

**Westchester County Department of Planning**  
**2008 Operating Budget**

**Mission**

The Mission of the Planning Department is to develop and implement policies, programs and projects that protect and improve the quality of life in Westchester County and result in more livable and sustainable communities.

Three of the specialized sections of the Department – Land Use and Development, Housing and Environmental Planning – focus on the programs that carry out this mission. They utilize the expertise of the Department's two other sections – Design and Administration – which enable the work program of the Department to be carried out in the most comprehensive and cost-effective manner for all county residents. Activities within each section focus on the pattern of development and the natural environment and ways in which buildings, transportation and open space can be shaped or utilized to achieve a physical environment that fosters smart growth for all county residents. The Mission is achieved by working closely with other County departments, the 45 municipalities and the private and non-profit sectors.

The work program of the department includes a number of activities that are mandated by the County Charter and New York State and the federal governments. These include the review of certain proposed land use and zoning actions by municipalities, review of County capital projects and the environmental review (SEQR or NEPA) of all County projects and legislative actions.

The Planning Department's work focuses on five program areas: General Government and Support, Culture and Recreation, Environmental, Economic Development and Health and Public Safety.

The proposed 2008 Budget has one new area of expense under the technical services line. \$75,000 is requested to contract with the Housing Action Council for the implementation and operation of the Westchester Housing Land Trust. The Land Trust will provide a mechanism to preserve the affordability of housing units in perpetuity. The Trust will hold legal ownership of the land and provide a ground lease to a developer to build improvements on the property or a ground lease to the homeowner that owns or leases the unit. The ground lease will restrict the resale value of the home and will ensure that each unit continues to remain affordable. The Land Trust, when fully established, will become a self sustaining entity.

Increases to the Planning Department's Operating Budget (without Hilltop Hanover) and to the Operating Budget of the Hilltop Hanover Cost Center are discussed on pages 12 and 13.

**2007 Accomplishments/2008 Work Program**

**General Government and Support-Land Use**

- Property Dispositions: Staff worked with the Director of Real Estate on the disposition of surplus parcels. The Board of Legislators approved the transfer of 7 parcels to municipalities or to adjacent property owners. Other parcels have been appraised and transfers to interested adjacent property owners are in process. The Department will continue to work with the Director of Real Estate on the disposition of approximately 20 additional parcels of County land in 2008.
- Westchester 2025: Patterns, the County's land use policy document was published in 1996. The County Planning Board, in recognition of the physical and demographic changes that have occurred in Westchester over the last 11 years, is in the process of preparing a new planning policy document which will be primarily web-based. Staff, working with the Planning Board, has created a draft website and updated draft policies to help guide future land use decisions. In 2008, the website will be made available to the public and the draft plan will be released. Public outreach meetings will be held regionally. In addition, meetings will be held with municipal officials to discuss issues unique to their municipalities. The Planning Board anticipates adoption of new policies in 2008.

- Route 9 Scenic Byway Plan: In 2007, Planning staff began the development of a Comprehensive Corridor Management Plan (CCMP) for US Route 9 in Westchester County. This plan would become the basis for the roadway to be designated a New York State Scenic Byway which will permit enhanced marketing and funding opportunities for the corridor. The CCMP is partly funded through a NYS Coastal Communities grant. In 2008, staff will conduct outreach with involved municipalities on various portions of the plan.
- Tappan Zee Bridge/I-287 Environmental Review: The Department provided full staff support for the County Executive's Tappan Zee Futures Task Force, convened by Mr. Spano and Rockland County Executive Vanderhoef to track the study of alternative plans for the Tappan Zee Bridge and I-287 corridor as well as to raise public awareness. Work will continue in 2008 as the study moves toward identification of a preferred alternative and release of the draft environmental impact statement.
- Westchester County Capital Program: The 2008 County Planning Board annual report on the County's capital budget and its five-year capital program, prepared by Department staff for Planning Board review and approval, evaluated 96 projects requested for 2008 funding and made recommendations on the physical planning aspects of each project. In addition, staff completed reviews of 77 design plans. Staff will continue these capital reviews in 2008 and assist departments in developing their capital programs. Staff will also work with operating departments to identify means to streamline the review process. In 2008, the Design Section will address site improvements and parking needs at county facilities, including Grasslands and the South County Trailway.
- County Facility Plans: A draft of the Master Plan for the Grasslands Reservation was completed in 2007; the plan will be finalized in 2008. Work was begun, in conjunction with the Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation to develop a capital program plan for Playland Park; a draft plan will be completed in 2008. In 2008, work will begin on a plan for Blue Mountain Reservation.
- Land Use and Zoning Referrals: Staff reviewed approximately 700 referrals of proposed municipal land use and zoning actions to County Planning Board and prepared 530 referral responses for County Planning Board review and approval on development proposals in accordance with the Charter mandate.
- Technical Assistance: Staff responded to over 3,000 requests for technical assistance from local municipalities on land use, environmental, housing and community development issues.
- Research:

Census 2010 - Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) Planning staff met with the Town and Village Clerk's Associations of Westchester to encourage their participation in the LUCA program. Staff developed maps and lists of housing units with potentially incorrect address information and sent this data to each municipality for their use in preparation for the LUCA data from the Census Bureau. Planning will provide technical support to municipalities in 2008 as needed.

