

3.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

3.1 Regional and Local Context

The Village of Croton-on-Hudson is located on the eastern side of the Hudson River, in the northwest corner of Westchester County, approximately 40 miles north of New York City. The western boundary of Croton-on-Hudson extends to the middle of the Hudson River, coincident with the boundary of Westchester County. The eastern boundary of the Village is also the eastern boundary of the New York State coastal zone (see Figure 3.1).

The 4.9-square mile village lies within the Town of Cortlandt, which also includes the Village of Buchanan. Surrounding municipalities are the Town of Cortlandt to the north and east, the Town of New Castle to the east, and the Town and Village of Ossining to the south. The Hudson River forms the Village's western boundary with Haverstraw across the River, and Croton River serves as part of its eastern one. Together, the rivers contribute to the beautiful vistas for which Croton-on-Hudson is known.

The Village is situated along regional highways and rail lines. US Highway Route 9 and New York State Highway Route 9A run along the western perimeter of the Village, providing north-south access through Croton-on-Hudson; State Route 129 provides access across Westchester in an east-west direction. Metro-North Railroad's Hudson line runs from Grand Central Station to Croton-on-Hudson and beyond to Poughkeepsie. Amtrak stops in Croton-on-Hudson as well en route south to New York City and north and west to cities as far as Albany, Buffalo, Toronto and Montreal. This makes the Croton-Harmon station a regional transportation hub.

3.2 Natural Environment, Parks, and Open Space Resources

Croton-on-Hudson's natural features include its extensive riverfronts, hilly topography, natural areas, and expansive views. The topography of the Village affords dramatic views of the Hudson River to the west; along the Croton River gorge, steep banks lead down to the River's edge. The scenic views of the two rivers are enhanced by the riverfront parks and extensive wooded areas throughout the Village.

a. Geology

Croton-on-Hudson is located within a bedrock complex approximately 480 million years in age. Known as the "Manhattan prong," this series of metamorphic rocks extends from southwestern

Connecticut, northern Westchester County, south to the southern tip of Manhattan Island. The valleys are principally marble and more easily eroded than the schists and gneisses of this unit's higher elevations. The hills are primarily erosion-resistant and tightly folded metamorphic rocks, mostly gneisses and schists with some local deposits of quartzite, overlain with till and coastal plain deposits; they represent the vestiges of ancient, worn-down mountain ranges.

Croton-on-Hudson's high points, and most of the exposed rock, are made of Manhattan Schist, a rock type that is the product of dynamic metamorphism dating back over 360 million years ago. Other outcrops in the Village include Fordham Gneiss, with Inwood Marble in the lower, flatter areas. In addition to these features, glacial erratics, or boulders left in place after the glacier melted, can be found all over the Village. Remains of glacial kettles, or kettle ponds, are present in the Croton-on-Hudson area as well.

The present configuration of Croton-on-Hudson's land and the present course of the Hudson River were formed over the last 1.5 million years. There were four periods of glaciation in the Hudson River Valley during this era, with each period involving numerous advances and retreats of the continental ice sheets. These glaciers were the source of many streams in the area, and also deposited glacial sediments (moraines) as they retreated. Croton Point was formed during the Pleistocene era as a glacial-alluvial delta, created by the runoff from the glacial streams following the glacial retreat, at a time when the water level of the Hudson River (then a swollen "Lake Hudson") was approximately 100 feet higher than the current water level.

In general, depth to bedrock tends to increase as one goes downslope, leading to alluvial deposits that form the banks of the Croton and Hudson Rivers. In addition, due to the collapse of the original Croton dam during construction during the mid-19th century, damned water broke free, rushing massive quantities of soil, sediment, trees, and even houses, downstream. During this mini-flood many thousand tons of sediment were moved from the Croton River channel to the mouth of the Croton River.

b. Topography and Drainage Areas

Croton-on-Hudson's topography includes low lying areas along the Hudson River, Route 9, and the railroad tracks, a fairly deep ravine along the Croton River, and a plateau along its northern boundary that in some areas reaches elevations up to 500 to 600 feet within a mile of the Hudson River. This steep terrain has formed a series of ravines and the following watershed drainage areas within the Village:

- Hudson River Basin: draining to the Hudson River to the west
- Croton Gorge Basin: draining to the Croton River and Bay to the south and east.
- Furnace Brook Basin: draining to the north where the drainage terrain is less steep and flows to lakes and streams, including the Furnace Brook and Lake in Cortlandt.

Croton-on-Hudson's topographical features also create dramatic views that orient most of the Village toward its two riverfronts: the steeper elevations in the northern section of the Village slope down to more level ground to the west along the Hudson and to the southern portion along the Croton River.

c. Soils

Soils within the Village of Croton-on-Hudson are typical of those in Northern Westchester, due to similar bedrock structure and glacial activity. In general, the Village is composed of upland soils associations, with glacial outwash, and organic materials along the Hudson River shoreline. Most of Croton-on-Hudson's soils are glacial in nature, consisting primarily of till (soils containing rocks and pebbles of irregular size), finely sorted soils (pebbles and stones of regular size), and fine outwash sands. The shoreline of the Hudson River is a mixture of glacial soils, alluvial deposits, and organic materials. As noted above, Croton Point was formed as a remnant of a glacial delta.

Given the irregular bedrock in the Village, trees and ground covering plants are crucial for slope stabilization. The unstable slopes in the Village can result in "slumping," which produces cracks and gaps in sidewalks, retaining walls, and railroad ties; many Village roads show the results of frost heaving in the late winter and early spring.

d. Water Resources

The water resources of the Village define much of its natural character: Hudson River and Croton Rivers and associated freshwater wetlands, the ponds at the north end of the Village, and several smaller streams that run from the higher elevations to the lower rivers, and their wetlands. The Croton Water Control Commission reviews all construction within 120 feet of a water body (which includes wetlands).

The entire Village falls within the New York State Coastal Zone. Its extensive coastal areas include the following designated environmental areas: the Lower Hudson River Estuary, New York

State classified Significant Habitats, Hudson River Critical Environmental Area, and State-designated wetlands. A portion of Croton-on-Hudson is situated in the Westchester County-designated Critical Environmental Area.

Lower Hudson River Estuary

Croton-on-Hudson is one of the many communities located along the Hudson River estuary, which has long been recognized as a valuable state and local resource, as well as an important part of the North Atlantic coastal environment. The Hudson River is regionally significant as a productive estuary and is one of only a few major tidal rivers on the North Atlantic coast of the United States. The lower Hudson supports regionally significant fish populations as well as populations of wintering and migratory birds that feed on the rich fish and benthic resources. This is the primary nursery and overwintering area for striped bass in the Hudson River estuary, and striped bass from the Hudson account for an impressive portion of the total North Atlantic population.

The estuary contains important spawning and nursery grounds for many commercially valuable fish and shellfish species as well as significant acreage of tidal freshwater wetlands within the State. These wetlands, along with the river's brackish tidal wetlands and stands of submerged aquatic vegetation, contribute essential nutrients which support the Hudson's complex web of life.

Over 16,500 acres in the estuary from Albany-Rensselaer to Rockland-Westchester Counties have been inventoried and designated Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitats, jointly by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and Department of State (NYSDOS). Two of these significant habitat areas are located along Croton-on-Hudson's shoreline: Croton River and Bay, south of Croton Point Park, and Haverstraw Bay (which includes Senasqua Cove) north of Croton Point Park.

Significant Fish and Wildlife Habitats

Significant coastal fish and wildlife habitats are under the jurisdiction of the New York State Coastal Management Program. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) evaluates the significance of coastal fish and wildlife areas, and upon recommendation from NYSDEC, the New York State Department of State designates and maps significant areas. Croton-on-Hudson's LWRP describes these habitats and their fish and wildlife values, and elaborates upon the state protection policy with more detail in its local coastal zone Policies 7A-G.

Croton River and Bay Significant Fish and Wildlife Habitat

This habitat includes an approximate one-mile segment along the Hudson River, and an approximate 1,200-acre shallow bay and mudflat south of Croton Point. The Croton River is a relatively large fresh water stream, draining an area of over 375 miles, including portions of the Croton watershed. During periods of State-declared drought emergency, the freshwater flow can be diverted out of the Croton River for municipal water supplies. To help preserve the quality of this freshwater flow, the tidal portion of the Croton River is included in the protected habitat.



View of Croton River

The Croton River and Bay have been subject to considerable habitat disturbance, including filling of wetlands for waste disposal at the Croton Point Landfill, discharges of stormwater runoff from developed areas and roads, residential and industrial uses along the River and Bay, and road and rail crossings.

This habitat includes one of the largest shallow bay areas in the lower Hudson River, sheltered from strong currents; this area functions as a productive year round habitat for resident fish species. As a result, the Croton River and Bay are very popular for recreational fishing; it is one of the recognized hot spots for striped bass in the Hudson River. Locally significant numbers of waterfowl can be seen in the area during spring and fall migrations.

Haverstraw Bay Significant Fish and Wildlife Habitat

Haverstraw Bay encompasses both sides of the Hudson over a six-mile reach, in the widest section of the Hudson River estuary. The Bay includes extensive shallow areas and is a place where the freshwater from the upper river mixes with the salt water from the Atlantic, producing a predominantly brackish water habitat. Despite various disturbances (including dredging, filling, bulkheading, waste disposal, and pollution from both sides of the river), Haverstraw Bay remains one of the most important fish and wildlife habitats in the Hudson River estuary.

Hudson River Critical Environmental Area

The Village property (former Seprieo site) along the Hudson River is located within the Haverstraw Bay Significant Fish and Wildlife Habitat, as described above. The property is also designated a Critical Environmental Area (CEA) because of the history, ecology, scenery, and recreational opportunities associated with the shoreline.

Groundwater Resources

The Village is also located immediately adjacent to the Croton and Kensico Watersheds of the Croton Aquifer System. The Croton River, which forms the southern boundary of Croton-on-Hudson, has a drainage area of 375 square miles; this river is the

predominant source of groundwater supply for the Croton-on-Hudson well system. The Village's wells tap into sand and gravel aquifers along the Croton Basin, just northeast of Black Rock Park; this groundwater provides a local source of clean water.

Floodplain

Low lying areas adjacent to the Hudson River and the Croton River and Bay are within the 100-year floodplain of the Village, which falls below elevation 8. The potential for flooding of these areas must be taken into account during any development/construction of these areas.

e. Scenic Resources

Croton-on-Hudson is located within the Hudson Highlands Scenic Area of Statewide Significance (SASS), which encompasses Orange, Putnam, Rockland and Westchester Counties. Designation as SASS provides protection from potentially adverse Federal or State actions which may impair the scenic quality of the resource. Under NYS Department of State's Coastal Management Program, six such areas have been designated in the Hudson Valley.

f. Open Space, Parks and Recreational Resources

The extensive network of parks, trails and open space throughout Croton-on-Hudson takes up almost one-half (45%) of the Village's land area. Although not all open space is available for public recreation or use (utility and transportation sites, privately owned vacant undeveloped lands, and common space areas at residential developments), this extensive and varied network of open space contributes to the semi-rural character and open vistas of the Village (see Figures 3.2: County and State Roads and Parks and 3.3: Existing Parks and Open Space).



Looking south along Hudson River, from Village waterfront property

Table 3.1: Croton-on-Hudson Open Space Acreage

<i>Type of open space</i>	<i>Acres</i>
Village parks and public spaces	54.5
County parks (Croton Point Park and Paradise Island)	526.0
Nature Preserves	133.2
Institutional Space (includes schools, libraries, Municipal Building, Temple Israel, Bethel Cemetery, and Van Cortlandt Manor)	109.0
Private recreational space (includes Hudson National Golf Course, and common open space within private residential developments)	297.0
Utilities and transportation rights-of-way (Con Ed power lines, Metro North Right-of-way, village well sites and utility site)	152.0
Vacant undeveloped lands	110.0
TOTAL OPEN SPACE ACREAGE	1,381.7



Village of Croton-On-Hudson, NY

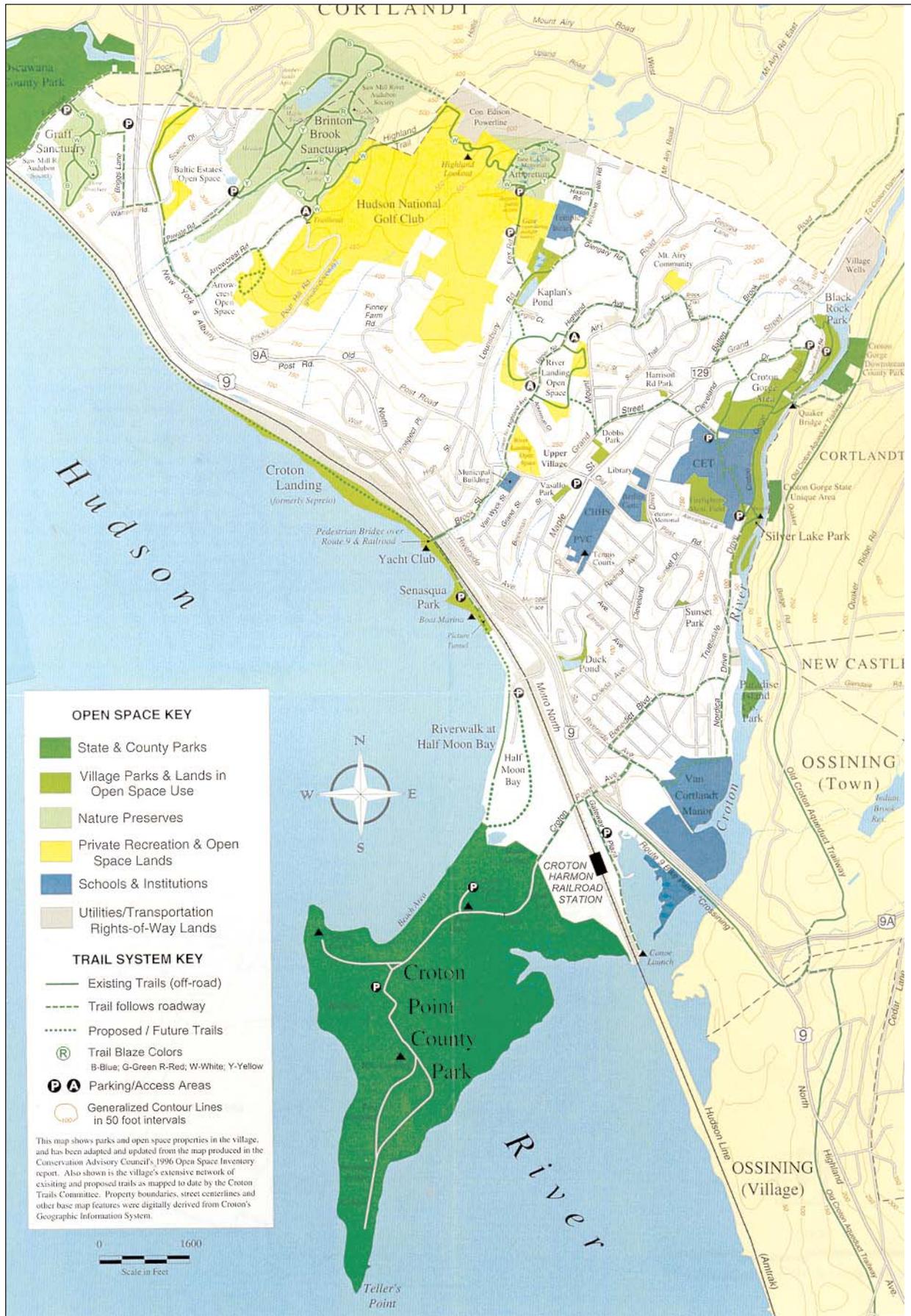
Figure 3.2. County and State Roads and Parks



BFJ Buckhurst Fish & Jacquemart, Inc.

