



VILLAGE OF CROTON-ON-HUDSON

DECEMBER 2024

Organizational and Operational Assessment and Plan for the Engineering Department



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Acknowledgments

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We would also like to extend our sincere appreciation to the Village Engineer and department staff who provided valuable insights on operations, emerging trends and key community issues. The Department also provided significant data and general guidance throughout the Study process. We would also like to thank the community stakeholders and volunteers that also participated in the Study and provided valuable insights and recommendations for the future of the department.



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I. Executive Summary

Study Purpose

The Village Engineering Department plays a significant role in the provision of Village services and is recognized for its excellent service delivery. As part of its proactive strategy to support and build upon this excellence, and to assure that Village government has the organizational structures and operations in place to best serve the Village of the future, Village leadership initiated an Organizational and Operational Assessment and Plan for the Engineering Department. The Village recognized that it is healthy for municipalities to periodically evaluate their functional alignments, organizational structures, and service delivery models; particularly in the context of significant changing community needs and priorities.

The Office of the Village Engineer is responsible for a wide range of functions. Central to its operations is the responsibility for the administration and enforcement of the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code and Energy Code, the Village Zoning Code, as well as a wide range of quality of life Village Local Laws and Codes. The Department also plays a significant role in the planning, development and coordination of community development projects including land use and re-use planning, technical review of projects, policy recommendations to the Village Board of Trustees and implementation of Village policy directives. The Department also provides professional and administrative support to the Village Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Water Control Commission, Waterfront Advisory Committee and the Advisory Board on the Visual Environment. The Department also provides, on a limited level, the oversight of engineering design services related to Village infrastructure and capital improvement planning. Finally, the Village Assessor function is also included within the Department.

Unanimously, municipal and community stakeholders agreed that the Engineering Department has done an excellent job in carrying out its wide span of roles on behalf of the Village government, its residents, and its property owners. At the same time stakeholders spoke to the changing nature of the services to be delivered and the workload of the Department due to a convergence of multiple influences and factors. Stakeholders spoke to multiple emerging community trends, changing community needs and expectations, new and re-invigorated Village policy direction, and ongoing New York State regulatory changes related to fire safety, the built environment and energy conservation.

It was critical for this study to include a review these trends and factors as part of the assessment and plan to realign the Engineering Department's organizational structure and operations to meet the future needs of the community. This includes identification of opportunities related to the alignment of functions, the organizational structure, leadership, management, staffing and the use of technology and best practices.

Study Approach

The organizational and operations assessment and plan was developed through a facilitated process involving Village leadership, the Department and key stakeholders. It provides a set of recommended strategies designed to prepare the Engineering Department to best meet Village priorities and goals and at

the same time address the current and anticipated workload increases. The strategies include minor re-alignments of functions, organizational restructuring and staffing, identification and implementation of program and management best practices, enhancing the level of customer service, and inclusion of optimization of technology tools. The study:

- Developed an understanding of Village priorities and key issues impacting the Village.
- Prepared a system-wide profile and assessment of the Engineering Department's existing organizational structure, organization and operations.
- Evaluated alignment of functions within the Department and between Department staff and other Village Departments.
- Identified key strengths to build upon and opportunities for improvement.
- Provided a set of recommendations that outline a realistic blueprint for action.

Key Observations and Considerations

Complementary Village Priorities: Village Land Use Planning and Development and Code Administration and Compliance

Village leadership has set forth a smart growth planning and development agenda with a strong eye on the protection of natural resources, optimization of the Village waterfront assets and green spaces, increasing multi-family housing opportunities and finding the best and highest repurposing of obsolete land uses.

The Village Board has set a policy focus on strategies that promote strong neighborhoods by assuring the built environment is structurally sound, is well maintained and provides for the health and safety of the community. This vision is framed in its continuum of Village local laws and codes that complement the NYS Uniform Building and Fire Prevention Code. Central to its success is a strong code administration, compliance and enforcement program.

While complementary in vision and desired outcomes, the delivery systems of these two priority areas are quite different. Strategic land use planning, including complex land re-purposing, and community development requires significant time on planning, environmental reviews, technical site plan reviews, negotiations between parties, grant writing and coordination with Village leadership, Village boards, developers, etc. The code administration and compliance program is a high volume regulated operation requiring detailed knowledge of the expansive set of NYS and local codes, consistently applying the codes through standard operating procedures and department work plans, attention to detail, deadlines and documentation. It also requires ongoing supervision, case tracking, quality control and re-assessment of work plans. The goal of codes is to achieve the highest level of compliance as soon as practical.

As the Village moves forward, it will be critical to continue to foster the complementary and often times interfacing nature of these priorities; yet, at the same time recognize that they require different operational approaches.

Village Infrastructure Engineering Services

Historically, the Village Engineer was the primary engineer relative to Village assets, infrastructure and capital planning; this responsibility has shifted to the Superintendent of Public Works who also holds a professional engineering license (P.E). Currently, the Village Engineer and the Assistant Village

Engineers indicate that their time dedicated to Village infrastructure engineering services has declined and they estimate that it represents approximately 5-10% of their time.

Robust Department Workload

While the Village is only 4.8 square miles in size, it has a population of more than 8,000 residents and approximately 3,179 housing units; both of which indicate a high fire safety, building permitting and local code enforcement workload. The department is responsible for building permit and construction inspections for approximately 300 new construction and construction alteration projects each year. In addition, the department is managing numerous land use planning and development functions. **Table 1: Municipal Characteristics** summarizes key Village characteristics.

Table 1: Municipal Characteristics

Village of Croton-on-Hudson Municipal Characteristics	
Population	8,327
Land Area (square miles)	4.8
Population per square mile	1,735.0
Housing Units	3,179
Median Household Income	\$166,087
<i>U.S. 2020 Census and American Community Survey (ACS) 2022 5 year estimates.</i>	

Expanding Workloads and Increased Complexity of Codes

The Department workload has increased and is projected to continue increasing over the next five years. The following summarizes key areas impacting the workload of the Department:

- **Pro-Active Village Policy Agenda.** The Village Board of Trustees is a proactive forward thinking governing body that actively researches and engages stakeholders and the community in the development of legislation that addresses emerging community issues. The Village Engineer's office is often heavily involved in these processes, conducting research, providing background information and developing draft proposals and draft codes and code amendments. In addition, the Engineering Department is assigned the long term responsibility for the administration and enforcement of the new/updated Village legislation. Examples include:
 - **Expansion of Affordable Housing.** The Village is taking an active role in expanding the availability of affordable housing. For example, the Village has developed an initial plan for the re-use of an obsolete Village owned property parking lot into a site for the private development of multi-family housing and the project is currently under review and consideration. In addition to the extensive land use planning, zoning and site review responsibilities required for such an initiative, the Department will be responsible for the permitting and inspection of the construction of the new facility as well as the ongoing fire safety inspections of the project building(s) and internal housing units.
 - **Accessory Dwelling Units Village Code amendment.** The Board has set policy focused on affordable housing which has resulted in multiple legislative initiatives including the 2024 update to the Village's zoning code relative to accessory dwelling units.

- **Multi-Family Housing Inspection Village Code Amendment.** As part of the prioritization on health and safety, the Board of Trustees recently reduced the interval for inspection of multi-family housing from every 3 years to every 2 years.
- **Smart Growth Development.** The planning, development and implementation of the Village's smart growth agenda involves significant planning, technical reviews, zoning reviews and the development and administration of amendments to the Village's Zoning Code. It takes time and effort to effectively balance development with the protection of natural resources within a community.
- **Community Planning and Development and Technical Support.** Stakeholders spoke to the increase in community planning and development initiatives as well as to the increased complexity of a number of the initiatives underway in the Village. This is reflected in the level of Village Board of Trustees, Village Planning Board, and Zoning Board of Appeals projects and agendas. This has also increased the Department's technical responsibilities including site plan reviews, site development monitoring, engineering reviews, drafting zoning code amendments and environmental assessments. In addition, the Department is actively involved in a number of waterfront development and protection initiatives.
- **Building Permitting, Plan Reviews and Construction Inspections.** There are a number of existing and anticipated large construction projects occurring within the Village, including large multi-family housing projects. Each requires in-depth site plan reviews, building plan reviews, dozens of on-site construction inspections and ultimately the issuance of certificates of occupancy.
- **Fire Safety and Property Maintenance Compliance Program.** As the housing projects come on-line, the fire safety inspection program will exponentially increase due to the significant increase in the number of multi-housing units currently underway or approved. In 2020 there were approximately 294 multi-family units covered by the fire safety program. Within the next 3-4 years that number could grow to approximately 460 units and possibly more in future years based on projects under consideration.
- **Expansion of the NYS Building Code.** The NYS Uniform Code is revisited every few years. Building Inspectors across New York State have identified not only an increase in the codes but also increasing complexity in administering and enforcing the codes.
- **Expansion of the Energy Code.** Code enforcement officers and building inspectors across New York State have noted that the updated version of the NYS Energy Code; particularly for new construction projects, has increased the time and complexity of conducting both building plan reviews and inspections. This has been compounded by the installation of new and emerging building energy conservation technologies and designs, such ground source and air source heating systems.

Renewed Priority Focus on Village Code Compliance and Enforcement

The Department has increased its proactive code compliance and enforcement program targeted at implementing Village codes including zoning, property maintenance, sidewalk maintenance and safety, abandoned vehicles, and tree removal.

Competing Demands

The evolution of these emerging community trends, changing expectations and policy directions are clearly impacting the Department workload. As it is currently configured and staffed, the Department cannot manage the current workload; nor meet anticipated increased demands, nor address the emerging expectations for enhanced quality code compliance programs and enhanced enforcement of codes. Simply stated, the current staffing level, the span of control and level of supervision, office processes, operating procedures and technologies have been outpaced by the elevated workload which is only anticipated to further increase in the near future.

To the Department's credit, it has been able to sustain the needed focus and technical expertise on the large land use planning functions and the building permitting, plan reviews and construction inspection program; however, as this workload is anticipated to increase, it is less likely the Department can keep pace with the workload. However, the Department has been challenged to keep pace with the expectations that promote strong neighborhoods through a strong fire safety and property maintenance program that involves not only the administration and enforcement of both the New York State and Village codes, but also through the implementation of pro-active strategies to achieve code compliance.

Succession Planning and Department Resiliency

In small departments that are responsible for a wide range of mission critical functions, such as the Village Engineering Department, it is often difficult and cost prohibitive to build in the staffing redundancy necessary to achieve seamless succession planning and the resiliency to handle retirements and resignations. A couple of years ago, the Engineering Department's office assistant retired and this October, the long term Fire Inspector retired. The positions were replaced; however, as is common in small organizations, historical knowledge is lost when long term employees leave the organization. The Village Engineer has been with the department for more than twenty years and is considering retirement sometime in the next two plus years.

Fiscal Constraints Require a Multi-pronged Response

As with most local governments, the Village is challenged by both external and internal fiscal pressures and must weigh decisions between, and among, a range of priorities. This planning process focused not only on needed resources, but includes strategies focused on management and industry best practices.

Strategy Framework

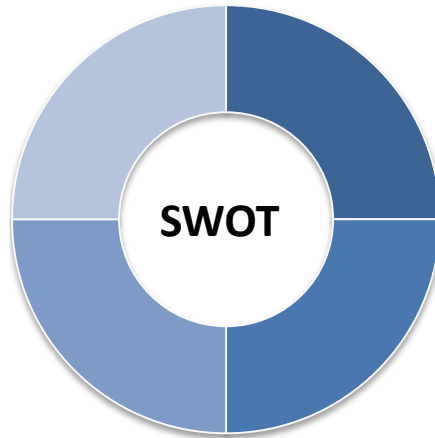
Unanimously, Village stakeholders noted that transformational development is happening in the Village and that this development is significantly impacting the workload and operations of the Engineering Department. It is often human nature to assume that increases in staffing will solve most operational issues. While staffing considerations are certainly a component of the study's recommended strategies; the future of the Department's operations will be well served by consideration of a broader set of strategies.

The Department of the future as envisioned by the Village Board of Trustees, the Department staff and key stakeholders is an organization containing a thoughtful alignment of functions and a strong organizational structure with the appropriate level and mix of staffing. It also envisions a Department that leads with strategic planning, that utilizes management systems, and provides the Department staff with the tools needed to function effectively and efficiently.

Municipal and community stakeholders provided valuable input into the assessment and planning process. Stakeholder input is summarized in **Table 2: Stakeholder Perspectives on Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats**.

Table 2: Stakeholder Perspectives on Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
• One-stop-shop for land use and building planning, development and code enforcement • Technical engineering expertise • Knowledgeable staff • Responsiveness to residents & stakeholders • 20+ years of stability due to same department head. • Quality planning and oversight of development projects. • Cross training and cross certifications	• Retirements/ transitions/ succession planning • Wide span of department functions • Inability to meet current workloads • Competing demands • Inconsistencies • Limited technology optimization • Competing demands • Limited backup resources • Frustration with enforcement tools • Reactive rather than proactive code administration and enforcement • Flat organizational structure
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
• Preparing for the future from a position of strength • Expand staffing levels to stabilize operations • Retain One-Stop-Shop alignment of functions • Create hierarchical structure • Institutionalize practices and procedures • Enhance management tools and practices • Workflow technology solutions • Enhance proactive enforcement program	• Loss of institutional knowledge through departures • Continuous expansion of NYS code requirements • Significant increase in workload • Increasing community expectations • Expanded Village codes • Safety concerns “falling through the cracks” • Increased expectations • Fiscal challenges • Code non-compliance



Summary of Proposed Strategies

The study process led to the development of seven strategy areas. The strategy areas include recommended initiatives for short term, mid-term and long term implementation. The strategy areas are summarized below:

Strategy 1: Functional Re-Alignment

Based on initial input from stakeholders, the study process considered four general approaches to functional alignment.

- **Status Quo.** The Engineering Department will continue to provide the same services as is currently performed.
- **Re-constitute the Engineering Department as the Planning, Zoning, Building and Codes Department.** In this option, the functions related to land use planning and development and the administration and enforcement of the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code and the Energy Code and the Village zoning, property maintenance and quality of life codes would become the central focus on the department. The engineering services role would formally be transferred to the Department of Public Works and the property assessment function be considered for consolidation with the Town of Cortlandt pending an impact review by the Village.
- **Consolidate the Engineering Department within the Department of Public Works.**
- **Extract the Land Use Planning and Development functions.** In this option, the land use planning and development functions would be extracted and either provided by an existing Village department or would be performed by a new and independent department reporting to the Village Manager.

Early on in the study process, the option to re-constitute the Village Engineering Department into a Planning, Zoning, Building and Codes Department surfaced as the preferred long term functional alignment as depicted below.



Stakeholders reported that the one-stop-shop alignment of land use planning, zoning administration and enforcement, building permitting and code enforcement has been responsive and available to residents, contractors, developers and community groups and would be important to maintain going forward. From an organizational perspective, this alignment of functions provides for the sharing of technical/professional staff and the administrative support staff between both the land use planning and control and code compliance programs. This alignment also supports the long term development and maintenance of integrated digital property records.

The evolutionary shift of the Village infrastructure engineering services to the Department of Public Works has resulted in a limited role for the Engineering Department. Formalizing this organic shift is recommended.

Strategy 2: Organizational Restructuring and Staffing Improvements

The long term recommended organizational structure is a Department of Planning, Zoning, Buildings and Codes and is depicted below:



The proposed structure is built on the foundations of the Engineering Department and is designed to support the recommended one-stop shop functional alignment. It provides for a division of labor that affords the Department Head the ability to focus on strategic land use planning, coordination of large Village Board driven initiatives, large Planning Board projects and Village Zoning policy. The structure includes a proposed Codes Division supervised by a proposed new Assistant Building Inspector to oversee the NYS Fire Inspection Code and Village Code enforcement programs. The new position would also assist with building permit applications, building plan reviews and construction inspections. This would free up the Assistant Building Inspector/Engineer position to focus on the larger, more complex building plan reviews as well as on other engineering reviews and technical assignments related to land use planning, water control, waterfront development, etc.

Phase I: Stabilize staffing and operations by filling the vacant code enforcement officer position and bring inspections; particularly fire inspections and compliance activities, up to date. An initial and ongoing assessment of the status of the part-time Fire Inspector's ability to

conduct all the inspections necessary to meet compliance standards should be conducted. If necessary, additional fire inspector staff hours or support from the new code enforcement officer or a temporary inspector could be utilized in the short term to address the outstanding inspections.

Phase II: Create a Codes Division within the Department supervised by a new Assistant Building Inspector position to handle fire safety and village code inspection and complaint investigation and response responsibilities as well as provide additional support for the building permit and construction inspection program.

Free up the Assistant Village Engineer to focus on building plan reviews and assistance with site plan reviews and other technical reviews and land use board support functions.

Upon review and consideration of the Board of Trustees, transition the assessment function to the Town of Cortlandt.

Phase III: Create the new organization and finalize the division of roles and responsibilities of the new Department and that of the Public Works Department via Village code amendments. Take the steps necessary to consolidate the property assessment function with the Town of Cortlandt.

Strategy 3: Succession Planning and Department Resiliency

The recommended organizational features contribute to a strong and resilient organization:

- Implement a staffing pattern that can better handle staff retirements and attritions.
- Require professional staff to obtain and hold a NYS Code Enforcement Officer or Building Safety Inspector certification.
- Minimally, require that one Assistant Building Inspector is a licensed professional engineer with three years of experience in building design work or review of building design work.
- The proposed Assistant Building Inspector position as envisioned would provide oversight to the Fire Inspector and the Code Enforcement Officer as well as assist the Assistant Building Inspector/Engineer with site plan reviews and construction inspections. The inclusion of organizational hierarchy provides further department resiliency during periods of transition.
- Retain a professional land use planner or firm to support the Village Engineer on the anticipated large development projects on an as needed basis.
- During Phase I and II of the re-organization, institutionalize critical workflows and document major projects and initiatives.

Strategy 4: Advance Proactive Code Compliance Efforts

The Village Engineering Department is recognized by stakeholders for its open access and user friendly approach to land use planning and development and building construction projects. This same model is recommended as a front end strategy to achieving optimal code compliance in the Village.

General

- Enhance the existing efforts to encourage voluntary compliance to address violations.

- Act promptly and consistently when violations are identified, and provide property owners with a reasonable timeframe, specific to the violation, to address and correct the violation.

