

**Chautauqua County 20/20
Comprehensive Plan**



Chautauqua 20/20 Comprehensive Plan

Draft January 2011

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Chautauqua 20/20 – Comprehensive Plan

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What makes a human being unique:

the fact that we can plan. Our greatest achievements have all resulted from our ability to envision the future and muster the methods and resources to achieve it. That is what forms the core set of skills and philosophy underpinning planning everywhere and municipal planning in particular. Planning is not reserved for professional planners. We plan our day, think about our children's future, and plot an itinerary for a vacation trip.

It makes sense to think about the future of our communities and to take the trouble to ensure that the decisions we make today will result in a viable and healthy future for them.

Community and regional planners study the way our lives are influenced by physical, economic and social forces. It's their job to help the rest of us shape the kinds of communities and regions we want. Planning involves many tools, including economic and demographic analysis, natural and cultural resources evaluation, goal-setting and implementation.

American Planning Association

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INTRODUCTION

SUMMARY

Chautauqua County's leadership recognizes that if it is going to change its course and be competitive on the world stage, it needs to plan for the future. It is self-evident and has been recognized by others outside of the county that Chautauqua County is abundant in natural, built and human assets, but has reacted to market conditions rather than being proactive. To use an analogy, one might compare Chautauqua County to a football team that is stocked with talent, but has an ill-conceived game plan at best. It is hard to imagine competing favorably without a well-conceived game plan. You might compete at some level based on talent alone, but without a clever strategy you can only go so far. Furthermore, Chautauqua County has been remiss when it comes to identifying its core assets and in developing strategies to build upon those assets for future growth. Using the same football analogy, it would be like a football team that isn't cognizant of its terrific passing attack as it continues to run the ball time and again to no avail. And then there is execution. Again, a game plan will only take you so far if you don't rehearse, practice and execute it.

The process used to develop this plan not only builds on existing and future assets, but has been developed based upon the values of the county's citizens. This is not a plan that was "cooked up" in the back offices of the Department of Planning & Economic Development; rather, it has evolved through the coordinated input of a broad cross-section of the community. From the identification of issues, to visioning, to action, this plan represents the will of the citizens of Chautauqua County, culminating in an implementation strategy that recommends actions that are programmatic, policy-oriented and project-specific, and are to be implemented over the next 10 + years.

We hope that this plan, Chautauqua 20/20, succeeds in capitalizing on our many assets to create jobs, lower the costs of existing services, and enhances the quality of life while preserving the rural charm of the County.

- Mark Geise, Deputy Director

Chautauqua County Department of Planning & Economic Development

PURPOSE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

The primary purpose of Chautauqua 20/20 is to chart a course that can be used by county government; its partners in the public, private and non-profit/institutional sectors; and by citizens in making decisions that affect the County's future. The Plan presents a vision for the future of Chautauqua County, based upon the community's values, from which a framework of goals and strategies were developed for a variety of key focus areas ranging from "Business Development" to "Active Living." The time of the Comprehensive Plan's release also celebrates Chautauqua County's bicentennial.

Chautauqua County completed its previous Comprehensive Plan (*Chautauqua County 1995*) in 1978. The original plan's authors recognized that the County's resources would "remain static or decline" and that a community planning process was necessary to direct the "passions and energies" towards "effectively dealing with our common problems." The plan was ground breaking for its time but primarily focused on the physical growth of the County and land use.

The County Comprehensive Plan Task Force, which was the first committee to evaluate how to approach updating the original plan, believed a new plan should focus on projects and programs rather than land use. A resource-based approach was proposed in order to set a framework that could best capitalize on Chautauqua County's natural, built and human assets to create jobs, lower the costs of existing services, and enhance the quality of life while preserving the rural charm of the County.

Through workshops, surveys, focus groups and a new interactive website, the planning process has captured the issues, opportunities and challenges facing the County today as communicated by the residents and stakeholders. The resulting plan, Chautauqua 20/20, must now take up the challenge of focusing our attention on our needs, our vision for the future, our limited resources, and an equitable balance between them. The plan is designed to provide the purpose and direction our communities and citizens need to help the County realize its hope for a bright future. The plan also complements and builds on the County's new branding initiative — *The World's Learning Center* — described further on the following page.

(The *Chautauqua County Design Principles Guidebook*, recently completed by Randall Arndt provides guidance to municipalities on land use and development issues, and is being incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan by reference.)

THE WORLD'S LEARNING CENTER BRAND

Chautauqua County has an unusually high number of natural resource assets and unique attractions. In addition, the area boasts more than 135 years as a learning vacation destination primarily because of Chautauqua Institution. This makes it completely unique as a vacation spot and provides a means for tourism marketers and economic development officials to build additional market awareness. Specifically, the learning vacation theme can expand the region's ability to attract visitors, in terms of seasonality and geographic target market area.

The World's Learning Center brand is built on recommendations from Destination Development Inc. as part of a two-step initial process:

- 2007 Chautauqua County Tourism Assessment—provided a review of the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for the specific areas and attractions within Chautauqua County to attract greater numbers of visitors.
- 2008 Branding, Development, and Marketing Action Plan—provided rationale for choosing “Chautauqua – The World's Learning Center” as the brand that will differentiate Chautauqua County and promote growth.
- The brand vision statement as expressed by Roger Brooks, Destination Development, Inc. is:

Chautauqua County expands the tradition of the Chautauqua education movement into the 21st century to become the World's Learning Center. Leisure learning opportunities for visitors abound throughout the County and throughout the year. Visitors from around the region and around the world are drawn to Chautauqua County to pursue their passions, while also enjoying the variety of charming, historical villages and towns, each unique in ambiance, shopping, dining, and entertainment offerings.

Underlying objectives and rationale behind the World's Learning Center branding initiative include:

- Build new market/visitor awareness by differentiating our area from competing destination areas—what do we offer that they don't?
- Take advantage of resurgent traveler interest in “leisure learning” vacations.
- Leverage the learning heritage that has long been associated with our area (Chautauqua Institution, Roger Tory Peterson Institute, agritourism and wine/grape industry tours, etc.) to (1) strengthen summertime visitation and (2) increase other season's visitation.
- The brand both relies on and supports the incredible natural environment and recreational offerings that our area has long been famous for.

Information has been compiled and posted online about more than 40 learning vacation experiences currently offered in the area. Learning experiences and the World's Learning Center brand have become the main focus in marketing materials, ad placements, and articles/publicity generated by the Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau. Additional marketing activities, such as a World's Learning Center brochure and development of thematic learning weekends, are under development.

The key to long-term success however, is two-fold:

- Appropriate private sector tourism businesses must develop and offer leisure learning experiences and cast themselves as part of “Chautauqua – The World's Learning Center”.
- Area agencies and organization that have a bearing on the local tourism industry must unite around the brand and move forward in a unified manner.

THE PLANNING PROCESS



Image by Mark Geise



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

INTRODUCTION

The Comprehensive Planning Team used a variety of methods to ensure that the plan is unbiased, transparent, comprehensive, citizen-based, and promotes the betterment of the entire community (Refer to Attachment A in Appendix). The issues addressed and the methods employed were:

INVESTIGATION

In the initial stages of development of the plan (1st quarter of 2007), a team that included Planning and Economic Development Department staff, legislators, and other key stakeholders reviewed the original comprehensive plan (*Chautauqua County 1995*) and other New York State county plans. Their discussions and review led them to focus on two resources; Tompkins County and Cornell University. The group communicated with and visited Tompkins County, NY to interview the Tompkins County Department of Planning staff and Cornell University professors to discuss their approach and to learn from their experience in developing a county comprehensive plan. The team returned with a greater understanding of how to approach the project and what they desired to accomplish.

APPROVAL FOR FUNDING

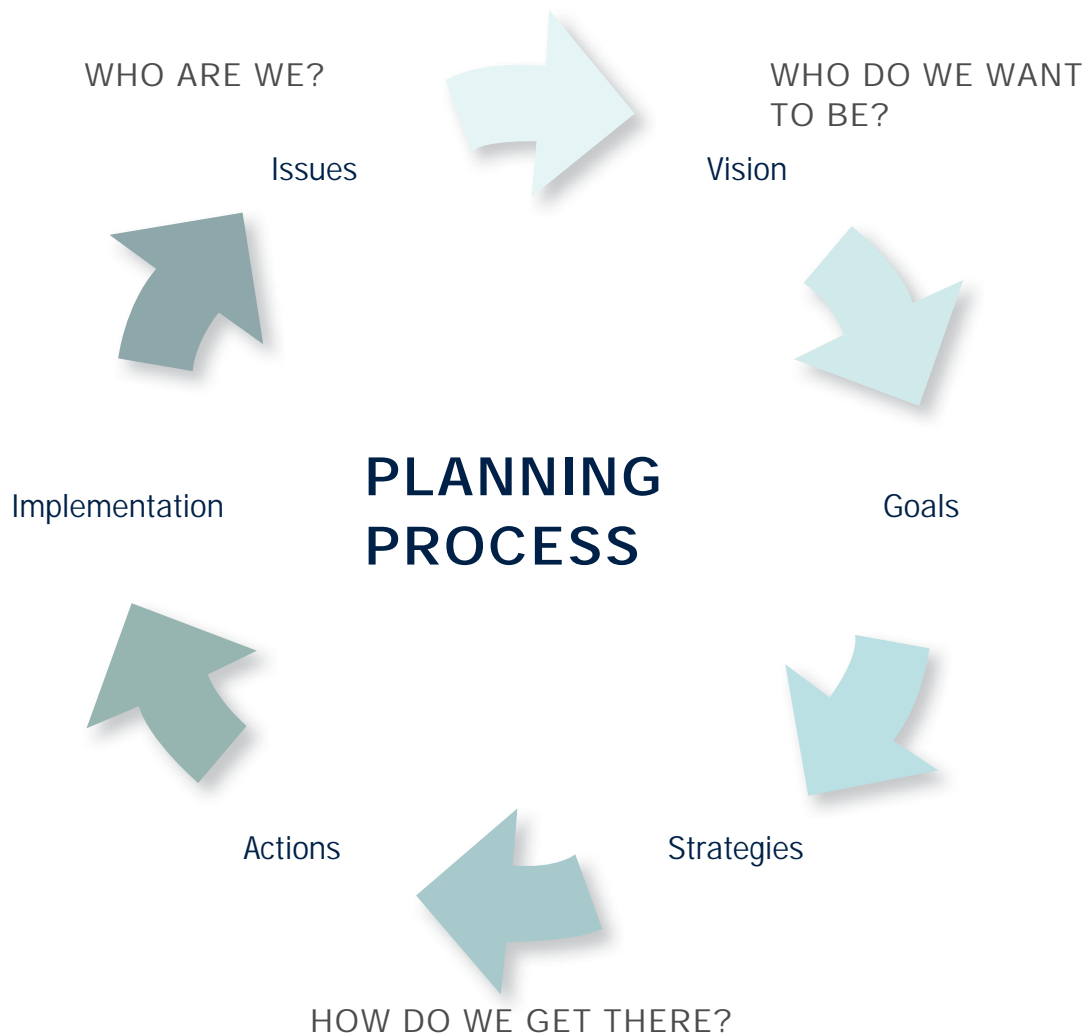
The Chautauqua County Planning Board was the original advocate for updating the 1995 plan and sought funding to develop a new county-wide comprehensive plan. The Legislature passed a resolution approving the capital budget, which included capital funding for the project in October of 2007.

PROMOTION

Meetings were held in September through November of 2008 for the purpose of informing the public and gaining support for development of the Comprehensive Plan, and to encourage the community to develop white papers regarding issues that were pertinent to the County (Refer to Attachment B in Appendix). The public meetings, conducted by Randall Arendt and Terry Martin, provided insights into local land use issues and encouraged the attendees to pass this knowledge on to their respective local planning/zoning boards.

SCOPING

A random, scientific phone survey was developed and conducted by Barry Zepowitz & Associates, Buffalo, NY, in December of 2009 in order to identify and frame issues, assets and attitudes regarding Chautauqua County (Refer to Attachment C in Appendix). The survey helped to define the scope and approach that would be taken to develop the comprehensive plan, as well as the primary areas of emphasis that would form the basis for formation of focus groups. Wallace, Roberts & Todd (WRT) was retained as a consultant to assist in developing the plan.



INVENTORY

A strategic scan was conducted to review available demographic information, plans, and other relevant information that had been compiled into a data book (Refer to Attachment D in Appendix) to corroborate or refute information gained to date through public meetings and other means. The results of the strategic scan provided the basis for identifying preliminary issues, which were utilized as a starting point for the public discussion of issues at Public Workshop # 1.

STRATEGIZING ISSUES (WHO ARE WE?)

The primary objective of Public Workshop #1 and a first round of Focus Group Meetings, held in March of 2010, was to solicit input regarding the county's strengths, weaknesses and ideas for the future. This information was compiled and analyzed to define the major strategic issues that needed to be addressed in the plan, and prescribe ideas for addressing these issues (Refer to Attachment E in Appendix). A Current Conditions and Strategic Issues Report was produced to synthesize the results of all of the efforts to date.

DEFINING VISION, GOALS AND STRATEGIES (WHO DO WE WANT TO BE?)

The primary objectives of the Public Workshop #2, Focus Group Meetings and web-based survey were to prioritize the issues identified to date as they relate to community, environment and economy, to define the vision, and develop goals and strategies to accomplish the vision. Please Refer to Attachment F in Appendix.

ACTION STRATEGIES AND IMPLEMENTATION (HOW DO WE GET THERE?)

The primary objectives of Public Workshop #3, a third round of Focus Group Meetings, and a second web-based survey (Refer to Attachment G in Appendix), conducted in October and November of 2010, were to prioritize the actions developed to date for each of the focus areas as they relate to community, environment and economy, to identify relationships between the priorities for different focus areas, and to develop an implementation strategy.

LAND-USE DECISION MAKING & GIS MAPPING

Because New York is home rule state, municipalities make their own decisions regarding local land use; however, the NYS General Municipal Law Section 239 review process requires municipalities to seek county input under certain conditions. This being the case, the county contracted with nationally renowned Randall Arendt to create a guidebook to assist municipal planning and zoning boards in making smart decisions involving local land use (Refer to Appendix H in Appendix).

Chautauqua County's GIS website contains maps and other tools (Refer to Appendix I in Appendix) regarding Chautauqua's GIS system and accessing maps.



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

ADOPTION

The Chautauqua County Legislature adopted the comprehensive plan in the first quarter of 2011 in compliance with New York State (NYS) General Municipal Law, Article 12-B, Section 239-d and NYS Environmental Quality Review Act regulations.



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

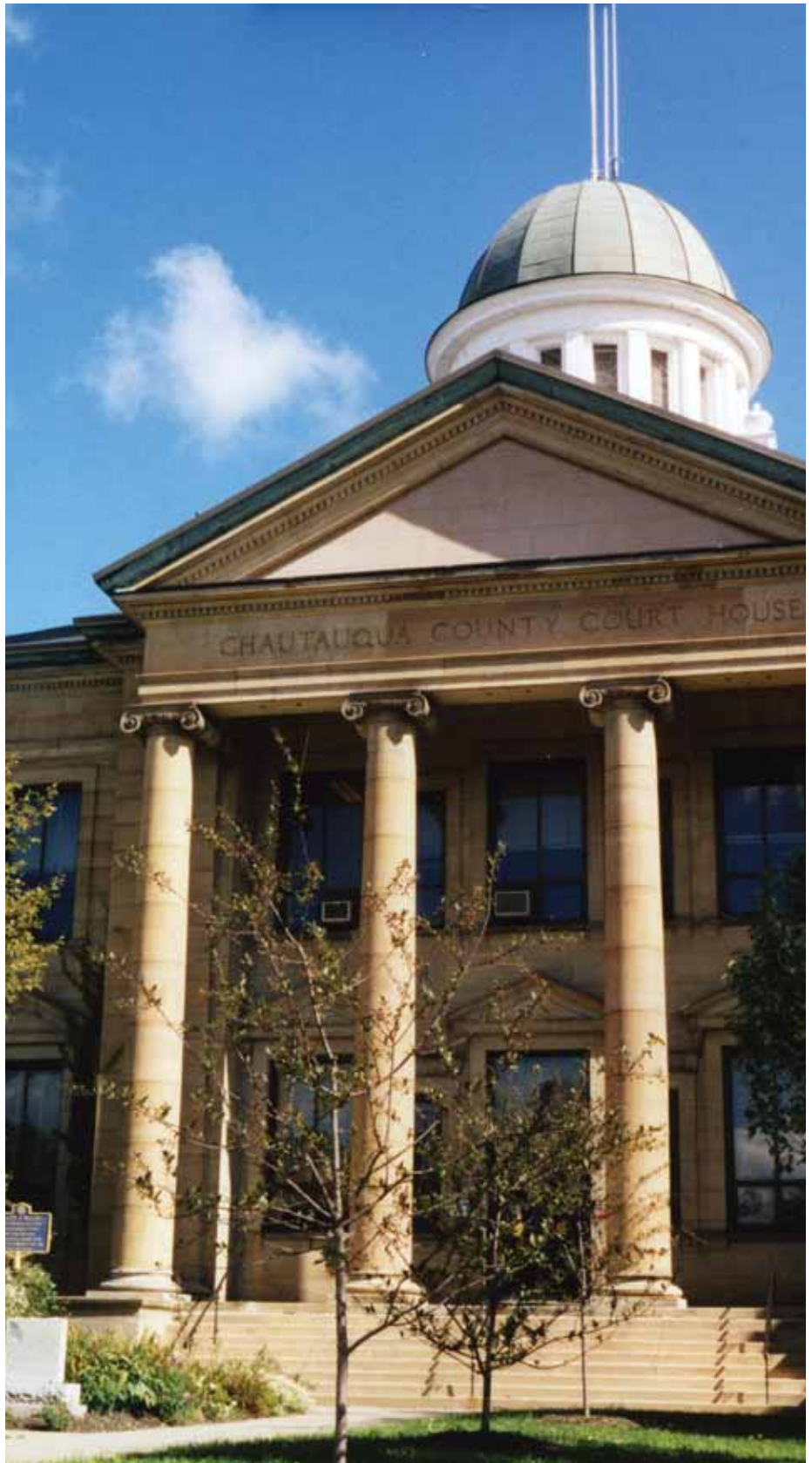


Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau





COUNTY PROFILE AND PLANNING ISSUES

Chautauqua County is a rural county in Western New York. Like many rural counties, it has been experiencing population decline, the loss of its youth to other more urbanized areas, and aging of the remaining population. Its population peaked at 147,305 in 1970 and, according to US Census estimates, declined to 133,903 in 2009.

Compared to the challenges of a declining and aging population, Chautauqua County's natural resources and location are strengths that can be built upon. The County has the largest number of farms in New York State. The microclimate created below the Allegheny Plateau supports grape farming, and the uplands are utilized for field crops and grasslands. This traditional agricultural base has preserved the open space and rural charm treasured by so many residents and visitors.

The County's overall economy has struggled to adjust to a changing global economy. For much of the twentieth century, it benefited from a strong manufacturing sector, a well-trained blue collar workforce, and abundant natural resources. Over the past 25 years, the manufacturing sector has declined as a result of global competition, changing consumer tastes, and technological advances. In the face of significant job loss in the manufacturing sector, the County has transitioned, with some success, to a more diversified economy. Some of its manufacturing base has been retained through specialization and targeted economic development programs, tourism and the service and retail sectors have expanded, and the agricultural base has remained stable. However, the median income for the County's populace is well below the national and state median income levels and the percentage of families living in poverty has increased.

If we accept these broad trends as the reality of "what we have become" as a County, then the question becomes "where do we want to be" and "what do we need to overcome to get there"? Chautauqua County employers need a well trained, highly educated workforce; our aging housing stock needs to be brought up to a reasonable standard; the organization of our governmental units and the services they deliver must be evaluated for efficiencies to help lower costs; and we must focus on improving job opportunities in the County. By characterizing the planning context and strategic issues, this section of the plan provides the foundation to help us begin to address these and similar challenges.

ANSWERS THE QUESTION: WHO ARE WE?

THE PLANNING CONTEXT

Chautauqua County is the western-most county in New York State, and is bordered by Lake Erie to the North, Pennsylvania to the west and south, and the Seneca Nation of Indians, Erie County, NY, and Cattaraugus County, NY to the east. The County is situated within a day's drive of most of the major population centers of the northeastern United States and the southern Canadian province of Ontario, and is well served by the transportation corridors that connect the northeast with the mid-west U.S. (refer to Figure 1). In addition to being crossed by two major interstates (I-90 and I-86), a network of state and federal highways, and rail, the County has two commercial airports and a network of well maintained county roads. The topography varies from the flat shoreline along Lake Erie in the north to the rolling hills of the Appalachian Plateau in the south.



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

The county is blessed with many small, agricultural-based towns that have unique rural character and charm. It also has an abundance of natural assets such as water bodies, parks and trails; agricultural assets such as grapes and maple syrup; impressive cultural institutions; renowned educational institutions; Amish communities; a vibrant manufacturing base; impressive architecture; and many other amenities. The County's assets are well represented in the following websites:

Chautauqua County's governmental website

www.co.chautauqua.ny.us

Chautauqua County Department of Planning & Economic Development website

www.planningchautauqua.com

County of Chautauqua Industrial Development Agency website

www.ccida.com

Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau website

www.tourchautauqua.com

County's interactive mapping site and map library website

www.chautauquagis.com



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

The County's residents are not the only ones that believe that Chautauqua County is a genuine gem. In an August 2007 report developed by Destination Development, Inc. titled "Assessments, Findings and Suggestions" for the promotion of tourism in the County, the author Roger Brooks stated that Chautauqua County "is an incredible county, far surpassing what we expected". In subsequent presentations by Mr. Brooks, he has stated publicly that Chautauqua has as much if not more potential to become a major tourist destination that any one of the 1000+ communities he has worked in.

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY MAP

For additional County map information see <http://www.chautauquagis.com>



Figure 1

STRATEGIC ISSUES

An understanding of the conditions and trends that are shaping the County today, and its evolution in the future, is necessary to provide context for the vision, policy framework, and action plan that were developed through the planning process. The foundation for this understanding is provided by the County's data inventory, which provides information about demographic trends, Chautauqua's natural environment, land use, infrastructure, economy and other topics relevant to the Comprehensive Plan. This section provides a summary of current conditions and key issues for Chautauqua's future based on a review of the data as well as public input received during the planning process, (i.e., public meetings, surveys, stakeholder interviews, and other means).

It is divided into four subsections:

- An overview of Chautauqua County's population (People and Demographics), followed by three subsections corresponding to the overarching themes of the plan:
- Environment
- Community
- Economy



Image by Mark Geise



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

PEOPLE AND DEMOGRAPHICS

The characteristics of a community's population and its social organizations are the starting point for future planning. This subsection addresses Chautauqua's population trends, social capital, and community attitudes.



Image: "P1000519." cqcostello. Available from: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/45406858@N07/4407922890/>

KEY ISSUES

The population of Chautauqua County has decreased steadily since it peaked in the 1970s at 147,305 residents. The latest population estimate from 2009 is 133,789, which indicated a 4.5 percent decline from the 2000 Census. The 2008 population estimate is similar to the population level in 1950.

Issue #1: Declining Population

The population of Chautauqua County has experienced slow decline for decades, but there are signs of stabilization.

There are indications that the population of Chautauqua County is stabilizing after several decades of decline. While raw numbers are still declining, the natural population change (ratio of births to deaths) appears to have bottomed out in 2002 and has been growing positively since that time with 110 more births than deaths in 2007. This indicates that the County's population could be stabilizing. Continued stabilization and possible future growth will depend on reduced out-migration, and an in-migration of new residents. Because of its outstanding resources, Chautauqua County has the potential to attract "free locators" (persons who choose to live in a place because of the quality of life it offers rather than a specific job opportunity).

The largest municipalities (and their 2008 Census estimates) are the City of Jamestown (29,463), the Town and Village of Pomfret/Fredonia (14,922), the City of Dunkirk (12,085), and the Town of Ellicott (8,777). Most Chautauqua County municipalities are estimated to have declined in population between the 2000 and 2008 Census updates. The communities that grew in that time period were French Creek, Kiantone, Pomfret, Fredonia, Ripley, and Villanova.

The Hispanic population in Chautauqua County is both the largest and the fastest growing minority group, increasing from 4.2% of the population in 2000 to 5% in the 2006-2008 Census Estimate. By contrast, the second largest minority group, African-Americans, only grew from 2.2% to 2.3% of the population in that short period of time. Chautauqua County is also home to three Amish communities that contribute to local culture, rural character, and the economy. The largest one is centered near Cherry Creek.

Issue #2: Aging Population

The population of Chautauqua County is becoming older.

The percent of the population over age 65 grew from 12.4 percent to 16.0 percent between 1970 and 2000. The median age for Chautauqua County at the 2000 Census was 37.9 years versus 35.9 years for New York State and 35.3 for the US. In 2008, the Census estimates the median age for the county will have risen to 38.7 years versus 36.7 years for New York State and 37.7 for the US.

“Baby Boomers” (generally born between 1945 and 1965) and “Millennials” (their children, generally born between 1980 and 2000) are the two largest generations in US History, yet these two important age groups are underrepresented in Chautauqua County’s population. Like many small and rural counties, Chautauqua continues to lose younger residents as they move to cities and regions that offer more job prospects and activities. The underrepresentation of residents aged 55 to 64 is a potential indication that more could be done to attract and retain residents at the beginning of retirement age.

Issue #3: Income and Poverty

Chautauqua County residents have lower household incomes and a higher percentage of residents live in poverty than the U.S. and New York State as a whole.

The median household income for Chautauqua County increased 38.7 percent from \$24,183 in 1990 to \$33,548 in 2000. The increase from 2000 to 2008 was slower, but still positive, increasing another 16.1 percent to \$39,865. By comparison, the 2008 median household income for New York State and the US was \$55,401 and \$52,175, respectively (See Figure Below). The overall increase in median household income from 1990 to 2008 in Chautauqua County was 64.8 percent. This positive growth, however, did not keep pace with the New York State and US median household incomes, which grew 68.1 percent and 73.6 percent, respectively.

While median incomes have grown, the percent of Chautauqua County residents living in poverty also grew from 13.8 percent in 2000 to 17 percent in 2008. This increase in poverty came after a period of stability in the 1990s. Nationwide, the poverty level grew from 11.3 percent in 2000 to 13.2 percent from 2000 to 2008. The poverty level for New York State in 2008 was 13.8 percent.

Median Household Income



Another factor that has an effect on the poverty rate in Chautauqua County is the high cost of some essentials that are above the national average: food and groceries (+5%), transportation (+11%), utilities (+24.5%), and health care (+9%).

In addition to the County's Social Services and other human service departments, Chautauqua County has a strong network of community non-profit and public sector service providers to help meet the needs of lower income residents. Examples include economic development corporations, urban renewal agencies, churches, shelters, and anti-poverty groups.

Issue #4: Social Capital

The County has a strong "social infrastructure" of organizations and volunteer groups engaged in activities to benefit the community. Collectively, these organizations are a major resource but face challenges for the future.

A number of private foundations and other groups with various missions operate in the County. Many of the groups, such as Rotary Clubs, Kiwanis Clubs, and lodges, have primarily older members and recognize the need to get younger people engaged in civic affairs. While some of these groups are regionally based (e.g., in northern or southern Chautauqua County), they tend to have strong networks and an ability to work together.

The resources of civic organizations are becoming stretched as they have grown in importance to the community. For example, the Chautauqua Region Community Foundation has a large number of funding programs with a focus on education and scholarships. The foundation granted \$2-\$2.5 million in recent years, but its operations are based on investment performance and have been impacted by the financial downturn.

Issue #5: Community Attitudes

Strong community attitudes have an impact on public discourse and governance issues.

A significant issue that was raised throughout the community and stakeholder input process is the perceived divide between the northern and southern parts of Chautauqua County. This divide has tangible effects (e.g., limiting efforts to leverage organizational resources at the countywide level) that can hamper the ability of the County to achieve its full potential. It also plays out in debates over major issues, such as governance, schooling, grant making, funding priorities, and other administrative topics.

Another recurring theme heard throughout the public input process is that there are too many layers of government. A related view is that the County would be better off if it were given more ability to control its fate. Comments such as "Albany can't be relied upon" or "state government is the first problem" were repeatedly voiced in stakeholder interviews. Given that Chautauqua County is located far from the center of state government in Albany, some residents believe that what works for other New York communities may not work as well for Chautauqua and that more autonomy would positively benefit the County.

Negative attitudes on the part of county residents, parochialism, and public apathy were all cited as weaknesses by public meeting participants. These findings suggest the need to disseminate information relevant to the issues and challenges facing the County to promote more informed public discourse.



Image by Mark Geise

ENVIRONMENT

Chautauqua's natural and cultural resources are clearly some of its strongest assets. This subsection describes Chautauqua's natural beauty, high-quality natural systems and water bodies, productive soils, and history that provide the County with a rich quality of life and economic opportunities.



Image: "Chautauqua Lake, NY - Oct 2007." GeorgieMac Pics. Available from: http://www.flickr.com/photos/geordiemac_pics/1800669749/

Issue #1: Geography, Climate, and Natural Resources

Chautauqua County's scenic landscapes and natural resources are among its greatest strengths and of key importance to the quality of life and the economy.

KEY ISSUES

Lakes, streams, forests, gorges, scenic farms, and other components of the natural environment of Chautauqua County are among its greatest assets. These natural resources provide opportunities for agriculture, outdoor activity, recreation, and a destination for nature lovers, outdoor athletes, and sportsmen in all seasons.

The community cherishes the natural amenities of the county. The top strengths identified in the February 2010 public meetings were: environment (18%), trails/parks/waterways/active living (12%), water resources (11%) and tourism (11%).

A unique aspect of the county's landscape is the escarpment of the Allegheny Plateau, which forms a high ridge running along most of the county a few miles inland from Lake Erie. The escarpment creates a microclimate that is ideal for growing grapes – particularly of the Concord variety. It is also a key watershed divide. Water to the south and east of the escarpment flows through the Mississippi River to the Gulf of Mexico, and to the north and west it flows through the St. Lawrence River to the Atlantic Ocean.

The County has strong educational proponents for the natural world. The Roger Tory Peterson Institute and Jamestown Audubon are recognized centers for nature observation, with missions to "create knowledge of and appreciation and responsibility for the natural world". Combined with conservation organizations such as the Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy and the Conewango Creek Watershed Association, these organizations promote an ethos of environmental conservation by introducing residents and tourists to the wildlife of Chautauqua County.

It is important to ensure that the carrying capacity of the natural environment is not compromised by overuse or inappropriate land development. The outstanding outdoor activities available in the county must be balanced with conservation of natural resources and agricultural lands.

Issue #2: Water

One of Chautauqua County's greatest assets—abundant water resources—is threatened by inappropriate development patterns and infrastructure design.



Image by Mark Geise.

Preserving the quality, safety, and accessibility of the water supply in Chautauqua County is critical to environmental sustainability as well as quality of life and business development. Water is a vital asset for drinking, agriculture, and recreation. The abundant water supply and its recreational benefits can be a catalyst for population growth and tourism and are an important draw for the County that should be preserved. Smart land use and development decisions can ensure that Chautauqua County maintains an adequate supply of clean water into the future.

Chautauqua County's streams and lakes are experiencing many of the problems that result from development pressures, including an increase in the amount of impervious surfaces. Manmade, impervious surfaces can prevent water from being filtered and recharging aquifers, which contributes to degradation of water quality in streams and lakes. Rain water that is not naturally filtered by vegetation and soil can cause excessive algal blooms in surface waters. Chautauqua and Findley Lakes are classified by NYSDEC as "impaired" waters due to the level of phosphorus entering them. In addition to the creation of impervious surfaces, artificial drainage systems have "short-circuited" the overland flow and groundwater recharge patterns that existed before development occurred in the County's watersheds.

