

# Town of Andes

## Comprehensive Plan

Town of Andes  
Delaware County, NY

Adopted: August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2003

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## **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.2 WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?**

The Comprehensive Plan is a policy document used to guide the growth and development of a community. It should serve as a foundation for future decision-making and consensus building, while also guiding beneficial growth in the Town of Andes. The Comprehensive Plan will help unify common goals for Andes, while providing a resource tool for the local government in developing effective strategies and implementation measures to reach these goals. The comprehensive plan will become a working part of the Town of Andes' development program and should be consulted throughout decision-making processes, as it reflects the expressed ideals and best interest of the public.

The comprehensive plan also provides the foundation for the Town's zoning ordinances. The zoning enabling laws in New York State require zoning regulations "be made in accordance with a comprehensive plan"<sup>1</sup>. In addition to providing a solid policy foundation, a comprehensive plan can also unlock doors to project funding and can also be utilized as a marketing tool to promote community assets of the community.

### **1.3 PLANNING PROCESS**

Since 15 years had passed since the creation of the joint Town and Village of Andes Comprehensive Plan, and since it was evident that the local land use regulations were in need of revision, the Andes Town Board established a committee in 2018 to revise the existing comprehensive plan with representatives from the Planning Board, the Town Board, the agricultural community, local businesses, long-time residents, and relative newcomers.

The first meeting of the Comprehensive Plan Update Committee was held in May of 2018. From that point on, the Committee met monthly to review sections of the existing plan and determine what, if anything, had changed since 2003.

The Committee drafted and mailed out a Community Survey to 1,545 recipients. 395 surveys were returned representing a 25.6% return rate. Responses were compiled into a database for analysis and data incorporated into Section 11 of this document.

The Comprehensive Plan Committee held a public workshop on a draft revised plan document on XXXXXXXX, XX, 2023. The workshop was held at the Town Hall and was attended by XX interested persons. A draft version of the document was made available on the Town website in advance of the workshop.

Forward to Town Board for adoption consideration, public hearing, etc.

## 1.4 GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The formulation of clear and concise goals and objectives is an integral component of the comprehensive planning process, and are combined with specific strategies needed. These strategies represent the long-range decision making policies for the future development of the Town of Andes. Collectively, these statements constitute the core of the Comprehensive Plan.

The goals and objectives can only succeed in providing direction if they reflect the community's vision of the future. These goals and objectives are representative of Andes' desire for logical and environmentally sensitive growth.

## 2.0 REGIONAL SETTING AND CONTEXT

The Town of Andes consists of 112 square miles, located in the Southeastern portion of Delaware County, situated on the western slopes of the Catskill Mountains. Approximately one third of the Town is located within the Catskill Park. The Catskill Park is a mountainous region of public and private lands located within Delaware, Ulster, Green, and Sullivan Counties. The Catskill Forest Preserve is the State land within the Catskill Park, which contains thousands of acres of forest along with meadows, remnants of old farmsteads, trails, lakes, rivers, springs, waterfalls, cliffs, fire towers, and a large variety of wildlife. These lands are constitutionally protected as "forever wild".

As a result of the high quality of water found throughout the Catskill region, and Andes, a large region of the Catskills has been designated as part of the Catskill/Delaware Watershed. The Watershed provides water to New York City via aqueducts and, as a result, certain rules and regulations have been set in place to preserve this resource and protect against potentially adverse impacts.

The major road network consists of New York State Route 28, New York State Route 30, County Route 1, and County Route 2. **Figure 1, Regional Reference Map and Figure 2, "Town Map"**, illustrate Andes' location and its relation to the overall regional setting.

Figure 1: Regional Reference Map

*- Insert full page color print -*

Figure 2: Town Map

*- Insert full page color print -*





### 3.0 HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES

One of Andes' many assets is the visual character created by the preservation of numerous historic and architecturally significant buildings. These resources distinctly reflect a rich local heritage. The community's rural heritage is celebrated through events, gatherings, and fairs in Andes and the surrounding communities. Andes' rich history includes logging, bluestone quarrying, leather tanning, trapping, fishing, tourism, and old railroad lines.

Bluestone was a widely used building material, and can still be seen along Andes' roads. Bluestone quarrying was a dusty dangerous job demanding that the stone be hauled by horse-drawn wagons, and later railroad, to Kingston and other Hudson River ports. From there it was shipped to cities throughout the eastern United States, Cuba, and Europe<sup>49</sup>.

Today, roadside stands and farmers' markets are abundant with fresh honey, apple cider, pumpkins, and maple syrup from the local family farms. The countryside awaits visitors with resorts, bed and breakfasts, motels, and campgrounds. The quaint Hamlet of Andes offers unique shopping, historic architecture, and cozy dining at a variety of restaurants. While, other historic sites throughout the Town of Andes offer a glimpse into the past. All of these amenities make up the historic and cultural resources invaluable to the local residents.

#### Andes Formation

According to legend as documented in *Munsell's History of Delaware County 1880*, a pair of farmers stumbled upon the present site of the hamlet of Andes. They accidentally met near the site of the current school when a cow had strayed from the Aaron Hull farm above the hamlet, and had mingled with the cattle of Jonathan Earle whom Hull discovered was his neighbor who lived a mile below the present hamlet.

The Town of Andes was created by separation from the Town of Middletown in 1819. During this time period, all of Andes was in the Hardenburgh Patent which had been granted to the Hardenburgh family by the British governor, Lord Cornbury in 1708. Originally a part of Albany County, the area became a part of Ulster County in 1774 and later a part of Delaware County in 1797. The town's name was derived from a suggestion of Daniel H. Burr when seeing that when the town was to include one of the hilliest sections of the county, said it should be called Andes. Mt. Pisgah, one of the highest peaks in the county at 3340 feet above sea level, is included within the township and received its name from General Erastus Root who was traveling along the Esopus Turnpike and kept coming in view of the then unnamed mountain peak. The general finally remarked that because they, like the Biblical children of Israel, were wandering in the wilderness and often in view of the mount, it should be called Pisgah. The township consists of nearly the same area as when it was formed, the northwest corner being annexed from the Town of Delhi in 1822.

The hamlet of Andes, whose original name of Trempersville being located on the Tremperskill stream was renamed Andes in 1821. The hamlet was incorporated as a village in 1861. The village was dissolved in 2003.

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the area was becoming known for the natural beauty of the Catskill Mountains and metropolitan residents who could afford transportation would visit recreationally. Some owners of larger homes would offer summer lodging for these vacationers. One such vacationer, F.F.Searing, the president of Searing Co., an industrial banking house in New York City, saw the need for convenient transportation to the community and he, along with some railroad friends, incorporated and chartered the Delaware and Eastern Railroad in 1904. This endeavor was to connect the East Branch of the Delaware River valley from the O & W at East Branch with the U & D at Arkville, with a spur running from Shavertown to Andes. In March of 1907, rail service to Andes was completed. This greatly contributed to the economic development of the area, allowing for the shipment of goods and convenient movement of milk to local creameries while providing rapid mail and pedestrian transportation between the communities located along its path. Searing's empire collapsed in 1911 and the railroad, which had cost well over \$2,000,000 to complete was sold for \$150,000 and reincorporated at the Delaware and Northern Railroad. The completion of a concrete road from Margaretville to Andes in 1922 greatly hurt the railroad business necessitating the closure of the Andes branch in 1925. The entire D & N railroad was discontinued in 1942 when the City of New York purchased it in preparation for the construction of the Pepacton Reservoir, with all rights of way reverting back to the landowners through whose property the railroad ran.

### Political History

The Hunting Tavern on Main Street is one of the oldest structures in Andes and is listed, with the majority of the hamlet, on the State and Federal Register of Historic Places. It is currently a museum and is open on weekends from May-October. It was built prior to 1800 by Ezra Benedict and has been restored to reflect the character and design when operated as a tavern by Ephriam Hunting in the 1840's. During the Anti-Rent disturbances of the late 1830's and 1840's, this tavern was the "Up Renters'" headquarters for this area and was considered a "safe-haven" for those supporting the land lease system that had been established when the area started being settled. During the colonial period, wealthy land owners had been granted the land in return for favors to English royalty and offered much of that land to struggling families for a yearly rent, contribution of crops to the owners' estates and the donation of labor to the "patroons" to maintain their estates. The tenants were responsible for clearing their rented land, erecting buildings and making other necessary improvements therefore they owned their buildings but not the land on which they sat. During the 1830's, one prominent landowner had become complacent in his later years and had not pushed to get rents and when he died he left his family with an enormous debt equal to the amount of back rents that had not been paid. The way the family chose to reduce this debt was to force the payment of back rents owed by the tenants, most of whom were unable to provide the necessary funds. The Delaware County Sheriff was employed to secure these funds by selling tenants' cattle for nonpayment of rent. The Hunting Tavern was the last stop of Undersheriff Osman Steele on

August 7, 1845, just before embarking on his way to the Dingle Hill lands of Moses Earle where he intended to sell his cattle for nonpayment of rent. On the day of the sale, down renters disguised in Calico dresses and sheepskin masks protested the sale and during the sale attempt, Steele was shot, dying later that day. The county was placed in a state of insurrection with anyone suspected of participating being arrested and charged with murder. This prompted the New York State legislature to abolish all feudal tenures in 1846, with the incident in Andes being responsible for the end of the lease hold system in the Northeast.

### Economics

With there being an abundant supply of water supplying the Tremperskill stream, industries using water for power sprang up along the stream. By 1835, there were saw mills, grist mill, tanneries, a fulling mill, carding mill and a trip hammer utilizing this power. The logging industries in the Union Grove and Shavertown areas, being located on the East Branch of the Delaware River, used the river to transport logs south in the form of rafts. After the Anti-Rent Wars succeeded in abolishing the lease-hold system, the area began to prosper with agriculture shifting from grain production and sheep farming to dairying. Prior to rail travel in the area, milk produced was made into butter which stored more easily and safely. Alexander Dowie established a very successful butter shipping business in Andes, storing butter from local communities in the cellar of his store and then shipping it to Harry Dowie in New York City. At one time, Andes was the largest butter shipper in the county. With the advent of the railroad, milk shipment to the metropolitan area became a reality and multiple creameries for processing milk were established both in Andes and Shavertown. In the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, dairying declined with tourism becoming the prominent “industry” in the area.