Fire Safety

- Host annual/bi-annual trainings for property representatives of assembly spaces, multi-family dwellings and non-residential occupancies. Offering a basic training for new property owners/management staff could be beneficial to increasing code compliance and reducing violations and costly enforcement. Topics could be focused on the critical elements of code compliance and the typical violations cited.
- Develop and provide user friendly pre-inspection checklists to operators of assembly space, multi-family dwellings and occupied non-residential buildings. The checklists could include typical inspection elements and typical violations.
- Develop templated graduated compliance letters and notices of violation to streamline code enforcement reporting and/or communication.

Village Code Compliance – Community Communication

- Leverage the Department's positive relationships with the community to communicate both the elements of and compliance with property maintenance and other quality of life codes.
- Send reminders to prior year non-compliant property owners prior to next inspection.
- Work with neighborhood associations on property management codes to gain a wider appreciation and support for code compliance.
- Make regular and proactive property maintenance scans across the Village. Early and consistent identification can mitigate safety concerns and prevent code violations from escalating.
- Capitalize on community events such as clean up days for education and compliance workshops and information dissemination.

Building Permits

- Communicate general information as to what likely needs a building permit with the public.
- Develop an informational piece that lists the types of improvement projects that require a building permit and those that do not. The information could be displayed on the department webpage along with a statement encouraging the public to call the department for clarification.
- Target communication to new homeowners, who may not realize what processes to follow before making improvements to their property and homes.

Strategy 5: Enhance Management Practices

• Develop simple Standard Operating Procedures/Guidelines

The Department has a skilled, knowledgeable department head and staff that know what needs to get done. It will be important that this knowledge be institutionalized and used to set the baseline for the future. The more that work flows, assignment of responsibilities, and tasks can be routinized, the less stressful and more efficient the staff can be and the higher the expectation of achieving compliance will be. The Department can start small and be strategic. Examples include:

- **Identification of Parcels Requiring Fire Safety Inspections** Formalize the notification process between the building permitting staff and the fire safety inspector regarding the change in use/occupancy and building permit/certificate. Conduct an annual cross reference to the tax rolls to assure all required facilities are inspected.
 - **Prepare Work Activity Guidelines - examples include:**
 - Inspections and re-inspections expectations, time intervals, etc.
 - Use of appearance ticket and referral for court action
 - Documentation and case tracking expectations
 - Follow up on non-compliant cases specific to the nature of the violation
 - **Establish and utilize project, task and management tools.** Example of tools recommended include: 1) automatic reports of overdue work; 2) Aging reports on non-compliant cases and case status; 3) Accompany staff on inspections on a periodic basis; 4) Expand use of check lists and standardized documentation guidelines and 5) Monitor timeliness of inspections to interval requirements.
 - **Establish Interval Workplans** Managing code enforcement operations, by its very nature, can be unpredictable; however, there is value in planning efforts. As the workload increases, establishing, monitoring and adjustment of work plans will facilitate prioritization of projects and re-alignment of functions in a timely basis.
 - **Expand the use of Data Driven Decision Making** There is great opportunity to use data and data dashboards to manage work not only at the case level, but to also to support the management of staff workloads, track and monitor over-due staff assignments, monitor status of non-compliant cases, identify trends in activity, workload, issues, non-compliance, etc. Evaluation of the data in combination with the work flow standards can assist the department to optimize opportunities for improvement, address gaps in the department's processes and strategies and work with Village leadership to address emerging community trends and organizational needs.
-

Strategy 6: Advance the Use of Technology and Workflow Automation

There are end to end workflow technologies designed specifically for building permitting, code enforcement management and land use planning. Municipalities that have implemented such systems have indicated the significant gains in automation of redundant actions, increases in efficiencies and ease of communication with property owners and contractors. Some have identified the benefits as being transformative. Such systems present an opportunity for improved compliance, communication and efficiencies and a number of the systems have achieved price points that are now approachable for small to medium sized municipalities. A number of the systems have the ability to handle and integrate a continuum of land use planning and zoning needs and building permitting and code enforcement functions.

Current technology solutions offer staff gains in workflow efficiency at every stage in the process starting with on-line application submissions. Inspection reports and other documents can be developed in the field and, upon approval, the documents can automatically be distributed, filed and indexed in the electronic system. Village staff, property owners and contractors can track that status of the project; reducing the need for back and forth phone calls and emails. Centralized tracking and reports of permits,

inspections, etc. can be automatically generated providing quick access to dashboards of streamlined information for staff, supervisors and managers at both the case specific, staff and management level. The systems often include dashboards highlighting current work assignments as well as overdue work.

Strategy 7: Consolidate the Property Assessment Function

According to the New York State Department of State, approximately 70 percent of the state's 554 villages have shifted the responsibilities of assessing to their respective towns. Consolidating the Village's property assessment function at the Town level has often been discussed as an opportunity to eliminate a duplication of service, streamline government and achieve cost savings. Both the Village of Croton-on-Hudson and the Town of Cortlandt Assessor maintain an assessment roll for all properties in the Village of Croton-on-Hudson. The Village rolls are used for the sole purpose of levying Village property taxes. The Town rolls in the Village of Croton-on-Hudson are currently utilized to levy Town, County and school district property taxes to Village property owners.

The Village may want to consider consolidation of the property assessment function at the Town level as it is re-organizing the Engineering Department. This Study outlines the process for consolidation as well as lays out considerations for the Village's deliberations on the matter.

II. Current State

Snapshot of Department of Engineering Responsibilities

The Engineering Department has responsibility for delivering critical municipal services. **Table 3: Current Service Matrix** illustrates the functional responsibilities of the Department.

Table 3: Current Service Matrix

Functional Area	Description
Engineering Services (Limited Workload: 10% of 1 full time engineer)	The Village Engineer's Office provides assistance for special projects; however, the Superintendent of Public Works, licensed professional engineer, has the primary responsibility for Village asset management and engineering services. ▪ Prepare design, scope and specifications for small Village projects. ▪ Oversee and manage contract engineers used for Village projects. ▪ Conduct assessments of the condition of Village infrastructure as requested.
Land Use Planning and Development	▪ Conduct site plan technical reviews of proposed land use projects. ▪ Support Village community development efforts. ▪ Provide professional and administrative support to the Planning Board, ZBA, the Water Control Commission and other Village advisory boards. ▪ Recommend and draft Village land use laws, updates and amendments. ▪ Coordinate and manage large development project. ▪ Assist in the development & implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.
NYS Uniform Fire Prevention & Building Code and NYS Stretch Code - Administration & Enforcement	▪ Review building construction plans & issue building permits for new construction and proposed alterations to 1-2 family homes, multi-unit dwellings, commercial buildings and a host of permits such as decks, pools, fences, etc. ▪ Conduct construction inspections and issue Certificates of Occupancy. ▪ Issue and monitor special use permits. ▪ Conduct Building Safety Inspections for assembly spaces; multi-dwelling unit buildings and occupied non-residential buildings. ▪ Administer and enforce the NYS Energy Code. ▪ Address non-compliance with Codes: voluntary compliance, notice of violations, stop work orders; seek judicial intervention when necessary.
Village Codes – Administration and Enforcement	▪ Administer and enforce the Village Zoning Code. ▪ Administer and enforce assigned local Village Codes including: tree removal, property maintenance, sidewalks, signage, flood damage prevention, etc. ▪ Recommend updates and changes to Village Codes.
Real Property Assessment	▪ Establish values of real property & prepare annual assessment rolls. ▪ Maintain exemptions. ▪ Provide technical support to the Board of Assessment Review.

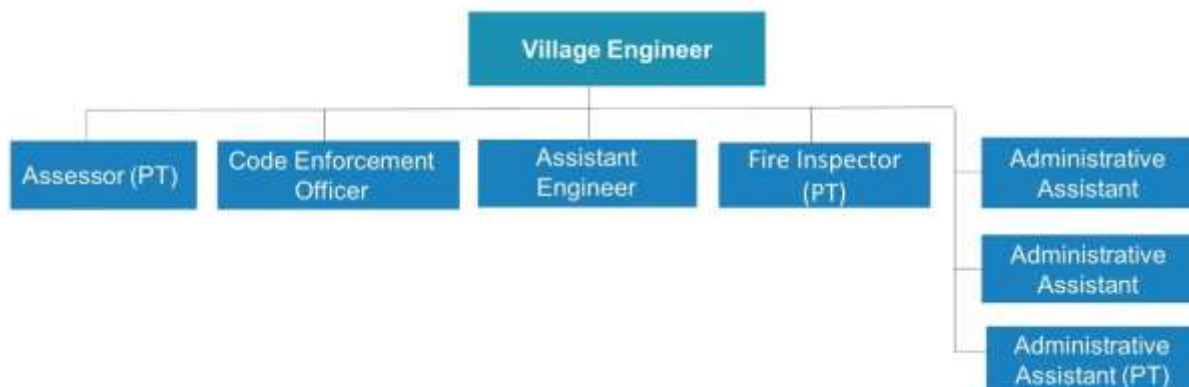
Current Organizational Structures and Staffing

Organizational Structure

The Engineering Department has historically functioned with three professional staff: the Village Engineer, the Assistant Engineer and the Fire Inspector along with two full time and one part time administrative assistant positions. The Fire Inspector retired in October of 2024 and was responsible for both the fire safety program as well as enforcement of Village Codes. The Village took the opportunity to make initial organizational improvements. The Village replaced the full time Fire Inspector position with a part-time (15 hours/week) Fire Inspector and is in the process of filling a new full time Code Enforcement Officer. The Village Engineer will be dedicated to the fire safety program and supplemented by the code enforcement officer as needed. The prioritized responsibility of the new Code Enforcement Officer position is the administration and enforcement of the Village Zoning and other quality of life Village codes such as tree removals, property maintenance, sidewalk maintenance, abandoned vehicles, etc.

As can be seen in **Figure 1: Current Organization Structure**, the Department has a flat organizational structure. All staff and functions report directly to the Village Engineer. The new code enforcement officer position will also report to the Village Engineer.

Figure 1: Village Engineering Department Current Organizational Structure



Historical Job Responsibilities

Village Engineer (Building Inspector) The Village Engineer oversees all operations of the department; and is the official Building Inspector for the Village; however, the Village Engineer indicates he spends approximately 50% of his time on land use planning responsibilities and consultation with property owners, contractors and developers on both land use and the built environment. This function requires a strategic mindset, as the role must balance community needs, community development goals with environmental sustainability, Village land use policies, NYS and Village code compliance and visual environment considerations.

- Provides technical advice, information, and policy recommendations on land use development, zoning, water control, water front development and other issues.

- Coordinates large land use development project development reviews and decision making processes. The process involves numerous technical and legal steps that must be timed and coordinated. This often involves collaboration with stakeholders such as the Village Board of Trustees and administration, other Village, County or State agencies, developers, engineers, and interaction with community groups and the public during the planning process.
- Technical review of project applications and site plans submitted to the Village Planning Board for consideration. This involves technical reviews and recommendations to the Planning Board regarding the conformance with Village Codes, need for special permits, Village infrastructure impacts, environmental impacts and subdivision approvals among other issues.
- Coordinate technical aspects of projects including water and sewer system issues.
- Interpreting New York State, Westchester County, Village codes, rules and regulations relative to land use, water control and the built environment.
- Recommend new, and updates to, Village local laws and codes regulations: Assisting with the development or updating of ordinances, codes, regulations, programs, and procedures
- Evaluating specific parcels of land to determine their suitability for development based on factors like topography, infrastructure, environmental constraints and historical land use.
- Updates to Village mapping system including infrastructure assets, zoning, etc.
- Prepare reports and presenting findings to stakeholders and policy boards.
- In addition to land use planning responsibilities the Village Engineer handles complaints, assists in handling non-compliance cases and provides coverage for the other professional staff.

Assistant Village Engineer: The primary responsibility of this position is to accept, review and issue permit applications for building construction projects; conduct the required construction inspections at specific phases of construction; and upon final inspection issue certificates of occupancy/completion. The Assistant Village Engineer estimates that 12% of his time is spent on site plan reviews, site work monitoring and technical support to the Zoning Board of Appeals. In addition, design work relative to Village assets accounts for approximately 5% of his workload. The Assistant Engineer organizes building permit information for the Village Assessor and then again for the Town Assessor (5% of his time). The Assistant Village Engineer estimates that 20% of his time is spent on fire safety and Village code enforcement.

Fire Inspector: Historically the position was full time, and according to the former Fire Inspector, 75%-80% of his time was dedicated to fire safety inspections and 20-25% was spent administering and enforcing the Village code and responding to complaints of non-compliance with Village codes. The former Fire Inspector also reported that the ratio of time between the two primary functions has essentially reversed over the past 10 years. Within recent years, there has been an increased focus on assuring for community health and safety through the administration and enforcement of the Village's code including property maintenance, sidewalks, etc. This resulted in a material shift in the Inspector's allocation of time. Upon retirement of the full time inspector, the Village created a part time (15 hours/week) Fire Inspector and a full time code enforcement officer.

Code Enforcement Officer: The recently created code enforcement officer position will be responsible for the administration and management of the Village codes.

Assessor: The Village assessor works part-time; typically working one day throughout the year. During the summer he comes into the office every other week and answers email and phone messages from home the other week. The primary function of the Assessor is estimating the value of all the parcels within the Village, setting the annual assessment roles and administration of exemptions.

Administrative Staff: There are two full-time and one part-time staff. Both full time staff members have specific work assignments; however they work as a team and are capable of performing each other's functions necessary to provide coverage and back up for each other.

A summary of the estimated time allocated to various functions is presented in **Appendix A: Staff Responsibilities & Time Allocation by Title**. This time allocation summary was based on an informal self-reporting by staff members. In small departments such as the Croton-on-Hudson Village Engineer's Department, staff wear a number of hats and provide assistance and back-up for each other as part of their day to day activities. Stakeholders spoke to the significant amount of time spent by the Village Engineer and Assistant Village Engineer working with Village homeowners, commercial property owners and contractors to review projects, answer questions and provide technical assistance and guidance. This provides value not only to the customer, but increases code compliance and avoids problems during the construction project. Anecdotally, staff estimated that this accounted for 15-20% of their time.

Civil Service

It is important to understand that local governments in New York State are required to follow New York State Civil Service Law relative to hiring and promotion. Westchester County Human Resources administers this for most of local jurisdictions in the County, including the Village of Croton-on-Hudson. There are significant rules that influence how and who a municipality may consider for various positions. The process can present challenges and can often lead to delays in the hiring process and inability to hire the candidate most desired.

The Civil Service process establishes the job title and creates the job specification which includes the typical responsibilities of the job and the minimum qualifications a candidate must possess prior to testing for a position. The process also places job titles in classifications such as competitive, non-competitive and labor class and civil service rules determines an individual's status in title including permanency. This Civil Service rules also determine whether the position is tested and if so how it is tested. For competitive titles, the Village must hire off of certified lists using the rule of three. **Appendix B: Summary of Westchester County Civil Service Titles and Job Specifications** includes a brief summary of the titles in use within the Village as well as related titles utilized in other jurisdictions within Westchester County. This is summary information only. (See actual job specifications for each title) for full and accurate job specification. It is important to note that job specifications, which identify typical work activities are not designed to be job descriptions which can better reflect the operations and job assignments specific to a particular position.

Additional NYS Certification Requirements

New York State requires that staff involved in the administration and enforcement of the Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Codes attend a basic training program administered by the NYS Department of

State, Building Standards and Services Unit, pass tests and obtain and maintain certifications. There are two levels of certification:

- **Certified Building Safety Inspectors (BSI)** are authorized to perform fire safety and/or property maintenance inspections of existing buildings and structures and take necessary steps to address non-compliance. The training program for Building Safety Inspector is three modules each consisting of 4 full days of training and a test. Fire inspectors cannot perform functions until they have completed the first module of the training and must complete the full series to continue role.
- **Certified Code Enforcement Officials (CEO)** are authorized to perform all NYS Fire Prevention, Building and Energy Code enforcement activities, including:
 - Review and/or approve plans necessary for the issuance of a building permit.
 - Perform construction inspections, issue stop work orders.
 - Perform fire safety and property maintenance inspections of existing buildings and take necessary steps to address non-compliance.
 - Training for Certified Code Enforcement Official includes successful completion of six training modules each consisting of 4 days of training and passing a test. The training must be completed within the shorter of:
 - One year of the appointment date of the CEO; or
 - Six months of the appointment date of the BSI; or
 - One year from the date the CEO attended their first training course (6 months for BSI).

Staff Salaries and Longevity

Staff salaries and longevity in position for current Village Engineering Department employees are presented in the **Table 4: Staff Salaries and Time in Title**. As can be seen below, at this point in time, there is little to no longevity in titles for the staff responsible for fire safety and Village code enforcement.

Table 4: Staff Salaries and Time in Title

Village Engineering Department			
	Full Time/ Part-Time	Salary	Time in Title
Village Engineer	FT	\$186,023	22
Assistant Engineer	FT	\$122,604	5
Code Enforcement Officer	FT	\$58,727	Vacant
Fire Inspector	PT	\$30/hour	0
Assessor	PT	\$30,000	2
Office Assistant	FT	\$64,832	3
Office Assistant	FT	\$64,832	3
Intermediate Clerk	PT	\$20/hour	2

NYS Uniform Code and Energy Code Administration and Enforcement

Building code administration and enforcement is one of the Village's most important tools to assure for the protection of life, safety and health in the built environment. The NYS Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code provides for a proactive program for both the construction of buildings and proactive inspections of certain facilities on a routine basis. Title 19 of the Rules and Regulations of the State of New York included in Part 1201 through Part 1210, set forth the requirements local governments are required to meet.

Pursuant to Executive Law §381 each local government responsible for administering and enforcing both the Uniform Code and Energy Code. Each municipality is required to adopt legislation that establishes its administration and enforcement program. The Village of Croton-on-Hudson adopted its Building Code pursuant to Executive Law §381 and in 2023 the Village updated its Building Code to reflect the most current updates to the relevant New York State Codes. The NYS Uniform Code and Energy Code are extensive and include multiple volumes and multiple editions of each volume; all of which are the responsibility of the local government to administer and enforce.