In particular, the County's forest cover plays a very important role in water resource conservation. However, development pressures and high tax burdens can encourage forest owners to sell their land and resources. As large areas of forest land are converted to development, water quality and treatment costs will rise and water quality will likely degrade.

Chautauqua Lake's watershed encompasses 160 square miles of land and includes 14 municipalities, including portions of Lakewood, Celoron, Ellery, Chautauqua and North Harmony as well as Sherman, Stockton, Panama and Busti. The Chautauqua Lake Management Commission created the Chautauqua Lake Watershed Management Plan, which advocates a balanced approach to watershed management based on good science, broad community support and economic viability.

Issue #3: Recreation

Year-round recreation opportunities are a major strength of Chautauqua County.



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

Chautauqua County offers a wealth of recreation opportunities during all four seasons. In 2002, Golf Digest ranked Jamestown as the "Best Little Golf Town in America." In addition to three County parks and two County-maintained overland trails, Chautauqua offers:

- Three State Parks (Midway, Long Point and Lake Erie), 5 County Parks
- 20 scenic public and private golf courses
- 14 marinas on Lake Erie, Chautauqua Lake, and Findley Lake
- A dozen swimming beaches on Lake Erie, Chautauqua Lake, and Lower Lake in Cassadaga
- Two downhill ski areas: Peek 'n Peak Resort and Cockaigne Ski Center
- Dozens of miles of overland trails, water trails, and rails-to-trails for walkers, hikers, cyclists, canoeists, horseback riders and snowmobilers
- 17,000+ acres of state forest land, 900 acres of county forest land
- A network of over 400 miles of snowmobile trails maintained by active volunteer organizations
- A wine trail
- Hundreds of miles of designated on-road bike routes
- Excellent fishing and hunting opportunities

Issue #4: Architectural Preservation

The County's cities, towns, and villages can capitalize on their historic buildings and walkable main streets.

The County has many walkable main streets, historic buildings in a variety of architectural styles, cemeteries, and other historic resources. Preservation and adaptive reuse of these historic treasures can lead to urban revitalization. However, the age of the County's building stock increases the cost of preservation and rehabilitation activities.

In the past, places such as Dunkirk and Jamestown played key roles as commercial and social centers for their environs. Today, people often drive to places like Erie and Buffalo for shopping and cultural events, leaving many of the main streets and town centers in the region with high vacancy rates. However, these areas have the "good bones" required to become the attractive, walkable downtowns that strengthen a community. Some of the walkable downtowns and main streets with improving curb appeal and a variety of services and activities include Fredonia, Lakewood, Findley Lake, Silver Creek, and Westfield.

Places like Jamestown were built for larger populations than they have now. As redevelopment efforts move forward, financial support and infrastructure investment should be based on the new reality that not every property can be revitalized. However, substandard buildings can have a negative impact on housing values for an entire block. Efforts to improve the appearance of residences or context-sensitive infill projects at key locations can focus on one block at a time until the revitalization is complete. The City of Jamestown and the Jamestown Renaissance Corporation/Gebbie Foundation have worked collectively to improve the facades of a number of older buildings in downtown Jamestown, which is a good model for other areas in the county to follow.



Image: "IMG_4070." OZinOH. Available from: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/75905404@N00/4659692929/>

Other factors that have hindered preservation efforts are the conversion of large single-family homes to apartments, the many residents who live in historic homes and are unable to afford the repairs necessary to restore them, and the conversion of large homes to apartments. Even with grants and tax incentives, it can be difficult to make the project finances work in Chautauqua County's real estate market. There is also a lack of local knowledge about adaptive reuse practices. One town that has seen some success with restoration efforts is Westfield, where people moving into the county are restoring historic homes.

Nationwide, historic barns serve as tourist attractions and a handful have been restored in Chautauqua County. Tying barn restoration projects to the agricultural history of the area – including the many patents for agricultural equipment that came from Chautauqua – can be a win-win for agricultural preservation and economic development.

Issue #5: Active Living and Healthy Lifestyles

Chautauqua County has many natural resources that provide opportunities for healthy activities and lifestyles.

Bicycle routes, recreation paths and nature trails are abundant in Chautauqua County and help to attract tourists, but they can also have a positive impact on the county in other ways. For example, a healthy population with reduced rates of obesity, diabetes, and other chronic illnesses can reduce public health expenses. Extending bike paths directly into towns and cities and developing programs for youths and adults to get out and enjoy nature on a regular basis are just two ways to achieve a healthier population and encourage active living.

Opportunities exist to team with private health clubs, businesses, and YMCA/YWCAs in the county to develop fitness and health awareness programs. Efforts to revitalize older, walkable communities also provide opportunities for healthy activity.



Image by Mark Geise.



Image: "Goofball on Bike." ataldredge. Available from: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/ataldredge/2755087014/>

Issue #6: History

There are many opportunities to use Chautauqua County's rich history and famous residents to boost tourism.

Historic figures hailing from Chautauqua County include statesmen, inventors, and the incomparable Lucille Ball – to give just a sample. Notable individuals include Civil War hero William B. Cushing, Supreme Court Justice and chief prosecutor of the Nazi war criminal trials at Nuremberg Robert H. Jackson, and ornithologist Roger Tory Peterson.

The County's museums, birthplaces, and graveyards have stories to tell to residents and tourists, whether they are vacationing in the county or just passing through on I-86 or I-90. These stories include the history of commerce, furniture-making, tool-making and other history related to farming, just to name a few. Efforts to promote this history have paid off. For example, the Chautauqua County Historical Society has seen an increase in visitors since it had an "attractions" sign posted on the Interstate directing tourists to its headquarters at the McClurg Museum in Westfield. The Destination Development, Inc. report on developing tourism in Chautauqua County contains many recommendations on how to use the County's history as an economic driver.

COMMUNITY

Chautauqua County has a substantial base of community infrastructure. The County's schools, hospitals, municipal facilities, housing and municipal services support the quality of life, personal enrichment, and economic growth of Chautauqua's citizens. This subsection details current trends and issues regarding these facilities and resources in the County.

KEY ISSUES

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Issue #1: Education

Chautauqua County has strong educational institutions. The County has a high percentage of residents with a high school diploma but it lags state and national averages for higher education. However, the County is above the national average for 2-year degrees due primarily to the strong presence of Jamestown Community College.

Chautauqua County's high school graduation rate is high, but it lags behind state and national benchmarks in the percent of population with a bachelor's degree or higher. Of adults 25 years and over, 36.5 percent of Chautauqua County residents have only a high school diploma. This is higher than the New York State rate of 27.8 percent of adults with only high school diplomas and the US rate of 28.6 percent of adults with only high school diplomas. Currently, the percent of adults with bachelors degrees is lower than the statewide and national averages (9.7 % versus 15.6% statewide and 15.5% nationally). Conversely, the percentage of residents with some college education is above the statewide average but below the national average indicating that many residents started college but did not finish. The county also lags slightly behind the state and the nation in the percentage of population with graduate degrees (7.2% versus 11.8% statewide and 8.9% nationally). Among current students, 78.5 percent of high school graduates plan to enroll in college versus 77.6 percent statewide. At the elementary education level, student performance in statewide tests for 4th and 8th graders is above the statewide average.

There were 33,000 enrolled students in all levels of education in Chautauqua County in 2008, of which 21,000 were enrolled in elementary through high school. The dropout rate for high school students in 2002 was 2.8 percent compared to the New York State average of 4.1 percent. In addition to schools, learning opportunities exist at the 34 libraries in Chautauqua County.



Image: "Art is BIG at Chautauqua." L-T-L. Available from: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/rwjensen/3886206361/>

HIGHER EDUCATION

There are four higher education institutions in Chautauqua County. SUNY Fredonia is one of the premier schools in the State university system. Jamestown Community College (JCC) was one of the first community colleges in the SUNY system and offers two-year associates degrees to first-time, transferring, and continuing education students. Jamestown Business College offers certificates, associates and four-year bachelor's degrees in business-related fields. Empire State College is a SUNY adult education institution offering associates, bachelors, and masters programs. The Manufacturing Technology Institute (MTI) is a partnership between JCC and regional businesses offering continuing education and job skills training for workforce development.

There are several scholarship opportunities available to Chautauqua County residents pursuing higher education. However, many of those scholarships are based on high school performance and test scores, which directs funds to students in need. JCC offers nearby residents the Unified Student Assistance Scholarship provides local high school graduates ranked in the top 20% of their class a full tuition scholarship to New York State institutions for up to two years of full-time study.

Building on the reputation of the Chautauqua Institution and the strong higher education offerings in the County, the "World's Learning Center" brand for Chautauqua County has been publicized and promotion efforts are underway. Promoting the "World's Learning Center" could help to position the County for future growth in tourism and high-tech jobs.

Issue #2: Fragmentation of Public Education

The large number of school districts raises concerns about potential duplication of services and high costs.

Chautauqua County's 21,000 elementary and high school students are divided among 16 school districts and parts of two others in a general population of just over 130,000 residents. It has been asserted that fewer school districts would eliminate duplication of services and promote more cost-effective delivery of quality education. In addition, the high number of school districts creates an unequal taxing structure across the County. It has been asserted that spreading property tax revenues more equitably throughout the County would minimize the impact of poverty and allow all children to receive an equal education. However, all efforts to consolidate school districts—except for the merger of the Mayville and Chautauqua districts—have failed in the past.

The BOCES (Board of Cooperative Educational Services) structure ensures the provision of special education as well as career and technical education classes that cannot be funded in individual school districts due to the limited number of students with a particular need. The BOCES structure allows some of the flexibility that stakeholders would like to see in Chautauqua County schools – flexibility to provide learning opportunities for all students.

Issue #3: Youth

The County has a difficult time retaining its youth when they reach adulthood.

Ensuring employment opportunities for youth is one of the most difficult challenges facing Chautauqua County. The County, educators, and employers should work together to ensure that students learn the skills necessary for the jobs of the future. Other groups should develop ways to involve youth in activities with opportunities such as youth boards, youth council, and intern-



Image by Mark Geisse



Image: "Get Your Chautauqua Daily News." Have Bag Will Travel. Available from: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/traveling-bag/189538850/>

Issue #4: Government Structure

Although municipalities and other jurisdictions often share resources, the multiple levels of government within Chautauqua County is an issue of major concern to residents.

There is a fair amount of cooperation between municipalities. Many towns informally share equipment and staffing resources (e.g., maintenance equipment, emergency response equipment, and recreation staff). Town and village board activity shows that there is a high degree of civic volunteerism in the county. As government resources decline, churches, community groups, and non-profit institutions are stepping in to fill the gaps in programs and funding. However, these organizations are struggling to keep up with demand in many cases and there are concerns that they do not have the financial or staff capacity to continue assistance at current levels.

The perceived lack of efficiency in government is a top concern of residents. According to one survey, the community views local and state government as the top weakness in the county (41%). In particular, high taxes, too many layers of government, and poor leadership were ranked as the biggest weaknesses of government. When asked about ideas for the future, residents had the most to say about local government (reduce/consolidate/share services – 45%; lower taxes – 23%).

There are many political and taxing jurisdictions, which is a problem not limited to Chautauqua County, but which characterizes New York State as a whole. Multiple levels of permitting can make development projects or starting a business difficult.



Image provided by CCIDA

Issue #5: Housing

Chautauqua County has high levels of vacant housing and buildings in only fair or poor condition.



Image by Mark Geise

HOUSING STOCK

In both the 1990 and 2000 Censuses, the average age of housing stock in Chautauqua County was the oldest of any Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) in the nation. At the 2000 Census, 47.3% of housing units were built in 1939 or earlier. Only nine percent of housing units were built since 1990.

Single-family houses make up 66 percent of the housing stock, multi-unit apartments 27 percent and mobile homes 7 percent. 68 Percent of units are owner-occupied.

While the age of Chautauqua County's housing means that much of it is historic in character, there are issues with vacancy and upkeep. Vacancy rates have increased as the population of the county has declined. As of the 2006-2008 Census estimate, 11,259 (17.1%) of the county's 65,704 housing units were vacant. In Jamestown, more than one in ten housing units was vacant: 1,828 of 15,369 units (11.9%). (Note: County-wide vacancy rates may be inflated due to seasonal residences not being occupied when the Census is taken in April.)

A county GIS assessment found that 71 percent of housing units are in need of work, based on two factors:

- 76 percent of units built before 1960 are likely to have lead paint hazards as well as asbestos; and
- 13.4 percent of housing units are in "fair" (with "signs of excess deterioration for its age") or "poor" ("obvious signs of excess deterioration") condition.

The county's six rehabilitation entities repair on average 40 to 50 units collectively per year when funds are available, with a goal to increase that number to 240-300 per year.

VALUE

At the 2000 Census, the median value of owner occupied housing in the county was \$64,000 compared to \$148,700 for New York State as a whole. Values in Jamestown (\$52,400) and Dunkirk (\$52,100) were well below the county median, while Fredonia (\$85,100) was much higher.

AFFORDABILITY

In spite of the high level of vacancy, the affordability of rental properties is a major concern, particularly for low-income renters living near or below the poverty line. The result is that a very high percent of the population pays more than the generally accepted guideline of 30 percent of its household income for housing. This is a particular problem for renters, 48 percent of whom pay more than 30 percent of their household income for housing.

Indicator (Housing Affordability)	Percent of Population Paying More than 30% of HH Income	Median Monthly Housing Cost
Rental	48%	\$580
Owner w/ Mortgage	28%	\$1,003
Owner w/o Mortgage	19%	\$455

In addition, many rental properties are in fair to poor condition. Vacant units within multi-unit buildings are a significant problem in the county's cities. Landlords are less capable of maintaining these older and larger buildings when vacant units are not bringing in rental income.

Issue #6: Healthcare

The County has difficulty attracting physicians due to low salary levels, but there are opportunities to improve preventive health care efforts.



Image: "April 20, 2009-Chautauqua Lake High School." RepBrianHiggins. Available from: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/repbrianhiggins/4228421097/>

HEALTHCARE

According to providers, healthcare outcomes in Chautauqua County are not where they need to be. According to stakeholders, the County has issues with high teen pregnancy and smoking rates, chronic disease, and childhood obesity. In particular, County residents need better access to specialists. Presently, residents often travel to Buffalo, Erie, and Cleveland for specialist services.

Currently, healthcare efforts in the county are focused on disease management. Transitioning to a prevention mindset is a goal of local and national healthcare providers, a direction that supports encouraging active lifestyles by creating walkable towns and villages. Jamestown's urban design plan presents an opportunity to promote such concepts.

Nursing programs at JCC help to ensure that the labor supply is sufficient and nurses' salaries in the County are adequate. However, recruitment and retention of doctors and other healthcare workers is a challenge. Around 1990, the average age of doctors in the county was 42 years. Today, the average age is 52. Relatively low pay for doctors makes it difficult to attract new specialists to Chautauqua. Specifically, insurance reimbursement rates for Chautauqua County are the second lowest in the country – only around 66 percent of the national average. The County is designated as a Health Professional Shortage Area and a Medically Underserved Population by the federal government, which among other things, qualifies County physicians for Medicare bonus payment systems.

New York State has had excellent success in reducing the incidence of teen pregnancy, and in 2005 was ranked 9th in the nation on this measure. The 2007 statewide rate of 13.2 was 41 percent lower than the 1999 decade-high rate of 22.4 per 1,000 females aged 15-17. There has also been a significant decrease in teen pregnancy in Chautauqua County from 1993 to 2004, although the County rates are nearly double the state average.

Among girls ages 15 to 19, the Chautauqua County pregnancy rate dropped from 60.8 per 1000 females in 1993 to 44 in 2004. Since 2004, rates of teen pregnancy for females ages 15-19 have fluctuated slightly each year and the 2007 rate was 39.4 per 1,000.

- The 2003-2005 Chautauqua County pregnancy rate for 15-17 year olds was 24.4 per 1,000 females. The 2006 and 2007 rates were similar.
- The 2007 New York State pregnancy rate for 15-17 year olds was 13.2 per 1,000 females.
- The 2007 "Rest of State" rate for 15-17 year olds, which excludes New York City, was 10.8 per 1,000 females.

The Center for Disease Control grant funding for “Steps to a Healthier NY” expired in 2008. The program focused on the prevention of diabetes, obesity and asthma and the control of risk factors including poor nutrition, physical inactivity and tobacco use and exposure. Chautauqua was one of four counties funded in NY state. Since the grant period ended, the County has not had the funding to support chronic disease prevention programs. During the joint Community Health Assessment and Community Service Plan planning, it was determined that the County hospitals and the Health Department would work collaboratively to develop a Diabetes Prevention and Management Task Force. Health Department staff members have periodically provided programs to promote physical activity and nutrition education at health fairs throughout the County.

Physical access to healthcare services could be improved. Healthcare stakeholders identified a need for improved transportation options to help people get to appointments, including transit, bikeways, and sidewalks to link patients to facilities.

Many Medicare patients travel to Buffalo because they can’t find specialists in the county who treat them. Hospitals and nursing homes are aging and out-of-date, but there is a shortage of funds to improve them.

The school-based health clinic at Jamestown High School is a model that healthcare providers would like to see replicated in other areas because it provides an opportunity to promote healthy lifestyles at an early age.

Issue #7: Arts & Culture

The Chautauqua Institution is a major anchor of a strong arts and culture community in Chautauqua County.



Image by Mark Geise

The Chautauqua Institution, with its active and diverse summer program, is a unique educational resource for adults and youth from around the world. Originally founded in 1874 as a summer camp for Sunday School teachers, the Institution has evolved into a global center for instruction in the visual and performing arts, exploration of faith and spirituality, learning from renowned guest speakers, and recreation (Chautauqua Lake and golf). Every summer, tens of thousands of people converge at the Institution, providing an opportunity to showcase the county to visitors. Another summertime destination is Lily Dale, a spiritualist community at the north end of Casadaga Lake, that is a renowned landmark of the Modern Spiritualist movement.

Countywide, there are civic centers, opera houses, arts councils, galleries, and venues for theatrical productions, ballets, and concerts. SUNY Fredonia’s Rockefeller Arts Center has two theaters and a 1,200-seat concert hall with associated classrooms and studios. The Arts and Sciences Center at Jamestown Community College includes the Weeks Gallery and Scharmann Theatre, which serves a variety of student and professional cultural events. The Fredonia Opera House is a restored 1891 Victorian Vaudeville theater that presents numerous theater, dance and music performances. The Reg Lenna Civic Center (“the Reg”) is home to the Chautauqua Regional Youth Symphony and the Drama Enrichment Program.

Issue #8: Transportation

Chautauqua County is well-served by interstate highway and freight rail access. Passenger rail and commercial air service are limited within the County, but travel time to nearby gateways is reasonable.

Chautauqua County is well positioned within a day’s drive of 36 percent of the US population, and local traffic congestion is rare. The county is served by two interstates (I-86 and I-90) with 14 exits, providing easy access to Erie, Cleveland, Buffalo, and Southern Tier communities, including Elmira/Corning and Binghamton. Also with an average length of 17.5 minutes, commutes to work in Chautauqua County are among the shortest in the country. There is an average of 21,500 motorists/day travelling I-90 and an average of 10,250/day on I-86, which provides an opportunity to invite these motorists to exit and experience Chautauqua County.

Chautauqua County residents rely heavily on private automobiles for most transportation. Seventy-nine percent of residents drive alone to work, while an additional ten percent carpool. However, ten percent of households have no access to a vehicle and 38 percent have access to only one vehicle. This is a significant portion of the population that could benefit from high quality public transportation and safe opportunities to walk and bicycle to meet daily needs.

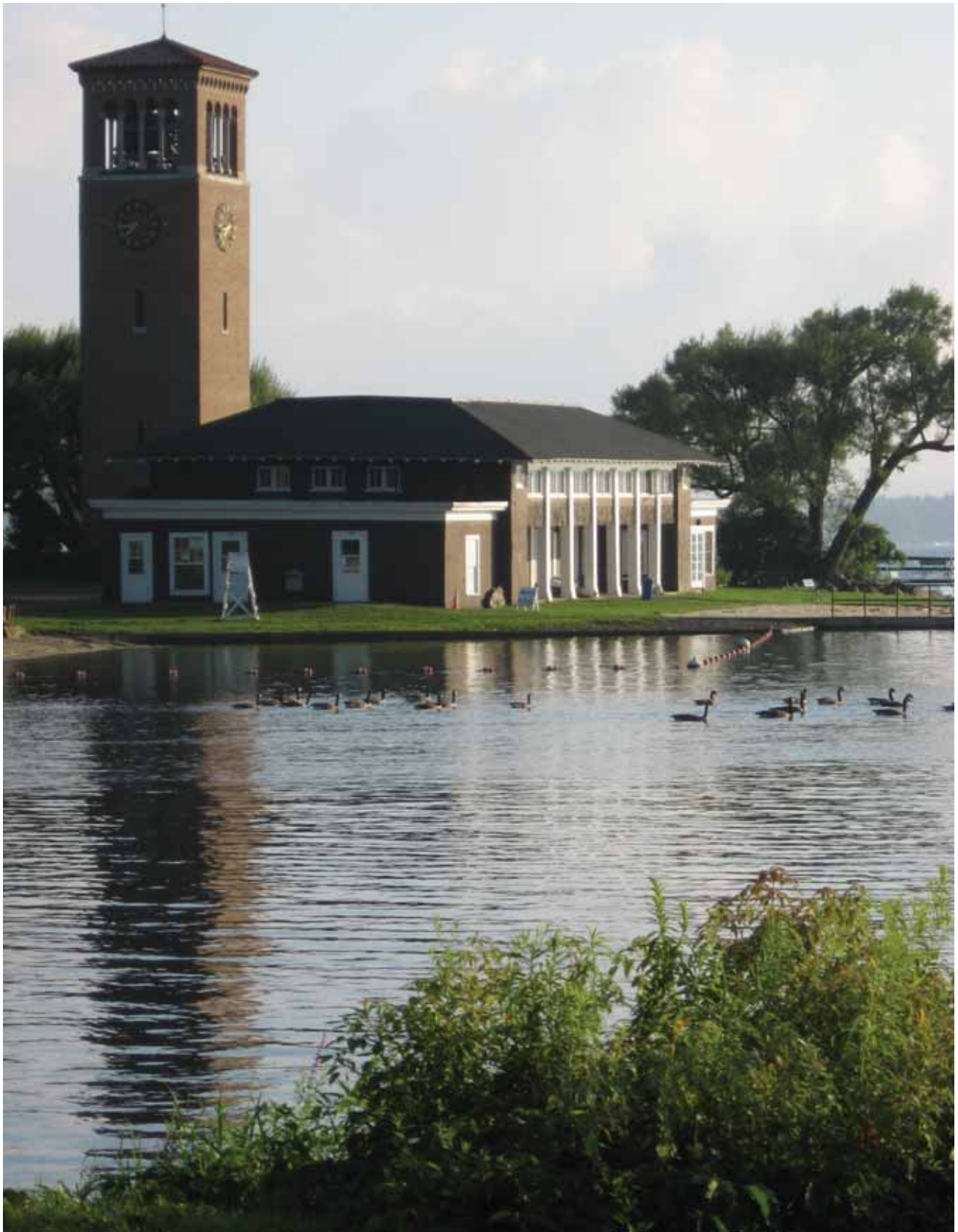


Image: "Another Iconic View." ataldredge. Available from: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/ataldredge/2754982022/>

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Public transportation service across the County is offered by the Chautauqua Area Regional Transit System (CARTS), which features fixed-route and demand response (“dial-a-ride”) services. City transit routes operate in Jamestown, Falconer, Celeron, Lakewood, and Dunkirk. Rural route service operates in the mornings and evenings connecting Jamestown and Dunkirk with smaller towns and villages throughout the county.

These services provide critical mobility for many Chautauqua residents who do not have access to private transportation. In order for public transportation to become a viable transportation option for more people, such as “choice riders” who have access to cars, CARTS may need to provide more frequent, attractive, visible flexible service. One opportunity for improvement is to better coordinate CARTS services with employment needs such as plant shifts and business centers.



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

AIR SERVICE

The County operates two airports: The Jamestown Airport and Dunkirk Airport. Chautauqua County Jamestown Airport is a commercial facility with scheduled passenger service to Continental Airlines’ hub at Cleveland-Hopkins International Airport. Erie International Airport and Buffalo Niagara International Airport are both within an hour’s drive of Chautauqua County offering direct flights to over a dozen destinations. Federal Express operates daily flights from Chautauqua County Jamestown Airport to Buffalo, providing worldwide express freight service to the residents and businesses in the county.

Current passenger counts at the Chautauqua County Jamestown Airport are around 3,700 annual passengers. The federal Essential Air Service program provides subsidy funding for airline and airport operations there. If 10,000 passengers were to use the airport, the annual federal funding would jump from \$150,000 to \$1.5 million. While use of jets exists with certain industrial users such as Cummins Engine and Nestle Purina Pet Care Company, there is room for expansion at both of the county’s airports, including industrial and office development. Questions exist as to whether the county can continue to maintain two airports without increased financial support or whether the county should be in the airport business at all.



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE

Currently, Amtrak’s once-daily Lakeshore Limited train – connecting Chicago, Boston, and New York City – runs through Chautauqua County however, the nearest stops are in Erie and Buffalo, NY. Westbound service to Cleveland and Chicago departs Erie, PA in the middle of the night. An Amtrak Thruway Bus provides one connecting service stop per day between Jamestown, Fredonia, Dunkirk, and Buffalo’s Exchange Street Station. Travelers can connect in Buffalo to the Lakeshore Limited to Chicago and Cleveland to the west as well as frequent Empire Service to New York City, Albany and other upstate cities to the east.

There is an existing train station in Dunkirk that could be rehabilitated and reopened for passenger service. An extra stop would only add about 10 minutes to the 19-hour trip between New York and Chicago while providing increased mobility for county residents and SUNY-Fredonia students. Amtrak service in the County would provide a new travel option for residents who prefer not to drive or fly and could provide easy access to the county for vacationers from the Midwest.

The New York State Department of Transportation recently created a New York State rail plan. That plan foresees improved passenger rail service in the Empire State, but makes no recommendations for improved service west of Buffalo. Ohio and Pennsylvania, on the other hand, have both created state rail plans that go beyond state borders and recommend faster and more frequent train service between Cleveland, Erie, Buffalo and Toronto.

Issue #9: Infrastructure
Basic infrastructure in the county is aging and costly to repair and maintain. However, opportunities exist to develop 21st century technologies such as broadband communications and renewable energy.



Image: "Railway bridge IMG_4063." OZinOH. Available from: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/75905404@N00/4660314582/>

FREIGHT RAIL

The county is well served by three freight railroads: Norfolk Southern, CSX, and the Western New York & Pennsylvania Railroad (WNYPRR). Freight rail access can help to attract manufacturing businesses to the county. CSX owns the former New York Central "Water Level Route", which runs from Chicago to Albany and Boston/New York City. In partnership with the Southern Tier Extension Rail Authority, the WNYPRR connects the communities along the southern border of Chautauqua County to the national rail network. There are also several miles of abandoned railroad in the county that could either be reactivated or converted into rail trails.

As an older county, the age of basic infrastructure – roads, communications, sanitary and sewer water treatment and delivery – is an issue of concern. Some sewage plants are at the end of their useful lives and the County and other responsible agencies are falling behind on general repair, which will result in higher "deferred maintenance" costs. The radio system for emergency services is substandard and public access to technology such as cable television and high-speed internet service is limited outside of the urban centers. A broadband fiber-optic network is being planned by utilities throughout the County to enhance commercial and residential communications.

Chautauqua County is traversed by 9 main state-maintained and 2 federal highways comprising 300 miles of roadway. In addition, there are more than a dozen major County routes totaling over 500 more miles of well-maintained roads. There are 316 county-owned bridges over 20' in length. At an average replacement cost of \$500,000, the potential cost to maintain these structures is significant. The Millennium Parkway project, to be located in Dunkirk, will improve truck access from I-90 to the Dunkirk-Sheridan industrial corridor.

National Grid provides electric transmission and distribution to most of Chautauqua County. Some communities are serviced by the following municipal electric utilities: Brocton Electric, Jamestown Board of Public Utilities, Mayville Electric, Westfield Electric, and Steuben Rural Electric Co-op in Cherry Creek.

New York State Electric & Gas (NYSEG), a subsidiary of Energy East Corporation, serves small areas of the county. NYSEG offers rate discounts and funding assistance to attract businesses to New York State.

National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation supports economic development through its Area Development Program (ADP). The program supports economic activity and redevelopment in Western New York with service grants of up to \$750,000 per year. National Fuel's Conservation Incentive Program supports businesses with cash reimbursements for energy-efficiency upgrades.

There is an outstanding opportunity for wind power development in Chautauqua County. Several large commercial wind developments are being considered in the towns of Arkwright, Pomfret, Hanover, Villenova, Ripley, and Westfield.

A methane capture project opened in early 2010 at the county-owned landfill located in Ellery. At this site, methane is piped to a new power generation facility capable of producing 6.4 megawatts of electricity. Depending on the value of electricity, the new system was originally estimated to provide a \$4 million annual return, half of which will cover the capital and operating expenses of the system while the other half goes to the County's general fund. The County is investigating an option to add another 1.6 MW of power production and opportunities for electric/heat co-generation as an extension of the methane project.

ECONOMY

Chautauqua County's economy, similar to many small communities across the country, is being challenged; however, it has diverse economic sector and substantial local resources. This subsection focuses on the strengths and weaknesses in the County's economic sector and important issues to consider for future economic development.

KEY ISSUES

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Issue #1: Industry and Employment

Future job prospects can be tied to an emerging tourism and service economy and industries that are likely to take advantage of local resources and geographic advantages.

Even before the current recession, Chautauqua County exhibited low employment growth over the past decade. The erosion of the County's manufacturing base, a downturn in agricultural prices, and government costs (e.g., tax burdens) are cited for the slow job growth. While manufacturing remains a vital part of the county economy (26.6 percent in 2004), the economic environment in Chautauqua continues to shift jobs away from that sector. In addition to manufacturing, there have been employment decreases in agriculture, wholesale and retail services, finance, insurance, real estate and the mining sectors during the last 25 years.

From 2000 to 2008, average annual wages in the county rose 26.53% from \$25,416 to \$32,159. Service jobs are among the lowest paid positions with average wages for accommodation and food service at \$12,083 and arts, entertainment, and recreation at \$16,481. The highest wage jobs are in mining and utilities at \$67,546 and \$82,621 annually, respectively. However, these two sectors only comprise about one percent of the jobs in Chautauqua County.

The annual taxable sales in the county rose slightly from March 1999 to February 2008 (1.8%). Total taxable sales actually declined from 2005 to 2008 from \$1.28 billion to \$1.18 billion. In some industries, the decline has been significant. For example, taxable manufacturing sales declined by 21.6 percent and combined retail trade fell by 4.4 percent.



Image: www.flavourofwines.com



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

Nevertheless, Chautauqua County has some significant advantages for business development. With its location midway between Chicago and New York City, Chautauqua is a logical location for logistics companies and manufacturers who need to be able to serve customers across a wide territory. The largest private sector employer in Chautauqua County is Cummins Engine, which is scheduled to expand to its Jamestown plant and recently celebrated the production of its 1 millionth diesel engine. Other large private sector employers include:

- Bush Industries – Furniture Manufacturer
- Cliffstar Corporation – Food Processor
- Fieldbrook Foods – Food Processor
- Hope's Windows, Inc. – Window and Door Manufacturer
- Nestle Purina Pet Care Company – Pet Food Processor
- RHI Monofrax – Refractory Manufacturer
- SKF Aeroengine – Bearing Manufacturer
- The Carriage House Companies, Inc. – Food Processor
- TitanX – Engine Cooling Manufacturer
- Truck-Lite

Agriculture and food processing are an important part of the county's economy. With 1,850 farms growing a variety of crops including vegetables, fruit trees, grapes, and grain fields, the county ranks first in New York State for the number of farms. The 229 dairy farms comprise the fifth-largest dairy industry in the state. As prices for agricultural products stagnate or decline, farms in the county are struggling to remain profitable.

