



*Town of Copake*

**DOWNTOWN COPAKE**

Where nature meets nurture.

**NYS DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE PROPOSAL**

*September 2021*









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## BASIC INFORMATION

**Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) Region:**  
Capital Region

**Municipality Name:** Town of Copake

**Downtown Name:** Downtown Copake: Where Nature Meets  
Nurture

**County:** Columbia County

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*“The Town has kept in sight a vision of our community’s magnificent asset of nature, working to preserve land and water, continuing to promote tourism while being sensitive to the evolving needs of residents of all ages.”*

*Survey Respondent*



# Welcome to Downtown Copake

## Where Nature Meets Nurture.

Hello Friends

Copake is a small town with a big heart. We've seen lots of changes since the hills of Copake were dotted with 100's of dairy farms, and the Main Street downtown had three operating family businesses and numerous professional offices. We had a drug store, a steakhouse and a grocery store which sold food downstairs and Ked sneakers and Lee blue jeans upstairs.

Now most people earn their living from non-agricultural industries. There have always been second home owners in Copake, but that population has grown. Many people are able to work remotely and cherish their time "in the country."

But for all that has changed, much remains the same. The Town is home to people from many different backgrounds, who come here - or stay here - for what they find: a warm community, a beautiful rural landscape, hills, and woods in which to hike or hunt and fish, country roads to bike, a quiet life "far from all the noise and hurry."

We are excited about and ready for the DRI opportunity. It will help us to maintain what we love about Copake while transforming our downtown by helping small businesses and new industries that will bolster our tax base and strengthen our economy.

This would be a dream come true, to revitalize our "downtown" while keeping its charm and welcoming spirit.

Jeanne E. Mettler  
Supervisor

## VISION FOR DOWNTOWN

### **We're leading the way to downtown revitalization.**

We advanced an illustrated Downtown Design and Development Plan with support from our local community foundation. In 2021 we completed a Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan Revitalization Strategy for our three primary waterways – the Roeliff Jansen Kill, Taghkanic Creek, and the Bash Bish Brook.

### **We stand ready, together, to achieve our consensus vision.**

As the pandemic lingers on we are keenly aware of the needs of our citizens and motivated to further improve their quality of life. We value our visitors very much - and we also value equity that comes from listening to residents and making improvements that work for them as our primary audience.

### **Resident pride and interest drove our choices.**

Hundreds of year-round and part-time residents participated in online workshops, a charrette, a follow up design workshop, walk and talk sessions, in person meetings with standing-room-only crowds, a series of surveys and online meetings and workshops complying with COVID-19 mandates to shape this vision:

*Copake's downtown is a healthy and equitable rural downtown inspired by nature at every turn. Its story – past, present and future – is of a vibrant place to live, work, play and visit. It's inviting and friendly, age-friendly, sustainable, flood-safe and resilient. Downtown provides inclusive social spaces that are connected by climate-ready trails and parks, blueways and bikeways. Our affordable and market rate housing options appeal to residents of all ages and abilities. Our partnerships with employers support workforce development and job growth. We have a deep commitment to our architectural and agricultural history and our arts and cultural identity. We are a family-oriented four-season destination for cycling and trail recreation that provides essential support for our local businesses. Downtown trails connect to the Harlem Valley Rail Trail and to Taconic State Park - they define our regional identity and drive increased visitor spending. Clean air, safe drinking water, and bountiful local food are hallmarks of our healthy environment and our beloved downtown.*

**"We need a vibrant "culture"...to attract new residents and to retain those growing up in the region.**

**Let's try to make Copake a destination folks would like to come to visit, spend time and money - and fall in love with and to eventually settle here."**

*Survey Respondent*





## JUSTIFICATION

*Are you ready to hear about agriculture, farm conservation, world-rare plants surrounded by magnificent scenery with an increasingly vibrant and livable downtown?*

**Welcome to Copake!**

### **WE'RE RURAL AND RURAL IS GREAT**

Prior DRI communities in the Capital Region (Glens Falls, Hudson, Albany and Schenectady) dwarf Copake in size. We are a small rural town that can leverage recent projects totaling \$38.5 million and compete with the big guys. How? Agriculture is growing and diversifying – reinvigorating the industry while protecting rural character. Our historic downtown mirrors that small town feel and appeals to residents and visitors. We have a different sense of place and quality of life amenities, but our non-urban assets define much of upstate NY and designation of Copake for the DRI would send a message that they matter too.

### **DIVERSE PLACE ANCHORED BY THRIVING FARMS**

The DRI area was selected because it is mixed use, compact, and displays our historic architecture and our agricultural heritage. It includes our primary commercial center at the junction of four important roadways. Memorial Park is an anchor. Our three value-added agriculture initiatives: Empire Historic Astor Farm, Farm On, and the Copake Agriculture Center, are growing food, jobs and small business.

### **FOUNDATIONAL PROJECTS ARE PLANNED AND UNDERWAY**

The DRI area is the focus of multiple major infrastructure projects at various stages of readiness including reconstruction of Route 7A, flood mitigation for downtown structures, and construction of water and wastewater infrastructure. There is also a resident-driven push to designate downtown a State and National Register Listed Historic District. Downtown is the anchor of a network of free public trails, including the Copake Spur that will connect downtown to the Harlem Valley Rail trail and the estimated 150,000 people that use HVRT each year. The Spur is an essential economic development project matched by generous easements for land and rights of way.

### **WHY THESE PROJECTS?**

This isn't "our kitchen sink" - we have chosen these projects over others because they are most appropriate for the DRI and most consistent with the Capital Region Economic Development Council's Magnet, Core and Talent strategies and with the statewide focus on workforce, childcare, placemaking and revitalization. For us at the local level they:

- **Are catalysts:** They accelerate community health and quality of life.
- **Build equity:** They benefit people of all ages, races, abilities and incomes.
- **Forge collaborations:** They engage partners in common cause and collective action.
- **Are vision-driven:** They speak strongly to the vision and goals of the Town, its partners and funders.
- **Are ready to go:** They can be ready within the time period DRI prefers.
- **Support the public interest/access:** They pledge to be accessible in perpetuity.
- **Demonstrate resilience:** They can adapt to change while maintaining impact.

### **DRIVEN BY OUR GOALS AND STRATEGIES**

Our businesses took a hit from COVID-19 but are poised to thrive again, supporting all residents, whether life-long Copakians, second homeowners or families from the region. Our goals and strategies are:

#### ***Goal: Downtown Copake is a Great Place to Work***

To accomplish this goal we will:

- Understand and address localized flooding in parts of downtown.
- Provide free recreation like parks and trails that keep us healthy.
- Intentionally act to preserve our small-town character and feel.
- Grow our local food hub to produce locally sourced products.
- Protect our rich architectural character and agricultural heritage.
- Create more entertainment and "things to do" for all ages.

#### ***Goal: Copake is a Great Place To Live***

To accomplish this goal we will:

- Meet the needs of long-time and seasonal residents.
- Expand availability of housing that is affordable to our local workforce.
- Increase access to all levels of care so our seniors can age in place.
- Support workforce development for jobs in emerging fields.
- Meet needs for state-of-the-art telecommunications services.
- Offer free downtown Wi-Fi.
- Be a cultural and heritage tourism destination with public art.
- Promote value-added agriculture to preserve farming.
- Be the safe, beautiful, and vibrant destination employers need.
- Focus all these strategies to grow our local property tax base.

**"I believe Copake is an ideal retirement place for high quality environmental living where we have enough amenities for a civilized life. As we age, the need for appropriate housing for and transportation for seniors are becoming major concerns."**

Survey Response



## Downtown Amenities

- Copake United Methodist Church and Cemetery
- Copake Grange Hall
- Copake Memorial Park
- Copake Memorial Clock
- Roe Jan Ramble
- Civic: Town Hall, Post Office, Fire Department, Clausson-Raught Community Rescue Squad, and Copake Park
- Copake Rapid Care
- Retail: Copake Wine Works, Copake Auction House, Copake Gift Shoppe, Sunoco Gas Station and convenience store
- Bank of Greene County & Key Bank
- Church Street Deli, Dad's Copake Diner, Clock Tower Pub & Grill, Copake General Store
- Farm On! Foundation, Copake Agricultural Center and Empire Farm

Historic buildings include:

- Copake Grange built in 1902
- United Methodist Church, built in 1853-1854
- Restored Copake Memorial Clock installed in 1944, honoring service members from World Wars I & II, Korea and Vietnam and completely restored in recent years.

## *Goal: Copake is a Great Place to Play*

To accomplish this goal we will:

- Strengthen downtown's identity as a bike and trail center.
- Increase passive and active access to our linked waterways.
- Create recreation that is inclusive and accessible for seniors, children, people with disabilities, visitors and young families.
- Connect downtown to the Harlem Valley Rail Trail.
- Be a cultural and heritage tourism destination.
- Design streetscapes to be age friendly.
- Provide a system of gateways, maps and apps, and way-finding.
- Connect downtown to our waterfronts.
- Maintain and expand gathering spaces.

## *All our goals and strategies need:*

- A plan of attack – hopefully a DRI Strategic Investment Plan.
- Engagement with the Capital Region Economic Development Council and the NYS agencies interested in our projects.
- Continuous visionary leadership - public and private.
- Infrastructure that supports compatible growth and density.
- Focus on resilience, sustainability and natural flood mitigation.

## READY TO GO

Our proposal focuses on actionable activities we can start right away complete in the 1 – 2-year window. Major foundational projects produce leverage underway that will enable other projects to advance and downtown Copake to grow and prosper.

## WE'RE NOT IMMUNE FROM CHALLENGES

### COVID 19 Impacts on the Capital Region, Columbia County and the Town of Copake

We're an optimistic bunch. We haven't lost faith in our downtown's future, but we're not immune to challenges the COVID-19 pandemic brought.

The Capital Region Economic Development Council (CREDC) concludes that "wide segments of the population – and even whole communities in the region - are facing an uncertain future and elevated unemployment within the core sectors that struggle to reopen safely. Columbia County lagged the region through the pandemic in key economic indicators including sustaining a **-9.7% private sector job loss**.

The pandemic had a devastating impact on small businesses. CREDC reports that small business employment fell to its lowest level in more than two decades. With over 16% of jobs in hospitality and leisure, **Columbia County experienced a -17.9% year-over-year drop in small business employment:** only Warren and Saratoga were harder hit in the region.

The CREDC 2021 Strategic Plan update establishes 54 magnet census tracts with high needs including Hudson and Austerlitz. Downtown Copake became a census designated place after the 2010 census – its first enumeration will be the 2020 census. Based on best available data, Copake meets or exceeds the needs metrics established for Magnet communities:

- While poverty rates declined in eight of the region’s 10 cities between 2014 and 2019, they rose substantially in rural communities near Copake’s downtown. For example, the percentage of people in poverty increased by 6.4% to just over 15% in nearby Claverack and by 74.1% in Gallatin. **Over 14.4% of Copake residents live in poverty up from 9.6% in 2020** - above the regional average of 10.4%.
- Fifteen percent of workers are employed in retail, accommodation and food service together with arts, entertainment and recreation. Nearly 25% of workers are employed in education, health and social services. **Over 40% of Copake establishments are in the arts, entertainment, recreation, and accommodation and food services sectors.**
- In June 2020, the U.S. Census released experimental data about resilience – “the capacity of individuals and households to absorb, endure, and recover from the health, social, and economic impacts of a disaster such as a hurricane, flood or pandemic.” CREDC Magnet communities report high percentages of residents with multiple risk factors that weaken their ability to respond to disasters such as severe weather and disease outbreak. **Over 24% of residents in Copake have three or more risk factors and half of Copake residents have two risk factors.**
- As of July 2021 the Urban Institute (UI) reported that there are 15,400 low-income jobholders in Columbia County. A low-income job provides compensation of less than \$40,000 per year. **UI reports that over 1,585 low-income jobs were lost in Columbia County due to COVID-19 including 77 in Copake through July 2021.** Half of the at-risk jobs are in accommodation and food service industries with the remainder in retail trade, care and social assistance, and in arts, entertainment & recreation.

**“The health of the environment including water, air, and soil is the basis of good growth. Visual environment is important too: it gives us a sense of order and makes us "good neighbors".**

Survey Response



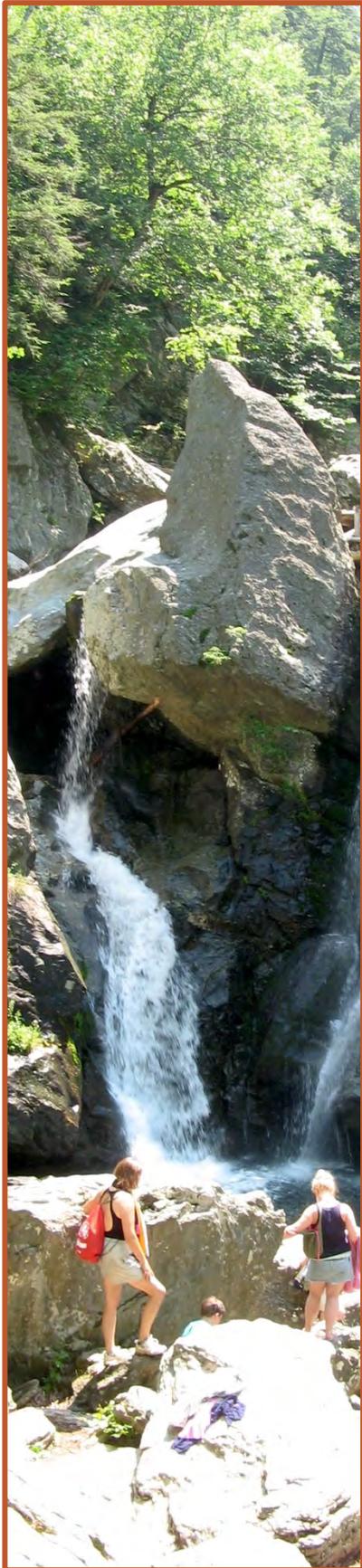


Columbia County, along with Saratoga and Greene Counties were also among seven counties statewide that saw what is referred to as “domestic migration gains” in 2020. The current housing bubble has also created more competition for market rate and affordable homes – driving prices above what most residents can afford. According to the New York State Association of Realtors’ (NYSAR) housing market data from October 2020, Columbia County saw a 35% jump in new listings from 2019 to 2020, attributed to historically low mortgage rates, constrained inventory, and the COVID-19 pandemic spurring interest in upstate home purchases. NYSAR also indicated a 57% jump in closed sales and a 20% increase in median sale price of homes in the county. **With a significant population living in poverty or earning less than median income the competition for affordable housing is reaching a critical level.**

### **SO WHY COPAKE?**

We have advanced projects in recent years valued at over \$38.5 million. This proposal builds on that success, proposing 13 projects (some with multiple components) with total value of \$40,000,000 and a DRI component of \$20,000,000. Taken as a whole, our projects create 215 direct, 200 supplier and 250 induced jobs. The average wage is \$54,500 and average annual labor output is \$10.2 million. Construction period employment is estimated as benefitting 400 workers.

**Why Copake? Because we’re a good bet.**



## 1 Boundary of the Downtown

The Town's comprehensive plan, 2021 Waterfront and Community Revitalization Plan (LWRP Component) and the Design and Development Plan identify downtown as having very strong potential as a walkable 'live-work-play' community and outline many strategies to create a 'walkable, vibrant, safe, and attractive community.'

We're approximately 100 miles north of New York City and 125 miles west of Boston, Massachusetts. Downtown is bounded by the Towns of Hillsdale to the north, Ancram to the south, Taghkanic to the west, and by Taconic State Park and the Towns of Mount Washington and Egremont in Massachusetts on the east. It sits about ¾ mile to the east of Route 22 between the Town of Hillsdale (about 5 miles north along Route 22), and the Town of Millerton (approximately 11 miles south along Route 22). State Route 22 connects many second homeowners and visitors to Columbia County and to the Berkshires in Massachusetts.

### **OUR MAGNIFICENT SCENIC BEAUTY**

Copake is defined by its beautiful agricultural landscape, rolling hills, hidden lakes, and wide-open vistas of breathtaking farmland, while the Taconic Mountains to the East provide a stunning backdrop in Columbia County. A large portion of our 41.2 square miles is undeveloped agricultural and recreational land. Copake's year-round population of 3,485 is supplemented by a longstanding second homeowner community which doubles the population during some months of the year.

### **A DOWNTOWN ALONG THE BASH BISH BROOK**

The Bash Bish Brook is downtown's primary waterway. It's a moderately large stream originating in Massachusetts that drains a roughly 13-square-mile basin into the Roeliff Jansen Kill watershed. Copake Falls provides a large campground on the Bash Bish Brook and is the access point to an expansive trail network with terrain that varies from easy to challenging offering spectacular views of Bash Bish Falls – Massachusetts' highest single drop waterfall. The Falls is a chain of flumes, cascades, and punchbowls in a deep, constricted and inaccessible gorge, reported to descend 180 feet over a linear run of 540 feet. The brook and falls were the catalyst for Taconic State Park and are renowned for excellent trout fishing.