### Fires

The hamlet has suffered several devastating fires throughout its history. In 1878, a fire starting in the wagon house of the Union Hotel destroyed all the buildings from the brook on Delaware Avenue to the entrance of High Street in a matter of two hours. The fire department had been organized the previous year but could do little to battle a blaze of that magnitude. In 1896 the Union Hotel itself burned to the ground taking with it businesses on the East side and residences on the west. 1920 saw the incendiary arson-ignited blaze destroy three buildings located across from the Andes Hotel. The purchase of a 1924 Day Elder pumper was prompted by the burning of Hulbert’s Hardware Store, Oliver’s Feed store and a residence with severe damage being done to the residence to the east, all of which stood on the lot formerly occupied by the buildings destroyed in the Union Hotel fire 28 years earlier. The department still owns this engine which is operable and still pumps water. Other major blazes fought by the Andes Fire Department were The Andes Co-Op Creamery in 1946; the EM Decker Feed and Hardware store in 1951 and the Aknusti mansion on the Gerry Estate in 1953, a fire which caused a loss (remember, this is 1953) conservatively at more than \$1,000,000.

## Pepacton Reservoir

The post-war years of 1948-1955 saw the New York City Board of Water Supply seize by eminent domain all the lands along the East Branch of the Delaware River from Dunraven to just above Downsville for the construction of the Pepacton Reservoir which was to provide drinking water to the metropolitan area. This involved the destruction of four hamlets, two of which, Shavertown and Union Grove, were located within the Township of Andes. This forced the residents to relocate from their homes, many of which had been in their families for generations, accepting whatever selling price the City was prepared to offer. The lands taken were prime river bottom farmland, the best in Andes. This was a devastating blow to the area, with the loss of population causing many relocating permanently outside of the area, which also dramatically affected the school population. The loss of a huge number of farms and the businesses that supported them is still being felt to this day. The land use regulations imposed by New York City within the watershed have stymied any hopes of economic development for the area and have contributed to the demise of farming in the township.

## Andes Society for History & Culture

The Andes Society for History and Culture organized in 1975 is a New York State chartered historical society and has been instrumental in preserving and enhancing the character, historical interest and beauty of Andes. One of the early tasks the organization undertook was the research and application needed to place contiguous properties located in Delaware Avenue, Main Street, High Street and Lower Main Street on the State and Federal Register of Historic Places. The Hunting Tavern has been restored through the ASHC's efforts as a museum and the organization's headquarters. The museum houses permanent Anti-Rent War and Pepacton Reservoir exhibits as well as local historical and cultural presentations which change annually. The group also purchased and restored the former Pleasant Valley Methodist Church at located at the Andes end of the Pepacton Reservoir. The former Andes Fire Hall on Main Street was purchased in 2002 and houses their Thrift Shop which benefits the community at large while providing an income source for the organization. The ASHC maintains the Anti-Rent War site on Dingle Hill and has placed a kiosk at the Pleasant Valley site depicting the communities taken by the construction of the Pepacton Reservoir. The organization most recently restored the historic Burr/Hamilton cemetery on Ridge Road.

## Cemeteries

Many cemeteries exist within the township of Andes, most of which are small family cemeteries with only a few tombstones. The Andes Cemetery Association was incorporated in 1904 with the earliest burial being in 1819. This cemetery is the only remaining cemetery still under the auspices of the New York State Division of Cemeteries and contains the remains of a Congressional Medal of Honor recipient as well as those of notable Anti-Rent War participants. During the construction of the Pepacton Reservoir, burials in all the cemeteries to be flooded were removed requiring the creation of the New Shavertown Cemetery which is still an active cemetery and the Pepacton Cemetery, that contains the bodies of all those not claimed and

relocated by family members in the valley. The Andes Cemetery contains many reburials from both the Pepacton and Cannonsville reservoirs.

### 3.1 GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The Town of Andes have an extensive inventory of existing historic and cultural resources. A high importance was placed on preserving and restoring many of these resources, as they are valuable to the community, the character, and overall history of the area. The unique identity created by Andes' cultural resources contributes to a sense of overall stability and pride within the Town and serves as an important attraction for visitors, potential residents, and businesses.

The Town has identified the following goals and objectives to ensure that the historical and cultural resources will be preserved and maintained.

**Goal:** *Protect and promote the historic and cultural resources in the Town of Andes*

#### **Objectives**

- Encourage commercial and residential owners of historically significant properties to preserve their properties as a historic and cultural resource.
- Expand the Andes Society for History and Culture facilities to promote tourism within the Town of Andes.
- Protect, preserve, and provide recognition of existing cultural resources identified as significant to the Town of Andes.
- Create museum space within the Town to display the history of the farm community that has existed in the area.
- Continue to develop festivals, fairs, craft shows, and other event-based attractions to promote the history and arts of the community.
- Provide support for and participate in events that celebrate the historic resources of the region.
- Continue preservation efforts at the Andes Railroad Station.
- Extend Riverwalk to amplify cultural and historic opportunities.

## 4.0 DEMOGRAPHICS

### 4.1 POPULATION TRENDS

In order to understand population trends, data was collected and analyzed from information acquired by the U.S. Census Bureau, paired with estimates based on the American Community Survey. **Table 4.1-1, “Town Total Population 1980-2021”** illustrates the change in total population over four decades. According to the 2020 census, the population of the Town of Andes was 1,114, which represents a decrease of 187 people in population as reported in 2010.

**Table 4.1-1: Town Total Population**

Geographic Area	Total Population 1980 – 2021 (* signifies American Community Survey estimate)				
	1980	1990	2000	2010	2021 (ACS)
Andes (T)	1,312	1,291	1,356	1,301	1,114

**Table 4.1-2: Town of Andes –Population Breakdown**

Age	Number		
	Total	Male	Female
Total population	1,029	576	453
Under 5 years	20	11	9
5 to 9 years	10	7	3
10 to 14 years	36	29	7
15 to 19 years	20	8	12
20 to 24 years	15	2	13
25 to 29 years	58	31	27
30 to 34 years	100	82	18
35 to 39 years	38	22	16
40 to 44 years	42	31	11
45 to 49 years	59	25	34
50 to 54 years	93	57	36
55 to 59 years	66	39	27
60 to 64 years	98	54	43
65 to 69 years	78	56	22
70 to 74 years	132	48	84
75 to 79 years	80	31	49
80 to 84 years	44	24	20
85 years and over	41	19	22

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census 2021: Census of Population and Housing; [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

The age distribution for the Andes' population is shown in [Table 4.1-2, "Population Breakdown"](#). Since 2000, the Town of Andes has seen the median age of the town population increase slightly to 56.3 years which is above that in the County as a whole, where the median age is 48.5 years.

### Household Populations

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, "married couple family households" represent 51.8% percent of households in the Town of Andes, 23% are classified as "male householder, no spouse present, family household" and 16.8% as "female householder, no spouse present, family household"

### Senior Citizens

Based on information from the 2020 Census, just over 36% of residents in the Town are in the age bracket 65 and greater. Further, the median age identified in 1980 by the Census was 35.2 years old, and the median age for the year 2020 has risen to approximately 56 years. These factors indicate that not only has Andes retained much of its population over the last two decades, but also attracted retirees and second homeowners to the area.

Although the senior population is a growing segment of Andes, there is a lack of facilities, such as nursing homes or assisted living residences, throughout the County to allow these citizens the ability to spend their free years within the community.

At this time a nursing home facility is not available within the Town, but with the aging population trend may become a needed amenity within the community.

If future demographic trends stay in line with current trends, Andes will soon have an even greater percentage of an older population due to the influx of early retirees and the aging "baby boomer" generation. Housing for the elderly or other staged-care facilities for senior citizens would create a cost-effective type of housing in Andes. This would be a cost-effective type of housing for Andes as no services are required of the local school district, while concurrently stimulating the consumer goods and services industry and contributing to the tax base. However, depending on the design and location of senior facilities, there may be a potential impact on the cost of emergency response services.

## **4.2 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT**

In terms of educational attainment, the most significant trend in Andes is the relatively large percentage of residents that retain post-secondary degrees. According to [Table 4.2-1, "2020 Educational Attainment"](#), over 39% of the population in the Town of Andes have a post-secondary degree.



**Table 4.2-1: 2020 Educational Attainment**

High school graduate (includes equivalency)	27.5%
Some college, no degree	27.3%
Associate degree	8.3%
Bachelor's degree	20.5%
Graduates or Professional school degree	10.3%

This statistic may account for a higher earning potential and ultimately the relatively higher incomes of Andes' residents. However, these statistics do not show the age of those individuals whom have obtained a post-secondary education. Those with higher levels of education include retirees who have had careers elsewhere and decided to settle in Andes during their later years. A strong retired population with a high level of education is an asset to the community in terms of generating valuable volunteers and maximizing community resources.

### **4.3 INCOME & EMPLOYMENT**

A strong indicator of an area's economic health is the median household income. According to the 2021 Census, the Town of Andes median household income was \$67,222, above the Delaware County median income of \$52,757.

In keeping with this trend, another positive economic indicator is the percentage of poverty levels found within the Town of Andes. The 2021 US Census indicated that the poverty level reported for the Town (7.4%) is lower than the average poverty rate for Delaware County (15.4%). These low percentages may be due to the larger number of professionals who have retired in the Town as well as the influx remote workers and telecommuting.

The close proximity to NYC has always allowed for weekend commuting but with more and more opportunities to work remotely, the Town has seen a shift in both the ages and ranges or disciplines of Town residents. Increased broadband coverage coupled with impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic have further increased the numbers of individuals and families working from home. The Town still strives to create job opportunities for area youth and recent graduates to improve the likelihood that they would remain in the community and start their own family.

#### Retaining and Drawing New Residents

Evidence suggests that there may be some in-migration by those seeking the quality of life that Andes has to offer, particularly the influx of new retirees. As previously mentioned, Andes has a large share of retirees, however, for future economic stability Andes must also attract young families with children. Additional investment is needed to improve quality of life for these younger residents so that they will remain in Andes and encourage other families to locate here as well.

Attracting younger families to Andes will require additional services, including the expansion of community services and facilities that cater to the younger generation. Expanded childcare facilities and a youth center and programming are needed to attract and support families. Andes should also continue its efforts to expand and improve recreational opportunities and rental housing. There is a shortage of quality rental housing for all population segments. A concerted effort is needed to rehabilitate the many older residences in Andes that are in poor condition and in need of work. Funding needs to be available for existing or prospective homeowners to improve these buildings.

Andes has a unique opportunity to attract new residents, as people are currently being drawn to communities that offer many of the same opportunities that Andes possesses. The possibility of owning a large attractive home in a good school district, combined with access to the arts, outdoor recreation, and nestled around a charming Main Street all succeed in creating Andes as an exceptional place to live, work, raise a family, or retire. In other words, there is a direct synergy between improving Andes and attracting new residents and businesses.