Census American Community Survey (ACS) In our role as a Census affiliate, the Department received the newest product to be released by the Census Bureau - a monthly survey of detailed characteristics of the population. In 2007, the initial release of the data was only for areas with a population of at least 65,000 (Yonkers, Mt. Vernon, New Rochelle and Westchester County) followed by data for communities with a population of at least 20,000. The Department assists municipalities in utilizing this data and will continue to do so in 2008 as more data is released.

Municipal/School District Ball Field Survey The Planning Department worked with the Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation to conduct a survey of municipal recreation directors and school district athletic directors to identify the number and type of baseball, softball, soccer and multi-use fields in each jurisdiction. Using GIS, the location of each ball field will be mapped. The project will be completed in 2008 and an analysis of the data will be used to evaluate future Legacy project requests.

- Westchester Municipal Planning Federation (WMPF): Department staff provided administrative, technical and program support to the WMPF Board for 12 technical training seminars in 2007 for officials, staff and land use board members throughout Westchester County. At least the same number of technical sessions will be provided in 2008. In addition, as municipal land use board members are now required by state law to obtain four hours of training each year, staff will work with WMPF to expand training opportunities and identify new formats so all are able to obtain the continuing education credits.
- Design Primer: In 2007, a draft of a new Design Primer was completed. This aide for local officials will provide insight into design review procedures and standards and will become part of the Department's primer series. It will be made available to municipalities in 2008.
- Big House/Tear Down Report: Research was conducted in 2007 for this new report on trends in the development of larger homes and the tear down of existing homes in Westchester. Staff compiled data through a survey of 43 municipal zoning ordinances, interviews with local officials and review of regional and national trends. The report will be drafted in 2008 and be made available to local officials to assist them in addressing construction that may be out of character with the community. The report will provide a compilation of existing regulations and sample ordinance language to address issues.
- Sing Sing Museum: The Planning Department continued working with the County Executive's office and the Village and Town of Ossining on efforts to establish a museum at the Sing Sing State Correctional Facility. An updated marketing report was completed in 2007 and it will be incorporated in funding requests to State and Federal government agencies. The historic, environmental and structural integrity of the powerhouse is being evaluated in order to proceed with phase one of a multi-phased approach to establishing the museum. In 2008, subsequent phases of the development will be determined and funding will be sought for the first phase.
- Bronx River Parkway Reservation Design Guidelines: A set of guidelines for future development projects on the Bronx River Parkway Reservation was drafted in 2007 by Planning staff in conjunction with staff of Parks Recreation and Conservation and Public Works. The guidelines cover signage, fences, lighting and other design related elements. It will be made available to County departments and other interested groups in 2008.

### **General Government and Support-Design**

This section focuses on the design and implementation of plans for County and municipal facilities and natural resource projects. Included are trailway and open space projects and wetland and stream bank restoration projects. Design projects encompass a planting plan for an individual facility, urban design studies of a target area, playground designs and streetscapes. Accomplishments are itemized under all program areas. This work will continue in 2008. In addition, the Design section will provide technical planning and construction management services to municipalities and non-profits within the 40 municipalities that are part of the Urban County Consortium receiving CDBG funds.

### **General Government and Support -Administration**

This section is organized to support the work program of the Department by providing needed financial, budgetary, contractual and personnel services including administration of grants, citizen boards and related functions. New administrative systems, policies and programs are being developed and implemented to maintain the smooth functioning of the department, enhance production and performance and achieve cost efficiencies and budgetary savings.