Fire Safety Code Compliance

The administration and enforcement of the NYS Fire Prevention Code is a centerpiece of proactive fire prevention for communities and should be a number one focus of community code compliance and enforcement efforts. Municipalities are required to put in place a program that:

- Conducts routine building safety inspections of public assembly spaces, multi-family dwellings, private educational and daycare facilities and occupied non-residential buildings.
- Assures inspections are conducted within the following intervals:
 - Areas of public assembly require inspections every year.
 - Private educational facilities and daycare centers require annual inspections.
 - Multi-family buildings (3+ units) must be inspected every two (2) ¹years pursuant to Village legislation.
 - Non-residential occupied facilities must be inspected every three (3) years.
- Investigates complaints and conduct related inspections.
- Addresses non-compliance using multiple engagement and enforcement tools including facilitate voluntary compliance, the issuance of notices of violation and orders to remedy, monitoring for corrective action and taking further enforcement actions to obtain compliance. The Building Inspector is responsible for pursuing enforcement actions and proceedings in consultation with the assigned Village Attorney.
- Maintains proper records, preparing and submitting materials and annual reports to the New York Secretary of State and to the NYS Department of State as may be requested.

¹ Village of Croton-on-Hudson local laws require inspections every 2 year; more restrictive than NYS Uniform Code.

Fire safety and property maintenance inspections are required of all buildings that contain areas of public assembly, all multiple dwellings (3+ units), private educational facilities, dormitories, and all nonresidential occupancies. **Table 5: Fire Safety Inspections** summarizes facilities inspected in the Village.

Table 5: Fire Safety Inspections

Fire Safety Inspections (Required by NYS Uniform Code)								
Type	Public Assembly Buildings		Multi Unit Dwelling Buildings			Occupied Non-Residential Buildings		Total Inspections
Inspection Intervals	Every Year		NYS: Every 3 Years ¹			Every Three Years		
Year	Public Assembly Buildings	Inspection Completed	Multi Dwelling Bldg ²	Total units	Multi Dwelling Bldg. Inspections Completed	Non Residential Buildings ³	Number inspections Completed	Total Inspections
2023	33	33	51	353	11	111	14	58
2022	33	33	49	347	22	122	8	63
2021	33	33	45	294	9	122	41	83
2020	31	31	45	294	1	103	43	75
2019	31	31	45	294	17	103	12	60
2018	31	31	45	289	3	113	48	82
Note 1: NYS requires Multi-Units Dwelling Buildings to be inspected every 3 years. The Village recently adopted a 2 year interval for inspections.								
Note 2: Fire Safety Inspections on Multi-Units Dwellings include an inspection of each unit.								

Like a number of municipalities across New York State, the Department has struggled with workload issues and has not been able to perform the necessary inspections within the required time intervals. The Department has prioritized assembly spaces and has completed the inspections for all the assembly spaces each year. The inspection process has not been able to consistently inspect multi-family dwellings, occupied non-residential structures, private schools, and daycares. In addition, the study process identified facilities that may need to be added to the list of facilities needing fire safety inspections that are not currently included in the program. These include potential additional multi-family dwelling units and educational/daycare centers.

The Village has taken a key step already and added staff to the Department to address workload issues. Based on the required intervals of inspections, the anticipated increase in multi-family units (both existing and new) and the addition of private/daycare facilities, the average number of facilities to be inspected each year is approximately 100; however, given the wide range of time each inspection takes, the Department may do more smaller and less complex investigations in one year leaving more time in an alternate year to handle the larger and more complex inspections; a practice the Department has historically employed. In the short term, the workload will be higher in order to address the backlog. As the additional large multi-family structures come on line the workload will increase.

The Department's system tracks whether a facility passes or fails an inspection. There were instances where facilities failed the initial inspection and the tracking system did not document that the facility was re-inspected nor passed upon re-inspection. However, the re-inspection results showing passing, the former fire inspector indicated that follow up on all identified violations was done and compliance was achieved. The Inspector indicated that the hard copy files provide documentation to support compliance.

Building Permits, Inspections and Construction Project Code Compliance

Municipalities must enforce the Uniform Code on all construction projects including new construction, alterations to existing structures and other projects including pools, decks, fences, etc. NYS authorize municipalities to exempt certain projects and the Village of Croton-on-Hudson adopted the following exemptions:

- The performance of ordinary repairs, provided that the work does not have an impact on fire and life safety, such as 1) any part of the structural system; 2) the required means of egress; or 3) the fire protection system or the removal from service of any part of the fire protection for any period of time.
- The construction or installation of one-story detached structures associated with one- or two-family dwellings or multiple single-family dwellings (townhouses), which are used for tool and storage sheds, playhouses, or similar uses, provided the gross floor area does not exceed 20 square feet.

All other building construction projects require a building permit. An illustrative list of projects requiring permits in Croton-on-Hudson can be found in **Appendix C: Illustrative Listing of Projects Requiring a Building Permit**.

As part of the Department's building permit administration and enforcement program, staff provides extensive guidance on the code requirements to homeowners and builders through the permitting process. This optimizes compliance with the Building Code and related Village codes and avoids protracted code enforcement. The Village Engineer and Assistant Engineer noted that in general, the engineering, architectural and contractor professionals are conscientious and strive to comply with the regulations. The following outlines the general steps of the process:

- Review and approve permit applications and required documentation and issue a building permit. The level of plan review and the number of subsequent inspections varies based on the type, scope and size of the construction project.
- Conduct construction inspections and sign off on work completed throughout the construction process prior to issuance of certificates of occupancy/compliance and temporary certificates. Staff indicates that they strive to conduct inspections within 2 working days of the request from the contractor. Depending on the scope of the project, a new single home construction project could take as many as 6-10 on-site visits to conduct the required inspections and sometimes re-inspections. Larger commercial projects require the building inspector to be on-site significantly more. Alterations to existing buildings and other projects such as decks, pools, and fences typically require fewer inspections. New construction projects typically include but are not limited to, the following inspections conducted throughout the construction project:

- 1) Work site prior to permit issuance;

- 2) Footing prior to pouring concrete;
 - 3) Foundation prior to backfill;
 - 4) Preparation for concrete slab;
 - 5) Framing;
 - 6) Electrical, plumbing, mechanical, fire-protection, and other similar service systems;
 - 7) Fire-resistant construction;
 - 8) Fire-resistant penetrations;
 - 9) Solid fuel-burning heating appliances, chimneys, flues or gas vents;
 - 10) Inspections required to demonstrate Energy Code and ECS compliance, including insulation, fenestration, air leakage, system controls, mechanical equipment size, and, where required, minimum fan efficiencies, programmable thermostats, energy recovery, whole-house ventilation, plumbing heat traps, and high-performance lighting and controls;
 - 11) Installation, connection, and assembly of factory manufactured buildings and manufactured homes; and
 - 12) A final inspection after all work authorized by the building permit has been completed.
- Address non-compliance using multiple enforcement tools including the issuance of notices of violations, orders to remedy and stop-work orders and revoking or suspending permits as needed.
 - Issue a certificate of occupancy or completion upon project completion and final inspection.

The historical trend of construction permitting activity is depicted in **Table 6: NYS Uniform Code – Number and Type of Building Permits** and it reflects the number of building construction permits issued by type by the Village from 2018-2023. This chart, however, does not necessarily portray the trend in workload, which is significantly influenced by the type of construction. As previously mentioned large commercial and large multi-residential construction projects require enormously more time, expertise and on-site inspections.

Table 6: NYS Uniform Code – Number of Building Permits

Village of Croton-on-Hudson NYS Uniform Code Number of Building Permits								
Year	Total Permits	1&2 Family Dwellings & Townhouses		Multi Residential		Non-residential		Other Permits ¹
		New	Existing	New	Existing	New	Existing	
2023	312	5	92	1	84	0	8	122
2022	313	3	81	1	79	1	79	69
2021	268	4	80	0	0	0	6	178
2020	357	3	77	0	1	0	19	257
2019	243	7	77	0	0	0	13	146
2018	332	3	57	0	1	0	14	257
Note 1: Other Permits include: pools, sheds, decks, plumbing, HVAC, etc.								
Source: 2018-2023 Uniform Code Part 1203 Reports and Department Adjustments								

Certificates of Occupancy and Stop Work Orders Upon final inspection and determination of compliance, code enforcement officers are responsible to issue a certificate of occupancy or a certificate of compliance.

The Department issues Stop Work Orders (SWO) when the Village Engineer or designee determines the work is contrary to the provisions of the Uniform and/or the Energy Codes, the site has unsafe work conditions or work is being performed without an active building permit or in violation of other local codes. **Table 7: Building Permit Activities** provides a summary of trends in total permits, stop work order and certificates of occupancy or compliance activities. As the low number of stop work orders depicted in the chart indicate and as Village staff have articulated, in general, there is a high rate of compliance with the building code on the part of contractor and developers operating in the Village.

Table 7: Building Permit Activities

Building Permit Activity			
Year	Total Building Permits	Stop Work Orders	Certificates of Occupancy/ Compliance
2023	312	1	133
2022	313	0	126
2021	268	1	71
2020	357	3	116
2019	243	4	131

NYStretch Code

In 2022, the Village of Croton-on-Hudson voluntarily adopted the NYStretch Code which is a more stringent code than the 2020 Energy Conservation Construction Code of New York State (State Energy Code). The NYS Stretch Code is based on a set of broad based principles that encourage the use of new energy efficient materials, technologies, building designs, and systems. The NYStretch Code exceeds the NYS Energy Code in building envelope, lighting, electrical and compatibility with renewable energy and electric vehicles.² The Energy Code is administered and enforced in conjunction with the Building Code. The program includes plan reviews and a series of inspections specific to the Energy Code. The expansion of the energy code and increasing energy conservation technologies will increase the complexity of energy code plan reviews and inspections. **Table 8: Energy Code Activity** summarizes the energy code enforcement activity over from 2019 through 2023.

Table 8: Energy Code Activity

Energy Code - Building Construction Projects Monitored					
Year	Residential		Commercial		Total
	New	Alterations	New	Alterations	
2023	3	70	0	7	80
2021	1	58	0	6	65
2020	3	68	0	7	78
2019	4	68	0	10	82
Source: 1203 Reports filed with NYS DOS; 2022 not included due to data reporting error.					

² New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, NYStretch Energy Code – 2020, July, 2019

Operating Permits

Operating permits are required for certain specified activities or for certain categories of building use. In the Village of Croton-on-Hudson, the operating permits issues all relate to buildings containing one or more assembly areas with an occupant load of 50 persons or more. On an annual basis, the Department issues approximately 13 operating permits; all related to high occupancy.

More Restrictive Local Standards

Executive Law §379 and Energy Law §11-109 provide a process for adoption of more restrictive standards for construction. The Village of Croton-on-Hudson adopted the following Village codes that are more restrictive:

- Village Sprinkler Code is more restrictive than the NYS Uniform Code.
- NY Stretch Code is more restrictive than the NYS Energy Code.

Village code requires the inspection of multi-unit dwelling buildings to be inspected every two years rather than every three years as provided for in the NYS Building Code.

Village Codes

Zoning and Village quality of life codes reflect community norms, policies and priorities of the Village government. The Department is responsible for the administration and enforcement of the Village zoning code and the range of other quality of life local codes. The enforcement of Village centric codes is critical to the quality of life of residents and maintenance of its neighborhoods. These codes also provide added protections for the health and safety of the occupants of properties and the surrounding properties.

The Village Board of Trustees has set a clear direction that enforcement of the Village's local codes is a top priority. This includes continued focus on the administration and enforcement of the Village's zoning code in order to guide growth and development and ensures that uses are compatible. The Board also desires a renewed focus on the administration and enforcement of other land use and built environments codes including: property maintenance, sidewalk maintenance, tree removals, signage and the use of gas powered leaf blowers. The Department reports that as a result of this focus, the Department has a sustained an elevated workload over the past five years. The current codes enforced by the Department include:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| • Blasting | • Noise | • Telecommunication |
| • Building Construction | • Property Maintenance | Towers |
| • Buildings, Unsafe | • Sewers | • Trees |
| • Flood Damage | • Sprinkler Systems | • Vehicles, Abandoned |
| Prevention | • Steep Slope Protection | • Water |
| • Garbage, Rubbish & | • Stormwater, Drainage | • Wetlands |
| Littering | & Erosion Control | • Zoning |
| • Graffiti | • Streets and Sidewalks | |

As depicted in **Table 9: 2023-2024 Village Code Inspections Reported**, the number of inspections related to Village Codes totaled more than 300 during the period June 1, 2023 through May 31, 2024.

Table 9: 2023-2024 Village Code Inspections Reported

2023-2024 Village Inspections Reported				
	Building Construction	Fire Safety (Facilities) ¹	Village Codes	Total
Fire Inspector	3	45	269	317
Assistant Village Engineer	383	0	14	397
Village Engineer	12	0	21	33
Total	398	45	304	747
<i>Note 1: This reflects the number of buildings inspected; not the number of dwelling units.</i>				
<i>Source: Quarterly Reports</i>				

The 2023-2024 year is fairly reflective of the prior four years. It is important to note, that inspections vary by type and circumstance. For example, a fire safety inspection of an assembly area or a multi-family structure with one hundred units is more involved than a tree removal inspection. This data merely provides a sense of the volume of inspections conducted during 2023-2024. **Appendix D: Department Inspection Activity** provides a five year review of inspections.

Addressing Non-Compliance

As with most code enforcement agencies, the desired approach to remedy code violations is to work with the property owner and/or contractor to obtain voluntary compliance. Staff indicated that it is often common that the property owner is not aware that they are in violation and desire to correct it as soon as practical. When voluntary compliance cannot be achieved, or the violation is serious, the department will issue a notice of violation and an order to remedy. The Village Engineer and staff indicated that unfortunately there are always a number of cases where they cannot obtain voluntary compliance. Staff indicated that they have the most difficulty getting compliance with Village's property codes relative to property maintenance, sidewalk safety, overgrowth of yards, etc.

Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code

The Village Building Code has incorporated enforcement powers authorized in Executive Law, Chapter 18, Article 18, §382 which provides local governments with civil, criminal, and administrative enforcement remedies including the authorization to order, in writing, the remedy of any violation of the uniform fire prevention and building code, and to issue appearance tickets for violations of the uniform code if needed. For violations of the Uniform and Energy Code, the Village Engineer (Building Inspector) or staff designee possessing the Code Enforcement Officer Certification from New York State to issue stop work orders for code non-compliance with a building project. The Building Inspector is authorized to request the Village's attorney to initiate the appropriate proceeding to abate the violation. The Village prosecutes cases in civil court and the Westchester County District Attorney handles cases taken to criminal court.

The Village Code indicates that persons who shall violate the Building Code are subject to a penalty as provided in § 382 of the Executive Law which provides for “a fine of not more than one thousand dollars per day of violation, or imprisonment not exceeding one year, or both for the first one hundred eighty days, and for the following one hundred eighty days shall be punishable by a fine of no less than twenty-five dollars and not more than one thousand dollars per day of violation or imprisonment not exceeding one year, or both and thereafter shall be punishable by a fine of no less than fifty dollars and not more than one thousand dollars per day of violation or imprisonment not exceeding one year, or both.” In situations where the violation impedes egress during a fire or other emergency, the statute provides for stricter penalties. This NYS statute also authorizes municipalities to seek injunctive relief from a court of proper jurisdiction for the removal of the building or an abatement of the building.

Village Codes

The enforcement provisions for the Village Zoning Code enable the Village Engineer to issue stop work orders. If the violation is not remedied the Village Board may send a notice to abate the violation. Failure to comply is a violation of the code and subject to the penalties of Chapter § 1-12 Penalties for Offenses Against Code Provisions of the Village Code.

The enforcement provisions regarding failure to comply with the sidewalk maintenance code authorizes the Village Manager or designee to issue a notice to remedy. Failure to comply with the notice enables the Village to cause the repair to be completed and the proportional cost placed upon the property owner and authorization to apply penalties subject to the Village’s Penalties code.

The enforcement provisions regarding the Village’s Weeds, Brush and Rubbish Code authorizes the Village Manager or the Village Engineer to issue a notice to remedy. Failure to comply with the notice, enables the Village to cause the repair to be completed and the proportional cost placed upon the property owner and authorization to apply penalties subject to the Village’s Penalties code.

Chapter 1 § 1-12 Penalties for Offenses Against Code Provisions of the Village Code states, “Except where specifically provided elsewhere, any person who violates any provision of this [Village] Code or fails to comply with any of its requirements shall, upon conviction thereof, be guilty of a violation pursuant to the Penal Law of the State of New York, punishable by a fine of no more than \$250 or by imprisonment for not more than 15 days, or by both such fine and imprisonment. Each day of noncompliance shall be considered a separate offense. Nothing herein contained shall prevent the Village from taking such other lawful action as necessary to prevent or remedy an infraction.”

Court Intervention

The Village Justice Court is held once a week, and the Village has a staff prosecutor that handles code violations in civil court. The availability of a weekly court and a dedicated prosecutor is an advantageous model. Village staff estimates that approximately 10-12 non-compliant cases are taken to court each year and estimate that 80% of the cases result in remediation of the violation prior to trial; however, the process often take many months to resolve. Should a case rise to the level of criminal court, the case would be prosecuted by the Westchester County District Attorney’s office. The Village Engineer indicated that the time and effort needed to pursue a violation in court can be a tedious and time-consuming process. The Department must issue an appearance ticket, assemble supporting documentation, create the accusatory instrument and attend court. The low level fines imposed often do not often result in timely compliance.

Complaints/Violation Aging Report

The Department’s Quarterly Reports include a Violations/Complaints report from its MUNIS tracking system. **Table10: Complaints/Violations Case Aging Report** summarizes the length of time these cases remained open. The Study reviewed cases tracked between December 28, 2021 and June 30, 2024. During this period, the reports tracked 73 new complaint/violations cases of which 52 were closed and 21 remained open as of June 30, 2024. As the table indicates, the majority of cases were closed within 3 months; however, of those cases that remain open beyond the 120, the majority (35) remained open at least 300 days.

The Study also identified that not all cases were consistently entered into the MUNIS system. For example, staff indicated that in addition to the cases tracked in the MUNIS system, the Department issued 70 notice of violations related to sidewalk repair between 6/1/23-5/31/24 and none of these cases were tracked in MUNIS. As of June of 2024, they had only achieved 50% compliance.

The study also identified that there were fire safety inspections noted as “failed” in the tracking system; however, the system did not consistently document and track whether there was 1) a re-inspection and 2) the violation was remedied and the re-inspection resulted in a “passed” score. Staff indicated that that information was kept in hard copy files.

