

## Chapter V: Recommendations and Implementation

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION TO RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter breaks down the action items, or recommendations for the community into “High” priority actions, “Medium” priority actions, and “Low” priority actions for the purposes of establishing a basic framework and foundation for moving towards implementation of the established goals. These recommendations are based on the information gleaned from the technical investigations (Chapter IV of this plan), the input of the Comprehensive Planning Committee, the feedback received through the public information meetings, and recommendations from the previous Comprehensive Plan. The recommendations are designed to help the Town of Concord achieve the goals and objectives outlined in Chapter III of this Plan update.

The timeframes assigned to “High,” “Medium,” and “Low” actions are further delineated as follows:

Low:	5-10 Years
Medium:	3-5 Years
High:	1-3 Years

Priorities will change from year to year depending on changing circumstances. What is an urgent matter today, might not be next year. The first, and most critical recommendation of this Plan is to form a committee dedicated to monitoring the implementation of the goals contained in the Comprehensive Plan Update (see Implementation).

#### 5.1.1 Recommendations

##### *Protect the Environment*

###### Agriculture

- Form an Agriculture committee that can help with researching and exploring the ideas for Agricultural protection. They can also take the lead on developing/directing the Agricultural Protection grant application.  
**Priority: High**
- Seek a grant from NYS Agriculture and Markets to develop an Agricultural Protection Plan for the Town of Concord (building off of the Erie County Agricultural Protection Plan).  
**Priority: High**
- Once the Agricultural Protection Plan is completed, consider the use of PDR's (purchase of development rights), TDR's (transferrable of development rights), and PACE (purchase of agricultural conservation easement). These will be dependent upon the results of the Agriculture Protection Plan. The PDR tool may not be suitable due to costs, and the TDR tool requires development pressures and locating areas where denser development is desired.  
**Priority: Medium**

- Other ideas that may come out of the Agricultural Protection Plan may include changes to the Residential- Agricultural zoning district (more focused on agricultural and Ag related uses), tougher subdivision regulations, an Agricultural Protection Overlay, etc.  
**Priority: Medium (dependent on Ag Plan)**
- Proactive tools such as Agricultural easements (tax breaks for providing easements), assistance to farmers in identifying markets, grant application assistance, farm transition planning, etc. could also come out of the Ag Protection Plan.  
**Priority: Medium (dependent on Ag Plan)**

### Mining

- Form a special committee to explore the options for regulating mining that may include:
  - Allow mining under incentive zoning. Incentive zoning would identify what could be allowed and what the needs of the Town are, and the processes and requirements needed to obtain these "re-zonings."
  - Keep mining as a separate zoning district, requiring rezoning each time a new application is received (as currently done), but using the Comprehensive Plan as the basis for determining whether or not a given location is a suitable one for mining.**Priority: High**
- Research the status of existing mines in the Town that are not zoned for mining.  
**Priority: High**

### Watershed Management

- Amend zoning ordinance to include provisions that encourage the construction of green infrastructure and limits the expansion of impervious surface.  
**Priority: High**
- Establish additional building code requirements (e.g. engineered flood vents) for new construction that occurs within, or near, the floodplain.  
**Priority: High**
- Establish dimensional riparian buffer areas on all watercourses. Establish adjacent areas to riparian buffer areas and limit the uses and types of construction allowed within the adjacent areas.  
**Priority: Low**
- Partner with Erie County and non-profit organizations such as the Buffalo-Niagara Waterkeeper to purchase land outright, establish conservation easements on land, and to add existing parcels to parkland.

**Priority: Low**

- Strictly enforce existing Town septic laws and consider adoption of additional local laws that would require maintenance, inspection, and upgrade of old septic systems.

**Priority: Medium**

- Work with FEMA to regularly update floodplain mapping.

**Priority: Low**

### **Promote Economic Development: Commerce and Industry**

- The Town, the IDA and the Village of Springville need to work together to establish mutually beneficial goals for the Zoar Valley Commercial Area (annexation of this area into the Village of Springville has been expressed as a possibility in the Village's Comprehensive Plan). This area is a long term growth area that needs to be properly planned. It should not be an area to compete with the development along Cascade drive, but provide different economic opportunities. Ag related or Ag support businesses could be included in the future of this area.

**Priority: Medium - High**

- Monitor the potential for business development at 219/Genesee Road interchange and work towards establishing a plan for the future of that area.

**Priority: Low**

- Update the Home Based Business Law to be a three level law:

- Allow some home based business by-right in the Town.
- Allow some higher level home based business by permit.
- Allow the final level of home based businesses by Special Use Permit.
- Proper definitions would be needed for these different level home businesses.
- Sample laws have been provided

**Priority: High**

- Establish 485-b program for eligible commercial and industrial facilities within the Town (pursuant to NYS Real Property Tax Law Section 485-b). For targeted areas (areas needing improvements/reinvestment), create an enhanced 485-b program.

