



# Ulster County Housing Smart Communities Initiative

Kai Lord-Farmer, Senior Planner  
Ulster County Planning Department



Ulster County  
Housing Smart  
Communities Initiative





# Ulster County Housing Smart Communities Initiative

## What is the Housing Smart Communities Initiative?

A **certification and capacity-building program** that provides **guidance, technical support, and incentives** for Ulster County communities working to help solve the housing crisis.

### How does it work?

- Municipalities receive **Housing Smart Community Certification** after completion of a certain number of weighted policy **Housing Smart Actions**
- In return, communities receive **technical support, consultant services, and access to funding**
- **Program website** used as central hub for the program



# Ulster County Housing Smart Communities Initiative

Ulster County  
Housing Action Plan  
**2021**

Housing Smart  
Communities Initiative  
**2022**



County Housing  
Advisory Committee  
**Ongoing**



Ulster County  
Housing Smart  
Communities Initiative



Ulster County  
Housing Smart  
Communities Initiative



## Ulster County Housing Smart Communities Initiative

### Housing Advisory Committee Members

- **Kathy Germain**, Vice President of Housing Services, RUPCO
- **Rick Alfandre**, CEO, Alfandre Architecture
- **Hayes Clement**, Real Estate Broker, Berkshire Hathaway
- **Tom Smiley**, CEO, Mohonk Mountain House
- **Richard Parete**, Supervisor, Town of Marbletown
- **Laura Petit**, Ulster County Legislator
- **Deb DeWan**, Woodstock Housing Committee
- **Erica Brown**, Community Outreach Coordinator, Radio Kingston
- **Debbie Briggs**, VP, Human Resources and Community Relations, Ellenville Regional Hospital
- **Susan Denton**, Director of Transitional Housing, Grace Smith House



# How did we get here?

.01

## Increasing demand for housing

20-year trend of demand for homes and second homes

.02

## Limited New Housing Supply

Limited development of new affordable, workforce, and middle-income housing



# How did we get here?

.03

## Construction Costs

Construction demand, inflation, pandemic-related restrictions, supply chain disruptions, labor shortages

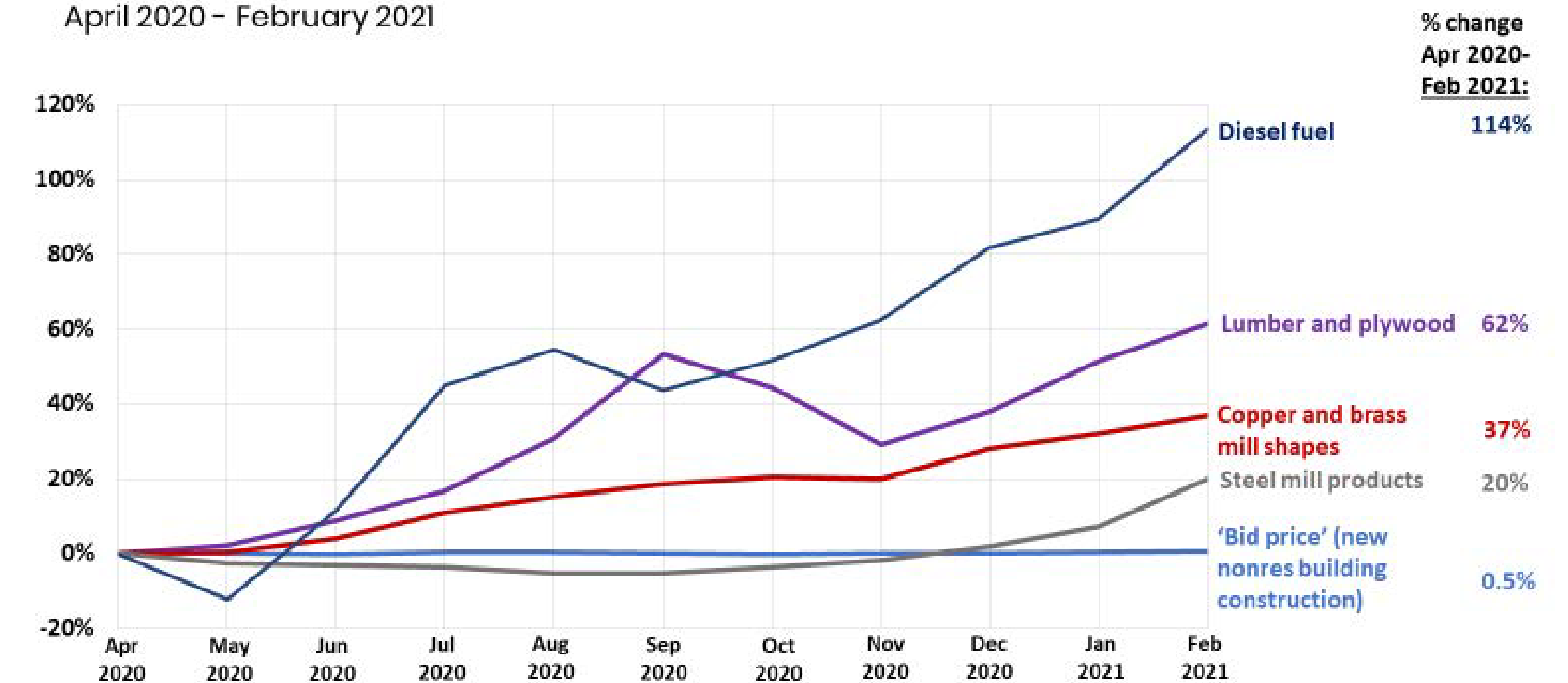
.04

## Short-Term Rentals + Vacation Homes

Reducing already limited supply of permanent housing for rent or sale

Price changes for construction and selected materials

April 2020 – February 2021



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, producer price indexes (PPIs) for new nonresidential building construction (bid prices), diesel fuel, wood, and metal products, not seasonally adjusted



