilities they would like to see in the community, such as trails, neighborhood tot lots, and expanded community center activities.

The storyboards were also kept on display until December 12, 2005 at the Warwick Town Hall; the Village of Florida Library; and the Village of Greenwood Lake Library. Feedback sheets were provided at each location for residents who may have missed the open house but still wanted to view the boards and provide input.

The results from the park visioning open house forums are summarized in Section 5.

1.4 Previously Conducted Public Outreach

Although an inclusive public outreach effort will be conducted as part of this planning process, several significant participation activities were organized in the past few years that touched upon many of the concerns to be addressed and discussed as part of this Park and Recreation Plan. A brief summary of these efforts follows.

1.4.1 Spring 2003 Resident Survey

In May 2003, a survey was distributed to approximately 13,000 resident households using the Town of Warwick Greater Valley Update Spring 2003 Newsletter. Completed surveys could be returned to the Town of Warwick's Recreation Commission at Town Hall via mail or hand delivered. As of July 6, 2003, 330 surveys had been submitted to the Town Recreation Commission, representing a return rate of less than 3%.

The survey was designed to gauge the recreational needs of the Town and Village residents and to assist the community in identifying the types of resources lacking in the community's parks. In addition to providing feedback on what activities they presently engage in at local parks, survey

respondents were requested to comment on what types of activities they would like to see in the future. The two-page survey had a total of nine questions and many respondents did not answer all questions. As a result, the percentage of responses discussed is in proportion to the number of respondents that answered each respective question, not a proportion of the total 330 responses. The following paragraphs describe several of the major findings.



Survey respondents were asked to rate the importance of protecting undeveloped open space and environmentally sensitive areas. A wide majority –84.5% --indicated that protecting open space was either important or most important. Nearly 80% of respondents identified preserving environmentally sensitive areas as either important or most important.

In evaluating the importance of making neighborhoods more attractive, the majority of respondents, 77%, indicated it was either important or most important. Respondents were split on the need for creating areas where neighbors could get to know each other. About 46.6% identified it as important or most important, while 38.5% indicated it was not important or were otherwise neutral to the idea.

Providing play areas for the community's young residents was identified as important or most important by 77% of respondents. Finally, nearly two thirds of respondents (64.2%) indicated providing recreational facilities for adults and for senior citizens was important or most important. It was regarded as not important by 6.7% of respondents.

In evaluating the need to allocate resources, and sometimes make difficult choices, the survey asked residents to offer their preferences on how the local governments should distribute limited resources to meet a variety of recreational needs. The following points summarize the basic findings.

- Given the choice of developing more, smaller parks or a few larger parks, 41.8% preferred small parks while 49.1% preferred large parks.
- The majority of respondents, 60%, would opt to fix up existing parks, while a third, 33.3%, would rather buy more parkland in developing areas.
- In choosing between developing vacant or undeveloped parklands or fixing up existing park and recreational areas, 27.6% chose the former while 64.2% preferred the latter.
- About 55.8% indicated a preference for spending money on building park and recreational areas, while 28.5% would prefer the money be spent on supervised recreation activities.

- Approximately 58.5% of respondents indicated that the local parks and recreation areas should continue to be maintained by the Town, while 31.2% felt citizen groups should develop, program, and maintain recreation areas.

In identifying the resources they most would like to see developed at the Town and Village local parks, the majority (61.8%) of survey respondents indicated they would like to see more bicycle trails developed in the community. More than half the respondents indicated a desire for more nature areas (55.2%) and more jogging and exercise trails (52.7%). Nearly half respondents identified a desire for more swimming pools (49.7%), lake parks/beaches (48.5%), improved lake and stream access (45.8%), and an ice skating/hockey rink (43.6%).

A more detailed chart of responses is included in Appendix F, Public Outreach.

1.4.2 Village of Greenwood Lake Comprehensive Plan

The 1997 Village of Greenwood Lake Comprehensive Plan included a number of short-term recreation-related goals and objectives. These goals focused on three major ideas: targeting efforts to maximize usage of existing park resources; focusing on maintenance of existing resources, and improving recreational facilities and activities.

In addition to maximizing usage of Lions Field and Helen Kelly Playground, the Plan proposed centralizing the Village's Little League (majors, minors and t-ball), Girls Softball, and soccer (under 10) into Village-owned recreation areas. To accommodate the additional usage, providing additional recreation-related parking would be necessary.