**Priority: High**

### **Ensure Proper Residential Development in Appropriate Areas**

- Develop incentives for building rehabilitation/Reinvestment
  - Utilize the Erie County Housing Rehabilitation, Lead Paint Remediation Grant, and Rental Rehabilitation programs to the fullest extent allowable.
  - Take advantage of and advocate for the use of New York State Historic Barns, Historic Building, Historic Home Ownership programs to encourage private investment in eligible properties.

- Investigate potential for use of federal historic preservation tax credit program for eligible income producing buildings located in the Town.

**Priority: Medium**

- Make text amendments to R-AG zoning district to restrict residential uses, but allow other non-residential uses to support agriculture

**Priority: High**

### **Support, Maintain, Improve and Expand Parks and Recreational Opportunities in the Region**

- Work with public and private entities to promote Sprague Brook County Park, Kissing Bridge, and Cattaraugus Creek as recreational destinations.

**Priority: Medium**

- Identify other Town assets that could be utilized for economic generating recreation-based tourism. Work with local groups (such as snowmobile clubs) to increase marketing efforts

**Priority: Medium**

- Work with IDA to engage, support, and promote local businesses that depend on recreational tourism as a revenue stream.

**Priority: Medium**

- Conduct public meetings to further discuss the proposed rails to trails project (former Buffalo and Pittsburgh Rail Road). This effort should culminate in a Town ballot referendum on the issue.

**Priority: Medium**

### **Provide Quality and Cost Effective Community Services**

- Form a special committee to explore the potential for promoting the local arts community, and identifying partnerships

**Priority: Medium**

- Form a special committee to explore the need for additional fire services due to the recent downgrade in PPC (Public Protection Classification), causing insurance premiums to rise.

**Priority: Medium**

### **Promote Quality Urban Design and Historic Preservation**

- Work with Village of Springville and surrounding municipalities to design and determine appropriate locations for gateway signage to be placed on prominent routes

### **Update Town Zoning Code**

- R-AG zoning district needs to be revised. Restrict residential subdivisions, increase lot size, and reduce number of allowed uses. Allow more agriculture related uses (agri-business, agri-tourism, and other support type businesses).
- M General Industrial zoning district needs to be revised to allow light industry and business uses.
- Eliminate those zoning districts that are not used (they do not appear on the zoning map) or that are underutilized.

**Priority for all: High**

## **5.2 IMPLEMENTATION**

The effectiveness of any Comprehensive Plan update rests on how well the community implements its recommendations. A primary function of a community's Comprehensive Plan is to provide guidance for how to deal with future land use decisions and actions, and the discussion in this document clearly outlines where the Town intends to promote growth and reinvestment, and where growth is not encouraged. However, the Plan is also a foundation for future decision-making on a range of actions. The Plan provides Town leadership with direction for addressing major priorities and issues. The recommendations also suggest a number of projects/activities or actions for the community to undertake to appropriately direct growth and redevelopment, preserve the character of the Town and improve the local quality of life.

### **5.2.1 First Steps**

The first steps in beginning to implement the Comprehensive Plan Update involves official adoption of the document, and its distribution to local decision-makers. The following outlines an implementation framework for the Town over the next year and beyond.

*Adoption:*

The Town Board of Concord will pass a resolution to formally adopt the Comprehensive Plan update. This action gives the Comprehensive Plan the force of law.

*Distribution:*

Copies of the final Comprehensive Plan should be distributed to municipal leaders as Town Board members; Department Heads; Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals members; and members of other relevant Committees or organizations. This action ensures that all decision-makers are informed about the community's goals and vision.

*Coordination:*

There must be coordination with other governmental agencies, such as Erie County, and the adjoining municipalities and, especially, the Village of Springville. It is also important to maintain open lines of communication with various State agencies, as they will be important partners, either organizationally, and/or financially, for implementation. For example, recommendations for improvements along the State highways will necessarily involve the State Department of Transportation. Strong communication with the local legislative delegation can also be helpful in generating support for specific projects.

*Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee:*

It is recommended that the Town establish a designated committee that is tasked with oversight of the implementation process. This Committee will put together an Action Plan, and meet on a periodic basis to evaluate progress toward the goals of this Plan. Committees can compile and organize necessary information. They can bring a fresh range of perspectives and expertise to a problem, and they enable the Town to tap the assistance of committed individuals.

*Annual Action Plan:*

It is recommended that a first step entail the development of an Action Plan for the next year. The Comprehensive Plan contains many recommendations, and not everything can be accomplished at once. The Implementation Committee should recommend to the Town Board a targeted list of activities to be accomplished in the first year. This list should reflect the current priorities of the Town, and it should be based on a realistic assessment of existing capacities in terms of budget and personnel. The goal is to select a few issues where the Town can make significant progress. The Action Plan should also include a few items that can be easily accomplished to help build a sense of momentum and a list of successes.