# How did we get here?

.05

## Limited Community Support for New Housing

Lack of community support blocking new housing, when proposed

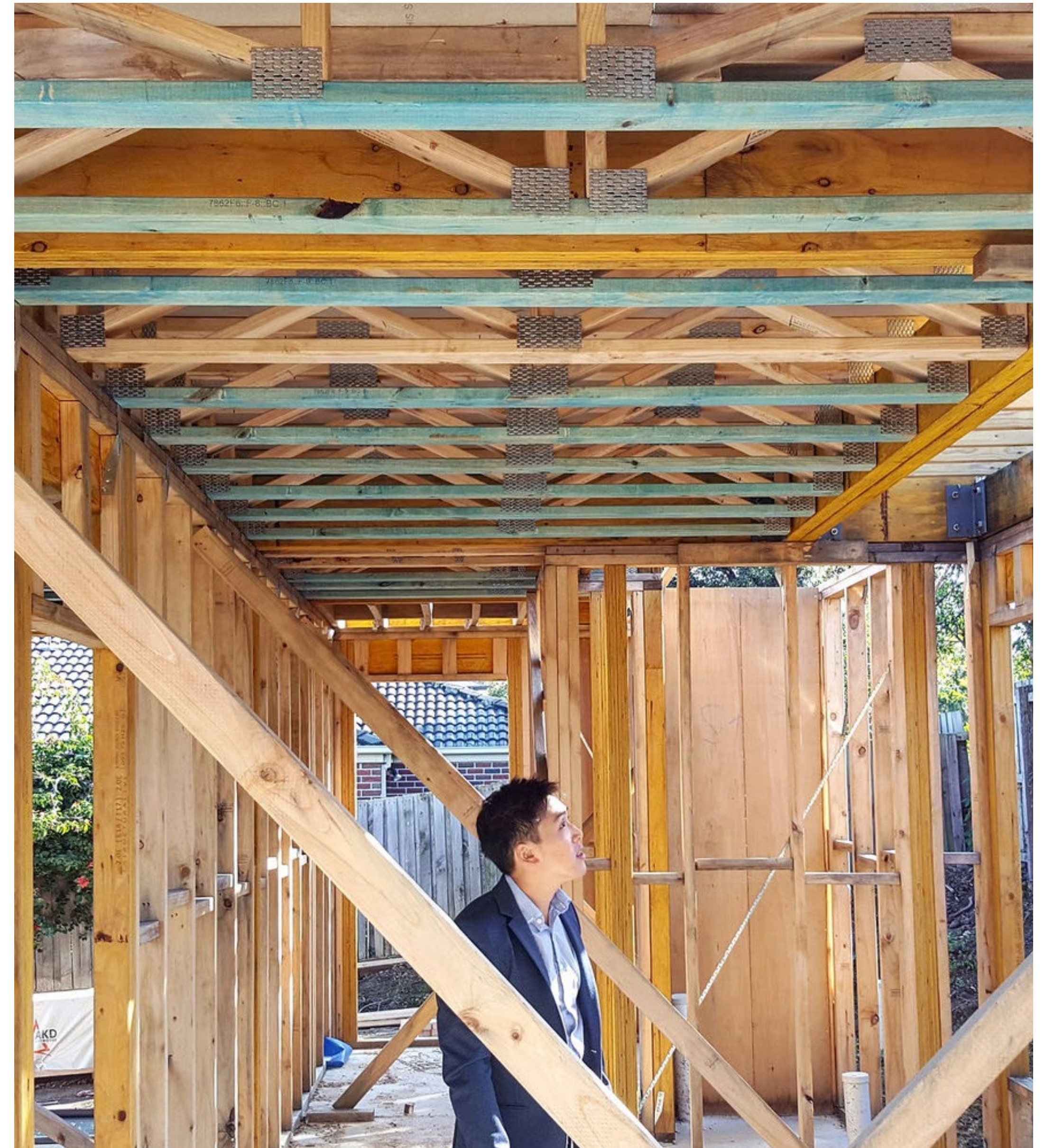
.06

## Development Uncertainty

Confusing and delayed local development reviews and approvals adds to the cost of building housing



Ulster County  
Housing Smart  
Communities Initiative





# Why Housing Matters?

## **Sustainable Economy**

Housing costs and availability in line with income allows business to attract and retain workers

## **Community Costs and Support**

Supportive housing saves money in mental health costs and the other costs to a community associated with homelessness

## **Housing Stability**

Housing stability for families of low and moderate-income creates better social and educational outcomes for children

## **Community Diversity**

Community diversity is built on a foundation of housing equity and diversity of class, race, gender, and ability drives creativity and innovation



# Town of New Paltz Housing Snapshot

## Rental Costs

Average rents increased by approximately 40% over the past 10 years while wages have remained stagnant

## More Income Going to Housing Costs

Approximately 15% of owners and 29% of renters in Town of New Paltz spend more than half of their monthly income on housing costs

## Increasing Home Prices

TONP home sale prices have increased 69% over the past 9 years

Median Home Sale Price

**2014: \$277,000**

**2023: \$467,000**

## Wrong Type of Housing

There is a mismatch between the housing needed and the housing being built.

From 2015 to 2020, the average new home size was 2,245 square feet with a median sales price of \$425,000.





Ulster County  
Housing Smart  
Communities Initiative

# Program Process and Benefits



# Benefits of Certification

## Technical Planning Support

Technical planning support from the Ulster County Planning Department for participating communities

## Templates and Planning Resources

Model regulations, housing policies, and planning tools provided for participating communities

## Training and Education

Training and educational events on how to implement smart housing policies and key housing issues

## Consultant Support

Consultant support for developing and implementing housing policies, regulations, and local Housing Action Plans

**More incentives will be available soon based on community feedback and needs...**



Housing Smart Community  
Initiatives

# Housing Smart Actions

## 12 Housing Smart Actions

### Action Categories

1. Community Planning
2. Leverage Existing Housing Stock
3. Land Use Changes
4. Development and Approval Process
5. Clean Energy and Energy Costs
6. Innovative Solutions





Community Planning

## Housing-Focused Community Outreach and Education Campaign (Required)

A community outreach campaign that ensures key stakeholders and the general public help inform housing policy and are educated on the importance preserving and developing affordable housing options.

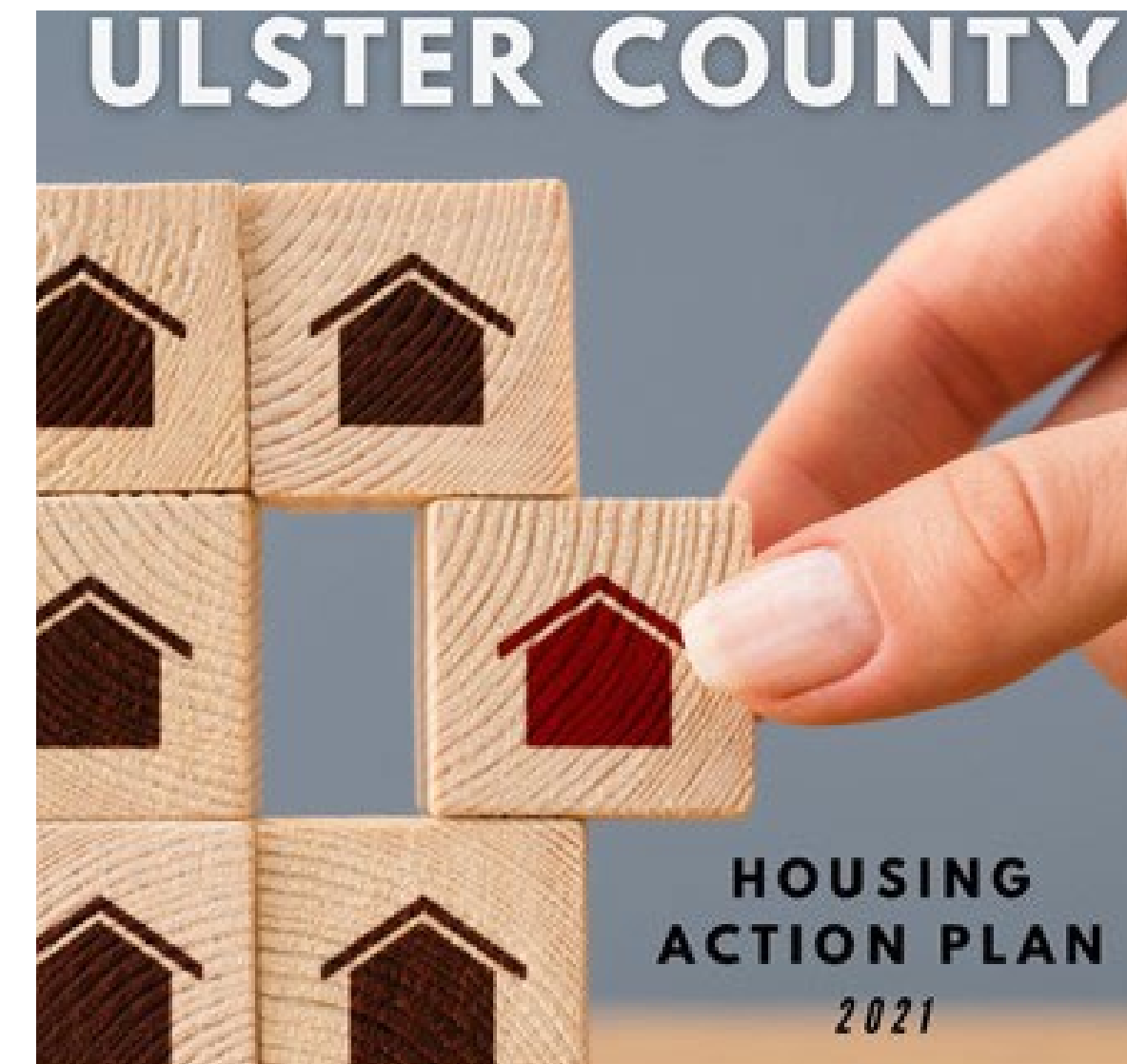




## Community Planning

# Create a Housing Action Plan (10 Points)

A municipal housing action plan is a strategic planning and assessment document that creates the foundation for implementing housing-related policies and actions.