## 5.0 HOUSING

### 5.1 EXISTING HOUSING STOCK

According to the 2020 Census, there was a total of 1,322 housing units in the Town, made up of a variety of structure styles and architecture. The structures in Andes add to the history and culture of the area and give the community a distinct character. The median year structures were built in the Town of Andes was 1970, with approximately 24.6% of the structures built prior to the year 1939.

Approximately 69.3% of the structures in the Hamlet were built before 1900 and there has been very little new construction within the Hamlet. As a result, the Hamlet has retained much of its original historic character. Many of these structures remain in excellent condition despite their age, preserving the history of the Main Street area.

### 5.2 HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

The majority of the residential development is single-family homes, which are distributed along the various transportation routes within Andes. “Second” homes or vacation homes comprise a larger proportion of the residential development. **It is estimated that approximately 60% of the residential homes in Andes are second” homes and 73% of the Town of Andes parcels are owned by non-residents.** Recent development trends within Andes show a continued residential growth, as more second homeowners move into Andes with possible retirement use in view

There are a variety of homeowners within Andes, including first time homeowners, second homeowners, seasonal/vacation homeowners, and retirees. Andes has been and continues to be a popular second home destination for people residing in the New York City Metropolitan area. Many of Andes second home residents are urban professionals or retirees retreating to the rural Catskills.

#### Short-term rentals

Today, the number of season/vacation homeowners continues to be over 60% of Andes population as illustrated in **Table 5.2-1, “2020 Town & County – Occupied/Vacant Housing”**. The US Census defines “a housing unit as vacant if no one is living in it at the time of the interview, unless its occupants are only temporarily absent. In addition, a vacant unit may be one which is entirely occupied by persons who have a usual residence elsewhere”.

**In the past, many of these residential homes empty for a large portion of the year but a recent influx of short term rental developments have created a new dynamics pertaining to true occupancy, tourism growth in addition to long-term housing/rental availability and affordability. As of May 2023, there are 109 short term rental properties in the Town of Andes, 24% of which are owned by individuals with a primary address outside of the Town. The Town enacted a registration/permitting process for short term rentals in 2022 to provide for a local**

property manager contact and to facilitate fire inspections by the Town.

**Table 5.2-1: 2020 Town & County – Occupied/Vacant Housing**

**Table 5.2-1, “2020 Town & County – Occupied/Vacant Housing”**

	Total Housing Units	Occupied Housing Units	Vacant	Percent Vacant
Delaware County	29,953	19,193	10,760	35.9%
Andes	1,322	582	740	55.9%

### 5.3 HOUSING COSTS

As noted above, many of the newer structures in the Town of Andes have been constructed for second homeowners or seasonal/vacation homes. These seasonal housing characteristics have several implications for the community. According to the US Census Bureau, the median house price in the Town of Andes was \$86,600 in 2000. The 2020 Census indicated that 64% of homes in Andes had a value of \$200,000 or greater. Increased housing prices has made it difficult for area youth and young families to purchase homes in the Town. Furthermore, increased competition with properties being sought for Short term rental development has added to the limited availability affordable homes for both purchase and long-term rental. Median Gross rent in the town is \$918 compared to \$723 for Delaware County as a whole. Programs that assist first time homebuyers are needed to improve the affordability of these homes and to encourage younger families to locate in Andes. In addition to making homes more affordable for the first-time homebuyers, residential development suitable for an aging population are needed within Andes. Workforce housing for all income levels is a continued need in the region, including the Town of Andes.

### 5.4 NEW HOME DEVELOPMENT

Andes continues to be an attractive, vital place for long-time residents and newcomers, retirees, and second-home owners due to primarily the beautiful landscape and rural community. Designing new, affordable housing to blend in with the current and historic architectural styles is important to the community. Design guidelines for reviewing new structures should consider the following:

#### Sense of Place

The physical character of the proposed development must be appropriate to the spirit of a specific place. Without sensitive guidance from design standards, new development may overwhelm the surrounding environment and diminish the character of older buildings and neighborhoods. Sense of Place comes from our experience of the place, our sense of its history, its people, and its built and natural character. We must understand the image of a place to establish the context. A new home or community development should be compatible

within the context of its surroundings when it fits with the visual and functional characteristics of its surroundings and keeps harmony with the area's scale, proportions, materials, colors, and uses.

### Buildings & Structures

New buildings and communities must be designed to provide quality of life, retain long-term livability, and sustain the natural system. New development should consider design that integrates natural and man-made elements; contextual compatibility with the environment and local community. New facilities must utilize skilled and sensitive professional design that includes the initial planning of the site, massing of forms, proportion, and scale of structures, functional and aesthetic layout, materials, lighting, signage, and landscaping.

### Scale & Context

This may be achieved through utilizing the following organizing, planning, and building concepts:

- Clustering of development, perhaps with a mix of uses.
- Attached or semi-attached units such as townhouses.
- Accessory Apartments and guest cottages in existing structures
- 'Co-housing' – Communities incorporate shared activity areas such as kitchens, dining rooms, gardens, laundry, storage, parking, child-care, elder-care, etc..
- 'Eco-housing' – Housing uses materials to provide a healthy living environment while having a low adverse impact on the environment.

The challenge of the future is to design and build in a way that respects the local context, accommodates the variety of ages, incomes, and cultural diversity, while not diminishing the distinctive natural features and natural systems of Andes.

## **5.5 GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

The housing needs of a community are a central element in planning for the future. The Town of Andes is a unique Catskill community, offering opportunities to year-round and seasonal residents. As a result, housing types greatly differ to meet the various needs of the residents. To meet the needs expressed by Andes, the following housing goals and associated objectives have been defined.

### Goals

*To provide and encourage the development of housing types that serves the needs of residents in all stages of life, while improving the condition of the existing housing stock and providing a greater range of housing opportunities. In addition, the Town of Andes will continue to encourage and unite the diverse range of residents in both communities.*

## Objectives

- Define residential growth areas with appropriate densities and development standards within the Town according to available infrastructure.
- Encourage the development of a broader range of attractive and affordable homes for year-round and seasonal residents.
- Encourage the development of senior housing and/or assisted-living housing.
- Improve opportunities for starting families and tenants.
- Encourage the rehabilitation of deteriorating housing.
- Encourage development that continues Andes as a safe and child-friendly Town.
- Encourage the development of workforce housing for all income levels

## **6.0 COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES**

### **6.1 Community Facilities**

#### Schools

Andes Central School is located at 85 Delaware Avenue in the Hamlet of Andes, serving residents from the Town, as well as four other townships, encompassing a total area of approximately 99 square miles.

The Andes main school building is one of the three structures that make up the Andes Central School District, in addition there is a technology classroom building and bus garage. Andes Central School includes thirty (30) classrooms, one gym, one library, and one hundred and ten (110) computers for the students' use. Recreational facilities at the school include a soccer field, a play field, basketball and Tennis courts, fitness room, and a playground for all of the students. Amenities are open to the public, as is the school building and grounds, which routinely opens for community events and organizations. The School grounds also feature a Community garden and greenhouses.

The School serves students from Pre-K through twelfth grade. The enrollment of the Andes School has declined from over 185 students in the year 2000, to roughly 70 students presently. At the same time the curricula and required offerings have expanded for the students. The School also provides a curriculum for students with special needs, who may require additional learning services or other attention. Over fifteen percent of the students have been identified as having a disability. Two resource rooms are used in the instruction of these students. A speech therapist and a school guidance counselor provide additional services for students with special needs. An Occupational Therapist is also on staff at the school.

There are also a number of post-secondary institutions regionally available. Delaware County is home to SUNY Delhi and Otsego Northern Catskills BOCES. Students in Grades Eleven and Twelve have the opportunity to attend the Career Education Center at Grand Gorge for one half a day for vocational training. Students use a distance-learning network through Otsego Northern Catskills BOCES, a post-high school training facility, to obtain course work from colleges and area schools. Other institutions include Hartwick College, SUNY Oneonta, Tompkins Community College and SUNY Cobleskill. The presence of these post-secondary institutions has a positive economic impact on the region by increasing the demand for housing and goods and services, and by creating a trained labor pool that may elect to work locally.

#### Library

The Andes Public Library is located at 242 Main Street within the Hamlet of Andes. The Library offers programs and activities for both adults and youth. The facilities offer adult and

children's rooms, a video and audio collection, public access computers, fax/scan/copy capabilities, reference and technical support, a fully online catalog, and interlibrary loan capabilities. The library also has tutoring and meeting space upstairs as well as community room and gazebo space that can be utilized by outside groups for digital or in person meetings and events.

For adults, the library has a book club, a knitting/sewing club, book talks, writing seminars, gardening lectures, trivia nights, local history lectures, book sales, musical concerts, and other special events both in the library as well as in the community. The library has an outstanding collection for children from preschool to young adult and offers a regular Song and Story time, Summer Reading Program workshops for youth grades K-8, game nights, tutoring and research support, and space for local youth to receive special services.

In addition, the library is still constrained for space, so should the Town of Andes decommission the spring house behind the library, the library would be interested in applying for State Library Construction Aid to finish it as an additional community/program space and book sale room. The library also hopes to someday install solar panels.

### Town Pool

The Town owns and operates a swimming pool facility located behind Town Hall. The pool is open to the public from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Various swimming classes are offered, including lifesaving classes and instruction for 1-year olds and up, and classes generally run for six weeks. In addition, the facility has a wading pool and diving board.

### Parks

Ballantine Park is the principle park in Andes. It offers a passive recreational opportunity to local residents and visitors. The park is owned by the Town and maintenance is provided for through a collaboration with private funder. Desired improvements include park furniture, low-impact pedestrian lighting as well as ongoing landscaping to replace any overgrown trees or bushes that may be removed through regular maintenance. Andes should explore fundraising opportunities such as the "Adopt-a-Tree" program to offset costs of improvements to the park. Andes has additional open space available that should be obtained for recreational and low intensity uses, such as parks and pedestrian linkages to the historic and cultural resources. Overall, Andes is fortunate to have a number of small parks, as well as the large resources available in the State Catskill Park. An effort to connect the park to the nearby Train Depot/trail is ongoing.

### Train Depot

The Andes Train Depot/trailhead, built in 1907 and renovated in the 2000's, provides a heated community space for meetings and events as well as a location for the Andes Foodbank efforts. The entrance is located at 266 Depot Street and parking is available for several vehicles. Just beyond the depot building, a very flat, one-mile walking trail extends along the old rail bed,



and provides a peaceful experience of field and woodland beauty and wonderful mountain views.