### **Culture and Recreation**

- **Open Space:** Westchester County, in collaboration with our municipal partners, has helped preserve over 2,000 acres of open space since 1998. Recent acquisitions have preserved a range of types of open space from the over 600 acres of Angle Fly Preserve in Somers to urban parks in White Plains and New Rochelle. Planning also worked with Parks, Recreation and Conservation on Legacy proposals for ball fields on County-owned land at Tibbetts Brook Park (south) in Yonkers and in municipally-owned parks in Ossining, Mamaroneck Town and Village, Larchmont and Lewisboro. A number of new projects for open space preservation and ballfields are under consideration for action in 2008.
- **RiverWalk:** Design is complete for several segments of the County Executive's proposed 50-mile long path along the Hudson River. A key segment of the Croton-on-Hudson RiverWalk is in construction and will be completed by the summer of 2008. Design is being finalized for a portion of trailway through Kraft Foods and a segment through the Metro-North Railroad property immediately north of Kraft, all in Tarrytown. Construction of this segment is expected to begin in 2008. A second segment in Tarrytown known as Scenic Hudson RiverWalk Park in Tarrytown will be designed in 2008 and construction is anticipated to commence in the second half of the year. The County and City of Yonkers will commence design on a segment of RiverWalk at the City's JFK Marino and Trevor Park that will include an outdoor amphitheater and pathway connection between Metro-North's Glenwood train station and the new amphitheater. Design will commence in 2008 on a portion of RiverWalk in the Crawbuckie Preserve and Mariandale property in the Village of Ossining. Staff is currently working with Tarrytown, Sleepy Hollow, Peekskill and Yonkers on other segments of RiverWalk. Implementation of various segments will be moved forward in 2008. The Department's RiverWalk Design Guidelines Report is being used by the County and others to ensure consistency and continuity in the use of materials and signage as segments are constructed.
- **Trailways:** The construction of Phase 5 segments of the South County Trailway north from the Bronx border to Dunwoodie Golf Course and north from Tuckahoe Road to Barney Street in Yonkers were completed in 2007. Phase 6, the final phase of the South County Trailway completing the gap between Warehouse Lane/Greenburgh and Route 119/Elmsford, is to be constructed by the NYS Department of Transportation as part of a Route 9A reconstruction and bypass project. An interim connection, utilizing local streets, will be explored and, if feasible, implemented in 2008. In 2008, design will begin to improve pedestrian access and provide parking for the South County Trailway in Hastings. In 2008, design will also begin on the rehabilitation and expansion of the Playland Parkway Pathway, on the Bronx River Parkway Reservation Trailway from Palmer Road to the Bronx border in Yonkers and on the portion from Crane Road to Fenimore Road in Greenburgh/Scarsdale. A feasibility/design study was begun in 2007 on the Tarrytown/Kensico Trailway and was completed in 2007. Final design will begin in 2008.

- Regional Bike and Pedestrian Plans: Department staff continued to chair the Bicycle/ Pedestrian Subcommittee of the three-county Mobility Advisory Committee and took the lead on planning for regional bike and pedestrian facility improvements. In 2007, staff prepared a plan for a proposed interim route for the East Coast Greenway and Bike Route 1 and distributed it to local officials. This proposed route will be presented at municipal meetings in 2008 and then finalized after review and comment.
- Greenway Planning: Staff continued in 2007 to seek local endorsement of the Compact Plan, *The Greenprint for a Sustainable Future*. To date 21 Westchester municipalities have adopted the plan with action by Lewisboro, New Castle and Greenburgh in 2007. Staff will continue to seek local endorsement of the plan.
- Historic Preservation: In 2007, the Department continued to provide staff support to the County's Historic Preservation Advisory Committee (HPAC) while reviewing the County's historically sensitive capital projects that included 30 ongoing projects and 35 projects proposed for FY 2008. In 2007, staff assisted HPAC in developing and running the "Preserving Community Character Conference" conference. Staff management of the capital project to create the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial at the Westchester County Courthouse was completed with the Memorial's dedication in 2007. Production of the initial phase for an interpretive and directional signage plan for the Bronx River Parkway Reservation was completed in 2007. Assistance to local communities with the development/adoption of local preservation ordinances and the provision of historic preservation assistance to other County departments will continue in 2008.

### Environmental Planning

Croton and Kensico Watershed Planning and Studies (MOA): The following activities were undertaken pursuant to the 1997 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between New York City, Westchester County and other parties involved in protecting part of the watersheds that provides drinking water to New York City and 85% of Westchester water consumers:

- Croton Plan The final draft *Comprehensive Croton Watershed Water Quality Protection Plan* for protecting water quality and community character was completed by Department staff for the County and the ten Croton Watershed municipalities. Work included GIS analysis, mapping, graphics and land use analysis as well as conducting public review sessions. Municipal agreement on the final plan is anticipated in early 2008. Work will continue in 2008 on implementation of the Plan's recommendations.
- Northern Westchester Watershed Committee (NWWC) Administrative and technical support was provided by staff to this coalition of town Supervisors who meet to implement the MOA. This will continue in 2008. The NWWC worked with the County Executive and the Riverkeeper in 2007 to examine highway deicing practices which resulted in staff conducting a survey of deicing practices in 2006 and preparing a comprehensive report in 2007 that included the survey results and recommendations for improving deicing practices.
- EOH Fund Administration The East of Hudson Water Quality Investment Program fund has grown from \$38 million to over \$57 million. The Board of Legislators approved the use of \$3.75 million for local projects, \$312,500 with equal matching funds for each watershed municipality and \$3.75 million for watershed wide projects subject to approval of each individual project. The NWWC has worked on a reallocation plan for the remaining \$50 million. Implementation of their recommendations will continue in 2008.

- Watershed Protection and Partnership Council As a member of the Partnership Council, the County – through the Planning Department – provides the Council with progress updates on the program areas above and serves as a member of the Technical Advisory Committee, which reviewed NYSDEC's NYC Watershed Croton Reservoir System Phase II Phosphorus TMDL Nonpoint Source Implementation Plan. In 2008, Department staff will continue to work with the Council on regional MOA issues, such as a regional approach to stormwater management.