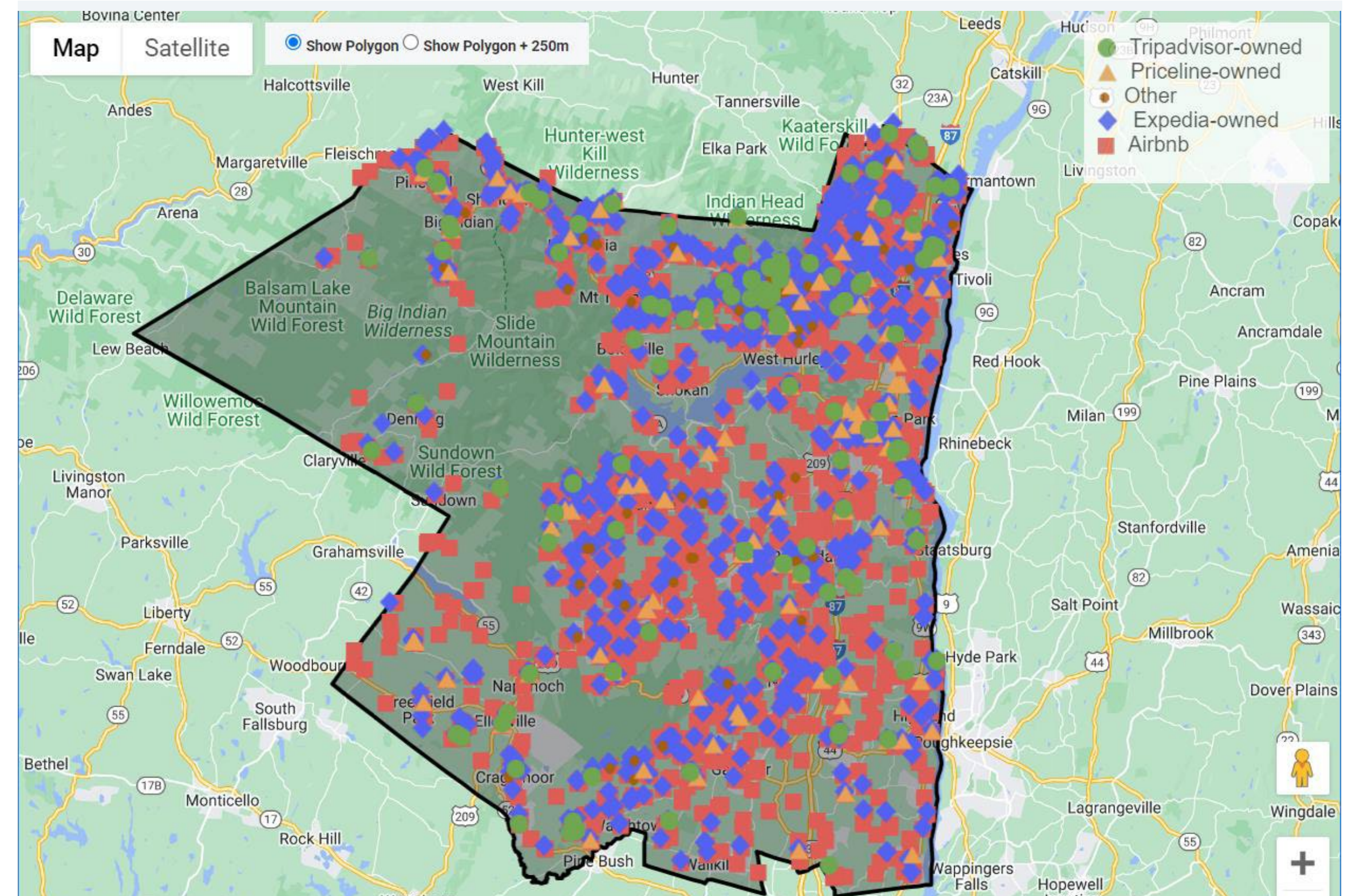




Leverage Existing  
Housing Stock

## Adopt Short-Term Rental Regulations (3 Points)

Adopting regulations that effectively limit the number of short-term rentals (STRs) and preserve stock of the long-term rentals in the community.