With over 17,000 acres of grape production, viticulture and related food processing are an important county industry and tourism attraction. The National Grape Cooperative – owner of the Welch's brand – supports a large food processing industry making grape juice, jelly, and related products. Maple syrup and wine (produced by 21 wineries) are other products for which the county is known. Pet food processing is also represented by the Nestle Purina Pet Care Company, which recently expanded its operation with a 200,000 square foot warehouse.

Issue #2: Workforce

As jobs shift away from manufacturing, a better-educated workforce will be necessary to attract higher-paying service jobs. Tourism-related jobs are growing.

Representing the shift away from manufacturing jobs, only six of the top twenty employers are manufacturing companies. Industries with growing employment include tourism related jobs in Information, Accommodation and Food Service, Real Estate Rental, and Entertainment/Recreation.

The County's unemployment rate was 5.6 percent in 2008 compared to 5.1 percent (May 2008) for the U.S. and 5.3 percent for New York State. The 9-year average unemployment rate from 2000 to 2008 was 5.0 percent, ranging from 4.0 percent in 2000 to 5.8 percent in 2003. The average unemployment rate for 2008 was 5.6 percent, showing an increase from 4.5 percent unemployment in 2006 and 2007. Due to the current economic recession, the county unemployment rate had risen to 8.8 percent by March of 2009 and 7.5 percent by March of 2010.

The average wage in 2008 was \$32,159 compared to May 2008 average wages of \$42,270 for the U.S. and \$49,590 for New York State.

Issue #3: Tourism and Second Homes

By focusing on its unique assets, such as Chautauqua Institution and natural features, the county can continue to build tourism as a major part of its economy. Visitors and seasonal residents who construct second homes are another important contributor to the County's economic vitality.

Recreation opportunities, wine trails, historic attractions, arts, natural features, and other assets of Chautauqua County, make it an obvious destination for tourists. While noting the County's exceptional assets, the Destination Development Inc. report (2008), notes that many of Chautauqua's attractions can be found in other locations. Therefore, Chautauqua County could gain a competitive edge by promoting its unique learning experiences centered around Chautauqua Institution and Chautauqua Lake. Such destinations serve as the primary draw for tourists who will spend time enjoying the other, secondary opportunities once they decide to visit Chautauqua.

The County contains significant infrastructure to support a major tourism industry, including:

- Outdoor recreation opportunities in all seasons — skiing, snowmobiling, hiking, boating, fishing, etc.
- Attractions such as the Chautauqua Institution, Chautauqua Wine Trail, Peek'n Peak Resort, and Lily Dale,
- Over 20 bed and breakfasts, about two dozen hotels/motels, and a handful of inns.

The Destination Development, Inc. report focused on creating the types of places that entice tourists to stop and stay for a while. Recommended improvements include "clean and safe" programs, efforts to revitalize quaint main streets and walkable communities, gateways that draw tourists, and wayfinding and information systems that provide friendly, helpful information about activities, historic sites, restaurants, and restrooms.

The report also focused on the opportunity to leverage the Lucille Ball experience in Jamestown. There are murals and other clues around town that this was her hometown, but those may not be apparent to the casual visitor. More coordination between individual attractions and stores that promote Lucy could leverage this wonderful asset to create a Jamestown "brand," attracting tourists to downtown Jamestown, resulting in increased spending at retail stores, restaurants, and gift shops. Again, these should be centered around learning experiences.

In addition to short-term tourists, the construction and occupancy of seasonal homes is an important segment of Chautauqua County's visitor economy. Over the years, the growth in the number of second homes has in large part been driven by the promotion of the County's natural resources and attractions, resulting in short-term visitors deciding to purchase or construct second homes here.



Image by Mark Geise

Issue #4: Small Business

Small businesses face barriers during startup.



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

While the county has an opportunity to use its natural assets to take advantage of emerging industries, such as wind turbine manufacturing, small business creation is made difficult in Chautauqua County due to a number of factors. First and foremost, the sluggish economy makes it more difficult to start a new business in the county – although there is ample affordable labor. There are also governmental and tax barriers at the county and state levels that can discourage new companies from choosing to locate in the county. As New York State's participation in traditional economic development has evolved, the focus has shifted from direct business loan incentive financing to complicated techniques and legislated development zones. The County needs to do what it can to remove barriers facing small businesses.

Entrepreneurs in Chautauqua County are also at a disadvantage in terms of startup funding. Venture capital is more difficult to find in Chautauqua County than in more populated areas due to a long-term trend of large national banks moving deposits from local branches to more urban areas. At the same time, the number of locally-owned banks in the region has declined. The relatively low value of real estate and other assets in the region results in banks being reluctant to make loans due to lack of collateral.

Growth opportunities may also exist for products such as local crafts and unique agricultural products. Small businesses and entrepreneurs in the County can also take advantage of the SUNY Fredonia Technology and Business Incubator programs available in the North county.

Issue #5: Tax Burden

High taxes are a barrier to economic development in Chautauqua County and New York State.

In 2002, it was estimated by the Citizen Budget Commission that New York State taxes were 73% above the national average and the second highest in the country. A Business First analysis of the top seven New York metropolitan areas with the highest property taxes in the nation included Jamestown. A 2010 economic development report to the city states that the tax situation "...is a deadly serious self-fulfilling set of behaviors, a very salient result of which is the fact that Jamestown is in what the State of New York labels the 'danger zone', with the city presently at 90.94% of its constitutional taxing authority".



Image by Mark Geise.





VISION 20/20

"Local planning is often the most direct and efficient way to involve the members of the general public in describing the community they want. The process of plan preparation, with its attendant workshops, surveys, and meetings and public hearings, permits two-way communications between citizens and local government officials as to the vision of the community and the details of how that vision is to be achieved." (Charles M. Haar, Harvard Law Professor)

Chautauqua 20/20 is a shared community vision for the future and a road map, woven from diverse focus areas and community input, for getting there. It is the product of a grassroots effort, driven by the issues and values identified by citizen participants in the planning process. Over an 18-month planning period, residents from every part of the County and from all walks of life shared their insights and suggestions for utilizing Chautauqua's abundant natural, cultural and recreational assets as a foundation for economic prosperity.

In February of 2010, a series of community workshops and working group meetings were held to gather public input. These meetings resulted in a draft vision and a list of strategic issues related to the county. Citizens were then given an opportunity to review and comment on this draft, and the strategic issues facing the County, in another series of public input events held in May of 2010. Eventually, more than 3,000 ideas were received through community workshops, working group meetings and a web-based survey. Under the leadership of the County Planning Board, guidance from the more than 150 citizens who participated in focus area teams, and several hundred others who participated in the prioritization process, these ideas were distilled to create a community vision. Consisting of an overarching statement about the County's future followed by goals related to the themes of environment, community, and economy, the vision is the basis of Chautauqua 20/20 and the motivation for actions necessary to successfully implement the plan.

ANSWERS THE QUESTION: WHO DO WE WANT TO BE?



CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY...

In our vision of the future, Chautauqua County's natural, cultural, and recreational resources; rural character; and other assets are the foundation of its exceptional quality of life and economic prosperity. Through the hard work of the County's greatest resource—its people—to achieve this vision, the Chautauqua name is recognized far and wide as

**A PREMIER PLACE TO VISIT,
LEARN, CONDUCT BUSINESS,
AND BE PROUD TO CALL HOME.**

GOALS

ENVIRONMENT

The County values and conserves its lakes, streams, forests, and other natural resources.

Historic villages, working farms, and scenic rural landscapes are maintained, contributing to the County's distinctive sense of place.

The County minimizes dependence on outside resources through sustainable use of its abundant water, soil, mineral, forest, and energy reserves.

COMMUNITY

Chautauqua County is a model in New York State for counties, municipalities, other government entities, educational institutions, and non-profit agencies, in providing cost-effective services and infrastructure through regionalization, the sharing of resources, collaboration, and the elimination of duplication.

The County's strong civic and social organizations work together to get things done by leveraging public, institutional, nonprofit and private sector resources.

The County's neighborhoods thrive through continuing investment in homes by permanent and seasonal residents.

Citizens have a positive, "can do" attitude and are committed to making better lives for themselves and their children in Chautauqua County.

ECONOMY

Anchored by the Chautauqua Institution, the County is a renowned destination and center of learning.

The County's abundant recreational opportunities attract visitors throughout the four seasons.

Capitalizing on assets such as their historic architecture and walkable main streets, world-class educational and health care institutions, and local attractions, the County's cities, towns, and villages are revitalized centers of economic activity.

The County's economy is diversified with new businesses and good job opportunities created in advanced manufacturing, agricultural production, tourism, green technologies, and other current industries.

Small business startups and entrepreneurial activity are strongly encouraged and incentivized.

The latest IT infrastructure is deployed to support the digital technologies needed for businesses to thrive in the 21st century economy.

Youth and adults are well prepared to participate in the 21st century economy through quality education and training programs.





COUNTY ACTION PLAN

Broad public participation is essential to formulating actions that have strong community support and can be implemented effectively. Public workshops, working group meetings, and a web-based survey conducted in November 2010, based upon the community's shared vision and strategic issues, culminated in the genesis of action recommendations for 15 focus areas. Implementing these actions will lay the foundation to begin to solve the challenges facing Chautauqua County so that we can prosper and achieve the vision for the future.

Working together is a key to solving our common problems and providing a stronger future for Chautauqua County and its citizens. This includes cooperation across jurisdictional boundaries of government; across public, private and not-for-profit organizations; among representatives of government, business, labor, the faith community, and other interest groups; and between citizens and government.

The Chautauqua 20/20 action plan can be described as our "marching orders" for the next 10 years. The proposed actions are the details of the road map that will set the community on the direction we have collectively decided to head. These action recommendations will focus our efforts so we can attain our goals for the future as effectively as possible.

ANSWERS THE QUESTION: HOW DO WE GET THERE?

FOCUS GROUP APPROACH

The foundation of the action plan is a series of strategies, listed on the facing page, that provide direction for achieving the goals set by Vision 20/20 for the core areas; environment, community, and economy.

Specific actions to implement these strategies have been developed and prioritized for the 15 focus areas of the plan based on public input and the work of stakeholder groups for each area. The 15 focus areas are:

1. Tourism/Cultural Resources
2. Agriculture/Foods
3. Business/Economic Development
4. Infrastructure/Public Investment
5. Education/Libraries
6. Workforce Development
7. Environment/Waste Management/Water Resources
8. Historic Preservation/Architecture/Community Revitalization
9. Active Living/Recreation
10. Energy
11. Youth
12. Housing
13. Healthcare
14. Local Government
15. Community Action/Human Services/Civic Organizations

The action plan is organized into high priority and “other” actions for each focus area. Working with the County’s Department of Planning and Economic Development, each stakeholder (focus) group and other stakeholders has been charged with guiding implementation of the priority actions for its area of interest.

CATALYTIC DIRECTIONS

While the action recommendations are divided into the 15 focus areas of the plan, successful plan implementation will depend on the synergies created by coordinating related actions across the different focus groups. Towards this end, the action plan identifies related focus groups for each action listed for the individual focus areas. Many of the actions reflect four broad directions that will have a catalytic effect in achieving the vision and goals for the future of Chautauqua County:

- Promote regional cooperation, collaboration, and cooperation across various levels of governments and segments of the Chautauqua County community
- Leverage the “World’s Learning Center” brand and tie it to active recreation and quality of life to promote economic development
- Market Chautauqua County’s assets at all levels
- Build financial capacity for implementation (e.g., through enhanced grant-writing capabilities)

In moving forward to implement the priority actions for its focus area, each focus group considered its role in advancing these “catalytic directions” as they relate to its area of interest and to the work of other focus groups.



Image by Mark Geise



Image by Mark Geise



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

STRATEGIES

ENVIRONMENT

- Conserve the County's important agricultural soils and support its local farming vitality.
- Maintain Chautauqua's rural landscape, heritage and scenic views.
- Protect Chautauqua's clean air and water resources.
- Improve the management of and access to the County's water resources.
- Make sustainable use of local and green energy resources to benefit the local environment and economy.
- Promote the natural assets of Chautauqua to grow new economic opportunities and attract additional residents and investment.
- Make active living and recreation; based on the County's beautiful natural environment, a distinct lifestyle attraction that draws new people to Chautauqua.
- Complete a county-wide, interconnected trail system that draws many different types of users.
- Enhance the County's current compact cities, towns and villages to be more walkable and accessible to recreational and active living opportunities.

COMMUNITY

- Create strong inter-municipal cooperation and focus on regionalizing government services.
- Improve trade and technology education and broaden the career paths for the County's youth.
- Build healthier communities that are compact, pedestrian-oriented, and limit sprawl that consumes land resources.
- Reposition the County's role to use housing as an economic development tool for neighborhood revitalization.
- Reduce the County's housing stock to meet current market demand.
- Encourage one county-level communication source for news and community resources.
- Engage Chautauqua's active civic groups to provide leadership and build partnerships on key initiatives to improve the County's quality of life.
- Promote vibrant communities that excite Chautauqua's youth and attract new residents, and improve the connections between the County's adults and employers with younger generations.
- Maintain sufficient access to resources and enrichment programs for the County's children.
- Promote a holistic approach to health care in the County in which every resident has access to adequate care.

ECONOMY

- Develop several new, primary tourist attractions that increase visitation in all four seasons.
- Link and "package" visitor activities to more effectively market the range of options and increase tourism's economic impact in the County.
- Leverage and connect Chautauqua Institution to existing and new visitor destinations that support the "World's Learning Center" brand.
- Grow citizens' pride and enthusiasm for Chautauqua's future.
- Identify market niches for Chautauqua's cities, towns and villages that support the County's economic direction and complement their historic, walkable character.
- Improve coordination and cost/benefit results of community services and infrastructure investment.
- Capitalize on the County's abundant water and energy resources for economic development.
- Promote infill development and reuse of vacant and underutilized properties in the County's urban centers.
- Protect and support the County's agricultural resources and economy.
- Target promising industry sectors based on the County's assets and emerging growth trends.
- Cultivate entrepreneurs and a business culture that thrives on Chautauqua's rural work and play lifestyle.
- Maintain the County's high-quality education system and retain new graduates to build Chautauqua's economy.

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

The remainder of this section of the plan presents the recommended actions for the 15 focus areas/groups. An overview of the focus group and its priority recommendations, along with the applicable strategies related to the three vision components, is presented for each area. The overview is followed by specific actions grouped according to priority (high and other). For the high priority actions, the agencies or organizations that will be charged with leading implementation are identified. Other related focus groups are referenced for all actions.



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau



Image by Mark Geise

PARTNERSHIP FOR ACTION

KEY FOR FOCUS GROUP ACTION TABLES

1. Tourism/Cultural Resources
2. Agriculture/Foods
3. Business/Economic Development
4. Infrastructure/Public Investment
5. Education/Libraries
6. Workforce Development
7. Environment/Waste Management/
Water Resources
8. Historic Preservation/Architecture/
Community Revitalization
9. Active Living/Recreation
10. Energy
11. Youth
12. Housing
13. Healthcare
14. Local Government
15. Community Action/Human Services/
Civic Organizations

ADA	American Disabilities Act
Andrea Rebeck	Andrea Rebeck, R.A. Historic Sites Restoration Coordinator New York State OPRHP-Field Services Bureau
BNE	Buffalo Niagara Enterprise
BOCES	Board of Cooperative Educational Services
CARTS	Chautauqua Area Regional Transit System
CCCC	Chautauqua County Chamber of Commerce
CCCF	Chautauqua County Community Foundation
CCE	Cornell Cooperative Extension
CCEC	Chautauqua County Education Coalition
CCHN	Chautauqua County Health Network
CCLS	Chautauqua County Library System
CCVB	Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau
COI	Chautauqua Opportunities, Inc.
CCE	Cornell Cooperative Extension
CPSE	Committee on Preschool Special Education
CW	Chautauqua Works
DPF	Department of Public Facilities (Chautauqua County)
DLDC/DJDC	Dunkirk Local Development Corporation/ Downtown Jamestown Development Corporation
DSS	Department of Social Services (Chautauqua County)
EMC	Environmental Management Council (Chautauqua County)
FWCSS	Far West Conference of School Superintendents
HD	Health Department (Chautauqua County)
IDA/CCIDA	County of Chautauqua Industrial Development Agency
IT	Information Technology Department (Chautauqua County)
JCC	Jamestown Community College
Lighthouse	Dunkirk Lighthouse Group
NYSDEC	New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
PED	Department of Planning & Economic Development (Chautauqua County)
STW	Southern Tier West
SUNY@ Fredonia	State University of New York at Fredonia
Task Force	Chautauqua County Housing Task Force
WIB	Workforce Investment Board
WSC	Watershed Coordinator
YB	Youth Bureau (Chautauqua County)

1. TOURISM/CULTURAL RESOURCES

The Tourism/Cultural Resources Focus Group includes representatives of the Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau, Chautauqua Institution, Fenton History Museum, the Arts Council, and other tourism-related stakeholders. The top priority for this focus group is to implement the “World’s Learning Center” brand, including coordination with other focus groups to maximize its benefits (increased visitation, jobs, etc.) for the County’s economy. Key support actions include targeted marketing efforts, improved wayfinding systems (digital applications in addition to physical signage), and encouraging vacation home development to generate investment and business development around niches such as outdoor recreation and the arts.



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

APPLICABLE STRATEGIES

- Develop several new, primary tourist attractions that increase visitation in all four seasons.
- Link and “package” visitor activities to more effectively market the range of options and increase tourism’s economic impact in the County.
- Leverage and connect Chautauqua Institution to existing and new visitor destinations that support the “World’s Learning Center” brand.
- Identify market niches for Chautauqua’s cities, towns and villages that support the County’s economic direction and complement their historic, walkable character.
- Build healthier communities that are compact, pedestrian-oriented, and limit sprawl that consumes land resources.
- Promote vibrant communities that excite Chautauqua’s youth and attract new residents, and improve the connections between the County’s adults and employers with younger generations.

FOCUS GROUP KEY

1. Tourism/Cultural Resources
2. Agriculture/Foods
3. Business/Economic Development
4. Infrastructure/Public Investment
5. Education/Libraries
6. Workforce Development
7. Environment/Waste Management/
Water Resources
8. Historic Preservation/Architecture/
Community Revitalization
9. Active Living/Recreation
10. Energy
11. Youth
12. Housing
13. Healthcare
14. Local Government
15. Community Action/Human
Services/Civic Organizations

ACTIONS

Tourism/Cultural Resources Actions	Other Focus Groups	Lead Agency
High Priority Actions		
Educate the populace about and Implement the recommendations from the “World’s Learning Center” branding and action recommendations from the 2008 Branding and Marketing Study prepared by Destination Development, Inc. to achieve premier destination status while maintaining rural charm.	2,3,8,9	CCVB
Expand the County’s marketing efforts to attract more regional customers through targeted media advertising sufficient to reach Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Southern Ontario, Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse. The objective is to more effectively market the tremendous concentration of cultural, historical, artistic and outdoor recreation activities available in the County over all four seasons.	3,8,9	CCVB
Improve the County’s wayfinding system by developing a design guidebook for signage and GIS mapping connected to global positioning systems (GPS).	4,9	PED
Define several second home and small business niches around key attractions (e.g., horseback riding, boating/fishing, and snowmobiling, arts, etc.) and build the key tourism infrastructure to induce home investment.	3,9,13,14	CCIDA/PED
Other Actions		
Determine the strategic needs for the Peek ‘N Peak Resort, Lucille Ball Comedy Experience, Grape Discovery Center, State Parks, Jamestown Ice Arena, Lily Dale, Chautauquau Lake, Lake Erie and other venues to make them even greater primary attractions for residents of and visitors to Chautauqua County.	2,3,7,8,9	
Enhance the County’s tourism website to showcase Chautauqua’s diversity of vacation options and cross-market activities better by adding tools such as interactive mapping to the website to allow prospective visitors to easily view all Chautauqua tourism options and broaden the range of visitors attracted.	1	
Build tourism “gateways” at the County’s NY State Thruway (I86 and I90) interchanges to attract people to stop and see the County. Couple major attractions and sampling of “retail/farmer’s market” type components to encourage visitors to explore the County’s assets.	3,4,14	
Partner with Chautauqua Institution to enhance its marketing efforts as the County’s major destination, including expansion of the Institution’s programs to other seasons for patrons within and outside of the County.	1	
Develop an agri-tourism program that utilizes the “World’s Learning Center” concept to develop opportunities for new alternative revenue sources to support the agricultural community.	2,3	
Explore additional financing models for funding marketing and developing tourism infrastructure such as increasing public bathroom facilities; parking; rest stops; and implementing expanded and more consistent wayfinding initiatives.	3,4	
Advertise Chautauqua County’s attractions on I-90 & I-86 via billboards and other means and work to integrate attractions with GPS.	3	
Promote special events for every season to bring vacation home owners back to the County more often and encourage greater second home investment (e.g., First Night on New Year’s Eve).	3,14	

2. AGRICULTURE/FOODS

The Agriculture/Foods Focus Group includes representatives of Cornell Cooperative Extension, the County Planning Board, The National Grape Co-op, the Grower's Co-op and other stakeholders. The top priority for this focus group is to preserve farmland by identifying and maintaining priority agricultural districts; supporting right-to-farm laws, and implementing strong agricultural zoning. Key support actions include encouraging organic, specialty, value-added, small-scale and artisan food producers; building agri-tourism; and developing special food and agriculture related activities that incorporate the "World's Learning Center" model.



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

APPLICABLE STRATEGIES

- Link and "package" visitor activities to better market the range of options and increase tourism's economic impact in the County.
- Protect and support the County's agricultural resources and economy.
- Target promising industry sectors based on the County's assets and emerging growth trends.
- Cultivate entrepreneurs and a business culture that thrives on Chautauqua's rural work and play lifestyle.
- Maintain the County's high-quality education system and retain new graduates to build Chautauqua's economy.
- Conserve the County's important agricultural soils and support its local farming vitality.
- Maintain Chautauqua's rural landscape, heritage and scenic views.
- Improve trade and technology education and broaden the career paths for the County's youth.

FOCUS GROUP KEY

1. Tourism/Cultural Resources
2. Agriculture/Foods
3. Business/Economic Development
4. Infrastructure/Public Investment
5. Education/Libraries
6. Workforce Development
7. Environment/Waste Management/
Water Resources
8. Historic Preservation/Architecture/
Community Revitalization
9. Active Living/Recreation
10. Energy
11. Youth
12. Housing
13. Healthcare
14. Local Government
15. Community Action/Human
Services/Civic Organizations

ACTIONS

Agriculture/Foods Actions	Other Focus Groups	Lead Agency
High Priority Actions		
Preserve farmland by identifying and maintaining priority agricultural districts; supporting right-to-farm laws, implementing strong agricultural zoning, and by evaluating central sewer and water system development needs in rural areas outside of existing villages.	3,4,7,14	PED
Promote and encourage organic, specialty, value-added, small-scale and artisan food producers with incentives and support. Create a licensed "community kitchen", co-op and/or incubator for entrepreneurs to make, test and market homemade juices, jams, and other products, thereby connecting agri-businesses to local restaurants and to customers outside of the region.	1,3,5,14	Cornell
Build agritourism through the new Grape Discovery Center, the "March for Maple" concept, and additional tours at local food processors. Develop special food and agriculture related activities that incorporate the "World's Learning Center" model, and develop farm trails similar to the wine trail or birds-on-barns trail initiatives that are effective elsewhere.	1,3,7,8,9	CCVB
Provide specialized education and training for the growth and success of emerging leaders in agriculture, including business management for owners and basic skills for entry level employees. Continue to promote existing programs such as 4-H and Future Farmers of America that involve our youth.	3,5,6,11,	CCE
Other Actions		
Preserve current agricultural exemptions, and create a more agricultural-friendly tax structure to maintain family farms.	14	
Launch a non-profit clearinghouse, involving farmers and the Extension Service, to connect consumers and farmers using a central marketing website and map of products.	1,3	
Create farm-to-table programs and a "buy local" network, using distribution points that include farmers markets around the County, and celebrate the value of our small scale farms.	1,4,14	
Encourage local farms to explore alternative enterprises such as community supported agriculture (CSAs), as well as renewable energy opportunities such as wind, by providing technical assistance and information about best practices used by these enterprises.	3,5,10	
Support Amish communities through appropriate outreach, modified regulations accommodating their unique lifestyle, and connecting their enterprises with the County's economic centers.	1,3,14	
Establish adequate and reliable funding sources for ag-supportive agencies such as Cornell Cooperative Extension and the Soil and Water Conservation District.	3,7,14	
Promote programs that support our lumber industry, including promoting sustainable forest practices, and disseminating information about current issues in the timber industry to local property owners.	5,7,14	
Preserve and protect prime farmland soils for agricultural use.	7,14	

3. BUSINESS/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Business/Economic Development Focus Group includes representatives of the Chautauqua County Legislature, County of Chautauqua Industrial Development Agency (CCIDA), The Chautauqua County Department of Planning & Economic Development (PED), the Chautauqua County Chamber of Commerce, the JCC Small Business Development Center, the Jamestown Renaissance Corporation and other stakeholders focused on business and economic development. Key priorities for this focus group include building on IDA's current efforts to retain and support expansion of existing businesses and employers in Chautauqua County; using an "asset-based approach" that targets economic development activities to capitalize on the County's rich resources; establishing an inventory of and marketing available tracts of land; and promoting the IDA's available funding programs (e.g., the adaptive reuse for tourism destination projects).



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

APPLICABLE STRATEGIES

- Develop several new, primary tourist attractions that increase visitation in all four seasons.
- Leverage and connect Chautauqua Institution to existing and new visitor destinations that support the "World's Learning Center" brand.
- Grow citizens' pride and enthusiasm for Chautauqua's future.
- Capitalize on the County's abundant water and energy resources for economic development.
- Promote infill development and reuse of vacant and underutilized properties in the County's urban centers.
- Target promising industry sectors based on the County's assets and emerging growth trends.
- Cultivate entrepreneurs and a business culture that thrives on Chautauqua's rural work and play lifestyle.
- Maintain Chautauqua's rural landscape, heritage and scenic views.
- Promote the natural assets of Chautauqua to grow new economic opportunities and attract additional residents and investment.
- Make active living and recreation; based on the County's beautiful natural environment, a distinct lifestyle attraction that draws new people to Chautauqua.
- Reposition the County's role of using housing as an economic development tool for neighborhood revitalization.
- Promote vibrant communities that excite Chautauqua's youth and attract new residents, and improve the connections between the County's adults and employers with younger generations.

FOCUS GROUP KEY

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Tourism/Cultural Resources | 9. Active Living/Recreation |
| 2. Agriculture/Foods | 10. Energy |
| 3. Business/Economic Development | 11. Youth |
| 4. Infrastructure/Public Investment | 12. Housing |
| 5. Education/Libraries | 13. Healthcare |
| 6. Workforce Development | 14. Local Government |
| 7. Environment/Waste Management/
Water Resources | 15. Community Action/Human
Services/Civic Organizations |
| 8. Historic Preservation/Architecture/
Community Revitalization | |

ACTIONS

Business/Economic Development Actions	Other Focus Groups	Lead Agency
High Priority Actions		
Partner with WIB, education, private sector, churches and other stakeholders to retain and expand current businesses in Chautauqua County and support existing, small businesses in targeted County industries to expand their enterprises (Business/Retention/Expansion Model). Profile recent hires by these businesses and undertake programatic targeting to reach this demographic.	1,2,4,6,14	CCIDA
Target economic sectors where the County has strong local assets to build on, including recreation and tourism, personal enrichment/learning, agribusiness and food processing, and industries requiring substantial local/renewable energy and/or water resources.	1,2,4,6,7,8,9,10,13	CCIDA
Create and maintain adequate development sites to start and support local businesses (e.g., brownfield redevelopment areas), taking advantage of state and federal funding programs.	4,8,15	CCIDA
Proactively market the IDA's "Adaptive Re-use Projects" and "Tourism Destination Projects" tax abatement funding programs to targeted industries in order to adapt old structures for new purposes and to attract tourism-related businesses to locate in Chautauqua County.	1,8,12,14	CCIDA
Other Actions		
Continue to market the current skilled workforce and quality of life in the County to businesses.	1,6,7,8,9	
Develop a "local venture" fund linked to the SUNY Fredonia Technology Incubator, to help transition businesses from start-up to commercialization. Look at linking this initiative to the mentoring program action initiative.	4	
Identify and build several industry clusters that complement the County's rural character and "World's Learning Center" brand, such as a high technology niche, non-traditional/distance education products, and specialty advanced manufacturing.	4	
Create a positive business climate for ventures exploring green energy and green energy technologies as a growing market opportunity.	6,7,10	
Focus on attracting the "Millennial" generation to the County by promoting our vibrant community spaces, various recreational opportunities, etc., through social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Virtual Jamestown, etc.).	1,8,9,11	
Promote the broadband capacity in region as an advantage for businesses, entrepreneurs, and residents.	4	
Organize and promote a veterans advisor and/or mentoring program to promote successful business and community development, and increase support networks for entrepreneurs and young professionals.	5,6	
Promote the availability of county-owned land in the vicinity of the Jamestown Airport Hill Industrial park.	4	

BUSINESS/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ACTIONS (CONTINUED)

Business/Economic Development Actions	Other Focus Groups
Work with New York State Thruway Authority, State, County and local representatives, and other stakeholders to develop and build a New York Visitor's Center at the Ripley Exit on NY I-90	1,4,14
Continue to support the development of SUNY-Fredonia's Technology Incubator as an R&D center that supports economic sectors in the County, and assist them in their efforts to reach out horizontally to other regional colleges and/or development initiatives.	5,6
Investigate the concept of providing funding assistance for startup enterprises to pay for professional services required to develop business plans to complement JCC SBDC's programs.	4,16
Encourage municipalities to adopt the Randall Arendt's <i>Chautauqua County Design Principles Guidebook</i> to assist them in land-use decision making.	4,7,8,14
Work with STW, NYS DOT and others to continue to build upon current assets of the multi-modal industrial complex in the Chadwick Bay Industrial Park.	4,14
Develop a strategy to improve and promote the currently available and newly developed industrial warehousing/manufacturing facilities in Chautauqua County.	3,4,14



4. INFRASTRUCTURE/PUBLIC INVESTMENT

The Infrastructure/Public Investment Focus Group includes representatives of the Chautauqua County Department of Public Works, the Chautauqua County IT Department, the County Parks Department, and other stakeholders. A top priority for this focus group is to implement cost-saving measures based on the recommendations of a cost/benefit analysis of community infrastructure and services. Other priorities include making selective widening and lighting improvements to Route 60, primarily from Dunkirk to Gerry; reviewing and implementing recommendations of the new business plan currently under way for the Jamestown and Dunkirk Airports; and evaluating use of revenues from local energy sources to fund the maintenance and creation of parks and other outdoor recreational assets.



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

APPLICABLE STRATEGIES

- Improve coordination and cost/benefit results of community services and infrastructure investment.
- Capitalize on the County's abundant water and energy resources for economic development.
- Improve the management of and access to the County's water resources.
- Promote the natural assets of Chautauqua to grow new economic opportunities and attract additional residents and investment.
- Complete a county-wide, interconnected trail system that draws many different types of users.
- Enhance the County's current compact cities, towns and villages to be more walkable and accessible to recreational and active living opportunities.
- Create strong inter-municipal cooperation and focus on regionalizing government services.
- Build healthier communities that are compact, pedestrian-oriented, and limit sprawl that consumes land resources.
- Promote vibrant communities that excite Chautauqua's youth and attract new residents, and improve the connections between the County's adults and employers with younger generations.