Table10: Complaints/Violations Case Aging Report

Complaints/Violations Aging Report		
12/28/21 – 6/30/24		
	Cases Closed	Cases Open as of 6/30/24
0 - 30 Days	26	1
31 - 60 Days	10	0
61- 120 Days	8	6
120 - 180 Days	0	1
181- 240 Days	0	1
241- 300 Days	1	0
301 – 360 Days	0	3
361- 420 Days	2	7
421-480 Days	3	1
> 480 Days	2	7
Source: Village of Croton-on-Hudson MUNIS		

Engineering Design, Infrastructure Assessment & Capital Improvement Planning

Historically, the Village Engineer played a significant role in the provision of engineering services relative to Village infrastructure such as the Village water system, facilities, etc. In recent years, the majority of this role has been assumed by the Superintendent of Public Works who is a licensed professional engineer. The Superintendent indicated that he has been able to dedicate time to small in-house design work as well as oversight of contract engineers because the Department staffing now includes a General Foreman position to provide the management and supervision of operations and

projects. The Superintendent indicates that the Public Works Department performs the Village's asset management functions, conditions assessments and capital planning for the Village's assets.

Both the Village Engineer and Superintendent of Public Works spoke to the positive working relationship between the 2 departments. There are numerous points of interface between each of the departments' functions such as private construction projects that intersect both departments. Both also spoke to the important role the Engineering Department plays in maintaining the updates to the GIS system as well as the provision of maps requested by the Department of Public Works.

At this time, the Village Engineer and Assistant Village Engineer estimate that their combined time dedicated to Village infrastructure is approximately 5+ hours per week.

Land Use Planning and Development

The Village Engineering Department is responsible to support multiple Village processes designed to ensure that land is used appropriately and that development is sustainable. The Village has a robust citizen-driven Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals. In addition, the Village capitalizes on additional citizen-driven boards including the Waterfront Advisory Committee, the Water Control Commission and Advisory Board on the Visual Environment. The Village Engineer and staff provide both the administrative and technical support to each board necessary to facilitate and ultimately move projects successfully through the processes.

The Village Engineer's Office plays a central and critical role in these efforts at both the macro and micro level. The Village Engineer actively supports the citizen-driven input processes through technical support, feedback and ongoing coordination and interface between and among multiple processes, the Village Board, administration, stakeholders and the property owners, developers and contractors. The Village Engineer estimates that approximately 50% of his time is dedicated to these functions.

With a land mass of less than 5 square miles, the Village government is continuously evaluating the highest and best use and re-use of its land. The result is continuous review of land use, opportunities for development and evolution of the Village's land use plans, policies and codes. The Village Engineer reviews and recommends code changes necessary to carry out the Board of Trustees policy vision and direction. This includes changes to the zoning and environmental laws intended to provide increased open space and waterfront access, to improve protections for natural resources, and to enable thoughtful re-development of properties.

The Village has numerous projects in the planning, development and/or implementation phase. The Planning Board meets on average 20 times per year. The Village Engineer and/or the Assistant Engineer attend the meetings, advise the Planning Board, conduct project specific technical reviews of project applications, environmental reports, site plans, subdivision plans, any necessary utility design, zoning compliance reviews, accessory apartments plans, change of use impacts, etc. They also provide general technical support and guidance relative to project engineering, planning and Village codes. The Village Engineer assists land owners, developers and residents to navigate through the land use and building development process and committee review processes.

The Village Engineer and Assistant Engineer also provide technical support to the Zoning Board of Appeals. They provide technical background on Village zoning laws and conduct project specific reviews regarding requests such as area and use variances and updates. The administrative staff provides support to the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Water Control Commission, Waterfront Advisory Committee, and the Advisory Board on the Visual Environment and other advisory boards. The Department prepares agendas and meeting packets, uploads all materials onto website, drafts resolutions and memos for chairpersons to review and approve.

Real Property Assessment

The Village Assessor reports to the Village Engineer. The Village Assessor works part-time; typically working one day a week throughout the year. The primary function of the Assessor is estimating the value of all the 3,300 parcels within the Village. The values are then converted into property assessments that must be maintained at a uniform percentage of market value each year. This involves obtaining and evaluating information on property sales, building permits, and MLS activity on all properties in the Village. The building permit activity data is provided by the Assistant Village Engineer on an annual basis. The Assessor then certifies a tentative assessment roll. Prior to the establishment of the final assessment roll, the Board of Assessment Review (BAR), which in the Village of Croton-on-Hudson is the Board of Trustees, may request the assessor to provide evidence to support the assessment being grieved by property owners. The BAR then determines the final assessment roll. The Assessor indicates that there are currently approximately 100 assessment changes each year. In addition to property valuation, the assessor approves and maintains property tax exemptions such as senior citizen, veterans and firefighter.

Technology, Workflow and Document Management

Currently, the Department utilizes the MUNIS permitting module to manage and track fees and to track both permitting and inspection activity for the Building Code, Fire Prevention Code and Village Codes. The system tracks stop work orders, certificate of occupancy/completion, violations and complaints. For building permits and planning board applications, the system is used to manage application requirements such as insurance coverage, necessary licenses, property classification, date of application, etc. The system tracks when construction inspections are completed by permit and identifies if they pass/fail.

Not all Village code enforcement, nor all fire safety cases and activities, are tracked in the system. For example, there were approximately 70 sidewalk inspections completed in 2023-2024 resulting in an initial finding of non-compliance that not were placed in the MUNIS system and were tracked on an independent spreadsheet. In addition, the necessary data to track compliance status of fire safety cases was found to not always be consistently entered into the system. The initial inspection is entered; however, the re-inspection documentation is often maintained in hard copy files. For multi-family housing, compliance in some instances was tracked only for the entire building; while in other instances the initial inspections were tracked by unit; however the follow-up inspections and results were not tracked. The system is not utilized as a management tool to track case closures, status of cases, identify overdue work activities or schedule inspections.

The Department utilizes other desktop tools such as Word, Excel, and PDF files to track workload, schedule appointments and document inspection work. Construction inspections are documented with photos and notes written on plans or put in word documents and then uploaded. Construction inspection approvals are entered into MUNIS and file photos and notes are uploaded. Sticky notes are used for reminders such as need for call back or “put on hold”. Notes attached to project documents are often used to communicate with office support staff. Depending on the record type, records are stored in hard copy and/or as PDFs.

Village Costs and Revenues

The Village Engineering Department and related department budgets have appropriations totaling \$965,895 in the 2024 budget and estimated revenues totaling \$241,000 for a projected net cost of \$724,895. **Table 11: Engineering Department Costs and Revenues** includes the budgeted estimates as well as the past the actual costs and revenues for the four previous years.

Table 11: Engineering Department Costs and Revenues

Engineering Department and Related Departments					
	24-25 Budget	23- 24 Budget	22-23 Actual	21-22 Actual	20-21 Actual
Expenditures					
Engineering	\$603,185	\$565,385	\$532,291	\$544,815	\$489,376
Assessor	\$31,800	\$31,900	\$23,043	\$19,628	\$17,428
ZBA	\$6,425	\$3,950	\$2,942	\$2,475	\$3,051
Planning Board	\$10,700	\$7,550	\$7,848	\$9,266	\$11,121
Fringe Benefits	\$313,785	\$292,560	\$268,816	\$269,181	\$241,673
Total Expenditure	\$965,895	\$901,345	\$834,940	\$845,365	\$762,649
Revenues					
Building Permits	\$160,000	\$125,000	\$412,547	\$149,654	\$101,029
Permits Engineering	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$58,760	\$51,515	\$57,801
Plumbing Permits	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$12,100	\$12,690	\$12,530
Planning Board Fees	\$6,000	\$5,500	\$8,475	\$8,750	\$9,875
Zoning Fees	\$6,000	\$5,500	\$6,300	\$7,500	\$9,300
Record Search Fees	\$14,000	\$14,000	\$15,421	\$18,337	\$26,910
Total Revenue	\$241,000	\$205,000	\$513,603	\$248,446	\$217,445
Net Total Cost	\$724,895	\$696,345	\$321,337	\$596,919	\$545,204
<i>Note: For purposes of the Study, a fringe benefit rate of 50% was applied.</i>					
<i>Source: Village of Croton-on-Hudson 2024-2025 Operating Budget.</i>					

As the table indicates, there is a significant net Village cost for these services. The net cost in the 2024-2025 Village budget totaled \$724,895; however, the net cost in 2022-2023 was significantly less due to income related to large construction project fees. There will likely be other unusual payments anticipated related to pending construction projects over the next couple of years.

Fees

The Department and Village administration regularly conduct a comparison with surrounding municipalities to assure the Village has a fair and comparable fee structure. The rates were adjusted in 2024 based on a comparative review.

III. Emerging Trends Impacting the Department

Multi-family Housing

There has been quite a bit of interest in the creation of additional multi-family housing projects in the Village over the past five years. **Table 12: Planned Multi-Unit Housing Development Projects** summarizes projects that are currently under construction, have obtained regulatory approval or are under consideration for approval by the Village. In total there are 106 units that have received final Village regulatory approval. For example, 1 Croton Point Avenue is a Village owned property that was formerly a transit parking lot. The property is under consideration to be sold and developed for the purpose of creating 100 units of multi-family housing.

These are time consuming initiatives that impact the workload of the Village Engineering Department as well as the Village Board of Trustees, the Village Manager and the multiple Village review boards. These complex projects often involve numerous procedural steps, impact analyses, technical reviews and require multiple Village and other regulatory processes and approvals prior to construction. The workload is also impacted by large projects that undergo the same processes but may not ultimately move forward or may result in project modifications for reconsideration (i.e. the proposed 280 unit project at One Half Moon Bay).

Upon receipt of an application for a building permit, the Village Engineering Department is responsible to review the application and the construction plans for compliance with the NYS Building and the NYStretch Codes. Upon issuance of the permit to build, the Department is then responsible for the ongoing construction monitoring and inspection process.

Table 12: Planned Multi-Unit Housing Development Projects

Possible Multi-Unit Housing Development Projects				
Project	Estimated Units	Current Development Phase	Building Plan Review/ Construction Inspections	Possible Opening
Maple Commons	33	Completed	2023-2024	Now Open
25 South Riverside	39	Construction	2024	2025
352 So. Riverside	5	Regulatory Approval	2025	2026
1380 Albany Post Rd.	29	Regulatory Approval	2025-2026	2027
1 Croton Point Ave.	100	Under Consideration	TBD	TBD
Source: Village Staff				

Upon construction completion and the receipt of a certificate of occupancy from the Department, the Department will be responsible to conduct fire safety inspections every 2 years including the internal dwelling units. The trend in dwelling units is depicted in **Table 13: Multi-Family Dwelling Units**.

Assuming the pattern outlined above, by 2027, there could be a 90% increase in the number of units included in the fire safety inspection program.

Table 13: Multi-Family Dwelling Units

Multi-Family Dwelling Unit Projected Trend	
Impact on Fire Safety Inspection Program	
Year	Estimated Units
2020	294 ¹
2023	350 ¹
2024	383 ²
2025	422 ²
2026	427 ²
2027	456 ²
Note 1: Data Source is Engineering Department 2020 and 2023 Reports to NYS Department of State.	
Note 2: Data source for estimated increases in units is Table 12.	

Expansion and Complexity of NYS Uniform Code and Energy Code

The NYS Uniform Building and Fire Prevention Code is reviewed every three years and updates and often additions are made to the code. There is continuous expansion and updates to the Uniform Code. The complexity of the codes and the range of responsibilities can be very taxing to learn, administer and enforce. Code enforcement officers not only need to know the current code but must also administer and enforce prior versions of the code. There is always training that goes along with extra roles which then compounds the workload issues.

The expansion of the NYS Energy Code has added significantly to the workload of both the Village Engineering staff as well as the property owners/contractors/developers. Enforcing the NYS Energy Code has also impacted the need for additional training related to both to the code itself as well as on emerging technologies. With electrification initiatives underway; it is likely this function will continue to demand more time and attention.

Enacted and Potential Village Code Additions and Expansions

In addition to the Village's emerging prioritization on the enforcement of property maintenance, sidewalks, tree removal, and gas powered leaf blower codes, the Village Board has adopted or has under consideration a number of new requirements or initiatives that also impact the Department's workload going forward. Examples include:

- As part of its focus on health and safety initiatives focused on the built environment, multi-family dwelling structures and units will now be inspected every 2 years rather than every 3 years.
- The Village Board recently enacted the NYStretch Code which is a stricter energy conservation construction code than the NYS Energy Code.

- The Village has an initiative in place to identify and address illegal apartments. Upon implementation, this will lead to the development of new strategies and increased inspections, permits, notices of violation and enforcement actions as necessary.
- The Village Board of Trustees recently adopted a local law amending the Village's Zoning Code to update regulations related to accessory apartments and permit accessory cottages in residential districts.
- The Village Board of Trustees has proposed updates to the Village's Tree Code that potentially could increase Department workload.
- The Village Board of Trustees is considering a new local law requiring the inspection of sewer laterals prior to the sale of a property to ensure there are no illicit discharges into the sanitary system.

Homes without a Certificate of Occupancy 1931-1960

The Village identified that there are approximately 250 homes constructed between 1931 and 1960 that do not have a certificate of occupancy. The Department has begun the process of mailing out letters to affected property owners. The mailings will be done in small batches in order to not overwhelm the Department. The initial batch includes properties that already have open building permits.

IV. Comparative Organizational Structures

A comparative review was conducted of the functional alignments and organizational structure with 13 other villages in Westchester County with populations between 5,700 and 11,800. While each municipality is unique, benchmarking to other similar municipalities can leverage ideas and opportunities that can be applied to enhance organizations and operations. **Table 14: Comparative Functional Alignments** provides a snapshot of the alignments in each village. **Appendix E: Comparative Organizational Structures** provides additional detail on each of each of the Village alignments and organizational structures.

Table14: Comparative Functional Alignments

Comparative Functional Alignments							
	Pop	Village Assessing Unit	Assessment Delivery Model	Engineering, Building & Codes Dept	Architect, Building & Codes	Building and Codes Department	Engineering & DPW
Croton-on-Hudson	8,237	Yes	In Engineering	X			
Sleepy Hollow	9,986	Yes	Contractual		X		
Dobbs Ferry	11,541	No	N/A			X	
Hasting-on-Hudson	8,590	No	N/A			X	
Tarrytown	11,860	No	N/A	X			
Briar Cliff Manor	7,569	No	N/A	X			
Pelham	7,326	No	N/A			X	
Pelham Manor	5,752	No	N/A			X	
Pleasantville	7,513	Yes	Assessor's Office			X	X
Irvington	6,652	No	N/A			X	
Bronxville	6,656	Yes	Assessor's Office			X	
Rye Brook	10,047	No	N/A			X	X
Tuckahoe	7,084	Yes	Assessor's Office			X	
Ardsey	5,079	No	N/A			X	
Source: Municipal Websites Summer 2024							

Key observations from the comparative review relative to functional alignments and organizational structure include:

- **Property Assessment Function**
 - 9 of the 13 Villages do not perform the property assessment function.
 - 3 Villages have an Assessor's Office and each office is a stand-alone department.
 - 1 village contracts the function out.
 - No Engineering or Building Department perform the property assessment function.
- **Engineering Function**
 - 9 of the 13 Villages do not have an employed Village Engineer position and contract for engineering services to support Village departments and operations.
 - 2 of the 13 Villages have a structure very similar to Croton-on-Hudson in which the Village Engineer is the Department Head over a department that includes administration and enforcement of the Uniform Fire and Building Code, Village Zoning and other codes and provides intake, coordination function and technical engineering review services for the Planning Board, ZBA and other boards. (Tarrytown and Briarcliff Manor)

- 2 of the 13 Villages have Public Works Superintendents that are licensed engineers and provide the engineering services relative to Village infrastructure. (Pleasantville and Rye Brook)
- **Building and Fire Prevention Code, Zoning Code Enforcement and Support for land use Planning Board, ZBA and Other Boards.**
 - 10 of the 13 Villages have a Building Department or a Building/Code Enforcement Department headed by a Building Inspector that oversees the administration and enforcement of the NYS Uniform Building and Fire Prevention Codes, Village Zoning and other Village codes.
 - 1 of the 13 Villages has a Department of Architecture, Land Use Development, Buildings and Building Compliance over seen by a Building Inspector/Architect. (Village of Sleepy Hollow)
 - 2 Villages have the functions embedded in the Village Engineer's Office similar to the Village of Croton-on-Hudson. (Villages of Briarcliff Manor and Tarrytown)

V. Key Stakeholder Perspectives and Observations

Observations

Local stakeholders provided valuable input into the assessment and planning process. Participating stakeholders included Village leadership, Village Engineer, department staff, chairs of the Village Planning Board, the ZBA, the Water Control Commission and the Superintendent of Public Works. The process included a combination of surveys and interviews. Stakeholder input is summarized in **Table 15: Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats**.

Table 15: Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats

STRENGTHS • One-stop-shop for land use and building planning, development and code enforcement • Technical engineering expertise • Knowledgeable staff • Responsiveness to residents & stakeholders • 20+ years of stability due to same department head. • Quality planning and oversight of development projects. • Cross training and cross certifications		WEAKNESSES • Retirements/ transitions/ succession planning • Wide span of department functions • Inability to meet current workloads • Competing demands • Inconsistencies • Limited technology optimization • Competing demands • Limited backup resources • Frustration with enforcement tools • Reactive rather than proactive code administration and enforcement • Flat organizational structure
OPPORTUNITIES • Preparing for the future from a position of strength • Expand staffing levels to stabilize operations • Retain One-Stop-Shop alignment of functions • Create hierarchical structure • Institutionalize practices and procedures • Enhance management tools and practices • Workflow technology solutions • Enhance proactive enforcement program		THREATS • Loss of institutional knowledge through departures • Continuous expansion of NYS code requirements • Significant increase in workload • Increasing community expectations • Expanded Village codes • Safety concerns “falling through the cracks” • Increased expectations • Fiscal challenges • Code non-compliance

Vision for the Future

Unanimously, stakeholders agreed that the Engineering Department has done an excellent job; however, all spoke to emerging external pressures on the department including: 1) the current and emerging trends in increased multi-family housing developments and population within the Village; 2) new and expanded Village codes to be enforced; 3) higher community expectations that codes be enforced and violation remedies be accomplished; and 4) expanding complexities of NYS Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Codes and the NYS Stretch Codes.

All stakeholders indicated that it is in the community's and Village's best interest to develop an organizational blueprint necessary for the Village to effectively and efficiently deliver engineering, community planning and economic development, zoning and code administration and enforcement services that can meet the Village needs and expectations of the future.