Source: Westchester County Major Open Spaces Map





Village of Croton-On-Hudson, NY

Figure 3.3. Existing Parks and Open Space

Source: Croton Conservation Advisory Council 2000

Village- and County-owned parks, private nature preserves, private recreational facilities and open space linked to educational and religious institutions constitute 35% of existing open space in the Village. Another three percent (3%) consist of vacant, currently undeveloped lands.

Parks and Recreational Facilities. The following tables illustrate the diversity of existing park and recreational facilities in the Village, including Village- and County-owned facilities, nature preserves and private recreation.

Table 3.2: Village and School District Parks and Recreational Facilities

Name and Location	Size (acres)	Special Features and Activities Offered
Dobbs Park Maple Street/Route 129	1.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • baseball field • basketball court • playground
Duck Pond Park Bungalow Road, off S. Riverside Avenue	2.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • baseball field • basketball court • playground • ice skating on pond in winter
Senasqua Park Waterfront park along Hudson River	4.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • boat launch ramp • movies and evening concerts during the summer • picnicking • windsurfing • playground
Senasqua Boat Basin Adjacent to Senasqua Park	N/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides mooring and storage space • sailing lessons available with Croton Sailing School
Silver Lake Truesdale Drive	13.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • freshwater river, open for swimming
Sunset Park Playground Sunset & Lexington Drive	0.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • playground



Dobbs Park, Upper Village

Table 3.2 continued:
Village and School District Parks and Recreational Facilities

Name and Location	Size (acres)	Special Features and Activities Offered
Harrison Street Park Harrison Street	0.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • playground
Black Rock Park Quakerbridge Road, along Croton River	10.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fishing • walking • picnicking
Vassallo Park Upper Village	1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outdoor stage • open grass area
PVC Tennis Court PVC Middle School, Olcott Avenue	N/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • three clay tennis courts
Kaplan's Pond Lounsbury Road	8.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • small pond • wetland area • natural preserve
Village waterfront property (Southern end of former Seprieo site)	12.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • passive recreation (new improvements planned for 2001-02)
Croton Bay Boat Launch	1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • boat launch • fishing
Skatepark	0.2	



View from Silver Lake Park

Table 3.3: Westchester County Parks

Name/Location	Size (acres)	Special Features and Activities Offered
Croton Point Park	503.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • camping • fishing • picnicking • children's play area • hiking • concerts, craft shows, and guided walks held throughout the year • swimming
Paradise Island	22.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • undeveloped island in Croton River accessible by boat

Village Trailway System. The Croton Trails Committee completed a Village Trailway Master Plan in 1993, establishing and mapping an interconnected Village-wide network of existing and proposed trails that link open space sites, and connect to the Old Croton Aqueduct Trailway that runs through Cortlandt and Ossining.

Table 3.4: Preserves and Sanctuaries

Name/Location	Size (acres)	Special Features and Activities Offered
Brinton Brook Sanctuary Albany Post Road	84.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • owned by the Audubon Society • three miles of hiking trails
Graff Sanctuary Furnace Dock Road or Briggs Lane	27.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • owned by the Audubon Society • walking trails
Jane E. Lytle Memorial Arboretum Fox Road	20.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village land managed by the Croton Arboretum & Sanctuary • walking trails • handicapped-accessible wetlands • boardwalk and outdoor classroom



Jane E. Lytle Memorial Arboretum

Parks, Recreation and Trails Improvement Projects.

Several improvement projects have recently been completed or for the Village's parks and recreational facilities.

Table 3.5: Completed Capital Improvement Projects

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Improvement</i>	<i>Completion Date</i>
Dobb's Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playground equipment replacement • Basketball court resurfacing 	1999
Sunset Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playground equipment replacement 	2000
Croton Gorge Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction of one mile trail 	1998
Village Waterfront (Seprieo property)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brush clearance 	1997-1998
Silver Lake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New roofs for bathhouse and pavilion 	1996-1997
Senasqua Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pavilion reconstruction • Installation of new playground 	1999
Ballfields	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irrigation and sod replacement at Dobb's Park, Firefighter's Memorial Park, Alexander Lane and Duck Pond 	1999
Croton-Ossining Walkway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction of walkway 	1999
Senasqua Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sewer line replaced and extended to Yacht Club 	2000
Harrison Street Playground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment improvements 	2002
Croton River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boat launch, south of Municipal garage 	2001

g. Environmental Policies and Programs

Village Environmental Conservation Policy

The Conservation Advisory Committee developed the Environmental Conservation Policy, adopted by the Village, to outline goals and objectives, define the specific laws, and documents relating to natural resource policies, and outline actions to conserve, improve, and protect the local environment. The Village goals and objectives include:

1. Conserve, improve, and protect its natural resources and environment, and to control water, land, and air pollution.
2. Coordinate the environmental plans and programs of the Village, with Federal, State, regional and local governments, other public and private organizations, and concerned individuals. As trustee of the environment for present and future generations, the Village shall also develop and manage the basic resources of water, land and air.
3. The Village shall create, foster, promote, and maintain conditions under which man and nature can thrive in harmony, while achieving economic and technological progress for present and future generations as follows:
 - a. Assuring surroundings that are healthful and aesthetically pleasing
 - b. Guaranteeing that the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment is attained without risk to health, safety, or unnecessary degradation
 - c. Promoting patterns of development that minimize adverse impact on the environment
 - d. Preserving the unique qualities of resources such as the Croton River and estuary, and Hudson River and its shoreline.
 - e. Taking care of air, water, and other resources that are shared with other local and regional bodies, as a good neighbor.

The Environmental Conservation Policy document lists the laws, codes, government entities, and documents that embody much of the environmental policy of the Village:

- Wetlands and Watercourses Law, 1988
- Erosion and Sediment Control Law, 1988
- Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, 1992
- Tree Law, 1984
- Water Supply Protection Law, 1989
- Park, Recreation, and Education Zoning Districts, 1988
- Village of Croton-on-Hudson Master Plan, 1977
- Trailways Master Plan, 1993
- Open Space Inventory, 1996
- Greenway Vision Plan, 1998
- Conservation Advisory Council, 1978
- Visual Environmental Advisory Board, 1979
- Water Control Commission, 1988

In addition, Croton-on-Hudson's environmental policy has been carried out through the following regional programs and accomplishments:

Hudson River Valley Greenway Act

The Hudson River Valley Greenway Act of 1991 created regional connections and cooperation within New York's 10-county, 3 million acre Hudson River Valley. The Act built upon the work of two existing organizations-the Hudson River Valley Greenway Council and the Heritage Task Force for the Hudson River Valley-and gave them a new focus and a new mandate. The directives of the program include working with local governments in the establishment of a Hudson River Trail System east and west of the Hudson; developing a strategy that would allow the Hudson River Valley to promote itself as a single tourism destination area; and working with the agricultural community to promote and protect the industry of agriculture in the Hudson River Valley.

The Hudson River Valley Greenway Program is guided by the following key principles:

- Open space networks
- Natural and cultural resource protection
- Local planning undertaken in a regional context, and regional planning undertaken in a local context
- Economic development, including agriculture, tourism, and urban redevelopment
- Reclamation of the waterfront and access thereto
- Public education with regard to Greenway principles and conservation.

There are 10 "model" Greenway projects underway in the Hudson Valley involving 23 communities. The Greenway planning process involves the creation of a local Greenway committee, the development of a community planning profile, and the subsequent development of a vision based upon several public meetings. Some of the Greenway programs have been developed jointly between communities. Two Greenway cities - Newburgh and Beacon - have developed a cross-river partnership that has incorporated planning, a cross-river "Trail of Two Cities," and the proposed reinstatement of ferry service. Croton-on-Hudson and Ossining have also developed a common trail and tourism strategy.

One of the keys to the success of the program has been the idea that, as a broad community vision is developed, small, feasible physical projects should be identified and implemented to give substance to the planning process.

Croton-on-Hudson has been recognized as a model community for its efforts to develop, protect, and reclaim the waterfront, in cooperation with other municipalities along the Hudson River. As described in Section 2.2, Croton-on-Hudson created a Greenway Vision Plan in 1997, which was incorporated into the existing Master Plan.

Westchester County has developed a Greenway Compact Plan that includes a regional economic development strategy for the Historic River Towns of Westchester (“HRTW”) that promotes tourism while incorporating protection of natural, cultural, and historic resources, main street revitalization, and increased access to the Hudson River. The Plan includes such projects as the Hudson RiverWalk, a promenade that will stretch from Yonkers to Cortlandt, and a Route 9 signage program to draw people to downtowns, historic sites, parks and trailways. The Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council adopted the Greenway Plan in June 2001. The Village of Croton-on-Hudson adopted the Plan in November 2001, making it the second one to be adopted in the 13-county Hudson River Valley region.

Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area

Croton-on-Hudson and Westchester County are also part of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area, a designation that acknowledges the scenic, historic and cultural resources of the area.

Local Waterfront Revitalization Program

The Village of Croton on Hudson is entirely located within a state-designated coastal zone (see Figure 3.4), and is therefore subject to the New York State Coastal Zone Management Program, established in 1981 by the Waterfront Revitalization and Coastal Resources Act, and administered by the New York State Department of State Coastal Management Program (CMP). The principal function of the CMP is to provide a framework for government decision-making in the coastal area. It includes 44 policies grouped in ten categories that address: development, fish and wildlife, flooding and erosion, public access, recreation, historic resources, visual quality, agricultural lands, energy and ice management, water and air resources.

A Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan was developed for Croton-on-Hudson, and adopted by the Village, the NYS Secretary of State, and the U.S. Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, in 1992. As previously discussed in Section 2.2(c) of this Plan, the LWRP describes specific state and local coastal zone policies in detail, and outlines the following overall objectives for Croton-on-Hudson’s future:

- link waterfront parks and waterfront recreational areas

- increase recreational facilities within the Village and improve waterfront access
- redevelop or restore underutilized coastal area lands
- improve the parking situation at the Croton-Harmon rail station
- assess the air quality of the Croton-on-Hudson area
- study the stormwater system of the Village
- protect scenic views of and to the Village
- study the traffic and roadway conditions within the Village
- facilitate the planning process by updating the Village's master plan for consistency with the LWRP and the development goals for the Village.

The LWRP lists a series of projects to help implement these policies, a number of which have been completed or are currently underway:

- Croton River Gorge Trail – create walking trail from Silver Lake to Black Rock
- Investigate additional/alternative sites for waterfront recreation areas (including purchase at fair market value of private property)
- Improve Croton Bay Boat Ramp & Village-owned land south of Metro-North parking areas (public access of village-owned land for recreational uses)
- Installation by DEC of Air Quality Monitoring Station
- Study of Village Stormwater system (discharge into coastal waters)
- Designation of Route 9 (in Croton-on-Hudson) as NYS Scenic Road
- Traffic & Roadway conditions study (identify improvements to facilitate traffic flow)
- Amendment of 1977 Master Plan

The preparation of this Comprehensive Plan in itself meets a key LWRP objective: amendment of the 1977 Master Plan to ensure consistency with LWRP. Proposed projects that address LWRP objectives are discussed further in Section 4.3, Recommendations for Natural Resources, Trails, and Open Space.

h. Environmental remediation

Due to its previous industrial uses, several waterfront areas of Croton-on-Hudson have required environmental remediation. Two formerly polluted sites have been remediated, the landfill at Croton Point and the PCB-contaminated lagoon at the Metro-North repair yard. Both were federally-designated Superfund sites.

Croton Point Park. The remediation and restoration of 125 acres formerly in use as a landfill was completed in 1996.

Former Seprieo Site (Village Waterfront Property). Testing at this location in 1986 indicated the presence of heavy metals and other contaminants in soils, presumably due to the former asphalt plant at that site, and the nearby railroad tracks. The contaminant levels were not high enough to require immediate remediation; however, further soil testing is recommended if any excavation or grading activities that could disturb soils is to be undertaken as part of the waterfront park development.

Metro-North repair yard lagoon. Many years of Metro-North railroad repair yard operations have resulted in contamination of its wastewater treatment plant lagoon and pond system, the surface soils located adjacent to the lagoon, and components of the original Wastewater Treatment Plant for the facility. Remediation of these elements was undertaken and substantially completed by May 1996. Subsequent investigation and feasibility studies determined that the non-aqueous phase liquid (NAPL) located around the former wastewater treatment plant lagoon is the only remaining environmental media requiring remedial action. Remediation of this area was underway as of the writing of this Plan.

3.3 Zoning and Land Use

a. Land Use and Zoning District Categories

The Village covers an area of 4.9 square miles of land, most of it zoned for residential use. The predominant non-residential uses consist of: open space and park areas; commercial districts located in the Upper Village and along North and South Riverside Avenues and Maple Street; and industrial/transportation areas associated with the Metro North facilities, Metro Enviro, and the tire distribution center located west of Routes 9 and 9A. Several small office districts are located in the Upper Village, North Riverside, the Municipal Place area, and at the north end of the Village.

A brief description of land uses and zoning districts is summarized below and shown in Figures 3.4: Existing Land Uses and 3.5: Existing Zoning.