*Assignments:*

In developing the Action Plan, the Board should decide how to best allocate assignments. For each item in the Action Plan, the Board should assign a sponsor or "champion" who will take responsibility to keep the issue moving forward. This can be a Board member, a staff person, a Planning Board member or a local citizen. Having an assigned "champion" greatly increases the likelihood of success.

## 5.2.2 Moving Forward – Next Steps

After adoption and distribution of the Update, the next step is to ensure there are adequate resources behind the implementation of the plan.

### *Budgeting:*

The Town Board should establish a budget for implementing the Comprehensive Plan. The budget should address funds for capital expenditures on specific projects, the funding of implementation activities such as studies, and administrative costs associated with implementation, such as legal assistance or match requirements for grant programs. Many recommended actions can be accomplished with little to no cash investment, but there needs to be a realistic assessment of actions that do require resources, particularly capital investments. Strategic phasing of certain projects may be required. Proactively budgeting for these activities helps ensure progress is made.

### *Partnering:*

The Town Board should identify potential partners to help accomplish their goals. These can be private organizations who are championing a specific cause, partner municipalities, such as the Village of Springville, or the County, or State agencies, depending on the nature of the activity. For example, the Historical Society would be a valuable partner for any activities associated with the historic resources located throughout the Town.

### *Communication:*

The Town Board is the central clearinghouse for issues in the Town. The Board should seek out ideas and recommendations from Town residents and staff, and, as noted above, actively coordinate with and other organizations and groups that are addressing similar issues.

### *Tools:*

The Town should consider reviewing existing procedures ensure their consistency with the Comprehensive Plan Update. It may be beneficial to develop forms, checklists or other tools to help guide local decision making.

### *Monitoring:*

On an annual basis, the Town Board should assess progress toward implementation actions and develop a new Action Plan allocating priorities and assignments for the upcoming year. This monitoring helps the Town keep track of progress made – or not made, and revalidates that the list of activities on the Action Plan remains the most important issues to address. It is likely that the Action Plan items will need readjustment periodically to reflect available resources, interests of active volunteers, local priority issues, etc.

### *Milestones:*

It is important to recognize and celebrate successes on a regular basis. This recognition helps maintain momentum and enthusiasm, and provides a sense of accomplishment. The Board should establish milestones to help maintain accountability. Large projects may need to be broken into achievable components to help make them more manageable. These targets help keep the plan on track.

*Advocacy:*

The Town Board has standing to advocate for the projects recommended in the Comprehensive Plan. The Town Board's advocacy of the Plan and its recommendations demonstrates commitment which can be very helpful in applying for grants and other support. Continued advocacy with County, regional and State representatives will keep them aware of the Town's priorities and vision, and may lead to assistance toward achieving the Town's goals.

*Intergovernmental Relations:*

As stated in New York State Town Law, if any other governmental agency has plans for a capital project within the Town, it must take the Town's Comprehensive Plan into consideration in its planning. This provides the Town with greater leverage in seeking to guide actions by other agencies in a manner that best supports its goals.

*Comprehensive Plan Updates:*

The Town should be proactive about evaluating and updating its Comprehensive Plan. This policy should be continued into the future.

### **5.2.3 Funding Resources**

The Town will need to seek outside resources to accomplish all the recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan. It is important to stay informed about potential funding sources for implementation efforts. There are a number of federal and state programs that offer funding for planning, design and/or capital projects.

Funding programs have different protocols and criteria, and proposed projects should be structured to target the grantors priorities and requirements. Identifying and taking advantage of funding opportunities can be a very effective means of implementing the Plan and achieving the Town's goals for the future. The following outlines some available funding resources.

*Federal*

- Community Development Block Grants
- Federal Highway Administration Funding Program
- Historic Preservation Tax Credits
- National Scenic Byways Program
- Rural Transport Toolbox
- TIGER Discretionary Grant Program



New York State

- Affordable Housing Commission (AHC)
- Brownfield Opportunity Areas
- Community Impact Grants
- Consolidated Funding Application (CFA)
  - >Community Development Block Development Grants
  - >Environmental Facilities Corporation Green Innovation Grant Program
  - >Main Street Program
  - >Municipal Grant Program
  - >New York State Council for the Arts
  - >Wastewater Infrastructure Engineering Planning Grants
- Drinking Water State Revolving Fund
- Environmental Restoration Program
- Household Hazardous Waste Disposal
- Municipal Landfill Gas Management
- Municipal Waste Reduction, Recycling
- New York State Child and Adult Care Food Program
- New York State Rehabilitation Tax Credit (Historic)
- New York State Historic Barns Tax Credit
- New York State Historic Homeownership Rehabilitation Tax Credit
- Recreation Trails Program (RTP)
- Solid Waste Municipal Landfill Closure
- Technical Assistance Grants
- Transportation Alternative Programs
- Zero Emission Vehicle and Infrastructure Rebates

Erie County

- Cultural Funding Application
- Fair Housing Program
- Housing Accessibility Program
- Housing Rehabilitation Program
- Lead Paint Remediation Grant Program
- Rental Rehabilitation Program

-Utility Connection Program