## UNIQUE MIX OF USES

Typical of rural downtown downtowns, development occurs along primary roads (Main and East Main Streets, County Route 7A, State Route 22, and Empire Road) that encircle a large swath of open and agricultural land (280 acres with +/- 2-mile perimeter). Downtown Copake is located west of State Route 22, on County Route 7A in the south-central portion of town. The center of the downtown, marked by the National Register Listed Memorial Clock, is at the intersection of Main Street, Empire Road, Church Street and Route 7A.



We crafted the boundary to include amenities and employers:

- Our downtown spaces and streetscape are destinations to walk, play, rest, and meet other people. This is the center of our walk circles.
- Small businesses are holding on but need more help to recover and succeed following COVID-19. The entire CBD is included.
- The Copake Spur is a driver of future economic growth. The boundary extends to the east to capture the primary trail alignment.
- Walt's is the first farm protected by conservation easement. The boundary extends east to include the farm.
- Park and recreation amenities provided safe gathering spaces at the worst of the pandemic. The boundary extends north to take in Memorial Park.
- FarmOn! and Empire Farm are critical agricultural enterprises. The boundary extends south to take in these farms.
- The Copake Agriculture Center near Town Hall and Memorial Park fosters niche farms and agricultural entrepreneurs.
- Studies report that homes near green spaces have higher property value. We include some open land that may be suitable for housing.
- Four-season recreation sustains year-round tourism. Our boundary includes trails and bike routes originating downtown.

To explore the proper size of the proposed DRI district we evaluated data for a ¼ mile (5 or 10-minute walk), ½ mile (10 or 15-minute walk), and one mile distance from the Copake Memorial Clock.

Most of the downtown core is within the ¼ mile walk and all the district (except for a small part of Memorial Park) are walkable in 10-15 minutes.

## COPAKE DOWNTOWN - PROPOSED DRI AREA BOUNDARY

Centerpoint: 179 County Route 7A, Copake, NY 12516 (Copake Memorial Clock)



### LEGEND

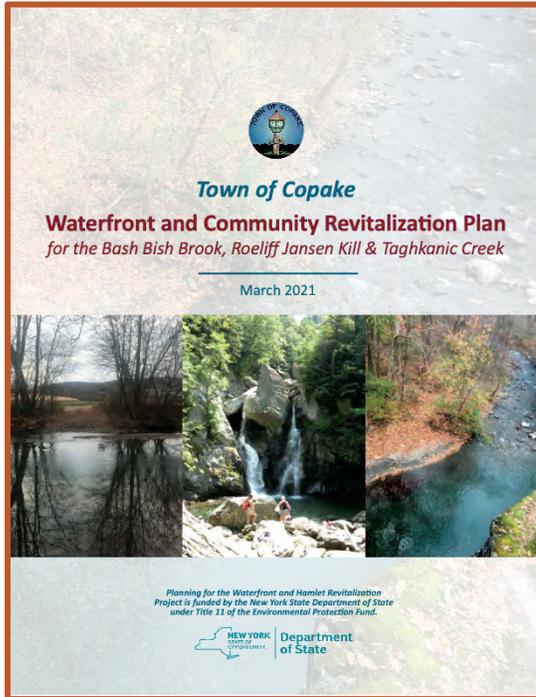
- .25 mile radius (123 acres)
- .5 mile radius (508 acres)
- 1 mile radius (2,103 acres)

- DRI Area Boundary (280 acres)
- Open Space in DRI Area (180 acres)

#### Farms in DRI Area

- FarmOn! Foundation
- Empire Farm
- Walts Dairy
- Copake Ag Center

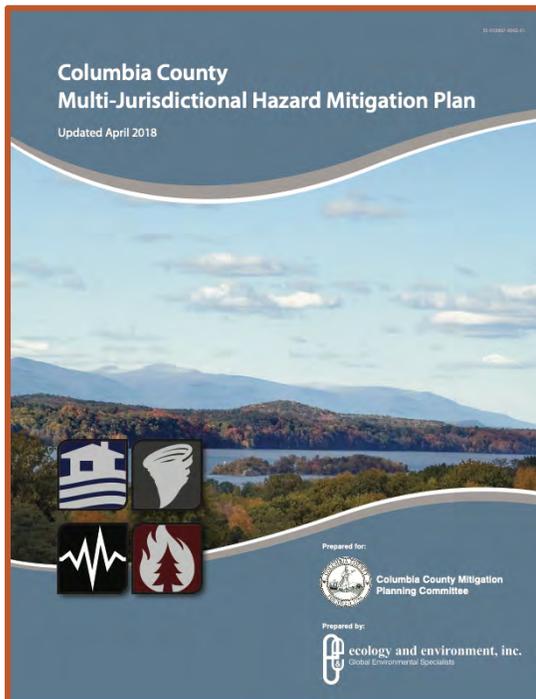
- **NORTHERN BOUNDARY** - The northern boundary begins at the intersection of County Route 7A and Mountain View Road. It travels east for 0.75 miles along Mountain View Road, jogging north near Lincoln Road, surrounding the Copake Memorial Recreation Park, rejoining Mountain View Road at Park Side Drive, continuing to the intersection with Farm Road on the east.
- **EASTERN BOUNDARY** – The eastern boundary begins at the intersection of Mountain View Road and Farm Road on the north and travels southward for 0.26 miles to the intersection with East Main Street. From East Main Street it travels 0.27 miles to the intersection with NY Route 22.
- **SOUTHERN BOUNDARY** - The southern boundary travels west along NY Route 22 for 0.15 miles, continuing past Walt’s Dairy Farm and following the Bash Bish Brook for 0.46 miles to the intersection with County Route 7A near Empire Road. At this point the boundary follows Empire Road south encompassing FarmOn and Empire Farm and returns to County Route 7A where it continues west along rear property lines along C7A until it turns north.
- **WESTERN BOUNDARY** - The western boundary follows County Route 7A north for 0.56 miles to close the loop at the intersection with Mountain View Road.



## WE'RE CHOOSING ACTIONABLE PROJECTS

We are very fortunate to have partnerships with Rhinestrom Hill Foundation and the Hudson River Valley Greenway. They helped us put the regulations and policies in place to remain a desirable place to live, work and play. We have benefitted from the guidance of NYS Department of State in completing our 2021 Local Waterfront Revitalization Strategy (see [www.copakewaterfronts.com](http://www.copakewaterfronts.com)) and from Columbia County Planning in developing the Hazard Mitigation Plan. The Columbia Land Conservancy has supported sustainable agriculture and facilitated the placement of nearly 1,500 acres of farmland under conservation easements with total value in excess of \$8.0 million. The value of building permits issued Town wide since 2017 is over \$64 million.

The following tables summarize over \$38.5 million in recent investments, with business owners investing every day.



### LEVERAGED FUNDING – PUBLIC

Columbia County share of Rte. 7 Reconstruction	\$1,500,000
Town contribution for streetscaping for Rte. 7	\$1,100,000
Federal/State share of Rte. 7 Reconstruction	\$4,500,000
DOS LWRP Revitalization Strategy EPF Grant	\$80,000
NYS EFC Engineering Grant	\$28,000
Downtown Design Plan Grant	\$30,000
Resilient Culvert (with Trout Unlimited)	\$94,000
NYS DEC and Partner Research Studies	\$250,000
Zoning Update	\$50,000
Donated Professional & Consulting Time	\$200,000
Value of Building Permits Issued 2017-2021	
	<b>\$7,832,000</b>

### PENDING NYS CONSOLIDATED FUNDING APPLICATIONS

2021 CFA – NYS DOS – Stream and Flood Assessment and Design of the Copake Spur	\$281,250
	<b>\$8,113,250</b>

LEVERAGED FUNDING – PUBLIC	
Farmland Conservation Easement Value	\$8,000,000
Business Investment (a sample): Wine Works \$113,000; General Store \$80,000; Tiny Hearts Farm \$1,500,000; Copake Auction \$400,000	\$2,113,000
Empire Farm/FarmOn Investment	3,000,000
The Grange Investment	\$26,000
North East Farm Access Investment	\$2,500,000
Value of issued building permits 2019-2021	5,000,000
	<b>\$17,640,000</b>
<b>Municipal Water and Wastewater System</b>	
Municipal Water and Wastewater System	\$5,000,000
	<b>\$22,640,000</b>

**“In Taconic Shores we have many new weekend residents and BnB visitors who would come to galleries, outdoor cafes and stores.”**  
*Survey Respondent*

**STRATEGIES TO LEVERAGE FUTURE INVESTMENT**

COVID-19 revealed how much we value and need places to be together. Downtown is small, and density is limited – every space and building counts. The trails along Bash Bish Brook add a free public health amenity. These recreational components all contribute to a healthier and more resilient community:

- The Copake Spur is a defining feature and a tool for revitalization.
- Natural flood mitigation and green infrastructure raise property values.
- Becoming a bicycle-tourism destination supports multi-modal, affordable forms of transportation.
- Increasing environmental justice and fair access to parks will reduce social isolation post COVID-19.

**FOUNDATION PROJECTS TO BUILD UPON**

We are fortunate to have some major foundational projects that produce significant leverage getting underway including:

**Foundation Project: Complete Reconstruction of County Route 7A** –Reconstruction of Rte. 7A is scheduled to begin in 2022 funded by FHWA and NYS DOT. This \$6.0 million investment will make downtown safer, more walkable and accessible. Copake has earmarked \$1.0 million to enhance the streetscape.

**Foundation Project: Water and Wastewater Implementation Plan** - An engineering study funded by NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation is underway to determine the best alternatives to develop community water and wastewater for





**Foundation Project: Copake Downtown National Register Listed Historic District Nomination** - Residents have come together to evaluate downtown resources – public and private (both commercial and residential) in preparation for nominating a district.

**Foundation Project - Flood Assessment and Resilient Flood Mitigation** Development of the Town’s Waterfront and Community Revitalization Plan with NYS Department of State competed in 2021 advanced both thinking and concern regarding frequent flooding of some downtown properties. In 2021 the Town submitted a grant for \$225,000 to NYS DOS under the LWRP program through the Environmental Protection Act. The Copake NY Bash Bish Brook Resilience Concept advances critical interrelated projects:

- **Feasibility Analysis & Stream Modeling** to study causes of Bash Bish Brook flooding and evaluate potential mitigation measures.
- **Spur Trail Design Concept** to facilitate safe bike/ped crossing of NY Route 22 near Weed Mine Road including design development package, trail alignment, surface, crossings, and amenities.

These projects reflect our aspirations for equitable access to trails and open spaces that make Copake stronger, healthier, and connected.

#### **ARTS AND CULTURE**

Copake embraces local artists, artisan and cultural events and venues. Our Grange Hall (the only one left in Columbia County – see [Copake Grange](#)) is a popular meeting place for community dinners, performing and visual arts, public forums, and events. It offers an array of programs but the building needs rehabilitation that the Grange members cannot afford.

#### **COMMUNITY AGRICULTURE**

To say that our agricultural sector has exploded in recent years would be a major understatement. Two new major downtown/downtown adjacent farms with community engagement and educational programming have located in Copake. Our longtime partner at Camphill Village is expanding. Hundreds of acres have been put in conservation thanks to the Columbia Land Conservancy. These amenities are growing Copake’s reputation as a regional food hub and can support larger farm to table opportunities. For example:

**CAMPBILL VILLAGE** - Copake is home to Camphill Village, one of the largest self-sufficient communities in the country for people with special needs. It is “located on 615 acres of wooded hills, gardens, and pastures, adults with special needs and long-and short-term service volunteers live and work together as equals in extended family homes.



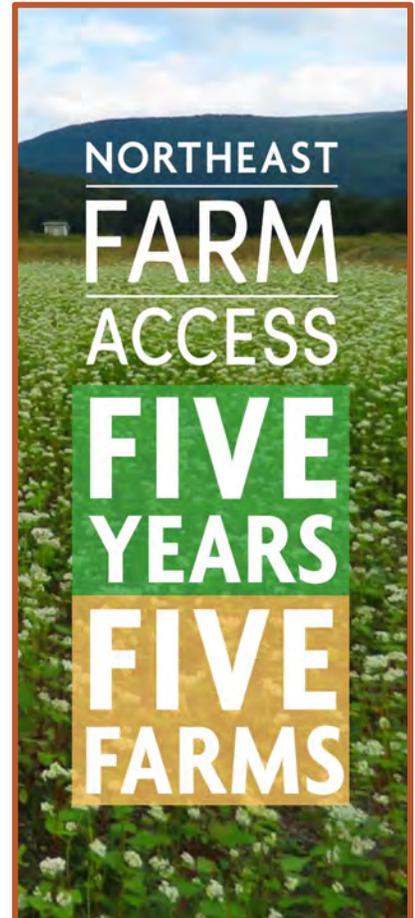
The founding of Camphill Village in 1961 was part of a transformative movement in the United States to reform how society treats people with special needs.” In addition to being a residential community, Camphill operates an online shop at <https://camphillstore.com>. The raw materials for their goods are locally sourced or home-grown lumber and home-grown roots, flowers, and seeds transformed into herbal cosmetics, teas, and culinary spice mixes. Farming operations include their ongoing focus on biodynamic/organic agriculture and operation of the oldest biodynamic seed company in North America.

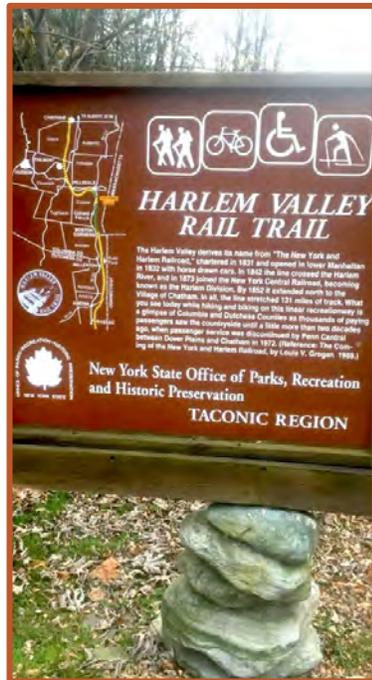
**FARM ON AND THE HISTORIC ASTOR EMPIRE FARM** – FarmOn! And Empire Farm is a 200 acre working farm offering a Community Supported Agricultural (CSA) program, farm store and year-round local programming. They provide opportunities to align with responsible food and resilient agriculture and build local economies through food education and farm preservation. The farm reports +/- \$850,000 in annual operations, investment and production.

**NORTHEAST FARM ACCESS** - The Copake Agricultural Center (200 acres total) is the “pioneer of a multi-farmer agricultural project that became the model for future centers. It’s a showplace of diversified, sustainable agriculture.” It is currently home to five farmers supported by off farm housing, barns and a greenhouse. The program purchased 192 acres and three farmhouses, moved 180 acres into conservation easements, and shifted 122 acres out of “conventional” agriculture into organic farming practices. In addition to revenue from production and food sales, the program has leveraged \$2,500,000 in production and programming. See [Northeast Farm Access \(nefarmaccess.org\)](http://nefarmaccess.org).

**COPAKE-HILLSDALE FARMERS MARKET** - Founder Roberta Roll started the Copake Farmers Market in the center of downtown. It merged with the Hillsdale Farmers Market to contribute to the growth and vitality of the towns of Hillsdale and Copake. It’s a focal point for the community and has major impact on the “wave of revitalization” downtown and beyond. The market provides a consistent venue for local musicians and built a loyal customer base for both farmers and food producers. See [Copake Hillsdale Farmers Market – Feeding our Neighbors](#).

**RANDOM HARVEST** - Located outside of the downtown but benefitting it in many ways, Random Harvest is a worker-owned neighborhood market working to grow a relational food economy – a food system that puts relationships at its center in the Hudson Valley. They support local farmers and food producers in our region, as well as carry an assortment of basic pantry items to help meet community needs. They have also started a Food Access Fund which sets out to “Feed your neighbors with fresh, delicious, local food.”





**FARMLAND CONSERVATION** - The Columbia Land Conservancy has worked with multiple farmers to put farmland values under conservation agreements. They work with major nonprofits and Land Trusts like Scenic Hudson as well NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets. The private value of these easements is \$8.0 million to date.

### CONNECTING TO LOCAL AND REGIONAL RECREATIONAL ASSETS

Opening of the Empire Trail underscores the importance recreation trails can play if they are designed to link active downtowns and recreation. According to US EPA, trails and trail-based recreation “can foster environmentally friendly community development and Main Street revitalization through conservation and sustainable use of public or private forests” or other natural resources. The EPA reports that trail development fosters community pride, good stewardship and local economic benefits; turns day trippers into overnight visitors; and justifies investment in amenities such as broadband service, shops, restaurants or breweries that also benefit local residents and businesses. Copake is following the EPA approach and using downtown as the gateway to nearby natural lands to “capture and amplify outdoor recreation dollars.”