Residential Uses. Croton-on-Hudson's pattern of development is typical of many villages: the highest density neighborhoods (those with more houses per acre of land) are situated closer to the commercial centers, with the density decreasing farther away from these centers. The neighborhoods situated closest to the Village's four commercial centers – Harmon, the Upper Village, North Riverside and the Municipal Place area – consist primarily of single family homes built on 5,000 and 9,375 square foot lots. These neighborhoods also contain the majority of the two- and multi-family residences in the Village. Moving away from the commercial centers, the lot sizes increase to 25,000 and 40,000 square foot lots. Section 3.5: Housing Trends covers Croton-on-Hudson's housing characteristics in greater detail.

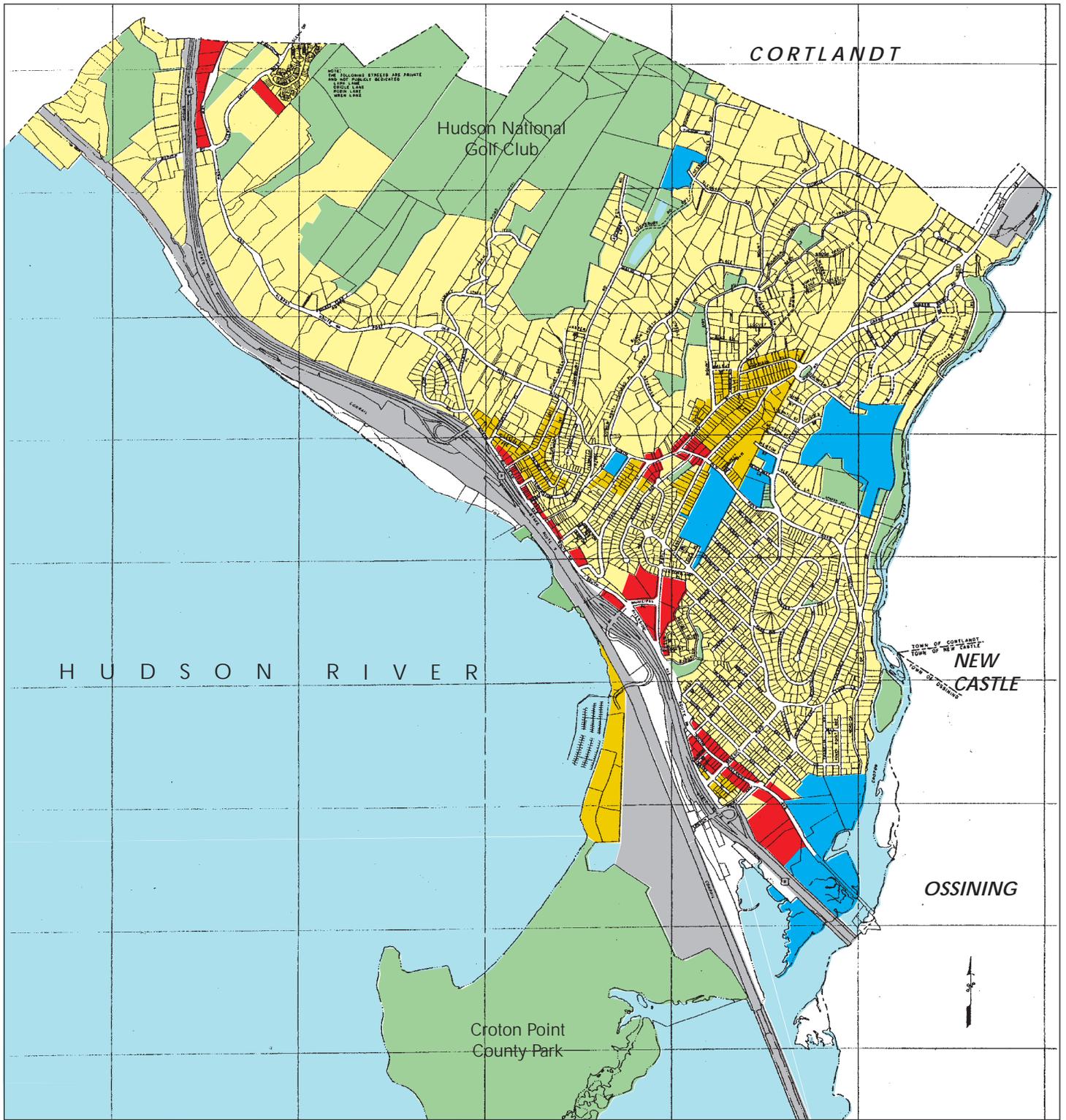
Single Family Housing. Croton-on-Hudson has four single-family residential zoning districts: RA-5, RA-9, RA-25 and RA-40. The districts range in density, as shown in Table 3.6, permitting from homes built on 1/8th acre lots (RA-5) to homes on one acre lots (RA-40).

The northern area of the Village is zoned primarily for RA-40 lots, with the exception of a small RA-25 district and an office district in the northwest corner of the Village. The density increases closer to the commercial centers and south of the Upper Village, with lots ranging from 5,000 to 25,000 square feet.

Multi-family Residential. The Village has two zoning districts permitting multi-family residential: RB (two-family residences) and RC (multi-family residences). These districts are limited to the Upper Village and North Riverside Avenue. The Village has two

Table 3.6: Residential District

District	Permitted Lot Size
RA-5	5,000 square feet
RA-9	9,375 square feet
RA-25	25,000 square feet
RA-40	40,000 square feet
RB	2,500 square feet per dwelling unit
RC	4 acres or 3,000 square feet per d.u.

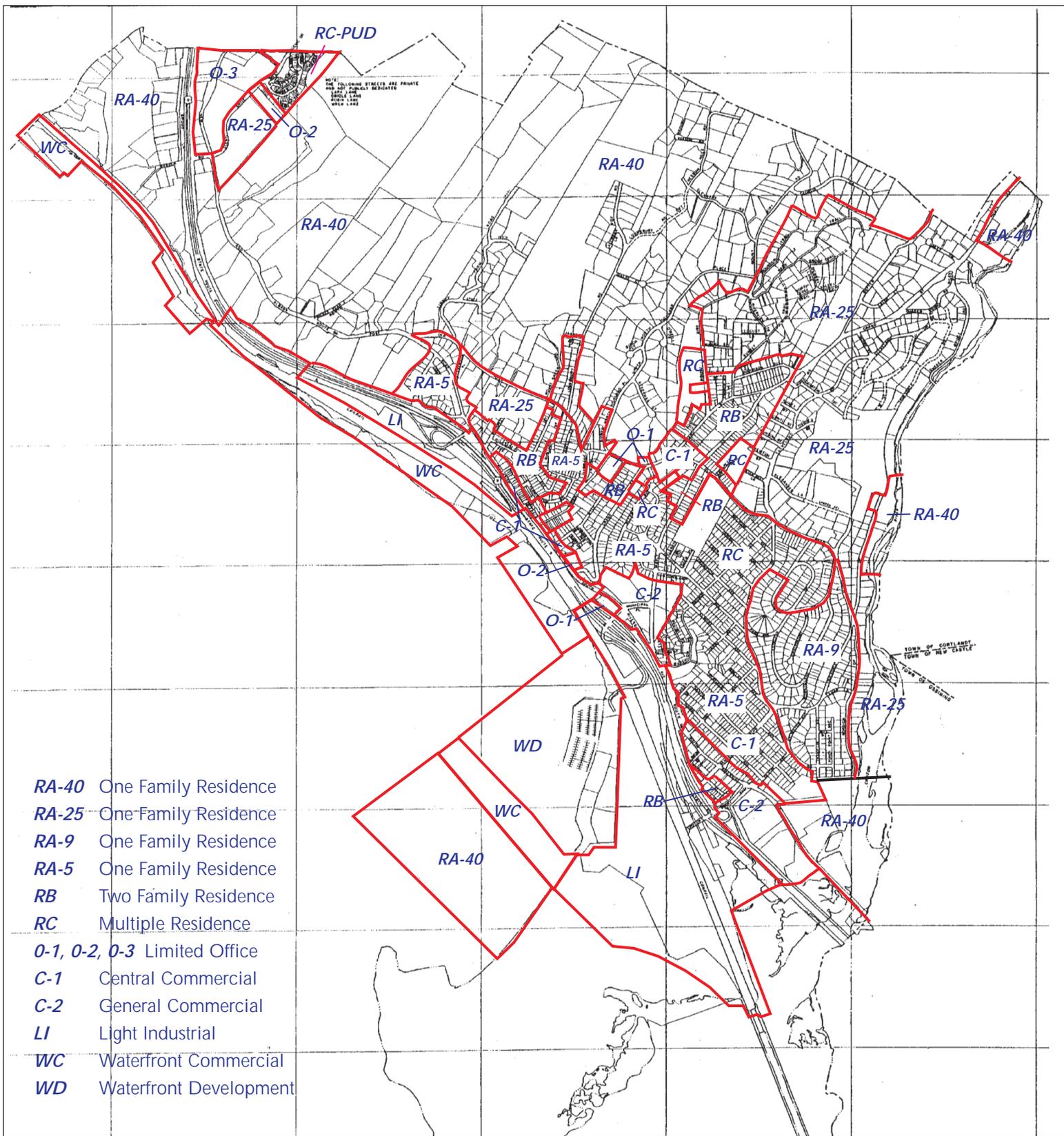


Village of Croton-On-Hudson, NY

Figure 3.4. Coastal Zone Designated Area: Existing Land Uses

- Single Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Commercial
- Open Space / Parks
- Institutions
- Utilities / Transportation
- Vacant Lots





Village of Croton-On-Hudson, NY

Figure 3.5. Existing Zoning



apartment buildings, both located in the Upper Village. The WD district along the Hudson River between Croton Point and Senasqua Park also permits multi-family development. The Half Moon Bay condominium development is located in that area.

Commercial Centers. The Village has four commercial centers: the Upper Village, North Riverside, the Municipal Place area, and the South Riverside/Harmon shopping area, which use approximately 2% of Village land uses. These districts are zoned C1 and C2, for central commercial and general commercial uses respectively. C1 commercial districts are zoned for a floor area ratio (FAR) of 2.0, which reflects the development in older commercial areas such as the Upper Village and North Riverside. C2 districts have an FAR of 0.5, which reflects the existing bulk in those areas.

There were previously three C1 districts in the Village: the Upper Village, the Municipal Place area, and South Riverside/Harmon. Since two of these C1 districts adjoined extensive C2 districts (at the Municipal Place area, and South Riverside/Harmon), these were recently rezoned to C2 to create more uniform zoning in those commercial areas, and more accurately reflect the existing bulk and uses.

The South Riverside/Harmon shopping area extends from the south boundary of the Village between Route 9 and Route 9A (South Riverside Avenue), to just north of Oneida Avenue in Harmon. This area is zoned C2, and is bisected by Croton Point Avenue, which connects it to the nearby train station.

The C2 district along North Riverside was recently rezoned to C1 zoning, reflecting its scale and building type (higher effective FARs) similar to that of the Upper Village. The Upper Village and North Riverside are now the only C1 commercial districts in Croton-on-Hudson.

The commercial districts are described in greater detail in Section 3.8 Special Planning Areas: Commercial Districts. The commercial establishments within these districts are mostly retail, service and professional businesses designed to serve the local Village population.

Office Districts. Most of the office space in Croton-on-Hudson consists of small-scale offices and home office use. The Village has five small office districts, found in the North End area of the Village (zoned O-1); North Riverside (O-2); the Municipal Place area (O-1); Route 9A/Grand Street (O-1); and South Riverside/Municipal Place (O-1). These office districts comprise approximately 0.5% of Village land.



Croton Professional Building along Riverside Avenue

The existing office districts have little available space. Additional land dedicated to office uses could relieve the pressure for home offices. For example, the Upper Village, which has two office districts, is ideal for business uses due to its proximity to services, retail and government. However, there are parking constraints, since residents and businesses compete for a limited number of available spaces.

Waterfront Commercial (WC) zoning was created “to enhance and develop to the maximum extent extrinsic and intrinsic values of the areas in the Village adjacent to rivers, streams, lakes and other bodies of water. Uses in this district should promote the public interest in the values of those areas for purposes of recreation, conservation and development of aquatic resources, giving proper recognition to the rights of owners to develop their properties commercially in a manner compatible with said values.” (From Zoning Code § 230-19). The Village’s Hudson riverfront area, from the northwestern tip of the Village to the area just south of Senasqua Park is zoned WC. The land uses in this district include Senasqua Park, a Village-owned park, the Croton Yacht Club, and the former Seprieo property, acquired by the Village for waterfront recreational uses. The requirements of this zoning include a provision for public waterfront access.

Waterfront Development (WD) zoning is a new riverfront development district which applies to a number of parcels on the Hudson River; has lower density than the previous RDU (Riverfront Development) district that was rescinded in the early 1990s; and has a provision for affordable housing and for maximum building height and length. WD districts were created in 1999 to facilitate the development of property along the Hudson River that is consistent with the Village’s Master Plan, Local Waterfront Revitalization Program and the Greenway Vision Plan. WD-zoning results in development projects that enhance and strengthen the waterfront’s physical integrity and economic viability; and expand the use and public accessibility for purposes of recreation, leisure and year-round residence. As possible, WD zoning requires larger tracts of land to be developed as single, unified and comprehensive projects. Permitted uses in WD districts include recreational facilities (swimming, ice skating, tennis, picnic areas) and residential uses. Uses permitted by special permits include restaurants, marinas, ferries and cultural uses (theater, bandshells and museums) (from Zoning Code § 230-31). The Half Moon Bay condominium development (discussed further in Section 3.5) is located there.

Parks Recreation and Education (PRE) districts were created in 1988 to “preserve natural resources, scenic beauty and other land and community resources whose retention is necessary for the continued maintenance of the quality of the environment. It is

designed to provide for public parks; recreational activities including all types of athletic activities; schools and other educational facilities; nature preserves; bird and wildlife sanctuaries; and similar uses." (From Zoning Code § 230-20. [Added 9-6-1988 by L.L. No. 6-1988]). Several natural areas, including the Jane E. Lytle Arboretum, Kaplan's Pond and the Village owned land in the Croton Gorge have been recently designated PRE districts.

Multiple Development Use (MDU) districts were added in 1982 to accomplish the following:

- a. Facilitate development consistent with the Comprehensive Master Plan of the village
- b. Achieve variety and flexibility in land development
- c. Encourage efficiency in the use of land
- d. Preserve features of unusual historic or scenic value.
- e. Permit development of larger tracts of land as a unit.