#### Other Watershed Planning and Studies

- Indian Brook-Croton Gorge Watershed Plan A plan was prepared and finalized in 2007 in cooperation with the five watershed municipalities. The Department has received a grant from the Hudson River Estuary Program to develop and implement an intermunicipal agreement and a small demonstration project as a first step in implementing the recommendations included in the Plan. Work on the new grant will begin in 2008 and be completed by fall of 2009.
- Bronx River Watershed Plan The Planning Department has completed a stormwater management plan for the Bronx River watershed, working with the 14 watershed municipalities, New York City, state agencies and non-for-profit groups to form the Bronx River Coalition. The plan includes a detailed wetlands assessment and wetlands assessment tools, an evaluation of municipal ordinances related to stormwater in the watershed communities and conceptual plans for 24 projects to improve stormwater quality. In 2008, the Department will prepare a plan to address flooding in the watershed and will implement one or more of the projects called for in the plan.
- Lower Hudson River Watershed Plan In 2008, the Department will begin work on a watershed plan for the Lower Hudson River watershed, which includes the Saw Mill River and Pocantico River. The plan will focus on flooding in the watershed in addition to a management plan for stormwater runoff. The plan is anticipated to be completed by end of 2009.
- Davids Island In 2007, the County and the City of New Rochelle continued to move forward with the \$1 million investigatory stage of the Davids Island Environmental Restoration Program. The County and City have agreed to contribute up to \$60,000 each to match the \$882,000 grant from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. The site investigation is to be completed in 2007 and a plan for remediation will be prepared in 2008 to present to the public. Staff continues to monitor progress of the Army Corps of Engineers, which has received over \$18 million for building demolition, archaeological and remediation work on the island. An additional \$8 million has been secured for the work to continue in 2008. Planning staff has been working in partnership with the City of New Rochelle on this project in anticipation of the County's acquisition of the island for park purposes.

#### Stormwater Management and Flooding

- Grant Award: Education and Outreach A \$200,000 grant was awarded to the County and 36 partner municipalities to develop an education and outreach program for stormwater education to meet requirements under the State's Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) permit program for municipal stormwater runoff (also known as the Phase II stormwater program). A scope of services and model intermunicipal agreements (IMAs) with the participating municipalities have been prepared. Work on the grant deliverables, which will consist primarily of education and outreach materials targeted at county residents and business owners, will begin in late 2007 and continue through March of 2009.
- Stormwater Retrofit Projects Three stormwater retrofits have been completed and plans are underway to install additional retrofits designed to improve stormwater runoff quality at existing County facilities, including Maple Moor Golf Course. Retrofits will also function as demonstration projects to educate local communities and the development industry. Partial funding for the retrofits came through grants from the USDA, NRCS, and ACOE. The projects will be posted on the County website, to provide additional information and resources and promote these beneficial practices.

- Stormwater Demonstration Park The Department worked closely with the Departments of Public Works and Parks, Recreation and Conservation to incorporate a variety of stormwater best management practices (BMPs) into the redesign of the County Center parking area. The site is intended to serve as a stormwater demonstration park to show how to minimize impacts to the environment and protect water quality. Funding is also being sought to restore a portion of the wetlands and streambank at the site to enhance the educational benefits to visitors. Construction began in fall of 2007 and is anticipated to be completed by late spring of 2008.
- Stormwater Management Plan The Department works closely with the Department of Public Works and other County departments in preparing annual reports under the County's State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) permit for Municipal Stormwater Runoff. The annual reports outline the efforts undertaken by the County to improve the quality of runoff discharged from its storm sewer system. 2007 is the last year in the first permit cycle. The Department will work with the Department of Public Works to prepare the final report, which is due early in 2008, and to prepare for the new 2008 – 2013 permit cycle, which has a number of additional reporting and evaluation requirements. The Planning Department also works closely with the Department of Public Works to administer a capital project for stormwater improvements to existing County-owned properties and facilities. A stormwater master plan will be prepared in 2008 for the County's Grasslands Campus, with implementation of the plan's recommendations to commence in late 2008. The Planning Department continues to seek grant funds to supplement the implementation of this project.
- Floodplain and Stormwater Management The Department will continue to work with municipalities on floodplain and stormwater management to reduce impacts to the environment and to minimize flood impacts throughout the county. The Department worked closely with the Departments of Public Works and Emergency Services to assess flood damage in the aftermath of the spring flood events as well as to evaluate the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) recently updated by FEMA.
- Flood Task Force In June 2007, County Executive Spano created a citizen based advisory task force comprised of experts in land use and matters related to flooding to work with the County to develop an action plan to reduce the impacts of flooding on people and property throughout the County and make recommendations concerning the County's capital program for flood damage reduction. Planning is working with Public Works to provide full support for the Task Force. In addition to regular meetings, subcommittees have been set up focusing on specific issues. Meetings are also being held with state and federal entities to coordinate our collective efforts and identify outside funding to assist in the design, development and implementation of future projects.