The incredible community energy behind the Copake Spur drove the Town to secure inland waterway status and prepare the Waterfront and Community Revitalization Plan so that we can compete for funding. With the annual Roe Jan Ramble and other cycling events, Copake is reinforcing its identity as a family-friendly four-season recreation destination and ensuring that growing regional tourism benefits local businesses. Build out of the Harlem Valley Rail Trail through Copake with another anchor in Copake Falls is expected to provide significant economic spin-off. Various economic impact reports for trails in NYS and beyond document the benefits these amenities bring including increasing value of nearby properties; boosting spending at local retailers and eating and drinking establishments; and drawing visitors who support hotels, bed and breakfasts and outdoor outfitters with larger purchases.

Copake has already positioned itself as a biking destination. Every spring there is an Antique Bike Auction at the Copake Auction which attracts enthusiasts from across the world. In conjunction with that auction, the Town promotes an Antique Bike Ride where local riders participate with penny farthings and other classic bicycles. Since 2012 Copake has partnered with the Towns of Ancram and Hillsdale to sponsor the Roe Jan Ramble Bike Tour, attracting upwards of 200 riders annually in recent years with hundreds of family members participating; in 2019 the event drew over 600 riders.



### 3 Recent and Impending Job Growth

The Capital Region Economic Development Council (CREDC) concludes that communities in the region are still struggling to regain ground lost to the pandemic. This is particularly a concern for Columbia County which lagged the region in key economic indicators including sustaining a **-9.7+% private sector job loss**. CREDC reports that employment in small businesses fell to its lowest level in more than two decades. With over 16% of its employment in hospitality and leisure sectors, **Columbia County experienced a -17.9% year-over-year drop in small business employment**: only Warren and Saratoga were harder hit in the region.

We expect growth, expansion and new business recruitment because of municipal wastewater added downtown. Implementing the 2021 Waterfront Plan will drive investment in local businesses that employ residents, create jobs accessible to low/moderate-income people, and drive tax base expansion. The Copake Downtown needs to draw some of the 150k annual users of the Harlem Valley Rail Trail (HVRT) onto the new spur trail connecting to the active downtown where they can visit, shop, dine and stay. We will continue to work with County programs that include job training, apprenticeships, and mentoring programs to offer residents - including harder to place workers and Veterans who may not be participating in the workforce - to access new jobs.

#### **CONSISTENCY WITH CREDC STRATEGIES AND CLUSTERS**

The Capital Region Economic Development Council has revamped some strategies to increase their reach to rural communities among other goals. The focus clusters for Copake are Creative Arts, Food and Tourism (CRAFT), Cleantech/GreenTech and Software. The latter two depend on excellent broadband and telecommunications stability and speed. If we can focus broadband investments in downtown with free Wi-Fi, it will go a long way to attracting these clusters and helping us make progress under three strategies:



- **TALENT STRATEGY** – The “Talent” strategy focuses on building and enhancing the talent pipelines for the key regional clusters. It aims to create rapid training opportunities for workers transitioning from industries that are vulnerable to the pandemic to those targeted by the Magnet strategy, such as food and beverage and other light manufacturing, software-IT and agricultural technology, as well as healthcare.”
- **MAGNET STRATEGY.** The “Magnet” strategy highlights the goal of attracting businesses to communities in need of diversification. The CREDC is prioritizing siting of food and beverage and light manufacturing, software-IT and agricultural technology in Magnet census tracts or in adjacent tracts. Many Magnet communities suffer from some of the region’s highest poverty rates. “They house potential Environmental Justice Zones and have high percentages of residents with multiple risk factors that weaken their ability to respond to disasters such as severe weather and disease outbreak. This strategy also supports the expansion of high-speed broadband and other infrastructure needed to attract more businesses in the target industries”
- **CORE STRATEGY** – The “Core” strategy focuses on building stronger urban and rural communities through placemaking in the creative arts and tourism segments of the CRAFT cluster as well as upgraded infrastructure that will strengthen a community’s ability to attract private investment. Many of our projects fall under this strategy.

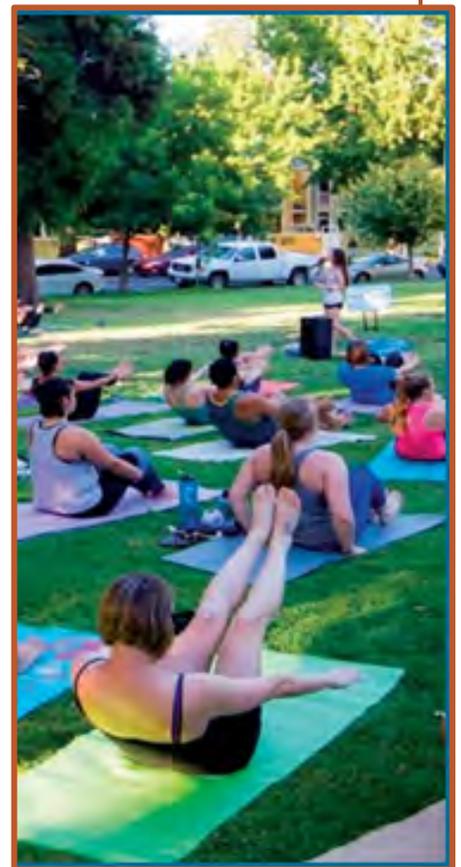
#### **TOURISM TRENDS PRE AND POST PANDEMIC**

An editorial in The Columbia Paper in December 2020 examined the growth in tourism prior to the pandemic, concluding that there “is no reason that Columbia County tourism can’t come roaring back – with help.” (see [EDITORIAL: We can recover with help - The Columbia Paper](#)). The numbers are compiled by Tourism Economics in “Economic Impact of Visitors in New York/Hudson Valley Focus.” Data reported includes the following:

- A record-high 265.5 million visitors enjoyed New York State in 2019, spending \$73.6 billion and generating an economic impact of \$117.6 billion.
- Columbia County had the highest rate of growth among the six counties in the Hudson Valley region in terms of tourism spending.
- With tourism spending up 5.2% ,accompanied by a 4.2% growth in tourism tax revenues, the rate of growth in tourism in Columbia County is ahead of Dutchess and even Westchester County.
- Visitors and “out of towners” pumped an estimated \$177 million into Columbia County which supported more than 2,400 jobs or 11% of the County economy.

**“The hamlet has greatly improved with the presence of some wonderful small businesses, including the Copake General Store, Dad's Diner and the Copake Wine Works.”**

*Survey Respondent*



## *Downtown Copake NY: Where Nature Meets Nurture*



The editorial concludes by saying “Columbia County needs tourist destinations for visitors to rediscover when COVID-19 is subdued. We need people who staff those enterprises, who run those restaurants, who build and repair of our legacy of historic sites. Together these people are a big industry for a small place.”

### **JOB CREATION FROM PROPOSED DRI PROJECTS**

Job creation estimates from Implan Economic Modeling were compared to employment multipliers from the Economic Policy Institute. This analysis estimates direct jobs, supplier jobs, indirect jobs and construction related jobs that will accrue to the proposed projects. Jobs in some industries were adjusted to full-time equivalents where possible. Potential labor output is estimated using NYS Department of Labor Occupational Wages which examine job classifications and identify median wage, entry level wages and wages of experienced workers. We estimate that the proposed projects can create:

<b>ESTIMATED COPAKE DRI JOB CREATION SUMMARY</b>				
<b>PROJECT</b>	<b>Direct Jobs</b>	<b>Supplier Jobs</b>	<b>Induced Jobs</b>	<b>Construction Jobs Benefitted</b>
Total Projects (\$40,000,000)	215	200	250	400
DRI Component (\$20,000,000)	120	115	130	210

Considering **total DRI funding of \$20,000,000** estimated job creation is 120 direct jobs; 115 supplier jobs; and 130 induced jobs for a total 365 jobs. We estimate 210 construction jobs will benefit. Considering the **total project value of \$40,000,000** the estimated job creation is 215 direct jobs, 200 supplier jobs and 250 induced jobs for a total 665 jobs. Estimated construction period employment benefitting from the projects is estimated at 400 jobs.

### **NYS DEPARTMENT OF LABOR OCCUPATIONAL DATA**

We used NYS DOL occupational wage estimated to understand the value of wages created by new jobs. NYS DOL explains the data: “Employment and wage data by occupation are based on the Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS) survey from approximately 44,400 businesses. NYS DOL reports wages at the entry level and experienced level as well as the average wage. We also selected 20 industry sectors most appropriate for the types of DRI projects proposed and took the average wage from those sectors. The sectors we included are:

NYS DOL OCCUPATIONAL WAGES - CAPITAL REGION - 2021			
Title	Median	Entry *	Experienced**
Total, All Occupations	\$47,880	\$28,390	\$84,220
Management Occupations	\$140,740	\$77,700	\$201,580
SELECTED OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES FOR DRI CATEGORIES			
Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers	\$97,810	\$66,760	\$120,490
Education Administrators, Preschool and Childcare Center	\$67,410	\$45,390	\$93,050
Education Admin., Elementary and Secondary School	\$131,110	\$89,150	\$154,880
Food Service	\$73,100	\$51,370	\$90,020
Lodging	\$74,570	\$52,150	\$100,220
Property, Real Estate	\$95,490	\$65,900	\$134,430
Social and Community Service	\$81,790	\$57,090	\$103,300
Agricultural and Food Science	\$50,290	\$36,290	\$63,790
Food Preparation and Serving	\$29,640	\$25,210	\$38,830
Office and Admin. Support	\$43,310	\$30,130	\$57,050
Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop and Greenhouse	\$30,910	\$27,670	\$36,640
Farmworkers, Farm, Ranch	\$37,000	\$27,270	\$43,130
Miscellaneous Construction	\$42,110	\$30,040	\$54,580
<b>AVERAGE ANNUAL WAGE</b>	<b>\$42,727</b>	<b>\$30,221</b>	<b>\$54,521</b>
* Entry wage: Average of the bottom third of wages in an occupation.			
**Experienced wage: Average of the top two-thirds of wages in an occupation.			

*“What I like the most about Copake is there are businesses for every kind of person, from the vacationer with money to spend, to ordinary folks just wanting a beer and a burger after a long day.”*

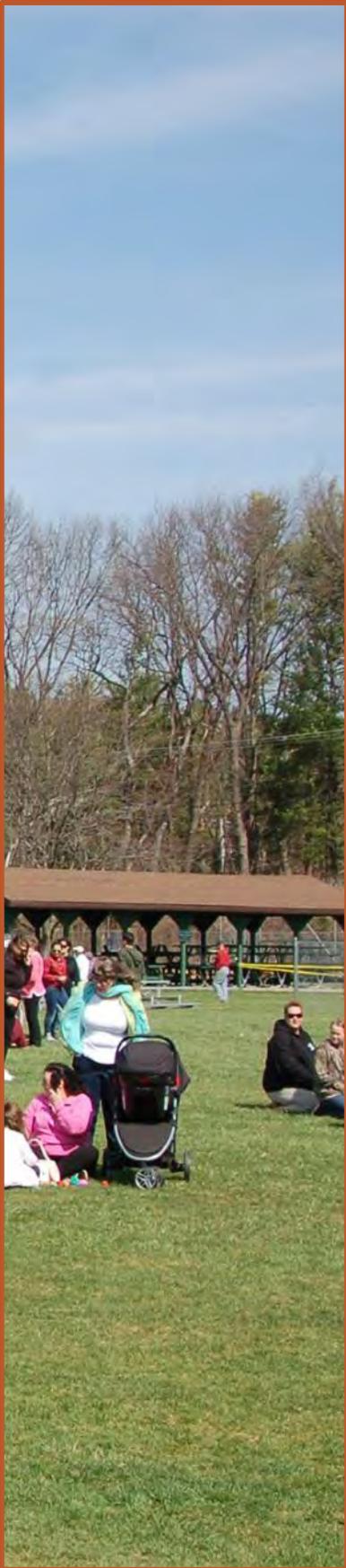
*Survey Respondent*

We also examined employment based on the full project value.

NYS All Occupations Average		Direct jobs	Supplier jobs	Induced jobs
NYS DOL Average Occupational Wages – All Industries				
	Est. Salary	215 Jobs	200 Jobs	250 Jobs
Median Wage	\$47,880	\$10,294,200	\$9,576,000	\$11,970,000
Entry Level	\$28,390	\$6,103,850	\$5,678,000	\$7,097,500
Experienced	\$84,220	\$18,107,300	\$16,844,000	\$21,055,000
NYS DOL 20 Selected Occupations Related to DRI Projects (Average)				
	Est. Salary	215 Jobs	200 Jobs	250 Jobs
Median Wage	\$42,727	\$9,186,305	\$8,545,400	\$10,681,750
Entry Level	\$30,221	\$6,497,515	\$6,044,200	\$7,555,250
Experienced	\$54,521	\$11,722,015	\$10,904,200	\$13,630,250

Direct job creation in the 20 occupational titles chosen yields labor income between \$6.5+/- million and \$11.72 million. The median wage for supplier jobs average \$8.54 million and the wage for induced jobs averages \$10.68 million.





## 4 Quality of Life

**Downtown Copake is nestled within that rich agricultural landscape at the cross-roads of Old Rt. 22, Main Street, Empire Road, and Church Street.**

In the 1950s, State Route 22 passed through the downtown of Copake. To create a faster, more direct north/south connection, Route 22 was relocated to its current alignment which bypasses the downtown. This decision had a devastating and long-lasting impact on the downtown’s business base. Today our location at the intersection of secondary roads instead of along Route. 22 is both an opportunity and a constraint. While downtown can be bypassed, once discovered its distinctiveness tells a story worth hearing.

We are a rural community comprised mostly of scattered residential uses and farms on country roads. More than half of Copake’s land has natural cover (56%) including forests, shrub/scrub and open water and wetlands. Over a third (35%) has agricultural cover including pasture and cultivated areas. Developed land makes up less than 10%. Downtown Copake is the commercial center.

Entering the Town from the north, the Copake downtown is a mixture of residential and commercial uses including a post office, banks, a pizzeria and deli, diner, Copake United Methodist Church and cemetery, gas station, the General Store and other local businesses. There is limited on-street parking, a municipal lot and individual business lots. Church Street is largely lined with well-maintained homes. The Clausson-Raught Rescue Squad and Copake Rapid Care are located next to Copake Memorial Park.

Our downtown reflects the community’s history and agricultural context with intact buildings that provide a clear foundation for restoration and enhancement. At its center sits the Town’s most iconic element—our historic street clock raised in a planting bed.

The downtown buildings are clustered tightly around the center and the cross-roads—creating a central “triangle” and compact central space. We hope to reduce excessive pavement as part of the Route 7A reconstruction, leaving more space for on-street parking, street trees, landscaping, and sidewalks to create a comfortable and defensible walking environment.

Our downtown has historic structures as well as properties ripe for reuse. The DRI planning process will help us to build on what we have in place and add focus to:



- **Meet Needs of Local Residents:** Our approach to infill development and rehabilitation asks and answers an essential question: How will this help today's residents? The influx of COVID-19 urban buyers has increased housing costs above what our hardworking residents can afford. There are concerns about gentrification as residents are priced out of homes and apartments.
- **Keep and Attract Families:** Identifying rehabilitation and development opportunities for underutilized buildings, especially smaller and more affordable homes, is a good way to attract younger residents.
- **Increase Walkability, Bikability and Local and Regional Connections:** A well maintained sidewalk network creates an environment that helps people to stay healthy. Downtown offers opportunities to use natural flood mitigation and green infrastructure such as porous pavers, bioswales, and rain gardens that illustrate new and innovative techniques to treat stormwater and mitigate flooding.
- **Grow Healthy Local Food:** Advancing local food goals by taking advantage of assets like the Hillsdale Copake Farmers Market, Random Harvest, the Copake Agricultural Center to reinforce downtown as a regional food hub and help cultivate farm to table restaurants.
- **Improve Community Wellness:** Encouraging healthy lifestyles through community gardens, walking loops, and bike trails; creating comfortable spaces for people of all ages and abilities.
- **Get Greener:** Branding downtown as a green core that is higher density and walkable, with new and rehabbed buildings demonstrating smart community principles in lighting, building design and use of green infrastructure, can distinguish Copake. Connecting downtown by trails and improving Route 7A as a complete street creates a more walkable and bikeable core. Adding or improving sidewalks that are comfortable, safe, and well-lit increases access and inclusion in an age-friendly place.
- **Reinforce Our Identity as a Gateway to the Berkshires:** We will reinforce our downtown as a gateway to the Berkshires and a tourism venue with retail, eating and drinking, and outfitter.
- **Advance Progressive Zoning:** We maintain a progressive zoning code to encourage the mix of uses and density appropriate for downtown. With municipal infrastructure density will increase and we will accommodate a wider variety of uses.