Industrial and Rail Transportation Uses. Industrial and rail transportation uses are entirely located along the Hudson River waterfront. The Croton Harmon railroad station, located just west of Route 9 and adjacent to Croton Point Park, is one of the key regional stations on the Metro North commuter railroad and Amtrak's New York State service. The entire railroad facility occupies approximately 100 acres, dominating the central section of the waterfront with numerous switching yards, as well as the Harmon rail yards where Metro North trains are sent for repair. Metro Enviro, a solid waste transfer station, and the Goodyear tire distribution center, are also located in this area.

Parks/Open Space. Croton-on-Hudson's network of parks, open space (including Hudson National Golf Course), nature preserves and trails, comprises approximately 30 percent of the land area of the Village. A detailed description of the parks and their facilities is provided in Section 3.2(e). Many of these open space areas are located within residentially-zoned districts.

3.4 Population and Demographics

a. Population Trends, 1970 - 2000

The 2000 Census shows Croton-on-Hudson's population at an all-time high of 7,606 persons. The population has remained close to 7,000 persons since 1970, although the Village experienced an 8.4 percent decrease in the 1970s. In the past two decades, the population has grown steadily, recovering and surpassing its previous high of 7,523 persons in 1970. Even with this increase, the population growth has fallen far short of the 1977 Master Plan's expectations, which projected a population of 15,000 in 2000.

Croton-on-Hudson's population growth has been proportionately greater than that of Town of Cortlandt and Westchester County. Within the last decade, the Town of Cortlandt's population grew by 3 percent and Westchester County's population by 5.6 percent. Many factors influence the growth rate, including the rate of migration to the Village, an increase in housing starts, and the birth rate.

b. Age and School Population

In 2000, the Village's median age was 40 years, an increase from the 1990 median age of 37.3 years. This increase is consistent with regional and national trends, with the aging of the "baby boom" generation. As in many suburban municipalities, Croton-on-Hudson's population is concentrated in the 25 to 54 age groups, with the greatest growth over the past decade occurring in the 35 to 44 and 45 to 54 age brackets.

The share of the population over the age of 65 decreased between 1990 and 2000, from 14.6% to 13.6%. However, as the 35 to 54 age groups shift to a higher age bracket in the coming decades, the 65+ age group can be expected to gain an increasing share of the population. In many municipalities, the shift in age distribution across the population has led to a re-examination of priorities, as issues such as affordable housing for seniors have become more pressing.

Concurrent with the increase in median age, the Village has participated in the county and regional "echo boom" trend, with an increase in the birth rate in the Village between 1980 and 2000.

Table 3.7: Croton-on-Hudson Population Fluctuations, 1970-2000

Year	Population	Percent Change
1970	7,523	
1980	6,889	-8.4
1990	7,018	1.9
2000	7,606	8.4

Source: U.S. Census; Westchester County Department of Planning

Table 3.8: Population Growth, 1990 - 2000

	Total Population		Percent Change
	1990	2000	
Croton-on Hudson	7,018	7,606	8.4
Town of Cortlandt	37,357	38,467	3.0
Westchester Cty.	874,866	923,459	5.6

Source: U.S. Census; Westchester County Department of Planning

Table 3.9: Age Comparison, 1990 - 2000

	1990	2000	Change in Share
	Percent Share	Percent Share	
under 5	7.1	7.8	0.7
5 to 9	5.1	7.9	2.8
10 to 14	6.1	6.5	0.4
15 to 19	5.8	4.9	-0.9
20 to 24	5.7	3.1	-2.6
25 to 34	15.8	10	-5.8
35 to 44	17.5	20	2.5
45 to 54	12.9	16.6	3.8
55 to 59	4.4	5.7	1.3
60 to 64	5.1	3.8	-1.3
65 to 74	7.6	6.4	-1.2
75 to 84	5.4	4.8	-0.6
85 +	1.6	2.4	0.8
Median Age	37.3	40	

Source: U.S. Census, 1990 STF3A and 2000 data

This increase, combined with a high housing turnover rate and the construction of new homes in the Village, has resulted in an increase in the school-age population in the Village.² Between 1990 and 2000, the share of the population under 18 increased by from 22% to 26%; enrollment in the Croton-Harmon school district increased during this time as well by 32%. According to the Croton-Harmon Union Free School District, increased enrollment in the school district is expected to continue over the next six years with a peak district-wide enrollment projected for 2006.

Table 3.10: Croton-Harmon Union Free School District Enrollment Projections, K – 12

<i>Year</i>	<i>Enrollment</i>	<i>Percent Change</i>
1990	1039	-
1997	1248	20.1
2000 (projected)	1374	10.1
2007 (projected)	1533	11.6

Source: Croton-Harmon UFSD Comprehensive Long Range Planning Study, April 1998

Table 3.11: Birthrate per Thousand Residents, 1980 - 1996

	<i>1980</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>1996</i>
<i>Croton-on-Hudson</i>	12.19	13.39	15.70
<i>Cortlandt</i>	7.45	9.32	9.77
<i>Westchester County</i>	11.29	15.13	14.21

Source: Croton-Harmon UFSD, Comprehensive Long Range Planning Study, April 1998, using New York State Dept. of Health data

² The Croton-Harmon UFSD estimates that the district, which encompasses 95% of the Village, had a housing turnover rate in 1997 of 3.6%. The majority of home buyers (approximately 72%) in the Croton-Harmon UFSD have children under the age of 18, compared to approximately 52% of sellers in the district, resulting in a growing number of children in the district. Source: Croton-Harmon UFSD, Comprehensive Long Range Planning Study, April 1998, based on *Experian Property Data Research* and *The Western Suffolk BOCES Planning Team Survey of New District Residents*.

c. Race and Ethnicity

As of the 2000 decennial census, 93% of Village residents were Caucasian. Asians and African-Americans each comprised 2% of the population, and Native Americans and other ethnicities comprise 3%. These proportions are relatively unchanged from the 1990 census, although the Caucasian population decreased slightly (-1.5%). The most significant change has been in the growth of the Village's Hispanic population, which more than doubled over the past 10 years and now constitutes 7% of the population.³

d. Households

According to the 2000 decennial census, Croton-on-Hudson has 2,798 households, an increase of 8.6% from 1990. The average household size increased from 2.5 to 2.65 during this time and the average family size grew from 3.06 to 3.11.⁴

Households are subdivided into family and non-family households. In Croton-on-Hudson, families comprise the majority of household types, constituting 73.3% of households. However, the share of families as a proportion of total households decreased slightly over the last ten years by approximately 1.7%. This decrease is consistent with regional and national trends, in which decreasing rates of marriage and increasing divorce rates have contributed to a growth in non-family households.

Table 3.13: Croton-on-Hudson Households and Families, 1990 - 2000

	1990	2000	Change
Total Households	2,577	2,798	8.6%
Families	1,933	2,052	119
Share of Total Households	75%	73.3%	-1.7%
Non-Family Households	644	746	102
Share of Total Households	25%	26.7%	1.7%
Average Household Size	2.5	2.65	0.15
Average Family Size	3.06	3.11	0.05

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000 data

Table 3.12: Race and Ethnicity, 1990 – 2000

	1990	2000	Percent Change
	Percent Share	Percent Share	Change in Share
Caucasian	94.5	93.1	-1.4
African-American	1.9	1.9	0.0
Asian, Pacific Islander	2.5	2.1	-0.4
Hispanic Origin	3.7	7	3.3
Native American	0.2	0.3	0.1
Other/More than One Race	1.1	4.3	3.2

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, 1990 and 2000 data

³ Residents of Hispanic origin may be of any race

⁴ According to the US Census Bureau, a **household** is defined as "all persons who occupy a housing unit," while a **family** is defined as "a group of two people or more (one of whom is the householder) related by birth, marriage, or adoption and residing together." The household classification contains both the family and non-family subgroups.

According to the 2000 Census, 85% of Croton-on-Hudson families are headed by married couples, and 15% by single householders. Most single householder families are headed by women. More than half of all families have children under the age of 18.

Among the non-family households, 83.3% have a single occupant; of those householders living alone, 35% are over the age of 65.

e. Education, Income and Employment

Croton-on-Hudson's rate of educational attainment is very high. In 1990, approximately 88% of Village residents 25 years and older had obtained a high school diploma. By comparison, Westchester County's overall rate was 80% in 1990.⁵

Median household and family income has been increasing in Croton-on-Hudson as well and has been consistently above the Westchester County medians. In 1989, the median family income in Croton-on-Hudson was \$74,472 and the median household income was \$65,031.⁶ Two-thirds of Croton-on-Hudson households (65%) had incomes of \$50,000 and up, with the majority within the \$50,000 to \$100,000 range. By comparison, Westchester County's 1989 median incomes were \$58,862 for families and \$48,405 for households. In 1996, Croton-on-Hudson's median household income levels were estimated to have increased to \$83,108, \$21,000 more than Westchester County's median household income of \$61,861.⁷

According to 1990 US Census data, approximately 1.6% of Croton-on-Hudson residents lived in poverty. Of these residents, 75% were female and 25% were male. Among Croton-on-Hudson's senior population, 45% of householders age 65 years and older had annual incomes below \$25,000, compared to 49% of Westchester County overall.⁸

The rate of participation in the labor force increased for Croton-on-Hudson between 1980 and 1990. In 1980, 65% of the Village's population over 16 was employed or actively seeking employment. By 1990, the total participation rate had increased to 70.5%. The proportion of women participating in the labor force increased as well during this decade, from 53% in 1980 to almost 61% in 1990.

Table 3.14: Types of Households, 2000

Family Households:	
Married-Couple Families	1748 (85.2%)
Female-Householder Families	229 (11.2%)
Male Householder Families	75 (3.6%)
Families With Own Children under 18	1,082 (52.7%)
Non-Family Households:	
Living Alone	622 (83.3%)
65 and Over	215 (34.6%)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000 data. Note: number in parentheses denotes percent of total family and non-family households from Table 3.13a

⁵ Source: U.S. Census Bureau data, 1990 and Westchester County Department of Planning

⁶ Family income is typically higher than household income due to the presence of dual incomes and the generally more stable finances of families.

⁷ Source: Westchester County Department of Planning

⁸ Source: Westchester County Department of Planning

3.5 *Housing Development and Trends*

a. *Residential Development Patterns*

The diversity and character of Croton-on-Hudson's housing stock were characterized as assets by many Village residents in their survey responses. The range of housing types and historic resonance of many homes lend an eclectic sensibility to the Village's residential areas and contribute to the quaint character of the Village.

Pre-1977 Housing Development

Most of Croton-on-Hudson's housing stock was built before 1969, with the majority built before 1939. When the original Croton Master Plan was written in 1977, most of the residentially-zoned land to the east, west and south of the Upper Village had already been developed. Most of these older residential neighborhoods are in higher-density zoning districts permitting development on lots ranging from 5,000 to 25,000 square feet and contained the largest population concentrations in the Village. As of 1977, only 15% of the Village's population was estimated to live in the northern parts of the Village.

Two of the oldest residential neighborhoods were originally separate communities: Mt. Airy and Harmon. Harmon, initially established in the early 20th century as an enclave for artists and writers, became home to railroad workers and commuters to New York City in the 1920s due to its proximity to the railroad station and railroad yards. A portion of Harmon is known as the "flats" due to the regular street grid and the flat topography, in contrast with the more winding street layout and varying topography of other parts of the Village. Harmon was largely built out by the late 1940s in the post-World War II housing boom.

Mount Airy, which began as a Quaker enclave, was by the early 1900s a summer colony that attracted many Greenwich Village artists and writers. The area continued to attract writers and artists although it is now mostly populated by professionals. To the east of Mount Airy Road is the informally-named Trails section of Croton-on-Hudson, situated roughly between Mount Airy Road and Batten Road northeast of Grand Street. The homes in the area were originally built in the 1920s as summer cottages and bungalows but are now year-round residences, set on small lots in this wooded, hilly section of the Village. A network of narrow, winding roads, with street names such as Sunset Trail, Park Trail and Brook Trail, runs through the area and gives the area its name.



Fieldstone house on Old Post Road



Trails section of Mount Airy neighborhood

Housing Development, 1980 - 2000

In the past 20 years, new housing has been developed in the northern part of the Village (north of the Upper Village) and along the Hudson waterfront north of Croton Point Park. All of the subdivisions in the northern part of the Village have been single-family homes while along the waterfront the Half Moon Bay condominiums were designed as a cluster subdivision. Over 600 permits for residential units were issued in the Village between 1980 and 1999, primarily for single-family residential homes, increasing the number of units and allowing the Village to expand in population.⁹ The subdivisions completed during this time period are described below:

- ***Georgia Lane subdivision.*** 30 single-family homes constructed - in the early 1980s in the northeast portion of the Village, along Georgia Lane off Mount Airy Road.
- ***Beekman Avenue/"The Draw".*** The Draw section of the Village was described in the 1977 Master Plan as the area between Old Post Road and Grand Street, Wells Avenue and Riverside Avenue. It was subdivided in the mid-1980s into 65 parcels, the majority of which were developed for residential purposes.
- ***Half Moon Bay.*** Half Moon Bay is a condominium development along the Hudson River north of Croton Point Park. Development has been divided into five phases. Phases 1 and 2, which added 120 units, were completed in the late 1980s. Phases 3, 4, and 5 were approved in 1999 and are slated to begin construction. The last three phases will add 156 additional units to the subdivision for a total of 276 units.
- ***River Landing Development.*** River Landing development was constructed in the early 1990s, on 70 acres of land between Upper North Highland Avenue and Mount Airy Road. Thirty-two single-family homes were constructed.
- ***Arrowcrest Development.*** The Arrowcrest Development, situated on land adjacent to the Hudson National Golf Club off Albany Post Road, was subdivided in the mid-1990s to create 35 single-family homes on one- to three-acre lots. The development also includes a conservation easement.
- ***West Wind.*** West Wind is the most recent subdivision in Croton-on-Hudson. Situated in the northwest portion of the Village, off Scenic Drive and Albany Post Road, the property was subdivided in the mid-1990s to build 36 single-family



Half Moon Bay condominiums



River Landing Development



Arrowcrest Development

⁹ Source: Croton-Harmon School District, Long-Range Planning Report, January 1999

homes. The subdivision also includes open space under a conservation easement.

b. Housing Trends

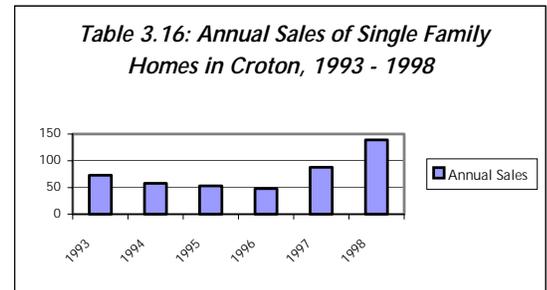
Detached single-family, owner-occupied homes have been the dominant housing type in Croton-on-Hudson. The 1977 Croton Master Plan estimated that there were 2,171 housing units, with an 80/20 ratio of single-family to multi-family units. This proportion of single- to multi-family units has been relatively stable: in 1990, the Village had 2,738 housing units, of which the majority (77%, or 2,587) were owner-occupied, single-family units. In 1990, the Village's vacancy rate was 5.5%, slightly higher than Westchester County's rate of 4.5%. Since 1990, 177 permits have been issued for residential units, 93% of which have been for single-family homes.