#### Environmental Review

- SEQR Reviews Environmental reviews in accordance with the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR) were conducted for 215 County projects and legislative actions and over 1,200 A&C agenda items in 2007.
- County Airport Supplemental EIS Planning is working closely with Transportation and Public Works to direct the consultant to the County in the preparation of a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement related to proposed modifications to the Airport Layout Plan. The larger project was put on hold in 2007 to study the parking situation at the airport and complete designs and studies in support of some of the individual projects. The SEQR process commenced in late 2007 on an individual project to improve the deicing facilities at the airport. The SEQR process for this project is anticipated to be completed by spring of 2008. The consultant is currently preparing a Draft Environmental Impact Statement.
- NEPA Reviews 90 NEPA reviews were conducted in 2007 for federally funded projects including housing, streetscapes, park projects, lead abatement and projects located at Westchester County Airport.

Education/Outreach/Community Involvement

- Hilltop Hanover Environmental Resource Center Activities and educational programs at Hilltop Hanover greatly increased in 2007, making it a popular venue for individuals and families to visit. Hudson WoolWorks maintains a herd of 70 merino and Shetland sheep and offers workshops to adults and children on pasture management, animal husbandry and wool operations, including knitting classes. The spring lambing season creates excitement and many visitors to see the babies (34 in 2007), including twins and triplets, out in the pasture with their mothers. The Winery at St. George planted an organic vineyard in April and will offer programs in 2008 on growing and harvesting grapes. Hilltop Farm Honey maintains 20 production hives and two demonstration hives. Their staff offers lectures to adults and children on honey bees and pollination. Cornell Cooperative Extension provides training workshops and classes to children, adults and visiting school groups. In 2007 these included grass/lawn clinics, composting clinics and a butterfly garden. Cornell also maintains demonstration gardens. Something Good in the World, Inc, also offers classes to children, families and school groups featuring a farm based curriculum. One popular program is "A Day on the Farm" which allows children to feed the chickens, go hiking on the trails and participate in planting or harvesting programs. The Watershed Agricultural Council provides assistance to the County on water quality issues, best management practices and has produced working documents such as a Forestry Management Plan and a Pasture Management and Grazing Plan for the Farm.

The Planning Department worked closely with the Department of Public Works through 2007 to implement infrastructure projects needed for development of the Resource Center. A green roof was installed on a shed and has become an educational demonstration tool. A 3,000 gallon water tank was installed and a new well activated. New planting beds and stone walls were installed as well as two new roofs on existing buildings. Three and a half miles of hiking trails were developed and are currently in use. In 2008 the farm will be hooked up to the Yorktown water system and will have potable water. Improvements will be made to the electrical system as well the septic system. Parking improvements will be made to accommodate the increasing numbers of visitors to the Center. Hilltop has hosted many programs and presentations in 2007. With the infrastructure improvements proposed in 2008, there will be an increase in quality programs, allowing the Resource Center to expand and fulfill its mission of providing quality environmental programs for the residents of Westchester County.

- The Citizen Volunteer Monitoring Program Three workshops were held during the spring of 2007 and over 80 volunteers trained, resulting in the weekly monitoring of 18 sites throughout the county (an increase of seven over last year's 11 sites). The program continued to expand this year to include six local high schools and over 100 students. The program has also been the subject of numerous news media reports, including the New York Times, and The Weather Channel. The program entered its second grant (this one for five years) from the NYSDEC. Funding from the program will be used in 2008 to expand outreach efforts and the involvement of the volunteers in the County's efforts to educate local residents and municipal boards and promote an understanding of watersheds, our impacts on them, and how we can use stream health as an indicator of water quality.
- Soil and Water Conservation District (SCWD) The Department provides administrative and technical services to the Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Directors, including overseeing the habitat restoration program and the provision of technical assistance to local communities, the professional community, and residents. The Soil and Water Conservation District continues to sponsor or co-sponsor three technical workshops on topics such as stormwater management and erosion and sediment control to protect the environment.
- Technical Assistance Staff organized three workshops and training sessions to increase understanding and technical expertise of environmental issues and has participated in over one dozen meetings, conferences and seminars in 2007. The 2008 schedule of workshops and training sessions is being planned.

- Brochures and General Information The Department continues to disseminate its brochures on stormwater management, based on our popular poster series, to local residents both online and in hard copy. The Department has also created brochures and disseminates information on programs related to environmental protection and agricultural preservation both online and hard copy where appropriate. Hard copies are distributed at environmental fairs and events. In 2007, the Department produced a guide on riparian buffers, describing the importance of vegetated buffers along streams and ponds and how to maintain and restore them. The Department will design and install six educational signs for aquatic habitat sites using a grant from the Long Island Sound Study Program. The Department also distributes literature and information prepared by other sources, such as technical manuals like the New York State Stormwater Management Design Manual. In 2007, the Department, through the Soil and Water Conservation District, distributed two guidebooks on streams (*Stream Processes: A Guide to Living in Harmony with Streams* and *Life at the Water's Edge: Living in Harmony with Your Backyard Stream*). The Department will seek funding to produce additional technical and informational material in 2008.