#### **MAGNIFICENT SCENIC RESOURCES**

Route 22 is the Valley's primary transportation corridor, and it has unique landscape characteristics that shape Copake's identity. Stretching 350 miles from Manhattan to Montreal, Canada, the Route 22 corridor is the major north-south roadway, running parallel to the base of the Taconic Plateau and Alexander Ridge. The roadway offers dramatic views to the beautiful scenery of the Harlem Valley.

Protection of the mountain ridge and its viewsheds remains a high priority based on the area's high biodiversity, scenic vistas, substantial recreational value, working farm landscapes and variety of habitat. The New York State 2016 Open Space Conservation Plan recommends that the State "continue to provide permanent protection for the Taconic Ridge through acquisition of fee simple ownership and of easements ....and encourage... the protection of farmland on the New York side of the Route 22 corridors." Trail system extensions including the Taconic Crest Trail, South Taconic Trail and the Harlem Valley Rail Trail connectors expose the public to scenic resources while providing recreation.

### **PROMOTE AND PRESERVE HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES**

We will continue to preserve, conserve and protect Copake's historic and cultural resources. There is growing interest in individual listing or nominating a National Register Historic District downtown.

- **Copake Grange Hall** – The Copake Grange dates to 1902 and is "dedicated to supporting and advancing the life of rural communities, particularly those with agricultural roots." It is the last remaining hall with an active Grange organization in Columbia County and includes a 94-seat theater and meeting spaces.
- **Copake Memorial Clock** -- Located at the crossroads of Main Street, Church Street and Empire Road in the hamlet of Copake, the pedestal-type memorial chime clock was built in 1944 by the noted O.B. McClintock Company of Minneapolis, MN. Commemorative WWI & WWII plaques are mounted on the metal clock. The clock is "the preeminent and most recognized symbol of the Copake community" and was restored in 2009.
- **Copake United Methodist Church and Copake Cemetery** -- Located in downtown Copake on Church Street and dating to 1854, this largely intact Greek Revival style historic church was built by Jude Snyder. It is set within the early 19th century Copake Cemetery.
- **Copake Memorial Park** – Located east of Robinson Pond along Mountain View Road, Memorial Park offers a community facility with a kitchen, tennis courts, little league baseball fields, a basketball court, a skate park, outdoor hockey rink and playground. It also includes a large pavilion for community activities and family gatherings as well as a memorial garden and path. The Town of Copake's Park Commission organizes a variety of community events at the park (e.g., Easter egg hunt, Zumba, summer entertainment, celebrations, tractor pulls). The Town offers a six-week summer program for children 5-12 years of age at the park.



## PARKS AND TRAILS

- **The Harlem Valley Rail Trail** - Originally the route of the New York & Harlem Railroad as a commuter rail from Manhattan, it is the highest point in Dutchess County. Views from the South Taconic Trail encompass the Hudson and Harlem Valley, the Southern Taconic's and the Catskill Mountains. In 1989, New York State bought the right of way of the former New York & Harlem Railroad to create a linear park following a 46-mile rail trail connecting Wassaic, NY to Chatham, NY. A segment that passes through Copake runs roughly 5 miles from Orphan Farm Road in Copake to Undermountain Road in Ancram, NY. The section from Millerton to the start of the Copake trail was recently completed.

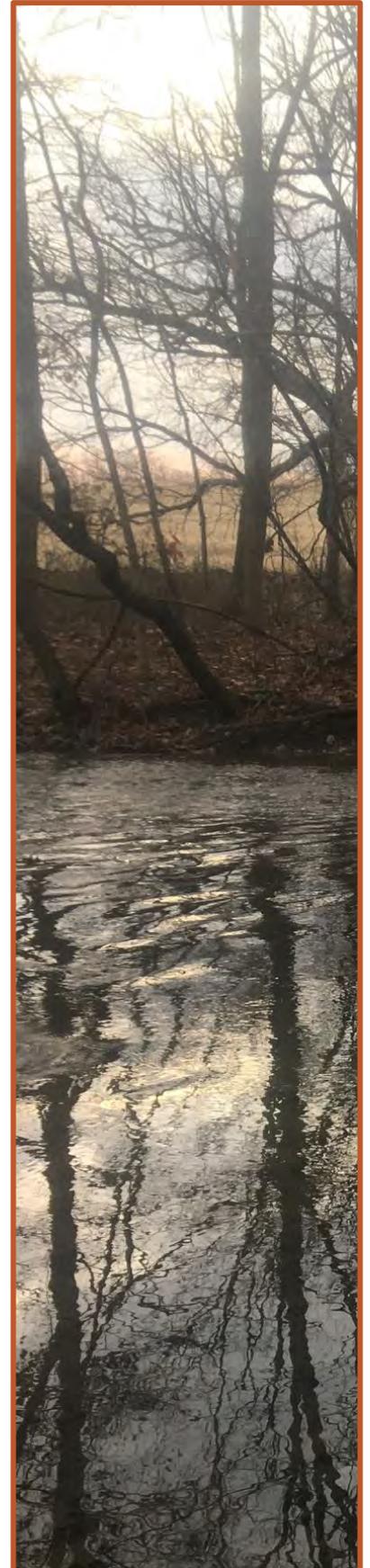
NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation has committed funding to connect the HVRT at Route 22 via a multi-use trail and bridge from Orphan Farm Road to Black Grocery Road. This is an important connector but bypasses downtown retail and restaurants. The Harlem Valley Rail Trail is the backbone of recreation across the Mid-Hudson Valley. It protects natural, cultural and economic resources of regional significance while providing safe and sustainable access. Our goal is to connect to the 150,000 people estimated to use the trail annually. These visitors and regional residents can assist Copake businesses on the road to recovery after COVID-19 by putting feet on the street to spend money – a public benefit of great local significance.

## GLOBALLY RARE RESOURCES

Natural resources are part of our tourism identity and quality of life. Copake hosts globally incomparable ecosystems with rare biodiversity, both aquatic and terrestrial. See [www.copakewaterfronts.com](http://www.copakewaterfronts.com) for full inventory of these resources.

## TACONIC STATE PARK MASTER PLAN AND TRAIL NETWORK

We will work to implement the Taconic State Park Trails Plan, which includes more than a dozen trails projects including connections between trails, trail extensions, rerouting, evaluation for and construction of accessibility enhancements, relocation or expansion of trail parking, trail improvements, in coordination with Friends of Taconic State Park. The Master Plan focuses on providing recreational opportunities, engaging visitors about the Park's environmental, historic, and cultural resources and being a place of inspiration and wonder at nature's splendor.



5

Supportive Local Policies



Quality of life policies currently being developed include an updated Flood Hazard Protection Ordinance, nomination of a State and National Register Listed Historic District, Complete Streets Policy and completion of our Climate Smart Communities pledge. The Town is also interested in adopting age-friendly community policies and promoting stream corridor protection and green infrastructure.

**COPAKE STANDING COMMITTEES**

- **Town of Copake Agricultural Advisory Committee** - Copake’s Agricultural Advisory Committee focuses on increasing the stability and financial success of farms to ensure a long-term vibrant farming community in Copake. They work to diversify operations, promote agritourism and local foods, and ensure that farmlands are affordable and accessible to farmers. They also promote environmentally sustainable farm practices to protect water and soil quality and open spaces.
- **Town of Copake Conservation Advisory Council** - The CAC works to protect rural character and the Town’s scenic resources, including open spaces, woods, meadows, lakes, ponds and streams, ridgelines and view sheds. The council serves in an advisory capacity to the Zoning and Planning Boards on matters affecting the preservation, development and use of cultural resources (including historic and archaeological) of the Town. They work to update and maintain the inventory of the Town’s natural and cultural resources.
- **Copake Economic Development Advisory Committee** – The Copake Economic Development Advisory Committee’s mission is to promote sustainable economic development by encouraging and supporting existing businesses and attracting new business opportunities. The CEDAC advocates for and balances the needs of residents, businessowners, environmental sustainability, quality of life and public works.
- **The Copake Hamlet Revitalization Task Force** - The Copake Hamlet Revitalization Task Force implements all steps necessary to revitalize and rehabilitate ‘downtown Copake’ as a mixed use, walkable, compact livable and affordable place.” The committee maintains dialogue with existing businesses in downtown Copake to learn what specific measures the Town can take to help them thrive.

## EARLY ADOPTER OF INNOVATIVE LAND MANAGEMENT TOOLS

The Town has a Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Code, Waterfront Plan and variety of natural resource-based utilization and management frameworks related to land and water management, land use, climate, resilience, habitats, water quality and supply, etc. Copake has adopted land management tools and incentives, including a scenic corridor overlay zone, and it is very familiar with sustainable land planning and the permitting that will be required associated with these projects. Copake has a sophisticated understanding of environmental issues, watershed and stormwater management and land conservation.

Copake adopted creative land management tools more than a decade ago making it one of the first communities in the region to plan for the capacity of land to be developed while protecting environmental character and resources. Environmental quality is critical to the Town's tourism strategy – anchored by downtown. Should land management fail to protect these resources the future of the downtown would be threatened. Innovative tools include:

- **Flood Area Overlay**- A Flood Area Overlay requires the Planning Board to review subdivision and new development projects to ensure they are designed to minimize flood damage, are properly elevated, and provide adequate drainage.
- **Scenic Overlay (SCOZ)** – Protects the Route 22 corridor's scenic and environmentally sensitive areas and preserves existing open land now used for agriculture.
- **Flexible Lot Subdivision** - Allows flexibility in lot sizes and site standards to protect environmentally sensitive, prime agricultural, historic, or unique lands by permanently conserving at least 60% of "constrained lands."
- **Rural Design and Siting Standards** – Requires residential development to be designed to preserve scenic features, hedgerows, rock walls and mature trees, preserve scenic views and vantage points, and preserve existing vegetation.

The Town will continue to monitor land use trends including acquisition, conservation easements, and land use regulations such as zoning, conservation subdivision regulations and the Scenic Corridor Overlay Zone. It will direct residential growth to downtown. Copake supports community education efforts related to stormwater management including reporting of illicit discharges and construction site runoff control, post-construction runoff control and pollution prevention. The Town will carefully evaluate developments proposed along the Bash Bish Brook.

## ADVANCING ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

Copake has worked on a dozen strategies with environmental partners and is committed to stream corridor and watershed protection. We regularly work with:

***"I would increase educational programs targeted especially to the new and growing new community members on our natural resources and how to safely and respectfully recreate with them."***

*Survey Respondent*





- Trout Unlimited
- Hudson River Valley Greenway
- Hudson River Estuary Reserve
- Scenic Hudson
- Cornell University
- Water Resources Institute of New York State
- NYS Department of Environmental Conservation

They have developed these essential studies and plans:

- Roe Jan Kill Headwaters Stream Crossing Plan (2019)
- Master Plan for The Taconic State Park
- Groundwater Resources Protection Plan
- NYS Open Space Conservation Plan
- Habitat Summary for The Town of Copake
- NYS Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)
- Habitat Management Plan for the Town of Copake
- Natural Resources Inventory Columbia County
- Trails Plan for Taconic State Park
- Harlem Valley Rail Trail Plan
- Water Resource Summary for the Town of Copake
- The Hudson River Estuary Wildlife and Habitat Conservation Framework
- Climate Resilience Summary

### **ADVOCATE FOR GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE**

The 2021 Waterfront and Community Revitalization Plan encourages use of green infrastructure including reduction/removal of impervious surfaces that increase runoff of stormwater, pollutants, and sediment into the streams to improve water quality, reduce local flooding, and maintain natural conveyance capacity. The Town will support efforts to identify, restore and maintain broad buffer zones of natural vegetation along streams, along the shores of other water bodies and wetlands and at the perimeter of other sensitive habitats.

### **LOCAL WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION STRATEGY**

In 2021 Copake completed a Waterfront and Community Revitalization Plan to manage resources and find ways to responsibly balance protection of natural resources while creating economic opportunity, support public health and promote environmental justice. (See [www.copakewaterfronts.com](http://www.copakewaterfronts.com).) A detailed inventory and analysis synthesized two dozen companion plans and addresses additional demographics and COVID-19 impacts. The companion atlas provides over 70 high resolution maps.

## **PROMOTE STEWARDSHIP EDUCATION**

Working with a group of devoted partners, Copake will help educate owners about unique features of their land. Owners will be recruited as stewards and conservation partners to protect the ecologically significant features and implement parcel-specific climate adaptation projects. A stewardship approach of coordinated voluntary action by private property owners is a fundamental component of Copake’s climate adaptation strategy. A project will encourage landowners to improve stream buffers and riparian areas that support healthy floodplains, wildlife habitat, water quality and water temperature. Programs like NYS DEC’s Trees for Tribes and Trout Unlimited’s Trout in the Classroom to engage the next generation of Copakians.

## **COMPLETE CLIMATE SMART COMMUNITY CERTIFICATION**

In 2011 the Town of Copake passed a resolution taking the NYS DEC Climate Smart Community Pledge. Climate Smart Communities (CSC) helps local governments take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate. The program offers free technical assistance, grants, and rebates for culverts, bridges, roadside ditches, and floodwater swales and report their condition to the Department of Public Works. This will enable the Town of Copake to regularly remove debris and reduce blockages that constrict the floodway and cause or worsen local flooding.

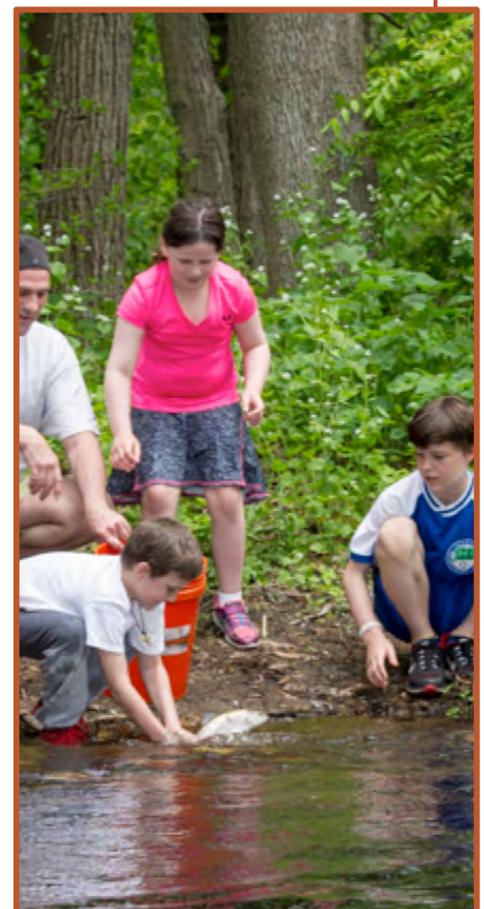
## **REVISE THE TOWN’S FLOOD DAMAGE AND PREVENTION CODES.**

The Town of Copake will use model code provided by NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, shaped to meet its needs. This is a critical task to ensure that Floodplain Permits are properly issued for new development. The revision will bring the Town’s code into compliance with the Uniform Building Code, which requires that development meet design flood elevation of base flood elevation plus two feet.

## **COLUMBIA COUNTY’S HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN.**

Copake, in partnership with Columbia County, maintains a plan for delivery of emergency response services. It identifies increasingly hot summers as a stressor to people as well as crops and livestock. Short term drought is of particular concern due to low well yields and high percentage of agricultural land. The Town will support a best practices program for water conservation and use (e.g., increased rainwater harvesting, protection of existing natural infrastructure including forests and wetlands and reduced impervious surface cover).

***“I would increase educational programs targeted especially to the new and growing new community members on our natural resources and how to safely and respectfully recreate with them.”***  
*Survey Respondent*





### **ADDRESS LOCAL FLOODING AND ADVOCATE FOR UPDATED FEMA FLOOD MAPPING**

The Town of Copake’s 2021 CFA to NYS DOS will support evaluation of areas subject to flooding and development of a game plan to address the risks. The Town will advocate with FEMA to conduct a flood insurance study to communicate flood hazards.

### **IMPLEMENT MODEL LAWS TO IMPROVE RESILIENCE FROM NYS DOS/NYS DEC**

Downtown is the Town’s highest density area apart from residential lake communities. We are evaluating a range of model laws including:

- **Basic Land Use tools for Resilience:** Waterfront Zoning District and/or Overlay District; Impermeable Surface Coverage Standards; Subdivision in Flood Prone Areas; Stormwater Site Design Plans; Regulating Encroachments on Drainageways.
- **Wetland and Watercourse Protection Measures:** Wetland and watercourse setbacks and buffer codes.
- **Watercourse Protection:** Stream-related zoning standards; watercourse overlay districts; local watercourse laws; management of floodplain development.
- **Development and Density:** Limit development in 100-year or 500-year floodplain: Compensatory Storage; Protection of Critical Facilities; State model Flood Damage Prevention Laws.
- **Stormwater Control Measures:** Implications of failure to reduce impermeable surface coverage; erosion and sediment control with stormwater management and stream corridor management provisions.