Maintenance-related objectives included creating a maintenance consortium (Little League, Greenwood Lake Soccer Club and the Village) to pay maintenance costs and developing a maintenance plan for Lions Field and Helen Kelly Playground. The Plan also supported the idea of privatizing field maintenance. Refurbishing the Lions Field lights and sprinkler system, allowing them to be used was identified as a priority.

Activities to improve the Village's recreational opportunities included expanding organized activities to appeal to a wider range of age levels, both children and adults and creating a more comprehensive summer recreation program emphasizing sports clinics, night games, and organized youth activities. The plan also identified pursuing additional funds, from the Town of Warwick, the Village, and through grants.

A Master Plan for Lions Field identified several improvements for the Village's major park. The primary recommendation included reconfiguring existing resources to accommodate a new minor league baseball field and a new soccer field/practice facility in the outfield. In addition to moving several basketball courts, implementation would necessitate the relocation of several light fixtures.

Specific recommendations related to improving Helen Kelly field included enhancing and increasing the park's field resources. In addition to delineating a girls' softball and t-ball diamonds in opposite corners of the playground, the plan calls for creating a 10-and-younger soccer field. A portable fencing system is proposed to delineate field spaces. To improve the playground, the Village would like to provide a water fountain.

By keeping the recreation master plan up-to-date and collaborating with partners, such as the Greenwood Lake School District, the Village intends to continue working on enhancing available recreation resources. Adding to the Village's recreational offerings, both available space and additional sports and activities, are identified as priorities. Finally, Village residents will greatly benefit through activities that capitalize on the Village's natural resources, such nature trail creation and pond rehabilitation for skating.

1.4.3 Greenwood Lake Beach Studio Project

The Town of Warwick's Village of Greenwood Lake Beach Visioning Committee partnered with professor Ann Steadham and her students of the New York City College of Technology to design the future Greenwood Lake Waterfront Park. The partnership with the Town of Warwick's Officials was facilitated by former New York City College of Technology Acting President Emilie A. Cozzi. The students were asked to design the redevelopment of this former marina site into an open-space waterfront park. Presentations of the students design were given to the Town of Warwick officials on August 9, 2005. The presentations included 15 building designs with landscaping and 7 site plan designs with detail of the beach, trails, parking and landscaping.

The Town is now in the process of looking for funding sources to potentially develop the beach. While the Town would like to develop a multi-functional facility at the site, initial efforts are focusing on site design, constructing a turn-around, and improving the parking area.

1.5 Previous Plans and Studies

1.5.1 Town of Warwick Comprehensive Plan, 1999

In 1999, the Warwick Town Board, with technical assistance from GREENPLAN, Inc. developed a Comprehensive Plan. The Plan, which focuses on identifying ways to preserve its rural quality and natural environment, serves as a guide for both the Town and its three Villages: Florida, Greenwood Lake, and Warwick.

The plan attempts to strike a "delicate balance" between maintaining Warwick as an agricultural community, and accommodating new growth, particularly residential development. It does this by focusing on the natural environment. To facilitate preserving the Town's natural and agricultural landscape, the plan examined: agriculture, residential growth, business development, recreation and open space, transportation, public facilities, and environmental protection. The Plan outlines the following recommendations:

- Support the economic viability of farming;
- Protect and enhance the Town’s rural character and quality of life;
- Assure that the Village and hamlet centers remain the focus for retail and service industry development;
- Maintain and expand public access to Greenwood Lake and develop access to other Town water bodies;
- Reduce traffic congestion and promote public transit;
- Improve Town services and infrastructure development in the areas targeted for growth; and
- Protect the natural scenic quality of the Town and environmentally sensitive areas.

The above-recommended planning policies establish a conceptual framework for more detailed development decisions and propose techniques and alternatives for implementing local planning policies.

1.5.2 Warwick Draft Open Space Plan, 2001

In 2001, the Town of Warwick Open Space Committee, with technical assistance from GREENPLAN Inc. developed the Draft Open Space Plan to supplement the goals developed in the 1999 Comprehensive Plan.

The Open Space Plan identifies more specific methods to achieve the primary goal of the Comprehensive Plan, protecting Warwick’s rural quality and natural environment. The Open Space Plan includes the following three goals:

- Preserve open space in Warwick to maintain the Town’s rural character and quality of life;
- Plan for sufficient recreation land and facilities; and
- Cooperate with the villages to plan for open space protection.