#### Agricultural and Farmland Protection

- Farmland Protection Implementation Grant The Department, working with the Westchester Land Trust and the Watershed Agricultural Council, prepared a proposal to participate in the State's Farmland Implementation Grant Program. The County was awarded over \$2.7 million to purchase the development rights on one of Westchester's few remaining family farms. Planning will be working with other County departments, the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets and the Watershed Ag Council and Westchester Land Trust to implement this grant and secure the agricultural conservation easement on the farm. The Department will also continue to submit applications for additional grant awards.
- Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan The Westchester County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan was certified by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets in 2005. The Department has submitted grant applications, partnering with the Westchester County Cornell Cooperative Extension Service, to implement a number of the recommendations contained in the plan. Department personnel participated in workshops on Agricultural Law and continue to work with local municipalities on agricultural issues. The Department will seek funding in 2008 to implement the recommendations to protect and enhance Westchester's agricultural industry.
- Agricultural Nonpoint Source Assessments and Whole Farm Plans The Watershed Agricultural Council completed the inventory, assessment and prioritization of agricultural land in 2006, completing fifteen whole farm plans to reduce potential environmental impacts associated with ten high-priority agricultural operations. The Department has submitted a five-year strategic plan for additional funding under the state Agricultural Environmental Assessment (AEM) program and will continue to look for additional ways to achieve the goals of this program in 2008.
- Additions to the Agricultural District Department staff worked with the Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board to review fourteen applications from local landowners who wish to be added to Westchester County's existing Agricultural District. After review by the AFPB and the Board of Legislators, six of the applications were recommended to the State for inclusion in the District, adding approximately 100 acres to Westchester's Agricultural District.
- Agricultural District Recertification In 2009 the County Board of Legislators must re-evaluate the current district and submit a report to the State. The County Planning Board is also required to prepare a report. In anticipation of these efforts, a steering committee is being established consisting of county and local municipal officials, various boards and representatives of various interest groups to work with a consultant to assist in the evaluation of the district. The Planning Department will support the efforts of this committee and the consultant.

### Aquatic Habitat Restoration Projects

- Current Projects The Division oversees the Aquatic Habitat Restoration Program, which restores degraded wetlands, watercourses, waterbodies and related habitats to improve water quality. Active projects in 2007 included:
  - Construction or design of four freshwater pond restoration projects.
  - Construction of one streambank stabilization project.
  - Construction of one freshwater wetland restoration project.
  - Construction of one salt marsh restoration project.
  - Construction or design of four stormwater retrofit projects.
- Education and Outreach A brochure of aquatic restoration sites created by the Department, along with an accompanying video, to serve as an education tool and encourage replication by local communities was widely distributed in 2007. Links to the County's website have been created from a number of other websites of related agencies and organizations. The Aquatic Habitat Program was the subject of several newspaper articles and a Weather Channel news spot. The Riparian Buffer Guide was produced using a number of examples from this program.

### Housing

#### Economic Development-Housing

- New Affordable Housing: The Housing Section has successfully worked with developers of affordable housing projects by conducting application reviews and providing technical assistance. Construction of 126 County funded affordable housing units in five individual developments will be completed by the end of the year. Another 786 units are currently under construction with 440 expected to be completed in 2008. Additional units are in the pipeline and will advance in 2008. These may result in another 400 units being completed by year-end 2008.
- Affordable Senior Rental Housing-White Plains: In January 2005, the County issued an RFP for affordable senior rental housing at the corner of Court and Quarropas Streets in White Plains. After a rigorous RFP review process, the HANAC/Bluestone team which is working with the Enterprise foundation was selected to develop the site. The approved proposal is for a showcase project of approximately 200 units of affordable senior housing in an architecturally significant building featuring green technology (including a green roof), smart technology and handicap accessibility. The Board of Legislators approved authority to enter into a 65 year lease with the development team, with three options to renew for 10 years each. This lease was executed in 2007. In 2008 the developers will continue to seek planning/zoning approvals from the City of White Plains and the County will execute the lease agreement.
- Section 8 Rental Assistance: In the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program, 4,377 units were assisted in 2007. In 2008, we expect an estimated additional 100 units to ensure the affordability of an older affordable housing pr8 5 home ownership units for graduates of the Family Self Sufficiency Program. In 2008, Section 8 anticipates continuing full use of its funding for rental assistance and continuing to operate as a "High Performing Agency" as designated by NYS DHCR.

- Family Self Sufficiency (FSS): The FSS Program helps families improve their economic stability by linking them to educational programs, vocational programs and support services. There are 318 families currently in this program. Since the inception of this program in 1993, 296 families have graduated with 20 of those families graduating in 2006. Twenty families are expected to graduate in 2007. The graduates of the FSS Program are encouraged to continue with our Home Ownership Program, which uses subsidies from Section 8 to assist with the mortgage payments. Presently we have four successful homeowners.
- Homeless Assistance: The County has coordinated and reviewed applications for supportive housing services to aid homeless households throughout Westchester County, including the cities of Yonkers, Mount Vernon, New Rochelle and White Plains and the Continuum of Care Network and will continue to do so in 2007. Planning will also work with other County departments and municipalities on the 10-Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness, required by the federal government. The Department is also helping to implement the Homeless Management Information System to ensure an unduplicated count of homeless persons assisted by the various programs.
- HOPWA Program: (Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS); The Department received an award from NYC for additional funding amounting to \$1.8 million in 2007. The majority of these funds provide monthly rental subsidies to 75 families. The balance is granted to the Cities of Mt. Vernon, Yonkers and New Rochelle to provide services to individuals with HIV/AIDS and their families.