- Ensure that Village has the proper staff resources, tools and system in place to respond to and address concerns, especially those of a serious nature, quickly. The department is entrusted with monitoring the construction of homes, buildings, retaining walls, drainage structures and other ancillary and accessory structures.
- Provide oversight of the public and private development which occurs in the Village so that residents have confidence that new construction is safe and adhering to federal, state and local laws and regulations.
- Ensure the Village has the proper resources to support planning and economic development functions.
- Ensure the organizational structure can adapt to emerging community trends and expectations.
- Balance the need to plan and steer future community planning and development with need to oversee, manage, administer and enforce the Village Zoning Code, numerous Village quality of life code and the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code and the New York Energy Code expanded in the Village of Croton-on-Hudson by the adoption of the NY Stretch Code.

Strengths of the Current System

- Engineering Department has done a very capable job of assisting to oversee and implement projects in line with Village policy goals.
- The Department, through its Department Head, is extremely strong in (1) technical engineering expertise; (2) knowledge of the Village code; and (3) institutional history in what has occurred in the Village regarding the built environment over the last generation.
- The department has a good reputation with members of the community. The engineer and assistant engineer are always willing to meet with residents, contractors, etc. to review plans, answer questions and ensure applications are complete. The office assistants are friendly and able to assist with administrative procedures.
- The Engineering Department is literally a “one-stop-shop” for residents, developers and contractors for land use planning, development and construction.
- Good communication between Village Engineering staff, the boards that they staff and the Department of Public Works.
- Best practices are applied to community development projects: preservation of environment, including flora and fauna, community comfort, protection and safety; and managing growth and development.

- The professional and support staff in the Engineering Department go out of their way to provide excellent service. Based on observation, they basically define the term "public servant".
- The Village has already established multiple volunteer groups to develop and oversee critical areas of citizen concern – a very progressive approach to involving stakeholders.

Challenges

- There is the public perception that the Engineering, Planning, Zoning and Enforcement being done by a very small staff, that it is “always stretched thin” regarding oversight and enforcement.
- Difficulty meeting community expectations, increasing workload and workload complexities using the historical organizational structure, human resources and management and technology tools.
- Limited time to focus on the actions necessary to address non-compliance and ensure for health and safety.
- Competing demands between needs for community development and planning functions and code administration and enforcement functions makes it difficult for staff to prioritize.
- Competing demands between Village Codes and the Fire Prevention and Building Codes. *Note: The Village has already worked to address this issue by restructuring the historical full-time Fire Inspector position into a full time code enforcement officer position focused on Village Codes and a part-time Fire Inspector position focused on the administration and enforcement of the NYS Fire Prevention Code.*
- Maintaining and updating the Village assessment roll takes away time that department employees can spend on other tasks. Village assessment is duplicative of the Town of Cortlandt Assessors Office which the Town is mandated to provide.
- There are limited opportunities to address cases that remain non-compliant for long periods of time.
- Sometimes it is difficult to address enforcement in a meaningful way. There is a perception that the system for enforcement lacks institutional teeth.
- Difficulty developing a proactive Village code enforcement program, and not just be a response system to complaints.
- Lack of standardization of processes related to enforcement particularly related to non-compliance cases.
- Need for integrated record keeping; use of data and management practices.
- Croton-on-Hudson’s aging housing stock presents challenges to code enforcement particularly regarding property maintenance and nuisances.
- One stakeholder felt the current alignment overlaps with DPW and requires coordination that results in delays, conflict of priorities, and available personnel resources.

Threats

- Loss of institutional knowledge as long-term staff retire.
- It will be impossible to manage the various program requirements given current increases in population caused by new housing, energy consumption and infrastructure needs, etc.
- There has been a continued increase in the depth and breadth of the NYS Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code requirements.

- There has been an introduction of new Village codes and higher expectations of existing codes that are increasing competition between department functions; in particular between Village codes and Uniform Fire Prevention code responsibilities
- Positive changes have been made to the Village's zoning districts in the past ten years to encourage additional development in a manner that protects the Village's waterfront areas and natural preserves. This has enabled a boon in multifamily construction project. While these changes are very positive for the community, code enforcement is more complicated and requires relatively more staff resources. This is threatening the stability of the department and its ability to carefully oversee specific planning and development functions, construction permitting, oversight and inspection functions and the long term fire safety inspection workloads.
- The competing demands could threaten the ability to attend to the health and safety requirements.

Potential Opportunities

Possible Re-Organizational Structure Options for Consideration:

- Ensure the Village has the structure and staff that can handle the bigger and more complex expectations and requirements of the future. The department also covers a wide array of services and should evaluate what functions should remain together.
- Possible consideration of integrating the Engineering Department into the Public Works Department. Consider adding new planning and economic development resources to the Village that could take on a coordinating role between and among the Board of Trustees, other Village Boards and the Village Manager as well identifying and seeking external funding to support various initiatives.
- Consider whether the Village should retain the property assessor function and if so, consider the value on continued alignment of the function with the Engineering Department.
- Department needs an additional building inspector to assist with the multitude of inspections and plan reviews that are submitted.
- Consider shifting the engineering functions that support Village infrastructure and capital improvement planning to the Public Works department. Clearer and/or revised job descriptions, lines of authority and responsibility with Village Engineer at the head of the department, adequate service personnel both professional and support staff.
- Improvement is predicated on additional staff resources to better distribute the work load and provide additional sets of specialized hands for key functions.

Possible Strategies

- Address the current and increasing demands caused by housing development, property improvement of current stock and outside pressures of new laws by government to protect the environment. Expansion is essential now with current roles supporting outcomes (code enforcement and health and safety personnel needed)
- Include planning and economic development consultant resource aligned to a reformulated department.
- Introduce and utilize management tools and practices and end to end work flow technology solutions needed to effectively and efficiently manage larger and more complex operations. The digital workflow system should be used for project management by owners and contractors with the ability to track status would be appreciated.

V. Key Stakeholder Perspectives and Observations

- Develop an organizational structure that can be modified to optimize staff time and resources.
- Develop a strategic planning group across stakeholder groups that must include Village Manager, Trustee(s) and the Village Engineer.
- Consider stronger code enforcement of Village codes including signage, tree protection and other aspects of protecting the visual environment.
- Need to assure processes and records access are designed for the future.
- The ability to do more design and contracting in house where it provides cost savings to the Village.
- Build on current strengths of the department by preparing for future staff transition.
- Provide continuous succession planning within the organization.
- Establish an organizational design that can continue to be effective upon the retirement and/or transition of department head as well as all staff.
- Leverage the strong relationships that have been developed with property owners to increase on proactive compliance and ensure outstanding items are completed, permits are renewed, and violations are addressed.
- Develop strategies to re-enforce fair and impartial approaches to enforcement by consistently conducting inspections and issuing notices to remedy and violations when appropriate.
- Shift from a responsive code enforcement program to a proactive program.
- Establish expanded communication strategies with the public that would help to alleviate any possible trust issues with the system.

VI. Strategies

Strategy 1: Functional Re-Alignment

Based on initial stakeholder input, four options were considered for functional alignment and are outlined below. The organizational structure and staffing recommendations were then developed for the functional alignment put forth as the preferred recommendation.

- **Status Quo**

The operation of the Village Engineer's Office would continue to encompass engineering work related to select Village public works projects, land use planning and development, zoning, building permitting and the administration and enforcement of all NYS Unified Code, NYStretch Code and all assigned Village Codes and the Village property assessment function.

- **Re-constitute the Engineering Department into a Planning, Zoning, Building and Codes Department**

- Maintain the alignment of land use planning and development, zoning, building permitting and code enforcement of the NYS Unified Code, NY Stretch Code and all assigned Village Codes in one department.
- Centralize all Village engineering responsibilities related to Village public works projects to the Public Works Department.
- Consolidate the property assessment function with the Town of Cortlandt's assessment function or have the assessor function as a stand-alone department reporting to the Village Manager. In the latter option, the Village Assessor could remain co-located with the new department to facilitate continued shared support staff services.

- **Consolidate the existing Engineering Department within the Department of Public Works**

Create an Engineering Division within the Public Works Department. The Division would include all the current functions performed by the Village Engineer's Department; however, there would be consideration of the consolidation of the property assessment function with the Town or the creation of a stand-alone Village Assessor's Office as outline in the option above.

- **Extract the Land Use Planning and Development Functions**

In this model, land use planning and development functions would be established as a stand-alone department or be integrated into another Department in order to alleviate the overload in the Engineering Department. During the process no existing department was identified as a viable option. This option would also include consider the consolidation of the property assessment function with the Town or the creation of a stand-alone Village Assessor's Office as outline in the option above.

Preferred Functional Alignment

Early on in the study process, **Option 2: Re-constitute Village Engineering into a Planning, Zoning, Building and Codes Department** surfaced as the preferred long term functional alignment. The study process considered the historical evolution of roles and responsibilities over the last decade, emerging community trends, stakeholder insights related to the preservation of functional alignments and the

opportunities for improvements through re-alignments. Key considerations leading to the preferred option are highlighted below.

- Stakeholders reported that from the customer perspective, the current one-stop-shop alignment of functions is a valuable strength. Specifically, stakeholders spoke to the alignment of general land use planning, the land use regulatory processes including the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals and the Water Control Commission and other related boards such as the Advisory Board on the Visual Environment and the building permitting, building plan reviews and inspection process. The current alignment has been responsive and available to residents, contractors, developers and community groups and would be important to maintain going forward.
- From an organizational perspective, significant benefit is gained through the ability to share technical/professional staff and the administrative support staff between among the land use planning, the land use regulatory processes, the building permitting and the code enforcement functions.
- Transition of Village engineering services related to Village assets to the Department of Public Works is more of a formality than it is a functional shift. As identified in **Section II: Current State**, the dependence of the Department of Public Works on Village Engineering for public works project engineering services has significantly declined as the Department of Public Works has developed the in-house engineering, construction management and capital project planning capacity.
- Discussions with both the Village Engineer and the Superintendent of Public Works regarding a possible merger of the Public Works and Engineering Departments did not reveal opportunities for improved service coordination, quality improvement or efficiency gains. In fact, both spoke to concerns that consolidation into a larger department could negatively impact the focus of both departments, further complicate the clarity of roles and responsibilities between and among staff, and create confusion for the public.
- Discussions with stakeholders identified limited benefits of extracting land use planning and economic development functions from the current alignment compared to the cost to establish a new stand-alone Department.

Strategy 2: Organizational Restructuring and Staffing Improvements

Re-Constitute Engineering Department as the Planning, Zoning, Building and Codes Department

The Engineering Department, as it is currently organized, is the core of the proposed department structure; however, it is recommended that the historical role of “village engineer” related to village infrastructure formally reside in the Department of Public Works. Land use and community planning, zoning and the administration and enforcement of building construction, fire safety, property maintenance and other quality of life Village codes remain intact as one department. While the formal responsibility for engineering of Village infrastructure is recommended to move to the Public Works Department, specific projects could be assigned to an engineer based on expertise and availability. The consolidation of the property assessment function with the Town of Cortlandt is recommended for further review and possible consolidation.

It is recommended that the department name align with its streamlined functions to further enhance the visibility and strength of the one-stop-shop. A sample name could be: **Planning, Zoning, Buildings and**

Codes Department. The name change and re-organization can be phased in over time enabling the transition of public works engineering functions to Public Works and the re-alignment of property assessment functions. All current staff members are envisioned as essential to the department moving forward. Desired outcomes from the organizational re-structuring and staff changes include:

- Strengthen the NYS Fire Prevention and Village Code administration and enforcement services necessary to assure for community safety and health relative to the built environment.
- Reduce competing demands between and among the critical functions.
- Promote the highest and best use of professional staff; particularly the engineers. Redirect work such as village code, fire safety and building code inspection duties to other titles to free the engineers to focus on the highly technical roles and responsibilities.
- Optimize multi-disciplinary skills sets necessary to support land use planning and development. The Village has a number of large development projects on the horizon that will require significant resources from the Village administration as well as the Village Engineering Department. Complimentary specialty skill set including land use planners and engineering should be considered in the Village's delivery system.
- Enable a streamlined focus on land use planning, zoning, building construction and code enforcement by shifting out the property assessment and engineering services.
- Promote the vision and mission of the Department as a one-stop-shop for land use planning, zoning, building and codes. **Figure 2: Planning, Zoning, Building and Code Enforcement** depicts continued alignment of functions recommended to remain in a one stop shop.

Figure 2: Planning, Zoning, Building and Code Enforcement



This model maintains and builds upon the positive community and stakeholder relationships the department has developed. Maintaining these relationships empowers staff to introduce new technologies that can improve communication with residents and stakeholders and to implement end to end workflow

automation tools that support operational efficiencies and enhances opportunities to centralize record storage, indexing and retrieval linked to each unique parcel of land.

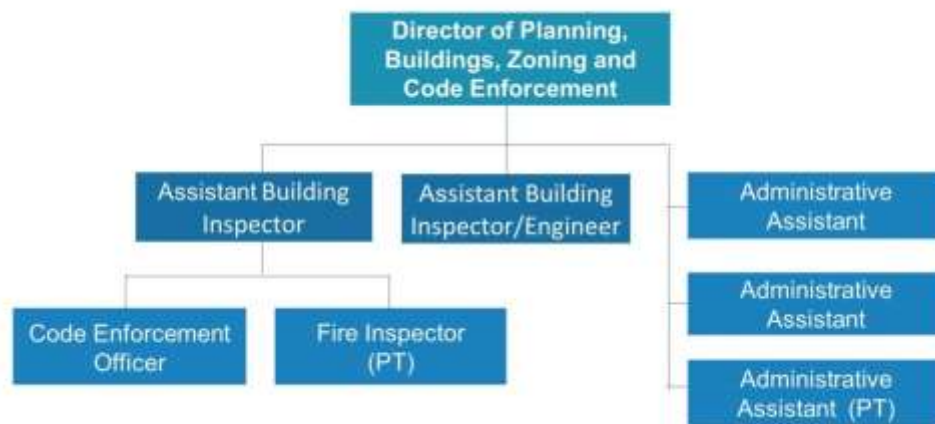
As staff assignments are better aligned to skills, there may be availability for the new department to assist the Village Board, administration and Department of Public Works with specific projects as is done today. The responsibility for mapping and GIS services is recommended to remain with the land use and building environment functions and the Department would continue to provide maps to Public Works as needed.

The re-structuring initiative could address the duplication of the Village property assessment function with that of the Town of Cortlandt. After impact evaluation, the Village Board could take the steps to formally opt out of the assessment function. The Village would use the section of the Town rolls specific to the Village prepared by the Town of Cortlandt Town Assessor.

Proposed Long Term Organizational Structure and Staffing

The long term (3-5 years) recommended organizational model creates a Department of Planning, Zoning, Buildings and Codes as depicted in **Figure 3: Proposed Organizational Chart**.

Figure 3: Proposed Organizational Chart



The proposed organizational structure includes 1.5 full time positions more than the historical staffing model in the Engineering Department.

- The Department Head would have an education requirement as an engineer, an architect or a municipal land use planner, hold the relevant license or certification and have minimally three years of relevant experience and progressive responsibility. In addition the incumbent would be required to have and retain a Code Enforcement Officer certification from the NYS Department of State Division of Building Standards and Codes.
- It is recommended that the re-structuring include a Codes Compliance Division that is supervised by a new Assistant Building Inspector. The position would meet the minimum qualifications as outlined in

the Westchester job specification's minimum qualifications and the incumbent must have and maintain the Code Enforcement Officer certification from the NYS Department of State Division of Building Standards and Code Services.

The Assistant Building Inspector would provide supervision over the Fire Inspector and the Code Enforcement Officer and report to the Department Head. The position would also perform building construction permit reviews and conduct construction and fire safety inspections. The position could also provide consultation with land owners/developers on potential building projects as well as guide owners/developers on the steps necessary to assure compliance. Depending on the future configuration of the department head position, the Village may want to consider upgrading the Assistant Building Inspector position to Building Inspector.

It will be critical that this position be responsible to assist the Department Head in the development and maintenance of standard operating procedures, work standards and work plans for the Code Compliance Division within the Department. In addition, in coordination with the Fire Inspector and the Code Enforcement Officer, the position would be responsible to take the steps necessary to prevent and address non-compliance. These steps range from pro-active education programs for property representatives, encouraging immediate remediation of identified violations, issuing violations, issuing appearance tickets and attending court.

- The Assistant Building Inspector/Engineer position is recommended but not required to have a professional engineer's license. The priority duties would be to 1) conduct building permit application and building plan reviews and construction inspections; 2) perform technical engineering plan reviews for projects before the Planning Board and support the ZBA and other boards; and; 3) consult with land owners/developers on potential projects.
- The part time Fire Inspector position qualifications would reflect those outlined on the Fire Inspector job specification. The position would be responsible to conduct all fire safety inspections as required by the NYS Fire Prevention Code within the established legal time intervals. It will be important to monitor the capacity of a 15-hour per week position to handle the workload. It may be necessary for the team to support this function as necessary.
- The full time Code Enforcement Officer would be responsible to administer and enforce the Village Codes under the auspices of the department. Examples of the codes to be enforced include: zoning, tree removal, leaf blower, property maintenance including sidewalk maintenance, abandoned cars. It is recommended that the incumbent obtain NYS code enforcement officer certification. In addition, the position would be responsible to take the steps necessary to prevent and address non-compliance. These steps range from assisting with pro-active education programs for property representatives, encouraging immediate remediation of identified violations, issuing violations, issuing appearance tickets and attending court.

Phased Approach

With the long term organizational restructuring in mind, the following outlines the immediate and phased-in implementation recommendations:

Phase I: Departmental Stabilization (2045-2025)

The first priority is the stabilization of the Village Engineering Department. The Village has just hired its part-time (15 hours per week) Fire Inspector position and has posted the job notice for the full time Code Enforcement Officer. With the recent retirement and the increasing workload, it will be critical to on-board, train and enroll both staff in the NYS code enforcement training and certification program.

The Fire Inspector must attain the NYS Building Safety Inspector certification within 6 months (either from date of hire or the start of the initial training class, whichever comes first) and may not perform any Building Safety Inspector duties until the first of three training modules has been completed and the test passed. The total basic training is 12 full days held in 3 4-day blocks.

The recommended priority of Phase I, would be to achieve compliance with the required Fire Safety inspection program. This will require the Fire Inspector to bring all of the inspections up date and to take the necessary enforcement actions to achieve compliance with the Fire Prevention Code. Based on the level of inspections, re-inspections and code enforcement actions necessary, the Village may want to consider utilizing the new code enforcement officer position to assist; should it found to be necessary. This would require the incumbent to obtain a NYS Building Safety Inspector certification within the first six months of hiring and assist, as necessary, the Fire Inspector with the Village's fire safety program.