FOCUS GROUP KEY

1. Tourism/Cultural Resources
2. Agriculture/Foods
3. Business/Economic Development
4. Infrastructure/Public Investment
5. Education/Libraries
6. Workforce Development
7. Environment/Waste Management/
Water Resources
8. Historic Preservation/Architecture/
Community Revitalization
9. Active Living/Recreation
10. Energy
11. Youth
12. Housing
13. Healthcare
14. Local Government
15. Community Action/Human
Services/Civic Organizations

ACTIONS

Infrastructure/Public Investment Actions	Other Focus Groups	Lead Agency
High Priority Actions		
Implement recommendations obtained from cost/benefit analysis of community infrastructure and services currently under way to determine cost-saving measures such as regionalization, consolidation, and creation of a greater regional sharing network for public equipment. Use this as a public education tool for citizen support.	3,7,14	County Executive's Office
Work with NYS DOT, Southern Tier West (STW) and others to continue to make selective widening and lighting improvements to Route 60, primarily from Dunkirk to Gerry, to increase the flow of traffic and improve safety.	3,14	STW
Review recommendations of the new business plan currently under way for the Jamestown and Dunkirk Airports aimed at increasing the number of passengers using the Airports to levels that make them profitable, developing county-owned land in the vicinity of the Jamestown Airport as a business park, and promoting hangar space at the Dunkirk Airport to attract regional business from the Buffalo Airport, especially by industrial/commercial customers. Also look at privatization options for the airports that will stem from the 2011 Special Regulatory Commission for Airports.	1,3	DPF
Use revenues from local energy sources, including potential fees from wind projects, natural gas drilling, and timber harvesting, to fund the creation and maintenance of parks and other outdoor recreational assets.	13,14	CCIDA
Other Actions		
Increase public transit ridership and eliminate duplication of services by implementing the current transit plan working with CARTS, human service providers, and private providers.	1,6,13,15	
Expand rail (passenger and freight) services in the County by coordinating with Amtrak, CSX and other rail providers. Work to establish an Amtrak station in Dunkirk in partnership with local interest groups, municipalities, SUNY Fredonia, Chautauqua Institution and other stakeholders.	3,7,10	
Investigate model multi-county services agreements for potential application to Chautauqua County's public services.	5,13,15	
Follow the NYS DOT Guide regarding "Complete Streets" design practices for bicycle, pedestrian, and ADA access (as feasible), for all road projects in the County that will promote biking and other green transportation options.	9,14,1,8	
Expand the use of renewable energy to create local jobs and revenues, reduce business costs, and decrease environmental impacts. The Chautauqua County Methane-to-Electric Project is a good model for additional public and private sector investment.	3,14,10	

INFRASTRUCTURE/PUBLIC INVESTMENT

ACTIONS (CONTINUED)

Infrastructure/Public Investment Actions	Other Focus Groups
Work to revitalize rail connections of the Western NY & Pennsylvania Railroad leading to Jamestown for freight and future shortline passenger excursions. (e.g., Jamestown Depot excursions).	1,3,8,9,14
Identify and reserve key corridors to connect potential renewable energy resource areas to the regional grid.	10,9,1
Develop, promote and implement a dredging plan for the Lake Erie Harbor System in coordination with the Army Corps. of Engineers' Programs.	4,7,14
Work with NYS DOT, STW and others to continue to build on current assets of the multi-modal industrial complex (rail, freight, aviation and port) in and around the Chadwick Bay Industrial Park in the north county and other locations throughout the County. The goal is to remain/become more competitive in the global economy. Investigate the potential of providing direct access from the New York State I-90 and/or State Route 5 to address concerns related to safety, air quality, congestion, etc.	3,7,14
Identify fiber optic needs of the community and fill voids in the network where needed.	3,14



5. EDUCATION/LIBRARIES

The Education/Libraries Focus Group includes representatives of Jamestown Community College, Fredonia State College, Chautauqua Central School, Panama Central School, BOCES, Chautauqua County Department of Public Works, the Chautauqua County IT Department, Reed Library at Fredonia State College, and other stakeholders. The top priority for this focus group is to survey current use and capacity of technology in public schools to identify IT infrastructure needs in order to maximize efficient delivery of educational services. Other priorities include lobbying state and local governments for legislation that addresses mandates and restructuring; continuing support to ensure Jamestown Community College remains a viable partner in providing the County's workforce with continuing education opportunities; and positioning schools as learning centers for the broader population.



Image by Mark Geise



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

APPLICABLE STRATEGIES

- Maintain the County's high-quality education system and retain new graduates to build Chautauqua's economy.
- Make active living and recreation; based on the County's beautiful natural environment, a distinct lifestyle attraction that draws new people to Chautauqua.
- Create strong inter-municipal cooperation and focus on regionalizing government services.
- Improve trade and technology education and broaden the career paths for the County's youth.
- Encourage one county-level communication source for news and community resources.
- Promote vibrant communities that excite Chautauqua's youth and attract new residents, and improve the connections between the County's adults and employers with younger generations.
- Maintain sufficient access to resources and enrichment programs for the County's children.

FOCUS GROUP KEY

1. Tourism/Cultural Resources
2. Agriculture/Foods
3. Business/Economic Development
4. Infrastructure/Public Investment
5. Education/Libraries
6. Workforce Development
7. Environment/Waste Management/
Water Resources
8. Historic Preservation/Architecture/
Community Revitalization
9. Active Living/Recreation
10. Energy
11. Youth
12. Housing
13. Healthcare
14. Local Government
15. Community Action/Human
Services/Civic Organizations

ACTIONS

Education/Libraries Actions	Other Focus Groups	Lead Agency
High Priority Actions		
Survey the current use and capacity of technology in public schools to identify IT infrastructure needs and maximize efficient delivery of educational services, including on-line access to library resources.	4,5,14	FWCSS
Jointly lobby at the state and local level for legislation to address state requirements and restructuring. This will involve a partnership between the County (through NYSAC) and school districts.	5,14	FWCSS
Ensure that County continues to play a key role in ensuring Jamestown Community College remains a viable partner in providing the County's workforce with continuing education opportunities to prepare them for the 21st century economy.	3,5,6,14	JCC
Position schools as learning centers for the broader population by offering community programs and services in local schools as part of a culture of lifelong learning in Chautauqua County.	5,11,15	FWCSS
Other Actions		
Ensure that the County continues to support processes to identify and implement efficiencies in the delivery of high quality education in all K-12 schools.	5,14	
Increase efforts to promote healthy lifestyles to youth, addressing issues such as drug and alcohol use, pregnancy, and fitness/wellness.	5,9,11,13	
Create a public/private partnership to invest in the County's education systems and provide a positive "champion" role.	3,4,14	
Continue County support of the Chautauqua–Cattaraugus Library System.	5,11	
Assess development of a regional, integrated educational system that allows children to access learning at their own rate. Education would be more flexible using a 24/7/365 learning model.	1,5	
Improve the County's education system at all levels to integrate with the "World's Learning Center" branding initiative.	1,14	
Create a stronger relationship between local businesses and schools focused on the "education pipeline" model that encourages pre-K through 12 education and promotes county school districts as partners in business growth in the future.	3,5,14	
Examine various available models for consolidation of districts and services, shared services options, and realignments of districts for opportunities to more efficiently provide quality education services at a lower cost.	5,14	
Strengthen educational "trade" programs to train needed workforce to support local industry needs.	3, 6	

6. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The Workforce Development Focus Group includes representatives of the Chautauqua County Workforce Investment Board, Chautauqua Works, Department of Social Services, Jamestown Community College Continuing Education Department, Casadaga Job Corps, and other stakeholders. Priorities include partnering on education and training initiatives to equip county workers with the skills needed for jobs available in the local economy; increasing employment opportunities for college graduates to retain current and attract former residents to move back to the County; and breaking the “cycle of dependency” for unemployed, underemployed, and low-income residents.



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

APPLICABLE STRATEGIES

- Grow citizens' pride and enthusiasm for Chautauqua's future.
- Cultivate entrepreneurs and a business culture that thrives on Chautauqua's rural work and play lifestyle.
- Maintain the County's high-quality education system and retain new graduates to build Chautauqua's economy.
- Improve trade and technology education and broaden the career paths for the County's youth.
- Engage Chautauqua's active civic groups to provide leadership and build partnerships on key initiatives to improve the County's quality of life.
- Promote vibrant communities that excite Chautauqua's youth and attract new residents, and improve the connections between the County's adults and employers with younger generations.
- Maintain sufficient access to resources and enrichment programs for the County's children.

FOCUS GROUP KEY

1. Tourism/Cultural Resources
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15. Community Action/Human
Services/Civic Organizations

ACTIONS

Workforce Development Actions	Other Focus Groups	Lead Agency
High Priority Actions		
Provide targeted workforce education and training to high-skill positions, advanced manufacturing, information technology, health care, trade, entrepreneurship and professional occupations. Partner with industrial/economic development agencies, Chamber of Commerce, the private sector, and educational institutions (JCC, BOCES).	2,3,5,7,10,11, 15	CCIDA/ WIB
Increase the number of job opportunities for the college/post-graduate population through the County's economic development programs and the support of entrepreneurial efforts.	1,3,5	CCIDA/ PED
Develop an integrated, cost effective and non-duplicative service delivery plan to move County residents from low income status to self-sufficiency.	5,12,14	COI, DSS
Other Actions		
Establish consistent workforce preparation standards (resume preparation, interview skills, workplace expectations such as appropriate dress, etc.) for every high school graduate in the County to meet.	3,5,11,15	
Develop the County's talent pipeline, including encouraging former residents to return and young talent that is here to stay, through creative communication and retention programs.	1,3,5,11	
Identify/establish "One-Stop" as a brand for job seekers in the County.	3,5	
Prioritize the development of work readiness skills in our youth and special populations.	3,5,11,15	
Connect with the County's youth at an early age focusing on the Search Institute's 40 developmental assets for children (www.search-institute.org).	5,11,15	
Establish incentives, such as an education loan repayment program, to attract/retain skilled people in underserved sectors.	3,5	
Enhance the accessibility of workforce and training services for the county's special populations, including but not limited to, disabled, ESL, mature workers, youth, low-income, ex-offenders, etc.	3,5,11,15	
Work with stakeholders to address high drug testing failure rates among trained and educated workforce that disqualifies individuals for available jobs.	2,3,5,7,10,11,14	
Provide more instruction/preparation guidance for the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) that many employers require their workforce to take and pass prior to being considered for employment.		

7. ENVIRONMENT/WASTE MANAGEMENT/ WATER RESOURCES

The Environment/Waste Management/Water Resources Focus Group includes representatives of the Chautauqua Lake Watershed Management Groups, Chautauqua County Health Department, South & Center Chautauqua Lake Sewer District, Conewango Creek Watershed Association, Chautauqua Institution, and other stakeholders. The top priority is to increase awareness of the importance of environmental issues at all governmental levels. Other priorities include reducing the impacts of development on environmental resources by utilizing sustainable development practices; completing an inventory of the County's community infrastructure related to the environment; and developing watershed level management plans and adopting those policies that apply to County governmental functions and operations.



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

APPLICABLE STRATEGIES

- Conserve the County's important agricultural soils and support its local farming vitality.
- Maintain Chautauqua's rural landscape, heritage and scenic views.
- Protect Chautauqua's clean air and water resources.
- Improve the management of and access to the County's water resources.

FOCUS GROUP KEY

1. Tourism/Cultural Resources
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Services/Civic Organizations

ACTIONS

Environment/Waste Management/Water Resources Actions	Other Focus Groups	Lead Agency
High Priority Actions		
Increase awareness of the importance of environmental issues at all governmental levels. Promote public education about environmental conservation. As an early action, evaluate reinstituting the former Environmental Committee of the County Legislature.	3,4,8,10,14	PED (EMC)
Reduce the impacts of development on environmental resources by utilizing sustainable development practices, including policies for stormwater management. Require or incentivize their implementation, especially in areas that impact Chautauqua Lake.	1,2,3,4,5,6,8,10,12,14	WSC, PED
Complete an inventory of the County's community infrastructure (water, sewer, etc.) as the basis for integrated management of natural and manmade systems, and prioritize systems in need of repair, upgrade and management.	3,4,10,14	DPF, WSC, PED, HD
Develop proactive watershed level management plans and adopt those policies that apply to County governmental functions and operations. The <i>Chautauqua Lake Watershed Management Plan</i> is a recently completed example.	1,2,3,4,9,10,15	WSC, PED
Other Actions		
Encourage the County's municipalities and public agencies to adopt principles of "Smart Growth" and "Complete Streets". An example is the recently completed Randall Arendt's <i>Chautauqua County Design Principles Guidebook</i> .	1,3,4,8,9,12,14	
Complete an inventory of the County's natural resources. Based on the location and concentration of resources, identify natural feature "Focus Areas" that include but are not limited to features such as: the County's lakes, unique natural areas, wetlands, stream corridors, aquifer recharge areas, Important Bird Areas, and recreational trail networks to promote land stewardship.	1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 10, 14	
Promote appropriate sustainable use of all water resources for water-dependent or water-enhanced uses.	1,2,4,8,9,10,14	
Expand the pilot road drainage inventory and watershed asset management project currently being pursued by Southern Tier West and others into a countywide program coordinated with local municipalities and the Soil and Water Conservation District.	1,2,3,4,14	
Organize local continuing education programs for engineers, highway department personnel, contractors, municipal officials, etc. regarding best management practices (BMPs) for stormwater management and erosion control, and make the programs available on the County's PED website.	1,2,3,4,6,14	
Create model local ordinances to protect the environment (air, water, and other natural resources), including controls on chemicals, emissions, nutrients, and sediment runoff.	2,3,10,14	
Promote vacant land and urban reforestation with programs such as Arbor Day and community tree planting initiatives.	1,2,8,9,12,14	
Continue to implement the master plan for expansion of the existing county landfill to achieve a 20-year capacity.	3,4,10,14	
Target achieving 100 % recycling countywide by 2020 and coordinate a recycling program for both the public and private sectors, including elements such as waste composting and source reduction.	1,2,3,4,5,10,14,15	

8. HISTORIC PRESERVATION/ARCHITECTURE/ COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION

The Historic Preservation/Architecture/Community Revitalization Focus Group includes the County Historian; representatives of Chautauqua Historical Society, Fredonia Preservation/Historical Society, Historical Society of Dunkirk, Cherry Creek Town Historian, and the City of Jamestown; and other stakeholders. The priority actions are to support a countywide preservation officer and/or grant writer(s); complete and maintain a baseline countywide inventory of historic/cultural resources; create interpretive tour routes/maps of significant historical resources based on themes related to the "World's Learning Center"; and establish a mechanism to encourage the private sector to invest in and restore old properties.



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

APPLICABLE STRATEGIES

- Link and "package" visitor activities to better market the range of options and increase tourism's economic impact in the County.
- Identify market niches for Chautauqua's cities, towns and villages that support the County's economic direction and are complementary to their historic, walkable character.
- Promote infill development and reuse of vacant and underutilized properties in the County's urban centers.
- Reposition the County's role to use housing as an economic development tool for neighborhood revitalization.
- Engage Chautauqua's active civic groups to provide leadership and build partnerships on key initiatives to improve the County's quality of life.

FOCUS GROUP KEY

1. Tourism/Cultural Resources
2. Agriculture/Foods
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13. Healthcare
14. Local Government
15. Community Action/Human
Services/Civic Organizations

ACTIONS

Historic Preservation/Architecture/Community Revitalization Actions	Other Focus Groups	Lead Agency
High Priority Actions		
Support a countywide preservation officer and/or grant writer(s) to work with the County Historian and local entities to seek funding for historic projects.	1,3	Legislature
Complete and maintain a baseline countywide inventory of historic/cultural resources. Work to make it a digital repository to more easily disseminate knowledge of historic/cultural resources, and appeal to young people.	1,5,14	PED
Create interpretive tour routes/maps of significant historical resources such as cemeteries, barns, homes, sites, museums, markers, shipwrecks and railroad lines based on themes that use the "World's Learning Center" brand.	1,2,14	PED/CCVB
Create a mechanism to encourage the private sector to invest in and restore old properties (e.g., a fund offering financial incentives for historic preservation coupled with other existing incentives at the state and/or local levels). Consider doing a historic house contest/fundraiser where volunteers and the local government partner to renovate landmark properties to resell.	5,12,13,15	Housing Task Force
Other Actions		
Including the County Historian, form a countywide, non-profit preservation group (similar to the Preservation Buffalo Alliance) focusing on both physical and cultural resources (e.g., historic buildings and artifacts, printed materials, etc.).	1,5,9	
Strengthen the promotion of historic/cultural resources to tourists by linking to the activities of the Chautauqua County Visitor's Bureau and expanding walking/biking tours (e.g., leveraging the War of 1812 and genealogy).	1,3,4,9,14	
Explore using National Trust's "Main Street" program guidelines to help municipalities and hamlets preserve and revitalize their downtowns.	1,3,4,6,14	
Support Jamestown's Urban Design and Neighborhood Revitalization plans. Promote, encourage, and support similar efforts in Dunkirk and in all of the county's villages and hamlets.	1,3,4,6,12,14	
When replacing structures in the commercial centers of cities and villages, retain to the extent possible historic building footprints and envelopes.	3,12,14,15	
Explore the creation of a maritime museum in the north county to tell the story of the region's history through its shipwrecks, create a premier scuba diving attraction, and incorporate a workshop area for constructing sailboats and canoes.	1,3,4	

9. ACTIVE LIVING/RECREATION

The Active Living/Recreation Focus Group includes representatives of Chautauqua County Health Network, Chautauqua County Parks Department, Chautauqua County Rails-to-Trails, Evergreen Outfitters, the Jamestown Audubon, and other stakeholders. Key actions recommend developing a new model for oversight and maintenance of parks, trails and waterways throughout the County; developing a well-designed signage system and on-line resources for trails and recreation opportunities; completing a multi-use greenway trail system throughout the County; and adopting a "Complete Streets" policy to improve safety and usability for all users.



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

APPLICABLE STRATEGIES

- Develop several new, primary, tourist attractions that increase visitation in all four seasons.
- Link and "package" visitor activities to better market the range of options and increase tourism's economic impact in the County.
- Cultivate entrepreneurs and a business culture that thrives on Chautauqua's rural work and play lifestyle.
- Maintain Chautauqua's rural landscape, heritage and scenic views.
- Improve the management of and access to the County's water resources.
- Make active living and recreation; based on the County's beautiful natural environment, a distinct lifestyle attraction that draws new people to Chautauqua.
- Complete a county-wide, interconnected trail system that draws many different types of users.
- Enhance the County's current compact cities, towns and villages to be more walkable and accessible to recreational and active living opportunities.
- Build healthier communities that are compact, pedestrian-oriented, and limit sprawl that consumes land resources.
- Engage Chautauqua's active civic groups to provide leadership and build partnerships on key initiatives to improve the County's quality of life.
- Promote vibrant communities that excite Chautauqua's youth and attract new residents, and improve the connections between the County's adults and employers with younger generations.

FOCUS GROUP KEY

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Tourism/Cultural Resources | 10. Energy |
| 2. Agriculture/Foods | 11. Youth |
| 3. Business/Economic Development | 12. Housing |
| 4. Infrastructure/Public Investment | 13. Healthcare |
| 5. Education/Libraries | 14. Local Government |
| 6. Workforce Development | 15. Community Action/Human Services/Civic Organizations |
| 7. Environment/Waste Management/Water Resources | |
| 8. Historic Preservation/Architecture/Community Revitalization | |
| 9. Active Living/Recreation | |

ACTIONS

Active Living/Recreation Actions	Other Focus Groups	Lead Agency
High Priority Actions		
Develop a new model for oversight and maintenance of parks, trails and waterways throughout the County, recognizing the health, economic, and tourism benefits that can result when people are encouraged to be more active with access to safe, attractive facilities outdoors. The Active Living Focus Group would continue to be involved as a way to coordinate and promote public/private partnerships and seek funding.	1,4,7,13,14,15	PED
Develop a well-designed system of wayfinding signage for trails and recreation, coordinated with an expanded county recreation map and on-line resources that include all of Chautauqua's recreational opportunities.	1,3,4,8,14	
Complete a 4-season, multi-use greenway trail system throughout the County (hiking, biking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling and other users) with sections that are family-friendly, sustainable, have connectivity throughout the county and region, and link to waterways (including Chautauqua Lake and Lake Erie), population centers, and historic points of interest. Link to promotion and events for visitors and residents.	1,3,4,7,8,14	
Define and adopt a County "Complete Streets" policy to improve safety and usability for all users on identified street projects, and encourage communities to do the same.	1,3,4,8,13,14	
Other Actions		
Look for opportunities for interpretive programs that tie recreation to the "World's Learning Center" branding initiative.	1,5,8	
Encourage industrial parks and future county development/redevelopment to include paved (permeable), multi-use trails by incentivizing them in land development regulations and providing them in all County-operated facilities, including the airports. Link to other county-wide or local trails (see Randall Arendt's <i>Chautauqua County Design Principles Guidebook</i>).	3,4,8,14	
Improve promotion of, and access to, waterfronts and beaches, as part of county-wide wayfinding system for recreation.	1,4,7,14	
Maintain an inventory of facilities that support users of trail systems (parking, rest rooms, picnic, etc.), and develop a plan for needed short and long term improvements.	1,4,7,8,14	

ACTIVE LIVING/RECREATION

ACTIONS (CONTINUED)

Active Living/Recreation Actions	Other Focus Groups
Explore the provision of a cantilevered crossing lane for pedestrians, bikers and other users on both sides of the Veterans (I-86) Bridge and adequate on/off connectors to local roads at such time as bridge improvements are made.	1,3,4,14
Work with DEC, the Sports Fishery Advisory Board, and local governments to improve the fisheries, maintain and improve fishing and boating opportunities, and create more fishing-related events throughout the County.	1,2,4,7,14
Asses the future economic vitality of the Chautauqua County Fair Grounds.	1,4,7,14
Complete and implement the equestrian trail plan, and look at expanding similar trails and other amenities throughout the County.	4



10. ENERGY

The Energy Focus Group includes representatives of the Chautauqua County Planning Board, Jamestown Board of Public Utilities, National Fuel, the Audubon Center & Sanctuary, and other stakeholders. Key actions include defining what energy sustainability means for Chautauqua County for use in county capital funding and other initiatives; creating a Legislative Energy Committee to establish priorities, criteria, and clear incentives for alternative energy production and energy-related initiatives in the County; advocating for legislation that provides and promotes local energy production; and encouraging municipalities to improve the energy efficiency of their housing stock.



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

APPLICABLE STRATEGIES

- Capitalize on the County's abundant water and energy resources for economic development.
- Maintain the County's high-quality education system and retain new graduates to build Chautauqua's economy.
- Make sustainable use of local and green energy resources to benefit the local environment and economy.
- Improve trade and technology education and broaden the career paths for the County's youth.

FOCUS GROUP KEY

1. Tourism/Cultural Resources
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Services/Civic Organizations

ACTIONS

Energy Actions	Other Focus Groups	Lead Agency
High Priority Actions		
Define what energy sustainability means for Chautauqua County in order to benefit the County's economy and quality of life. Incorporate the definition into the County's mission statement and make it policy for consideration of capital funding requests and other initiatives.	3, 4, 7, 8, 10, 14	PED
Create a Legislative Energy Committee to establish priorities, criteria, and clear incentives for alternative energy production and energy-related initiatives in the County.	2, 3, 4, 7, 10, 14	PED
Advocate for legislation that provides and promotes local energy production in order to generate local revenues, reduce economic costs, and lower environmental impacts.	2, 3, 4, 7, 10, 14	PED
Advocate that towns, villages and municipalities improve the energy performance of their housing stock by better enforcing existing codes and promoting energy efficiency standards and incentives for new/rehabilitated units.	4, 8, 10, 12, 14	Housing Task Force
Other Actions		
Investigate the feasibility of establishing an industrial park for the sole purpose of creating and promoting green and energy-related industries.	2, 3, 4, 7, 10, 14	
Organize an academic/government partnership to develop a comprehensive training program including sharing research, identifying economic opportunities, and raising public awareness.	3, 5, 6, 10, 14, 15	
Promote and support waste-to-energy business opportunities.	2, 3, 4, 7, 10, 14	
Work with local energy utilities to help them provide and retain the delivery of their services to the businesses, residents and other interests in Chautauqua County.	3, 4, 10, 14	
Use a portion of revenues from local energy sources, including potential fees from wind projects, natural gas drilling, and timber harvesting, to fund parks and other outdoor recreational development.	3, 4, 7, 9, 10, 14	
Identify and reserve key corridors to connect potential renewable energy resource areas to the regional grid.	3, 4, 7, 9, 10, 14	
In accordance with the "World's Learning Center" branding initiative, create an energy technology learning center in partnership with a local education institution (i.e., SUNY Fredonia Shale Research Institute).	1, 3, 5, 6, 10	
Promote, encourage, and give preference to conservation initiatives involving county-owned buildings, vehicles, behavior, etc.	3, 4, 7, 14	

11. YOUTH

The Youth Focus Group includes representatives of the Chautauqua County Youth Bureau, the Chautauqua County Legislature, Youthbuild, Chautauqua Striders, YMCA, CHRIC, and other organizational stakeholders and representatives of the youth community. A top priority is to update the Comprehensive Integrated County Youth Services Plan (prepared by the Chautauqua County Department of Social Services and Youth Bureau per state requirements) to set the direction for how these and other priority actions will improve quality of life and services for Chautauqua County's youth will be accomplished. Other key actions for this focus group include establishing a "one-stop" of current youth-oriented information, expanding job and related training opportunities for youth, and providing transportation for youth to activities and programs.



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

APPLICABLE STRATEGIES

- Maintain the County's high-quality education system and retain new graduates to build Chautauqua's economy.
- Improve trade and technology education and broaden the career paths for the County's youth.
- Engage Chautauqua's active civic groups to provide leadership and build partnerships on key initiatives to improve the County's quality of life.
- Maintain sufficient access to resources and enrichment programs for the County's children.

FOCUS GROUP KEY

1. Tourism/Cultural Resources
2. Agriculture/Foods
3. Business/Economic Development
4. Infrastructure/Public Investment
5. Education/Libraries
6. Workforce Development
7. Environment/Waste Management/
Water Resources
8. Historic Preservation/Architecture/
Community Revitalization
9. Active Living/Recreation
10. Energy
11. Youth
12. Housing
13. Healthcare
14. Local Government
15. Community Action/Human
Services/Civic Organizations

ACTIONS

Youth Actions	Other Focus Groups	Lead Agency
High Priority Actions		
Participate in and encourage the completion of the Comprehensive Integrated County Youth Services Plan that will prioritize actions and programs. Consolidate services and leverage the efforts of youth service organizations throughout the County to attract federal, state, and foundation support.	3,5,6,8,11,15	DSS,YB
Establish the County as the repository "One-Stop" of current information about community services and funding availability. Diagram who is doing what and at what cost as a basis for efficient service delivery.	4,6,11,14,15	IT
Increase job opportunities for youth using apprenticeships, internships, and community service providers.	1,2,3,5,6,13,15	WIB/Works
Improve access for youth to transportation (CARTS) by providing discount vouchers and other incentives for job or other positive community engagement activities.	4,5,6,14,15	CARTS
Other Actions		
Provide assistance to agencies in their efforts to seek funding by providing grant writing assistance or making financial resources available to offset the cost of hiring grant writers.		
Create "one voice" for the youth by establishing a Youth Service Advisory Council, including young representatives, in the County to integrate and strengthen current youth programs.		
Seek to engage youth in community-related issues by reaching out to them on their own turf and in online forums.		
Help promote faith and community-based programs aimed at strengthening mentoring opportunities to teach families basic life skills.		
Evaluate the feasibility of building an indoor, multi-use, sports-oriented center in the northern part of the County (similar to the Jamestown Ice Arena in the south county) and/or re-establishing a "teen center" in the north county.		
Consolidate, collaborate and leverage the efforts of youth service organizations throughout the County to attract federal, state, and foundation support to maintain consistent grant funding sources.		
Involve young people in bi-lingual marketing efforts using social media (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, interactive website, etc.), aimed at the county's youth population to inform them of available activities and programs (e.g., a community calendar for youth). Private and public sector sponsors could be sought to oversee this initiative.		
Help organize volunteer activities for county youth, i.e., community clean-ups for roads and lakes, recycling, parks, etc.		
Evaluate the effectiveness of existing programs in providing an adequate safety net to address negative behaviors such a drug use and teen pregnancy.		
Work with schools to develop community service programs in lieu of traditional in-school disciplinary action.		

12. HOUSING

The Housing Focus Group includes representatives of CHRIC, CODE, Inc., Lutheran Senior Housing Center, Residents and other stakeholders. Priority actions are to enable the County Housing Task Force to pursue identified housing strategies, including consideration of land banking for commercial and residential properties; creating a “hands on” training program; and implementing a pilot IDA tax abatement initiative for vacant commercial buildings.



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

APPLICABLE STRATEGIES

- Promote infill development and reuse of vacant and underutilized properties in the County's urban centers.
- Reposition the County's role to use housing as an economic development tool for neighborhood revitalization.
- Reduce the County's housing stock to meet current market demand.

FOCUS GROUP KEY

1. Tourism/Cultural Resources
2. Agriculture/Foods
3. Business/Economic Development
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5. Education/Libraries
6. Workforce Development
7. Environment/Waste Management/
Water Resources
8. Historic Preservation/Architecture/
Community Revitalization
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13. Healthcare
14. Local Government
15. Community Action/Human
Services/Civic Organizations

ACTIONS

Housing Actions	Other Focus Groups	Lead Agency
High Priority Actions		
Empower the County Housing Task Force to take a leadership role in assessing and developing identified housing strategies that lead to the preparation of a proactive strategy to adjust the County's housing supply to meet current market demands. Issues to address include excess supply, changing market preferences, and demand for second homes. Implementation could include reinvestment by a public/private partnership in reuse of existing buildings and land banking/disposition of properties as part of complementary open space initiatives.	8,12,14,15	Housing Task Force, PED
Create a "hands on" training program with the County's schools, BOCES, and higher education institutions to provide instruction in housing rehabilitation and real estate investment that is financially self-sustaining.	5,6,8,11,14,15	6
Enhance the County's ability to support reinvestment in market rate housing by implementing a pilot IDA tax abatement initiative for the redevelopment of vacant commercial buildings into mixed-use projects.	3,8,10,14	CCIDA
Other Actions		
Encourage investment in housing appealing to retirees that is linked to the "World's Learning Center" branding initiative.	1,8	
Investigate property management/land banking opportunities to identify and strategically remove existing, derelict properties to improve neighborhood conditions, and find ways to reduce housing demolition and disposition costs (e.g., a pilot program at the County landfill linked to municipally-approved housing revitalization plans).	3,4,8,14,15	
Promote the implementation of urban revitalization efforts in Jamestown and Dunkirk by supporting Jamestown's Urban Design Plan and Neighborhood Revitalization Plan recommendations. Promote similar efforts in Dunkirk and other municipalities to induce housing demand.	3,8,14	
Review the development approval procedure to streamline the process, lower costs, and encourage more investment for high-quality buildings/units.	3,4,14	
Improve the quality of the County's housing stock with design and energy efficiency programs.		
Seek to increase code enforcement compliance county-wide by working with code enforcement officers and educating the local judicial system.	4,5,8,14	
Promote use of design principles expressed in Randall Arendt 's <i>Chautauqua County Design Principles Guidebook</i> .		

13. HEALTHCARE

The Healthcare Focus Group includes representatives of Chautauqua County Health Network, Chautauqua County Health Department, Westfield Memorial Hospital, Chautauqua County Department of Mental Hygiene, the Resource Center, Jamestown Area Medical Associates and other healthcare-related stakeholders. The key priority identified by this group is to develop a unified voice/advocacy group to represent the healthcare community in Chautauqua County. Other priorities include promoting the technical integration of clinical health systems throughout County; and attracting more medical professionals to the County by creating incentives to offset the compensation expected by the top qualified physicians.



Image www.ddiversified.com



Image www.aunz.siemens.com/healthcare/publishingimages

APPLICABLE STRATEGIES

- Promote a holistic approach to healthcare in the County in which every resident has access to adequate care.
- Leverage and connect Chautauqua Institution to existing and new visitor destinations that support the "World's Learning Center" brand.
- Target promising industry sectors based on the County's assets and emerging growth trends.
- Make active living and recreation; based on the County's beautiful natural environment, a distinct lifestyle attraction that draws new people to Chautauqua.