## 6

### Public Engagement

There is broad and strong support for the DRI proposal. We have advanced a comprehensive community engagement effort for our downtown that began before the onset of COVID-19 and has continued online as the pandemic continues. The schedule anticipated needs of all stakeholders including second homeowners and responded to COVID-19 safeguards, exercising an abundance of care given the significant percentage of residents at high risk. A unanimous resolution by the Copake Town Board is included which reflects our strong commitment and readiness.

Building on the work of the Downtown Revitalization Task Force, Copake prepared a Design and Development Plan. The primary goal is “development of a town center that attracts new business and residential opportunities; is inviting, viable, and pedestrian-friendly; and exhibits a cohesive look and feel.” This outlined strategy is consistent with the needs and desires of our residents; uses the best environmental practices; helps meet developmental pressures; and maintains downtown’s unique character and safeguards its environmental, architectural and historic resources. Well over 200 year-round and part-time residents participated in an intensive multi-day design and visioning workshop as part of the effort.

As a companion to the Waterfront and Community Revitalization Plan, a Public Participation Plan laid out a variety of methods to engage people to discuss issues and needs, identify strengths, weaknesses opportunities and threats, share their vision, identify potential challenges or obstacles and select the projects, policies and programs to achieve a shared community vision.

Our outreach has been conducted directly and online. We used mailed postcards, posters and fliers in addition to emails, save the date announcements, piggybacking on local organization mailings, announcements in the Copake Connection newsletter, postings on the project website, status updates and thank you emails. A full featured website called [www.copakewaterfronts.com](http://www.copakewaterfronts.com) is live.

The Town is fortunate that walking tours were completed before January 2020. We also completed our first community design workshop in person. That program introduced the DRI along with the NYS DOS supported Waterfront and Communities Revitalization Plan drawn by the extensive outreach campaign including a mailing to all residents, posts online, social media, flyers, postcard distribution and posters. The group brainstormed ideas and potential projects.

Two online dialogues were held in late 2020. The Meeting One topic was Wildlife Habitat, Land and Agriculture Preservation, and Flood Mitigation. Meeting Two focused on recreation and revitalization. The second community engagement event was held as an online zoom workshop in February 2021, following a comparable outreach program. The workshop was attended by close to 80 people. Ideas for catalyst projects were presented including downtown walkability and accessibility, flood mitigation, various trails initiatives, and the need for senior and workforce housing which are featured in this proposal.

The companion EFC Engineering Planning Grant funded by NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation to evaluate water and wastewater issues along the Bash Bish in downtown is underway. It will survey the community and complete two workshops.

To ensure the final proposal captures all community ideas, the Town is drawing from three online surveys which received 58 responses (at present) with links from Town websites and social media. In the DRI-specific survey, respondents described how would spend \$10 million to support downtown Copake projects. The top ten highly supported ideas included:

- Renovate and upgrade buildings downtown
- Improve hamlet parking
- Enhance attractiveness of downtown by painting buildings, improving storefronts, adding better lighting
- Create pedestrian-friendly downtown by adding and connecting sidewalks and walking trails among amenities
- Attract additional downtown businesses that create jobs and support new residents
- Create affordable housing as well as assist homeowners with maintenance (e.g., develop affordable senior and workforce housing, improve historic houses, create dormitory for cyclists)
- Study and address/reduce flooding issues
- Complete local Rail Trail (HVRT) and build spurs to connect to downtown Copake and other hamlets
- Expand local amenities and cultural offerings (e.g., movie theater, community garden, bakery, cooking and farming classes, galleries, artist co-ops, music venue, recreational amenities like skating rinks or go-kart tracks, brew pub, creamery)
- Promote and protect natural resources (e.g., protect waterways from run off, educate community members, improve water management in town).

Respondents also explained what they considered to be the Town of Copake's greatest accomplishments within the last decade. Top themes that emerged among people's answers included:

**“Copake is an active community, that likes to get out and about, but there are no walking paths from downtown to either the Town Hall, nor the Memorial Park, nor the nearby rail trail. I would link all of them with some funds left over to help maintain the trails.”**

*Survey Respondent*



### ***Greatest accomplishments***

- Strong community spirit and engagement, including getting the community through pandemic.
- Attracting, restoring and supporting many wonderful and diverse small businesses (e.g., Copake General Store, Dad’s Diner, Copake Wine Works, Copake Clock Tower Bar/Restaurant).
- Sensitivity to needs of all demographics and forward-thinking Town – has worked to bring Broadband, Rail Trail Spur and deserves credit for downtown Copake being in much better economic shape (but there is still more to do).
- Community Park and associated events (e.g., concerts, movies)
- Development of agricultural commerce (e.g., Empire Farms, farmers market, small farm CSAs, increased organic farming)
- Revitalization of the Copake Grange
- Rapid Care Center
- Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code

We conducted a final online meeting to review the application, answer questions and gather ideas on September 8, 2021 (25 people joined that workshop.) The Town also requested the inputs of its standing committees: the Conservation Advisory Committee and the Economic Development Committee. Town Departments added ideas. We understand that if we are selected, a Local Planning Committee will be appointed and more opportunities to solicit projects from the community will be welcome.





7

Transformational Projects

WHY THESE PROJECTS?

This isn't "our kitchen sink" - we have chosen these projects over others because they are appropriate for the DRI and consistent with the CREDC's Magnet, Core and Talent strategies, and statewide focus on workforce, childcare, placemaking, and revitalization. The projects:

- **Have capable partners:** Projects are led by capable developers.
- **Support:** Projects have broad community support.
- **Catalyst impacts:** Accelerate community health and quality of life.
- **Build equity:** Benefit all ages, races, abilities, and incomes.
- **Forge collaborations:** They engage partners in common cause and collective action.
- **Are vision-driven:** They speak strongly to the vision and goals of the Town, its partners and funders.
- **Are ready to go:** They can be ready within the time period DRI prefers.
- **Support the public interest/access:** They pledge to be accessible in perpetuity.
- **Demonstrate resilience:** They can adapt to change while maintaining impact.

Downtown Copake DRI Projects and Job Creation				
#	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	DIRECT JOBS	TOTAL INDIRECT	CONSTRUCTION JOB VALUE
1	Rehabilitate and Expand Copake Grange	4	8	10
2	Main Street Building Rehab, Reuse and Redevelop	16	30	38
3	Develop New Workforce and Senior Affordable Housing	46	85	106
4	Copake Trails and Parks Network	20	37	46
5	Family-Friendly Neighborhood and Town Wide Cycling	5	9	11
6	Complete Streets with Placemaking	52	95	119
7	Mitigate Downtown Flooding with Natural Measures	33	60	75
8	Downtown Water and Wastewater Systems	27	50	63
9	Expand Broadband Including Free Downtown Wi-Fi	2	4	5
10	Community Garden and Composting Center	1	5	6
11	Assist Small Businesses to Make Resilience Improvements	7	14	18
12	Develop a Marketing Strategy and Digital Media Platform	2	3	4
		215	400	500

The projects are actionable activities that we can start right away and complete in a 2-year window. Major foundational projects with leverage underway that will enable other projects to advance and downtown Copake to grow and prosper. We have nearly \$30.0 million in investments that are underway or recently completed. We have proposed 13 projects with total value of \$40.0 million and a DRI component of \$20.0 million. These projects have strong public support and experienced sponsors.

### Downtown Copake DRI Projects Cost, Schedule, and Sponsors

#	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	TOTAL COST	LEVERAGE/MATCH	DRI FUNDS	READINESS (Months)	PROJECT SPONSOR	LEVERAGE SOURCES
1	Rehabilitate and Expand Copake Grange	\$800,000	\$300,000	\$500,000	12-24	The Copake Grange	Donated Services and Labor
2	Main Street Building Rehab, Reuse and Redevelop	\$3,000,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	12-36	Building Owners	Private Match, Easements, Grants
3	Develop New Workforce and Senior Affordable Housing	\$8,500,000	\$3,500,000	\$5,000,000	12-36	Private Developer	Private equity and Financing
4	Copake Trails and Parks Network	\$3,700,000	\$1,600,000	\$2,100,000	12-24	Town of Copake	Donated Services and Land
5	Family-Friendly Neighborhood and Town-wide Cycling	\$900,000	\$400,000	\$500,000	12-24	Town of Copake	Business Support and Grants
6	Complete Streets with Placemaking	\$9,500,000	\$6,500,000	\$3,000,000	12-36	Town of Copake	Committed NYS DOT, Columbia County and FHWA
7	Mitigate Downtown Flooding Naturally	\$6,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000	12-36	Town of Copake	Easements, Donations and FEMA BRIC
8	Downtown Water and Wastewater	\$5,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$3,000,000	12-24	Town of Copake	Low Interest Loans
9	Expand Broadband with Free Wi-Fi	\$400,000	\$100,000	\$300,000	2-12	Building and Business Owners	Business Support and Grants
10	Community Garden and Composting Center	\$500,000	\$200,000	\$300,000	6-12	Town of Copake with the Copake Agricultural Center	Donated services and land
11	Assist Small Businesses to Make Resilience Improvements	\$1,400,000	\$800,000	\$600,000	12-24	Copake/ Columbia Hudson Partnership	Owner Equity Match
12	Develop Marketing Strategy and Digital Media Platform	\$300,000	\$100,000	\$200,000	12-24	Town of Copake	Local Grants and Donated Services
		\$40,000,000	\$20,000,000	\$20,000,000			

### 1. REHABILITATE THE COPAKE GRANGE 935

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Rehabilitate and Expand Copake Grange</b>
<b>Project Sponsor</b>	The Copake Grange
<b>Readiness</b>	12-24 Months
<b>Total Cost</b>	\$800,000
<b>Total Leverage</b>	\$300,000 in Donated Professional Services and Labor
<b>DRI Funds Proposed</b>	\$500,000

**The Copake Grange 935** is a non-profit community organization comprised of local members from the Roe Jan area in and around Copake. They are a local chapter of the National Grange, and an organization over 150 years old that is dedicated to supporting and advancing the life of rural communities, particularly those with agricultural roots. The Grange Hall, built in 1903, is individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places. With its 94-seat theater and meeting spaces, it is dedicated to bringing the community together through lectures, plays and performances, and serves as a civic center to advance local initiatives that can benefit our downtown. The Grange’s mission is to assist individuals, families, and communities through grassroots action, service, education, advocacy, cultural activities, entertainment, and agriculture awareness. Their goals include: 1) maintaining the Grange as a membership organization; 2) providing a meeting place for various community activities, such as community dinners, performing and visual arts, private parties, public forums, and other events; and 3) investigating immediate and long-range needs of the community and advocate for them.

The Grange is our community center, and it can be much more – focused on nurturing community connections through art, culture, local food, and agricultural education. There are opportunities to develop parking on adjacent land. DRI funds are needed for construction/ rehabilitation, remediation, restoration, and preservation (it is individually listed on the Register of Historic Places). The Grange Board has prepared a detailed scope of work focused on historic preservation rehabilitation of the structure, improving accessibility, rehabbing their commercial kitchen, and purchasing digital theater equipment (“go digital or go dark”) among other items. Options may exist to provide local artists with live work space on the second floor.

**Proposed DRI Funding Use:** Restoration of arguably downtown’s most important building to preserve its historic character while creating modern amenities.





**Advances CREDC Strategies:** The CREDC Magnet Strategy is advanced by developing a wider array of free community services and entertainment in a community with 14.4% of people in poverty and half of residents low or moderate income. The Core Strategy is advanced by saving and restoring a magnificent historic building and adding interpretative signage that tells its story. Rehabilitating the Grange is a landmark effort that will generate momentum and attract businesses and visitors. It is also consistent with growth in the CRAFT cluster and the statewide propriorities for revitalization and placemaking.

**2. ADAPTIVE REUSE – Downtown Main Street Building Program.**

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Rehabilitation and Adaptive Reuse of Downtown Buildings</b>
<b>Project Sponsor</b>	Building Owners
<b>Readiness</b>	Complete in Phases: 12-36 months
<b>Total Cost</b>	\$3,000,000
<b>Total Leverage</b>	\$1,500,000 in Private Match, Façade Easements, Community Grants
<b>DRI Funds Proposed</b>	\$1,500,000

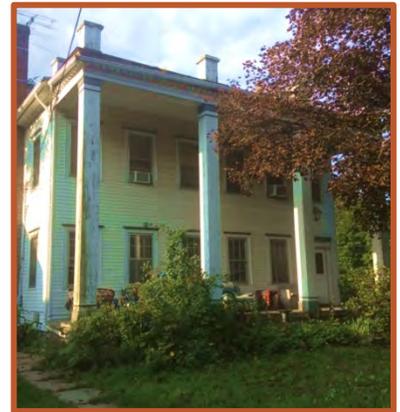
**Project Description**

The Town has a number of buildings that require attention – from facade improvements to full restoration (like the Grange). Some have been vacant for years and others need TLC to be productive again. There are opportunities for food hub activities and a culinary kitchen to support entrepreneurs and offer classes. Many of these buildings are eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places if we can save them from deferred maintenance and demolition by neglect.

A sample of buildings have been evaluated and need everything from minor accessibility improvements to major restoration like roofs and rehabilitation of exteriors and interiors to fit out space for growing companies. Opportunity sites have been identified which require significant façade and/or interior restoration. Many of these buildings include currently vacant second and third floors that could either be used as offices for nonretail businesses currently in first floor space or for affordable apartments.

There is potential for creating up to 20 residential or live/work spaces. Identified opportunities include:

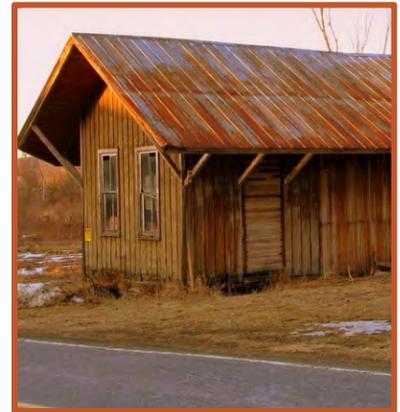
- The Copake Inn. The Copake Inn is a traditional clapboard building with a large porch. It was a restaurant with rooms above. The building is deteriorating, vacant on the first floor with three apartments on the second floor.
- Buildings to the South of the Copake Inn. Two structures are in poor condition with known water issues. This is a potential new construction infill site.
- The old RR depot at the south entrance to town. The building has recently been purchased and may require assistance to rehabilitate.
- Large two-story Greek Revival across from the National Register Listed Historic Methodist Church. The building is in poor repair. It includes rental apartments that need rehabilitation.



DRI Investment will spur private investment at these opportunity sites, improving the vibrancy and sense of place in our historic downtown district.

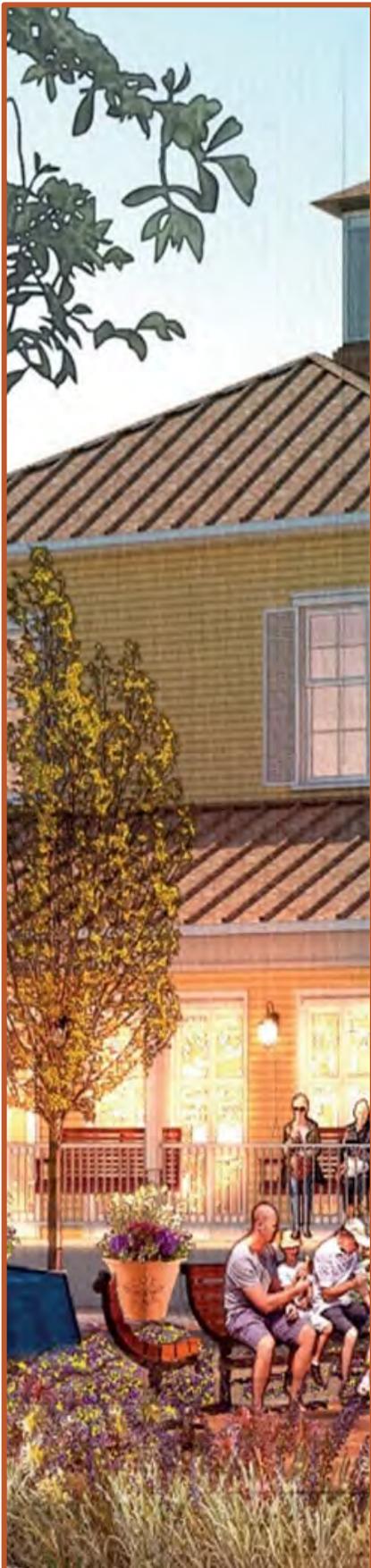
**Proposed DRI Funding Use:** Restoration of five downtown structures for mixed use and a goal to maintain first floors for retail, a restaurant, or comparable uses. A focus on arts, entertainment and local food advances the CRAFT cluster.