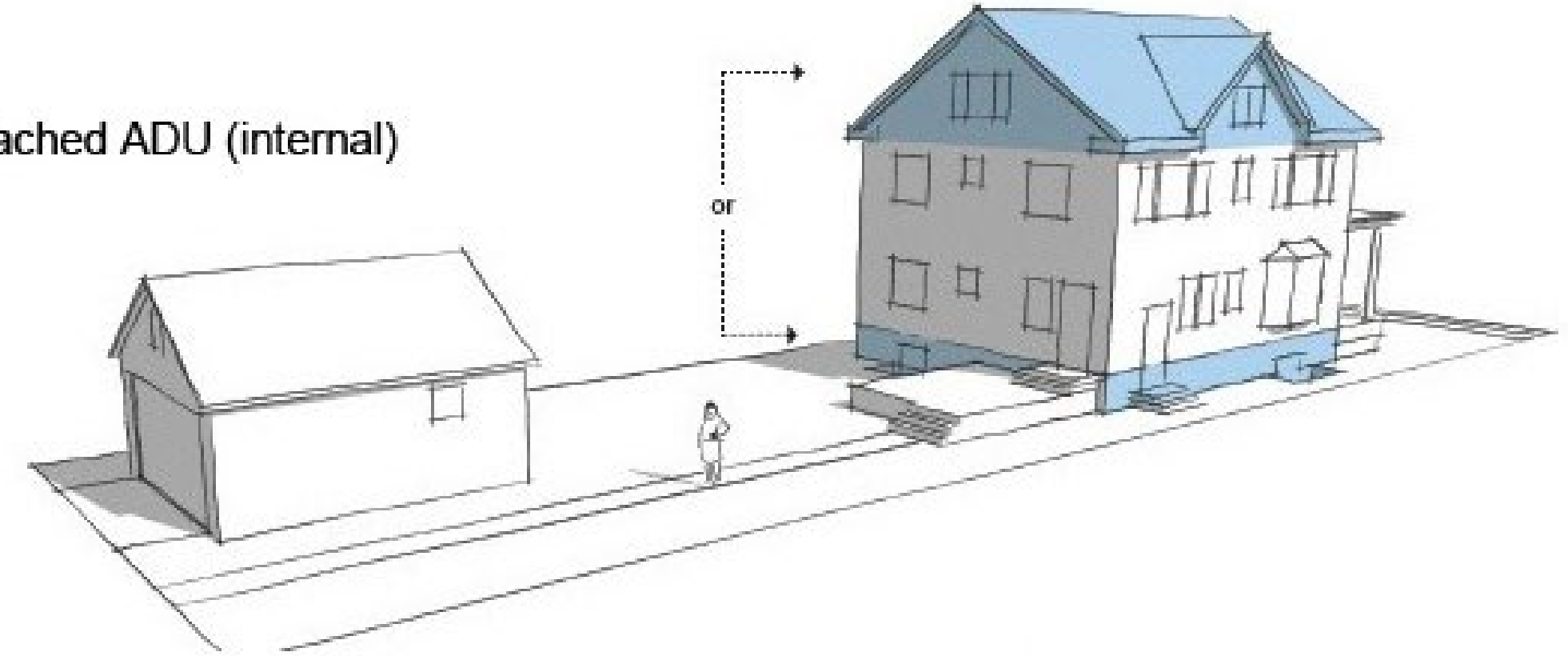


Leverage Existing  
Housing Stock

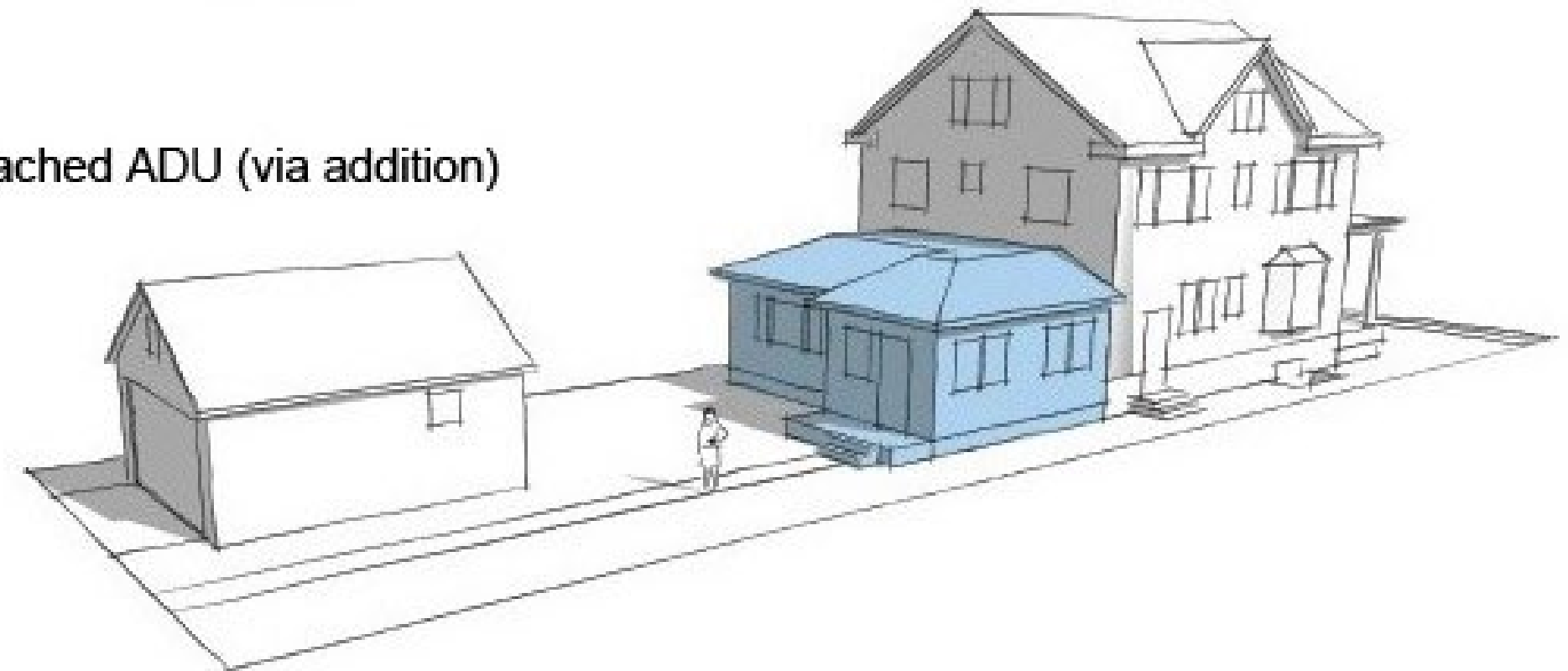
## Support Development of Accessory Dwelling Units (3 Points)

Updating the municipalities land use  
and/or zoning code to reduce  
restrictions on the rehabilitation or  
development of new Accessory  
Dwelling Units (ADUs).

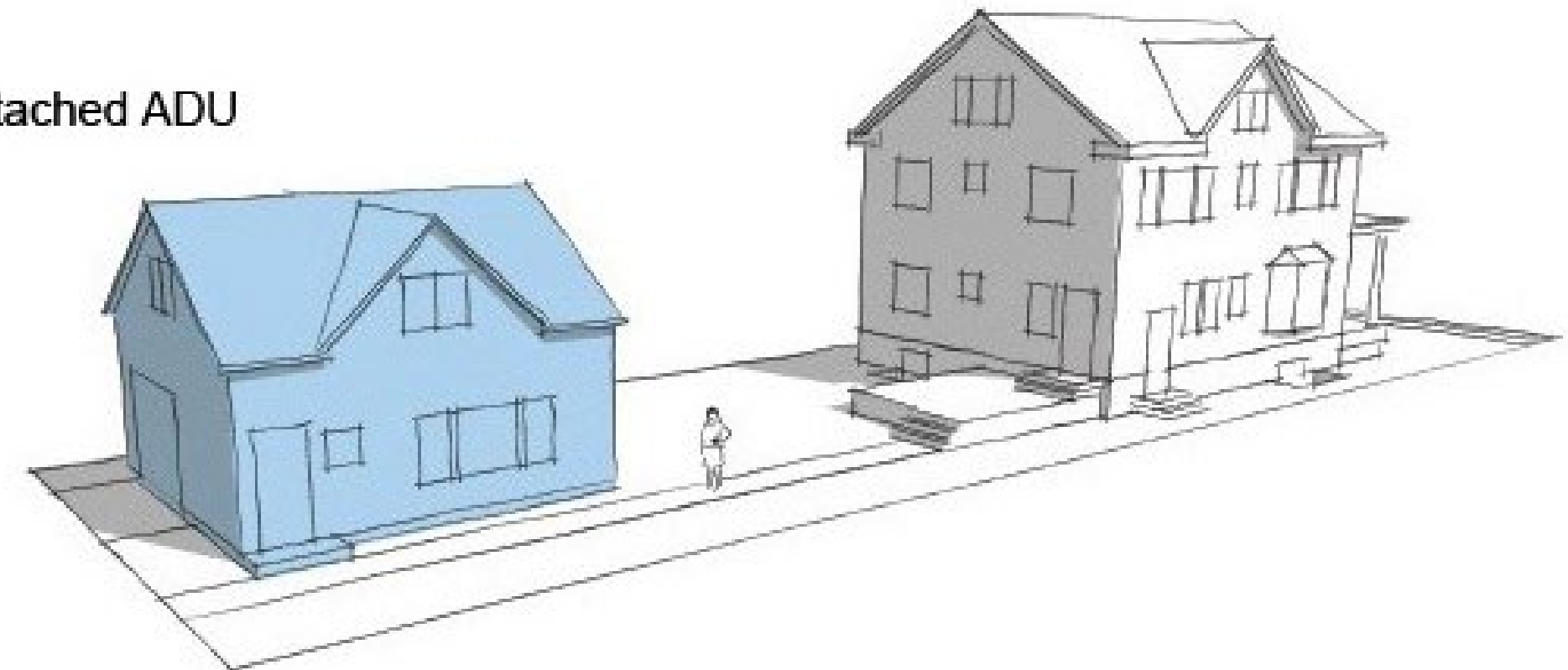
Attached ADU (internal)



Attached ADU (via addition)



Detached ADU



Ulster County  
Housing Smart  
Communities Initiative



Leverage Existing  
Housing Stock

## Adopt Existing Real Property Tax Laws (2 Points)

Passing laws at the municipal level  
to allow local property tax  
exemptions that provide housing-  
related benefits to specific types of  
properties and demographic  
groups.