Phase II: Organizational Re-structuring and Staffing (2025)

Phase II includes a recommendation to create an Assistant Building Inspector position that would report directly to the Village Engineer and would have regulatory responsibilities related to the NYS Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code, the NYStretch Code, Village Zoning Code and other Village Codes. The new position is recommended to include the following key responsibilities:

- Provide supervision and oversight of the Fire Inspector and Code Enforcement Officer.
- Assist the Village Engineer to develop and implement enhanced proactive compliance and enforcement strategies.
- Assist the Village Engineer to develop department procedures related to the department's regulatory responsibilities including compliance activities and intervals between compliance activities, work product expectations, reporting requirements and work status tracking, etc.
- Assist the Village Engineer to develop work plans and work schedules to assure timely inspections, consider and evaluate potential end to end work flow automation tools, tightened focus on developing standard operating procedures.
- Assist with the building construction inspection workload in order to enable the Assistant Village Engineer to dedicate more time to the anticipated increase in building permitting and building plan review workload.
- Oversee the action steps necessary to implement the initiatives focused on achieving timely code inspections and compliance.
- Identify and address the engineering resource needs of the Public Works Department. Currently, the Village Engineer and Assistant Village Engineer allocate in total approximately 5 hours/week of engineering services associated with Village infrastructure.

- The Village administration and Board of Trustees would evaluate the impact of discontinuing Village property assessment.
- As the larger multi-family housing projects move into the building permitting and inspection phase, the Department should assess the capacity of the staff to handle the workload and address any identified gaps.

Phase III

- Create the Planning, Zoning, Building and Code Enforcement Department and make the necessary Village Code amendments necessary to effectuate the change.
- Potentially transition the property assessment function to the Town of Cortlandt. Should the decision be made to maintain the function, it is recommended to be a stand-alone operation reporting to the Village Manager. The function could; however, remain co-located with the Planning, Zoning, Building and Code Enforcement for the purposes of shared space, equipment and support staff.
- Formalize the “Village Engineer” role in the Department of Public Works and make the necessary Village Code amendments as necessary. Based on workload and capacity, the new Department should evaluate its capacity to continue to assist Public Works with specific projects.

Strategy 3: Department Resiliency

The Department restructuring includes elements that would support department resiliency. The following recommended steps all contribute to creating enhanced organizational strength and resiliency:

Retain a Land Use Planning Firm to Provide “As Needed” Services

The Village has a number of land use planning and building construction projects in the pipeline. As was apparent with some of the recent large commercial and multi-family housing projects, the planning and regulatory processes are complex, involve multiple regulatory review processes and community impact analyses and often take years prior to the final regulatory decisions are completed.

The Village could consider placing an experienced land use planning firm on retainer to be utilized as needed. This would have two benefits. It would provide additional support for the Village Engineer on an as needed basis with the anticipated larger projects. At the same time it could provide continuity for the management of large projects should there be critical staff retirements. The Village would select a qualified firm to provide relevant services on an as-needed basis. Examples of the services to be provided include:

- Perform technical support services on projects on an as assigned basis.
- Coordinate and facilitate between and among the multiple regulatory processes for proposed large commercial and multi-family housing projects. This could include developing and updating an outline of the necessary regulatory processes and timelines, arranging for the necessary impact analyses, etc.
- Review and analyze assigned planning board applications submitted to the Village including Site Plan Reviews and provide technical reports for the Village Board of Trustees, the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals as needed.

- Prepare public hearing notices for assigned projects, as needed.
- Prepare agenda-ready reports, findings of fact, and conditions of approval for inclusion with the associated regulatory approvals.
- Present assigned current planning projects at public hearings held by the relevant regulatory body.

Staffing Resiliency

The proposed model includes an organizational structure that is more resilient and can better handle staff retirements and attritions and can provide additional coverage for leave time and gaps in service.

- Ensure that the majority of the five professional staff positions (4.5 FTE) obtain and continue to retain the NYS Code Enforcement Officer or Building Safety Inspector certification that enables the individual to conduct either or both fire safety inspections as well as perform building inspector functions.
- The minimum qualifications for the Department Head should require a licensed engineer or architect or a certified land use planner.
- The job specification for the Assistant Building Inspector/Engineer provides flexibility in the assignment of responsibilities.
- The proposed Assistant Building Inspector position would enhance department resiliency. It will reduce the span of control by adding a supervisor within the department. This position can handle building permitting, construction inspections, fire safety inspections and Village code enforcement functions.

Standard Operating Procedures

- Succession planning and organizational stability are supported by a set of straight forward standard operating procedures and work standards as outlined in **STRATEGY 5: Enhance Management Practices**. Institutionalizing the current practices will support organizational stability during times of staff transition; particularly when it involves leadership positions.

Strategy 4: Advance Proactive Code Compliance Efforts

The Village Engineering Department is recognized by stakeholders for its open access and user friendly approach to land use planning and development and building construction projects. This same model is recommended as a front end strategy to achieving optimal code compliance in the Village.

Department's Historical Focus on Code Compliance as the Desired Outcome

- Voluntary compliance is the desired outcome and the Department should continue its efforts to encourage compliance to identified violations. Staff should continue to explain violations clearly to property owners, provide information on corrective actions, and answer questions.
- The Department should act promptly when a violation is identified, and provide property owners with a reasonable timeframe, specific to the violation, to address and correct the violation.

Fire Safety Code Compliance

With the desired outcome being code compliance, the following proactive strategies are recommended to avoid the time consuming and inefficient workflow path related enforcement of non-compliant cases:

- Host annual/bi-annual training for representatives of assembly spaces, multi-family dwellings and non-residential occupancies. While it is the property owner's responsibility to be compliant, offering a basic training for new property owners/management staff could be beneficial to increasing code compliance and reducing violations. Topics could be focused on the critical elements of code compliance and the typical violations cited.
- Develop and provide user friendly pre-inspection checklists to operators of assembly space, multi-family dwelling and occupied non-residential buildings. The checklists could include typical inspection elements and typical violations.
- Develop templated graduated letters and notices of violation to facilitate achieve compliance re: notice of non-compliance; then referral to court.

Village Code Compliance – Community Communication

Leverage the Department's positive relationships to proactively communicate with the community on the importance of code compliance.

- Build regular and proactive community scans into the code compliance program to identify potential violations before they become significant issues. This consistency across the Village and steady pressure can mitigate safety concerns and prevent code violations from escalating.
- Utilize various means to communicate property maintenance and other quality of life codes to the community.
- Capitalize on community events such as clean up days.
- Send reminders to prior year non-compliant property owners prior to next inspection.

What Requires a Building Permit/What does not?

- There are definitely nuances to making a determination of whether a project needs a building permit prior to initiation of the project. However; it would be beneficial to provide general information to the public as to what likely needs and what likely does not need a permit. The Department could provide an informational piece that lists the types of improvement projects that require a building permit and those that do not. The information could be displayed on the department webpage along with a statement encouraging the public to call the department for clarification.
- Build regular and proactive community scans into the code compliance program to identify construction projects underway without a permit.
- Target communication to new homeowners and realtors, who may not realize what processes to follow before making improvements to their property and homes.

Strategy 5: Enhance Management Practices

Standard Operating Procedures/Guidelines

The Department has a skilled, knowledgeable department head and staff that know what needs to get done. It will be important that this knowledge be institutionalized and used to set the baseline for the

future. The more that work flows, assignment of responsibilities, and tasks within workflow can be routinized, the less stressful and more efficient the staff can be and the higher the expectation of achieving compliance will be. Creating basic frameworks for operations and workflows free staff up to focus on the more difficult decisions they have to make rather than spending time on determining what the next step should be. Standard work flows, procedures and guidelines are also important for training new employees.

The Department can start small and be strategic. It could for example begin with the workflows for the administration and enforcement of NYS Uniform Code and Village Codes. The development of procedures/guidelines can be phased in over time and can be targeted at critical procedures initially. Examples include:

- **Identification of Parcels Requiring Fire Safety Inspections**
 - Formalize the existing notification process between the building permitting staff and the fire safety inspectors regarding the process to share information on change in use/occupancy and building permit activity that would require a property to be added to the buildings requiring regular fire safety inspections.
 - An annual cross reference to the tax rolls should also be conducted to assure all properties requiring safety inspections are identified.

- **Work Activity Standards**

With the increase in activity, anticipation of additional staff and periodic turn-over of staff, development of simple work activity standards for regulatory staff would be beneficial. Guidelines should define, for example:

- Guidelines for fire safety inspection activities specific for assembly space, multi-family dwelling and occupied non-residential spaces. The Village has a checklist used for inspections. This could be used as the base for the work standard. Upon review and update of the checklist, a fleshed out version detailing the inspection expectations could easily be developed.
- Re-inspection expectations including intervals for cases of non-compliance.
- When to issue an appearance ticket necessary to take a non-compliant case to court
- Documentation expectations
- Inspectors should follow-up and take formal enforcement action when property owners do not correct cited violations.
- Simple guidelines could similarly be established for Village Code enforcement inspections such as property maintenance.

Addressing Non-Compliance

- Set expectations for follow up on non-compliant cases, graduated interventions and referral to court. The guidelines should address reasonable intervals between steps based on the type and nature of the case. These standards will assist in the training of new employees, succession planning, and cross training of staff, and reduce confusion during periods of transition.
- While, most code non-compliance cases require the same steps, they are not all equal as to the time intervals necessary for a property owner to abate the violation. The intervals for addressing property

maintenance violations such as high weeds and grass, nuisances and rubbish should have a short time expectation. Typical clean up can happen within 5-10 days.³ Similarly, the Department should establish guidelines that ensure that inspectors schedule the re-inspection correspondingly.

Work Reporting and Documentation

All work activities should be reported, as practical, in a single unified code administration and enforcement system. Examples of data to be included for work activities include case identifier, case status, worker ID, action taken, action date, compliance achieved/failed, next action and time interval on next action. This will enable:

- Dash board reports identifying overdue staff activities.
- Dashboard reports identifying the aging on non-compliant cases and case status.
- Tracking key indicators of compliance and non-compliance.
- Use of check lists and standardized documentation guidelines.
- Use a single data collection and tracking system.
- Develop system in which violations are found, need to track that they were re-inspected and found to have passed or failed.
- Support for data-informed decision making at the case specific and management level.

Case record documentation guidelines relative to inspections and findings of non-compliance are critical to successful, consistent and efficiency enforcement efforts. Guidelines should outline the typical elements needed and the standards used to determine non-compliance such as detailed records of inspections, violations issued and ongoing status, communications, photos, tests conducted and corrective actions taken.

Interval Workplans

As the Department's workload increases, annual work plans will become even more important management tool to help guide resource allocation and prioritization of activities. This will be particularly important over the next three to five years as the work load will constantly be changing and shifting between departmental functions. The work plan should be simple and straightforward establishing work performance targets, general timelines for accomplishment of the targets and the resources needed.

Simple work plans will be important to manage the change and identify unanticipated issues; all of which can inform the process necessary to adjust accordingly. A more formalized plan should outline annual activities, establish annual performance targets and place each work activity in a schedule. It should also identify those activities that take priority should the plan not be achievable due to unanticipated events or workload. There are life safety activities to which the Department must attend. Work plans should take into consideration the adopted fiscal policy of the Board of Trustees and the best practice recommendations for service and service intervals. When these are in conflict, the department leadership should be working with Village leadership and administration to develop a short term and/or long term solution.

³ Center for Community Progress, Code Enforcement Process Improvements for St. Louis County, p5

Data Driven Decision Making

There is great opportunity to use data to manage work not only at the case level, but to also to support the management of case specific work, tracking of over-due staff assignments, cases remaining non-compliant and workload trends. It can also be used to measure impact on compliance. All of this data can inform strategic planning for the future of the department. Evaluation of the data in combination with the work flow standards can assist the department to optimize opportunities for improvement and address gaps in the department's processes and strategies. A few examples of data that could be useful to review on a regular basis include:

- Workload trends by activity type.
- Trends in the number and type of violations.
- Violation aging reports that includes case stage: voluntary, notice issued, re-inspection of notice; referral for court action, etc.
- Inspections due but not completed.
- Unclosed permits with lapse of activity.
- Dashboard data that continuously monitors and tracks proactive compliance programs.
- Evaluation of enforcement strategies including appearance tickets and court intervention. Such data could be the basis of recommended improvements in sanctions, time intervals, etc.
- Measure compliance by code.

Staff Development and Training

Department staff participates in trainings on a regular basis necessary to maintain their NYS Uniform Code certifications. In addition to trainings related to NYS Codes, the department may want to include soft-skill trainings related to community engagement, conflict management and working with difficult cases and successful code compliance strategies including enforcement programs.

Strategy 6: Advance the Use of Technology and Workflow Automation

Description

Currently, the Department uses a combination of the MUNIS permit system to track its building permits, inspections and complaints/violations as well as uses desk top word processing and spreadsheets. Records are stored in multiple mediums: in MUNIS, excel spreadsheets, as PDFs and in hard copy files.

There are emerging technologies and products designed specifically for building permitting, code enforcement management and land use planning. Such systems present an opportunity for improved compliance, communication and efficiencies and have arrived at price points that are approachable for small to medium sized municipalities. The systems take advantage of end to end workflow automation enhancements. A number of the systems have the ability to handle and integrate continuum of land use planning and zoning needs and building permitting and code enforcement functions. Typically the specific functions are offered as modules and municipalities can start with one or more modules and build out their big picture integrated system over time.

The opportunity lies in the systems' ability to automate repetitive steps from the beginning to the end of multiple work flows in a program. For building permitting, as an example, the process automates the permit process from its inception including an interface with available GIS systems. Applications are

submitted on line, including plans. An application can automatically flow from one staff person to another for input, review and if needed approval. Plans can be reviewed, notes made and readjustments resubmitted through the system.

Upon approval by the municipality, an automatic permit can be issued and automatically distributed. Property owners, developers and contractors can access the system 24/7 and track project status. Construction inspection scheduling can be set on line. Construction inspection reports can be completed in the field with photos and other documents uploaded and automatically distributed from the field. The system can generate notice of violations and stop work orders, certificates of occupancies, etc. Each case can be assigned to the appropriate employees and internal signoffs by supervisors can be built into the workflow. The automated workflow can be tailored to the processes of a particular department. These tools provide efficiencies and consistency in work activities. Critical work activities that can be automated include:

- Field based mobile applications enable inspection work and notes to be entered into the case record from the field. The inspection report can be completed and photos and other documentation can be uploaded into the system.
- Inspections can be scheduled on line.
- Upon identification of a code violation, the process of each case can be tracked and monitored over the life of the case.
- Homeowner/contractor communication portal providing 24/7 access to building permit status
- Automatic routing of permit applications between staff within the department which can reduce the use of paper notes back and forth between staff.
- Automatic document creation (inspection reports, notice of violations, order to remedy, stop work orders, certificate of occupancy/completion, etc.)
- Automatic document distribution upon necessary municipal sign-off approval to pre-designated parties.
- Dashboards and automatic notice of overdue inspections and other actions.
- Integration with other system such as GIS mapping and parcel data.
- The emerging technologies are cloud based and vendor hosted. In general the tools are intuitive and have been simplified requiring less technology support from municipalities.
- Records storage, indexing and retrieval can be automated. This can provide staff with access to recent and potentially historical records associated with code violations, as well as other documents submitted by dwelling units and property owners in compliance with state regulations. Tracking complaints, applications, and requests, staff can access and update parcel specific records from the field in real-time.
- Automated dashboards that can assist with the implementing management best practices and task tools to facilitate timely and compliant work by staff and management oversight of that work. The systems often provides dashboards identifying overdue inspections, send reminders for work scheduled and planned, tracks open cases, provide aging reports.

Benefits

- Improved oversight at management, supervisory and task level.
 - Data dashboards of open work, overdue inspections, outstanding work.
 - Alerts on overdue work.
- Improved communication with property owners and developers.
 - 24/7 access by property owners and developers to system, project status and updates
- Gains in efficiency.
 - The automation tools reduce reliance on paper notes that are then manually entered into a digital format.
 - Automatic feed of fields necessary to generate documents.
 - Pre-set distribution lists and automatic sends of documents upon required municipal approvals.
- Limited need for municipal technology staff support.
- Integration between building permit, code enforcement, zoning and land use planning workflows.
- Report generation to support data driven decision making.
- Automatic file storage and indexing of documents.

In the emerging cloud based systems, a municipality does not buy the software; rather, the municipality pays an annual service fee. There are upfront costs associated with tailoring the system to the municipalities' needs, data conversion, training and integration with local GIS or other land use systems. Annual costs typically reflect 2 primary factors – the number and types of modules the municipality desires to purchase and a standardized pricing metric such as population or number of parcels.

Strategy Approach**Coordinate a series of demonstrations**

It will be important to have a collective understanding of the technology capacity that can be gained by the participating municipalities. Most vendors offer on-line or in-person demonstrations of their products. Suggested participants include Department representatives, the Village Manager, fiscal office representatives. Based on the relatively high volume of building permits and code enforcement activities, the Village may want to initially focus on one or more of the regulatory programs and phase in, if desired, the land use planning and development elements.

Define Department Needs

- Determine the modules the department is interested in obtaining.
- Define both the essential features vs. desired features. There are a wide range of products. It will be important to select a product that is right sized for the Village's relatively small operation. (See **Appendix F: RFP for Software - Potential Product Features**).
- Understand data ownership issues.
- Develop a collective understanding of acceptable cost ranges and also an understanding of the pricing methodologies utilized by potential vendors. Typically the pricing for the vendor hosted model is an annual service fee based on the modules chosen and standard measures such as

number of parcels, population, etc. The consultant obtained copies of several recent RFPs issued in New York State and will provide copies to the Village Manager and Village Engineer under separate cover.

- Develop an RFP based on the system modules and features desired.

Strategy 7: Property Assessment

According to the New York State Department of State, approximately 70 percent of the state's 554 villages have shifted the responsibilities of assessing to their respective towns. Consolidating the Village's property assessment function at the Town level has often been discussed as an opportunity to eliminate a duplication of services, streamline government and achieve cost savings.

The Village Board of Trustees and administration requested that this study process review the logistics involved and possible implications of consolidating the function at the Town level to inform their consideration and possible policy deliberations of this matter. Thirteen villages in Westchester County have terminated their assessing unit status. The most recent consolidations in Westchester County occurred in 2017 and included: Tarrytown, Dobbs Ferry, Hastings-on-Hudson and Elmsford.