**Advances CREDC Strategies:** The CREDC Magnet Strategy is advanced by improving and increasing rentable space for small business, developing affordable units and artist live/work space. On- and off-site placemaking improvements and accessibility amenities help achieve the Core Strategy. It will also advance statewide strategies for placemaking and downtown revitalization.



**3. AFFORDABLE HOUSING - Develop New Senior and Family Workforce Housing.**

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Senior and Workforce Housing</b>
<b>Project Sponsor</b>	Town of Copake with Housing Developer TBD
<b>Readiness</b>	12-36 Months – Depending on NYS HCR Capital Funding Round Timing
<b>Total Cost</b>	\$8,500,000
<b>Total Leverage</b>	\$3,500,000 (Private Financing and Developer Equity)
<b>DRI Funds Proposed</b>	\$5,000,000



It's common in communities with a significant percentage of property owned by seasonal residents for land prices to be high. Domestic migration due to Covid-19 has made the affordable housing need much greater with many families experiencing housing disruption. Seniors with limited incomes and young families earning entry level wages struggle to afford housing. Without public water or wastewater service, communities like Copake require larger and more costly lots to protect health and the environment. Our approach strives to offer life cycle housing where young couples can rent an apartment, grow into a home large enough for a family and transition to townhomes or supported senior housing when the time comes.

The Town is committed to providing an array of quality housing options accessible to a diverse group of residents of all ages and at different income levels. We are working formally with the Towns of Hillsdale and Ancram to identify developable sites and work as a team to select preferred developers. Either Copake or the three towns will release a Request For Qualifications and select a preferred developer to help build out a mix of affordable apartments, cottages and owner-occupied townhomes. The program may require covenants in leases and deeds requiring that workforce housing be rented or sold to local or regional workers and prohibiting use of property for Airbnb or comparable short term rental services.

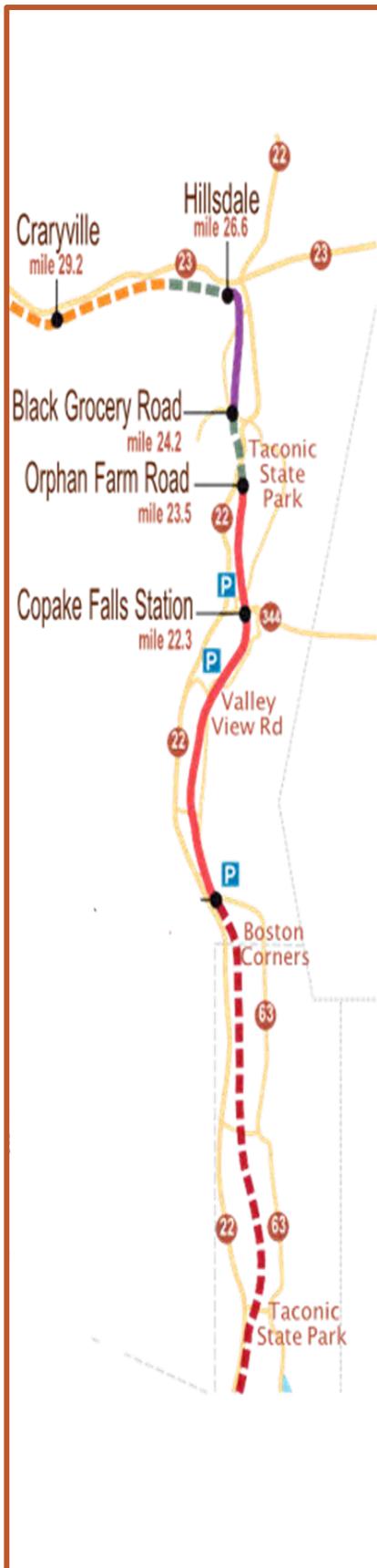
The Town would also like to offer a homebuyer program partnering with dozens of local realtors, lenders, housing agencies, businesses, and community organizations to educate and assist current residents and newcomers, and to facilitate the homeownership process.

The program would offer homebuyer education; grants for income-qualified first-time buyers; lenders offering discounted financing options; rehab loans as part of a home purchase; and access to wide-ranging housing opportunities.

This developer partnership project will enable us to evaluate opportunities and leverage local investment capital projects, subsidize purchase price or terms, develop support services or programs, assist with grant writing, and grant administration or otherwise support the selected developer(s) and identified projects.

**Use of DRI Funds:** Leverage private developer equity to advance two major housing initiatives: senior cottages and family townhomes or cottages. Of the total, \$400,000 will be used to make grants to homebuyers to help close the affordability gap.

**Advances CREDC Strategies:** The CREDC Magnet Strategy is advanced by improving access for the region's workforce to



affordable housing. Employers identify lack of housing as a major obstacle to hiring and maintaining workforce. Considering housing as part of critical infrastructure makes this project consistent with the Magnet and Core strategies. If the public spaces in the residential projects is carefully developed as a playground or community garden, for example, it will significantly expand placemaking opportunities and help achieve the Core Strategy. It will also advance statewide strategies for placemaking and downtown revitalization.

**4. COPAKE TRAILS AND PARKS NETWORK – Develop Trails, Loops and Park Amenities.**

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Copake Park and Trail Network</b>
<b>Project Sponsor</b>	Town of Copake
<b>Readiness</b>	12-24 Months
<b>Total Cost</b>	\$3,500,000
<b>Total Leverage</b>	\$1,500,000 (Donated land/ easements)
<b>DRI Funds Proposed</b>	\$2,000,000

Recent opening of the Empire Trail underscores the importance recreation trails can play in making us resilient. Parks that are safely connected to vibrant downtowns have an even greater public benefit.

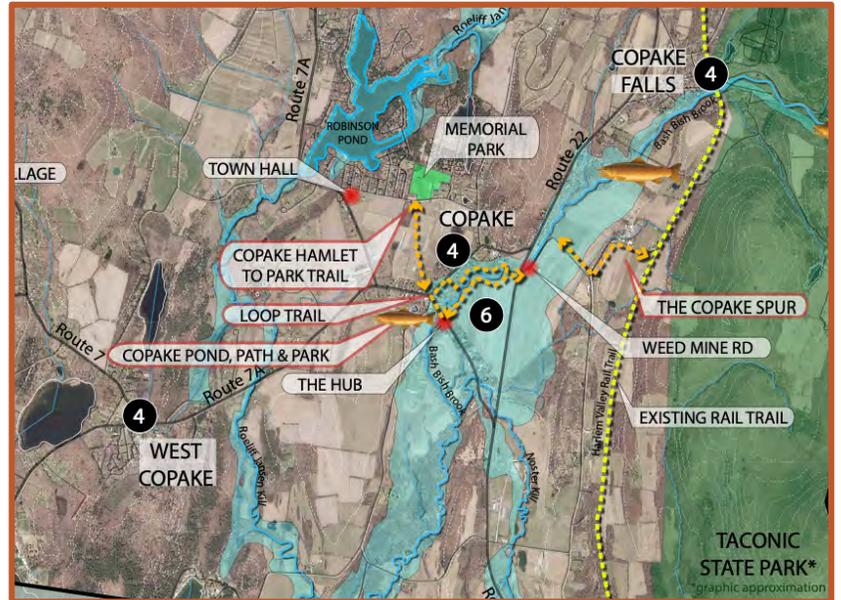
Copake is following the EPA approach and positioning downtown as the gateway to nearby natural lands to “capture and amplify outdoor recreation dollars.” This project includes nine trails and park projects – from new trail development to park improvements.

**Use of DRI Funds:** Build out the trail network anchored in downtown, add Fire Pond Park and improve Memorial Park, providing a significantly expanded free outdoor public recreation network.

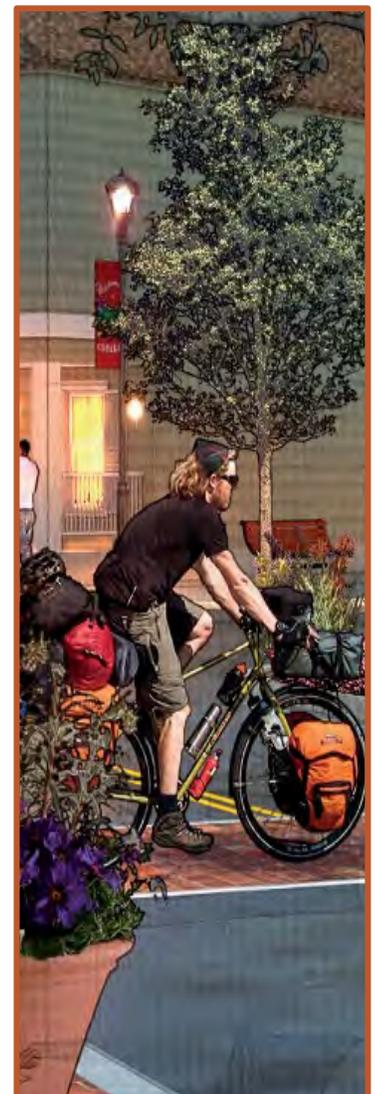
**Advances CREDC Strategies:** The CREDC Magnet Strategy is advanced by constructing the amenities employers say they need to attract and retain workers. They offer free recreation to all residents. The Copake Spur Connection to the Harlem Valley Rail Trail is a major focus and currently Copake’s biggest opportunity to capture economic spinoff. That spinoff is likely to fall within the CRAFT cluster businesses in retail and restaurants/provisioners. The Core Strategy is advanced by careful trail design that integrates placemaking. The project will also advance statewide strategies for placemaking and downtown revitalization.

The Trail and Park Network includes:

- **Off Road Pathway from Downtown Copake through the Copake Agriculture Center Path to Town Hall and Memorial Park.** The approximately 0.5 mile path will connect Downtown Copake to the Town’s Memorial Park and Town Hall on Mountain View Road – a safe off-road connection to our most popular amenities. The project is estimated to cost \$300,000 including \$100,000 in local match and \$200,000 in DRI funds. The multi-use path would follow an easement through the Copake Agricultural Center lands and the member farmers support the path’s development.



- **Bash Bish Brook Trail to the Old Hub Restaurant.** Working with private owners, the Town will develop a 2.5-to-3.0-mile path from Copake Falls along the east side of Bash Bish Brook to the north entrance of Weed Mine Road, where it would meet the Copake Spur. The estimated cost is \$600,000 including 100,000 in local leverage and \$500,000 in requested DRI funds. This would create an important connection between Copake Falls and downtown, providing walking and biking access to the Copake Town Park, playing fields, Town Hall, and Taconic State Park.
- **Copake “Cup of Coffee” Trail.** The Town will develop a 1.25-mile loop trail beginning to the north of Dad’s Diner on Route 7A at the core of the downtown and ending at the former Hub Restaurant on Route 7A on private property that will be donated. The cost of this trail is estimated at \$225,000 including \$75,000 in local leverage and \$150,000 in requested DRI funds. From the Hub Restaurant the trail wanders along the east side of Bash Bish Brook, turning north just short of State Route 22 where it will cross a new, small rustic bridge, before turning and meandering behind the houses along Route 7A emerging opposite the Octagon House and continuing to the Hub. Noted as “being just long enough to drink a cup of coffee,” the path would provide an ideal recreational amenity for walking, biking, and fishing with immediate access to downtown.
- **Copake Spur.** The Spur will connect downtown to the Harlem Valley Rail Trail, traversing beautiful farmland. The project is estimated to cost \$1,000,000 including \$500,000 in leveraged donated land and local grants and \$500,000 in DRI funding. The Town has a CFA



## *Downtown Copake NY: Where Nature Meets Nurture*

application pending with NYS DOS to determine the most effective means for crossing State Route 22. It includes a 0.75-mile-long gravel trail with footbridge and trail amenities between downtown and Route 22. Subject to engineering and design feasibility, the current preferred alternative involves a climate adaptation approach that aligns the spur under one of the bays of the Route 22 bridge and directs flow through the other bay as it once flowed naturally. Once Route 22 is crossed the final section is on road for 1.0 mile on an enhanced right of way to the intersection with Harlem Valley Rail Trail. The trail will be located on land donated to the Town or on an easement acquired by the Town or a partner.

Engineering analysis related to stream character, hydrology and hydraulic modeling, and a property survey, among other evaluations, as well as analysis of flooding in downtown have been requested in a 2021 Consolidated Funding Application to NYS Department of State for \$225,000. Stormwater that does flow under the bridge discharges into surrounding open, low-value agricultural land and could be captured by well-designed green infrastructure rain gardens. This farmland is under a conservation easement with trails being one of the allowed uses. The Spur would help downtown businesses capture tourism spending.

- **Copake Downtown Fire Pond Park and Trail.** The Fire Pond, its access road and parking area are located on Town-owned land southwest of the Memorial Clock Triangle. It is an active water source for firefighting.

The surrounding land has magnificent views of the beautiful agricultural landscape to the southwest making it an opportunity waiting to happen. The Park will have simple amenities such as a picnic pavilion, barbeque pits, picnic tables, horse shoe pits, and a small playground. The existing topography makes the site a great candidate for a simple earthen amphitheater that could utilize a small deck as a stage while also functioning as an overlook. The project will construct a compact community park with portable stage, sail shade structure, outdoor theater equipment, etc. The project is estimated to cost \$500,000 with leverage of \$250,000 and DRI funds requested of \$250,000. The project will be designed with the Fire Department. An easement along the western property line would provide a dedicated fire access lane to the pond, eliminating any pedestrian conflicts with fire trucks within the park.

- **Copake Memorial Park Improvements.** Following assessment, the Town will improve Memorial Park, downtown's primary recreation campus. We will engage young people and youth sports leagues. Based on preliminary input, this project is estimated at a total cost



of \$600,000, with \$200,000 local leverage and \$400,000 in DRI funds. The improvements will increase park accessibility and use of adaptive sports equipment and fields.

- All Age – All Access Waterfront and Fishing Access.** Following assessment, the Town will identify primary potential access points. The Project is estimated to cost \$400,000 with local leverage of \$200,000 and \$200,000 in DRI funds requested. Copake welcomes diverse waterfront users, including residents and visitors of different ages, abilities, cultures, and incomes to use and celebrate the waterways. We will work with private owners and lake communities to expand public access and improve the quality of experience at public spaces. Access points and related amenities discussed by the public to date include evaluating the Old Railroad Depot at the South Entrance to the Copake Downtown. The Noster Kill, a protected trout stream, flows through the Old Railroad Depot site. The property could make a strong connection to downtown while serving the fishing public and taking advantage of opportunities to coordinate the Taconic Central School District’s “Trout in the Classroom Program” through Trout Unlimited.
- Implement Climate Smart Communities Projects.** Support the Conservation Advisory Committee and other Town organizations to complete Climate Smart Communities projects.

**5. SAFE BICYCLING NETWORK: Family-Friendly Neighborhood and Town-Wide Cycling**

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Bike-Friendly Neighborhood Connections</b>
<b>Project Sponsor</b>	Town of Copake
<b>Readiness</b>	12-24 Months
<b>Total Cost</b>	\$900,000
<b>Total Leverage</b>	\$400,000
<b>DRI Funds Proposed</b>	\$500,000

Multipurpose trails for biking and other activities create jobs, generate revenue, and sustain rural places like Copake by drawing visitors and residents through recreation and heritage tourism. Trails encourage people to enjoy natural and cultural sites by providing new recreational opportunities. Copake will carry this message out to help businesses understand the value of bike tourism and help them to be ready to meet visiting, day tripping and local cyclists.

This project will connect gaps in the off-road trail network by adding connectors – both on road and off to make downtown the anchor of a town-wide single track multi-purpose network. We will provide safe and convenient bicycle access to all parts of the community through a signed network of on- and off-street facilities, low-speed streets, and



secure parking. Stations where cyclists can rest and wash their bikes will be downtown at popular ending points for rides. The Town will involve local cyclists in identifying road maintenance needs, safety, and ongoing improvements. Working with partners such as Taconic Hills School District, FarmOn! Foundation at Empire Farm, Camphill Village and others, Copake will educate road users to share the road, interact safely and integrate road design and education programs. The Town will also educate about the economic impact of trails and cycling.