The value and cost of single-family homes have risen in the past decade. In 1990, the median value for owner-occupied units was \$226,600, and the median rent was \$796. By 1998, the median value of homes had increased to \$255,000. Both the median sale price and the number of homes sold increased between 1993 and 1999. Sales price increased by 29%, from \$209,850 in 1993 to \$269,625 in 1999. The number of annual sales increased by over 90% between 1993 and 1998, with the greatest number of sales occurring in 1997 and 1998.

The subdivisions completed in the last twenty years have provided needed additional housing units in the Village. However, with the exception of Half Moon Bay, these developments have provided only single-family homes best suited for families. At the same time, the demand for appropriately-sized, affordable housing for aging Croton-on-Hudson residents, young couples without children, and Village personnel is growing. The Village has worked with the Croton Housing Network to provide housing to meet these needs throughout the Village. To date, housing units, both rental units and individually owned homes, have been created on Bank Street, Brook Street, at Mount Airy Woods, in the Westwind Subdivision and at the Half Moon Bay condominium development. The Village should examine ways to encourage lower cost, smaller-sized single or multi-family dwellings in order to maintain the demographic diversity of the Village.



Source: Westchester County Department of Planning



Source: Westchester County Department of Planning

3.6 Transportation and Traffic Circulation

a. Transportation Networks

Highways and Roads

The functional classification of a municipality's roadways helps determine its traffic circulation patterns and the appropriate traffic measures in problem areas. Roads in a municipality are typically classified as arterials, collectors and local roads. A functional classification of Croton-on-Hudson's roadways has been developed for this Plan based on Westchester County road system and a review of the road network in Croton-on-Hudson, as described below and shown in Figure 3.6: Roadway Classification.

Croton-on-Hudson's roadways are classified as follows:

Limited Access Highways. U.S. Route 9 is the only limited access highway in Croton-on-Hudson. It passes through the Village along its western perimeter, forming a north-south regional travel corridor through Westchester County. Unlike other sections of Westchester County, this area is not served by a major interstate highway such as I-684 or I-287.

Arterials are designed to move traffic within the municipality and between the municipality and surrounding communities, as well as provide access to adjacent properties. Two arterials, both of which are state highways, traverse Croton-on-Hudson:

1. State Route 9A (the original New York Albany Post Road). Route 9A parallels Route 9 at the north end of the Village. At Old Post Road it becomes North Riverside Avenue and then South Riverside Avenue south of Brook Street.
2. State Route 129 (Maple and Grand Streets). Route 129 runs east-west through the Village, connecting with Routes 9 and 9A at the western end of the Village and running east through Cortlandt and Yorktown.

Collectors are roads that act as connecting links in the street system, carrying traffic from local streets to arterials. Intersections between arterials and collectors are often signalized whereas intersections between collectors and local streets are controlled by stop signs. The following roads are classified as collectors:

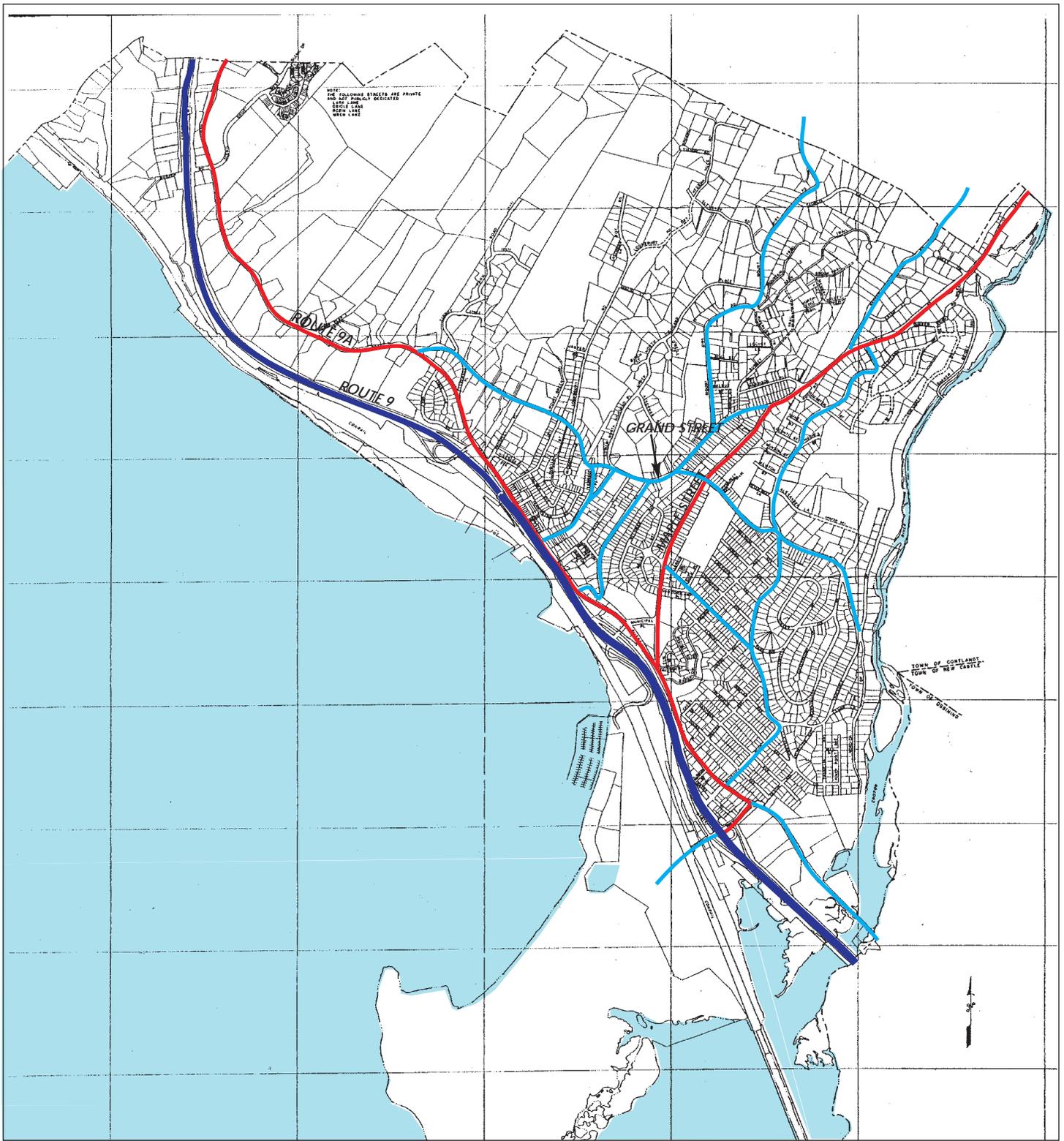
1. Mount Airy Road
2. Old Post Road North and South
3. Brook Street
4. Terrace Place
5. Grand Street between South Riverside Avenue and Maple Street
6. Batten Road



Intersection of Routes 9A and 129



Brook Street funnels traffic to and from Route 9A



Village of Croton-On-Hudson, NY

Figure 3.6. Roadway Classification

-  Limited Access Highway
-  Arterials
-  Collectors

7. Cleveland Drive between Benedict Boulevard and Jacoby Street
8. Jacoby Street
9. Benedict Boulevard between South Riverside Avenue and Cleveland Drive
10. Olcott Avenue
11. South Riverside Avenue, south of Croton Point Avenue (County Road 305)
12. Croton Point Avenue (County Road 74)

Local Streets are roads which provide direct access to the properties along them. All streets in the Village that are not classified as collectors or arterials are local streets. Croton-on-Hudson's local roads vary in width and condition but many are narrow and winding, retaining the character of country roads.

Traffic circulation in the Village is generally good; however, residents attending the public workshops and comments in the resident survey indicated several problem areas. Residents identified heavy traffic and some delays at two intersections: Croton Point Avenue and Route 9A, with train-related traffic, and Municipal Place/Maple Street. They also noted noise and speeding traffic along Route 9A, which serves as the main street through the North Riverside and Harmon/South Riverside commercial centers, and Route 129, which runs along the eastern boundary of the Upper Village. These commercial centers accommodate pedestrians and local drivers as well as the higher speed through traffic, requiring enforcement of speed limits and the possible implementation of additional traffic calming and pedestrian safety measures.

Rail Access

The Croton-Harmon railroad station at the south end of the Village is a regional rail transportation center, providing local commuter service to New York City via Metro North, and service to points north including Albany, Buffalo, Toronto, Montreal, and Chicago via Amtrak. Over 100 Metro-North trains stop daily at the Croton-Harmon Station en route to or returning from Midtown Manhattan's Grand Central Station. The commute between Croton-Harmon and Grand Central ranges from 45 to 70 minutes depending on the time of day.

The Croton-Harmon Railroad Station is the most heavily used station of all three Metro-North railroad lines. An estimated 2,860 commuters board trains at Croton-Harmon during peak AM commuting hours en route to Grand Central Station; almost 7,100 passengers board or disembark at Croton-Harmon each day.¹⁰ The majority of commuters are from Westchester municipalities (including Croton-on-Hudson, Ossining, Cortlandt Manor and



Local roads, Mount Airy neighborhood



Commuter parking, Croton-Harmon Railroad Station

¹⁰ Based on Metro-North Railroad's estimated 2000 ridership figures

Yorktown Heights) although commuters from Putnam, Dutchess and Orange Counties use the station as well.

The Village provides a 2,000 vehicle commuter parking facility at the station, with 1,600 spaces reserved for monthly permit holders and 400 daily spaces. The majority (70%) of parking permit holders live outside of the Village.

Bus Service

The Westchester County Bee Line provides the following bus service in the Village:

- Route 14 (Peekskill-Ossining-White Plains) provides local daily service in Croton-on-Hudson stopping at South Riverside Avenue and Croton Point Avenue
- Route 10 (Croton Commuter) provides bus to rail service via Grand Street to the Croton-Harmon train station, Monday through Friday during peak AM and PM commuting hours
- Route 11 (White Plains-Ossining-Croton) provides service to the Croton-Harmon Station from municipalities south of Croton, Monday through Friday during peak AM and PM commuting hours.

The Bee-Line routes provide access to surrounding municipalities and the train station. However, residents have noted that the routes are limited for those who depend on public transportation for mobility (see Figure 3.7: Public Transportation Routes).

b. Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation

Croton-on-Hudson's small town character and natural beauty make walking and bicycling attractive options for travel and recreation within the Village. Walking trips are convenient for traveling short (1/4 to 1/2 mile) distances and both walking and bicycling can serve as viable alternatives to local auto travel.

There are sidewalks within the Village's four commercial centers and in some of the residential neighborhoods. However, pedestrian links between residential neighborhoods and commercial centers are limited, making pedestrian travel between neighborhoods and to commercial areas difficult. In the resident survey and public workshops conducted for this Plan, many residents cited the condition and lack of sidewalks as a problem within the Village, raising as particular concerns safety and accessibility. Residents also cited the need to improve the demarcation of crosswalks, especially in commercial areas.

Designation of bicycle paths in park areas and the installation of bike racks at the Croton Station would encourage bicycling as an alternate means of local travel.



Sidewalk condition, Upper Village



Village of Croton-On-Hudson, NY

Figure 3.7. Public Transportation Routes

-  Metro-North Rail Line
-  Bee-Line Bus Routes



3.7 Community Services and Utilities

a. Police

The Croton-on-Hudson Police Station is located in the Stanley H. Kellerhouse Municipal Building, at One Van Wyck Street. The Village's police force consists of 21 full-time officers, including two detectives, as well as two parking enforcement officers, five crossing guards and two dispatchers. The full-time force is supplemented by the volunteer Auxiliary Police, who assist the Police Department with crowd and traffic control at special events.

The Department has a five-officer Dive Team and a six-officer Emergency Response Team as well as a Youth Officer who is available to work with youths in the community. Programs sponsored by the Police Department include DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) and a "Dark House List," designed to protect vacant homes from burglary.

At all times, the Police Department has two officers patrolling Croton-on-Hudson by car and one available for dispatching at headquarters. Emergency response time throughout the Village is approximately three minutes. Patrol cars are equipped with automated electronic defibrillators, and full first aid kits and all officers are trained in C.P.R. and first aid. By 2002, laptop computers will be installed in all patrol cars with a link to headquarters so that police reports can be filed on-site and downloaded directly into the station computer.

b. Fire-Fighting and Emergency Medical Services

Croton-on-Hudson's Fire Department is a volunteer organization that provides fire-fighting and emergency medical response services to the Village. The approximate emergency response time to all points in the Village is five minutes. The Department has three fire stations and five companies, and approximately 220 volunteers, including fire fighters and emergency medical technicians. The three fire-fighting stations, located throughout the Village, are:

- Harmon Engine Company, located at Benedict Boulevard and Wayne Street. The reconstruction of the station was completed in the spring of 2002.
- Grand Street Firehouse, located on Grand Street in the Upper Village. The original building, which is over 100 years old, is being expanded to accommodate a ladder truck.
- Washington Firehouse, located on North Riverside Avenue at High Street.

Village residents in need of medical care can be brought to one of the following four medical centers, depending on the nature of the care needed:

- Phelps Memorial Hospital Center, in Sleepy Hollow, NY (7 miles)
- Hudson Valley Hospital Center, in Peekskill, NY (6 miles)
- Northern Westchester Medical Center, in Mount Kisco, NY (8 miles)
- Westchester Medical Center in Valhalla, NY (11 miles)

c. *Religious Institutions*

There are six places of worship in Croton-on-Hudson:

1. St Augustine's Church (Episcopalian)
2. Temple Israel of North Westchester
3. Our Savior Evangelical Lutheran Church
4. Asbury United Methodist Church
5. Chapel of The Good Shepherd (Roman Catholic)
6. Holy Name of Mary Church (Roman Catholic)

d. *Educational Facilities*

The Village of Croton-on-Hudson is served by two school districts: the Croton-Harmon Union Free School District and the Hendrick Hudson School District. The Croton-Harmon District encompasses most of Croton-on-Hudson as well as parts of Cortlandt and Yorktown. The northern-most portion of Croton-on-Hudson is served by the Hendrick Hudson School District.