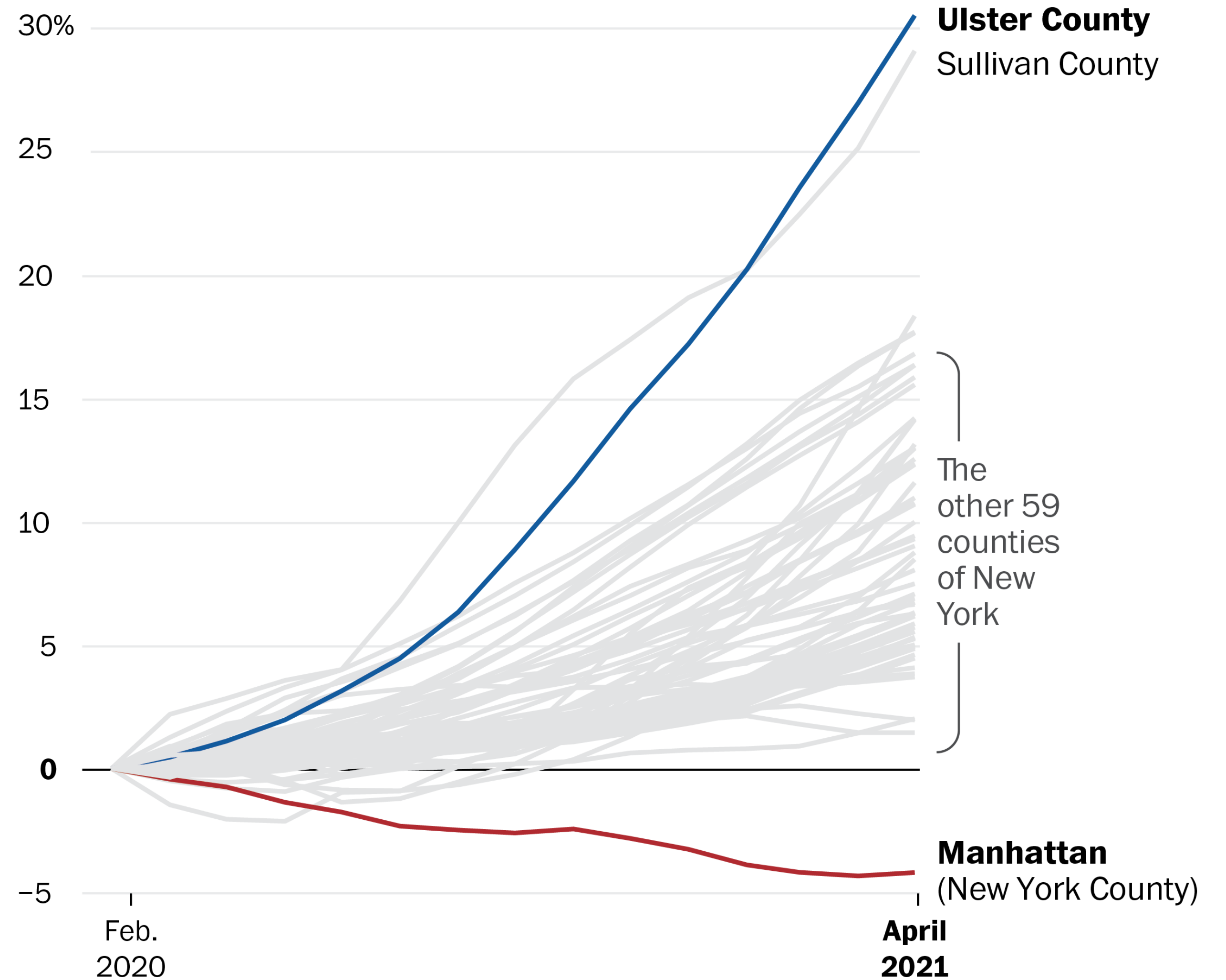
- Residential-Commercial Urban Exemption Program–  
Conversion of a Non-Residential Property into a Mix of  
Residential and Commercial Uses
- First-Time Homebuyers of Newly Constructed Homes
- Alternative Veterans' Exemption
- Capital Improvements to a One-or Two-Family  
Residential Property

Leverage Existing  
Housing Stock

## Establish Rent Stabilization Regulations (3 Points)

Determining whether the municipality is eligible for establishing rent stabilization regulations and, if so, passing regulations to stabilize rents for qualifying housing units.

### Pandemic-era price growth in New York counties



Source: Zillow

THE WASHINGTON POST



## Land Use Changes

# Upzoning and Mandatory Affordable Housing (4 Points)

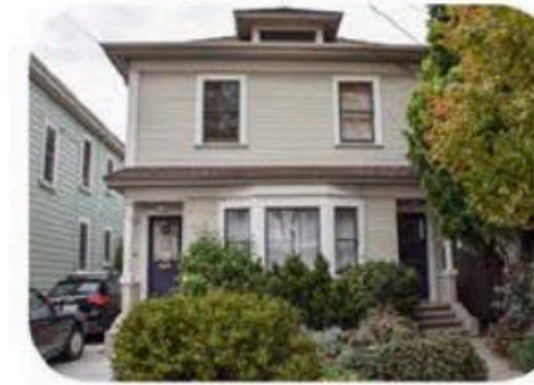
Updating the municipalities land use and/or zoning code to increase the number of units that can be built in residential zones while ensuring bigger projects include affordable housing minimums.

### Examples of Low-scale Residential Housing Types

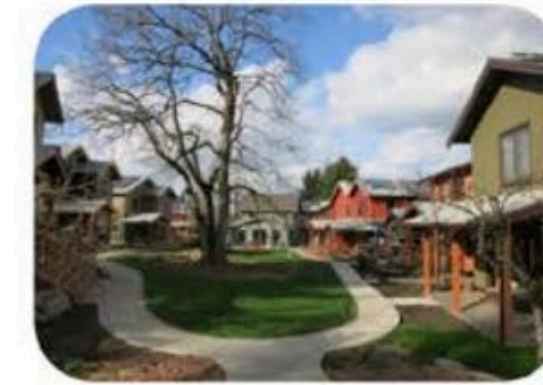
House & ADU



Duplex, triplex



Cottage housing



Fourplex



Small lot house



Tiny/mobile house



Townhouses



Small multifamily

### Illustration of Mid-scale Residential Housing and Transition to Low-scale Residential





## Land Use Changes

# Adopt an Affordable Housing Overlay District (4 Points)

Identifying a location in the municipality to place an affordable housing overlay (AHO) district and adopting a regulation instituting the AHO district.

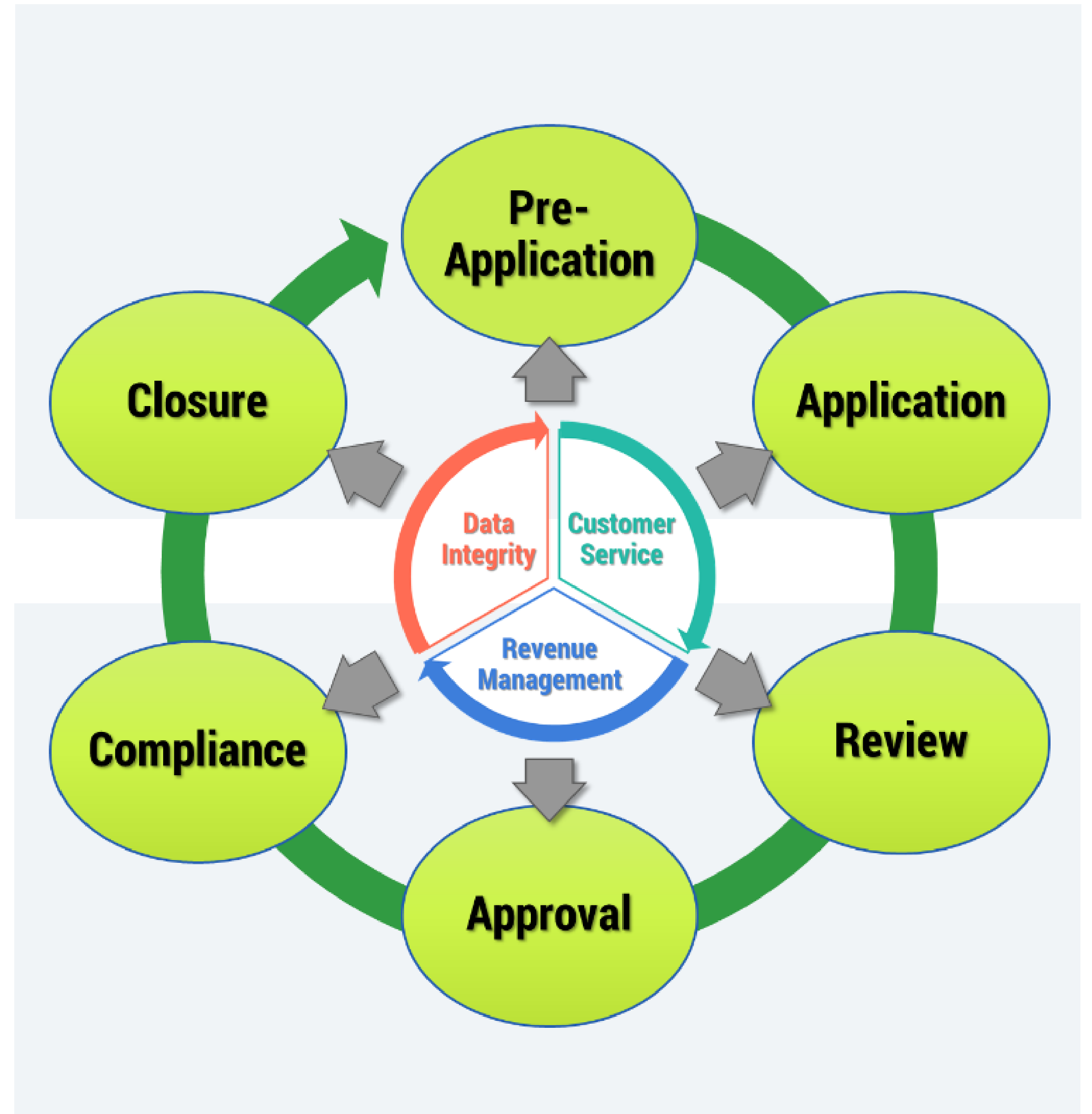




Development and  
Approval Process

## Streamline Development Approval Process (2 Points)

Working to streamline the development approval process for residential properties to provide certainty and clarity for developers or individuals planning residential projects.