The Plan highlights the need for protecting “unseen but essential” natural resources such as underground aquifers, undiscovered biological corridors, hidden animal habitats, and Critical Environmental Areas that are endangered by increasing development. It also includes programs to preserve and promote the Town’s historic and cultural heritage.

The Plan provides recommendations for parks, scenic roads, trail systems, and recreation

programs. As noted in the Open Space Plan, the recommendations are as follows:

- Implementing the voter approved Open Space Preservation Program with its focus on agricultural lands;
- Making appropriate revisions and additions to the Town Code through zoning, subdivision regulation, and other environmental resource protection programs;
- Using available tools for monitoring land use and growth; and
- Directing and/or establishing Town and inter-municipal committees and boards to follow through with actions that support open space and rural character preservation.

1.5.3 Warwick Zoning and Buildout Analysis, 2001

In 2001, Community Planning and Environmental Associates developed the Warwick Zoning and Build-Out Analysis for the Town of Warwick along with the Villages of Warwick, Greenwood Lake, and Florida. The focus of the study was to preserve Warwick's rural quality and its natural environment. The following summary includes excerpts from the *Warwick Zoning and Build-Out Analysis*.

The Study attempts to answer several critical questions relating to the future growth and development of the Town and its three villages. The Study attempted to identify:

- What are the current zoning practices in each of the municipalities;
- What will the Warwick communities look like in the future if built out according to the current zoning, and what are the implications of this growth;
- How consistent are the zoning laws with each other and with any adopted comprehensive plans; and
- What are the options for inter-municipal cooperation, and how can these communities become more consistent in their planning.

An attempt was made to answer these questions by conducting a thorough review of Town and Villages zoning laws and comprehensive plans. A build-out analysis/study was also conducted to gauge the degree of impact on the area once all developable land is converted to uses permitted under existing zoning. A time frame for the final build out was not predicted.

Each of the zoning codes were reviewed, with specific emphasis on understanding the planning and zoning techniques being used to accomplish municipal goals. The review included the following:

- Identifying the major goals, zoning techniques used, and direction the zoning takes the community through a build-out analysis;
- Identifying inconsistencies or deficiencies within the code, if any;

- Determining how well the laws conform to any adopted comprehensive plan;
- Determining what levels of consistency there are between the laws.

The build-out analysis identified the following results for the Town and the Villages:

The Town of Warwick (excluding the Villages) has 63,600 acres of land, of which 20,000 acres are buildable. If all the buildable land were developed as currently zoned, this would result in an overall addition to the infrastructure facilities such as new houses, households, more commercial space, and increase in the number of residents. The build out could experience a 117% increase in the Town’s total population to 39,820 people. This would result in an additional 3,930 students. This would also require additional infrastructure, municipal facilities, and service providers (such as police officers and firefighters).

Even with changes to the existing zoning (increasing the required minimum lot sizes), there would still be an increase in total population, student aged children, and infrastructure facilities. But, these increases would be comparatively less. Growth under the changed zoning would result in a 69% increase in Town population to 30,998 people, with an additional 2,314 school aged children.

The Village of Warwick has a total of 1,424 acres of land, of which 235 acres are buildable. If all the buildable land were developed as currently zoned, this would result in a 26.5% increase in the Village’s total population to 8,077 people, with an additional 430 students. This buildout would require new roads, additional infrastructure, and more municipal service providers.

The Village of Florida has a total of 1,185 acres of land, of which 399 acres are buildable. If all



the buildable land were developed as currently zoned, this would result in a 90% increase in the Village’s total population to 4,896 people, with an additional 428 students. This would necessitate the provision of additional infrastructure and municipal facilities.

The Village of Greenwood Lake has a total of 1,097 acres of land, of which 269 acres are buildable. If all the buildable land were developed as currently zoned, this would result in a 14% increase in the Village’s population to 3,878 people, with an additional 81 students. This would also result in an increase in needed infrastructure and municipal facilities to serve Village residents.

The final projected population forecast for the Town of Warwick and its villages, without any modifications to the Town's zoning, was forecasted at 56,671. With changes to the Town's zoning this figure would be 47,849.

1.5.4 School Enrollment Warwick Valley Central School District, 2004-2005

The Report presents the 2004-2005 Warwick Valley Central School District's demographic and enrollment trends. A two-part study, Part one focuses on the demographic and community analysis of the District, and Part two highlights the 2014-2015 ten-year enrollment forecast.