Town Operations

The Town of Cortlandt Assessor maintains the assessment rolls for all properties in the Village of Croton-on-Hudson. The Town rolls in the Village of Croton-on-Hudson are currently utilized to levy Town, County and school district property taxes.

Legal Authorization to Opt Out

The Village is not required to be a assessing unit. Pursuant to Section 1402 of the Real Property Tax Law (RPTL), the Village may cease to be an assessing unit and opt to levy its tax based on the asseement rolls prepared by the Town of Cortlandt. Under this option, there is no separate administrative or judicial review of assessments for village purposes. In this model the Village would use the Town tax roll and would have no responsibility for the preparation, maintenance or defense of the roll. (RPTL, §1402(3)).

Village Property Tax Bill Impact Considerations

It is important to note that the Town rolls are already used for Town, County, school district and library property tax bills. Village officials indicate that Village property taxes reflect approximately 25% of the total annual property taxes paid by Village property owners. Should the Village opt out, the assessed values set by the Town would then also be used to levy Village property taxes.

The Village assessor prepared a comparison by parcel of the assessed values and the full values of each property which reflected a wide range of differences. A summary of the Village Assessor's findings are included in **Appendix G: Approximate Change in Full Value Using Town Assesements**. Based on this comparison data set of Village and Town assessed values for each parcel, this Study then modeled the potential impact on property tax bills by parcel using the 24/25 Village tax levy. The data set available excluded new construction and did not exclude exemption values,. As such, the study assessment could only provide a rough approximation of the impact on property tax bills. **Table 16: Consolidation of Assessment Function - Approximate Impact on Village Tax Bills** presents a summary of the range of approximate tax increases and tax decreases and the approximate number of properties experiencing increases or decreases.

Table 16: Consolidation of Assessment Function Approximate Impact on Village Tax Bills

Approximate Impact on Village Property Tax Payments Due to Shift to Town Property Assessment Rolls		
	<u>Increase</u> in Tax Bill	<u>Decrease</u> in Tax Bill
	Number of Properties	Number of Properties
\$0	0	1
\$1-\$99	183	400
\$100-\$199	170	321
\$200-\$399	285	366
\$400-\$599	217	186
\$600-\$799	157	105
\$800-\$999	102	65
\$1,000-\$1,199	90	54
\$1,200-\$1,399	44	39
\$1,400-\$1,599	33	49
\$1,600-\$1,799	21	22
\$1,800-\$1,999	17	14
\$2,000-\$4,999	40	44
\$5,000-\$9,999	4	6
\$10,000-\$14,999	0	2
\$15,000-\$19,999	0	1
\$20,000-\$24,999	0	1
Total Properties	1,363	1,676
<i>This is a model to present an approximate impact only.</i>		

As **Table 16** indicates, the model predicts that more properties will see a reduction than those that will experience an increase. This also means that the parcels anticipated to experience an increase will have an average increase per parcel greater than the average decrease.

Other Considerations

- The Town would be required by law to use the May 1 taxable status date for the Village tax purposes. Construction and demolition after this date would not be subject to the Village tax roll.
- The Village would continue to levy, collect and enforce the collection of delinquent taxes and has the option to have delinquent taxes collected by the County.
- The Village would no longer be responsible for making or defending assessments.

- The Village would no longer have an assessor or board of assessment review. The Village would no longer be responsible to defend in small claims court or tax certiorari proceedings. The Village would; however, receive notice of such proceedings (RPTL, §§708(3), 730(8)).
- The Village could retain its Village exemption options.
- Opting out results in cost savings to the Village of approximately \$32,000 per year.

Opt Out Process⁴

The Village could opt out of its assessment roll by passing a local law, subject to permissive referendum. The NYS Office of Real Property Tax Services has prepared a model law which can be found at https://www.tax.ny.gov/pdf/publications/orpts/vlg_assessment_options.pdf

Should a valid petition for a referendum be filed, the Village must take the necessary steps to call for and hold a referendum on the local law. Should the Village electorate vote yes to ceasing the Village assessment unit, the village will thereafter levy its taxes on a copy of the appropriate portion of the town assessment roll. The local law will be effective for all village taxes levied, unless the local law is subsequently rescinded.

If the Village's local law initially takes effect between village taxable status date and the corresponding village tax levy, the village will not cease to be an assessing unit until the following year.

The Village must follow the legal procedures for filing the local law with the New York State Department of State. In addition, the Village must forward a copy of the local law to the NYS Office of Real Property Tax Services within 10 days of the adoption.

Fiscal Implications

There are fiscal implications related to several of the proposed initiatives.

Re-organization and Staffing Within the re-organization strategy, the Village budget already provides for the creation of the full time code enforcement officer and the part-time building inspector positions. The recommended proposal to create a new Assistant Building Inspector position is currently not provided for in the Village budget. Optimally, the Assistant Building Inspector would have multiple years of experience in the administration and enforcement of the NYS Uniform Code and Energy Codes. Based on this recommended experience level and an expectation of supervisory responsibilities, a salary range between \$85,000 - \$95,000 is recommended. This recommendation takes into consideration the current Village salary scale as well as the salaries of similar positions in other communities within the region. An estimated cost with fringe benefits and related costs would be in the range of \$125,000 to \$135,000.

Professional Services Contract with Land Use Planning Individual or Firm A contracted land use planner on retainer could support the Department Head with planning, development and coordination of large development projects as may be needed. These costs could be funded by the large project fees. Where the level of work is extraordinary and outside the scope of the current fee structure, it would be placed as a charge upon the developer, as is currently the practice.

End to End Workflow Technology Solutions Typically, the end workflow products are procured in modules such as building permitting, code enforcement and/or land use planning. Municipalities can

⁴ New York State Office of Real Property Tax Services

define which modules they want to procure and often start with one or two and expand as needed. The available products often tend to scale to either small-medium municipalities or to larger municipalities where the needs and sophistication of the workflow products are greater. Product costs are often calculated relative to a set metrics such as the number of building permits per year, population, property valuation, etc.

The products that scale to the smaller-medium size communities are often vendor hosted. As such, the pricing is an annual service cost. One time upfront costs include the mapping of the workflow activities including any needed supervisory reviews and sign-offs and the automatic distribution of documents upon authorization. It can also involve establishment of the interface with the municipal GIS system for property data and the creation on the electronic version of the Village's forms, notices and letter upon authorization.

Village Assessor Consolidation of the function at the Town level would have an estimated annual \$32,000 savings to the Village of Croton-on-Hudson.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - Staff Responsibilities & Time Allocation by Title

Appendix A – Staff Responsibilities & Time Allocation by Title

Staff Time Allocation			
Functions	Village Engineer	Assistant Engineer	Fire Inspector
Management and Administration	10%	0%	0%
GIS, FOILs, Lawsuits, Meetings	6%	2%	0%
Village Infrastructure	10%	5%	0%
Land Use Planning, Site Plans, Etc.			
Consultation w/Contractor/Owner	15%	0%	0%
Planning and Development	12%	2%	0%
Large Project Planning	15%	2%	0%
Large Project Construction Monitoring	0%	2%	0%
Plan Reviews	0%	2%	0%
Support for PB, WCC, Waterfront, etc.	4%	0%	0%
Support for Zoning Board of Appeals	1%	2%	0%
Erosion Control	<u>0%</u>	<u>2%</u>	<u>0%</u>
Subtotal Land Use Planning	47%	12%	0%
NYS Building and Energy Code			
Consult w/Contractor/Property Owner	0%	15%	0%
Building Permits, Inspections, COC, etc.	11%	42%	5%
Information for Village & Town Assessor	0%	5%	0%
Subtotal Building and Energy Code	11%	62%	5%
NYS Fire Safety Inspections			
Building Safety Inspections	2%	5%	20%
Non-compliant -Enforcement	<u>1%</u>	<u>0%</u>	<u>0%</u>
Subtotal Fire Safety Inspections	3%	5%	20%
Local Code Admin and Enforcement			
Village Code Enforcement	6%	12%	75%
Respond & Address Complaints	7%	2%	0%
Subtotal Village Code Admin & Enforcement	13%	14%	75%
Total	100%	100%	100%
<i>Source: Staff Self Reporting</i>			

APPENDIX B - Summary of Westchester County Civil Service Titles and Job Specifications

Appendix B – Summary of Westchester County Civil Service Titles & Job Specifications

Summary of Westchester County Civil Service Titles and Job Specifications

(This is summary information only. See actual job specifications for full and accurate job specification)

Title/ Civil Svc Class	Examples of Work Responsibilities from the Civil Service Job Specifications	Minimum Qualifications
Village Engineer Competitive	Responsible for the administration of the Department of Engineering and staff supervision. The position may serve as the head of the Building Department or Public Works Department. Responsible for the administration of the Department of Engineering and staff supervision. The Engineer can provide consultation to the Village Board, the Village Manager and the Department of Public Works. The Village engineer prepares or causes to be prepared designs, cost estimating, asset assessments and bid specifications for Village construction projects. Performs related work as required. The specification provides more examples including duties if also functioning as the Superintendent of Public Works.	Engineering P.E. License + 2 years of experience in field of civil engineering, 1 year of which must have been in supervisor capacity.
Assistant Village Engineer Competitive	Provides professional engineering functions such as preparing or causing to be prepared engineering designs and/or cost estimates, bid specifications, etc. and can perform administrative work and assist Village Engineer on advising on engineering matters as well as the overall operations of the department. The position may be assigned building inspector duties, prepare Village maps. Some supervision maybe exercised over Village employees. Performs related duties as required.	Engineering P.E. License + 1 year of experience in the field of engineering that involved the design and/or supervision of construction of public works facilities. Special Note: If assigned to perform building code permitting and inspections, the incumbent must obtain and maintain NYS Code Enforcement Officer Certification.

Appendix B – Summary of Westchester County Civil Service Titles & Job Specifications

Building Inspector/Competitive	Under general direction the position conducts residential and commercial building inspections for compliance with NYS Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code and local fire prevention codes. Responsibilities may include issuance of operating permits; investigation of complaints and conduct investigations.	GED and active status as a <u>certified Code Enforcement Officer Per NYSCRR Title 19</u> and: a) 6 years on on-site experience in construction and building safety including 1 year as general contractor or foreman for major construction trade OR b) BA in Engineering, Architecture or related field <u>plus</u> 2 yrs experience in design, construction or supervision of construction.
Assistant Building Inspector /Competitive	Under general supervision of Building Inspector or head of Building Department, assists in the review and approval of building plans and permit applications, conducts inspection of building under construction or existing structures for health and safety. Admin and compliance with zoning and other local codes. (This class is not responsible for the examination of plans for the construction involving reimbursement concrete or structural steel but may be required to perform routine inspection duties re: structural members. Supervision of small number of clerical assistant employees. Performs related duties as required.	HS/GED <u>AND</u> a) 3 yrs of on-site building construction experience and/or investigative work to enforce codes and ordinances related to construction and safety of building structures including 1 year as an on-site general foreman or subcontractor or foreman for a major construction trade such as carpentry, plumbing and Electric or HVAC <u>OR</u> b) BA degree in Engineering, Architecture or related field <u>Special Requirements:</u> Obtain and retain NYS CRRR for certification as a Code Enforcement Officer.
Fire Inspector/Competitive-FT Non-Competitive PT	Under general direction the position conducts residential and commercial building inspections for compliance with NYS Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code and local fire prevention codes. Responsibilities may include issuance of operating permits; investigation of complaints and conduct investigations.	HS/GED + 3 years as a volunteer or paid firefighter, a building inspector or as assistant building inspector and completion of minimum basic code enforcement training courses. Substitution: Completion of 30 college credits in engineering, building construction, civil technology, architectural tech or a related field may be substituted at a rate of 30 credits/ yr of the above requirements up to a max of 2 years.

Appendix B – Summary of Westchester County Civil Service Titles & Job Specifications

Building Inspector Trainee/Competitive	While getting on-the-job training & obtaining certification to enforce NYS Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code, perform limited duties inspecting buildings, other than those specifically exempted by ordinances or resolution, both erected and under construction and/or repair, for compliance with approved plans, the local building code, zoning and plumbing codes & the multiple residence law ,etc. The term of the appointment may not exceed 18 months, during which time the incumbent is required to complete the code enforcement official basic training program as outlined in Title 19 of NYSCRR. A person who has commenced, but not completed, the code enforcement official inspector basic training program may, during such person's basic training period, perform code enforcement official enforcement activities on behalf of the local agency if so designated and authorized by the appointing authority. Upon satisfactory completion of the traineeship and the basic training courses within the prescribed time frame, incumbents are advanced to the Building Inspector level without further examination.	HS Diploma/GED and either: (a) 6 yrs. on-site building construction experience and/or investigative work to enforce codes and ordinances related to construction and safety of building structures, including or supplemented by 1 yr. as either a general contractor (including on-site building construction, inspection or supervision) or a sub-contractor or foreman for a major construction trade such as carpentry, plumbing, electrical o HVAC; <u>or</u> (b) Bachelor's Degree* in Engineering, Architecture or related field of study applicable to building construction & 2 yrs.in the design, construction or supervision of the construction of buildings.(* Spec provides for substitutions) Note: If incumbent to enforce NYS Uniform Building and Fire Prevention Code shall be required to complete the basic training
Code Enforcement Officer/Competitive	Performs enforcement work related to quality of life issues such as littering, sanitation, noise, dumping, peddling, & similar activities as outlined in local codes, ordinances, and laws. Where violations are noted, action to secure compliance is instituted. Does <u>not</u> have responsibility for inspection and enforcement of the provisions of NYS Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code and local codes, ordinances and laws pertaining to construction, which rests with other municipal employees; i.e., Building Inspector, Assistant Building Inspector, Fire Inspector, and Housing Inspector. NOTE: Confirmation needed to assure this meets updated NYS Rules.	HS/GED and either: (a) 2 yrs of work experience where the primary role was conducting field inspections and/or investigations; <u>or</u> (b) two (2) years of work experience which required familiarity with municipal codes and ordinances; <u>or</u> (c) two (2) years of work experience which involved public contact.

Appendix B – Summary of Westchester County Civil Service Titles & Job Specifications

Zoning Officer/Competitive	Responsible for the inspection of property& building structures for conformity with planning and/or zoning regulations, & the interpretation & enforcement of the municipal planning and/or zoning ordinances related to the use, development, & construction of land, property, and buildings within the municipality. Investigates & responds to complaints, issues summonses, and follows up on violations. May act as a liaison to the Planning and/or Zoning Boards. Does related work as required.	HS Diploma/GED AND 4 yrs. experience where the primary function was map, mechanical, structural or architectural drafting; the review of building or construction plans and specifications; conducting physical planning studies; or the inspection of building construction projects to enforce codes and ordinances relating to the construction and safety of building structures. Note: there are college credit substitutions in minimum quals.
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APPENDIX C - Illustrative Listing of Projects Requiring a Building Permit

**Croton-on-Hudson
Sample Listing of Project Requiring a Building Permit**

- New Construction
- Additions, conversions and alterations Including Kitchen/Bathroom Renovations (Except if fixtures or appliances are being replaced in-kind.)
- Plumbing
- Gas Work
- Change in Use/Occupancy
- Fill/excavation
- Decks
- Demolition
- Pools in ground and above ground
- Wood stoves
- Fire Place
- Solar Panel
- Generator Installation
- Garages
- Car ports
- Sheds
- Porch/Decks
- Accessory Structures
- Spas/Hot Tubs
- Water/Sewer Connections
- Oil Tank Removals
- Signs (commercial)
- Roof replacement involving changes/replacement of sheathing, roof line or rafters
- Enlarge, decrease or otherwise modify existing doors or windows
- HVAC – change in systems; i.e. Conversion to central air
- Conversion to ground source heat pumps (geothermal)
- Installation or replacement of fuel fired appliance (furnace/boiler)
- Change of fireplace inserts, Gas fireplaces, Pellet Stoves
- Install or replace a masonry chimney or metal flue stack.
- Windows/Skylight/Doors additions or change in size to existing window frames
- Telecommunication new, relocation (commercial)
- Retaining Walls (if over 4 feet in height)

APPENDIX D - Engineering Department Inspection Activity

Appendix D – Engineering Department Inspection Activity

Fire Inspector - Number of Inspections																	
Time Period	Total Inspections	Total NYS Building and Fire Prevention	Building Construction Inspections	Fire Safety	Oil Tank	Total Village Codes	Zoning	Sidewalks	Tree Removal	Property Maint	Snow Removal	Back Flow	Misc	Complaint	Leaf Blower	Street Opening	Sewer
Q4 2024 (MAM 2024)	55	12	2	10	0	43	1	23	6	0	0	0	5	8	0	0	0
Q3 2024 (DJF 2024)	45	7	1	6	0	38	0	14	6	2	1	2	2	10	0	1	0
Q2 2024 (SON 2023)	69	26	0	26	0	43	0	20	12	2	1	0	1	7	0	0	0
Q1 2024 (JJA 2023)	128	3	0	3	0	125	0	66	9	4	0	0	7	19	20	0	0
Village Year 2024	297	48	3	45	0	249	1	123	33	8	2	2	15	44	20	1	0
Q4 2023 (MAM 2023)	60	20	3	17	0	40	0	13	9	2	0	0	3	12	1	0	0
Q3 2023 (DJF 2023)	60	17	0	17	0	43	0	0	3	1	0	0	13	19	1	6	0
Q2 2023 (SON 2022)	46	23	1	22	0	23	0	0	8	3	0	0	2	10	0	0	0
Q1 2023 (JJA 2022)	70	11	2	9	0	59	0	2	7	7	0	0	9	25	9	0	0
Village Year 2023	236	71	6	65	0	165	0	15	27	13	0	0	27	66	11	6	0
Q4 2022 (MAM 2022)	45	12	0	12	0	33	0	0	10	1	0	0	10	12	0	0	0
Q3 2022 (DJF 2022)	72	16	3	13	0	56	0	6	27	3	0	0	7	13	0	0	0
Q2 2022 (SON 2021)	60	20	0	20	0	40	0	0	21	2	0	0	10	7	0	0	0
Q1 2022 (JJA 2021)	141	86	6	80	0	55	5	2	19	12	0	0	6	11	0	0	0
Village Year 2022	318	134	9	125	0	184	5	8	77	18	0	0	33	43	0	0	0
Q4 2021 (MAM 2021)	62	12	1	11	0	50	0	0	23	2	0	0	9	16	0	0	0
Q3 2021 (DJF 2021)	70	21	7	14	0	49	2	18	15	4	0	0	9	1	0	0	0
Q2 2021 (SON 2020)	64	23	3	20	0	41	0	1	17	1	0	0	12	9	0	1	0
Q1 2021 (JJA 2020)	105	2	1	1	0	103	0	13	28	5	0	0	31	26	0	0	0
Village Year 2021	301	58	12	46	0	243	2	32	83	12	0	0	61	52	0	1	0
Q4 2020 (MAM 2020)	27	8	0	8	0	19	0	0	8	1	0	0	3	7	0	0	0
Q3 2020 (DJF 2020)	75	21	2	19	0	54	2	0	17	4	14	0	11	6	0	0	0
Q2 2020 (SON 2019)	98	14	2	12	0	84	0	33	17	8	0	0	9	16	0	0	1
Q1 2020 (JJA 2019)	121	22	10	12	0	99	0	0	31	10		2	8	26	0	22	0
Village Year 2020	321	65	14	51	0	256	2	33	73	23	14	2	31	55	0	22	1