FOCUS GROUP KEY

1. Tourism/Cultural Resources
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11. Youth
12. Housing
13. Healthcare
14. Local Government
15. Community Action/Human
Services/Civic Organizations

ACTIONS

Healthcare Actions	Other Focus Groups	Lead Agency
High Priority Actions		
Develop a unified voice/advocacy group to represent the complete healthcare community in Chautauqua County (i.e., Healthcare Focus Group, CCHN, etc).	14,15	CCHN, County Health Dept.
Promote the integration of clinical health systems across the care continuum throughout Chautauqua County.	14	County Health Dept., Hospitals
Attract more medical professionals to the County by supporting improved community amenities, creating an endowment, or by providing other subsidies/financial incentives to offset the compensation demanded by the top qualified physicians.	3,4,5,15	CC Med Society, CCHN, County Health Dept.
Other Actions		
Provide grant writing capabilities and/or financial resources at the county level to offset the costs of agencies to access grant writing expertise.	3,14	
Provide a functioning, federally qualified health center in the County.	14	
Promote integrated health information systems by supporting state and federal grant initiatives, such as broadband, healthcare information exchange, and other IT-related initiatives.	4	
Provide better access to medical care for County residents by creating a "One Call" system for transportation to appointments.	4,6,14,15	
Maintain an adequate emergency response system and support emergency preparedness training.	4,14	
Promote personal responsibility for health as part of the County's "World's Learning Center" branding initiative. Look at creating a Center for Rural Wellness & Aging.	1,4,9,14	
Investigate the viability of creating a healthcare-related corridor in Jamestown as recommended in the Jamestown Urban Design Plan.	3,4,5,6,14,15	
Investigate the establishment of a non-emergent health provider in the north county.	13,14	
Continue to expend resources to investigate Medicaid fraud.	14	
Investigate why Medicaid/Medicare reimbursements are among the lowest in the country, and what can be done to address this issue.	3,4,14	

14. LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Local Government Focus Group includes representatives of municipal governments within the County, the Chautauqua County Department of Finance, and other stakeholders. The key priorities are to complete a countywide efficiency study to identify the potential areas for increased shared services and local government consolidation, coordinate economic development efforts between the County and local municipalities, and support local governments with decision-making tools.



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

APPLICABLE STRATEGIES

- Grow citizens' pride and enthusiasm for Chautauqua's future.
- Identify market niches for Chautauqua's cities, towns and villages that support the County's economic direction and are complementary to their historic, walkable character.
- Promote infill development and reuse of vacant and underutilized properties in the County's urban centers.
- Protect and support the County's agricultural resources and economy.
- Cultivate entrepreneurs and a business culture that thrives on Chautauqua's rural work and play lifestyle.
- Conserve the County's important agricultural soils and support its local farming vitality.
- Maintain Chautauqua's rural landscape, heritage and scenic views.
- Enhance the County's current compact cities, towns and villages to be more walkable and accessible to recreational and active living opportunities.
- Create strong inter-municipal cooperation and focus on regionalizing government services.
- Build healthier communities that are compact, pedestrian-oriented, and limit sprawl that consumes land resources.
- Promote vibrant communities that excite Chautauqua's youth and attract new residents, and improve the connections between the County's adults and employers with younger generations.

FOCUS GROUP KEY

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4. Infrastructure/Public Investment
5. Education/Libraries
6. Workforce Development
7. Environment/Waste Management/
Water Resources
8. Historic Preservation/Architecture/
Community Revitalization
9. Active Living/Recreation

10. Energy
11. Youth
12. Housing
13. Healthcare
14. Local Government
15. Community Action/Human
Services/Civic Organizations

ACTIONS

Local Government Actions	Other Focus Groups	Lead Agency
High Priority Actions		
Complete an integrated countywide efficiency study to identify potential areas for increased shared services and local government consolidation. These might include highway, police, fire, courts, assessing, code enforcement, water & sewer, and schools.	4,7,5	County
Coordinate economic development efforts between the County and local municipalities.	6,3	CCIDA
Support local governments with information and other resources to provide them with better decision-making tools in order to foster better local solutions and counter unfunded State mandates.	3,4,7,8,10,14	PED
Other Actions		
Maximize the use by local governments of the Center for Regional Advancement at SUNY Fredonia to create strong inter-municipal cooperation and develop standards for providing services.	7,4	
Seek methods for overcoming legal and financial impediments to sharing of services and equipment.	5	
Investigate options for keeping municipal expenditures in the local economy by giving "preferential" consideration for locally procured goods and services.	5	
Undertake an efficiency/needs assessment study for county government aimed at understanding what the appropriate size of the workforce and type of services that should be provided at the county level.	5	
Using an independent entity, educate community members on governmental functions, operations and expenditures through a neutral organization to improve and strengthen public dialogue on issues.	12,15	

15. COMMUNITY ACTION/HUMAN SERVICES/ CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS

APPLICABLE STRATEGIES

The Community Action/Human Services & Civic Organizations Focus Group includes representatives of Chautauqua Opportunities Inc., Chautauqua County Department of Mental Hygiene, Chautauqua Striders, the Resource Center, Chautauqua Leadership Network, Northern Chautauqua Community Foundation and other stakeholders. Key priorities are to promote increased internet access to services throughout the County for all socio-economic groups; work with providers to expand public transportation; convene local officials to improve after school activities, encourage public school facilities as community learning centers, and create more career opportunities for students; support public and private housing initiatives to improve and maintain the quality of the County's housing stock; and organize and promote collaboration between the various stakeholders.



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Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

- Grow citizens' pride and enthusiasm for Chautauqua's future.
- Maintain the County's high-quality education system and retain new graduates to build Chautauqua's economy.
- Create strong inter-municipal cooperation and focus on regionalizing government services.
- Improve trade and technology education and broaden the career paths for the County's youth.
- Build healthier communities that are compact, pedestrian-oriented, and limit sprawl that consumes land resources.
- Reposition the County's role of using housing as an economic development tool for neighborhood revitalization.
- Reduce the County's housing stock to meet current market demand.
- Engage Chautauqua's active civic groups to provide leadership and build partnerships on key initiatives to improve the County's quality of life.

FOCUS GROUP KEY

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Community Revitalization
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10. Energy
11. Youth
12. Housing
13. Healthcare
14. Local Government
15. Community Action/Human
Services/Civic Organizations

ACTIONS

Community Action/Human Services/Civic Organizations Actions	Other Focus Groups	Lead Agency
High Priority Actions		
Support increased affordable internet access throughout the county for all socio-economic groups, and provide more services via the internet.	3,4,5,14	County IT
Work with all current transportation providers, including CARTS and private employers, to explore opportunities to collaborate to expand public transportation to more employment locations and after regular business hours. Develop a website to inform the public of service availability on-line.	3,4,6,11, 13,14	CCIDA, CCCC
Convene local officials (county/town officials, school superintendents and board presidents) to 1) focus on improving after school activities and increasing their access to all children in the County, 2) encourage the model of public school facilities as community learning centers offering programs and services where people live, 3) create more opportunities for students at the middle and high school levels to explore various career paths by establishing strong, skill-based partnerships with employers, and 4) address the business liability issues to make the aforementioned goals feasible.	3,5,6, 9,11,14	Assoc. of Superintendents
Support public and private housing-related initiatives that encourage public and private investment to improve and maintain the quality of the County's housing stock, including education about financing and homeownership.	3,4,8, 12,14	Housing Task Force
Promote regionalization/consolidation/sharing of services of civic organizations, community action organizations, government entities and school districts where feasible.	3,4,5,6,7,8,11, 12,14	County Exec Office

COMMUNITY ACTION/HUMAN SERVICES/CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS

ACTIONS (CONTINUED)

Community Action/Human Services/Civic Organizations Actions	Other Focus Groups
Other Actions	
Organize and promote collaboration between civic organizations and community action organizations, including special events.	14,15
Promote/encourage greater connectivity of community policing/neighborhood watch groups to improve neighborhood safety.	4,14,15
Advocate for the adjustment and coordination of social service providers' schedules to better serve the working community.	4,6,15
Support public/private partnerships to provide assistance to all socio-economic groups to achieve economic security.	3,5,14,15
Encourage more opportunities for community involvement and asset acquisition for all people, but especially minorities.	11,14,15
Help attract younger citizens into community groups by creating e-clubs, more one-time commitment activities, and working with auxiliaries.	11
Encourage diversity, including socio-economic, in civic organizations.	6
Encourage the Observer and Post Journal to cover county-wide issues in both newspapers and make other strides towards reducing the north/south county divide.	3,4,5,14,15
Support more comprehensive/proactive substance abuse intervention programs, including the availability of medical detoxification and methadone treatment programs within the County for recovering substance abusers, and expand community campaigns aimed at curtailing underage alcohol use and illegal substance abuse.	13,15
Help to create a mechanism to connect civic organizations with local leaders for the purpose of building membership and sharing information.	14,15
Encourage civic organizations to participate in the "World's Learning Center" branding initiative through investment and other means.	1,3,4,15
Expand/enhance partnerships between civic organizations and the county's education system whereby civic organizations can expand their investment in the county's education system while providing a positive "cheerleading" role.	5,15
Assist in the engagement of as many county citizens as possible in community activities and grow the active membership of local civic groups.	11,14,15
Assist in organizing more year-round civic events, possibly using "less-popular" holidays (e.g., Groundhog Day, Valentines Day, etc) as themes.	1,9,14,15
Capitalize on the momentum generated through the "Amazing County.com" project being conducted.	1,11,14,15
Support literacy programs.	5,15



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ACTION SURVEY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This section highlights the results of the Chautauqua County Comprehensive Plan Community Actions Survey which was conducted from November 1, 2010 through November 26, 2010. This survey was the result of the collaboration of 15 focus groups whose input over the preceding 12 months was vital to the development of the action items for each of the designated focus areas. The action items developed by each focus group were then used in the development of this survey.

There were a total of 431 respondents to the survey. Within that group, 390 participated in the online survey and 41 completed a paper version of the survey. The online platform used to present the questions and collect the data was SurveyMonkey. A link to the survey was provided through the Chautauqua County Department of Planning and Economic Development webpage. Of the 390 who started 288 finished the survey for a completion rate of 73.8%. The paper survey was completed by attendees at one of the public meetings. During the data analysis process three duplicated surveys were identified, removed and not counted in the aforementioned totals to maintain data integrity.



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

In the 14 separate age brackets the male to female representation was 51.7% to 48.3% respectively. There was a concentration of respondents in 6 of the 14 age brackets ranging from 40 to 69 years of age. These contained 77.4% of the total respondents with a male female representation of 50.8% to 49.2%. The highest concentration was in the 55 to 59 bracket with 15.4% of the respondents and a male/female representation of 57.8% and 42.2%. These respondents indicated that they lived in one of 38 separate zip codes. Of the 38 zip codes 32 were within Chautauqua County and 6 from outside Chautauqua County. The greatest concentration of respondents lived in Jamestown, Fredonia, Lakewood and Westfield which in total accounted for 51.45% of the respondents.



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

The main portion of the survey was dedicated to the data collection and analysis of the 15 focus areas which contained a total of 169 action items. Each of the 15 focus groups was tasked with developing action items pertaining to their area where that action items' implementation would have the potential, both directly and indirectly, to benefit economically, socially and/or culturally both existing as well as future residents and businesses of the county. Across the 15 focus areas and 169 total action items there were a total of 6 action items which received more than 20% of the votes within their respective focus areas and an additional 10 action items that received between 15% and 20% of the votes within their respective focus areas. The results of the focus area action item prioritization did not vary greatly from those determined by the focus groups and public, with a few exceptions

The Budget Allocation question asked the respondents to divide \$150 amongst the 15 focus groups as they saw fit. The top three focus groups with the largest budgeted amounts were Business & Economic Development with 13.59%, Tourism & Cultural Resources with 12.45% and Agriculture & Foods with 9.93% of the \$150 amount. The open comments for this question indicated the need to think of the county as one whole entity not just rural and urban components. Additionally, it was indicated that there was the need to reduce expenses but to also invest in education, youth, the environment and the future of the county.

The themes expressed in the Final Comment section are consistent with those themes expressed throughout the survey. Across the 15 focus areas there were the consistent themes of reducing taxes, the cost of government, merging of services, merging of school districts and to a lesser extent reducing the size of the legislature. Additionally, there were those residents calling for economic development, attracting businesses, increasing tourism, creating jobs and markets and retaining jobs for agricultural as well as other business sectors. Finally, there was the call to stem the loss of residents and businesses due to the high tax burden.

This survey was long in terms of the number of questions asked and required the respondent to read through 11 to 12 action items to make his/her selections. The time required to complete the survey it was substantial with the average time spent on completion at about 56 minutes. It is reasonable to conclude that the length and complexity of this survey coupled with the time required to complete illustrates the commitment that the respondents have to the future of Chautauqua County.



Image by Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

NEXT STEPS

From the outset, one of the primary objectives of the planning process was to create working groups that would not only provide input into the development of the comprehensive plan, but would also play a crucial role in implementing the actions recommended in the plan. Whether the momentum created by development of the plan can be maintained remains to be seen; however, many of the working group members have pledged their commitment to continue on after the plan is adopted to implement the recommended actions. That is not to say that all of the working groups and their members will be involved in implementing all of the actions; however, there are core members that have stated that they intend to stay actively involved in making sure the identified actions become a reality. This is especially true in cases where the identified actions fit directly into the core missions of their agencies.

This being the case, a summit of the working group chairs will be convened in the weeks following the adoption of the plan (1st quarter of 2011). This summit will serve to commend the chairs for their efforts to date, but will also seek their ongoing commitment as we progress into the implementation stage of the plan. Pledges of commitment will be followed by concrete steps to create implementation groups identified in the action plan, develop timelines/schedules for each of the top ranked actions, determine when and where the groups will meet, what resources they may need, and what threats may stand in the way of the identified action becoming a reality.

An annual review of the implementation plan's progress will be conducted at or around the anniversary of the adoption of the plan (the 1st quarter of each year). This annual review will look at the progress made in implementing the plan's priority actions, what new issues may have arisen that may change the relative importance of the ranking of the actions, and what new actions may need to be considered in order to address emerging issues. This review and subsequent recommendations should be completed early in the year to stay ahead of the budget development for the coming fiscal year. We have consistently maintained that this plan will not be static; our intent is to review and revise our progress and priorities, and adjust its implementation in tandem with what is happening in the world around us. A complete update of the comprehensive plan will likely be needed 10 years from the time of adoption, or 2021, the nature and details of which are not known at this time.



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APPENDIX

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ATTACHMENT A

PLANNING PROCESS DETAIL



Methodology

Introduction

The Comprehensive Planning Team used a variety of methods to ensure that the comprehensive plan is unbiased, libertarian, comprehensive, democratic, and is for the betterment of the entire community. The issues addressed and the methods employed are described below.

Investigation

A team of individuals, including PED staff, legislators and other key stakeholders spent an entire day with the Tompkins County, NY, Department of Planning staff discussing the approach and lessons learned from their comprehensive planning initiative. The team returned with a greater understanding of how to approach the project and what they desired to accomplish.

Timeline

3/12/07 Meeting in Ithaca Re: Tompkins County Comprehensive Plan

Approval for Funding

The Chautauqua County Planning Board was the original impetus behind seeking funding for the development of a County-Wide Comprehensive Plan. The Legislature passed a resolution approving capital projects funding for the project.

Timeline

10/24/07 Legislature Approved Capital Funding Request

Promotion

Meetings were held in September through November of 2008 for the purpose of informing the public and gaining support for development of the Comprehensive Plan, and to encourage the community to develop whitepapers regarding issues that are of interest to the County. The public meetings held by Randall Arendt provided insights into local land-use issues and encouraged the attendees to pass this knowledge on to their respective planning/zoning boards.

Timeline

4/28/08 Dr. Terry Martin Hired
9/15/08 Miller, Mannis, Schachner & Hafner, LLC Hired
9/15/08 Randall Arendt Hired
9/15/08 Public Meeting Chautauqua Suites (kick-off session – Randall Arendt)
10/15/08 Randall Arendt Presentation – Chautauqua Lake Central School
10/29/08 Luncheon meeting to discuss Comp Plan process & use of discussion papers (IDA Board Room)
10/08 – 6/10 Discussion Paper Postings
11/5/08 Randall Arendt – Chautauqua Suites

Scoping

A random, scientific phone survey was developed and conducted by Barry Zeplowitz & Associates, Buffalo, NY, in order to identify and frame issues, assets and attitudes regarding Chautauqua County. The survey and Economic Development Summit helped to define the scope and approach that would be taken to develop the comprehensive plan, as well as the primary areas of emphasis that would form the basis for formation of focus groups.

Timeline

1/27/09 Team Meeting - Economic Development Summit – Chautauqua Suites
6/1/09 Matt Pawlowski Hired
7/1/09 Barry Zeplowitz & Associates Hired
9/25/09 Wallace, Roberts & Todd Hired
12/1-8/09 Phone Survey Conducted

Strategizing Issues

The primary objective of Public Workshop #1 and Focus Group Meetings was to solicit input regarding the county's strengths, weaknesses and ideas for the future. This information was collated and analyzed to define the major strategic issues that needed to be addressed in the plan, as well as prescribing ideas to address these issues. During this period, a strategic scan was conducted to review available demographic information, strategic plans and other relevant information to corroborate or dispute information gained to date through public meetings and other means, and this information was collated into a report.

Timeline

12/1-2/9/10	Strategic Scan
2/10/10	Public Workshop # 1 (North County)
2/11/10	Focus Group Meetings
2/11/10	Public Workshop #1 (South County)
2/12/10	Focus Group Meetings

Defining Vision, Goals and Strategies

The primary objectives of the Public Workshop #2, Focus Group Meetings and web-based survey were to prioritize the issues identified to date as they relate to community, environment and economy, to define the vision, and develop goals and strategies to accomplish the vision.

Timeline

5/18/10	Public Workshop #2 (North County)
5/19/10	Focus Group Meetings
5/19/10	Public Workshop #2 (South County)
5/20/10	Focus Group Meetings
5/24-6/7/10	Web-based Survey – Visioning

Action Strategies and Implementation

The primary objective of the Public Workshop #3 and Focus Group Meetings was to prioritize the actions developed to date for each of the focus areas that relate to community, environment and economy, to prioritize the focus areas as they relate to each other, and to develop an implementation strategy. This was followed by a web-based survey that provided the community the opportunity to prioritize the identified action items, to provide comments, and to complete a budget exercise for the focus areas. A forum of focus group chairs will be held on (Date TBD) to outline a strategy for implementation going forward, and to seek their ongoing commitment.

Timeline

10/19/10	Public Workshop #3 (North County)
10/20/10	Focus Group Meetings
10/20/10	Public Workshop #3 (South County)
10/21/10	Focus Group Meetings
11/1 – 30/10	Web-based Survey – Actions

Adoption

The Chautauqua County Legislature adopted the comprehensive plan on (Date TBD) according to NYS Environmental Quality Review Act regulations (Reference Section).

ATTACHMENT B

COMMUNITY WHITEPAPERS

LISTING OF TITLES AND AUTHORS

Link to whitepapers on website: <http://www.planningchautauqua.com/content/final-report>

Community Whitepapers

Prepared for Chautauqua County Comprehensive Plan

Planning for the Future

By Todd J. Trantum, President/CEO, Chautauqua County Chamber of Commerce

Economic Development Survey of Assets

By Economic Development Focus Group

Hospitality Coalitions Position on Bed Tax 5-5-2003

By James K Webb

NY Materials White Paper 01-27-10

New York Construction Materials Association

Watershed Discussion Paper

By John Jablonski III, Executive Director, Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy

Young People are Inheriting the World and Chautauqua County

Prepared by: Rick Constantino, Jeffrey Corcoran, John Murphy and Terry Martin, Ph.D.

Discussion Paper on Housing

Anonymous

Equestrian Development in Chautauqua County

By Terry H. Martin, Ph.D.

Visioning Can Lift People Up

By John L. Shedd, A.I.A and Terry H. Martin, Ph.D.

Promoting Participation in Comprehensive Plan

By Robert Allison and Terry Martin

Chautauqua County's Workforce May Not Be Able to Sustain Economic Prosperity Unless Action Is Taken Now

By Susan McNamara, Ph.D., Executive Director Workforce Investment Board / Chautauqua Works, Inc.

Planning Board Focus Survey

By Chautauqua County Planning Board

Strategic Outlook on Regional Governance Discussion Paper

Anonymous

Regional Economic Development Discussion Paper

By Thomas M. Barnes and Alyssa Dechow, Southern Tier West

Education and Workforce Development Go Together

Judy Shaffer, Adult and Community Education Coordinator, E2CCBOCES

Higher Education Discussion Paper

Carol Bremmer, Director External Resources
(edited by Greg DeCinque, President)

Wastewater and Our Environment Discussion Paper

Christine Humphrey, Chemist South & Center Chautauqua Lake Sewer Districts

Healthcare and Economic Development Discussion Paper

Anonymous

Westfield Discussion Paper (Rural Economic Development)

John T. Rawlinson. - Executive Director Westfield Development Corporation

Agriculture Discussion Paper

Virginia E. Carlberg, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Chautauqua County

Education Discussion Paper

Carol S. Hay, Panama Central School

Trails Discussion Paper

Carol Lorenc, Hugh Trantum

Tourism Planning & Development Directions

Andrew Nixon—Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

Quality of Life in Chautauqua County

Quality of Life in Chautauqua County Focus Group

Active Living Discussion Paper

By Lisa Schmidtfrerick-Miller

Chautauqua County Needs Transportation Choices

By Hugh A. Butler

ATTACHMENT C

ISSUES PHONE POLL SURVEY OVERVIEW

Prepared by: Barry Zeplowitz, Inc.

Link to full report on website: <http://www.planningchautauqua.com/content/final-report>

Chautauqua County Comprehensive Plan Survey Overview December 2009

Barry Zeplowitz & Associates is pleased to present the results of this survey to the Chautauqua County Department of Planning and Economic Development. This section outlines the research techniques used in gathering the information presented in the report. The project director for this study was Barry Zeplowitz. General staff support was provided by Penny Mills and Betty Giolando.

The study of 600 county residents was conducted December 1-8, 2009. All respondents were part of a fully representative sample of Chautauqua County residents 18 years and older. For purposes of this study, we used random digit dialing to insure that every person 18 years and older living in the County with a telephone had an opportunity to be called and participate in the survey.

The confidence interval associated with a sample of this size is such that: 95% of the time, results from 600 interviews (Chautauqua County residents 18 years and older) will be within $\pm 4\%$ of the True Values.® True Values® refer to the results obtained if it were possible to interview every Chautauqua County resident 18 years and older. This survey was weighted to reflect age groupings based on the 2008 census for Chautauqua County.

Interviews were conducted by our instructed personnel working from the company's own telephone bank in Buffalo, New York. Editing, coding and data processing were done at our headquarters in the Olympic Towers, Buffalo, New York. The computer tabulations were produced by a statistical software package created for Barry Zeplowitz & Associates.

The questionnaire was designed by Barry Zeplowitz & Associates based on input and discussions with the various stakeholders, including but not limited to: Chautauqua County Executive, Greg Edwards; the County Department of Planning and Economic Development staff; the County Planning Board; the consultant for the plan, Wallace Roberts and Todd, LLC; and other stakeholders.

For purposes of analyzing the survey, we broke the County into six regions:

Western Lake Erie consisted of Ripley, Westfield, Portland, Brocton and Stockton.

Southwest Rural consisted of Findley Lake, Sherman, Clymer and Panama.

Chautauqua Lake consisted of Mayville, Ashville, Dewittville, Bemus Point and Lakewood.

Jamestown consisted of the City of Jamestown and Falconer.

Eastern Rural consisted of Sinclairville, Gerry, Kennedy, Frewsburg, Conewango Valley and South Dayton.

Eastern Lake Erie consisted of Fredonia, Dunkirk, Cassadaga, Forestville, Silver Creek and Irving.

ATTACHMENT D

COMMUNITY DATA BOOK

OUTLINE

Link to full report on website: <http://www.planningchautauqua.com/content/final-report>

Chautauqua County Data Book Outline

1. Demographic Trends
 - Population Change/Projections
 - Age/Sex Pyramid & Trends
 - Household Trends (Size & Income)
 - Racial Diversity
 - Educational Attainment
2. Natural & Historic Resources
 - Water Resources/Watersheds
 - Woodlands
 - Sensitive Natural Areas
 - Building Suitability/Agricultural Suitability
 - Protected Lands
 - Cultural & Historic Resources
3. Land Use & Development Trends
 - Land Use Map
 - Percentage of Land Use Types
 - Subdivision & Land Development Activity
 - Redevelopment Activity & Opportunities
 - Rate of Development & Typical Density/Lot Size
4. Community Facilities
 - Utilities – Condition & Capacities
 - Renewable Energy Resources/Percent of Energy from Renewables
 - Solid Waste Management/Recycling Programs
 - Educational Facilities/Libraries
 - Parks & Recreation Facilities
 - Public Safety – Police/Fire/EMS Coverage & Response Times
5. Transportation
 - Information on Each Mode
 - Congestion Measure (i.e. Level of Service)
 - Work Destination/Average Travel Time to Work
 - Multi-modal Coverage Map/Modal Split
 - Freight Access
 - Transportation Improvements Planned

6. Housing & Community Conditions

- Housing Mix
 - o Units
 - o Age
 - o Tenure
 - o Vacancy
- Housing Affordability (Median HH Income -vs- Price)
- Housing Value
- Housing Assistance Patterns & Value
- Community Plans & Conditions

7. Economy

- Income & Cost of Living Index
- Employment by Industry & Projections
- Sector Output & Employment Trends
- Major Employers
- Business Starts

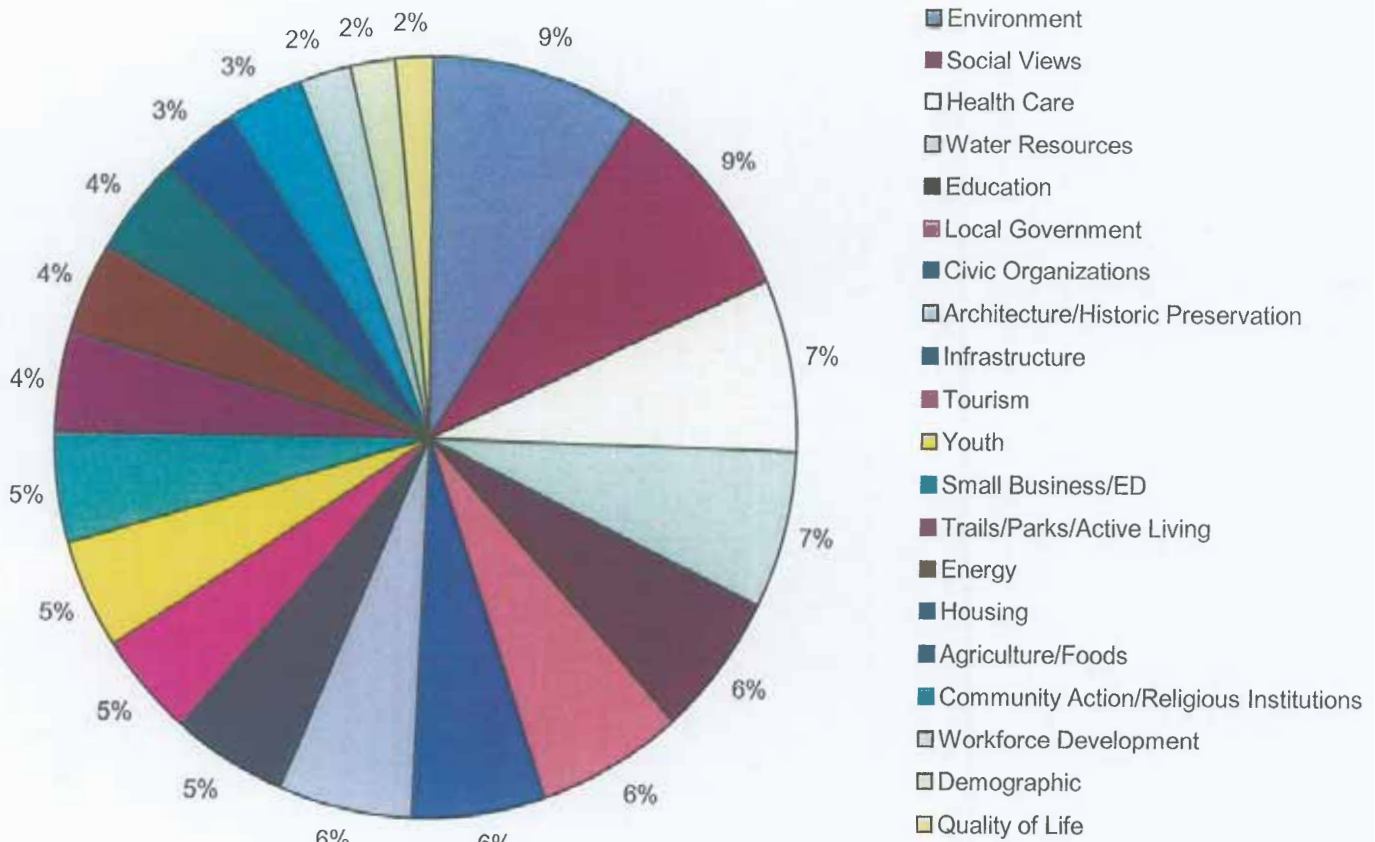
- Number/Percentage of Locally-owned Businesses
- Tax Burden
- Economic Plans / Investments

ATTACHMENT E

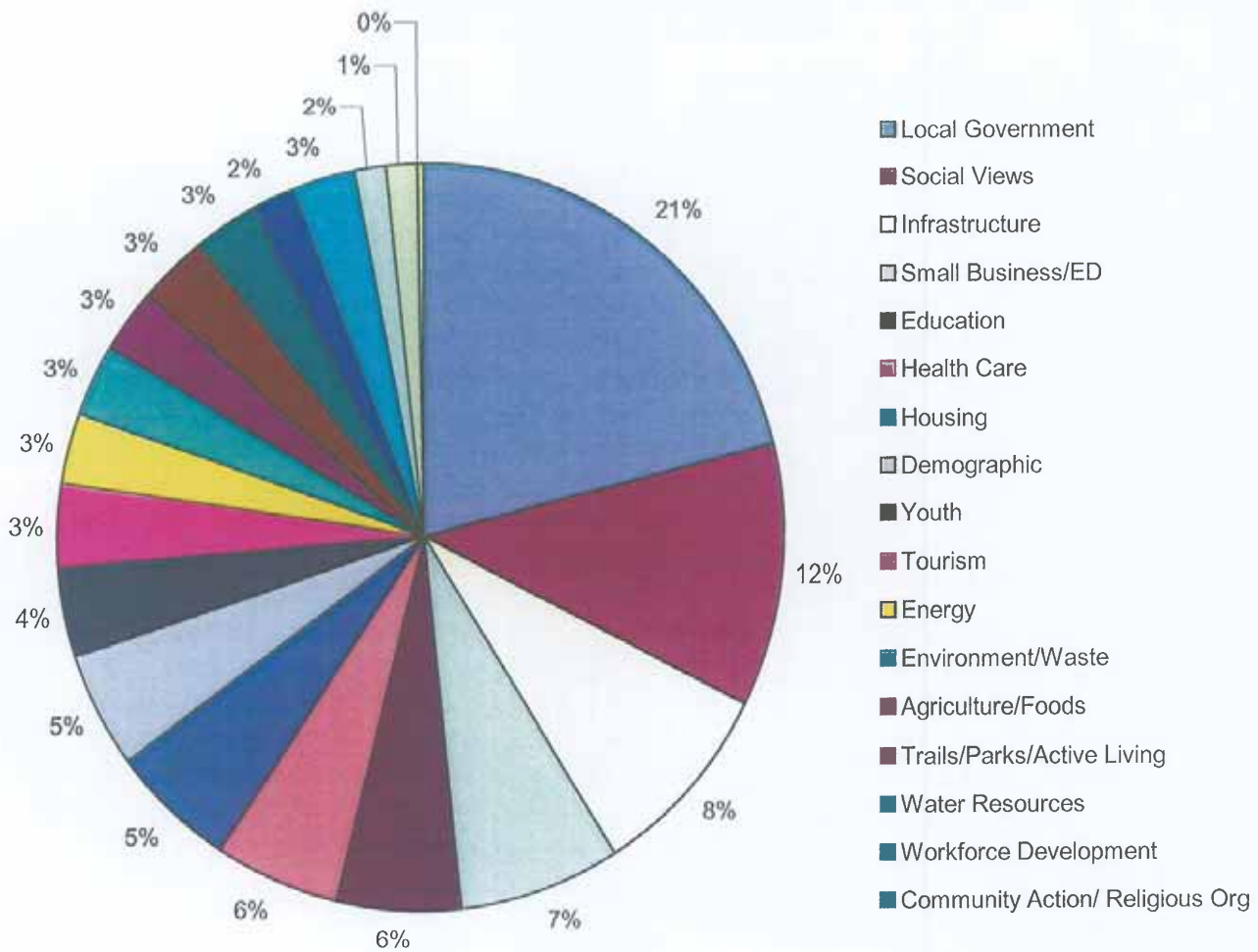
FOCUS GROUP AND PUBLIC MEETING RESULTS

Link to full report on website: <http://www.planningchautauqua.com/content/final-report>