In June 2013, the Bullet Hole Spur addition to the hiking trail was opened. The Spur extends the trail an additional 2 miles, bringing the option of the total walk to 4 miles round trip. The Spur climbs the ridge above the rail bed, taking hikers through mature hardwood forest, open woodlands covered in ferns and princess pine, an old pine plantation and hemlocks towering above the Bullet Hole Creek. The Spur is a bit more strenuous. There are a couple of well-designed moderately steep sections, but they are followed by relatively flat sections so you get a nice breather after working a little harder. There are many wonderful views of the Tremperskill valley from the Spur.

### Little Pond

Little Pond is a NYSDEC managed campground located in the Catskill Forest Preserve which offers a leisurely hiking trail around a 13-acre pond, and the opportunity to venture along trails leading to the ruins of an old farm or enjoy breathtaking views atop the Touchmenot Mountains. The campground features a beach, boat rentals, as well as remote sites on the back side of the pond. Little Pond is located minutes from Beaverkill, a world renowned fly fishing stream.

Other park amenities include a 67 tent and trailer sites; 8 "remote" tent sites; picnic area with tables, grills, or fireplaces; pavilion rental; playground; volleyball; horseshoes; soccer; basketball; ice sales; firewood sales; flush toilets; hot showers; trailer dump station; recycling center; sand beach; boat launch; rowboat, paddle boat, kayak and canoe rentals.

## **6.2 COMMUNITY SERVICES**

### Fire Protection

The Andes Joint Fire District is comprised of the Andes Fire Department and the Andes Emergency Squad, which provides the primary emergency services for approximately 1,300 people within the Town of Andes. These services include fire protection and firefighting capabilities, rescue at motor vehicle accidents, protecting the public at dangerous sites such as downed electric lines and unsafe roadways, search and rescue and primary medical assistance and transportation of the injured and sick. Additionally the District maintains an emergency housing facility that can be used by its residents during disasters such as floods.

Services are coordinated and managed through the Andes Fire Department facility that is located within the Hamlet of Andes on Tremper Kill Road. The Andes' Fire Department and Emergency Squad is staffed by approximately 60 volunteers, who are dispatched through the 911 Center located at the Delaware County Sheriff's Department in Delhi. These volunteers receive no monetary compensation.

The primary objective of the Fire District is to make available equipment and facilities that meet all the State and Federal safety and training requirements for use in protecting the local citizens from harm. This highly maintained equipment is a significant factor in assuring the safety and comfort of the volunteers and the community they serve.

The Department receives approximately 75 fire calls per year and 150 ambulance calls per year. Water is supplied by hydrant in the Hamlet and then boosted by the fire trucks. Otherwise the trucks supply the water to a fire emergency and water pressure is approximately 150 to 200 gallons per minute.

As with many rural fire companies, the most significant problem facing the Andes' Fire District is the recruitment and retention of trained volunteers. Without these individuals Andes would not have fire protection, emergency response teams, primary medical care, and emergency transport capabilities. The alternative to volunteers would be a salaried core of trained individuals that would cost the community a large sum annually.

Andes has a shortage of residents within the 25 to 45 year age range. Significant impacts on recruiting and retaining qualified individuals stem from the rigorous training requirements and standards placed on the Department by State and Federal safety and training requirements. These requirements for the Emergency Medical Training (EMT), require that volunteers maintain and update their skills and qualifications by undergoing training and testing, much of which is very intensive and time consuming.

The Fire Department receives funds from both donations and tax dollars. Currently the Fire Department is financially capable of meeting the community demands, due to the high quality of volunteerism. Long-range plans for the Fire Department include the purchase of various pieces of equipment and vehicles in an effort to provide the quickest and most efficient fire, medical and emergency services to the residents of Andes. Some items that would prove beneficial to the Andes' Fire District and the community as a whole include:

- Blankets and cots to be utilized in the event the Fire Station needs to be used as an emergency shelter;
- Improved/enhanced Global Positioning System (GPS) Instrumentation;
- Three gas detectors (Combustible, Oxygen, Carbon Monoxide); four (4) Gas meters
- Regularly updated Thermal Imaging Equipment;
- Upgraded Rescue Truck;
- Replacement Pumper/Tanker;
- All terrain vehicle, such as a four-wheeler, to be used for grass fires or search and rescue operations; The Department fleet does include a UTV capable of fire/medical response.

### Police Protection

At this time, Andes does not have its own police department. The Delaware County Sheriff's Department and the New York State Police Department provide police protection to the Town of Andes. The facilities and services provided by the County and the NYS Police Department are considered adequate and there are no plans for expansion at this time.

### Medical Services

There is a shortage of health professionals throughout Delaware County, including Andes. Typically, rural areas have difficulty attracting and retaining health care professionals.

The Andes Health Center is a Bassett primary health care center located at 245 Lower Main Street in the Hamlet of Andes that features primary care physicians and practitioners that offer family medicine services to patients of all ages.

The Andes' Fire Department, with the support of the Delaware County Sheriff's Department and the NYS Police Department, provide emergency service to residents of Andes. The nearest hospital is in Margaretville. In emergency situations, persons are first taken to Margaretville, and in extreme cases persons are airlifted to larger regional hospitals, located in Kingston and Albany.

### Solid Waste Management

The Town of Andes' residents dispose of household solid waste at the Transfer Station located on Tremper Kill Road in the Town of Andes, after which it is taken to the Delaware County Solid Waste Management Center (SWMC) landfill located in the Town of Walton. There are limitations as to what types of solid waste materials can be taken to the Transfer Station: construction materials, hazardous waste, or most liquid products (i.e. paints, etc.) are not accepted at the transfer station and are available for proper disposal at annual Clean Sweep events offered by the Department of Delaware County Solid Waste Management. Garbage pick-up services for residents can be privately contracted with a number of local area operators. The transfer station meets the needs of residents and there is no proposed expansion of services to the Transfer Station at this time.

### Post Office

The Andes Post Office is located at 204 Lower Main Street and was constructed in 1992.

### Religious Organizations

Within the Town of Andes, there are four different religious organizations. These organizations include the United Methodist Church, the United Presbyterian Church, St. Ann's Roman Catholic Church, the Cabin Hill Presbyterian Church and Camp L'man Achai.

The United Methodist Church is located on Lower Main Street within the Village of Andes. This church is used for various community activities, including the senior citizens monthly lunch meeting. The United Presbyterian Church hosts a variety of activities and events within the community and an annual Christmas Program for the community<sup>45</sup>.

St. Ann's Roman Catholic Church is located on Route 28 in the Village of Andes, and is affiliated with the Sacred Heart Church in Margaretville. Currently it operates as a mission church and there are no plans of for improvements or expansion.

The Cabin Hill Presbyterian Church is located at 7615 County Hwy. 2 and is affiliated with the Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley.

Camp L'man Achai is located on Perch Lake Road and is a Jewish summer camp with main offices located in Manhattan.

### **6.3 Goals & Objectives**

The goals and objectives established for the area of community resources primarily focuses on community facilities, community activities, volunteer programs, the school, the library and other similar resources identified. The Town of Andes' residents offered a variety of ideas to host and fund community activities and programs. The following addresses the overall goals and objectives for both the Town.

#### **Goals**

*To protect and improve the Town of Andes' community resources, while finding new opportunities to provide the community with means of participating in new activities and programs hosted throughout the community for the health, safety, and well-being of the residents and businesses of Andes.*

#### **Objectives**

- Develop and expand services and opportunities for all age groups, including but not limited to housing, recreation, transportation, activities, and programs. Continue to maintain and enhance the Andes School to ensure strong academic opportunities for students and to attract young families to the District/Town.
- Continue to maintain and enhance the Andes School to ensure strong academic opportunities for students and to attract young families to the District/Town.

- Develop and expand all activities and programs available for youths within the Town.
- Support the development and maintenance for trail linkages and local clubs that utilize these trails
- Promote multi-purpose use of the School and churches to broaden recreational and community opportunities available to all residents of Andes.
- Encourage membership in the Andes Volunteer Fire Department and Emergency Service squad
- Encourage membership in community groups

## **7.0 INFRASTRUCTURE**

Land use development is dependent upon the provision of a community's infrastructure. The availability of water and sewer facilities and accessibility via roads are important to residents and businesses. Adequate and well-planned infrastructure also plays a key role in maintaining the existing economic base and in attracting new businesses.

### **7.1 Roads**

Overall, there are approximately 151.03 miles of roadway within the Town of Andes; consisting of 111.46 miles of Town roadways, 9.35 miles of County roadways, 18.72 miles of New York State roadways, and 11.5 miles of New York City roadways that straddle the southern portion of the Pepacton Reservoir.<sup>31</sup>

The New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) maintains two sections of roadway through Andes: State Route 28 and State Route 30. Route 28 runs east/west in the northwest portion of the Town of Andes and through the Hamlet. A portion of Route 28 is also known as Main Street, up until the point where Route 28 turns north as Delaware Avenue. As Route 28 veers off to the north, Main Street continues as Lower Main Street. Route 30 travels in an east/west direction and runs adjacent to the Pepacton Reservoir. The NYSDOT plows and treats both Route 28 and Route 30 throughout the winter season. From the Hamlet of Andes extending westward is Delaware County Route 2. Extending south from the Hamlet is Delaware County Route 1, which is on the National Highway System / Federal Aid Surface Transportation Program.

The Delaware County Highway Department is responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the two County roads that traverse Andes: County Route 1 and County Route 2. The County plows and salts both of these roads throughout the winter season. Route 1 runs north/south from the Hamlet south to Route 30 where it ends. Route 2 runs east/west from the Hamlet west into the Town of Hamden, where it ends. The County provides regularly scheduled maintenance as needed to these roadways throughout the year. There are no scheduled major improvements planned at this time for either County Routes.

The Town of Andes Highway Department is responsible for the remaining local roadways. Regular plowing and treatment occurs on local roadways throughout the winter. Roads are prioritized based on school bus routes, and bus routes are plowed and treated first for safety reasons. There are some roadways that do not receive the regularly scheduled plowing and salting, and such roadways are posted with a seasonal sign on the side of the roadway. There are no scheduled major improvements planned at this time beyond the regular upkeep and maintenance. A Highway Management Plan to track road maintenance and monitor associated infrastructure inventory was completed in 2011.

## **7.2 Water**

Municipal water is primarily provided to the residents of the Hamlet water district, with a number of properties on Gladstone Road who are served by municipal water. Not all properties within the hamlet are currently served by municipal water. In total, there are approximately 300 residents with municipal water. The current water flow is 20 to 30 thousand gallons per day. Pressure throughout the district is approximately 60 to 70 psi (pounds per square inch). New water mains and a well have recently been added due to periodic water shortages

The current water district is provided water from a set of springs located on the eastern side of the Town. This water is filtered/treated for use by the district users.