Part one of the report describes the basic population characteristics and other demographic features, while Part two focuses on the enrollment trends from 1982 to 2014. The District, at 88 square miles, includes part of the Towns of Warwick and Chester, and the Village of Warwick. As indicated in this report, the Town's population is projected to increase to 36,343 residents by 2010, and 46,666 residents by 2025. The population of the Village of Warwick is expected to increase to 7,607 by 2010, and 9,829 by 2025.

1.5.5 Southern Walkkill Biodiversity Plan

The Wildlife Conservation Society completed a biodiversity study of the Towns of Chester, Goshen, and Warwick in 2005. Its subtitle was "Balancing Development and the Environment in the Hudson River Estuary Watershed." The intent behind the plan was to identify vital biologically diverse areas for conservation purposes and to establish a regional, multi-town approach to land use planning to promote wildlife and habitat conservation. The project sought to address the impacts of sprawl on natural ecosystems by: (1) proving baseline scientific information; (2) developing innovative tools; and (3) integrating these elements into the land use decision-making process. These initial three steps are to provide a platform, so that there may be more thorough municipal and inter-municipal discussions, and collaborative efforts to address challenges and pursue opportunities, in the future.

To ensure the protection of biodiversity (and to ensure that development supports biodiversity) the report calls for the accommodation of both "core wildlife habitat areas" and "connective corridors." These connective corridors, broad swaths of habitat that connect habitat hubs, enable dispersal of animals among the hubs, maintaining the gene pools and preventing localized species extinctions. While not as undisturbed or intact as the habitat hubs they connect, these swaths do provide secondary habitat in addition to their important linkage function.

Warwick, the second largest town in New York State, houses a number of different ecological environments. Water bodies and stream environments within the Town that are significant habitat areas include: (1) Walkkill River; (2) Glenmere Lake/Black Meadow Creek; (3) Quaker Creek; (4) Pochuck Creek; (5) Wheeler/Stony Creek; (6) Eastern Waywayanda Creek/Wickham Lake; and (7) Western Waywayanda Creek. Recommendations for protecting and preserving these waterways include maintaining and/or restoring natural vegetation and alignment and

minimizing development along the riverbanks. Adjacent farms should incorporate practices supportive of the birds that make their homes within these habitats.

Wetland areas housed in Warwick include: the Blooms Corners Swamp and its adjacent uplands and the significant Atlantic White Cedar Swamp. These wetlands, imperiled by adjacent development and land uses, should be maintained and protected.

Warwick houses a number of vital, hilly areas that support a variety of animal and vegetation habitat areas. Pochuck Neck, at the base of Pochuck Mountain, houses a diverse array of birds and ecological connections; Mounts Adam and Eve provide a “stepping stone” habitat for animals that move from ridge to ridge; the West Highlands Corridor, East Highlands Corridor, and the Southern Warwick/New Jersey border provide an extensive contiguous habitat with a variety of species and significant ecological communities. To protect these areas and maintain the habitat quality and diversity, development should be minimized and intermunicipal collaborative efforts should be established.

Finally, the Black Dirt area of Warwick hosts a wide array of State-listed and declining bird species. The grassland-associated species reside in this area because of the farming. To maintain the habitats, farming must be maintained. This plan recommends maintaining an early successional stage of growth in the area, such as a wildlife-friendly farming practice.

1.5.6 Orange County, New York Open Space Plan, 2004

The Orange County Department of Planning completed the first Orange County Open Space Plan in July 2004. The document stands as a formal supplement to the County Comprehensive Plan. As the County has been experiencing substantial population growth that is projected to continue, the Plan, as was indicated in its Introduction, was designed to accomplish the following:

- Define the uniqueness and environmental characteristics of the County as they relate to quality of life;
- Define future open space needs; and
- Recommend County and other priority actions needed to protect key open spaces.

Developed around the same time, there was some overlap in the issues addressed through the County’s 2003 Comprehensive Plan and the 2004 Open Space Plan. These areas of concern included:

- Better management of development patterns - providing guarantees that land development location and design is consistent with open space needs and,
- The future of agriculture – supporting farmland protection efforts that complement lead efforts to support the economic, business vitality of agriculture.