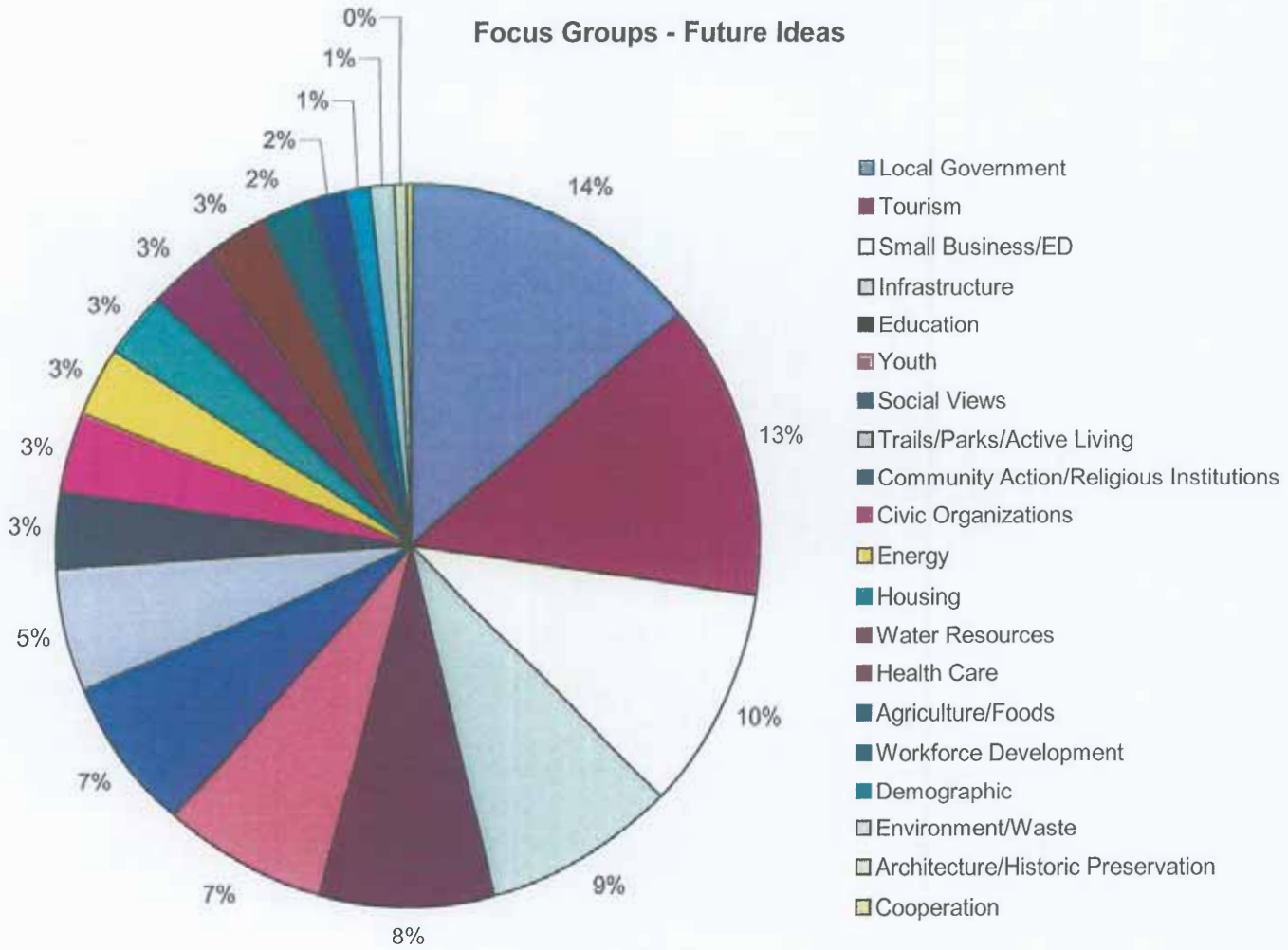
Focus Groups - Strengths



Focus Group - Weaknesses



Focus Groups - Future Ideas



ATTACHMENT F

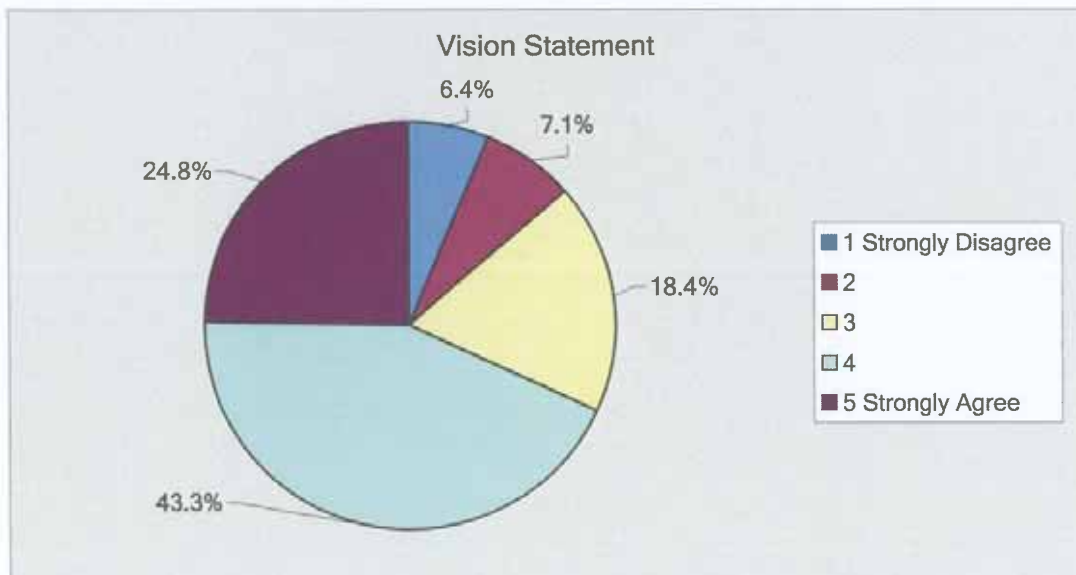
VISION WEB-BASED QUESTIONNAIRE

Link to full report on website: <http://www.planningchautauqua.com/content/final-report>

County Vision Questionnaire: Vision Statement

Do you agree with the opening statement? "In our vision of the future, Chautauqua County's natural, cultural, and recreational resources, rural character, and other assets are the foundation of its exceptional quality of life and economic prosperity. Through the hard work of the County's greatest resource - its people - to achieve this vision, the Chautauqua name is recognized far and wide as a premier place to visit, conduct business, and call home."

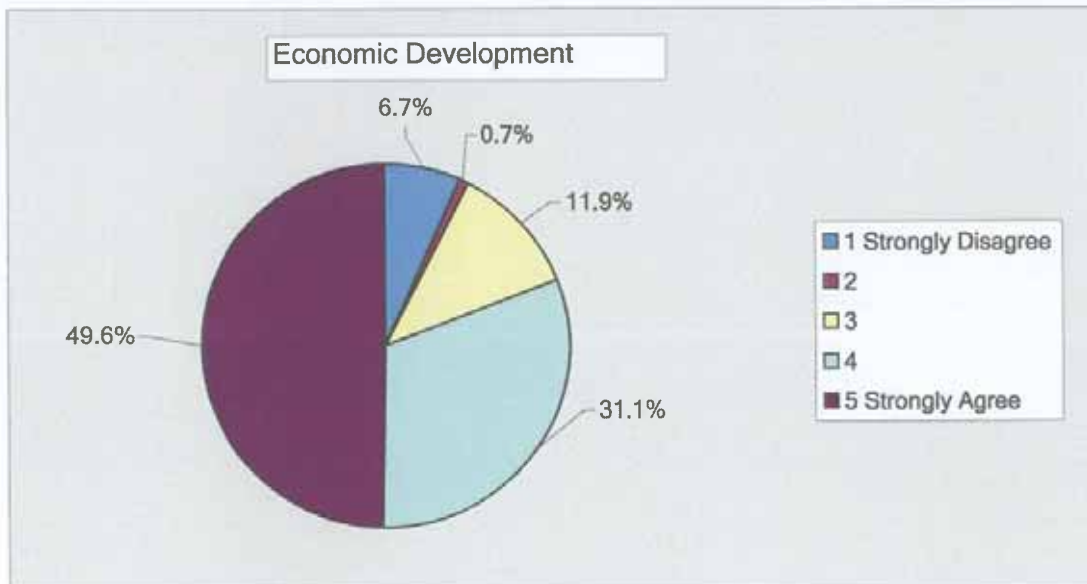
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1 Strongly Disagree	6.4%	9
2	7.1%	10
3	18.4%	26
4	43.3%	61
5 Strongly Agree	24.8%	35
<i>answered question</i>		141
<i>skipped question</i>		4



County Vision Questionnaire

Jobs and economic development have been identified as a high priority by Chautauqua County's citizens and officials. Do you agree with building on Chautauqua's natural, cultural, and human assets to grow the County's economy and employment opportunities?

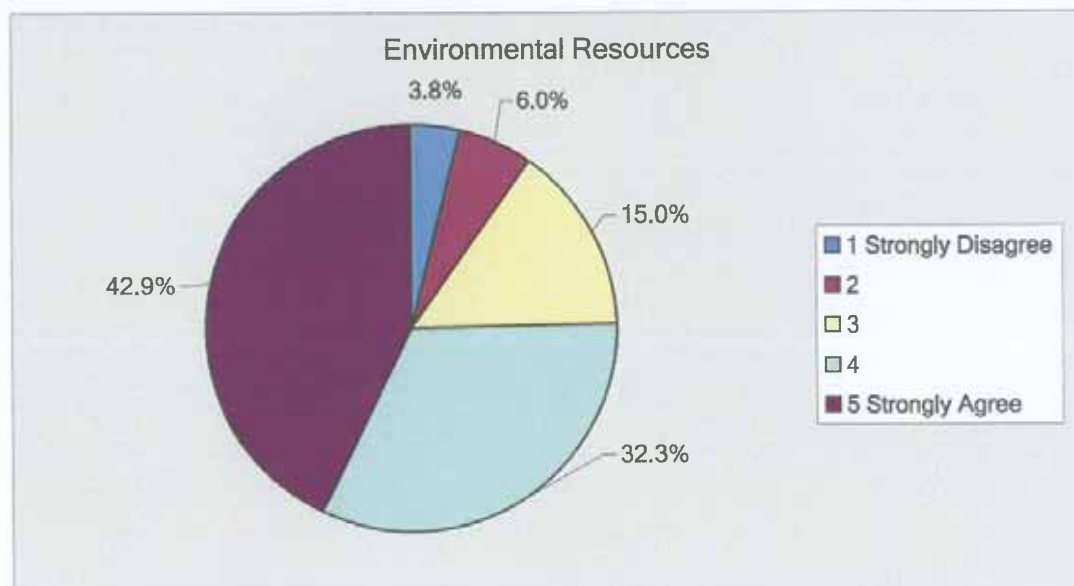
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1 Strongly Disagree	6.7%	9
2	0.7%	1
3	11.9%	16
4	31.1%	42
5 Strongly Agree	49.6%	67
<i>answered question</i>		135
<i>skipped question</i>		10



County Vision Questionnaire: Environmental Resources

Based on current community input Chautauqua County strongly values protecting its environmental resources! Do you agree that the statements in the Environment Section express those values for the County's future?

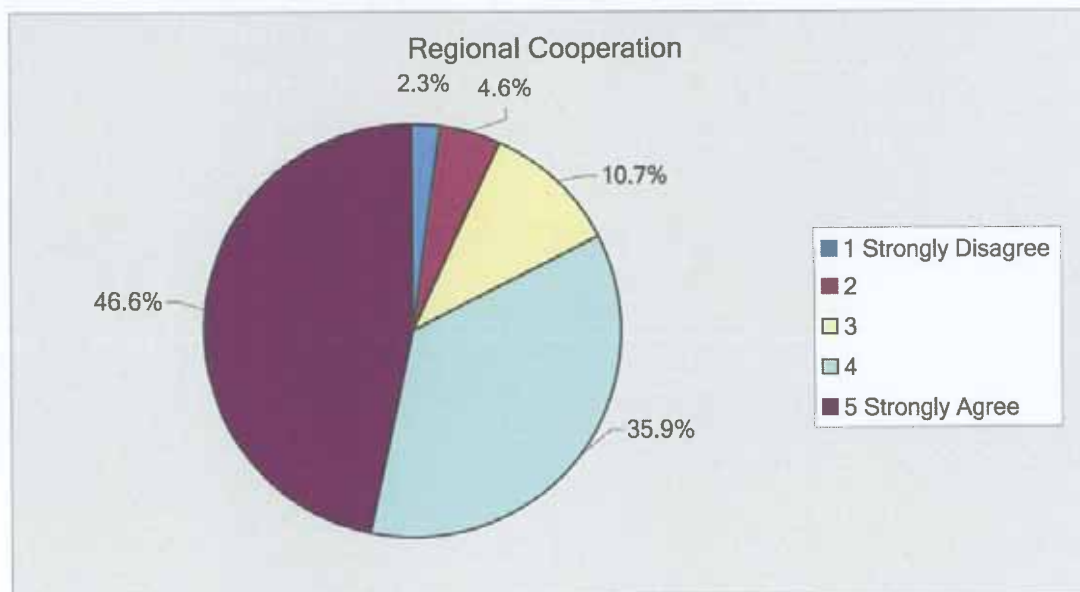
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1 Strongly Disagree	3.8%	5
2	6.0%	8
3	15.0%	20
4	32.3%	43
5 Strongly Agree	42.9%	57
<i>answered question</i>		133
<i>skipped question</i>		12



County Vision Questionnaire: Regional Cooperation

The Draft Vision calls for increased regional cooperation and partnerships to address current issues and improve the County's future. Do you agree with the emphasis of the statements in the Community Section?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1 Strongly Disagree	2.3%	3
2	4.6%	6
3	10.7%	14
4	35.9%	47
5 Strongly Agree	46.6%	61
<i>answered question</i>		131
<i>skipped question</i>		14



ATTACHMENT G

ACTIONS WEB-BASE SURVEY SUMMARY REPORT

Link to full report on website: <http://www.planningchautauqua.com/content/final-report>

Chautauqua County Comprehensive Plan Survey Final Report

Survey Basics

This report highlights the results of the Chautauqua County Comprehensive Plan Community Actions Survey which was conducted from November 1, 2010 through November 26, 2010. This survey was the result of the collaboration of 15 focus groups whose input during the preceding 12 months was vital to the development of the action items for each of the designated focus areas. The action items developed by each focus group were then used in the development of this survey. Both the online and the paper version of the survey were developed from this information.

There were a total of 431 respondents to the survey. Within that group, 390 participated in the online survey and 41 completed a paper version of the survey. The online platform used to present the questions and collect the data was SurveyMonkey. A link to the survey was provided through the Chautauqua County Department of Planning and Economic Development webpage. Of the 390 who started 288 finished the online survey for a completion rate of 73.8%. In addition there was a paper version of the survey that was identical to online survey except for the three demographic questions of age, sex and zip code which were not included. The paper survey was completed by attendees at one of the public meetings.

During the data analysis process three duplicated surveys were found. There were 2 individuals who completed both the online as well as the paper survey. In this instance one of the 2 responses from each of the individuals was removed. Additionally, there was one set of responses that were identical to each other and came from the same IP Address. A decision was made in this case to remove one of the two responses. In these cases the duplicate surveys were removed and not counted to maintain data integrity. These removals are reflected in the aforementioned response results.

Demographics

The respondents fell into all of the 14 separate age brackets from "15 to 19 years" to "80 to 84 years".

Across those 14 age brackets the male to female representation was 51.7% to 48.3% respectively. There was a concentration of respondents in 6 of the 14 age brackets ranging from 40 to 69 years of age. They contained 77.4% of the total respondents with a male female representation of 50.8% to 49.2%. The highest concentration was the 55 to 59 bracket with 15.4% and a representation of 57.8% male and 42.2% female.

Distribution of Respondents

The respondents were unevenly distributed amongst 38 separate zip codes. There were

32 zip codes within Chautauqua County, 3 from Erie County, 1 from Niagara County and 2 from out of state. The greatest concentration of these respondents lived in J Jamestown (14701) with 24.27%, the Village of Fredonia (14063) with 11.97%, Lakewood (14750) with 8.41% and Westfield (14787) with 6.80%. These 4 municipalities accounted for 51.45% of the respondents.

Focus Area Analysis

The main portion of the survey was dedicated to the data collection and analysis of the 15 focus areas. Each of the 15 focus groups was tasked with developing action items pertaining to their area where that action items implementation would have the potential, both directly and indirectly, to benefit economically, socially and/or culturally both existing as well as future residents and businesses of the county. Those areas were Tourism & Cultural Resources; Agriculture & Foods; Business & Economic Development; Infrastructure & Public Investment; Education & Libraries; Workforce Development; Environment, Waste Management & Water Resources; Historic Preservation, Architecture and Community Revitalization; Active Living & Recreation; Energy; Youth; Community Action, Human Services & Civic Organizations; Housing; Healthcare and Local Government.

There were a total of 6 action items across the 15 focus areas and 169 total action items which received more than 20% of the votes within their respective focus areas. Those action items which received the highest percentage of votes were: Local Government, action item #3 "...countywide efficiency study to identify the potential areas for increased shared services and local government consolidation" at 22.51%; Active Living and Recreation, action item #4, "...Completing a multi trail system..." at 21.63%; Youth, action item #9, "Increase job opportunities for youth ..." at 20.88%; Workforce Development, action item #4, "...increasing job opportunities for graduate and post graduate..." at 20.86%; Local Government, action item #4, "Seek methods for overcoming ...impediments to sharing of services and equipment" at 20.62%; and Housing, action item #3, "...remove existing, derelict housing stock and investigate land-banking opportunities" at 20.30%. There was an additional 10 action items that received between 15% and 20% of the votes within their respective focus areas.

There were some consistent themes across the focus areas such as reducing taxes, the cost of government, merging of services, merging of school districts and to a lesser extent reducing the size of the legislature. Additionally, there were those residents calling for economic development, attracting businesses, increasing tourism, creating jobs and markets and retaining jobs for agricultural as well as other business sectors. Finally, there was the call to stem the loss of residents and businesses due to the high tax burden.

Tourism & Cultural Resources

This focus group received the 2nd highest level of funding in the budget allocation section of the survey.

The top priority for this focus group recommends implementing the "World's Learning Center" brand, including coordination with other focus groups to maximize its benefits for the County's economy. Key support actions include targeted marketing efforts, improved wayfinding systems (digital applications in addition to physical signage), and encouraging vacation home development to generate investment and business development around niches such as outdoor recreation and the arts.

The top three action items for Tourism and Cultural Resources

Action Item	Percentage
1. Implement the “World’s Learning Center” (*) branding and action recommendations to achieve premier destination status.	12.97%
3. Expand the County’s marketing efforts to attract more regional customers.	11.64%
8. Enhance the County’s tourism website to showcase Chautauqua’s diversity of vacation options allowing prospective visitors to easily view all tourism options.	10.93%

There were 74 written response. This focus group received the highest number of comments of all the groups including the Final Comment section. This importance was also supported by the high level of budget allocation. Within the responses there were multiple comments centered on the “World’s Learning Center” concept being partnered with schools, colleges and organizations in the county. Advertisement and marketing was mentioned including the use of billboards and “gateway” locations as options to promote the area. Outdoor activities, user friendly roads and paths and agritourism were also mentioned as means to market the area and bring in tourists.

Agriculture & Foods

This focus group received the 3rd highest level of funding in the budget allocation section of the survey.

The top priority for this focus group recommends preserving farmland by identifying and maintaining priority agricultural districts; supporting right-to-farm laws, and implementing strong agricultural zoning. Key support actions include promoting and encourage organic, specialty, value-added, small-scale and artisan food producers; building agri-tourism and developing special food and agriculture related activities that incorporate the “World’s Learning Center” model.

The top three action items for Agriculture & Foods

Action Item	Percentage
5. Create farm-to-table programs and a “buy local” network.	15.01%
3. Promote and encourage organic, specialty, value-added, small-scale and artisan food producers and create an associated agri-business “community kitchen” and/or incubator to support their development.	14.84%
2. Preserve current agricultural exemptions, and create a more agricultural-friendly tax structure to maintain family farms.	14.25%

There were 33 written responses. Its importance to the respondents was reflected in both the higher number of comments and its budget allocation. There several comments indicating the importance of Agriculture as a significant portion of the county’s economy and that it required special attention and support. Specific farm and agricultural sectors were mentioned as requiring special or enhanced support. The need for political support for the area was indicated. Also indicated was the need to educate politicians about the agricultural economy of the county. The Amish received positive comments on their contribution to the local economy though their niche market yet they also received negative comments

based on their rejection /non participation of the local community other than for their own needs.

Business & Economic Development

This focus group received the highest level of funding in the budget allocation section of the survey.

Key strategies for this focus group include 1) building on IDA's current efforts to retain and support expansion of existing businesses and employers in Chautauqua County, and 2) an "asset-based approach" that targets economic development activities to capitalize on the County's rich resources. Other economic development priorities include establishing an inventory of and marketing available tracts of land and promoting adaptive reuse of existing structures for business purposes.

The top three action items for Business & Economic Development

Action Item	Percentage
1. Work to retain, expand and support ventures in targeted businesses/industries in the County.	13.56%
7. Target economic sectors where the County has strong local assets to build on.	13.12%
9. Create a positive business climate for ventures exploring green energy and green energy technologies.	11.20%

There were 42 written responses for the Business & Economic Development focus group. Although the focus group did not receive the highest number of comments its relative importance to the respondents was reflected in its budget allocation. These comments included Tax incentives, lowering and/or removing taxes, creating new industrial parks, enhancing and promoting existing industrial parks, wireless networks & broadband capacity, attracting Millennials and keeping young professionals from leaving, working to retain jobs and businesses in the county, business incentives to relocate into the county, reuse existing land & buildings finally the need to attract, develop and retain high paying high quality jobs in the county.

Infrastructure & Public Investment

Key actions identified for this focus group include implementing recommendations obtained from cost/benefit analysis of community infrastructure and services currently under way to determine cost-saving measures. The other key support actions include working to continue to make selective widening and lighting improvements to Route 60, primarily from Dunkirk to Gerry; reviewing and implementing recommendations derived from the new business plan currently under way for the Jamestown and Dunkirk Airports; and look at using revenues from local energy sources to fund the maintenance and creation of parks and other outdoor recreational assets.

The top three action items for Infrastructure and Public Investment

Action Item	Percentage
9. Expand the use of renewable energy to create local jobs and revenues, reduce business costs, and lower environmental impacts.	16.19%
8. Expand rail service by coordinating with Amtrak and CSX. Strive to achieve Amtrak passenger station in Dunkirk.	12.81%
1. Implement recommendations from cost/benefit analysis of community infrastructure and services currently being undertaken.	11.65%

There were 30 written responses for the Infrastructure and Public Investment focus group. These comments include improving roads, bridges and access to the western part of the county from I86; infrastructure to support train service and improve plane access, traffic and service; county wide assessments for infrastructure support; cost sharing and the elimination of service duplication; there was the suggestion for different types of tax financing options to fund the projects and finally there was concern about the ability to bring these ideas to completion.

Education & Libraries

This focus group received the 5th highest level of funding in the budget allocation section of the survey.

The key strategy identified recommends surveying the current use and capacity of technology in public schools to identify IT infrastructure needs in order to maximize efficient delivery of educational services. The other strategies include lobbying the state and local institutions for legislation that addresses mandates and restructuring; continuing support to ensure Jamestown Community College remains a viable partner in providing the County's workforce with continuing education opportunities; and positioning schools as learning centers for the broader population.

The top three action items for Education & Libraries

Action Item	Percentage
1. Ensure that the County remains supportive of processes that seek to identify and implement efficiencies in the delivery of high quality education for K-12.	16.65%
4. Continue to ensure that Jamestown Community College remains a viable partner in providing continuing education opportunities.	15.74%
8. Create a stronger relationship between local businesses and schools focused on the "education pipeline" model that encourages a K-16 education and promotes county school districts as partners in business growth.	14.46%

There were 51 written responses for the Education & Libraries focus group. This focus group received the second highest number of responses giving an indication as to the importance of the topic to the respondents. This was also reflected in the above average funding allocation. There were numerous mentions of the importance of this topic to the

future of the county. The respondents indicated the need to merge schools and libraries, merge and consolidating school districts and reducing the cost of education to the taxpayer and the tax burden on the local economy. There was the mention to get schools and businesses together, link work and skills training, expand educational opportunities to a wider range of residents and a general indication that all of the action items were of importance. There was also the mention of getting more individuals into college, locating the colleges in urban centers, fostering more collaboration between the colleges and their host municipalities. Finally letting teachers teach the core subjects unhindered by regulations.

Workforce Development

This focus group received the 4th highest level of funding in the budget allocation section of the survey.

Priorities include partnering with educational institutions on training initiatives to equip county workers with the skills needed for jobs in the local economy; increasing employment opportunities for college graduates to retain current and attract former residents to move back to the County; and breaking the “cycle of dependency” for unemployed, underemployed, and low-income residents.

The top three action items for Workforce Development

Action Item	Percentage
4. Increase the number of job opportunities for the college/post-graduate population through the County's economic development programs and the support of entrepreneurial efforts.	20.86%
10. Develop an integrated service delivery plan to move residents from low income status to self sufficiency.	15.63%
2. Provide targeted workforce education to high-skilled, high paying positions in targeted industries.	12.22%

There were 24 written responses for the Workforce Development focus group. Although the comments were average in terms of their number the importance of the topic was reflected in the funding allocation. There was an indication of the need to foster welfare to work programs that actually get individuals into jobs that can lift them off of Welfare. There was the emphasis to matching the business needs for skilled employees with job training and for linking college and high school graduates with jobs. There was the mention of the need to develop good paying jobs, businesses and business supporting companies.

Environment, Waste Management and Water Resources

The key action recommends increasing awareness of the importance of environmental issues at all governmental levels. Other support strategies include reducing the impacts of development on environmental resources by utilizing sustainable development practices; completing an inventory of the County's community infrastructure; and developing proactive watershed level management plans and adopting those policies that apply to County governmental functions and operations.

The top three action items for Environment, Waste Management and Water Resources

Action Item	Percentage
4. Complete an inventory of the County's community infrastructure (water, sewer, etc.) as a basis for integrated management of natural and manmade systems, and prioritize systems in need of repair, upgrade and management.	13.48%
13. Target achieving 100% recycling countywide by 2020 and coordinate a recycling program for both the public and private sectors.	12.83%
2. Reduce the impacts of development on environmental resources by utilizing sustainable development practices.	10.32%

There were 25 written responses for the Environment, Waste Management and Water Resources focus group. There were a number of comments centered on improving, protecting and maintaining the quality of Chautauqua Lake. The protection of ground water, the county watershed and water quality was mentioned. The recycling of electronic waste and the disposition of recyclables that currently have little market value was mentioned as needing to be dealt with. It was also mentioned that the environmental legislative committees should be restored.

Historic Preservation, Architecture and Community Revitalization

The key actions recommend supporting a countywide preservation officer and/or grant writer(s) to work with County Historian and locals to seek funding for all historic projects.; completing and maintaining a baseline countywide inventory of historic/cultural resources; creating interpretive tour routes/maps of significant historical resources based on themes that use the "world's learning center" approach; and creating a mechanism to encourage the private sector to invest in and restore old properties.

The top three action items for Historic Preservation, Architecture and Community Revitalization

Action Item	Percentage
6. Strongly promote historic/cultural resources to tourists by linking to the activities of the Chautauqua County Visitor's Bureau and expanding walking/biking tours.	14.77%
10. Create a mechanism to encourage the private sector to invest in and restore old properties.	13.46%
5. Explore the creation of a Maritime Museum coupled with a major scuba diving attraction in the north county to tell the story of the region's history through its shipwrecks and attract shipwreck diving enthusiasts from throughout the world to experience the Lake Erie Quadrangle, which possesses the highest concentration of shipwrecks anywhere in the world.	12.34%

There were 29 written responses for the Historic Preservation, Architecture and Community Revitalization focus group. The revitalization of the Jamestown and Dunkirk core centers was important, as was bringing back business to these areas and this would have a positive effect on the community. There was mention of the number and quality of historic towns and villages in the county, that people come to see these locations and spend money and that the emphasis should be on more than just Jamestown and Dunkirk. It was mentioned that the preservation of buildings and homes was important, that owners should be afforded with incentive opportunities to protect and preserve their properties and that while historic building should be restored, building that are too far gone should not be saved.

Active Living & Recreation

Key actions recommend developing a new model for oversight and maintenance of recreation efforts throughout the County; developing a well-designed signage system for trails and recreation opportunities, and expanding the current County recreation map and on-line resources; completing a multi-use greenway trail system throughout the County; and adopting a County "Complete Streets" policy to improve safety and usability for all users..

The top three action items for Active Living & Recreation

Action Item	Percentage
4. Complete a multi-use trail (greenway) system for the entire County to provide more opportunities for hiking, biking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, kayaking, etc.	21.63%
3. Develop a well-designed wayfinding (signage) system, map and on-line resources for trails, parks and other recreation activities in the county.	15.07%
9. Work with DEC, the Sports Fishery Advisory Council and local governments to improve the fisheries, maintain and improve fishing and boating opportunities, and create more fishing-related events throughout the County.	13.76%

There were 30 written responses for the Active Living & Recreation focus group. The water resources of Lake Erie, Chautauqua Lake, the beaches of Dunkirk, walkways and paths nearby these and other water resources was mentioned as important to the development of the county. The promotion of these water resources and the sporting and outdoor recreational activities associated with them was also mentioned as areas that could be promoted and improved upon. It was mentioned that the county should promote all active living and outdoor activities together. There was also the suggestion that the county should focus on revenue generating activities, market to snowmobilers, list walking trails on website and link to other outdoor activity organizations.

Energy

Key actions include defining what energy sustainability means for Chautauqua County and incorporating the definition into the county mission statement; creating a Legislative En-

ergy Committee to establish priorities, criteria, and clear incentives for alternative energy production and energy-related initiatives in the County; and advocating for legislation that provides and promotes local energy production.