Croton-Harmon Union Free School District (UFSD)

The Croton-Harmon UFSD covers approximately 95 percent of the land area of the Village of Croton-on-Hudson, as well as portions of the towns of Yorktown and Cortlandt. The District has three schools, all located in Croton-on-Hudson: Carrie E. Tompkins Elementary School, Pierre Van Cortlandt Middle School, and Croton-Harmon High School, over 100 teachers and serves approximately 1,350 students, as of 2002. Approximately 75% of its student body lives in Croton-on-Hudson.

Table 3.17: Enrollment in Croton-Harmon UFSD Schools

<i>Public Schools</i>	<i>Grades</i>	<i>Enrollment 1990 - 2000</i>	<i>Capacity</i>	<i>Percent of Capacity</i>
Carrie E. Tompkins Elementary School	K-5	716	602	119%
Pierre Van Cortlandt Middle School	6-8	278	292	95%
Croton-Harmon High School	9-12	357	424	84%

Source: Croton-Harmon UFSD Long Range Planning Study, April 2000 Update

The District's student population has been growing steadily. According to a planning study by the Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), District enrollment will increase by approximately 230 students – 17 percent – in the coming years. The demographics wave will crest at different times in the three District schools: Carrie E. Tompkins' enrollment is expected to peak in 2002 at 753, Pierre Van Cortlandt's in 2005 at 373, and Croton-Harmon High School in 2009 at 504.

Based on class-size recommendations issued by BOCES, Carrie E. Tompkins Elementary School will need eight to ten additional classrooms to accommodate this increase, in addition to increased space for administrative services. The elementary school is already operating above capacity; the school uses hallways, a stage, and a prefab annex for classroom space. Pierre Van Cortlandt Middle School and Croton-Harmon High School have more available capacity. However, according to BOCES, Pierre Van Cortlandt Middle School is expected to need at least three additional classrooms, as well as enhancements to its cafeteria, athletic, and music facilities, while Croton-Harmon High School will need four new classrooms.

A total of 155 students from within the District, or 10 percent of the total, attended non-public schools in 1999-2000. The percentage attending non-public schools has varied between 8 and 11 percent over the last decade.

Hendrick Hudson School District (HHSD)

The northern-most tip of Croton-on-Hudson is served by the Hendrick Hudson School District. The HHSD has almost 2,800 students, from the municipalities of Montrose, Verplank and Buchanan as well as parts of the City of Peekskill and Cortlandt Manor. As of the 2000-2001 school year, only 85 students, or 3 percent of HHSD's student body, lived in Croton-on-Hudson. A total of 152 students in the HHSD, or 5.4 percent, attend non-public schools.

Table 3.18: Enrollment in Hendrick Hudson School District

<i>Public School</i>	<i>Grades</i>	<i>Enrollment 1999-2000</i>	<i>Capacity</i>	<i>% of Capacity</i>
Buchanan-Verplank Elementary School	K-5	449	552	81
Frank G. Lindsay Elementary School	K-5	556	648	86
Furnace Woods Elementary School	K-5	371	480	77
Blue Mountain Middle School	6-8	673	984	68
Hendrik Hudson High School	9-12	729	900	81

Source: Hendrick-Hudson School District

The HHSD student population is beginning to stabilize after a period of growth in the early 1990s. The increase in population will reach the high school by 2005, when it is expected to grow to approximately 920 students. To accommodate the increase in population, the district undertook several school expansions: Blue Mountain Middle School completed an expansion project in early 2001 and the construction of additional classrooms and science labs is expected to begin at the high school in 2002.

e. Cultural Resources and Programs

Historic Resources

The Village has several properties which have been listed on the National and Westchester County registers of historic properties.

Van Cortlandt Manor. A National Historic Landmark, the Van Cortlandt Manor is situated at the southern end of the Village, just east of South Riverside Avenue along the Croton River. The Manor was developed in the 18th century on lands owned by the Van Cortlandt family, a prominent merchant and political family who played a significant role in the development of colonial New York. The Manor buildings include the stone manor house, an 18th-century tavern and a reconstructed tenant dwelling. The Manor once encompassed over 2,400 acres but almost all of this land was sold or divided among family heirs over the years. Today, the Manor is open to the public as a working estate and museum, on five acres of land. It is owned and operated by Historic Hudson Valley, an organization devoted to historic preservation in the Hudson River Valley.

Croton North Railroad Station. The Croton North Station, constructed in the 1890s, is located on the west side of Route 9 south of Brook Street. The Station served as the second Metro-North railroad stop in Croton-on-Hudson until the mid-1900s. The site is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

126 Old Post Road North. 126 Old Post Road was built in 1905 in the English Cotswald style. The fieldstone house was built from the same stone used in the construction of the Croton Dam. The house is one of a network of structures that were part of the former Wyndhurst Estate and is listed on Westchester County's inventory of historic places.

Baker House, 35 Old Post Road North. The Baker House was constructed in 1927 of the same material used in the Wyndhurst Estate houses. The house, listed on Westchester County's inventory of historic places, is constructed of the same stone used for the Croton Dam.

Bethel Chapel, Old Post Road South. Built in the late 1700s, the chapel was home to Croton-on-Hudson's Methodist congregation until it moved into the Asbury Church in 1883. The adjoining cemetery contains the graves of several Revolutionary War soldiers and Indians. The Chapel is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Relevant Historic Preservation Programs

Historic River Towns of Westchester (HRTW) is a consortium of 12 municipalities along the east bank of the Hudson River, including Peekskill, Cortlandt, Buchanan, Croton-on-Hudson, Town and Village of Ossining, Briarcliff Manor, Sleepy Hollow, Tarrytown, Irvington, Dobbs Ferry, Hastings-on-Hudson, and Yonkers, as well as Historic Hudson Valley. These communities participate in joint activities (including the popular Hudson Heritage Festival in the fall) to promote the historic and cultural heritage of the area.

As previously discussed in Section 3.2.g, HRTW has worked with the Westchester County Planning Department and Hudson River Valley Greenway since 1996 on a variety of initiatives relating to tourism and economic development, including the preparation of a Greenway Compact Plan. HRTW and New York State Department of State are currently working with Westchester County on a Regional Signage System Study.

Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area. National Heritage Areas are National Park Service designations involving cohesive and important American landscapes with distinctive scenic, historic, and cultural resources. They involve voluntary partnerships among federal, state and local governments rather than land acquisitions and regulation.

Legislation to establish the Hudson River Valley as a National Heritage area was first introduced by Congressman Maurice Hinchey of Saugerties in 1994. An amended version of the

legislation passed in 1996 and was signed by President Clinton in November. At the time, eight other heritage areas were designated.

The legislation defines the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area as all of Albany, Orange, Rockland, Putnam, Ulster and Westchester counties and parts of Rensselaer, Columbia, Greene and Dutchess. It authorizes \$10 million in implementation funding over a 15-year period, as well as \$5 million in program support. It names the Greenway Council and Greenway Conservancy as the Heritage Area Management Entities for the program.

Under the legislation, the Greenway, working with the National Park Service and the counties and communities in the Hudson Valley, is to develop themes relating to such topics as the Revolutionary War, the Hudson River School of Art, the Industrial Revolution and patterns of rural landscape and agriculture. The themes will be linked together in an overall Heritage Area plan designed to encourage tourism, recreation, preservation of community character and linkages of physical and cultural resources.

American Heritage River. The Hudson has the distinction of being an American Heritage River, one of only ten rivers designated by the President in 1999 as part of a program to help communities restore and revitalize waters and waterfronts. The American Heritage Rivers Initiative integrates the economic, environmental, and historic preservation programs and services of federal agencies to benefit communities engaged in efforts to protect their rivers. A full time contact from a federal agency, called a "River Navigator," helps match community needs with available resources from existing programs. The Natural Resources Conservation Service has been chosen as the lead agency for the Hudson River.

f. Community and Cultural Resources

The Croton Council on the Arts, a non-profit group founded in 1976, promotes the arts in Croton-on-Hudson and sponsors events featuring local and visiting artists. The CCoA organizes several annual events, including Photographers of Northern Westchester, the "Local Color" Exhibition and "ArtsJam." The photography exhibit, co-sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Croton-on-Hudson, features works by professional and amateur photographers from Northern Westchester. The "Local Color" show, held each Spring in Ossining, exhibits art work by CCoA members and ArtsJam, also held in the Spring at Senasqua Lodge, is a festival featuring arts exhibitions, music and spoken work performances.

The Croton Chamber of Commerce organizes several community events each year in conjunction with the Village Recreation Department, including Summerfest in June, Winterfest in December, and several holiday programs over the course of the year. Summerfest is held each year on the first Sunday in June. The festival includes a firemen's and community parade, followed by a street fair with food, children's rides and local vendors along the streets of the Upper Village. In December, Winterfest is held in Vassallo Park in the Upper Village, consisting of a tree-lighting ceremony and caroling.

Each December, Villagers are invited to participate in the holiday decorating program in December, in which Village residents and businesses "adopt" and decorate the holiday trees that line the Upper Village; in October, residents can decorate Upper Village windows in the Halloween spirit.

Broadway on Hudson is held each year, where Broadway stars donate time to perform for the Village. The **Hudson Stage Company**, a Cortlandt-based group, gives staged readings at the Croton Free Library. The **Croton Teen Theater** offers a summer theater program for local teens. At the end of the summer, the group performs a musical at the high school. The **Croton Children's Theater** also meets and performs plays each summer at the Croton-Harmon High School.

Musical groups include the **Croton Chorale**, which performs seasonal religious music, and the Hudson Bells, affiliated with the Asbury Methodist Church.

The **Croton-Harmon School District** runs an Adult Education Group, offering classes ranging from exercise to cooking to wine tasting.

Recreation Programs. The Village's Parks and Recreation Department offers a range of programs for adults, teens and children, operated on a seasonal basis (Fall, Winter/Spring and Summer) throughout the year. Adult programs include exercise classes, music and art studies. Some classes are reserved for senior citizens. Youth programs include sports and dance classes and music instruction. In the summer, the Department hosts the Croton Day Camp (for elementary school-aged children), Tiny Tots camp and a variety of activities for teens. The Department also sponsors special events each season such as a Goblin Walk and Spring window painting contests and a Summertime Concert Series each year in Senasqua Park.

Village events and seasonal activities are held in schools and parks around the Village. However, in the resident survey and public workshops, an interest was expressed in seeing a Village community

center developed that would serve as a central location for events, and provide activities for teens and senior citizens.

g. Croton Free Library

The Croton Free Library, located at 171 Cleveland Drive, has a collection of 75,000 books, 5,000 audio-visual materials and 170 subscriptions to periodicals and newspapers. In addition to these holdings, the library has computer terminals to provide internet access and can be accessed on-line by Village residents. The library also participates in an inter-library loan program through the Westchester Library System.

The library organizes and hosts a variety of programs for Village residents from story-telling and music programs for children to theater, staged readings, arts and cooking programs for adults.

Founded in 1938, the library began as a room in the Croton High School and then moved to the second floor of the Municipal Building before moving to its present location in 1965. The library has undergone two expansions since its construction; the first in 1988-89 and the second in 1997, which added a program room.

h. Public Works and Utilities

Water Resources. Although Croton-on-Hudson is situated close to the Croton Aqueduct System and borders the Croton River, it does not tap into the reservoir system for its water. Instead its water supply comes directly from sand and gravel aquifers pumped from three deep wells under the Croton River Basin. Well water provides a very pure source of water because it requires only a minimum amount of treatment and avoids the potential problems with pollution run-off that are associated with surface water from the reservoir system.

The Village's three active wells are located on Route 129 (a fourth well is inactive). The wells can produce up to 1.8 – 2 million gallons of water per day; the average daily water consumption is 1 million gallons per day. The automation of the well pumping system was completed in 2001. Water pumped from the wells is stored in a network of four reservoir tanks located throughout the Village; two tanks in the Mount Airy area, one on Hessian Hills Road and the fourth on the Hudson National Golf Course. The four tanks can hold a total of 2.3 million gallons of water. By tank, the capacity is as follows:



Croton Free Library, 171 Cleveland Drive

1. Upper North Highland:	1,250,000
2. North Highland underground:	400,000
3. Hessian Hill Road:	500,000
4. Hudson National Golf Course:	<u>150,000</u>
	2,300,000 gallons

The installation of this fourth reservoir tank at the golf course in the early 1990s, coupled with a water main extension completed in early 2001, connected neighborhoods in the northern part of the Village – Scenic Ridge, Westwind, and Arrowcrest – to the Village water system. These areas had previously been served by the Town of Cortlandt’s system.

The sloped topography of the Village makes regulation of water pressure very important. The Village has invested in new pressure reducing valves to improve regulation of water pressure, allowing water to be moved quickly from the upper to the lower end of the Village in the event of a fire or other high demand on the water system.

Although the current three-well system serves the Village adequately, if a well were to be taken out of service, the supply to the Village would be significantly reduced. As such, the Water Department has requested funds to install a fourth well, to ensure adequate supply of water if one of three wells is out of service.

Sewer System. The Village utilizes a sanitary sewer system in the most densely populated areas of the Village, and septic system systems in the less dense areas. Most of the Village’s sanitary sewer system was installed during the 1920s and 1930s, connecting already constructed houses to the sewer system. Subdivisions constructed more recently by private developers also have sewer connections, as the Village required private developers to install sanitary sewers. However, houses developed after the 1930s by individual residents in the outlying areas of the Village on single lots were often not connected to the system. These homes are served by private septic systems.

Most of the Village’s sewer lines are between 70 and 80 years old and are beginning to show signs of age. Some lines are cracking and need to be re-lined or replaced. The Village invested \$100,000 in 2000 to rehabilitate several manholes and sewer lines and has focused efforts on sections of the lines that have problems. A proactive effort to reline the sewer lines before the conditions worsen could help preempt further problems.