Ulster County  
Housing Smart  
Communities Initiative



Development and  
Approval Process

## **Housing Sites Inventory and Request for Concepts (3 Points)**

Develop an inventory of land  
suitable for residential development  
and solicit conceptual development  
proposals for specific sites for new  
housing development.



Ulster County  
Housing Smart  
Communities Initiative



Clean Energy and  
Energy Costs

## Adopt a Building Energy Code (2 Points)

Adopting an energy efficiency  
standard related to new building  
construction and major renovations.





Leverage Existing  
Housing Stock

## **Establish or Join a Housing Rehabilitation Program (3 Points)**

Establish or join a housing rehabilitation program that provides homeowners with access to grants, loans, and technical assistance for home rehabilitations and retrofits.

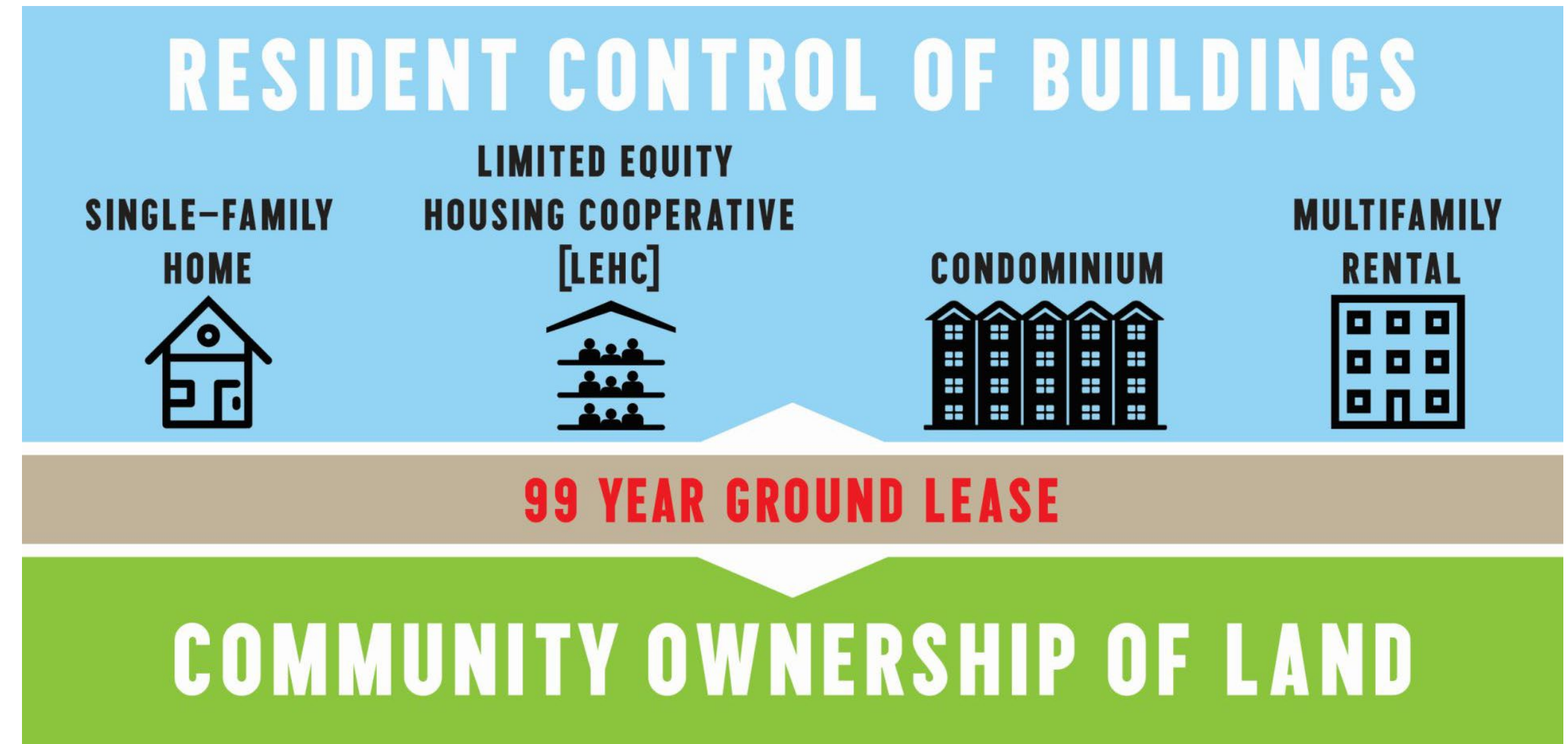




Innovative Housing  
Solutions

## Create Innovative Housing Solutions (2-5 Points)

Encourage municipalities to develop unique and innovative solutions to promote the preservation and development of affordable and workforce housing.





# Certification Levels

|                 |                                    |  |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Bronze</b>   | <b>Foundational steps required</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Join the Program and Engage the Community</li> <li>• Establish a Community Outreach and Educational Campaign</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Silver</b>   | <b>10 points</b>                   | <p><b>Required Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt Short Term Rental Regulations (2 Points)</li> </ul> <p><b>Additional Actions:</b><br/>Any combination of additional actions totaling 8 points (most actions are worth 2-4 points)</p>   |
| <b>Gold</b>     | <b>20 points</b>                   | <p><b>Required Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the Development of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) (2 Points)</li> <li>• Implement Upzoning and Mandatory Affordability (2 Points)</li> </ul> <p><b>Additional Actions:</b><br/>Any combination of additional actions totaling 6 points (most actions are worth 2-4 points)</p> |
| <b>Platinum</b> | <b>30 points</b>                   | Must have completed a Municipal Housing Action Plan (10 points) in addition to 20 points from other actions.   |



# Certification Levels

|                 |                                    |  |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Bronze</b>   | <b>Foundational steps required</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Join the Program and Engage the Community</li> <li>• Establish a Community Outreach and Educational Campaign</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Silver</b>   | <b>10 points</b>                   | <p><b>Required Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt Short Term Rental Regulations (2 Points)</li> </ul> <p><b>Additional Actions:</b><br/>Any combination of additional actions totaling 8 points (most actions are worth 2-4 points)</p>   |
| <b>Gold</b>     | <b>20 points</b>                   | <p><b>Required Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the Development of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) (2 Points)</li> <li>• Implement Upzoning and Mandatory Affordability (2 Points)</li> </ul> <p><b>Additional Actions:</b><br/>Any combination of additional actions totaling 6 points (most actions are worth 2-4 points)</p> |
| <b>Platinum</b> | <b>30 points</b>                   | Must have completed a Municipal Housing Action Plan (10 points) in addition to 20 points from other actions.   |