### **Economic Development-Community Development**

- Community Development: In 2007, 18 municipal improvement projects were designed in 19 communities. Eighteen of those projects have been completed. Construction is underway on another 6 projects, which include parks, sidewalks, streetscapes, and playgrounds totaling almost \$6 million. In 2008 staff anticipates designing and constructing 15 projects in 13 communities valued at \$6 million. Staff will design an additional 5 projects valued at \$2 million that will be constructed in 2009.

### **Health and Safety**

- Rehabilitation of Existing Housing: In 2007, 9 units were completed through the Property Improvement Program and another 13 through additional resources such as the NYS RESTORE program, Access to Home Program and WRAP (Weatherization Referral Assistance Program) funds. PIP funds were also awarded to a 123 unit development, formerly a Mitchell Lama development, which assisted in maintaining the affordability of those units.
- Lead Paint Abatement: The Lead Safe Westchester (LSW) program continues to reduce the incidence of lead poisoning in high risk children and also to has a significant impact on improving the condition of the pre-1978 affordable housing stock. In September of 2006, the County was awarded an additional \$5 million from HUD to evaluate and reduce lead paint hazards and implement controls in approximately 375 housing units over the next two years. 63 units were completed in 2006. 110 units will be cleared in 2007 and an estimated 150 units will be cleared in 2008. Work on lead abatement is done in partnership with the Department of Health.

### **Trusts and Grants**

Planning Department Trusts and Grants totals are one of the highest totals for Trusts and Grants administered by a County department. The majority of these funds are administered by the department for the direct benefit of individual families, not-for profit agencies and municipalities, most of which may not be eligible for funding on their own. It is important to note that these grant funds are critical in leveraging local fund raising, municipal contributions and project financing and can generate up to five times the grant revenue for individual projects.

The 2008 figure for all grants obtained by the Planning Department is \$90,148,874, an increase of \$8,890,531 over 2007.

Sixty six percent of staff positions in the Department of Planning are fully funded through Federal and State grants. An additional eleven percent is offset through other non-tax levy sources.

### **Revenue**

The Department, including the Hilltop Hanover cost center, is projected to bring in \$866,809 in revenue from a variety of sources.

In 2007, six administrative and research lines were moved into the operating budget from the CDBG Trust Account in order to use reduced CDBG funding to deliver programs and services to the residents of the 40 municipalities that directly benefit from this funding. Before 2007, the CDBG Trust Account was able to absorb 100% of these personnel costs. The positions moved into the operating budget last year are for staff who carry out critical support functions such as accounting, contract management, personnel and research for the entire department. These positions are usually found in the operating budgets of other County departments. In 2008, these positions will be offset by revenue from CDBG administrative funds for 60% of the full amount for the entire year. The CDBG program will continue to absorb a significant percentage of these expenses as long as funding is available and, as is standard practice for the Planning Department, we will continue to be aggressive in the pursuit of outside funding sources to any replace future reductions in CDBG funding.

### **Tax Levy**

The Planning Department's tax levy forecast, including the Hilltop Hanover cost center, for 2008 is \$4,445,667, an increase of \$259,448 over 2007.

The following expenditures impact the Department's tax levy:

#### **I. Planning Department (without Hilltop Hanover)**

1000 Orgs: Annual Regular Salaries/Annual Other/Overtime The 2008 proposal in these personnel lines is \$2,665,501, an increase of \$31,278 over 2007.

2000 Org: Equipment The 2008 request is \$5,000 for replacement of furniture that has reached the end of its useful life. No funds were requested in 2007.

3000 Orgs: Book/Office Supplies/Postage: The proposed expenditures in these three categories remain the same as 2007.

4000 Orgs: Equipment Services/Memberships/Travel/Technical Services/Supplementary Programs the proposed expenditures in these categories total \$955,543, a decrease of \$232,672 over 2007.

5000 Orgs: 2008 projected charges from other County departments total \$1,206,426, an increase of \$153,764 over 2007.

II. Hilltop Hanover Cost Center: The total operating budget for this cost center is \$415,056, an increase of \$248,719 over 2007. The increase is due to an upgrade for the Center's Director, the continuation of the staff assistant position that was an added starter in mid 2007 and the funding of summer interns to assist the increased programming during that season. Also, various other cost allocations increased such as general supplies, printing and office supplies, educational material, equipment, contractual and technical services and services by Public Works and Law. The department is projecting \$12,000 in rental revenue from this cost center.