In 2022, The Town was approached by their contracted engineering firm about significant upgrades to the water system, primarily the transition from treated surface water spring to wells accessing underground aquifers. Test wells have been drilled and will undergo testing for quality and adequacy of the district. The Town, in cooperation with their contracted engineering firm are pursuing NYS funding to further develop this infrastructure to bring the new well online.

## **7.3 Wastewater**

The Hamlet of Andes is currently served by a municipal wastewater treatment plant, the capacity of which is sufficient for existing and future development.

## **7.4 Broadband & Cellular Infrastructure**

As a result of recent build-out efforts by the Margaretville Telephone Company (MTC), over 196 miles of Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) facilities and 23 miles of Hybrid-Fiber-Coax (HFC) facilities have been deployed within the township, serving 1202 customers (total service customers).

Service is available to all serviceable addresses (defined as service locations along public rights-of-way or with established utility easements) within the Town of Andes have access to broadband services either via (FTTH) or (HFC) facilities. All facilities have the capacity to offer 1-Gbps Download and 50 Mbps Upload speeds.

A small number of service addresses listed as “off-grid” and do not have access to facilities based broadband infrastructure. In many cases, these service points are non-inhabited structures, hunting camps, or other dwellings without the utility infrastructure in place necessary to extend broadband facilities. Broadband facilities can be extended to any of these address requesting service provided there is an existing utility line, established utility easement, and / or access to an open trench suitable to install MTC supplied conduit and a suitable powering source necessary to run customer premise equipment.

Cellular service in the town is very limited and efforts remain to increase coverage for convenience as well as for emergency response. The Town would like to have cellular carriers install infrastructure on the existing Delaware County Emergency Services tower located atop Mt. Pisgah.

## 7.5 Goals & Objectives

Industrial, commercial, and residential developments are all dependent upon the provision of a community's infrastructure. The availability of water and sewer facilities and road accessibility are important to the residents and businesses. Adequate and well-planned infrastructure also plays a key role in maintaining the existing economic base and in attracting new businesses. This can be achieved through a comprehensive inventory of the existing road system and condition of infrastructure in the Town of Andes, including drainage structures, signs, and guide rails. After the completion of a comprehensive inventory, identified improvements can be completed to provide additional safety features or upgrades to the drainage systems where warranted.

Careful planning of Andes' infrastructure needs will help assure that the community's goals are met. The following goals and objectives have been identified to meet the demands on infrastructure for the community as a whole.

### Goals

*To ensure that adequate infrastructure is in place to protect environmental quality, to meet the needs of both seasonal and year-round residents and to promote economic development.*

### Objectives

- Pursue the continued expansion and availability of affordable broadband and cellular service throughout the Town of Andes.
- Ensure that future installation / expansion of infrastructure is done in accordance with recommendations of the Town of Andes Local Flood Analysis (LFA)
- Maintain an emphasis on implementation of the LFA and Floodplain Protection
- Work in cooperation with the Delaware County Soil & Water Conservation District to improve the drainage system and highway structures to improve water quality and control erosion.
- Work to improve gravel improving subbase and drainage. Once a stable and well-drained sub base is established an oil and stone treatment should be added to decrease maintenance needs and reduce erosion.



- Improve road slopes by cutting brush and selective thinning to maintain the aesthetic rural character of the Town.
- Improve highway maintenance to roadways throughout the Town of Andes so that they are safe for multiple modes of transportation.
- Advocate for better maintenance of State-owned roadways.

## 8.0 NATURAL RESOURCES

### 8.1 Topography and Soils

Soils are often factors that determine the suitability of land for development. Proper soils provide good, stable support for various development purposes. Soils are of critical importance when considering the feasibility of on-site sewage effluent disposal and development capability.

Three important characteristics of the soil relevant to determining suitability for development or, specifically, a septic tank absorption field are depth to water table, depth to bedrock, and drainage. When combining these factors, the degree for suitability of soil for a septic tank absorption field can be expressed as “slight,” “moderate,” or “severe.” According to **Figure 3, “Soil Suitability Limitations,”** (for buildings with basements), the Town of Andes is limited as to where development is suitable; most of Andes is severely limited. This rating takes into account the soil constraints, including slope and drainage. Existing development in Andes is concentrated in the areas where there are slight and moderate slope limitations.

The determination of an area’s suitability for development is partially dependent on the slope of the land. With greater slopes, there is a greater difficulty in developing the land. By avoiding development on inappropriately sloped areas, a community can be assured of minimizing the adverse effects of development on soil stability, water quality, and other natural resources. **See Figure 4, “Topographical Map”.**

Generally, steep slopes are wooded, and this asset should be protected. Wooded slopes function as a protection against erosion, flooding, and drainage problems, but are also a scenic resource. During construction, vegetation is removed and the potential for erosion increases. Where steep slopes exist, special design and construction techniques are required if development is to occur. Generally, slopes within Andes should be examined and **Table 8.1-1, “Percentage of Slopes & Suitability For Development”** serves as reference for future development.

**Table 8.1-1 Percentage of Slopes & Suitably for Development**

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

**Insert Full Page color Slopes /TOPO**

**INSERT FULL PAGE COLOR SOIL SUITABILITY LIMITATIONS MAP**

## 8.2 Watershed

Andes is located within the Catskill/Delaware Watershed, which is approximately 100 miles northwest of New York City. The Catskill/Delaware Watershed provides about 90 percent of New York City's drinking water, covering over 1,600 square miles of land in five counties, including the Town of Andes in Delaware County, and consists of six major reservoirs, including, the Ashokan and Schoharie Reservoirs of the Catskill System and the Rondout, Neversink, Pepacton, and Cannonsville Reservoirs of the Delaware System<sup>55</sup>.

Andes has several primary tributaries that connect to the Delaware River and the Pepacton Reservoir. Cutting through the south-central part of Andes, the East Branch of the Delaware forms the Pepacton Reservoir, which drains over 95% of Andes and serves as a water supply for the City of New York. There are two aqueducts transporting the water from the Catskill/Delaware Watershed to New York City, the Catskill Aqueduct, and the Delaware Aqueduct. The Watershed provides approximately 1.5 billion gallons of water daily to more than nine million customers in New York City, as well as areas of Westchester, Putnam, Orange, and Ulster Counties. [Figure 2, "Town Map"](#), illustrates the location of the Pepacton and the local tributaries.

### Pepacton Reservoir

The largest water body in Andes is the Pepacton Reservoir, a reservoir created to provide water for New York City. The Pepacton Reservoir traverses Andes and is also the northern boundary for the Catskill Park in Andes. The Pepacton Reservoir was created in 1955, by impounding the East Branch of the Delaware River. The reservoir was named after the small hamlet of Pepacton after the hamlet was buried under 120 feet of water when the East Branch of the Delaware River was impounded<sup>69</sup>. The Pepacton flooded four communities: Arena, Pepacton, Shavertown, and Union Grove, displacing 974 people<sup>70</sup>.

The Reservoir is about twenty miles long and averages about one-half mile wide and holds 140.2 billion gallons at full capacity. The Reservoir is typically at full capacity between the months of March and June; water withdrawals usually result in a gradual drawdown of the reservoir during the summer and fall. Access to the area is limited. Deer hunting, hiking and fishing are allowed by permit only in certain areas, and no powerboats are permitted on the Reservoir. Non-motorized kayaks, canoes, rowboats, and sculls with the appropriate recreational boat tags may be used. All recreational boats except kayaks must be at least eleven feet five inches (11'5") in length. Kayaks must be at least nine feet (9') in length and all vessels require steam cleaning prior to use in the Pepacton.

## Watershed Regulations

The Town of Andes is a part of the Watershed communities established in the Watershed Agreement. A component of the Agreement included a revised “Rules and Regulations” describing the restrictions and regulations applicable to activities undertaken within the watershed. These regulations are designed to ensure the continued, long-term protection of New York City’s water supply, while minimizing the adverse economic impacts on Watershed communities.

Andes landowners are affected by provisions of the Watershed Regulations, such as placement and operation of septic systems, location of underground fuel oil storage tanks, and the construction of new impervious surfaces. The Regulations provide benefits to communities, such as Andes, by controlling sources of pollution, including, wastewater treatment plants, sewer systems, septic systems, and stormwater pollution. Exemptions to the regulations are in place and are designed to protect responsible growth in existing areas, while protecting water quality through increased regulation of activities within these areas.

The Catskill Watershed Corporation(CWC), with headquarters in nearby Arkville, NY provide financial support through programs for septic system rehabilitation and maintenance as well as providing funding opportunities for stormwater provisions required as a result of Watershed Rules and Regulations. The CWC also offers Economic Development Programs intended to support environmentally responsible businesses and to create and retain jobs in the Catskills Region. They are intended to help offset impacts of New York City Watershed regulations and the City’s acquisition of thousands of acres of land which will remain permanently off limits to development.

## Land Acquisition Program

The NYCDEP can purchase property in the Catskill/Delaware and Croton Watersheds pursuant to a water supply permit issued by the NYSDEC. The main purpose of the Land Acquisition Program is to enable the City to assemble sufficient “buffer lands around the reservoir, their tributaries and other important land features in order to protect water quality. It is important to note, that the Land Acquisition Program is a purely voluntary program, and acquisitions will only be made if there is a willing buyer and seller. The lands acquired by New York City, either through purchase or conservation easements, will then remain as open space for the purposes of watershed protection, with many acres designated as recreational lands for the public. As of January 2023, approximately 14,695 acres of land have been acquired in fee or placed under conservation easement in Andes, constituting approximately 20% of the total area (land & water) of the Town. Roughly 4,650 acres of this total are lands acquired around the Pepacton Reservoir obtained prior to the 1997 Memorandum of Agreement between the Watershed Communities and NYC. Table 8.2-1 “NYCDEP Land Acquisition” provides a breakdown of City holdings within the Town of Andes.

**Table 8.2-1 NYCDEP Land Acquisition**

	Number of parcels	Acres
Town of Andes	2,365	72,381.38
Fee acquisitions (Pre MoA)	4	4,648.53
Fee acquisitions 1997-2023	139	7,248.40
Conservation Easements	30	11,079.96

### 8.3 Water Resources

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) classifies streams as adequate for supporting the following: water supply (A), bathing and fishing (B), fish propagation and survival (C), or fishing (D). A suffix of “T” denotes that the stream supports trout propagation while a suffix of “S” means that the stream supports trout spawning. The NYSDEC has classified the East Branch of the Delaware and the Pepacton Reservoir, as it travels through Andes, as an “A” Class, “A(T)” Standard waterway<sup>67</sup>.