The top three action items for Energy

Action Item	Percentage
10. Promote and support waste-to-energy business opportunities.	15.64%
3. Advocate for legislation that provides and promotes local energy production in order to generate local revenues, reduce economic costs, and lower environmental impacts.	15.07%
1. Define what energy sustainability means for the county, incorporate the definition into county mission statement, and make it policy for consideration of capital funding requests and other initiatives.	10.43%

There were 14 written responses for the Energy focus group. There was support for the development of green energy options, partnering green energy with green businesses and other energy exploration including waste to energy opportunities. There were several responses that supported educating the public on the benefits of wind power, the development of wind farms and wind energy.

Youth

This focus group received the 6th highest level of funding in the budget allocation section of the survey.

Key actions for this focus group include increasing funding for youth programs, expanding job and related training opportunities for youth, and providing transportation for youth to activities and programs. A top priority is to update the Comprehensive Integrated County Youth Services Plan to set the direction for how these and other priority actions will improve quality of life and services for Chautauqua County's youth will be accomplished.

The top three action items for Youth

Action Item	Percentage
9. Increase job opportunities for youth using apprenticeships, internships, and community service providers.	20.88%
6. Seek to engage the youth in participating in community-related issues.	13.25%
3. Consolidate, collaborate and leverage the efforts of youth service organizations to attract federal, state, and foundation support to maintain consistent funding sources.	11.82%

There were 20 written responses for the Youth focus group. Although there were only 17 comments the importance of the topic was reflected in the funding allocation which was above average. The comments centered on the youth as the future of the county and need to be included. Troubled, fringe or "at risk" youth need to have their special needs

addressed and get them involved to prevent their loss. There was also the suggestion the creation of safe places for the youth to get together such as multi-sport or youth centers.

Community Action, Human Services and Civic Organizations

This focus group received the lowest level of funding in the budget allocation section of the survey.

Key actions recommend supporting increased affordable internet access throughout the county for all socio-economic groups, and providing more services via the internet; working with all current transportation providers to expand public transportation; convening local officials to 1) focus on improving after school activities, 2) encourage public school facilities as community learning centers, 3) create more career opportunities for students to explore various career paths; support public and private housing-related initiatives that encourage public and private investment to improve and maintain the quality of the County's housing stock; and organize and promote collaboration between the various stakeholders.

The top three action items for Community Action, Human Services & Civic Organizations

Action Item	Percentage
5. Convene local officials to 1) focus on improving after school activities, 2) encourage public school facilities as community learning centers and 3) create more career opportunities for students to explore.	12.05%
14. Promote regionalization/consolidation/sharing of services of civic organizations, community action organizations, government entities and school districts where feasible.	8.47%
4. Work with all current transportation providers to explore opportunities to collaborate on an initiative to expand public transportation to more employment locations and for the provision of services after regular business hours.	7.91%

There were 31 written responses for the Community Action, Human Services & Civic Organizations focus group. This group received the lowest level of funding of all the focus groups; however, the comments did support the acceptance of the need to address these issues. There were several comments indicating that too many different topics were lumped into this one category but that all were important. There were the indications that organizations need to improve their efficiency and do a better job on educating their client group on more efficient use of the services and benefits they receive. There was also the emphasis on giving the client groups involved the tools that they need to improve their situation. There was also an indication that housing and the handling of landlords was important to the well being of the community.

Housing

Key actions identified recommend providing authority to the County Housing Task Force to develop identified housing strategies including the consideration for land banking for commercial and residential properties; completing the current study of subsidized housing in the County; and preparing a proactive strategy to adjust the County's housing supply to meet current market demands.

The top three action items for Housing

Action Item	Percentage
3. Identify and strategically remove existing, derelict housing stock and investigate land-banking opportunities.	20.30%
7. Create a "hands on" training program with the County's schools, BOCES, and higher education institutions to provide instruction in housing rehabilitation and real estate investment that is financially self-sustaining.	13.47%
4. Find ways to reduce housing demolition and disposition costs.	10.40%

There were 18 written responses in the Housing focus group. There was support for equitable property code enforcement, demolition of dilapidated/dangerous building and structures, streamlining the eviction process for destructive/non paying/drug using tenants and holding landlords/owners responsible for the condition of their properties. Additionally there was support for education/training programs for home ownership and rehabilitation.

Healthcare

The key strategy for this focus group identified recommends developing a unified voice/ advocacy group to represent the healthcare community in Chautauqua County. Other actions include promoting the technical integration of clinical health systems throughout Chautauqua County; and attracting more medical professionals to the County by creating incentives to offset the compensation required to attract better qualified physicians.

The top three action items for Healthcare

Action Item	Percentage
5. Attract more medical professionals to the County by supporting improved community amenities, creating an endowment, or by providing other subsidies/financial incentives to offset the compensation required to attract better qualified physicians.	16.60%
8. Maintain an adequate emergency response system and support emergency preparedness training.	15.40%
9. Promote personal responsibility for health as part of the County's brand as the World's Learning Center, and possibly create a Center for Rural Wellness & Aging.	12.10%

There were 19 written responses in the Healthcare focus group. Amongst these comments were several in support of Medicare/Medicaid rate alignment, improve reimbursement rates, cost and fraud reduction. There is the suggestion that the county needs a different structure in the number and type of care facilities. There is the suggestion to sell the county home and get the county out of the health care business. There is the promotion of personal responsibility for health care/healthy living choices.

Local Government

The key strategies of this group were to recommend completing an integrated countywide efficiency study to identify the potential areas for increased shared services and local government consolidation; and coordinating economic development efforts between the county and local municipalities.

The top three action items for Local Government

Action Item	Percentage
3. Complete an integrated countywide efficiency study to identify the potential areas for increased shared services and local government consolidation.	22.51%
4. Seek methods for overcoming legal and financial impediments to sharing of services and equipment.	20.62%
6. Investigate options for keeping municipal expenditures in the local economy by giving "preferential" consideration for locally procured goods and services.	13.94%

There were a total of 24 written responses to the Local Government focus group. All of the top three action items were represented in the written responses. These themes revolved around the reduction of waste but not services, eliminating and consolidating excess governmental layers, consolidating school districts and buying locally. While the reduction and consolidation of the towns and villages was generalized, there were multiple comments made to the reduction in the size of the county legislature and the elimination of the county industrial development agency.

Budget Analysis & Allocation

The Budget Analysis & Allocation portion of the survey asked the respondent to work with a budget of \$150.00 and invest it across the fifteen focus groups. The respondent could invest as little as \$0.00 in a focus group or as much as \$150.00. However, the total budgeted amount they had to work with was \$150.00.

All of the focus groups received funding at some level. If a respondent were to distribute the \$150 evenly across the 15 groups then each focus group would receive \$10.00 or 6.67%. The actual resulting distribution of funds was not the same for each group. The analysis determined that respondents chose some groups over others. In total 6 focus groups received more than the 6.67% and 9 received less than the 6.67%

Budget Allocation		
Focus Area	Percent	Amount
Business/Economic Development	13.59%	\$20.39
Tourism/Cultural Resources	12.45%	\$18.68
Agriculture/Foods	9.93%	\$14.89
Workforce Development	7.42%	\$11.13
Education/Libraries	7.18%	\$10.76
Youth	6.93%	\$10.40
Infrastructure/Public Investment	5.94%	\$8.91
Environment/Waste Management/Water Resources	5.44%	\$8.16
Healthcare	5.34%	\$8.00
Active Living/Recreation	5.01%	\$7.51
Historic Preservation / Architecture/ Community Revitalization	4.68%	\$7.02
Energy	4.66%	\$7.00
Local Government	4.50%	\$6.74
Housing	4.17%	\$6.25
Community Action, Human Services & Civic Orgs.	2.78%	\$4.17

The six focus groups with the largest budgeted amount are: Business & Economic Development with 13.59% of the total budgeted amount or \$20.39 out of \$150.00; Tourism & Cultural Resources with 12.45% or \$18.68; Agriculture & Foods with 9.93% or \$14.89; Workforce Development received 7.42% or \$11.13; Education & Libraries received 7.18% or \$10.76 and the Youth focus group received 6.93% or \$10.40 of the total budget. Of the 9 focus groups that received less than the 6.67% of funding allocation the lowest level of funding was for the Community Action, Human Services & Civic Organization. This focus group was allocated 2.78% of the budgeted amount or \$4.17 out of \$150.00.

The open comments for this question indicated the need to think of the county as one whole entity not just rural and urban components. Additionally, it was indicated that there was the need to reduce expenses on one hand yet invest in education, youth, the environment and the future of the county.

Final Comments and Summary

The Final Comment section of the survey had a total of 72 responses. The themes expressed in the Final Comment section are consistent with those themes expressed throughout the survey. While there were comments across the focus areas suggesting that improvement could not occur in the county, on the whole however, the comments were positive and supportive of efforts to bring about a positive change in the future of the county.

Across the 15 focus areas there were the consistent themes of reducing taxes, the cost of government, merging of services, merging of school districts and to a lesser extent reducing the size of the legislature. Additionally, there were those residents calling for economic development, attracting businesses, increasing tourism, creating jobs and markets and retaining jobs for agricultural as well as other business sectors. Finally, there was the call to stem the loss of residents and businesses due to the high tax burden.

This survey was long. There were a total of 37 questions which required responses. Fifteen of these required the respondent to read through 11 to 12 complex action items to make his/her top three selections. There were an additional fifteen which required the respondent to provide comments if he/she chose to. The time required to complete the survey therefore was substantial with the average time spent on completion at about 56 minutes. It is reasonable to conclude that the length and complexity of this survey coupled with the time required to complete it illustrates the commitment that these respondents have to the future of Chautauqua County.

ATTACHMENT H

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY DESIGN PRINCIPLES GUIDEBOOK

Link to full report on website: <http://www.planningchautauqua.com/content/final-report>



GREGORY J. EDWARDS
County Executive

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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www.co.chautauqua.ny.us

June 1, 2009

Community Leaders and Citizens
Municipalities in Chautauqua County, NY

Dear Colleagues,

Chautauqua County is pleased to publish the Chautauqua County Design Principles Guidebook – Visualizing Our Options: Creating a Better Future. It was prepared by conservation and rural design expert, Randall Arendt. These guidelines include advanced design concepts and techniques that allow growth to continue in our rural communities while protecting our rural community character and working landscape.

Chautauqua County is a beautiful community. These design guidelines will enable our rural county to continue growing while enhancing that beauty. Please use this guidebook in your planning for every new development proposal and community plan. If we all do this one project at a time, year-after-year, we will create a better future.

The next step is up to you!

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gregory J. Edwards".

Gregory J. Edwards
Chautauqua County Executive

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William J. Daly".

William J. Daly, Director
Chautauqua County Department of Planning
and Economic Development

ATTACHMENT I

GIS MAPPING

Link to County GIS maps on website: <http://www.chautauquagis.com>

Chautauqua County has a broad range of Geographic Information System (GIS) services that allow users to access not only a broad range of available maps, but it is also a dynamic system that allows users to search based on various queries. The site is constantly updated and fine-tuned as conditions and needs warrant.



Town of Ripley
Comprehensive Plan

Local Law Filing

NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF STATE

41 STATE STREET, ALBANY, NY 12231

(Use this form to file a local law with the Secretary of State.)

Text of law should be given as amended. Do not include matter being eliminated and do not use italics or underlining to indicate new matter.

STATE RECORDS

FEB 07 2017

County

City

of

RIPLEY

Town

Village

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Local Law No.

1

of the year 2017

A local law

Adopting Amended Town of Ripley Comprehensive Plan

(Insert Title)

Town Board

Be it enacted by the

(Name of Legislative Body)

of the

County

City

of

Ripley

as

follows:

Town

Village

LOCAL LAW 1-2017

SECTION I. TITLE

This local law shall be entitled "Adoption of Amended Town of Ripley Comprehensive Plan".

SECTION II. AUTHORITY

The Town of Ripley previously adopted a Comprehensive Plan under the authority of NYS Town Law Section 272-a.

SECTION III. REFERRALS

The Town of Ripley Planning Board was authorized by the Town Board to review a draft amended Comprehensive Plan under the authority of NYS Town Law Section 272-a (5) (a) which was then the subject of a Public Hearing and approval by the Town of Ripley Planning Board.

SECTION IV. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Town Board adopts in its entirety the Town of Ripley Comprehensive Plan as set fourth below on pages 2 -

Text of Town of Ripley Comprehensive Plan

Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Ripley

Adopted January 12, 2017

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Section I

INTRODUCTION

The Town of Ripley, like many other small rural communities at the beginning of the twenty-first century, is facing important issues regarding economic survival and identity. The comprehensive planning process gives the entire community the opportunity to work together to develop goals for the future and make the decisions and commitments that can bring a shared vision into reality.

The planning presented in this document is intended to serve as the Town of Ripley's Comprehensive Plan. The bulk of this document is based on input received by planning board members' solicitation of ideas and concerns at meetings of various citizens' groups over an approximately one year timeframe from August-1996 to September-1997 and from informal discussions between residents and members of the planning board. Many of the recommendations presented in Sections 3 and 4 were, and are continuing to be developed by citizen committees working under the direction of the Town Board. Similarly, in 2016 the Planning Board at the request of the Town Board and Supervisor, undertook a process to update Ripley's Comprehensive Plan. The County Planning Department has been most helpful in guiding the efforts of the Planning Board to complete this process with the least possible financial burden on the community.

One of the underlying assumptions of the comprehensive planning process is that if the Town does not take decisions into its own hands, outside forces will most likely determine its future. Whether these forces are developers, state agencies or the

general economy, the Town runs the risk of losing its identity if it does not clearly articulate its goals for the future. However, the mere statement of goals and plans will not produce the desired results unless the Town and its citizens implement their goals through zoning amendments, strategic and fiscally responsible public investments, cooperation with private and public outside entities, and dedicated volunteerism.

In 2016, the residents of Ripley celebrated the 200th anniversary of the founding of the township. At the same time, Ripley is at a turning point in its history. Built on a 19th century farming economy and having resisted many of the changes involved in America's industrial and manufacturing growth, its citizens now recognize that it is necessary for the community to permit, and even encourage, some commercial growth in Ripley. Nevertheless, as society rediscovers the value of the natural environment, Ripleyites are anxious to avoid "urban sprawl" and retain the rural "Come Home to Ripley" flavor. It is seen as desirable that a major portion of the township be dedicated to agriculture and conservation, but even many long-term residents are willing to designate some portions near the major transportation corridors for light industrial and commercial growth in order to make the transition to a brighter economic future. While few are interested in an urban, or even suburban possibility for Ripley's future, some residential development, particularly within the hamlet and the nearby vicinity as well as along the Lake Erie shoreline, is also now generally accepted as desirable.

Although personal and local misfortunes have contributed to the decline of a number of properties in Ripley, recent years have seen a number of new residents moving into and improving properties in the township. This influx of new faces provides both opportunity and conflict. The challenge of the planning process is to bring all segments

of the community together in an atmosphere of mutual respect, building upon the institutions and traditions of the past which have kept Ripley a special place. In order to define, therefore, the aspects of growth the community of Ripley is willing to pursue in the next five to ten years and give direction to those agencies serving the community, the Planning Board of the Town of Ripley set to work in 1996 to develop a "Comprehensive Plan" for the Town of Ripley. Updates were initiated in 2009 and 2016 and it is anticipated that a vigorous ongoing update process will occur regularly. It is hoped that by setting forth a vision that promotes development, while protecting the agricultural base of the community, the citizens of Ripley will be able to support those agencies working to produce growth in the Town without the fear of uncontrolled expansion. This planning process is intended to build community cooperation in implementing shared goals for the future.

Section 2

BACKGROUND, LOCATION AND HISTORY

The Town of Ripley is situated in western Chautauqua County on the shores on Lake Erie. It lies some 70 miles west of Buffalo, NY, but only 25 miles east of Erie, PA. The presence of the first N.Y. State exit on I-90, along with two railroad main lines and two other major highways makes the community a Gateway to New York State.

The town covers an area of about 31,110 acres. Its shape is a modified square thanks to the irregularities caused by the Lake Erie frontage, of which there is about 8 miles. The earliest settlers came during and after 1803 to what was then part of the Town of Batavia in Genesee County. Hamlets known as Forsythe, Quincy and Northville developed along the Buffalo-Erie Road in the Town of Chautauqua. The present boundaries of the County were defined in 1808 by an act of the State

Legislature, and in 1811 Chautauqua County, (Chautauqua since 1869) was formally incorporated. In 1813, the Ripley area was part of the Town of Portland. On March 1, 1816, the number of settled freeman grew large enough to warrant a township and Ripley was incorporated. At that time, Ripley included the area that we now know as Westfield, which would later be incorporated as a separate town in 1829. It was at this time our present boundaries were established: Lake Erie on the north; Town of Mina on the south; Town of Westfield on the east; and the Pennsylvania state line on the west.

The opening of the Erie Canal during 1825 marked the period when the hamlet of Quincy developed into the main village, its name being changed to Ripley Village during the 1870's, in honor of General Eleazar Wheelock Ripley, under whom many of our pioneers fought in the War of 1812. Other major factors of change have included the coming of railroad service during 1852, locally drilled natural gas during the 1880s and 1890s, telephone and public water supply during 1896, electricity by 1914, radio during the 1920s, television during the 1940s, commercial natural gas lines in 1964, and cable TV access in the 1990s.

Ripley lays claim to a number of interesting firsts. The year was 1897 when the first automobile appeared in Chautauqua County and it appeared first in Ripley, having entered from Pennsylvania on a trip from Cleveland to New York City. Charles Mann Hamilton, a lifetime resident of Ripley, was first in the county to own an automobile, a Winton. So, naturally, the first "gasolene" station between Cleveland and Buffalo was located in Ripley. Hamilton, an avid racing fan, set a World Record for automobile racing on September, 28, 1901 at Fort Erie, Canada: 15 miles in 29.44 minutes!

Ripley is the site of excavations studying a local Indian village and burial ground and the site of the unique 'tomb table' grave of 1812 soldier, Lt. Campbell Alexander. It is also the hometown of the inventors of the Burrows Cycle Car, the Rickenbrode wrench, and the Orton Grape Harvester, which revolutionized viticulture all over the world as well as (and it is the hometown of) tire manufacturer, Mr. B. F. Goodrich.

The face of an almost totally self-sufficient town that had weathered many changes was never quite the same following World War II. Farm mechanization, fear of "smoke stack" development, the devastating loss of local business due to a major downtown fire and changes in the economic climate have brought hard times to the town of Ripley, New York.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The physical and topographic characteristics of the area provide the Town of Ripley with a great potential for diverse activities and development. From the lakeshore measured at 573 feet above sea level, the land gently undulates into the glacial moraine foothills of the Allegheny Mountains, to 1200 feet above sea level. At no place is the proximity of the hills and Lake Erie more distinct than at Ripley. There are many beautiful lake views from the slope rising above the lake plain as well as along the shoreline escarpment. Many small creeks drain north from the hills, but the watershed draining through the deep ravines of Gage's Gulf and Twenty-Mile Creek provide the Town with a natural focus for its conservation and recreational district. Although a reservoir built on Belson Creek supplies municipal water to the town's water districts, the majority of Ripley's residents depend on private wells tapping into the ground water supply. There are two major wetland areas designated within the township. One, at the southern edge of the town, is part of a large wetland covering portions of our southern

neighbor, Mina township; the other, known as Brockway Swamp, lies between Route 20 and the I-90 right-of way just outside the eastern edge of the hamlet. This being an area along the Canadian goose migration route, a number of farm ponds hospitable to migrating birds are also mentioned on the wetlands map. However, no area of the township is under designation as a federal flood plain area.

The soil on the lake plain is of varied consistency containing pockets of sand, clay and loam. Lake Erie protects the lake plain from some of the temperature extremes of inland areas, which supports a large grape growing industry. The lake plain, with its flatter topography, is also a natural place for transportation corridors and population centers to develop while steeper terrain and more severe weather, with less hospitable soils, have kept development in the southern parts of the township scattered and open.

POPULATION AND SERVICES

The estimated peak population period for the Town of Ripley occurred during the 1950s and 60s. In 1990, the population was just under 3000 people. According to the 2010 census, about 2,400 people, and in 2014 it is estimated about 2100 people live in Ripley. As the population has decreased over the years the Median age has increased. In 1990 the median age was 32.5 while in 2014 the median age was 42.1. The median household income and per capita income has decreased as well. These changes have resulted in a higher number of Ripley residents living below the poverty level.

The Ripley Free library converted to a "District Library" in 2016 becoming its' own taxing entity under the School District umbrella. Streets not owned by the State or County are maintained by the Town of Ripley. Municipal water district one and two presently service 400-500 households in the downtown area as well as along Route 5 East. In 2016, water districts three, four, and five were proposed, along with sewer

district two which will cover route 20 west to Shortman Road out route 5 west to the border. Two of the proposed water districts will cover the remainder of route 5 east to Westfield. Providing for redundant supply capability between the two Towns.

A solid waste disposal company under contract to the Town transports recyclables and garbage from a central collection site twice a month.

Religion and education came with the original settlers to the area. Services and classes were held in crude log cabin homes at first, until more permanent and grand structures could afford to be erected. Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians held the first classes and built the first churches. Presently, there are Mennonite and Four Square Gospel congregations as well. The only Catholic church in Ripley was consolidated in Westfield around 2013.

The earliest schools were independently formed, but carried on according to the State Laws of 1812 following town establishment. From Common District Schools to Union Free to Centralization, the children of Ripley have always been exposed to the advantages of local public education. Ripley Central School, right at the crossroads of Route 20 and Route 76, now serves between 200 and 300 students in grades pre K-7, with 80% of them using the school bus. Students from the more distant southerly part of the township are within the Sherman Central School District; others from the eastern edge of Ripley attend school in Westfield. Grades 7 thru 12 are sent to Chautauqua Lake Central School in Mayville, affording them greater opportunity for sports and elective classes.

Fire fighting and rescue squad services are provided entirely by volunteers. The Ripley Fire Department members, who are active, including about eight who have

advanced training as emergency medical technicians or auto extrication. There are two fire stations, one on the first block south of Main Street, the other in South Ripley. Some medical services are available through the Ripley Health Care Center, but the nearest hospital is only 10 to 15 minutes away in Westfield, NY. Other hospitals serving the area are in Dunkirk and Buffalo, NY, and Erie, PA. Ripley has a small administrative police office for services provided by the Chautauqua County Sheriff's Department.

Limited public transportation is available through the Chautauqua Area Rural Transit Service.

LAND USE

Land use in Ripley has long been generally unregulated. With large expanses of open, rural areas, if the neighbors' actions created a nuisance, you were generally far enough away not to have to confront it often. More recently, as escalating costs of town government have impacted Ripley's small population, and as the suburbs of Erie, PA, have expanded eastward along Lake Erie, Ripley's citizens have become aware of the need to consider what kind of environment they would like to live in and what type of development and preservation of open spaces would support their goals. Accordingly, in 1992 the first zoning law was passed.

That zoning law preserves a large portion of the Town in a **'Rural Use'** category, which is generally liberal in use application. It also defines a **'Conservation/ Recreation'** area within the open part of the township, which is basically 'untouchable' for development along the main water routes. It also marks off areas of the lake plain

that currently support small residential lot and small commercial uses and offers other lake plain areas for development of larger commercial and large-lot residential uses. Manufacturing and industrial uses are allowed in two separate small locations.

Residential uses were considered as a secondary issue in most of the planning discussions held. However, the designation of a mixed residential/small commercial use area in the community center was encouraged. Expansion of the water and sewer service lines was seen as a major obstacle to overcome before development both in the central residential area and in more outlying areas could progress. The high occupancy rate for residences in the community revealed in analysis of the last U.S. census indicates that additional residential development is indicated.

Considering the type of residences currently available in Ripley, small units to accommodate the needs of the elderly and of young people entering the work force would be of particular value to the community. However, the proximity of Erie and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania offers the potential for inviting new residents to develop second homes that take advantage of lake views along the lakeshore and up the hill south of Side Hill Road. Making full use of our Lake Shore should be given thorough consideration, Town-owned properties designated as overlooks or scenic camps, could be used as a viable method to increase revenue. This could include, but not be limited to cottage rentals, campsite areas, and other small business to support tourism along with mixed large lot residential-with approval through a special use permit.

Commercial uses are defined in the current zoning law. The small area designated for traditional downtown commercial use is already actually a mixed-use area and should be designated as such with a definition including small retail businesses and services and professional services as well as residential and religious uses. Commercial development within the community is definitely needed as Ripley is experiencing a marked lack of businesses serving the basic needs of a community. Only a few scattered businesses are now located in the currently designated commercial zoning district.

Manufacturing/Industrial uses are presently limited, both actually and potentially. There are only two businesses in town that fit the description. Re-examination of the needs of such entities and redesigning of the zoning districts is a first step. Expansion of water and sewer lines, probably under the auspices of private developers, would be another step toward expansion in M/I uses. Addition of a NY State designated "Shovel Ready" site on route 20 near Shortman Road is hoped to be a commercial project magnet.

ECONOMY

Several diverse economic elements offer hope for strengthening Ripley's economy. Farming has always been a mainstay in Ripley; however, dairy, beef, hog, and poultry farming which supported many families in the southern part of the township in earlier years have declined in profitability and number in recent years until few remain. Still, farming is a major factor in the economy here. The town developed agriculturally as a grain growing section, but the planting of the first grapevine during 1869 started an era of viticulture which grew to 5700 acres by 1907. Although the acreage today is

considerably less, it is still an important industry. Apple, cherry, and hardy peach orchards, as well as berry, sweet corn, and truck farm production continue to be a vital part of the agricultural landscape. Local Wineries and Micro-brew enterprise are a burgeoning business prospect.

Another element of Ripley's economy is shown by a look at a current list of businesses in Ripley. Apparently the trend of the 1990's to home-based businesses and entrepreneurship is well established here. With this and the nation-wide concern for quality of life, which is driving business owners and employees to seek a more rural lifestyle, Ripley should be able to attract an increasingly diverse population of investors. It bodes well for the future of Ripley where its residents have long been informally committed to preservation of the historic character of the Town.

A third element of economic development in Ripley is the growing market for unobtrusive services for traveling visitors. There are 8 to 10 miles of the internationally known Seaway Trail crossing Ripley, but there are no rest/refreshment or repair/supply facilities along the Ripley stretch of Route 5.

The historical buildings of Ripley also offer an old-fashioned charm that could be used as a magnet for an area of specialty retail development. Undeveloped areas in the hills of South Ripley invite the outdoors-oriented person to thoughts of camping, hiking, and skiing activities. The immediate proximity of Lake Erie and its shoreline provide a variety of current, as well as potential recreational opportunities, for both local residents

and visitors. Further, the popularity of Chautauqua Institution and other nearby tourist attractions suggests that additional lodging and dining facilities would be well used.

Two final elements are not to be ignored. Pre-existing access to three major trucking routes and two railroad lines (including a siding off the main line) and the presence of a population that chooses to live here, even without much gainful employment available, could be powerful plusses for business owners seeking to locate themselves advantageously with regards to supply and distribution routes and to develop a stable work force.

CONCLUSION

Today Ripley faces the challenge of peaceful coexistence with the twenty-first century. We cannot survive by ignoring or rejecting all change and modernization, but we need not become absorbed by urban sprawl either. The current planning process has first tried to poll the community's attitudes and needs to develop a shared vision. Defining a goal behind which the majority of the community can unite was step one. The next three sections contain step two; an outline of some of the community's ideas, some recommendations as to how implementation can be accomplished and an action agenda for the next two years.

The final part of the planning process is to review progress on a regular basis, encouraging full public participation, and to reformulate long and short-term goals through united community efforts.

These steps will ensure the possibility of realizing Ripley's vision of being an affordable place to live without having a major change in our rural way of life.

Section 3

COMMUNITY GOALS AND STRATEGIES

A generally shared vision of Ripley as an affordable place to live with a rural way of life was enunciated during the original and current planning effort. This underlies the list of general and specific goals for the future of Ripley, which are outlined below. Detailed recommendations for implementing them are listed in Sections 4 and 5. The goals, however, are the most important aspect of this plan and will, when kept in sight, unify the Town in its transition from a firm 19th century foundation to a vital 21st century rural community. Planning and zoning decisions with public and private investments, of both finances and energy, should be made in a manner consistent with fulfilling these goals.

The predominant feeling of the residents of Ripley is a deep emotional attachment to the rural setting and agricultural heritage of the Town. There is no groundswell of support for dramatic changes. On the contrary, the deepest concern is to retain the Town's historically rural characteristics while dealing effectively with modern economic realities.

The goals and strategies that follow are not listed in order of priority. All are interrelated with one another. They are presented in an order that flows from one subject to another.

MAINTAIN A RURAL STYLE OF LIFE

This was a part of the vision that seemed to capture the spirit of the community during the original presentations and hearings held. Ripley is very proud of its long history of agricultural contributions to the economy of the State including dairy farming and many acres of vineyards and orchards. Agricultural practices are changing with the times, but panoramic views of open farming country and beautiful Lake Erie are of utmost importance to the people's vision of a rural way of life. Nevertheless, the population center(s) of the Town are also an integral part of the rural lifestyle. They provide nearby sources for commodities and services and employment. But more importantly they provide the gathering places where most faces become familiar and the sense of a safe and relaxed rural community character is solidified. With increasing economic vitality, they will be the glue that holds this large township together as, indeed, the community where folks "Come Home to Ripley".

Some of the specific goals directed toward maintaining the rural Ripley atmosphere include:

- Retaining large areas of actively producing agricultural businesses.

- Revitalizing the downtown Main Street shopping area in conjunction with establishment of an historical district.
- Maintaining open spaces and agricultural areas along the entry corridors on Route I-90, Route 20, Route 5, and Route 76.
- Maintaining and improving citizen participation and open communications regarding local governmental activities.
- Providing for appropriate ground water protection including both wellhead protection as well as general community watershed protection by providing for development controls in areas, which are specifically sensitive to ground water disruption.

RETAIN ACTIVE FARM PRODUCTION

Retaining large areas of active agricultural production is a given in Ripley. Indeed, active farming is implicit in the community's rural self-image. Maintenance of a hospitable environment for such enterprises is certainly high on the priority list. However, working together to maintain actively producing agricultural businesses into and through the 21st century will require a commitment on the part of both farmers and non-farmers. To sustain a rural farming society, the requirements of efficient farming will always have priority over the comfort of the neighbors. Those seeking out and moving into an area of active farm production must respect the necessity for activities that may produce noise, odor, or air pollution from time to time. However, non-farming residents do contribute to the tax base and economic viability of the town and those conducting farm operations should respect their neighbors by doing as much as

possible to use responsible modern agricultural practices to reduce the nuisance effects of their business.

Specific strategies for supporting agricultural production as part of the rural way of life in Ripley include:

- Reviewing current zoning language to see that it contains clear and simple land use regulations providing for protection of responsible agricultural practices.
- Making available to individual and corporate residential property developers up-to-date public records of properties in active agricultural production and the practices likely to be associated with each type of production.
- Facilitating development of farming related projects such as a farmer's market, farm tours, hayrides, horseback riding, country-dances, etc.
- Encouraging best-management practices to minimize soil erosion, tillable land disruption or other developmental impacts, which would diminish active farm production or alter qualitatively the appropriate rural setting in the community, as are available from the County Agricultural Extension Service.

REVITALIZE MAIN STREET

Revitalizing the economy of the downtown Main Street shopping area is also clearly a priority for many of Ripley's residents. They want downtown to be a place where members of the community can keep in touch as they take care of the basic business activities people depend upon in their daily lives. Non-retail businesses and apartments on upper floors can add vitality, employment and customers.

While Ripley should not lose its unique character, shops and facilities that draw tourists can add valuable economic activity. Antique shops and a racing memorabilia shop currently attract visitors. A number of historical sites along Route 20, including the stately Hamilton Mansion, could contribute to an historical district, the development of which could attract more.