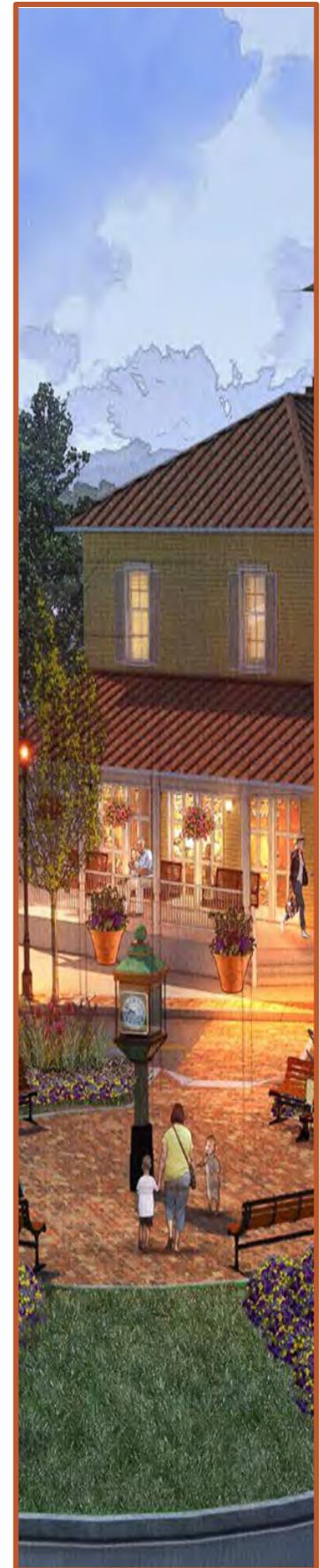
**Use of DRI Funds:** DRI funds will be used to construct safe on and off-road family biking routes and more advanced road and mountain biking routes.

**Advances CREDC Strategies:** The project constructs recreation amenities and multi model transportation routes and amenities for bicyclists. The network will connect to walking and winter sports trails and market all as a package. Consistent with the CREDC Magnet Strategy, the project strengthens infrastructure that is appealing to businesses. Consistent with the Core Strategy the project will draw tourists interested in supporting our CRAFT establishments. It is consistent with the statewide strategies for placemaking and downtown revitalization.

#### **6. ADVANCE COMPLETE STREETS – Layer Placemaking and Streetscape Amenities on Infrastructure Investments**

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Downtown Place Making Amenities</b>
<b>Project Sponsor</b>	Town Of Copake and Copake Economic Advisory Board
<b>Readiness</b>	12-24
<b>Total Cost</b>	\$9,500,000
<b>Total Leverage</b>	\$6,500,000 (Committed NYS DOT, Columbia County and FHWA)
<b>DRI Funds Proposed</b>	\$3,000,000

Copake is actively participating in the Route 7A Reconstruction Project to improve highway conditions and enhance safety for all route users. The project is coordinated by Columbia County Department of Public Works and guided by the Copake Downtown Highway Rehabilitation Citizens Advisory Committee. The consulting engineers have completed topographic survey work and are designing potential rights-of-way and/or mapping permanent easements. Preliminary design sketches are expected for review in fall 2021 and the project is still on target for construction during 2023. The anticipated transportation improvement cost is approximately \$6.0 million. The Town has pledged over \$1.0 million to make basic streetscape improvements (lighting and some street furniture) and DRI funds of \$1,000,000 are needed to add placemaking amenities, including welcome signs, information kiosks, event banners, etc. and improvements for bicyclists such as share the



road signs on Route 7A and on sections of feeder streets in the DRI Area (Main Street, East Main Street, Farm Road, Empire Road and Mountain View Road).

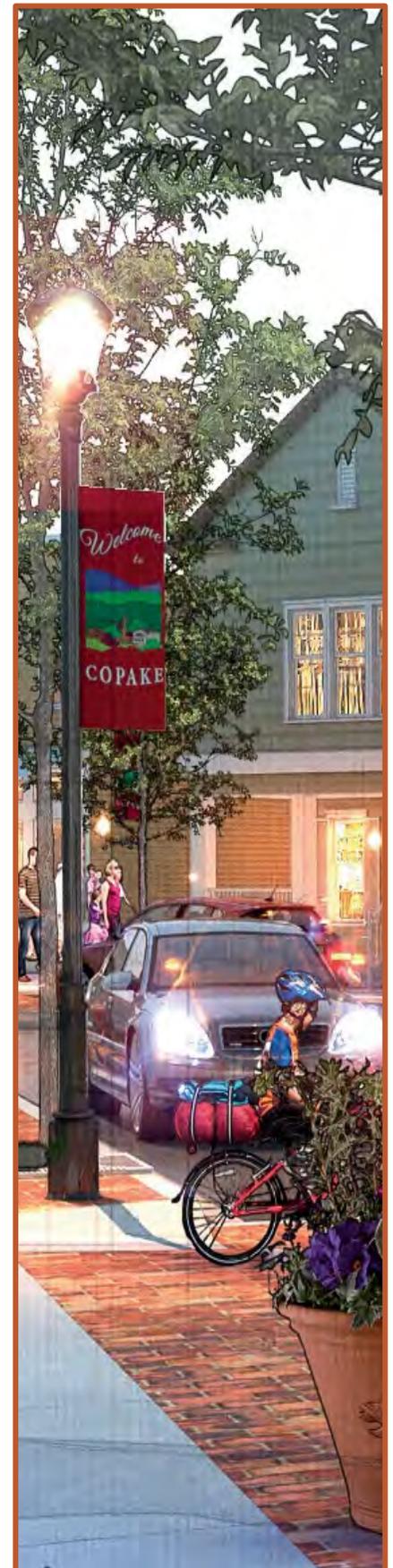
Improvements will be designed to calm traffic, increase pedestrian safety, and support special attributes of downtown. In downtown today there is a need to better define the public realm and create space that is safe, healthy, accessible, and inclusive. This includes adding pedestrian safety amenities like high visibility crosswalks, clear branded signage, curb extensions and bollards.

Developing an effective streetscape program requires a keen focus on walkability (sidewalks, crosswalks, accessibility) and on creating attractive human-scaled spaces with landscaping and tree planting, benches, lighting, banners and seasonal flowers, public art and building murals among other possible enhancements.

In partnership with property owners this effort may also include façade improvement programs and commercial building retrofit under the Resilience Fund or directly as a Main Street Adaptive Reuse Project. Part of this effort involves signage and information services. The Town will begin with information kiosks because they are relatively low cost and can convey a great deal of information graphically. Virtual wayfinding, which is less expensive than traditional on-street signage and could also be deployed quickly, can be available in many languages, and expand over time. Beautiful gateways create a sense of arrival while calming speed. The Town will promote signage to improve the visibility of small businesses to increase sales and improve the perception of downtown. Signage will also be improved on individual commercial establishments and small grants can be made for blade and awning signs.

**Use of DRI Funds:** Design and construction of a system of interrelated branded signage, kiosks, online wayfinding, welcoming gateways, and improved streetscapes.

**Advances CREDC Strategies:** This project is a model project under the CREDC Core Strategy. DRI funds are needed to layer on traditional infrastructure investment that reconstructs roadways but not streetscapes. It is also consistent with statewide strategies for placemaking and downtown revitalization.



**7. MITIGATE FLOODING – Mitigate Downtown Flooding with Natural Measures.**

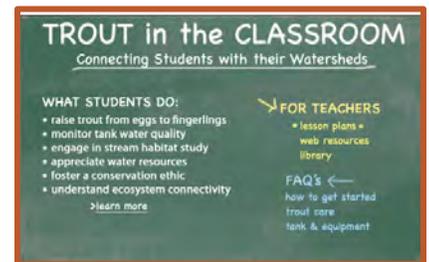
<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Flood Mitigation</b>
<b>Project Sponsor</b>	Town of Copake
<b>Readiness</b>	12-36 months
<b>Total Cost</b>	\$6,000,000
<b>Total Leverage</b>	\$3,000,000 (FEMA and NFWS)
<b>DRI Funds Proposed</b>	\$3,000,000

Concern about flooding on private property was identified as a critical issue at each engagement session and through a targeted online survey. The County Haz Mit Plan recommends that the Town develop a pre-disaster mitigation fund, make efforts to reduce the risk of power outages and inspect and clean culverts and ditches annually. References in the plan open access to FEMA Flood Mitigation Assistance, Pre-Disaster Mitigation, Repetitive Flood Loss Program, Severe Flood Loss Program and Hazard Mitigation Grant Programs which Copake will leverage as possible.

The Town has a CFA request pending with NYS DOS that would begin the evaluation of Bash Bish Brook flooding in downtown. The analysis will monitor effects of stormwater runoff in areas developed beyond recommended density thresholds. They will integrate flood management strategies into municipal and emergency planning, create natural vegetated shoreline and stream buffers to protect assets, right size culverts, promote best practices for flood prevention such as use of green stormwater infrastructure, and conserve natural areas that contribute to stormwater management. We will advocate with FEMA to conduct a flood insurance study or comparable effort to determine flood risk more accurately town wide.

Once vulnerable sites have been evaluated, mitigation measures can be identified and advanced. As possible, Copake will support private property owners to address or reduce flood impacts. As part of this effort, Copake will help educate owners about unique features of their land that reduce flooding. Owners will be recruited as stewards and conservation partners to protect the ecologically significant features and implement parcel-specific climate adaptation projects including improving stream buffers and riparian areas that support healthy floodplains, wildlife habitat, water quality and water temperature.

In 2011 the Town of Copake passed a resolution taking the NYS DEC Climate Smart Community Pledge. Climate Smart Communities (CSC) helps local governments take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate. The program offers free technical assistance, grants, and rebates. Our pledge includes regularly removing debris and reducing blockages that constrict the floodway and cause or worsen local flooding.





Copake will use and encourage the use of green infrastructure, provide guidance, and require projects that require post-construction stormwater management to use green infrastructure whenever possible. The Town will also promote the use of green infrastructure by homeowners by encouraging them to plant trees and use swales, pervious paving, rainwater gardens, green roofs, planters, infiltration gardens, disconnected downspouts, and curb extensions, etc. Copake will restore riparian corridors to reduce the influx of potential nutrient-laden runoff from the adjacent properties into the waterways and support efforts to identify, restore and maintain broad buffer zones of natural vegetation along streams, along the shores of other water bodies and wetlands and at the perimeter of other sensitive habitats.

**Use of DRI Funds:** Evaluation and construction of resilience and flood mitigation in the downtown core for residential and commercial structures. Training for local partners on the use of natural mitigation and green Infrastructure and evaluation of ways to integrate resilience into Town codes.

**Advances CREDC Strategies:** The projects reduce risk factors and improve environmental justice issues that make the community and residents vulnerable. Nearly 25% of residents have two risk factors and over half have three risk factors that limit their ability to respond resiliently to natural disasters and hazards as defined by the Census Bureau. The projects will construct mitigation infrastructure consistent with the CREDC Magnet Strategy and upgraded infrastructure that will strengthen our ability to attract private investment under the Core Strategy. It will also advance statewide strategies for placemaking and downtown revitalization.

## 8. WATER AND WASTEWATER SERVICE – Design and Construct Downtown Water and Wastewater Systems.

Project Name	Municipal Water and Wastewater Development
Project Sponsor	Town of Copake
Readiness	12-36 Months
Total Cost	\$5,000,000
Total Leverage	\$2,000,000 (low interest loan)
DRI Funds Proposed	\$3,000,000

The Preliminary Engineering Feasibility currently underway will analyze needs, identify costs, and present alternative approaches, recommending a preferred course and system design beginning with wastewater services. Once feasibility has been established, the Town can apply to the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) for interest-free or low-interest rate financing focused on construction of sewers and wastewater treatment facilities.

If the project is funded it would be the perfect time to undertake related projects that will require additional borrowing and cost beyond what the

Town may be able to afford including municipal water, stormwater management and habitat restoration and protection projects. DRI funds in the amount of \$3.0 million are included to anticipate those costs and time efficiency. The lack of municipal infrastructure has slowed growth, inhibits maintaining proper downtown density and is the biggest roadblock we face to revitalizing and growing downtown.

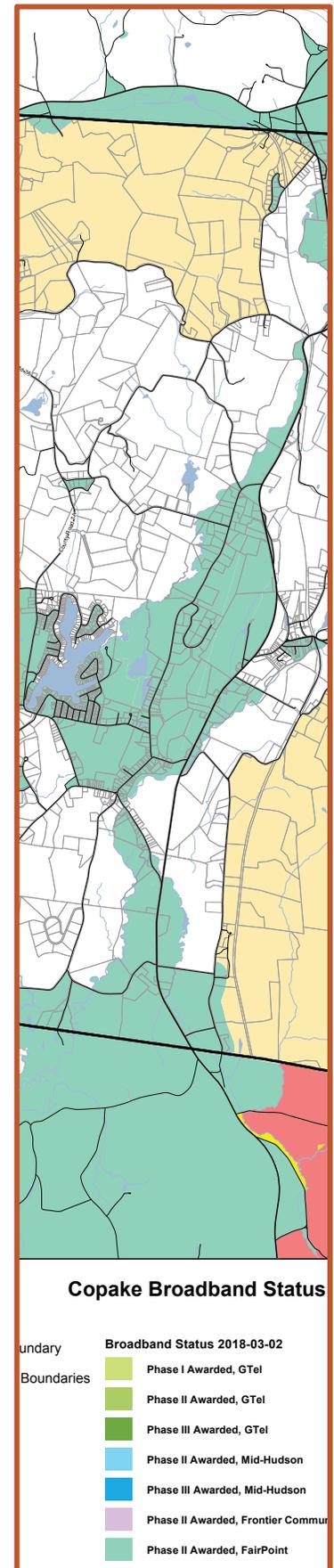
**Use of DRI Funds:** DRI funds will be used to supplement CWSRF to address natural resource restoration and protection and resilience improvement including potentially flood mitigation.

**Advances CREDC Strategies:** The projects reduce risk factors and improves environmental justice issues. The project will construct safe municipal wastewater and water systems that protect water quality and facilitate infill development and current site expansion and redevelopment. Consistent with the CREDC Magnet Strategy, the project resolves an obstacle to overcoming our high poverty rate: enabling business growth that will create jobs and strengthen our ability to attract private investment under the Core Strategy. It will advance statewide strategies for placemaking and downtown revitalization.

**9. BROADBAND - Expand broadband including free downtown Wi-Fi.**

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Broadband Expansion and Downtown Wi-Fi</b>
<b>Project Sponsor</b>	Town of Copake
<b>Readiness</b>	12-24 Months
<b>Total Cost</b>	\$400,000
<b>Total Leverage</b>	\$100,000 (Business support, local grants)
<b>DRI Funds Proposed</b>	\$300,000

Copake will advance installation of Town-wide business class broadband service. The lack of broadband in downtown has been repeatedly identified as a weakness in attracting businesses. With migration from urban areas intensifying, changing climate, and an increasing base of retirees, this obstacle is more important than ever. Lack of “real time” connection is also an impediment to visitor wayfinding and amenity access. The 2018 Copake Broadband Status map shows swaths of broadband coverage awarded to FairPoint (Phase II &III) and areas covered by the NYS Public Service Commission (PSC), with the remaining areas not currently eligible. In March of 2019 it was reported that 50% of the Town remains unserved by broadband, including in the most densely populated areas. The Copake Broadband Committee indicates that as of 2021, broadband access for the Town has likely reached roughly 85% coverage. This project will also develop free Wi-Fi in the downtown core. An engineering and feasibility study is necessary to better identify the need, the services required, and the best path to make updated services available throughout downtown.



**Use of DRI Funds:** DRI funds will be used to design, develop, and deploy business class broadband across the downtown and add free Wi-Fi.

**Advances CREDC Strategies:** We will deploy broadband service which are directly supported by the CREDC Magnet Strategy. It also advances the Talent Strategy and the statewide Workforce Development Strategy.



**10. LOCAL FOOD – Create a Community Garden and Community Composting Program**

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Community Garden and Composting Center</b>
<b>Project Sponsor</b>	Town of Copake with the Copake Agricultural Center
<b>Timeframe</b>	6-12 Months
<b>Total Cost</b>	\$500,000
<b>Total Leverage</b>	\$200,000
<b>DRI Funds Proposed</b>	\$300,000



The Downtown Copake Community Garden at the Copake Agriculture Center on Mountainview Road is within the DRI Area. Despite having a wealth of community supported agriculture and value-added agriculture programs, Copake does not have a community garden. With an influx of new owners, some with little gardening experience, this project will forge a bond between newcomers (including pandemic and climate migrants) and longtime residents. Working closely with Camphill Village, sections will be reserved for gardeners needing adaptive access with Camphill members serving as mentors. A children’s garden will also be grown.

The community garden will be a place where people could have a plot to grow their own vegetables and flowers. On the surface, this is a simple project that can build lifetime bonds between gardeners and with Downtown. Free programming will be provided to learn about gardening, soil amendments, and best organic gardening practices. Programs and events will be available alongside programs using Memorial Park (which is across the street). The community composting center will provide a drop off location where community members can bring their food scraps and leaves. Compost bins on site would make compost for the community garden and anyone else who needs compost in modest amounts. Excess food from the garden will be donated to families or the food pantry. The community garden builds on the successful farmer’s market. Projects include an off-road walking path



between downtown and the Agriculture Center making the connection even stronger and access to the community garden easier.

**Use of DRI Funds:** Create a community garden and composting center on land provided by the Copake Agriculture Center to be matched by the Agriculture Center.