The County Open Space Plan is a five-year plan, matching the five-year horizon of the County Comprehensive Plan. Recommendations in the Open Space Plan include early action items (to be implemented in one year) and longer-term, five-year actions. Recommendations also include low-cost actions as well as actions requiring a commitment of financial and/or staff resources. Four of the major resource areas for consideration include Water Resources, Recreation, Landforms and Landscapes, and Biological Diversity (Biodiversity). The following highlights are excerpted from the Plan’s executive summary. A more detailed discussion of the farming issues and agricultural soils follows.

Water resources include the surface waters and watershed areas; protection zones around well heads; wetland areas and buffer zones; 100-year flood plain areas; vernal pools; streams; rivers; and lakes. Such water resources can encompass large tracts of land and can be protected through a variety of protection measures that may limit some land uses, but not prohibit all land uses from occurring in an area.

Recreation includes a variety of lands, both in type and in size. Local parks and urban open spaces include a range of large parks with natural areas, playing fields, playgrounds, and small “passive” parks with trees and benches. Within these open spaces, there may be community gardens, and paths for walking and biking through woodland and along streambeds.



Significant landforms and landscapes are natural features that were formed through dramatic changes in the earth’s surface. The features may include palisades, steep inclines, rock out-cropping, prominent mountaintops and valley vistas. Some of these features may include agricultural areas where land has been cleared for farming or man-made buildings were constructed to create picturesque landscapes. Other areas may be connected with historical events such as military battlefields or industrial activities.

Biodiversity is a shortened version of the term “biological diversity”. The concept encompasses the complex community of individual species and their habitats, acknowledging the variability within and among the species. Orange County contains unique features and circumstances that produce exceptional biodiversity. These include its geology, an ecological crossroads, low-density development and active agricultural uses.

As indicated in the County Open Space Plan, Orange County has increasingly become concerned with encouraging a balanced land use development pattern, one that accommodates population and housing growth while fostering economic development and maintaining the open space and rural character of the County. Maintaining the County’s prime soils as active agricultural lands is a related challenge. In reviewing development patterns over the past twenty years, it becomes

apparent that much of the County's new residential development has occurred outside the core urban areas. In 2000, approximately 18% of the County's population resided in the cities, while 61% lived in the towns, and the remaining 21% resided in the villages.

An estimated total of 15,322 building permits were issued for the period 1990-2000, resulting in an annual average of about 1,392 building permits. If current trends continue, new housing development will occur on another 5% of the County's remaining 522,000 developable acres over the next 20 years. Much of this growth will occur in Monroe, Chester, Warwick, Blooming Grove, Woodbury, Montgomery and New Windsor areas. Other, more rural areas, such as Deerpark, Greenville, Wawayanda, Minisink and Mount Hope, are also likely to experience some growth in residential development. There is also the possibility that large-scale residential developments in the southeastern part of the County could further skew the geographic distribution of growth over the next decade.

Orange County has a wide range of soil qualities and conditions, anchored by the highly productive muck lands or "Black Dirt," and, as a result, agriculture remains an important feature of the County's economy and landscape. The County has just over 522,000 acres of farmland, of which 224,000 acres have a USDA land capacity classification of I through III. (Classes I-III of seven classes are considered prime). Approximately 20,000 acres of generally unbuildable "black dirt", of which 14,000 is farmed, is located in the Towns of Goshen, Warwick, Wawayanda, Minisink and a small part of Chester. These Black Dirt soils are highly productive and suitable for a wide variety of vegetable and field crops. Found in large contiguous blocks within the "Black Dirt" regions, these soils support little development potential and are likely to remain highly suitable for farming into the foreseeable future.

Although agricultural activity occurs primarily in the Wallkill River Valley, it is also common in other areas. Soils with high land evaluation scores are scattered throughout the upland portions of Orange County, with concentrations existing in upland valleys and throughout the Wallkill River Valley. According to the County Open Space Plan, these upland soils are the most prone to development.

As the County Open Space Plan indicated, prime and productive soils account for 43% of all soils in the County. Most of the soils are deemed prime to fair for one or more of the following: flowers, vegetables, or fruit and tree fruit production. Prime and productive soils are highly desirable for residential and commercial construction. These soils are present to some degree in almost every town with large blocks in Warwick, Goshen, Wawayanda, Minisink, Montgomery, and Newburgh. These towns are also under high development pressure.

While small farmland protection efforts were identified as being under way, the Plan indicated that larger efforts would be necessary to keep ahead of the growing development pressures.