Specific strategies for revitalization of Ripley's rural community center include:

- Changing the zoning to include a mixed-use district and an historical overlay district in order to encourage revitalizing development in character with the existing architecture. Provide SUP process for development along the lake shore and public areas.
- Marketing the downtown to desirable retail uses, adding basic clothing, pharmacy, supermarket stores and barbershop, to the hardware, bank, post office, and library already on Main Street.
- Developing a plan for the purpose of protecting and improving historic structures; provide for ways to utilize public land along the route 5 shoreline. Research and CONTINUE TO apply for grant moneys to facilitate this work.
- Actively pursue derelict structures and property maintenance issues.

MAINTAIN RURAL ENTRY CORRIDORS

The concern for Ripley's entry points was based both on aesthetics and the need to give a clearer sense of arrival and direction when entering the Town. Two entry points need to be considered: the political boundaries and the entry points into the downtown

area. As the traveler, whether a resident or a visitor, enters at the political boundaries, nothing says "rural" like acres of open space and croplands. While residential, commercial, and tourist development were agreed to be essential to the economic welfare of Ripley, the importance residents placed on the sense of being in the country dictates that strong measures should be taken to preserve the natural open spaces and agricultural areas currently existing along Routes I-90, 20, 5, and 76, the entry corridors to the community. However, this can profitably be done without severely curtailing the development of prime properties in close proximity to these major transportation routes by initiating the following strategies:

- Removing deteriorating structures from sites along the entry corridors.
- Improving directional signage on Route 5, Route 20, and Shortman Road.
- Instituting design guidelines for screening and placement of signs along the entry corridors with a purpose of controlling visual pollution of rural vistas.
- Providing clearer guidelines for commercial signs, especially along the entry corridors.
- Providing for full utilization of the existing roadway network so as to avoid the need for new roads.
- Provide clear guidelines for placement of towers, wind turbines and solar panels in all districts.

CONTINUE AN OPEN DIALOGUE

Local political events occurring at the same time the planning process was under way, stimulated a strong desire for a sense of more public inclusion in matters pertaining to all local governmental activities. The 1997 Town Board's initiation of several citizens advisory committees contributed dramatically towards fulfilling that goal.

It should, however, be viewed as just the beginning of a continuing process in which Town residents and their elected and appointed officials develop a close working relationship to identify and meet community goals for the future. Some specific follow-up strategies include:

- Maintaining and/or adding inclusive advisory committee structures in the area of community development.
- Developing and maintaining avenues for printed reports of official government actions and concerns, as well as community organizations' activities and concerns, to be distributed both downtown and in South Ripley.
- Providing opportunities for general public input meetings on a regular basis.
- Getting various organizations to work together to coordinate community-wide activities and/or celebrations.
- Involving business and property owners more effectively in the planning process.

MAKE RIPLEY AN AFFORDABLE PLACE TO LIVE

This part of the vision was of overriding importance, being repeated time and time again in every discussion of comprehensive planning. The loss of substantial portions of the commercial industrial tax base in the post war years has shifted the tax burden disproportionately to the residential property owners of Ripley, often with the result of having unacceptably high impacts on household incomes. Resistance to any changes in the community, common in previous years, has thus yielded to a general acceptance of the need for significant business and residential growth. Some citizens even expressed willingness to compromise on the overall rural character of the community and accept any kind of development in any part of the Town in order to ensure economic growth. Most felt, however, that while some residential development would be

advantageous to most parts of the Town, any major commercial development effort would be best concentrated in portions of the lake plain close to transportation corridors.

Withdrawing a number of acres from formerly agricultural uses for commercial development purposes, while necessary at this time should not become a regular part of Town policy. A large proportion of the township has been and should continue to be dedicated to agricultural pursuits. Local government regulations should allow all reasonable practices associated with these businesses. This does not mean that visible junk piles or unmuffled engines must be tolerated.

It does mean that disease preventative spraying, fertilizing, cleaning, harvesting, and storage' activities, conducted in a manner consistent with current standards of the industry, must be tolerated in spite of non-aesthetic sights, sounds, or, smells.

In order to encourage economic growth without excessively intruding on the-rural atmosphere of the community the following goals were established:

- Work with local, county, regional, state, and federal economic development agencies to recruit business investment that will provide employment opportunities, particularly for long-term employees and entry-level workers.
- Increase tourist flow.
- Provide for increased residential development.
- Increase recreational opportunities, particularly for young people.
- Work with the School Board to provide for affordable quality educational opportunities for all members of the community.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

An urgent need in Ripley is for a place of employment. Agriculture, which historically provided an occupation for many families and used many seasonal, unskilled workers is no longer a major employment source as it evolves into fewer, larger business entities and new technologies make it less labor intensive. Many of our adults are commuting 25 miles or more to find employment. Our students have very few opportunities available to them to get employment experience. Our High School graduates have few, if any incentives or opportunities to support themselves while remaining within the community. The Main Street area is addressed as part of the Rural Style of Life goal and is certainly an important part of the economic vitality effort; however in every planning input meeting a multitude of ideas emerged for business enterprises of all kinds in the Town of Ripley. However, many felt there were some almost insurmountable obstacles that had kept any of these possibilities from developing. Specifically, the Shortman Road area with its I-90 access was identified as a desirable development location. To be successful in recruiting business employers to the Town, private cooperation is vital; nevertheless the following important public strategies were identified:

- Redefining zoning districts to clarify purposes and revising the zoning map to reflect current planning goals including the development of one or more commercial/industrial type employment complexes.
- Extending water and sewer services to the Shortman Road area, and along route 5 east.
- Developing an attractive incentive program to encourage improvement and expansion of established business locations as well as new business investment.

The community's plan should contemplate that business development centers are often very similar across the nation and successful business recruitment often depends on developing non-economic quality of life opportunities, as well as insuring the ease of business operations through community infrastructure.

INCREASE TOURIST FLOW TO RIPLEY

Planning discussions often addressed the question of how to effectively attract tourist dollars to Ripley without detracting from its character as a personal 'little corner of the world' for its residents. Again a multitude of ideas surfaced for private sector development including development of educational and recreational farm activities such as farm tours, wine and micro brew tours, horseback riding, hay rides, u-pick crops and country dancing; development of Route 5 properties to provide services and camping for Seaway Trail particularly bicyclists travelers,; and development of South Ripley sites to provide services for hikers, campers, and skiers.

Specific public strategies to encourage this type of development include:

- Improving welcoming facilities at the I-90 Thruway exit through cooperation with the County funding programs.
- Incorporating private rural activities as resources in public celebrations and activities.
- Revising the zoning code to provide clear and hospitable guidelines for such developments.
- Creating informational brochures for distribution at welcome centers, commercial establishments, as well as other public outlets.

PROVIDE FOR INCREASED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Census analysis shows a high percentage of occupied units in Ripley, indicating a shortage of available housing. Housing in Ripley has historically been single-family ownership. Three aspects of this issue finally surfaced. First, Ripley's citizens want to encourage their young people to stay and settle in Ripley, but young people looking for a place to rent as they start out on their own have a hard time finding accommodations in town. Second, while a high proportion of our elderly choose to continue living in the community, those who are finding the large homes in which they raised their families are now more than they need or can comfortably manage, also find it difficult to relocate to a smaller home within their own community. Third, development of new residences by refurbishing currently underused property was seen as a benign yet effective way to increase the tax base in the Town. Some specific strategies to encourage this development include:

- Reviewing and revising the zoning code and map to provide options for affordable small home development and extended temporary living quarters aimed specifically towards the needs of young families and Senior Citizens with possible tax incentives.
- Review and renew remodeling and home improvement incentives with Temporary Tax Abatement on projects involving more than \$5,000 investment.
- Designating more areas for executive housing in parts of town with a view of the lake.
- Providing a hospitable climate for home-based business entrepreneurs.
- Extending water and sewer service further along Route 5, Route 20, and Side Hill Road.

- Exploring ways to recruit development of a graduated care complex for Senior Citizens.

INCREASE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

This is one suggestion for improving the community that came up frequently during the planning process. Ripley's residents recognized its need for wholesome recreational outlets, particularly for young people. The development of commercial recreational enterprises would provide both recreation and employment to the Town. The advantage of the central location Ripley enjoys among the smaller communities between Erie and Fredonia should be capitalized upon. Identifying a location and seeking an investor for an all-season sports complex to become a hub of facilities and activities for the youth of this and surrounding communities was a specific suggestion. Publicly owned park facilities should also be improved and maintained. Specific suggestions offered by the Parks, Recreation and Education Advisory Committee included:

- Continuing improvement of facilities at the Town Beach by installing steps to the beach area and platforms on the walk path to the steps.
- Planting trees to shade spectator areas of the baseball and soccer areas at the Ripley Community Park by the Town Building.
- Seeking funding to replace and upgrade the creative playground area for safety.
- Constructing a larger building in the Community Park area to act as a center for weekly or monthly activities.
- Seeking grants to provide additional funding for community recreational development programs.

PROVIDE FOR AFFORDABLE QUALITY EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY

Property taxes in most of Ripley are divided between 50% school taxes, 40% Chautauqua County taxes, and 10% Town taxes. The economic impact of the school expenses therefore is high. While Ripley has produced a number of outstanding graduates over the years, concern for the cost of doing so, especially with increasing State requirements is great. Complicating the situation, however, is the fact that Ripley is served by three different school districts. While the Ripley Central School District has responsibility for the educational needs of much of the township, a significant number of residents in the southern part of the township are served by the Sherman Central School District, as well as some areas that are served by the Westfield School District. The Ripley Central School Board is searching for alternative ways to provide a quality education in town. Individual citizens and local government need to CONTINUE TO ACTIVELY be involved in working out a solution.

CONCLUSION

The goals and strategies listed above reflect the input of a broad cross-section of the community. It is, however, merely a list of goals and, therefore, no more than a wish list. Many of these items have been suggested for years without producing results. In order to achieve the Town's goals, people will have to work closely together on some of the implementation steps, which follow. They will need to set priorities and follow through on action commitments.

One widely shared goal was not specifically mentioned much during the planning meetings, probably because it is taken for granted. This is the goal of maintaining and improving the quality of public services, especially fire protection, emergency rescue, police, schools and public works, while keeping the costs of these services and the tax rate under control. Providing high quality public services requires a continued investment in these functions, and not neglecting them in order to fund items from the preceding wish list. A successful planning process should help stimulate high quality growth, which will increase the community's ability to finance basic services, as well as other public improvements.

Section 4

IMPLEMENTATION OF GOALS AND STRATEGIES

A comprehensive plan has value only if people are willing to do the work of implementing it. The planning process revealed a degree of consensus that should assure everyone that the proposed goals, strategies and implementation measures will be broadly supported. It is probably possible to fulfill most of the goals over a long enough time frame, but only if people follow through with actions and if the Town enjoys prosperity sufficient to support the public improvements that are suggested. The real work, and the real benefit, of the planning process comes from moving forward with specific actions. The most important types of action that need to be taken fall into the categories of zoning changes and public investments.

REGULATORY (ZONING) CHANGES

Many of the goals emerging from the planning process cannot be achieved under the Town's current zoning. It is therefore necessary to make changes in at least the following areas:

DOWNTOWN USES

The existing zoning of the downtown Main Street area is C-1 with a surrounding R-1 district. Diversity is needed to make a Rural Community Center work. Use limitations based upon the concern that different uses might conflict with one another need to be addressed with design and compatibility criteria administered through the site planning and special permit processes. In order to implement the goal of revitalizing the Main Street area, it will be necessary to change both the zoning map and the text relating to uses in this area.

Recommendation:

Create a central community district that allows a wide range of uses, with compatibility criteria to assure that they reinforce and do not damage each other.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

An historic over-zone may provide valuable protection for preserving the character of Ripley's downtown. The Town should consider the possibility of establishment of an historic over-zone. The establishment of an historic over-zone may qualify the Town as a Certified Local Government (CLG) under state and federal law, in which case it will become eligible for funding for additional planning and protection of historic resources. This should be pursued with the State Historic Preservation Office.

Recommendation:

Consider creation of an historic over-zone, contact the State Historic Preservation Office to determine eligibility for CLG status, and make amendments to the zoning law, if feasible, in order to secure CLG status.

ENTRY CORRIDOR

An entry corridor over-zone is a good basic provision for protecting the rural aesthetics upon entering Ripley. It should be created with a strong set of design and maintenance criteria.

Recommendation:

Create an entry corridor over-zone with necessary codification in order to create and preserve an asthetically rural corridor through the township.

Coordinate development concepts of maximizing use of the existing roadways within the township to avoid the necessity of utilizing additional lands for roadway construction and to maximize development along existing thoroughfares within the Town.

SITE PLAN REVIEW

Currently, site plan review applies only to a selected miscellany of major projects in the town. Extending site plan review throughout the town for projects involving division of lots and for all projects above a certain size or scale will enable the Town to better

control the layout and appearance of projects. Also, site plan criteria should take into account the concern about maintaining the rural style of the community so prominently raised.

Recommendation:

Extend site plan review throughout the Town for larger commercial and residential uses, and set up site planning standards to reflect the desire of Town residents for development that is in harmony with the rural atmosphere of the community and compatible with the architecture in all areas with extra attention in the historic district.

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS

In planning for the development of a town it is important to define clearly the uses considered suitable for specific areas of the township. The current definitions are vague and difficult for residents or developers to understand.

Recommendation:

Rewrite section 401 to establish districts for specific types of Commercial, Industrial, and Manufacturing uses with clear definitions.

LAND USES

In the years since the zoning law was adopted, changes in technology and in the fabric of our society have brought about the need for review of permitted land uses with a view to include new and clarify old provisions.

Recommendation:

Review provisions for permitted land uses and rewrite or add new uses as needed. Make such modifications to simplify the text and to make it more readable and user friendly.

RESIDENTIAL USES

In order to encourage residential development, much clearer provisions for a variety of residential uses than is contained in the current zoning law must be available. Neither current residents, nor potential developers of residential properties can now easily determine how the provisions of the zoning code affect their projects. Areas should be designated for large lot home development distinct from lakeshore development. Provisions for multiple family developments should be more clearly made.

Recommendation:

Rewrite definitions of residential districts to include multiple family units and add a district designated for large lot development.

ZONING MAP

As a result of the Comprehensive Plan recommendations, the Zoning Map will change and a new one must be prepared and certified for submission to the Department of State.

Recommendation:

Prepare a redesigned zoning map to accurately reflect new planning strategies and priorities.

CODIFICATION

A fundamental public need is to prepare and distribute an updated copy of the Zoning Law for public use. Copies of the original law, adopted in 1992, are available. The perception that the law is undesirably complex for the needs of the community and the discovery of some provisions scattered through different sections and appendices, makes it very difficult for most citizens to determine the zoning provisions applicable to their property and even difficult for members of the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Planning Board to know and act in all their assigned functions.

Recommendation:

When the substantive amendments proposed above are adopted, the entire zoning law should be recodified into a simple, easy-to-use PDF searchable format. This should include establishment of clear procedures, responsibilities and record-keeping functions for officials involved with zoning administration and enforcement.

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

The regulatory changes discussed above will enable the Town to shape the activities of private landowners and developers. Since much of the Town of Ripley has not been developed, some of the most important recommendations relate to public projects that will support the development necessary to improve the tax base, while retaining Ripley's unique rural atmosphere.

Some of these recommendations simply require different management of public facilities. Others will require the expenditure of funds to make public improvements. The

challenge, of course, is to secure funding from state, federal or private sources, reducing the necessity to call upon local revenues. A major resource in Ripley is volunteer workers and citizens willing to serve the Town Board in an advisory capacity. Local residents working together can often find ways to stretch dollars far more effectively than relying on governmental intervention.

ESTABLISHING PRIORITIES

In order to accomplish the goals proposed in Section 3, the Town will need to set priorities for public improvement projects. This can be done with the help of citizen volunteers working to document needs, determine costs and research funding availability. Not everything that people want can be done, and trade-off will be necessary. Some principles to bear in mind are that:

- Operation, routine maintenance and periodic investment in new equipment for essential services should not be sacrificed for the sake of more visible improvements.
- Projects that the private sector can finance and completely undertake should be done privately, with appropriate Town supervision.
- A small number of inexpensive but visible projects should be undertaken quickly to show positive results. These might be done by volunteers or funded by outside sources.
- Larger, longer-term projects should be planned in a manner that is phased in overtime.
- Desirable projects that can be funded by grants or other outside sources should be actively pursued.

Recommendation:

The Town should set priorities for public improvements based upon the Section 3 goals. Particular attention should be paid to water and sewer line extensions, welcoming facilities, signs and appearance in the entry corridors, and town-owned activity areas. However, the regularly-occurring need for street and sidewalk improvements, water and sewer improvements, fire equipment, and Town building and park maintenance should be taken into account as part of the long term planning process.

BUDGETING

The Town needs to continue with the development of a long-term budgeting process for capital improvements. In an era of limited public resources, this will enable it to set priorities and work systematically toward the fulfillment of its goals. Having such a system in place will also increase the Town's effectiveness in applying for and receiving grants to fund public improvements.

Recommendation:

The Town should establish a capital improvement program that takes the proposed goals established above, as well as the regularly occurring investment requirements of the Town departments and translates them into phased action steps. Part of this process is to identify sources of funding including state and federal transportation funding programs.

DOT AND RAILROADS

Many of the most divisive issues in Ripley are related to transportation. Since Ripley is an important highway entry point in the State of New York and is also significantly affected by the railroads, it must develop an active voice in negotiating with the two entities, which control these transportation systems. These agencies also control significant amounts of funding that can be used either for the benefit or to the detriment of the Town.

Recommendation:

Town leaders should meet regularly with DOT to keep abreast of DOT project plans, to communicate the Comprehensive Plan goals and strategies, and to enlist their support and cooperation. Some of the issues, which need to be discussed, include:

- *Destination signs*
- *Sidewalks in Main Street revitalization area*
- *DOT 5-year plan projects affecting Ripley*
- *Cooperative construction of supply water to Shortman Road Thruway exit area*

One major aspect of Ripley, which can be seen as both an asset and a liability, is the Railroad lines that pass through the Town. A comprehensive plan for the community would not be complete without consideration of the Railroads and a careful look at probable changes in Railroad policies and practices, especially with regard to at grade crossings, both within the hamlet and with reference to outlying and farm crossings. Without a plan to deal with such actions, Ripley could become fragmented and bitter. With an appropriate plan, a delightful and vital community could emerge.

Recommendation:

Town leaders should meet regularly with Conrail and Norfolk and Southern officials to communicate the Comprehensive Plan goals and strategies and to enlist their support and cooperation. Some of the issues that need to be discussed include:

- Construction of an off-grade railroad crossing
- At-grade agricultural and street crossings
- Railroad spur property reuse
- Coming to future planning events
- Fencing requirements

REGIONAL COOPERATION

Ripley has strong sense of local identity and independence. Unfortunately, this sometimes contributes to a sense of isolation, of being in an unnoticed little corner of the County and the State. Nevertheless, some of the desirable services and projects identified in the planning discussions can only be successful if the Town works cooperatively with a larger population and a more regional perspective. The most obvious examples involve the suggestion of a major family sports complex and the management of school costs through a combined districting arrangement.

Recommendations:

Town residents should consider which of the facilities and improvement they desire might be supported by adjacent towns and Ripley and begin discussions with these towns on how to develop such facilities.

Section 5

AN ACTION AGENDA

Establishing goals, strategies and implementation measures are helpful, but do not by its self produce results. Only specific actions taken in furtherance of the goals and recommendations in Section 2 and 3 will move the Town along the road toward achieving its goals. Some of these are immediate short-term actions (3-6 months); some are longer-term (6-18 months). The specific actions that follow are recommended to begin implementing the Town's consensus.

Three to Six Months

1. The Town Board has already formed five citizens' committees that have done a great deal of work identifying and addressing immediate community concerns. These committees are in an excellent position to carry out the action agenda necessary to move this plan from paper into real life and, indeed, are already doing so. They are focusing on the following:

Community Pride

- Get approval for placement of an across-the-intersection sign at the intersection of Routes 20 and 76.
- Place Welcome signs on all the major roads entering the township.
- Research establishing one or more yearly community events unique to the Town of Ripley.

Communications

- Establish a community news section in the School information system.

- Place a distribution box for School News Letter in South Ripley'.
- Keep the Town announcement board up to date.
- Research an appropriate location for a Town Bulletin Board in the Main Street area.
- Establish and maintain a Town Website and social media interface to keep citizens aware of upcoming meetings and events.

Parks Improvement

- Install steps to the beach area at Ripley Town Park. Provide tent camping sites and scenic overlook area.
- Plant trees in the baseball and soccer areas of Ripley Community Park.
- Secure funding for rebuilding of the Creative Playground at the Ripley Community Park.
- The Planning Board should also have formed committees of interested citizens to focus on the following:

a) Main Street Revitalization

- Research the process.
- Develop a plan for revitalization of the downtown area.

b) Zoning Law Revision

- Identify and prioritize sections needing revision.
- Research and recommend additions to and deletions from the zoning law.
- Research and recommend new district boundaries, including overlay districts.

2. Complete the first draft of the Comprehensive Plan focusing on goals, priorities and an action agenda. Circulate this widely to the public as well as to the County, DOT, as well as other business and industrial residence.
3. Draft zoning amendments to implement community goals. Consider committee recommendations on a comprehensive rewrite to make the zoning more easily understood.
4. Recruit local professionals in planning, development, law, writing, printing, accounting, design, and other relevant fields to assist the action committees and the Planning Board. This will assure greater community participation and more realistic and realizable, outcomes.
5. Recruit a citizen grant writer to research and write grant applications for implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.
6. Convene a bi-monthly Community Council to coordinate the activities of committees, other organizations and the school district to review progress on the Comprehensive Plan and to encourage full public participation in the planning process.
7. Meet with DOT and Railroad officials to invite their participation, ask current questions, set a schedule for keeping them informed about Ripley's progress and to ascertain their schedule for making highway and railroad improvements.

Six to Eighteen Months

1. Complete revision and adopt changes to the zoning law and supportive regulation and design guidelines for special districts.
2. Complete an historic inventory and survey and seek National Register listing.
3. Establish a capital improvement planning process for public improvements in the Town.

4. Continue with implementation of committee action plans to:

- Replace current playground.
- Plant trees yearly in Community Park.
- Install platforms on walk path at Ripley Beach area.
- Build a larger building at the Community Park.
- Erect a Town Bulletin Board.
- Place a RIPLEY, NY sign over Main Street.
- Establish one or more annual community events.
- Keep community informed through printed reports in Blue Eagle Express.
- Enhance the appearance of entry corridors by removal or upgrading of derelict buildings through code enforcement.
- Erect an inviting welcome center with County support.

5. Each year, reformulate short and long term goals for the following eighteen months. Consider scheduling a Planning Event in October (before the 'snowbirds' go south).

6. Complete planning for Main Street revitalization with short and long term goals and an action agenda.

Civilian employed population 16 years and over	964	+/-154	964	(X)
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	43	+/-31	4.5%	+/-3.1
Construction	67	+/-38	7.0%	+/-3.8
Manufacturing	185	+/-48	19.2%	+/-5.2
Wholesale trade	0	+/-11	0.0%	+/-3.1
Retail trade	75	+/-32	7.8%	+/-2.9
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	50	+/-26	5.2%	+/-2.7
Information	25	+/-26	2.6%	+/-2.6
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	37	+/-20	3.8%	+/-2.0
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	60	+/-35	6.2%	+/-3.5
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	242	+/-78	25.1%	+/-6.5
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	119	+/-48	12.3%	+/-4.6
Other services, except public administration	42	+/-25	4.4%	+/-2.5
Public administration	19	+/-13	2.0%	+/-1.4
CLASS OF WORKER				
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	964	+/-154	964	(X)
Private wage and salary workers	786	+/-132	81.5%	+/-5.6
Government workers	109	+/-49	11.3%	+/-4.8
Self-employed in own not incorporated business workers	69	+/-31	7.2%	+/-2.9
Unpaid family workers	0	+/-11	0.0%	+/-3.1
INCOME AND BENEFITS (IN 2014 INFLATION-ADJUSTED DOLLARS)				
Total households	853	+/-78	853	(X)
Less than \$10,000	82	+/-45	9.6%	+/-5.2
\$10,000 to \$14,999	49	+/-23	5.7%	+/-2.6
\$15,000 to \$24,999	109	+/-30	12.8%	+/-3.6
\$25,000 to \$34,999	157	+/-43	18.4%	+/-4.5
\$35,000 to \$49,999	128	+/-37	15.0%	+/-4.2
\$50,000 to \$74,999	154	+/-47	18.1%	+/-5.5
\$75,000 to \$99,999	80	+/-36	9.4%	+/-4.2
\$100,000 to \$149,999	63	+/-29	7.4%	+/-3.2
\$150,000 to \$199,999	18	+/-12	2.1%	+/-1.4
\$200,000 or more	13	+/-14	1.5%	+/-1.6
Median household income (dollars)	40,121	+/-6,146	(X)	(X)
Mean household income (dollars)	51,688	+/-6,810	(X)	(X)
With earnings				
Mean earnings (dollars)	51,046	+/-6,096	(X)	(X)
With Social Security	335	+/-58	39.3%	+/-6.3
Mean Social Security income (dollars)	16,710	+/-2,426	(X)	(X)
With retirement income	160	+/-42	18.8%	+/-4.9
Mean retirement income (dollars)	35,724	+/-26,356	(X)	(X)

With Supplemental Security Income	32	+/-18	3.8%	+/-2.2
Mean Supplemental Security Income (dollars)	14,675	+/-3,875	(X)	(X)
With cash public assistance income	17	+/-12	2.0%	+/-1.5
Mean cash public assistance income (dollars)	3,800	+/-1,265	(X)	(X)
With Food Stamp/SNAP benefits in the past 12 months	127	+/-47	14.9%	+/-5.4
Families	616	+/-79	616	(X)
Less than \$10,000	54	+/-39	8.8%	+/-6.3
\$10,000 to \$14,999	7	+/-8	1.1%	+/-1.3
\$15,000 to \$24,999	65	+/-31	10.6%	+/-4.9
\$25,000 to \$34,999	99	+/-38	16.1%	+/-5.4
\$35,000 to \$49,999	98	+/-33	15.9%	+/-5.2
\$50,000 to \$74,999	133	+/-45	21.6%	+/-6.8
\$75,000 to \$99,999	80	+/-36	13.0%	+/-5.9
\$100,000 to \$149,999	63	+/-29	10.2%	+/-4.4
\$150,000 to \$199,999	13	+/-11	2.1%	+/-1.8
\$200,000 or more	4	+/-7	0.6%	+/-1.0
Median family income (dollars)	47,656	+/-5,739	(X)	(X)
Mean family income (dollars)	54,990	+/-5,415	(X)	(X)
Per capita income (dollars)	21,597	+/-2,968	(X)	(X)

SECTION V. REPEALER

This Local Law repeals in total the Town of Ripley Local Law 2-1998 which enacted the original Town of Ripley Comprehensive Plan.

SECTION VI. SEPARABILITY

If any part or provision of this Local Law or the application thereof be adjudged invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, such judgment shall be confined in its operation to the part or provision or application directly involved in the controversy in which such judgment shall have been rendered and shall not affect or impair the validity of the remainder of this Local Law.

(If additional space is needed, attach pages the same size as this sheet, and number each.)

Page 1 of 4

DOS-239 (Rev. 11/99)

(Complete the certification in the paragraph that applies to the filing of this local law and strike out that which is not applicable.)

1. (Final adoption by local legislative body only.)

I hereby certify that the local law annexed hereto, designated as local law No. 1 of 20 17 of the ~~(County)(City)(Town)(Village)~~ of Ripley was duly passed by the Town Board on 1/12, 2017, in accordance with the applicable provisions of law.
(Name of Legislative Body)

2. ~~(Passage by local legislative body with approval, no disapproval or repassage after disapproval by the Elective Chief Executive Officer*.)~~

I hereby certify that the local law annexed hereto, designated as local law No. _____ of 20 _____ of the ~~(County)(City)(Town)(Village)~~ of _____ was duly passed by the _____ on _____, 20____, and was (approved) (not approved) ~~(repassed after disapproval)~~ by the _____ and was deemed duly adopted on _____, 20____, in accordance with the applicable provisions of law.
(Name of Legislative Body)
(Elective Chief Executive Officer*)

3. ~~(Final adoption by referendum.)~~

I hereby certify that the local law annexed hereto, designated as local law No. _____ of 20 _____ of the ~~(County)(City)(Town)(Village)~~ of _____ was duly passed by the _____ on _____, 20____, and was (approved) (not approved) ~~(repassed after disapproval)~~ by the _____ on _____, 20____. Such local law was submitted to the people by reason of a (mandatory)(permissive) referendum, and received the affirmative vote of a majority of the qualified electors voting thereon at the (general)(special)(annual) election held on _____, 20____, in accordance with the applicable provisions of law.

4. ~~(Subject to permissive referendum and final adoption because no valid petition was filed requesting referendum.)~~

I hereby certify that the local law annexed hereto, designated as local law No. _____ of 20 _____ of the (County)(City)(Town)(Village) of _____ was duly passed by the _____ on _____ 20 _____, and was (approved) (not approved) (Name of Legislative Body) repassed after disapproval) by the _____ on _____ 20 _____. Such local (Elective Chief Executive Officer*) law was subject to permissive referendum and no valid petition requesting such referendum was filed as of _____ 20 _____, in accordance with the applicable provisions of law.

*Elective Chief Executive Officer means or includes the chief executive officer of a county elected on a county-wide basis or, if there be none, the chairperson of the county legislative body, the mayor of a city or village, or the supervisor of a town where such officer is vested with the power to approve or veto local laws or ordinances.

Page 3 of 4

DOS-239 (Rev. 11/99)

5. ~~(City local law concerning Charter revision proposed by petition.)~~

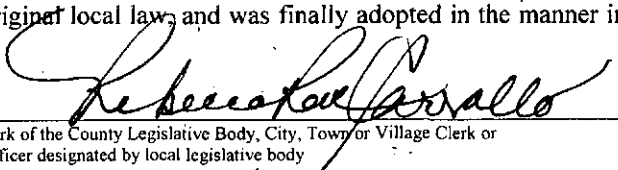
I hereby certify that the local law annexed hereto, designated as local law No. _____ of 20 _____ of the City of _____ having been submitted to referendum pursuant to the provisions of section (36)(37) of the Municipal Home Rule Law, and having received the affirmative vote of a majority of the qualified electors of such city voting thereon at the (special)(general) election held on _____ 20 _____, became operative.

6. ~~(County local law concerning adoption of Charter.)~~

I hereby certify that the local law annexed hereto, designated as local law No. _____ of 20 _____ of the County of _____, State of New York, having been submitted to the electors at the General Election of November _____ 20 _____, pursuant to subdivisions 5 and 7 of section 33 of the Municipal Home Rule Law, and having received the affirmative vote of a majority of the qualified electors of the cities of said county as a unit and a majority of the qualified electors of the towns of said county considered as a unit voting at said general election, became operative.

(If any other authorized form of final adoption has been followed, please provide an appropriate certification.)

I further certify that I have compared the preceding local law with the original on file in this office and that the same is a correct transcript therefrom and of the whole of such original local law, and was finally adopted in the manner indicated in paragraph _____, above.


Clerk of the County Legislative Body, City, Town or Village Clerk or
Officer designated by local legislative body

(Seal)

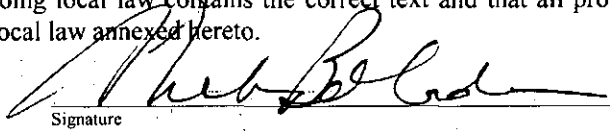
Date: _____

1/30/2017

(Certification to be executed by County Attorney, Corporation Counsel, Town Attorney, Village Attorney or other authorized attorney of locality.)

STATE OF NEW YORK
COUNTY OF CHAUTAUQUA

I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing local law contains the correct text and that all proper proceedings have been had or taken for the enactment of the local law annexed hereto.


Signature

Town Attorney
Title

County
City of Ripley
Town
Village

Date: 1/30/2017