Appendix D – Engineering Department Inspection Activity

Assistant Village Engineer - Number of Inspections by Type																
Time Period	All Inspections	Total NYS Building and Fire Prevention	Building Construction Inspections	Fire Safety	Oil Tank Removal	Sewer	Total Village Codes	Zoning	Sidewalks	Tree Removal	Property Maint	Back Flow	Misc	Complaint	Leaf Blower Complaints	Street Opening
Q4 2024 (MAM 2024)	101	98	90	0	8	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
Q3 2024 (DJF 2024)	98	97	92	0	5	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Q2 2024 (SON 2023)	125	122	104	0	8	10	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
Q1 2024 (JJA 2023)	<u>111</u>	<u>104</u>	<u>97</u>	0	3	4	7	0	3	0	0	0	1	1	2	0
Year ending 5/31/2024	435	421	383	0	24	14	14	0	3	0	0	0	8	1	2	0
Q4 2023 (MAM 2023)	114	114	105	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Q3 2023 (DJF 2023)	93	90	86	0	4	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
Q2 2023 (SON 2022)	105	103	101	0	2	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Q1 2023 (JJA 2022)	<u>117</u>	<u>116</u>	<u>115</u>	0	1	0	1		0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Year ending 5/31/2023	429	423	407	0	16	0	6	1	0	0	0	0	4	1	0	0
Q4 2022 (MAM 2022)	84	82	81	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
Q3 2022 (DJF 2022)	89	84	84	0	0	0	5	1	0	1	0	0	3	0	0	0
Q2 2022 (SON 2021)	124	119	119	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0
Q1 2022 (JJA 2021)	<u>128</u>	<u>124</u>	<u>123</u>	0	1	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0
Village Year 2022	425	409	407	0	2	0	16	1	0	1	0	0	14	0	0	0
Q4 2021 (MAM 2021)	0	0					0									
Q3 2021 (DJF 2021)	71	66	66	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	0	0
Q2 2021 (SON 20120)	104	101	100	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
Q1 2021 (JJA 2020)	<u>125</u>	<u>121</u>	<u>120</u>	0	1	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0
Village Year 2021	300	288	286	0		1	12	0	0	0	0	0	7	5	0	0
Q4 2020 (MAM 2020)	50	50	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Q3 2020 (DJF 2020)	92	87	87	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0
Q2 2020 (SON 2019)	97	93	92	0	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0
Q1 2020 (JJA 2019)	<u>102</u>	<u>97</u>	<u>97</u>	0	0	0	5	0	1	0	0	0	4	0	0	0
Village Year 2020	341	327	326	0	0	1	14									

Appendix D – Engineering Department Inspection Activity

Village Engineer - Number of Inspections by Type																
Time Period	All Inspections	Total NYS Building and Fire Prevention	Building Construction Inspections	Fire Safety	Oil Tank Removal	Total Village Codes	Zoning	Sidewalks	Tree Removal	Property Maint	Back Flow	Misc	Complaint	Leaf Blower Complaints	Street Opening	Sewer Hook Up
Q4 2024 (MAM 2024)	14	0	0	0	0	14	0	0	1	0	0	4	0	0	2	7
Q3 2024 (DJF 2024)	8	6	4	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Q2 2024 (SON 2023)	4	1	1	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Q1 2024 (JJA 2023)	7	5	3	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Year ending 5/31/2024	33	12	8	0	4	21	1	0	1	0	0	6	0	0	3	10
Q4 2023 (MAM 2023)	5	2	2	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Q3 2023 (DJF 2023)	5	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	3
Q2 2023 (SON 2022)	12	8	7	0	1	4	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	1
Q1 2023 (JJA 2022)	13	6	6	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	0	0	2
Year ending 5/31/2023	35	16	15	0	1	19	0	0	0	2	0	6	2	0	2	7
Q4 2022 (MAM 2022)	4	1	1	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Q3 2022 (DJF 2022)	12	8	8	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
Q2 2022 (SON 2021)	11	7	7	0	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Q1 2022 (JJA 2021)	2	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Village Year 2022	29	17	16	0	1	12	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	7
Q4 2021 (MAM 2021)	17	10	10	0	0	7	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
Q3 2021 (DJF 2021)	3	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Q2 2021 (SON 2020)	12	6	6	0	0	6	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	1	2
Q1 2021 (JJA 2020)	7	4	4	0	0	3	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Village Year 2021	39	21	21	0	0	18	3	0	4	0	0	3	0	0	3	5
Q4 2020 (MAM 2020)	3	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Q3 2020 (DJF 2020)	11	10	10	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Q2 2020 (SON 2019)	9	7	7	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Q1 2020 (JJA 2019)	19	14	14	0	0	5	1	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Village Year 2020	42	34	34	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

APPENDIX E - Comparative Organizational Structures

**Westchester County
Village Organizational Models
(Preliminary Review – Website Information Only)**

Village of Croton-on-Hudson	Population: 8,237	Building Permits: 313
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- **Engineering Department**

Village Engineer	1	\$186,023
Assistant Engineer	1	\$122,604
Assessor	PT	\$ 30,000
Fire Inspector	PT	\$ 30,000
CEO	1	\$ 58,727
Admin Assistant	1	\$ 64,382
Admin Assistants	1	\$ 64,382

Note: No Village Planner or Planning Consultant

Village of Sleepy Hollow	Population: 10,100	Building Permits: 1,282
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- **Department of Architecture, Land Use Development, Buildings and Building Compliance**

Building Inspector/Architect	1
Assistant Building Inspector	2
Zoning Inspector	1
Office Assistant	1
Secretary to PB/ZBA	1

- **Village Engineer function - contractual**
- **Village Assessor – contractual**
- Note: LDC focused on the East Parcel redevelopment site. ED currently is VM;

Dobbs Ferry	Population: 11,141	Building Permits: 895
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- **Department: Building Department**

- Building Permits and Inspections and Fire Safety Inspections
- Administration and Enforcement of Zoning and Other Local laws: Signs, Tree Removal, Dumpsters, Demos, Erosion
- Land Use determination, support for PB, ZBA, ARB and Historic Review

Building Inspector	1	\$148,165
Assistant Building Inspector	1	\$107,133
Assistant Building Inspector (FI/Codes)	1	\$ 89,345
Senior Office Assistant	1	

- **Village Consulting Engineer:** provides engineering consulting services re: Village infrastructure and support to the Building Department.
- **Assessment – Not provided by Village**

Hastings on Hudson

Population 7,993

Building Permits: 820

Building Department

- Administration and enforcement of the NYS Uniform Building and Fire Prevention Code
- NYS Energy Code (NYStretch) and Hastings Green Code.
- Administer and enforce Village Zoning Code
- Local Code Enforcement: ADU, tree removal, dumpster, flood, street opening, steep slopes, solar, Stretch Energy Code and Hastings Green Code
- Support for Planning Board, ARB, ZBA

Building Inspector	1
Deputy Building Inspector	1
Fire Inspector (in FD)	PT
Assistant/ & PB&ZBA Sec	PT (shared with DPW)
Office Assistant	PT (shared with Village Clerk)

Planner	Consultant
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- **Engineer – contracted function \$90,000**
- **Assessor - Not provided by the Village.**

Tarrytown

Population 11,860

Building Permits: 1,073

- **Engineering/Building Department**
 - Building and Codes Responsibilities
 - Administer and enforce NYS Uniform Building and Fire Prevention Code and NYS Energy Code
 - Administer and enforce Village Zoning Code and other Village codes: signs, sidewalks, tree removal, demolitions, solar, leaf blowing)
 - VE oversee building and codes responsibilities
 - VE works with land use boards to obtain necessary approvals for projects and permits
 - VE reviews applications to board and consults with land use boards: PB, ZBA and ARB.
 - VE recommends and zoning text code amendments
 - VE carries out capital improvement infrastructure projects from inception to construction and project close out with funders
 - VE – MS4, stormwater management, cross connection control, private fire hydrant testing, dam safety and water supply and distribution
 - Engineering for Village infrastructure and assets

Staffing

Village Engineer/Building Inspector	1	35% of time on land use/Building
Building Inspector	1	
Assistant Engineer	1	New pos'n - 40% on Building and balance on in-house engineering design work to reduce costs.
Code Enforcement Officer	1	(Made FT to ensure fire safety code enforced)
Secretary to the Planning Board	1	
Office Assistant	1	

Salaries

Village Engineer/Building Inspector	1	\$177,000
Building Inspector	1	\$170,000
Assistant Engineer	1	\$ 87,500
Code Enforcement Officer	1	\$ 70,000
Secretary to the Planning Board	1	\$ 75,000
Office Assistant/Financial	1	\$ 77,000

- **Assessor** - Village does not provide property assessment
- **Technology**- goal for 2024/2025 – implement an automated permitting system

Briarcliff Manor

Population: 7,864

Building Permits: 371

- **Building & Engineering Department**
 - NYS Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code administration and enforcement
 - Zoning and Village code administration and enforcement such as tree management
 - Village Engineer reviews site plans and advises Planning Board on engineering matters
 - Support services for Planning Board and ZBA
 - Village Engineer oversees various Village capital projects

Zoning, Review site development plans and advising PB on engineering issues, NYS Building Codes, local codes, i.e.: Trees AND overseeing various Village capital projects.

Village Engineer	1
Assist Bldg. Inspector (PE)	1
CEO	1
Office Assistant	1

Village Planning Consultants: **Buckhurst Fish and Jacquemart**
(Note: Not sure who contractor reports to)

- **Assessor – Village does not provide**

Pleasantville

Population 7,430

Building Permits: 413

- **Building Department**

- NYS Uniform and Energy Codes:
- Local Law admin and enforcement: Accessory Apartment, Boarders/ Roomers, Commercial Dumpster, Demos, Fill Deposit, Flood Damage Prevention, Rooming House Licensing and Sign Permits.
- Other: ARB, SEQR Planning Inquiries, Planning Commission, Property and building files, Site Plans, Subdivisions, Wetlands; Wetlands Permit, ZBA support, Zoning Inquiries, Zoning Variance Applications.

Building Inspector	1
Assistant Bldg. Inspector	1
Assistant	1

- **DPW Superintendent/Village Engineer**
- **Assessor – Assessor’s Office**

Tuckahoe

Population 6,995

Building Permit: 490

- **Building Department**

- NYS Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code admin and enforcement
- Code of Ordinances of the Village of Tuckahoe
- Support for Planning Board and ZBA
- Note: Village Attorney and BI attend PB and ZBA; unclear of roles/level of support provided.

Building Inspector	1	\$65,000
Ass’t Bldg Inspector	1	\$60,000
Administrative Ass’t	1	\$62,000

- **Village Engineering – Consulting Services** Avg appropriation \$110,000
- **Assessor – Assessor’s Office** PT salary \$4,820
- **Note:** PB and ZBA have stenographer \$7,200/year

Rye Brook

Population: 9,920

Building Permit: 1,097

- **Building Department**

- Administer and enforce NYS Uniform Building and Fire Safety: construction plan review, building permitting and construction inspections as well as conduct fire/building safety inspections.
- Administration and enforcement of Zoning code and other Village codes: fuel tank removals, demos, sprinklers, etc.

- Review and forward permit applications to the appropriate Village Board, (Zoning Board of Appeals, Architectural Board of Review, Planning Board, Board of Trustees), and document their findings.

Building Inspector	1	\$134,493
Assistant Building Inspector	1	\$102,500
Secretary to Planning Board, ZBA and ARB	1	\$ 65,859
Office Assistant	1	\$ 49,149

- **Engineering and Public Works Department**

Superintendent of Public Works is Village Engineer \$170,000

- **Assessment – Village does not provide property assessment.**

Pelham

Population: 7,326

Building Permits: 520

Building Department

- Issues building permits and makes inspections for buildings under construction, improvement, or in a state of poor maintenance and/or disrepair.
- Inspections are made of existing housing and commercial properties for related complaints and Code enforcement.
- Issues plumbing permits, oil tank removal permits, street opening permits, sidewalk replacement/repair permits, fence permits, electrical permits, sign permits, awning permits, and sidewalk café permits. Upon completion of work authorized by a permit, the department transmits the estimated value added to real property under construction to the Pelham Assessor's Office and supplies the Town Engineer with a copy of the plans for all Building Permits in order to update the Tax Maps and records.
- Staffs the three Land Use Boards - Architectural Review, Planning Board, and Zoning Board of Appeals
- Coordinates with the Village Administrator's and Clerk's Offices to see site plans, special permits, and other applications through the land-use processes.
- Maintains Property records and researches records in order to provide certification letters and closing certificates to title companies and attorneys regarding the status of existing buildings in the normal course of the property refinance, mortgage, and/or sale and transfer processes.

Staff

Building Inspector	1	\$142,800
Building Inspector	PT	\$ 45,500
Fire Inspector (in FD)	PT	\$ 7,500

Assessor's Office: Village is not an assessing entity

Village Engineer: Village uses contracted services

Pelham Manor

Population: 5,682

Building Permits: 538

- **Building and Zoning Department**

- Administration and enforcement of NYS Uniform Building and Energy Code
- Administration of Village Zoning Code (driveways, setbacks and accessory buildings and other Village codes: yard signs, canine regulations

Building Inspector 1 \$139,050

- **Assessor – Village does not provide property assessment.**

Ardsley

Population: 5,000

Building Permits: 362

- **Building/Code Enforcement**

- Administers and enforces NYS Uniform Building and Fire Prevention Codes
- Administers Village Zoning and other Village codes: property maintenance, accessory dwelling units, sidewalks and other quality of life codes.
- Accepts and processes applications for Village Board Site Plan Approval and for the Planning Board, ZBA and ARB.
- Additional responsibilities: Superintendent of Buildings, Plumbing Inspector, Sanitary Sewer Inspector, Code Enforcement Officer, Storm Water Management Officer and Flood Damage Prevention Administrator.

Building Inspector 1 \$156,009
PT Ass't. Bldg. Insp. PT \$ 37,440
CEO PT \$ 29,721 (filled by BI)
Office Assistant \$ 30,000
Fire Inspector in Fire Dept: \$21,462

- **PB and ZBA**
 - Each has a part-time secretary to their Board
 - Planning Consultants as needed on project basis.
- **Engineer – contracted**
- **Assessor – Village does not provide services**

Bronxville

Population: 6,507

Building Permits: 833

- **Building Department**

- Administers and enforces NYS Uniform Building and Fire Prevention Codes
- Administers Village Zoning and other Village codes: signs and awnings, fences, storm water management

- Maintenance of Village owned buildings

Building Inspector	1	\$150,405
Ass't BI	1	\$120,000
Secretary	1	\$ 87,214

- **Assessor's Office**

Assessor	PT	\$115,000
Assessor Assistant	PT	

- **Engineer – no reference found**

Irvington

Population 6,402

Building Permits: 291

- **Building Department**

- Issues building, plumbing and electrical permits
- Enforces the NYS Uniform Building and Fire Prevention Code
- Enforces Village Zoning and Other Codes
- Accepts applications to the Planning Board and Architectural Review Board.

Building Inspector	1
Ass't. Building Inspector	2
Assistant	1

(Note: Planning Board Budget has a professional services line of \$52K)

- **Assessor** – Village does not provide the service.
- **Village Engineer** – no reference found; would require additional research.

APPENDIX F - Workflow Automation Product RFP – Possible Features

Code Enforcement Software RFP - Potential Product Features

The following is a sample listing of the features often considered when developing a Request for Proposal for a code enforcement workflow and data management software system. Typically features are defined as either essential features vs. desired features. Examples to be considered:

Ability to automate workflows, approval processes and track workflows.

- On-line permit application process, permit issuance, inspection tracking system and document generation.
- Efficient document generation and capacity to populate fields.
- Building safety inspection tracking system and document generation.
- Report generation such as the 1203 report or municipal monthly reports.
- On-line fee payment and tracking system.
- Mobile friendly / support mobile access (smartphone or tablets) with access to features including real time data, ability to upload documentation from the field, ability to complete an inspection report in the field and mark up documents.
- Capacity to support automatic data exchanges with entities such as County GIS enabling ongoing updates to parcel data for the code enforcement data base.
- Dashboard functionality to monitor workload status including overdue work
- Track the completion against scheduled due dates.

Capacity to Tailor Workflow, Mapping of Approval Processes, Documents, Checklists

- Enable the flexibility to define the document review workflow and notification process based upon the requirements for each project.
- Flexibility of the system architecture. Is it easily editable by a user?

Constituent portal and/or communication-update system

- Enables code enforcement staff, residents and/or contractors to check the status of building permits or building inspection
- Automatic notification system.
- Scheduling of inspections.

Records Retention and file management system

- Capacity for files, photos, drawings storage
- Automatic indexing system
- Easy navigation
- Technical capacity to support virtual inspections.

**APPENDIX G - Approximate Differential in Full Value Using Town
Assessment Rolls**

Comparison of Property Full Value Village of Croton-on-Hudson and Town of Cortlandt	
<u>2024</u> <u>Approx. Parcels</u>	<u>Approx. Change in Full Value</u> <u>Assuming Town Values</u>
14	-90% to -61%
31	-60% to -51%
43	-50% to -41%
85	-40% to -31%
103	-30% to -21%
385	-20% to -11%
758	-10% - 1%
71	0%
667	+1% to +10%
423	+11% to +20%
227	+21% to +30%
98	+31% to +40%
58	+41% to +50%
29	+51% to +60%
24	+61% to +70%
23	+70% or more
3,039	Total Parcels
71	No Change
1,549	Increases
1,419	Decreases
51%	% Increase
49%	% Decrease or No Change
459	Increase 21% or more
15%	% Increase 21% or more
232	Increase 31% or more
8%	% Increase 31% or more
Source: Village Assessor	