3.8 Special Planning Areas: Commercial Districts and Hudson River Waterfront

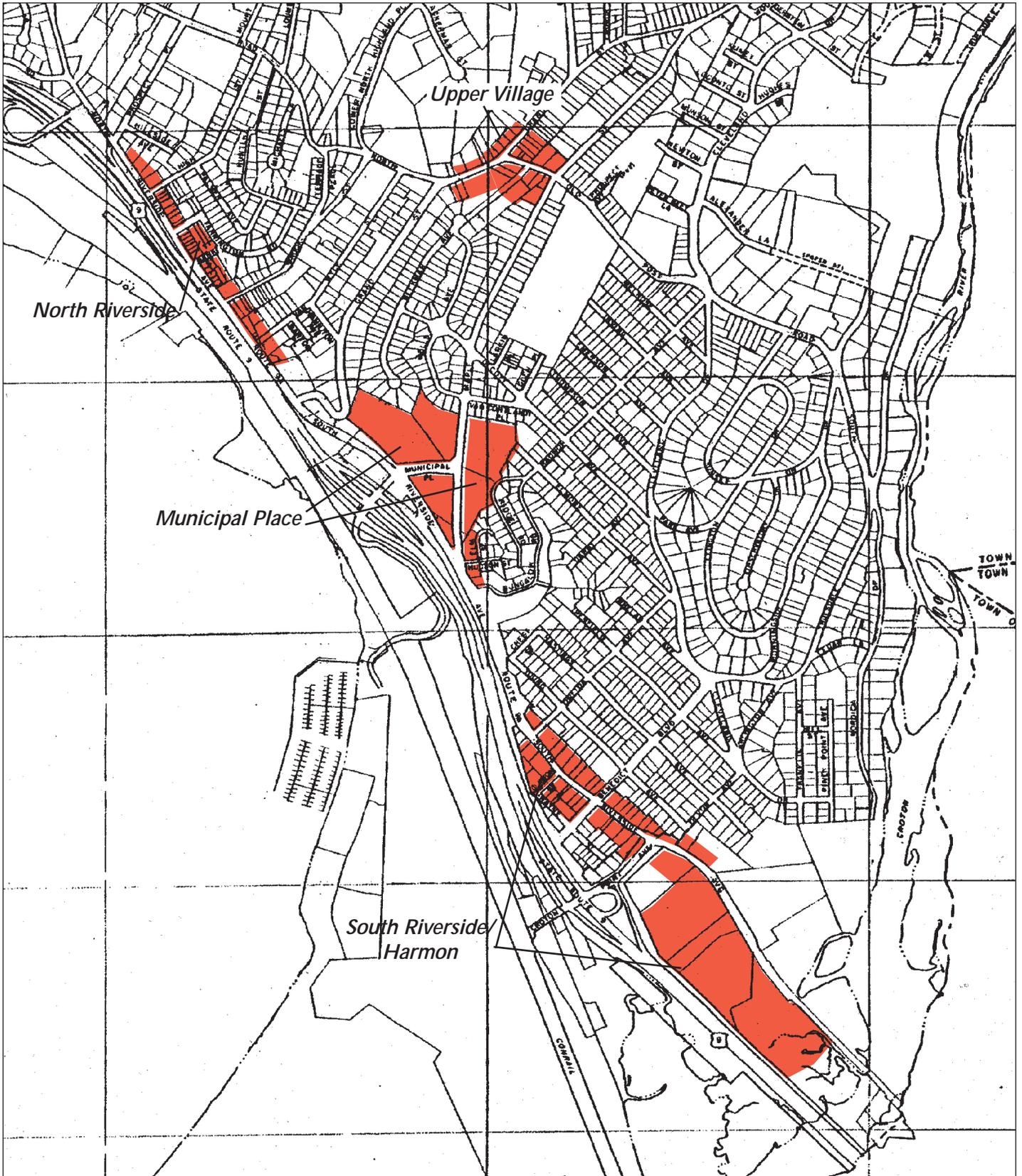
a. Commercial Districts

Due to its historical development as the separate communities of Mt. Airy and Harmon, and the nature of its transportation systems, Croton-on-Hudson has a patchwork of several distinct commercial retail and office areas: the Upper Village, North Riverside, the Municipal Place shopping centers (including the auto dealership, Post Office area, Croton Commons and Van Wyck II shopping plaza), and the South Riverside/Harmon shopping area, which developed around the railroad stop at Harmon (see Figure 3.8). North Riverside was located close to the original Croton North train station, and the Upper Village at the crossroads of Grand Street and Old Post Road.

With the exception of the Upper Village, all of these commercial centers are located along the Route 9/9A corridor. The North End area is the entryway into the Village from the north along both Routes 9 and 9A. North Riverside is linked via Brook Street to the Upper Village. The Municipal Place shopping area is bisected by Maple Street, which runs north to the Upper Village. The Harmon/South Riverside/Harmon shopping area is located at the approach to the train station from Croton Point Avenue, with access to the nearby Harmon residential area.

The customer base for each of these commercial centers is local, drawing shoppers from within the Village rather than from the Northern Westchester region. Croton-on-Hudson has made an effort to prevent sprawling commercial development and to maintain the local orientation of these districts. However, the general consensus in the Village is that the types of establishments need to be diversified to better meet the needs of residents and encourage local shopping, and that higher quality aesthetic standards will help attract shoppers to these areas.

Croton-on-Hudson's commercial centers play a dual role in the Village, as sources of retail and services for residents and as defining "images" of certain areas of the Village. The retail composition of these centers determines whether local demand for shopping and services is being met; at the same time, the appearance of these centers is key to the image of the Village for residents and to visitors. As such, recommendations for improvements to the centers must take both of these roles into account. The function and character of the four commercial centers are described below. Chapter 4.0 presents recommendations for improvements to several of these centers, as zoning district "overlays" for image-defining gateways.



Village of Croton-On-Hudson, NY

Figure 3.8. Commercial Areas



uses, reinforce the role of the Upper Village as a central location and the symbolic “core” of the Village.

Upper Village

In the survey conducted for this Plan, most residents identified the Upper Village as the heart of Croton-on-Hudson. The Upper Village includes frontage along Grand Street, Maple Street and Old Post Road between Van Wyck Street to the west and the intersection of Old Post Road and Maple Streets to the east. In addition to its commercial district, the Upper Village contains two- and multi-family residential districts and low-scale office uses (including the Municipal Building). The mix of uses and building scale contributes to the area’s historic sensibility and quaint character.

The Upper Village commercial district is zoned C-1, for central commercial uses, with two small areas zoned O-1, for Limited Office Use. The district has a FAR of 2.0, which permits a floor area of twice the total square footage of a given lot and reflects the higher density, compact nature of the Upper Village. The small size of the lots in the Upper Village (approximately 1/8th of an acre) limits the permissible size of buildings to its historic scale, typical of its older structures. Some of the commercial building stock consists of former single-family homes. The buildings range in height from one- to three-story buildings, some with a mix of ground floor commercial and residential on the upper floors. Most buildings have a minimal or shallow setback from the sidewalk creating a sense of connection with the street.

The predominant commercial uses are small-scale convenience retail, restaurants and personal service establishments. Customers arrive both by car and on foot. The Upper Village is viewed as the most pedestrian friendly commercial area in Croton-on-Hudson, with sidewalks with brick-like paving, street lights, and manageable street crossings.

Parking is provided by two municipal lots, plus some private non-residential spaces and on-street parking. Shoppers share parking spaces with Upper Village residents and business owners in the district. The lack of convenient parking for shoppers using the Upper Village stores was raised as a concern during the public workshops for this Plan.

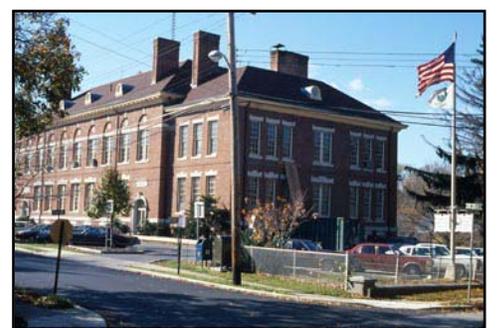
Residents are also drawn to the Upper Village for non-shopping purposes. The Municipal Building, located between the upper ends of Van Wyck and Brook Streets, houses the Village government and administrative offices, and provides space for Village meetings and events. Dobbs Park, situated between Grand and Maple Street east of Old Post Road, hosts recreational and other local events. These public uses, combined with the mix of residential and commercial



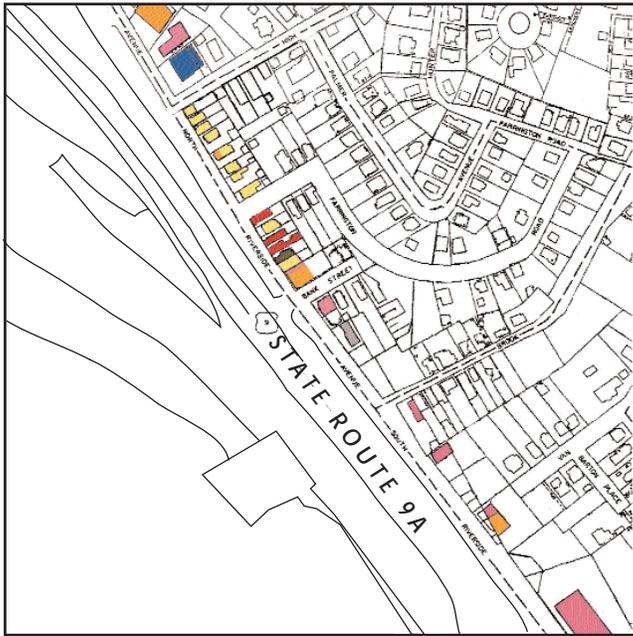
Upper Village, looking east along Grand Street



Mixed-use buildings, Upper Village



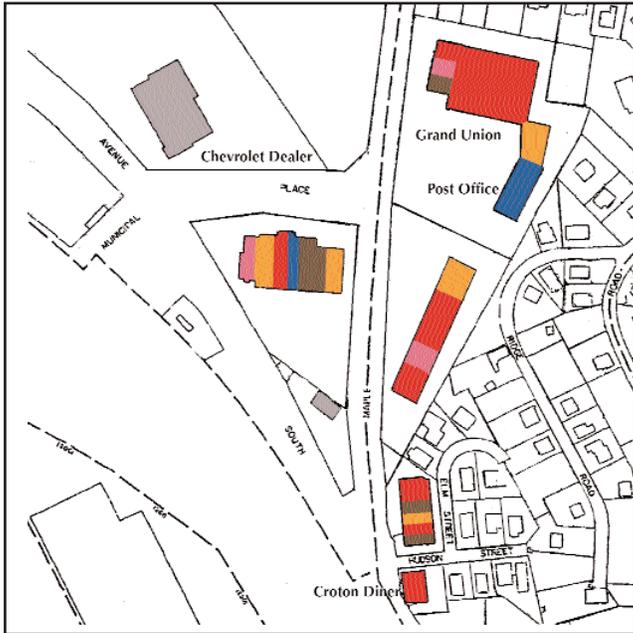
Municipal Building, Upper Village



1. North Riverside



2. Upper Village



3. Croton Commons/Grand Union



4. Harmon

Village of Croton-On-Hudson, NY

Figure 3.9. Commercial Centers: Land Uses



uses, reinforce the role of the Upper Village as a central location and the symbolic “core” of the Village.

North Riverside

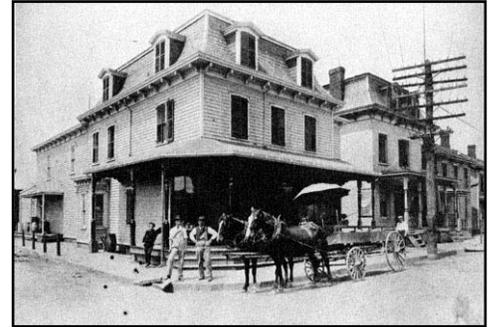
The North Riverside commercial center extends along the east side of North Riverside Avenue/ Route 9A, approximately from Prospect Place to just south of Grand Street. A small O-2 office district interrupts the commercial area just north of Grand Street. The center is bounded on the east by residential neighborhoods (two-family and RA-5 single family) and on the west by US Route 9.

North Riverside is approximately 8.5 acres and is zoned C1, for general commercial uses with a permitted FAR of 2.0. As with the Upper Village, lot sizes are small and buildings are close together. Many of the commercial buildings are former single-family homes. Some buildings contain mixed uses, with ground floor commercial and residential uses above.

The uses in the North Riverside commercial district are a mix of commercial, residential, office, restaurants and personal service establishments. A medical suite is located in the office district north of Grand Street. The Washington Firehouse is located just north of High Street.

As with the Upper Village, North Riverside is accessible by foot and car, although parking is limited to on-street spaces. The district has benefited in recent years from the installation of brick sidewalks, pedestrian-scale streetlights and planters. The orientation and setback of buildings improve the area’s “walkability,” especially north of Bank Street, where buildings are set flush with the sidewalk line and front onto North Riverside Avenue, creating a street wall and enhancing accessibility for pedestrians. South of Bank Street, however, the building orientation is mixed, with some buildings fronting on side streets and more varied setbacks. Uses in this section are more varied as well, with a mix of businesses and services, and there appear to be several vacant lots. Consequently, this part of the North Riverside commercial district is less inviting to pedestrians and appears separated from the rest of the district.

North Riverside plays an important role as a commercial area and as a link to both the Upper Village and the Hudson waterfront. North Riverside provides pedestrian and vehicular access to the Upper Village via Brook Street and Grand Street. The Hudson River is visible from North Riverside and can be accessed on foot via the Brook Street pedestrian bridge.



North Riverside and Brook Street, 1900



North Riverside, pedestrian scale and mixed uses north of Bank Street



North Riverside between Brook and Bank Streets

Municipal Place Shopping Area

The shopping area located along Municipal Place and Maple Street includes the Croton Commons shopping plaza, the Van Wyck II stores, and the shopping plaza along Maple Street that contains the Post Office and several stores. The center is bounded to the north, south and east by single-family residential neighborhoods and to the west by Route 9. The southern tip of the shopping area, where South Riverside Avenue and Maple Street intersect, acts as a gateway leading into the Upper Village from Route 9.

Municipal Place's shopping plazas contain a mix of convenience goods stores and service establishments, including restaurants and take-out places, pharmacies, nail salons, cleaners and other stores. Most commercial space is occupied, although a Grand Union supermarket closed in early 2001. The center also encompasses several stand-alone buildings: an automobile dealership is located on the northwest side of Municipal Place, a gas station at the intersection of South Riverside Avenue and Maple Street, and the Croton Diner just south of Hudson Street. A vacant, undeveloped parcel (the Katz property covering 2.4 acres) is situated adjacent to the automobile dealership.