The Fisheries Bureau of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation reports that the East Branch of the Delaware has supported game fish such as catfish, rainbow, brown and brook trout, small mouth bass, and perch. Other species that were present included carp and minnow, suckers and sculpins. As a result of the high water quality and presence of trout propagation, permits are required for activities that have the potential for adverse impact to these waterways.

#### Tremper Kill & Liddle Brook Stonewalls

Tremper Kill and Liddle Brook have long been a vital component to the way of life in Andes. These waterways provide benefits to the residents of Andes as a scenic resource and as a water source for the daily operations of farms and sawmills. Both the Tremper Kill and Liddle Brook were laid with stonework in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century when they were used to power mills. These stonewalls, which still exist today, are the largest man-made structures in Andes. Over time as the soils erode and wash away, many stones have been dislodged or are in danger of being dislodged.

A balance with the protection of the historic stonewalls and the reduction of flood risk is necessary for the preservation of the delicate ecosystem. A comprehensive and multi-faceted flood mitigation plan, the cumulative benefit of multiple measures implemented over time can provide a more profound benefit to the community by way of limiting the hazards associated with the future flood events. **The Andes School, in cooperation with Delaware County Soil & Water are pursuing design/construction measures to relocate and stabilize the walls/banks, create a floodplain bench to increase storm capacity and enlarge the span of the Andes School Transportation Bridge to reduce any constriction of flood waters.**

Continued erosion of the walls and surrounding lands could result in impacts to the municipal sewer main that runs near the existing tennis courts. The project seeks to protect school and municipal infrastructure, reduce flooding impacts on NYS Route 28 and adjacent residences while at the same time replacing a failing structure that provides the only vehicular access to the school grounds.

#### 8.4 Wetlands

Wetlands are recognized as important ecological resources that provide functional benefits to a community, and are perhaps the most critical of all water considerations due to their extreme sensitivity to development. The development limitations of wetlands must be taken into consideration in planning. Wetlands control stormwater runoff, improve water quality, stabilize soils, filter nutrients and contaminants, provide fish and wildlife habitat, and offer excellent passive recreational opportunities. In addition, wetlands can absorb great amounts of water during heavy rainfall and spring runoff, decreasing the potential impacts of flooding.

The two regulatory agencies for wetlands are the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) and the NYSDEC. The ACOE utilizes the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) maps, which should be used with a degree of caution since this survey is based upon the time of year, amount of rainfall, and other variables. **Figure 5, “FEMA Floodplains, DEC Wetlands”** illustrates the wetlands identified by the NYSDEC Freshwater Wetland maps.

#### 8.5 Forested Lands and Wildlife

The Catskill Park is a mountainous region of public and private lands in four counties, including Delaware, Ulster, Green, and Sullivan. The Catskill Forest Preserve is the State land within the Catskill Park. The Catskill Forest Preserve was created in 1885 and has grown from 34,000 acres to almost 300,000 acres<sup>72</sup>. These lands are constitutionally protected as “forever wild”, a designation that prohibits the sale of the land or of any products derived from the land including timber<sup>73</sup>.

There are approximately 11,080 acres of NYS owned land within the Town of Andes, representing just over 15% of the total Town (land and water). There are two Forest Preserve management units in the Town of Andes to manage Andes Forests; Middle Mountain Wild Forest consists of approximately 6,600 acres and Dry Brook Ridge Wild Forest consists of approximately 2,400 acres<sup>74</sup>.



Historically, numerous trades made use of the Catskill forest – furniture makers, lumberjacks, charcoal producers, hoop-makers (used to hold barrels together), and wood acid manufacturers. At one time there was very little forested land at all in the Catskills. For instance, historical records show that by the 1840's the supply of hemlock trees in the Catskills had been depleted to the point that major tanneries in New York had to re-establish their businesses in Pennsylvania. Today the forest has rebounded, in part due to the protection offered by the Catskill Forest Preserve.

The unique habitat of the Catskills includes mountainous or “sub-alpine” forests that contain primarily balsam fir and red spruce tree species. Both of these species are uncommon in New York except in northern or high elevation areas. The high peak areas remain cool and moist throughout the summer months.

The peaks are also known to support birds such as the Bicknell's thrush and blackpoll warbler, which nest in New York at high elevation habitats. These locations in the Catskills are the southernmost extent of the breeding range of the Bicknell's thrush. Bicknell's thrush is a species at risk because of its limited breeding range, existing only in parts of New England, New York, Quebec, and maritime Canada.

Wildlife in the Catskill region includes deer, coyotes, bears, rabbit species, bobcats, minks, fishers, red squirrel, fox, porcupines and eagles. The presence of these wildlife resources are important to Andes' local economy. Revenue is generated in Andes by the purchase of local goods and services by hunters and fishermen. Indiscriminant use of the forest will endanger the use of other important natural resources that exist within the environment. For example, cutting trees in close proximity to streams removes the natural shade provided to the stream and endangers the trout habitat that require specific stream temperatures.

## **8.6 Goals & Objectives**

The Town of Andes have recognized a great concern for the protection of the natural features within the community. The rural character and the scenic and aesthetic qualities of the community are frequently cited issues. There is also concern for the protection of special environmental features such as steep slopes, wetlands, lakes, streams, and scenic views. Agricultural lands are recognized as a special resource that should also be protected. Best Management Practices (BMPs) coupled with other flood mitigation measures, such as increased bridge and culvert sizes and/or floodplain reclamation projects, would have broader comprehensive approach to reducing flood elevations, inundation zones and corresponding flood hazards through Andes.

Measures that can be undertaken by Andes to protect and conserve natural resources may include the following:

- Support interagency cooperation to implement provisions of the Town of Andes Local Flood Analysis (LFA) in efforts to reduce flooding.
- Organize a meeting with all stakeholders, property owners, adjoining property owners, NYSDEC, US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), Conservancy groups, and others as applicable to determine/confirm interest in development of a resource management plan.
- Negotiate access agreements for passive recreational uses
- Produce comprehensive mapping products on local trail systems. Connect local trail system maps with regional trail system map products
- Explore methods to maintain open hillside lands historically used for agriculture

## Goals

*Protect the quality of the environment and the natural resources of the Town of Andes through well thought out development to avoid negative impact on natural resources and environmentally sensitive lands from potential sources of contamination and degradation. In addition, protect the special features of the natural environment that preserves and characterizes the Town of Andes.*

## Objectives

- Ensure the protection of natural features through the Town of Andes' regulatory processes, site plan review, and subdivision regulations.
- Encourage redevelopment and new development in areas that are minimally constrained by natural resources and ecologically sensitive land
- Development of a town-wide database of storm damage that could be updated after every storm. This would provide useful data when determining which future projects to pursue; and help in gathering data for grant applications that require Benefit Cost Ratios. The data base should include actual, verified Base Flood and First Floor elevations at each residence to accompany damage values.
- Review local ordinances to identify opportunities for improved local resiliency and mitigation of flood-related hazards. As an NFIP community, the Town is obligated to comply with the minimal NFIP requirements listed by FEMA.
- Floodplain Conveyance through Andes – Tremper Kill: Stonewalls and development along the banks of the Tremper Kill have been impacted with the increase storm events. Several sections of stones have been dislodged in places or have failed completely. In an effort to reduce the impacts of flooding and water velocities the addition of a floodplain reclamation and bridge expansion project will

improve conveyance capacity within the Hamlet of Andes.

- Encourage the evaluation of bridge and culvert structures for the influence on backwater and the extent of flooding. Develop a plan to increase the structure size to address the increase in the frequency and magnitude of storm events within the Town of Andes. Increasing the opening of the bridges will allow for greater flood conveyance, reduce the flood depth, flood velocity, and stream erosion. Reducing the risk of flooded public highways will improve water quality, stabilize soils, and reduce nutrients and contaminants from entering the stream system
- Educate and inform residents and officials on Floodplain management principles
- Provide information and available resources on invasive plant & animal species and how to limit the spread within the local landscape

## **9.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **9.1 Local and Regional Economy**

The economy of Andes is linked to that of the Catskill region, which is diversified (concentrated in the service, manufacturing and agriculture sectors), but small in scale. The tourism economy is primarily generated from visitors to the area and their spending on hotels, transportation, dining, shopping, entertainment, and miscellaneous goods and services.

To meet future changes and challenges, it is critical that the people of Andes plan for the future. Currently, Andes' economy is made up of commercial activities, agriculture, recreation, and tourism. Further economic development within Andes can best be achieved through an expansion of commercial and business interests, professional services, an enhancement of recreational opportunities, and expanded tourism services.

Economic development needs to consider efforts to protect and strengthen the natural environment and historic character of the Town. For example, potential conflict may exist if new construction or incompatible uses proposed in historically sensitive areas. Alternatively, economic development could strengthen preservation goals in providing for adaptive use of significant buildings. Historic character plays a central role in the objectives related to commercial revitalization and tourism promotion, and this role should be strengthened as part of both previously stated goals.

Another important economic development strategy for Andes will be regional cooperation. The Town, along with the Andes Chamber of Commerce should keep up-to date on, and actively participate in, economic development efforts such as those of the Delaware County Chamber of Commerce, Catskill Watershed Corporation, and Catskill Center for

Conservation and Development.

### Local Business Trends

The largest local employer continues to be Andes Central School. Recent upward trends have been in short-term accommodation rentals, wedding venues, and the manufacture of craft beverages as well as the development of local agribusiness. Expanded high speed internet/broadband accessibility has had great impacts on the local workforce with a shift from traditional onsite employment to telecommuting/home office arrangements. This provides increase employment opportunities as well as an influx of professions and disciplines within the town.

### Andes Chamber of Commerce

The Andes Chamber of Commerce is an association dedicated to promoting the general welfare and prosperity of the community and its local businesses. The Chamber provides cooperation and a working relationship between the local business community and local government and/or other civic organizations. Further, the Chamber strives to stimulate the public sentiment for the overall benefit of the community and its inhabitants.

### Delaware County Chamber of Commerce

The Delaware County Chamber of Commerce unites hundreds of business and professional firms within the County. The Chamber functions as a central agency with the purpose of improving businesses and the business environment, as well as building stronger communities. The Chamber's mission is to promote private enterprise and mutually beneficial relationships among its members. They also foster business and community growth through government relations, member services, education relations, community development, and economic development.

### Primary Marketing Strategy

This plan proposes a secondary strategy of attracting additional arts, crafts, and related niche businesses based on the beautiful Catskill setting, historic buildings, location on a major thoroughfare, and a currently thriving arts culture. Andes should highlight its unique identity and encourage quality restaurants and shops that specialize in Catskill themes and material through crafts, antiques, and by catering to the outdoor recreation enthusiasts. The large attractive buildings along Main Street, coupled with the already active arts community, present a unique opportunity to develop artist studios and galleries within a walkable setting.