# Program Progress

## 12 Bronzed-Certified Communities

Town of Saugerties

Town of Rochester

Town of Woodstock

Town of New Paltz

Town of Shandaken

Town of Gardiner

Town of Olive

Village of Ellenville

Town of Marbletown

Village of New Paltz

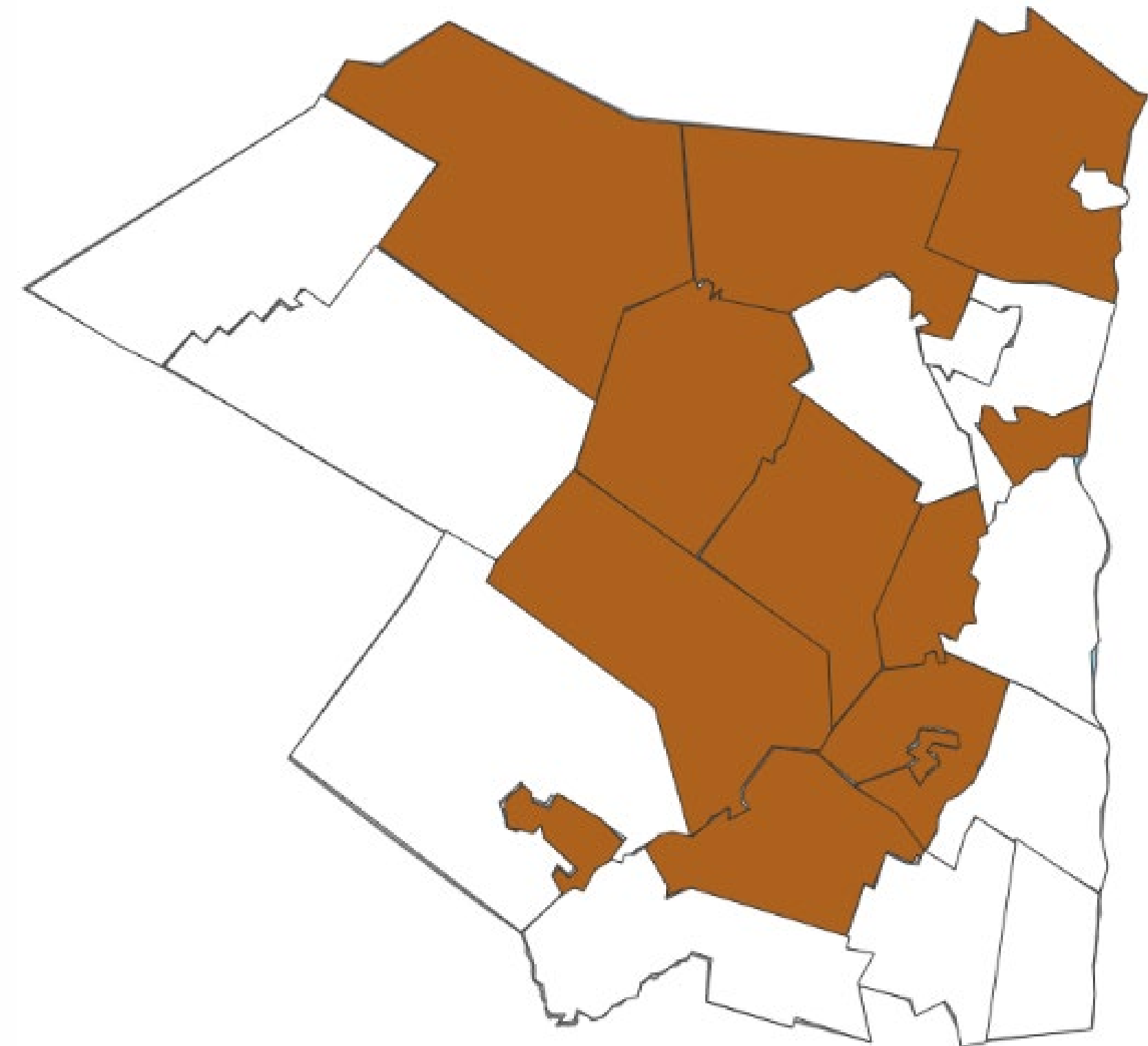
Town of Rosendale

City of Kingston

9 Housing Smart Communities Coordinators

9 Housing Smart Task Forces/Committees

## Certified Housing Smart Communities



Ulster County  
Housing Smart  
Communities Initiative



# Program Progress

Certified Housing Smart Communities

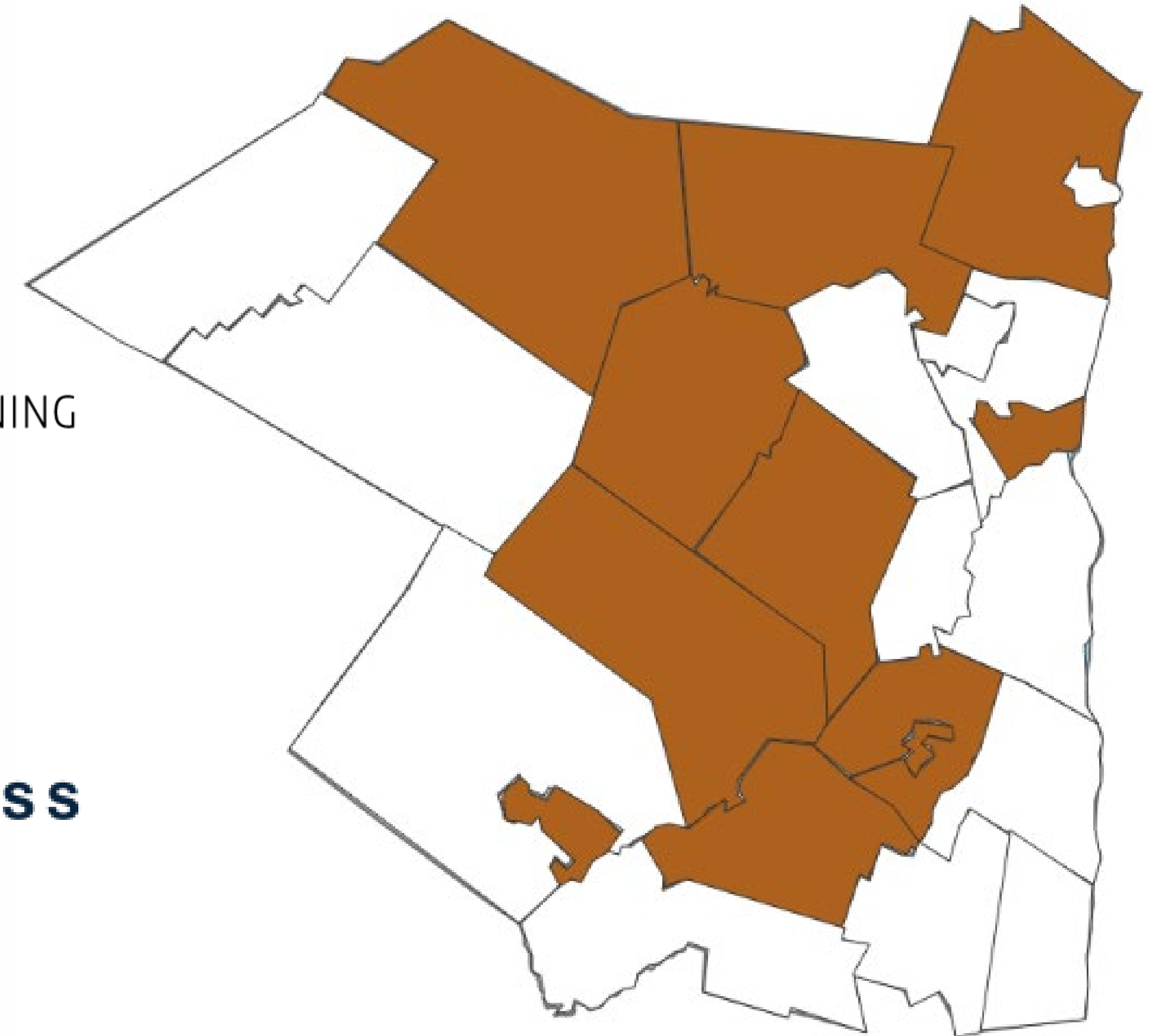
Housing Consultant Support Services



Barton & Loguidice



HUDSON VALLEY  
PATTERN *for* PROGRESS





# Program Progress

## Housing Consultant Support Services

### Town of Woodstock

Housing Education Playbook and Sites Inventory