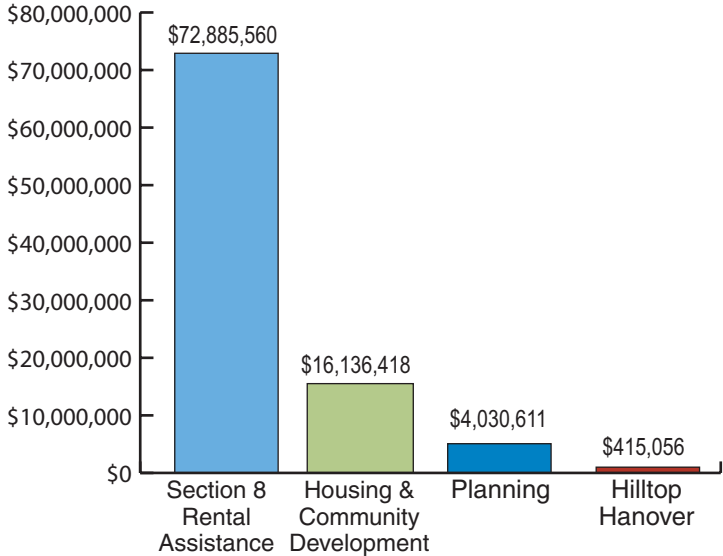
The Planning Department, with the amount of trust and grant revenue it obtains and the services it provides to the County and its municipalities delivers major value for a relatively low cost to taxpayers.

**WESTCHESTER COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING  
GRANTS AND REVENUE 2007-2008**

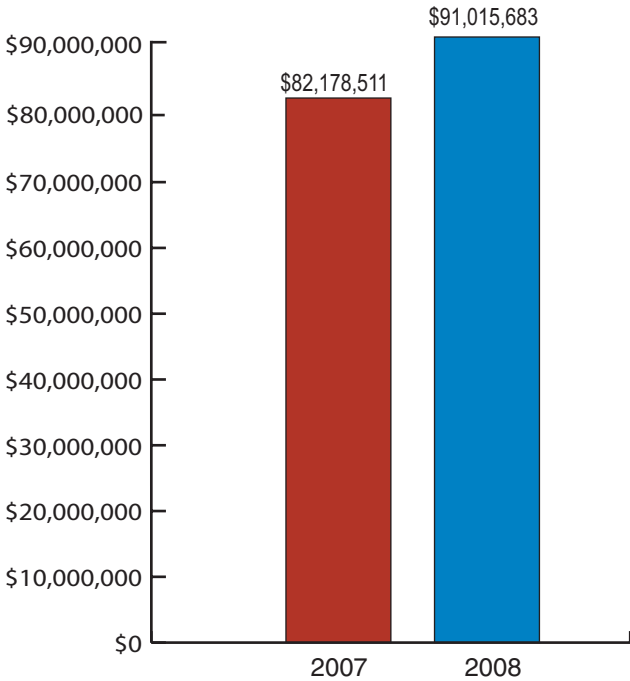
<b>Planning Department Grants</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)	5,908,521	5,862,732
HOME Program for Affordable Housing	1,762,211	1,752,104
American Dream Down Payment Initiative	27,284	27,284
Emergency Shelter Grant	250,815	254,833
Housing Development Fund	0	0
Property Improvement Program	2,961,734	1,038,265
HUD Lead Abatement Program/HUD Lead Hazard Reduction Demonstration	3,342,565	0
HUD Lead Abatement Program/HUD Lead Hazard Reduction Demonstration II		5,000,000
HOPWA - Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS	1,873,791	1,601,200
RESTORE Program	80,000	0
Affordable Home Ownership Development Program Grants	0	600,000
Section 8 Rental Assistance Program	62,549,819	72,885,560
319 Funding for Water Quality Planning and Monitoring	0	0
Long Island Sound Projects	2,136,578	259,822
Croton Bay Watershed	3,074	36,926
Soil and Water Conservation District	15,662	7,937
Water Quality Improvement Project	269,564	272,936
Stormwater Education and Outreach Grant	0	200,000
Hudson River Corridor Quality Program	17,452	62,548
Croton Watershed Good Neighbor Payments	59,273	236,727
Pocantica River Watershed Management Plan	0	20,000
Croton Bay IMA	0	30,000
<b>Subtotal Department Grants</b>	<b>81,258,343</b>	<b>90,148,874</b>
<b>Planning Department Revenue</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>
Revenue from all Sources	920,168	866,809
<b>Subtotal Department Revenue</b>	<b>920,168</b>	<b>866,809</b>
<b>Total Department Grants &amp; Revenue</b>	<b>82,178,511</b>	<b>91,015,683</b>
<b>Total Operating Budget</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>
Section 8 Rental Assistance	62,549,819	72,885,560
Housing & Community Development	16,206,921	16,136,418
Planning	4,019,882	4,030,611
Hilltop Hanover	166,337	415,056

WESTCHESTER COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING  
including Hilltop Hanover  
**2008 OPERATING BUDGET**  
**2007-2008 GRANTS & REVENUE**

**Total Operating Budget  
2008 Program Cost**



**2007-2008 Grants & Revenue**



- *Planning Department Trusts and Grants represent one of the highest totals for Trusts and Grants administered by a Westchester County department.*

WESTCHESTER COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING  
including Hilltop Hanover

2008 OPERATING BUDGET DISTRIBUTION