Andes may explore ways to expand its tourism base by improving its image as a year-round tourist destination. An active Main Street will, in itself, stand as the primary vehicle for encouraging additional tourists to visit Andes. However, Andes does not currently have enough lodging for visitors and tourists. In order to keep visitors longer in Andes, Bed & Breakfasts should be encouraged. To encourage second homeowners to visit, Andes should

put announcements of special events on the website as well as promotion efforts from the local and County Chambers of Commerce.

Andes should also continue to expand the tradition of holding events such as festivals and fairs that feature locally produced products and encourage the patronage of local businesses and services. Promoting and interpreting the colorful history of Andes is another strategy for drawing tourists. Particularly appealing are the walking tours of the area's historic sites and natural amenities. Tying into regional tourism strategies and developing a closer working relationship with neighboring communities are other simple, yet effective strategies that should be pursued.

## **9.2 Andes Main Street**

Main Street in the Hamlet of Andes serves as the central business/commerce location within the Town with a variety of cafes and restaurants, specialty/retail businesses and essential services. Main Street possesses many architectural design features that make it unique to the area and give Andes its character. The Main Street area possesses great opportunities for expanding and improving the small-town atmosphere that Andes has always known.

### Road Access

The accessibility to and from an area is important for attracting new businesses and strengthening existing ones. The viability of Main Street is linked to its accessibility to the surrounding residents and communities, as well as its ability to accommodate traffic and parking needs. There are several transportation issues closely related to the Main Street revitalization and future residential development. Such issues include the demand for parking and pedestrian access. The manner in which these issues are addressed has the potential to significantly impact the historic character of the community.

The accessibility to and from an area is important for attracting new businesses and strengthening existing ones. The viability of Main Street is linked to its accessibility to the surrounding residents and communities, as well as its ability to accommodate traffic and parking needs.

### Pedestrian/Bicycle Access

Pedestrian access is available primarily in the Hamlet of Andes. Pedestrian linkages to parks and significant cultural places should be improved.

Along Main Street bicycle access is available in the road right-of-way. Traffic along Main Street tends to be slower and safer for bicycle users. However, along the roadways within the Town, bicycle access is less accessible for the average cyclist. The roads in the Town tend to have many sharp curves and steep hills, which can be dangerous for a cyclist sharing the

road with vehicles. There are some bicycle trails off road that are traverse easements and right-of-ways owned by the State, NYC, the Town, and private properties.

Vacant properties

**There are several buildings within the Hamlet that have remained vacant and/or dormant for many years. Active reuse of these structures would add to the economic vibrancy of the Hamlet while ensuring that structures are maintain and available for local commerce.**

**9.3 Agriculture**

Andes Agriculture

Agriculture has long been a staple to not only the economy in Andes, but to the very way of life that residents have come to enjoy. It has enhanced the landscape of the community by affording open vistas, picturesque farmhouses, and scenes of animals and livestock. The large open fields also supplement the area wildlife by providing feeding grounds for deer and turkey, which both complements the regional scenery and enhances local hunting opportunities.

According to the Delaware County Real Property Tax Service, approximately 4,855 acres of land are utilized for active agricultural production. Table 9.3-1 provides a breakdown of operations in the Town.

**Table 9.3-1 Agricultural Lands (2023 Assessment rolls)**

<b>Property Class</b>	<b>Type of Operation</b>	<b>Number of parcels</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
105	Active vacant land	14	1,069.38
112	Dairy	10	1,969.15
113	Cattle	5	868.76
114	Sheep, Wool	2	369.91
116	Goats, Donkeys	1	37.21
117	Horses	5	540.35
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>37</b>	<b>4,854.76</b>

There are approximately 10,570 acres of land in the Town that is part of a NYS Certified Agricultural District #3 and 69 parcels of land in the town receive agricultural tax exemptions due to agricultural activities that occur on their land.

There are currently three (3) fulltime dairy farms within the Town of Andes, representing a notable shift in the Agricultural Industry from a time where expansive dairy farms across the Andes countryside dominated the local economy and land uses from the time of the earliest settlers until the 1950's.

Agriculture should be encouraged in the Town of Andes as the industry continues to evolve locally. Many smaller farms that cater to the production of beef and products associated with goats and sheep have become a larger part of the agricultural landscape of Andes. In addition, several 'hobby' or 'part-time' farms are enjoyed by many of Andes residents, which produce items such as fresh fruit, vegetables, and specialty crops. An ever-growing emphasis on local foods and products, farm to table and farmer's markets, farm stands and nurseries continue to demonstrate the agricultural viability that remains strong in the Town. The Town sees the growth of local agribusinesses as a key component of its local agricultural economy moving forward.

### Agricultural Easements

Government agencies and the conservation community have long recognized the acute financial pressures facing farms. Often much of a farm's investment and assets are tied up in their property. In response to the loss of farmland across the country, many states, as well as a few local municipalities, land trusts, and watershed agencies, have established 'Purchase of Development Rights' (PDR) programs.

PDR is a program where a government agency, town, or conservation organization pays cash for the development rights (a conservation easement) on an agricultural property, which helps the farmer realize and utilize much of the needed value tied up in their land, without losing it to development. This money can help pay off farm debt, expand operations, and keep a farmer in business; it keeps land available for production, and it helps keep our rural, agrarian countryside intact. Agricultural easements are generally designed to be more flexible than other types of conservation easements, allowing for the growth and evolution of farm operations and changing economic conditions. The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets has a statewide competitive PDR program, available to farms in counties with completed Ag & Farmland Protection Plans.

In the Catskill region specifically, the Watershed Agricultural Council (WAC) has an agricultural easement program for active farms located within the NYC West-of-Hudson Watershed. The sale of development rights or conservation easements is not the only answer to farmland preservation, but can serve as a valuable tool to consider in which the decision to preserve the land and to access the development equity in the property is left solely to the farmer. As of January 2023, the Watershed Agricultural Council had secured approximately 2,538 acres of land in Agricultural Easements and an additional 929 acres of Forest Easements.

## **9.4 Goals & Objectives**

Economic development creates employment opportunities and a tax base for a community. While industrial activity is the most visible form of economic development, it also encompasses commercial, professional services, and recreational development. Economic development could also strengthen preservation goals in providing for adaptive use of

significant buildings. Historic character will naturally play a central role in objectives related to commercial revitalization and tourism promotion. Enhancement to the Town of Andes' economy can be met through the goals and objectives identified below.

## Goal

*Ensure that adequate infrastructure is in place to protect environmental quality and promote economic development. Identify and designate areas to expand existing infrastructure to accommodate additional growth and economic development in a manner that ensures the protection of the environment within the Town of Andes, while preserving the quality of life for year-round and seasonal residents. Enhance the historic character along Main Street to encourage economic development and to improve the overall appearance and identity within the Hamlet.*

## Objectives

- Promote the development of distinctive niche markets and services that will continue to promote the Town of Andes as a unique community.
- Diversify the tourism economy by promoting the historic resources within the Town of Andes. In addition, support regional efforts that encourage both economic and tourist based initiatives within the area.
- Encourage both seasonal and year-round economic development to provide continued employment opportunities for Andes' residents.
- Identify future need for development and provide suitable locations and regulations for various types of developments. Update the Town of Andes land use regulations in order to properly evaluate and provide the appropriate locations and design standards for future commercial development.
- Support and encourage new and existing appropriate businesses in the Town of Andes.
- Promulgate appropriate wireless communication facilities and zoning regulations to promote, market, and support home-based businesses and telecommuting.
- Expand lodging opportunities in the Town of Andes.
- Continue to search for a place to establish public parking opportunities for those visiting Main Street.
- Encourage businesses that are compatible and will enhance the existing character of Main Street, such as development of a general/convenience store.
- Enhance Code Enforcement efforts on vacant commercial properties to encourage maintenance.
- Investigate whether design guidelines are needed and/or desired by the community.



## Goal

*Preserve the rural and agricultural character of the Town and provide support to the agricultural community.*

## Objectives

- Continue to support the agricultural community within the Town of Andes.
- Support & expand upon existing agricultural programs designed to aid farmers.
- Promote and support Agribusiness development in the Town.
- Provide regulations and other incentives to support agricultural activities in the Town of Andes that are in cooperation with the Delaware County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan.

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## 10.0 LOCAL LAND USE REGULATIONS & DEVELOPMENT

Land use patterns in Andes are illustrated in **Figure 6, “Land Use Classification”**. Residential land use is the most prevalent land use, followed by wild, forest, and conservation lands; public service lands; agricultural lands; recreational and entertainment lands; community service lands; commercial lands; and industrial lands.

### 10.1 Local Land Use Regulations

#### Zoning

The zoning in Andes is primarily for residential development but allows a range of uses by Special Permit. In the Town of Andes there are five (5) zoning districts, the General Rural District that covers the majority of the Town area and four (4) Hamlet zoning districts: Highway Residential (H-R), Industrial (I), Rural Residential (R-R), and Village Residential (V-R). The Hamlet is primarily Rural Residential, and along Main Street the lots are a combination of Highway Residential and Village Residential. **See Figure 7, “Zoning Map”**, prepared by the Delaware County Planning Department.

Both the Town Zoning law and the Town Subdivision Regulations are administered by the Town Planning Board. This includes requests from the public for the creation of any new parcel of land in the Town as well as for any change in boundaries of existing parcels (Boundary Line adjustments). In addition, the Planning Board oversees application for the proposed construction of all uses other than the erection of a one or two-family residence through a Special Permit and Site Plan Review Process.

The Town of Andes Zoning Board of Appeals receives and reviews requests for any variance from the adopted provisions of the Town Zoning Law.

#### Subdivision review

The Town enacted Subdivision Regulations in the early 1990s to administer review of parcel creation in the Town. The regulations were intended to achieve the following purposes:

- Promote orderly development in accordance with a Comprehensive Plan
- Protect the rural agricultural and scenic character of the Town
- Preserve the Town’s natural resources, particularly the water supply

- Provide for the controlled growth of residential and commercial use of land consistent with the economic and social needs of the community while respecting existing land uses.
- Promote the health, safety and general welfare of the Community consistent with Article 16 of Town Law.

### Short-term rentals

In 2022, the Town Board adopted a local law specific to the regulation of short-term rentals (STRs). The proposed local law outlines the permitting and enforcement process and requires owners of short-term rental properties to have property managers and their contact information included in a municipal database. Other provisions specify required off-street parking, capacity limits, the posting of “house rules”, proof of liability insurance and “bed tax” identification number. Each short-term rental is subject to a fire and safety inspection by the town code enforcement officer.