**Advances CREDC Strategies:** The community garden advances the CREDC Magnet Strategy by supporting low-income families, building understanding of the economic impact of agriculture, and supporting diversification in food and beverage and agri-tech sectors of CRAFT to create jobs and businesses. It will provide participating families with food at very low or no cost. It offers another gathering spot downtown and a casual way for all community members, old and new, to know each other and to know Copake. It is a draw for visitors and has a spinoff impact on other downtown shops and restaurants. The Community Garden and Composting Center are placemaking anchors under the Core Strategy.

#### **11. RESILIENCE FUND - Support Small Business Rehabilitation and Resilience Improvements.**

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Copake Business Resilience Fund</b>
<b>Project Sponsor</b>	Town of Copake/Local Financial Organizations/Columbia Hudson Partnership
<b>Readiness</b>	6-24 months
<b>Total Cost</b>	\$1,200,000
<b>Total Leverage</b>	\$600,000 (Owner equity match)
<b>DRI Funds Proposed</b>	\$600,000

Significant support for real-time business operations or losses due to COVID-19 have been and are available. There are many facility improvements not covered by State and Federal funds. This grant/low interest loan fund will provide a gap financing measure to support renovations. The initiative provides small loans to owners of existing buildings within the DRI area who demonstrate a commitment to renovate existing retail and commercial storefronts and spaces. Property owners, business owners and entrepreneurs may seek grant assistance for building improvements, site upgrades, commercial build-outs and rent subsidies and resilience projects, especially energy efficiency and flood mitigation. Properties need to be designed resiliently – with onsite flood mitigation and floodproofing when needed and energy saving systems and equipment. Grant recipients will need to commit to rehabilitating historic façade elements and, when possible, add outdoor seating and dining spaces. It’s important that resources be available to businesses to floodproof structures including raising outlets and electrical switches, installing flood-friendly flooring, painting the exterior with waterproof exterior paint, and installing flood-resistant doors and windows all in a manner that conserves historical character.





**Use of DRI Funds:** Leverage private developer equity along with structured grants/forgivable loans/low interest loans to address a range of building improvements including rehabilitation, energy improvement, floodproofing/mitigation or other environmental concerns.

**Advances CREDC Strategies:** The CREDC Magnet Strategy is advanced by improving access to rehabilitation capital that includes a range of resilience enhancements which should further stabilize companies in recovery so that they can restore or expand employment. External building improvements, including historic facades, will be improved to increase downtown’s sense of place and advance the Core Strategy. It will also advance statewide strategies for placemaking and downtown revitalization.

**12. MARKETING STRATEGY - Develop A Marketing Strategy and Digital Media Platform**

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Copake Bike &amp; Trails Marketing Strategy</b>
<b>Project Sponsor</b>	Town of Copake with the Copake Economic Development Advisory Committee
<b>Readiness</b>	6-12 Months
<b>Total Cost</b>	\$300,000
<b>Total Leverage</b>	\$150,000 (Donated professional services and local foundation support)
<b>DRI Funds Proposed</b>	\$150,000

Copake will develop a strategy that markets and promotes downtown as the hub of a network of biking and trails recreation. Bicycling is one of the fastest growing types of outdoor recreation and tourism nationwide. It’s estimated that 48 million people bicycle recreationally each year, contributing \$96.7 billion to the economy annually. Running, including jogging and trail running, is even higher: it was the most popular activity among Americans when measured by both number of participants and by number of total annual outings.

Copake is well positioned to market this brand. Bicycle travelers tend to be geotourists - people who National Geographic describes as “interested in experiencing the distinctive characteristics of a place, including its culture, landscape, history, and the well-being of its residents.” Copake has been actively positioning itself as a biking and trails destination for over a decade. Each spring the Antique Bike Auction at the Copake Auction attracts enthusiasts from across the world. In conjunction with that auction, the Town promotes an Antique Bike Ride where local riders participate with penny farthings and other classic bicycles.



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A market analysis will examine the profile of cyclists and their needs (fun/ family, moderate, competitive), volume of visitors, economic activity, spin off and employment, event and venue participation rates, estimated spending per day/overnight travel, promotion by audience, etc. The Roe Jan Ramble Bike Tour attracts upwards of 600 riders annually. Copake will engage cyclists and trail users to prioritize routes and assign a rating for difficulty and family-friendliness. The cycling families will inventory trails with maps, indicating difficulty ratings and descriptions in the wider region.

Based on the market analysis, Copake will develop a suite of marketing materials specifically tailored to trail users and cyclists highlighting what the Town and region have to offer. This package would include printed and virtual “materials” including flyers and brochures that can be made available at bike shops, races, and other bike-related events.

**Use of DRI Funds:** DRI funds will be used to assess, market and develop appropriate marketing measures to advance the Town’s Bike and Trail destination brand and promotion of the Roe Jan Ramble.

**Advances CREDC Strategies:** The CREDC Magnet Strategy is advanced by improving safe bicycling infrastructure and by visitors frequenting businesses within the CRAFT cluster. The Core Strategy is advanced by promoting an available, largely free recreation amenity that can draw visitors from the region and beyond. It will also advance statewide strategies for placemaking and downtown revitalization.





## 8

### Administrative Capacity

We feel well prepared to advance the DRI if we are selected. The Town Supervisor, Deputy Supervisor, Town Clerk and Town Attorney will provide grant administration and have provided contract administration, grant administration and fiscal accounting successfully for other grants. The Chair of the Waterfront and Community Revitalization Plan Advisory Committee, Roberta Roll, will bring a wealth of knowledge to the Local Planning Committee (LPC).

If we are selected to participate in the DRI, we are committed to hire a full-time coordinator for at least three years beginning in January 2022 when we hope our DRI strategic investment plan will begin development. The DRI Coordinator will be responsible for ensuring that state-approved revitalization projects are completed within the required time frames. As the DRI's Project Manager, the Coordinator will hold focused meetings developers and their teams, and stakeholders to ensure compliance with contract requirements, keep projects on track, coordinate with municipal planning, permitting and regulators, and maintain communication between local sponsors and State Partners. The Coordinator will ensure that incentive funds are properly marketed and managed with technical support from the Small Business Development Center and the Columbia Hudson Partnership. Both groups have directly relevant experience with business loan funds. Supervisor Jeanne Mettler will be the lead contact for the Town during the DRI planning process.

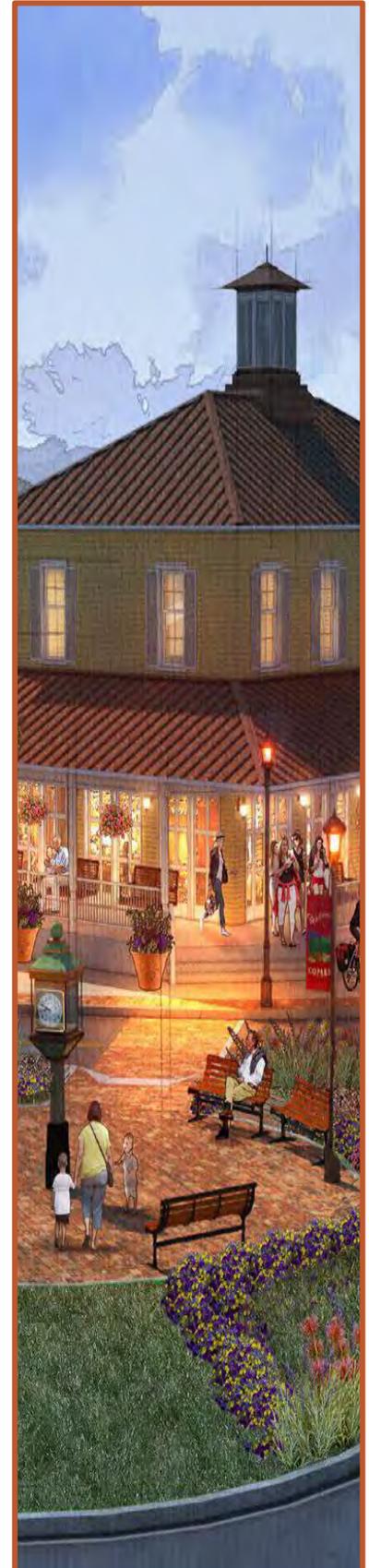
This proposal outlines steps for implementing projects and identifies partners. Connections between the SIP and regional plan elements from the Capital Region REDC and other local, regional, and state projects and processes are identified. Every year, the Town Board will measure and report on progress implementing the plan.

Once the SIP is complete and implementation projects are identified, the Town of Copake will serve as grant administrator for many DRI projects, including all public infrastructure and public space projects, signage projects, marketing and branding and reuse of buildings including major infrastructure projects. All projects will involve coordination with a designated NYS agency. The following Town offices and departments will participate in the DRI planning process and may be involved in the implementation of these projects: Supervisor's Office, Town Clerk's Office; Town finance office, Town Attorney, Parks and Recreation Department and the Department of Public Works.

Administration of private projects involving construction and rehabilitation of properties will be managed by the local project sponsor through direct contract with an overseeing NYS agency such as Empire State Development or Homes and Community Renewal. Private development projects will need to obtain all required local, State, and other permits and approvals.

Work will be supported as needed by the following list of organizations at the local, regional, State, and federal levels that could support implementation and be considered for membership on the LPC. They know Copake and already help us to deal with a wide range of issues and opportunities such as infrastructure, telecommunications, broadband expansion, local food and food sufficiency, resilience and climate change initiatives, road and bridge improvements, green economy job development and small business support. These are our partners:

- **Columbia Economic Development Corporation (CEDC)** - CEDC is the lead economic development organization for Columbia County, New York. Their mission is to strengthen the area's tax base through economic development and job creation, to assist business to locate and expand within the County, and to promote Columbia County as a premier spot for both business investment and personal opportunity. They also coordinate the work of Columbia County Industrial Development Agency and the Capital Resource Corporation. CEDC's services can support small business mentoring and microlending.
- **Columbia County Planning** - The Columbia County Planning Department supports local governments regarding land use, planning, zoning, agricultural districts, data analysis, demographics, and transportation. The Department provides staff support to the Columbia County Planning Board and the Environmental Management Council. They serve as members of advisory bodies such as the Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board and the Transportation Advisory Committee.
- **Columbia County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)** - The Mud Creek Environmental Learning Center offers a variety of hands-on, inquiry based, environmental education programs, adapted to any grade level. They are also available to develop programs to meet the needs of scout groups and other community organizations for both children and adults.
- **Cornell Cooperative Extension of Columbia and Greene Counties** - - Cornell Cooperative Extension puts knowledge to work in pursuit of economic vitality, ecological sustainability and social well-being through five major programs:





- Environment and Natural Resources, Sustainable Energy, and Climate Change; Agriculture and Food Systems; 4-H Youth Development/Children, Youth and Families; Community and Economic Vitality; and Nutrition, Parenting and Wellness. They bring local experience and research-based solutions together, helping New York State families and communities thrive in our rapidly changing world.

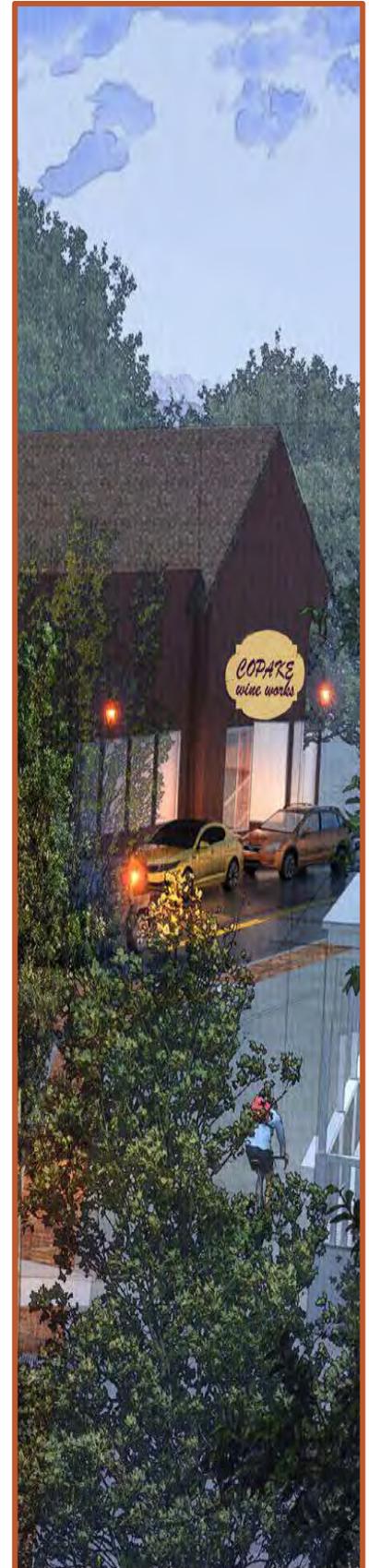
### Regional Nonprofit Partners And Funders

- **Columbia Land Conservancy (CLC)** - For the past thirty years, the Columbia Land Conservancy, a nonprofit organization that relies on charitable support, has worked with private landowners, businesses, government agencies and partners to preserve the County's vibrant rural character. It has conserved more than 30,000 acres of farmland, forests and wildlife habitat for agricultural production, scenic beauty, and recreation. CLC works with the community to cultivate connection to the land by providing outdoor and educational activities at ten Public Conservation Areas, supports agriculture by ensuring prime farmland continues to be available to the next generation of farmers, and works with individuals, towns, and villages to promote land protection and smart land use planning. CLC has volunteer opportunities for groups and individuals interested in helping to keep Columbia County rural.
- **Open Space Institute, Inc. (OSI)** - The Open Space Institute protects scenic, natural, and historic landscapes to provide public enjoyment, conserve habitats and working lands and sustain communities. Since 1984, OSI has protected more than 116,000 acres in New York State. In Columbia County, OSI has protected more than 1,100 acres along the pastoral banks of the Kinderhook Creek, including the former estate of President Martin Van Buren and the highly productive Roxbury Farm. In 2016 OSI secured more than 500 acres adjacent to Hand Hollow State Forest. The preservation of this wooded property will expand recreational opportunities in Columbia County, while contributing to the protection of local water quality.
- **Scenic Hudson** - Scenic Hudson is the largest environmental group focused on the Hudson River Valley. Its team of experts combines land acquisition, support for agriculture, citizen-based advocacy, and sophisticated planning tools to create environmentally healthy communities, champion smart economic growth, open riverfronts to the public and preserve the valley's inspiring beauty and natural resources.

*Downtown Copake NY: Where Nature Meets Nurture*

In Columbia County, Scenic Hudson protects farmland as well as ecologically important areas in the towns of Claverack, Clermont, Copake, Germantown, Greenport, Livingston, Philmont, Stockport, Stuyvesant and Taghkanic. Scenic Hudson has conserved more than 1,600 acres of forests and farm fields surrounding Olana, hilltop home of renowned 19th-century landscape painter Frederic Church, preserving views he and other Hudson River School artists immortalized on canvas. The organization's network of free public parks up and down the Hudson River includes Harrier Hill Park in Stockport and RamsHorn-Livingston Sanctuary, just across the Hudson in Catskill, Greene County.

- **The Nature Conservancy (TNC)** - The Nature Conservancy is the leading conservation organization working around the world to protect ecologically important lands and waters for nature and people. Locally, the Conservancy and partner organizations are working to identify needs and opportunities for habitat restoration, community infrastructure and river access in the Hudson River Estuary and the communities along its shoreline.
- **Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council and the Greenway Conservancy for the Hudson River Valley, Inc. (HRVG)** - 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 as an innovative state sponsored program created to facilitate the development of a regional strategy for preserving world-renowned scenic, natural, historic, cultural and recreational resources of the Hudson Valley while encouraging compatible economic development and remaining consistent with the tradition of municipal home rule. The Greenway Act created two organizations, within the executive department, to facilitate the Greenway process: the Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council and the Greenway Conservancy for the Hudson River Valley, Inc.





## COPAKE IN THE NEWS

- [Report Finds Broadband Internet Gaps Persist In Columbia County | WAMC](#)
- [Roe Jan Ramble canceled for 2nd straight year | Columbia County | hudsonvalley360.com](#)
- [The realities of restoring an old home \(timesunion.com\)](#)
- [The Locally Grown Flower Industry Is Blooming Thanks to Covid - Bloomberg](#)
- [Before you buy that bouquet ... - Bloomberg](#)
- [Camphill Village Copake Is a Hudson Valley Community for All Abilities \(hvmag.com\)](#)
- [Hudson Valley flower and herb CSAs for the picking \(timesunion.com\)](#)
- [How Hudson Valley Farmers Are Experiencing Climate Change - The River \(therivernewsroom.com\)](#)

## ADDENDUM

### *Opportunities for Electric Vehicle Charging Stations.*

The Town will be restoring parking as part of the Route 7A project and adding new space to support DRI projects. We would be happy to participate with NYS DOS to find opportunities for Electric Vehicle Charging Stations.