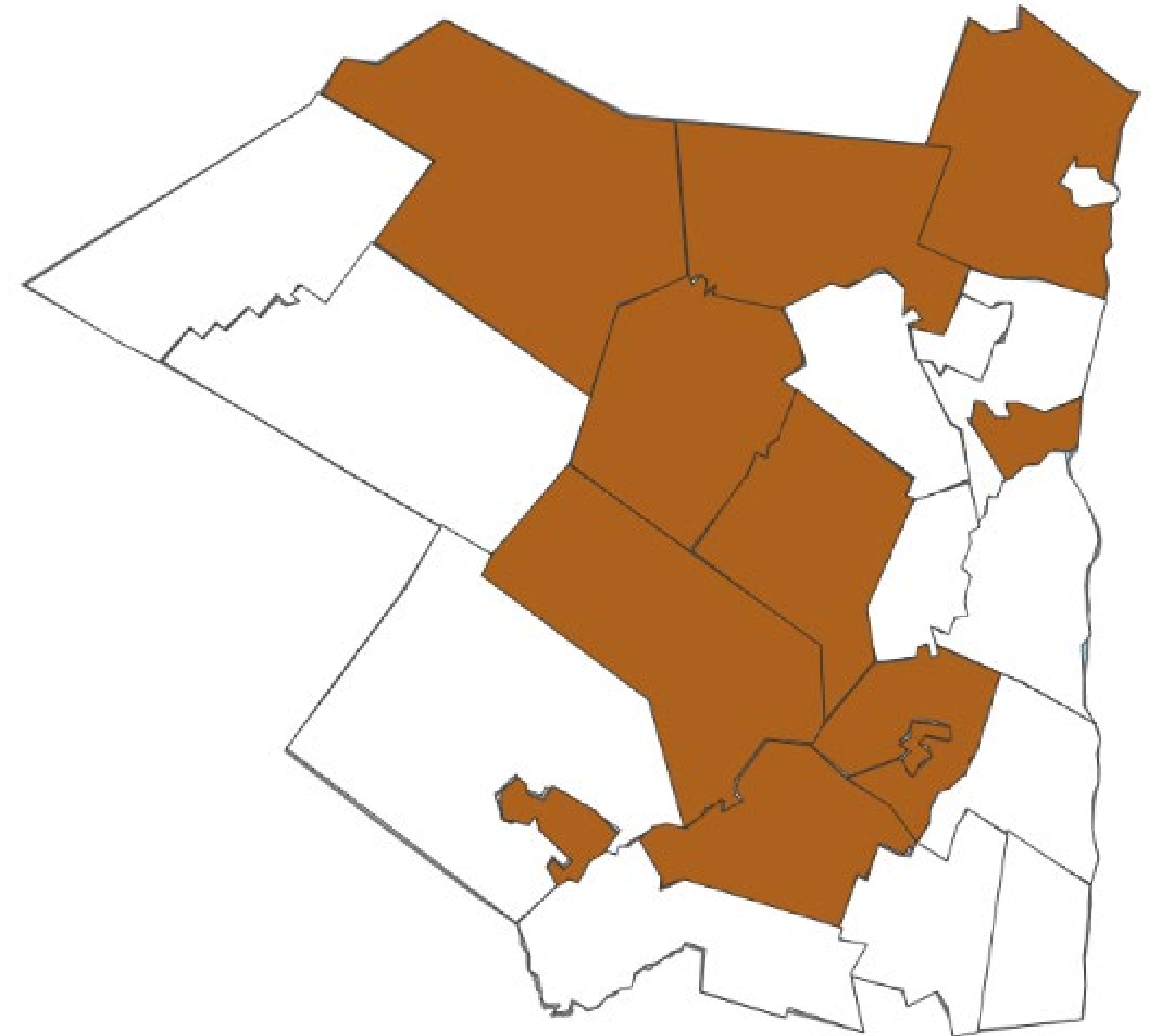
### Town of Olive

Housing-Supportive Zoning and Subdivision Update

### Town of Rochester

Housing Sites Inventory and Design Charette

## Certified Housing Smart Communities



Ulster County  
Housing Smart  
Communities Initiative



# Program Progress

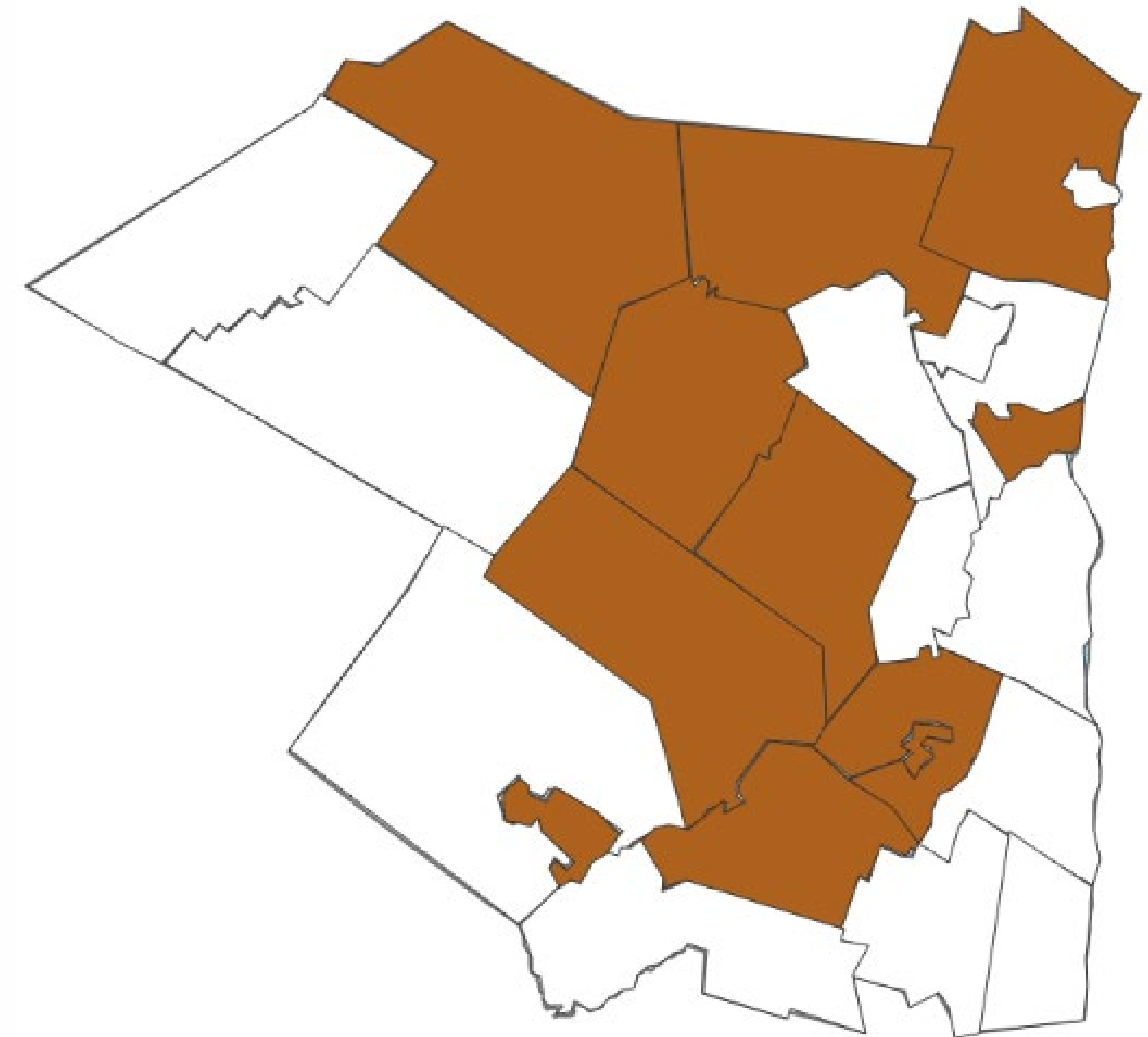
# Governor Hochul's Pro-Housing Community Program

is a new certification process that is based on a community's commitment to identifying impediments to and promoting housing growth.

- “Pro-Housing Communities” receive priority in funding applications
- Tool for tracking housing growth and statistics



## Certified Housing Smart Communities





Housing Smart Community  
Initiatives

# Thank You! Questions?

- ✓ **Website:**  
<https://hsci.ulstercountyny.gov/>
- ✉ **housingsmart@co.ulster.ny.us**
- 🕒 **845-340-3469**