Permits are applied for through the Town Clerk with compliance review by Code Enforcement. Regulations require that the permit be posted in the residence and that neighboring property owners (within a 200-foot radius), be notified of the property owner’s intent to operate a short-term rental.

## **10.2 Future Density and Layout of Development**

The existing density and development of Andes is still typical to rural communities. The primary commercial development occurs along the major roadways, primarily NYS Route 28, and extends along the other major roadways, NYS Route 30 and County Route 1 and County Route 2. This provides both the commercial businesses and the customer base with easy access to goods and supplies. The Hamlet of Andes is the hub of commercial development and has created a destination point for tourists visiting Andes.

The residential development is largely spread out throughout Andes. Many of the lots are large acre lots keeping the density to a minimum. In the Hamlet, residential lots are much smaller and keep the integrity of the small town character.

Past and present land use play an important role in planning for the future. The character of Andes relies heavily on its natural resources and historic character. These resources are appealing to new residents, second homeowners, and vacationers. Public sentiment expressed during the Comprehensive Planning process, indicates a desire for future development along the roadway corridors while

at the same time enforcing new regulations to protect the views and vistas unique to Andes. Regulations and methodologies for maintaining the scenic qualities and natural resources, while providing for growth and development are strongly desired.

### **10.3 Relationship Between Natural & Built Environment**

The natural environment is important to the overall character and appeal of the community. Andes is fortunate to have incredible views and vistas of the countryside that have been undisturbed. Both year-round and seasonal residents have chosen to live in Andes due to these existing natural and rural amenities. The residents are able to enjoy larger tracts of land and the rural, natural countryside, while homes have been constructed in locations that take advantage of the views and vistas.

### **10.4 Development Potential**

Andes offers a wide range of outdoor recreational opportunities to all age groups. In order to provide the quality of life necessary to attract seasonal visitors as well as year round residents, it is essential that Andes continues to enhance a wide range of recreational and entertainment options to match the varying needs.

As discussed earlier, certain aspects of Andes' current land uses and economy that should be addressed and implemented are enhancements to the area's infrastructure, including additional retail developments, dining establishments, and streetscape improvements to draw tourists, as well as the establishment of a retirement community or long-term care facility. While strengthening the tourist economy should remain the primary goal for the Town, efforts to maintain a diverse economy also be considered.

Currently, commercial land uses are primarily in the hamlet area, along Main Street, as illustrated in Figure 3, "Land Use Classification," due to access to the primary transportation routes. This commercial development can be characterized as specialty/niche shops, restaurants, a motel, and office buildings. Additional commercial development may be needed if Andes desires to entice additional residents and tourists year round. Light industry, such as media, printing, and computer-based businesses would be a "good fit" with the existing development. Outside the Main Street area, along major travel corridors, additional light commercial development could be explored. There are limited vacant parcels scattered throughout the hamlet, not all of which are developable due to the presence of resource constraints such as wetlands, slopes, and regulation restrictions associated with the watershed. There are some vacant commercial buildings along Main Street that have a potential for reuse and development within the hamlet.

With the availability of telecommunication technologies, a recent trend has been the emergence of home-based business and telecommuting. Proximity to major urban centers such as Albany, Kingston, Poughkeepsie, and New York City make Andes an ideal location for telecommuting and home-based businesses.

## 10.5 Goals & Objectives

The residents of the Town of Andes expressed concern for maintaining the high quality of life in the community, while allowing for planned future commercial and residential growth and change. The current rural and agricultural character is highly valued, and the need to preserve agricultural land uses and activities is also viewed as crucial to preserving this character. Significant concern was expressed with respect to preserving the traditional features of the cultural and historic resources of the community.

Many view both the quality and location of future development with concern. In order to preserve the character of the community, commercial development has been targeted within the hamlet of Andes and in some areas along the State highways within the Town.

Several goals and objectives were identified at community meetings for the Town of Andes:

### Goals

*Goal: To properly allocate land uses within the Town in order to provide the appropriate land use regulations to protect environmental quality, historic resources, quality of life for year-round and seasonal residents while promoting economic development. The Town of Andes will promote the efficient use of land in localized settings of development so as to avoid environmental degradation, preserve open space, provide cost-effective infrastructure, and reduce the potential for land use conflicts.*

### Objectives

- Periodically review and evaluate local land use laws to ensure that allowed uses are up to date and consistent with the needs of the Town.
- Provide and enforce development standards and criteria to promote the efficient use of land, improve and maintain visual quality, and accommodate transitions among potentially conflicting uses.

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- Explore options for the regulation of commercial solar installations
  - Designate areas to promote additional growth and economic development in the Town of Andes that are appropriate and compatible with surrounding uses.
  - Implement the Town of Andes Local Flood Analysis, both by incorporating its suggestions into the zoning and subdivision regulations and by considering its findings when siting and/or reviewing future development.
  - **Provide and support active Code Enforcement efforts to ensure that local regulations are able to be administered adequately and consistently**
  - Provide zoning controls and other incentives to support agricultural activities in the Town.
  - Provide for consistent applicability of ADA guidelines to ensure for accessible commerce opportunities for all.
  - Provide development policies in order to protect historic and cultural resources within the Town.

### Goal

*To improve the appearance of the Town and Hamlet in a manner that is consistent and will promote the Town and Hamlet as a place for year-round residents, preserve the historic character of the Town and Hamlet of Andes, strengthen the tourism economy, and enhance the appearance of Main Street.*

### Objectives

- Develop corridor design guidelines to preserve the scenic views and vistas along major roadways through the Town.
- Enhance the overall image of Andes through regulations pertaining to junk in yards to preserve the aesthetics of the Town, including the Hamlet.
- Continue efforts to enhance the identity of Andes by improved signage identifying significant natural features within the Town of Andes, especially scenic lookouts.

**INSERT FULL PAGE ZONING MAP**

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## 11.0 What Makes Andes Special

In 2018, residents of Andes responded with written comments to the survey conducted by the Delaware County Planning Department and described the qualities that made Andes a unique place. Overall, the physical beauty and mountainous setting have historically drawn residents and visitors to Andes. The small size of the community, coupled with the quiet, rural setting, creates a safe, family-oriented atmosphere. Residents of Andes have endless opportunities to participate in outdoor recreation such as camping, hiking, hunting, fishing, cycling, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, and down-hill skiing in this rural setting. Excellent recreational opportunities and a beautiful setting have established the Town as a prime location for second homes and a large retiree population.

Residents also enjoy an array of community services such as quality water, fire protection, snow removal, education, and a library. Beyond basic services, the area offers remarkable arts and cultural opportunities in and around Andes. This unique combination of community resources provides a major building block for the Andes' development strategy.

Another distinguishing characteristic of Andes is its rich history, reflected in the quaint architectural style characteristic of the Catskill region. These unique buildings that line Main Street invite tourism-based development strategies.

Revitalization and street beautification are two critical components of such strategies.

Andes' Main Street has considerable economic development potential. Existing community services provide a good foundation for future development and enhancements to the Main Street. There are opportunities for new businesses to locate in vacant commercial buildings on Main Street. In addition, the Main Street is located on NYS Route 28, which brings visitors and potential patrons to this area. Bringing additional business to Main Street and further enhancement of Andes' Main Street will strengthen its ability to attract tourists.



## 11.1 Strengths of Andes

In order to provide a foundation for the discussion that follows, it is useful to summarize Andes major strengths and challenges. There remains a general theme for the protection of the rural, small-town character of the community is an ever-present primary planning goal.

In no particular order, the following are the strengths of Andes, as identified by residents in their responses to the Andes Survey conducted by the Town in 2018:

- Affordability
- Architecture
- Ballantine Park
- Cemeteries
- Churches
- Hunting and Fishing
- Library
- Local History
- Location & Landscape
- Cafes/Restaurants
- Proximity to Health Care
- Rural Character
- Safe, Low Crime
- Clean Streets
- School
- Small Businesses
- Tourist Attractions
- Town Pool
- Water
- Palmer Hill viewscape

## 11.2 Challenges of Andes

The area continues to grow more appealing to retirees and second homeowners, creating new housing stock within Andes. However, the housing growth results in increased costs to the Town for infrastructure and services, and ultimately increases the overall cost of living in Andes.

The existing challenges or problems with Andes were identified among the responses to the survey conducted by the Town. The challenges listed reflect common responses from the written responses:

- Create Safe Bike paths
- Enforce existing laws
- Parking needs in Hamlet
- Limited sewage area
- Lack of cell service
- Improved Roads & Sidewalks
- Limited public transportation
- Rising cost of living, taxes
- Needs for seniors
- Need increased transfer station hours
- Need for convenience/general store
- Need Business/Industry growth
- Tax base
- Retention of Youth
- Need for more services
- Costs and availability of Broadband
- Protect existing family farms
- Junk
- Need for affordable housing
- Reduce above ground wires in Hamlet.

Many of these challenges are due to Andes' remote location, and a remedy for these challenges may not be readily available in the near future. Andes' vast size of approximately 112 square miles of land area creates a problem for providing infrastructure needs to all of its residents. Small rural roads that once served farms years ago and have since been abandoned, are now being required for access to the new residential areas. Cottages, mobile homes, and vacation homes are altering the appearance of the area.

As stated in the previous Town of Andes Comprehensive Plan, "as more and more vacation homes are built, the resulting demand for services, such as road maintenance, snow removal, fire protection, police protection, and ambulance services may go beyond the current capabilities of local government". Today, as the community's issues are revisited, these concerns and challenges continue to hold true.

### **11.3 A Vision for the Future**

The values of the past must be related to the needs of the present and the future. "Let's keep Andes the way it is", was the desire of the community in 1977 and still holds true forty years later. However, as time moves forward, population increases, and technological advances have led to changes that must be made to provide adequate services for the citizens of Andes.

Attractive, carefully developed, orderly communities have inherently sound economic foundations. Within Andes, planning can establish logical patterns of land use, which are based upon the needs and desires of the community. Based on these considerations, this plan sets forth a vision founded on the following elements:

- Provide and enforce development standards and criteria to promote the efficient use of land, improve and maintain visual quality, and accommodate transitions among potentially conflicting uses.
- Revitalize Main Street through continued streetscape improvements, building stabilization and renovation, and business attraction
- Retain Existing Businesses through the above strategy, tax incentives, and a marketing strategy
- Target Gaps In Retail And Services. Currently, residents of Andes must go outside of the Town to purchase goods and services. Filling the gaps with businesses in the community makes good business sense.

- 
- Promote Tourism through both events and facilities. Focus on the arts, cultural events and activities, as well as, historical events and activities.
  - Restore and Rehabilitate the existing housing and attract investment in high quality permanent and rental housing.