The complex of shopping plazas along Maple Street are characterized by groups of single-story buildings set back from the street and fronted by surface parking lots. Although there is a pedestrian path on the east side of Maple Street, the layout encourages automobile use, and the lack of safe and attractive pedestrian connections discourages shoppers from walking from one plaza to another.

The vacant Katz property creates an important opportunity to create a focal point for this area. Given the proximity of the post office, restaurants and the mix of retail stores, this site could perhaps be established as a new center for the Village.

South Riverside/Harmon Shopping Area

The South Riverside/Harmon commercial center is situated along the east and west sides of South Riverside Avenue south of Oneida Avenue. The center is bounded on the north and east by residential neighborhoods. To the west is Route 9 and to the south is the Van Cortlandt Manor property, a five-acre historic estate.

The Harmon commercial area includes a mix of smaller-scale shops along South Riverside and a large (30-acre) shopping area south of Croton Point Avenue that includes the "Shop Rite Shopping Center." As with the other shopping areas in the Village, Harmon contains a mix of retail and service establishments. Notable in the area is the



Van Wyck II shopping plaza, on the east side of Maple Street



Croton Commons shopping plaza, on the west side of Maple Street

concentration of auto-related uses: along South Riverside between Oneida Avenue and Croton Point Avenue are eight auto repair shops, car dealerships and gas stations.

Harmon also has numerous personal service establishments, including hair and nail salons, and professional services such as insurance and travel agencies and medical offices. The "Shop Rite" Shopping Center contains a Shop-Rite supermarket and a mix of service establishments such as salons, cleaners and laundromats, and retail establishments.

The location of the Harmon/South Riverside shopping area enhances its retail potential: it is accessible to pedestrians from surrounding neighborhoods and is a gateway to Croton from the Croton-Harmon Railroad Station, via Croton Point Avenue. However, sidewalks need to be improved and extended to increase pedestrian access to the Shopping Center and the nearby train station.

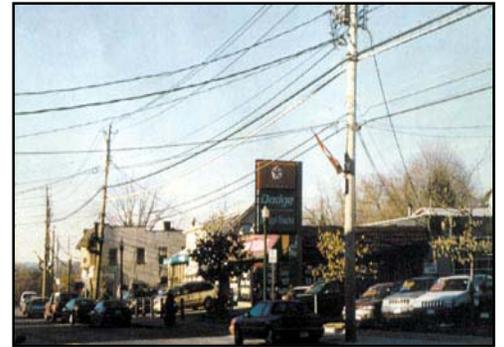
This area also lacks a strong architectural identity. Building form, façade design and site landscaping vary from one property to another. Utility poles and overhead wires on the east side of South Riverside Avenue dominate the landscape. In addition, many of the sidewalks are lined by unscreened surface parking lots.

b. Hudson River Waterfront

History of the Waterfront

The Hudson River, which forms Croton-on-Hudson's western boundary, is one of the defining features of the Village. The River was the impetus for Croton-on-Hudson's earliest settlements and industry, attracting Dutch traders in the 1600s and later supporting several industries, including shipping and brick manufacturing. In 1846, the tracks were laid for the Hudson River railroad line and in the early 1900s, an engine terminal was constructed close to Croton Point. The construction of the railroad reserved a large portion of waterfront property for utility and transportation uses, creating a barrier between the waterfront and the elevated parts of the Village, which were developing for residential and commercial uses. This barrier was reinforced with the construction of north-south US Route 9 in the 1960s and the closing of the Croton North railroad station near the Upper Village.

Today, the railroad continues to have a significant presence adjacent to the waterfront but the other waterfront industries have disappeared. Two parks – Westchester County's Croton Point Park at the southern end of the Village, and the Village's Senasqua Park – draw residents to the waterfront for recreational activities. In addition, several recent projects have created new residential and



Auto dealership, South Riverside Avenue



Shop Rite shopping plaza

recreational uses along the waterfront and reconnected this area with the rest of the Village. These projects include the creation of the Half Moon Bay condominiums, the construction of the Brook Street pedestrian bridge and the purchase by the Village of waterfront property ("Village parcel") in 1996.

Waterfront Land Uses

The Hudson River stretches the length of the Village's western perimeter. Although historically used for mostly industrial and rail-related purposes, the land along the riverfront today is primarily characterized as residential, recreational, and vacant. The major land uses are described as follows:

Croton Point Park, at the south end of the waterfront, is a 504-acre Westchester County park, located on a peninsula that juts out into the Hudson River. Road access is provided by Croton Point Avenue, which connects to Routes 9 and 9A. The park offers a range of amenities including camping, fishing, hiking, picnicking and play areas (see parks and recreation section).

Southeast of the park, at the mouth of the Croton River, is the ***Croton Bay Boat Launch***, which is used primarily for canoes and kayaks and other small boats, as well as fishing and passive recreation.

North of Croton Point Park is the ***Half Moon Bay*** condominium complex, which consists of 120 residential units in 18 buildings, plus a clubhouse, a common building, and pedestrian trails. A public walkway, restricted to Croton-on-Hudson residents, stretches the length of the development along the riverfront. Completion of Half Moon Bay over the next two years will add 156 new units on 14 acres on the eastern portion of the site. Additional pedestrian trails, open to the general public, are planned for the final phases of the project, to connect Croton Point Park to Senasqua Park to the north.

Adjoining Half Moon Bay are ***Senasqua Park, the Croton Sailing School and the Croton Yacht Club***. Senasqua Park is a 4.5-acre Village-owned park providing on-land recreational facilities, boat storage and mooring slips. Croton Sailing School and the Yacht Club are privately-owned businesses on Village-owned land. The Croton Yacht Club includes a modular building, a parking area, and several floating docks with slips for boats. These three sites make up the active recreational core of Croton's Hudson riverfront. Vehicular access to the sites is provided by either an at-grade crossing over the railroad tracks at Brook Street or through the one-lane tunnel at the western end of Municipal Place. Pedestrians can access the park through the tunnel or via a pedestrian overpass at Brook Street.

Village Parcel (Seprieo Property). The Village purchased this property in 1996 with funding from the Open Space Institute and the Lila Acheson and DeWitt Wallace Fund. Of the property's 30 acres, 14.3 are on land, the remaining acres are under water. The property is a narrow strip of land between the Hudson River and the Metro-North railroad tracks, beginning just north of the Croton Yacht Club. The 13.4 acres (both land and water) at the south end of the site have been the focus of recent planning studies for recreational options.

The north end of the Village Parcel, known as the Beaverkill Parcel, is a much narrower, 16.6-acre land parcel (both land and water) consisting of a breakwater, a small protected cove, and a beach area used for passive recreation and to launch small boats. The existing breakwater within this area creates the cove. An agreement between the Village and the Beaverkill Conservancy mandates that the Village must maintain the Beaverkill Parcel as a natural area for passive recreational uses that enhance waterfront access.

Recent Planning Efforts

Greenway Vision Plan

In 1996, the Village appointed a Greenway Committee to evaluate Croton-on-Hudson's role in the development of the Hudson River Valley Greenway. The Hudson River Greenway Act, passed in 1991, established a program for municipalities to develop a network of trails, parks, historic and cultural sites along the Hudson River. Croton-on-Hudson and Ossining submitted a joint application as Model Greenway Communities to receive financial assistance in the planning process.

This planning process began in early 1996 with an inventory of existing conditions along the entire Croton-on-Hudson waterfront and the identification of possible waterfront development scenarios. The Village's consultants, the firm of Imbiano Quigley Landscape Architects, and Allee King Rosen & Fleming (AKRF), prepared the inventory in close consultation with the Greenway Committee as well as with the Recreation Advisory Board, the Conservation Advisory Council, and the Waterfront Advisory Committee.

The result of this study was the ***Greenway Vision Plan***, completed in 1997, which reviewed potential uses and improvements to waterfront lands, and made recommendations concerning land use strategies for specific waterfront areas.

Land use and design recommendations for the waterfront included such elements as: designing the entrance to Half Moon Bay as a two-lane road with an adjacent sidewalk, signage, a boulevard

treatment and trees; buffering adjacent railroad facilities with solid screen and plantings; rehabilitating the "picture tunnel" for pedestrian access; creating a ferry dock and terminal; and restoring Senasqua Park as an active recreational facility. Several development schemes for the Village Parcel were reviewed, including a conceptual site plan for a generic Dutch settlement Village, a railroad museum, or an interpretive center. Mooring of various ships, including the Clearwater and a replica of the Half Moon ship, were considered.

The Greenway Vision Plan was incorporated as part of the Master Plan in 1997. Subsequent waterfront planning efforts have focused on the undeveloped waterfront property (Seprieo site), as described below.

Croton Waterfront Feasibility Study (2000-2001)

The Feasibility Study was prepared to examine potential recreational uses for the currently unused Village property north of the Croton Yacht Club (the former Seprieo property). The first draft of the study was undertaken to identify and evaluate alternative land use scenarios for the study area, and based on the analysis of environmental and socioeconomic issues, develop a preferred Waterfront Development Plan. It initially defined four alternative scenarios for the waterfront study area, described generally as follows:

- Alternative A: Passive Recreation with trails, picnic areas, possibly a visitors center
- Alternative B: Passive Recreation with water dependent uses (i.e., barge restaurant, marina, boat launch)
- Alternative C: Waterfront Recreation with on-land development, including restaurant, cultural center, marina, trails, and picnic area.
- Alternative D: Active sports recreation area with a ballfield, tennis courts, basketball, running track).

The four alternatives were reviewed by the community. New York State Department of State (NYSDOS) also reviewed and provided input and a preferred alternative was developed.

The following guiding principles were prepared for the formulation of the Proposed Waterfront Development Plan:

- Comply with the policies of the Village of Croton-on-Hudson LWRP
- Serve as a model of environmentally sensitive design
- Create a community-based resource

- Expand on and comply with the mandates and land use strategies set forth in the recently adopted Greenway Vision Plan
- Create a commons or gathering space centered on a band shell or gazebo
- Expand and improve parking areas, both paved and unpaved
- Create various recreational areas for all age groups, maintaining open spaces for flexible uses
- Enhance and improve an existing underutilized launch for boats
- Commence the closure of an existing septic system at the CSX building and connect the building's sanitary system to the new public sewer system and connect a new park building, if required, to the new system
- Eliminate an existing septic easement
- Install safety enhancements such as site lighting and continuous fence or barrier between the railroad and the park
- Comply with accessibility guidelines as specified in the Americans with Disabilities Act
- If possible, elevate the roadway to allow for emergency evacuation during flooding events
- Create a continuous waterfront access in the form of a trail or walkway

The final draft of the Croton-on-Hudson Feasibility Study for the Village Waterfront Property, September 2001, describes each of the four alternatives, evaluates the relative advantages and disadvantages of each presents the preferred plan, as follows.

Waterfront Development Feasibility Study, September 2001

The preferred alternative consists of the following key components:

- ***Passive recreation areas:*** to include a picnic area, open lawns, a major flexible open space programmed for seasonal exhibits, outdoor sculpture, court games
- ***Multiple use trails:*** jogging and walking trails to connect to the north cove to the north, and to the county trail system running from Croton Point Park north along the waterfront.
- ***Visitors Center:*** conversion of the small building owned by CSX into a park-related building with Village and park information area, small offices, restroom facilities, snack bar or vending machines, bait shop, and storage of park equipment. A new small park building could be constructed in addition, or in lieu of, the converted CSX owned building

- **A 3,000 square foot bandshell** for cultural/community events
- **Beach/boat launch:** Enhancement of the small existing beach area for a boat launch for small non-motorized watercraft
- **Stone Rip-rap:** retention and enhancement of the existing stone rip-rap structure for shore stabilization.
- **4,000-square foot fenced playground** area with play structure
- Development of an adjacent area for court-type games targeted for the elderly (i.e., horseshoes and bocce).
- **Above-ground stormwater management system,** including a series of natural storm water treatment devices
- **Creation of several small parking areas,** including a main parking area west of the access road, and two smaller parking areas to serve as overflow parking and serve users of the north cove nature trails and fishing areas.

A future development option, not part of the preferred alternative, was also studied for the area between the main parking lot and the water's edge. A restaurant and a small marina are identified as possible uses for this site. The area of this possible development is recommended for a flexible, possibly temporary use such as a sculpture garden, dog run, or wildflower meadow.

Waterfront-Related Projects

Several waterfront related projects are underway that relate to the planned recreational use of the Village parcel. These include:

Half Moon Bay Condominiums Completion

As part of the build-out of the condominium complex, new pedestrian paths open to the public will be created; these will help link waterfront uses along the shoreline from Croton Point Park north to the Village Parcel, as part of a larger county trail system.

Closing of Brook Street Crossing and the Gateway Plan

To improve public safety, the NYS Department of Transportation and the Metro-North Railroad have proposed closing the Brook Street at-grade crossing to vehicular, bike, and pedestrian traffic. Vehicular access to the waterfront would be limited to the Senasqua tunnel (proposals have also been made to limit the Senasqua tunnel in the future to pedestrian and bicycle use) and the access road to Half Moon Bay condominiums.

The Gateway Plan proposes a new north-south connecting road to serve the waterfront, running from the Half Moon Bay condominium access road through the parking areas in Senasqua Park, to the Yacht Club, and the Village waterfront site to the north. This road would improve current substandard roadway conditions by accommodating two-way traffic and widening lanes for bicycle traffic.

Extension of Sewer Line

The sewer system main that serves Senasqua Park has recently been extended to the Yacht Club. This main could be further extended to the new park building and other possible facilities to the north.

3.9 Summary of Planning Issues

The planning issues that emerged from the public participation and research phases of the Comprehensive Plan are described below. The issues cover a range of topics, including natural resources, housing, transportation and commercial development. Underlying these issues is the common interest in preserving Croton-on-Hudson's small-town character and natural resources. The following chapter recommends strategies to address these issues.

<i>Natural Resources, Parks and Open Space</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance and appearance of parks and trails • Preservation of Village's open space character • Accessibility to parks, especially waterfront
<i>Housing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of affordable and age-appropriate housing • Increasing housing costs • Housing maintenance and code enforcement • High property taxes • Regulation of accessory apartments
<i>Transportation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speeding along arterials routes (Routes 9A and 129) • Congestion in commercial areas and around train station • Need for sidewalks and crosswalks • Need for increased parking in commercial areas • Truck circulation and loading • Improved bus transportation services for seniors
<i>Commercial Development</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mix and quality of retail and services • Appearance and maintenance of commercial buildings • Improvements to pedestrian access • Encourage additional specialty stores
<i>Community Facilities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of recreation options • Need for community center for teens and seniors citizens • Absence of arts and cultural center