

# APPENDIX A

TOWN OF  
**Dryden**  
**2045** comprehensive plan  
update

RELATED PLANNING  
DOCUMENTS  
& STUDIES

## APPENDIX A: RELATED PLANNING DOCUMENTS + STUDIES

### *The Dryden General Plan, 1968*

**Sponsor:** The Town of Dryden

**Adoption Date:** Not Adopted

In October 1968 the firm of Egner and Niederkorn completed The Dryden General Plan on behalf of the Town of Dryden and the Villages of Dryden and Freeville. The 230-page document, funded under the Department of Housing and Urban Development Section 701 Program, provided a detailed analysis of the town and villages then, including population, housing and economic data. It then proposed a series of policies to guide the development of the communities through the 1970s, 1980s and into the 1990s.

The General Plan assumed a population in 1990 of about 16,200 persons, of which 2,000 would live in Dryden village, and 700 in Freeville. (Actual population in 2000 was 13,532. See below.) This projection was partly in response to the anticipated construction of a limited-access NYS Rte. 13 between Ithaca and Cortland that was expected to stimulate new industrial development and residential growth. The substantial growth of manufacturing in Cortland at the time and growth in the education sector in Tompkins County were also major factors in this growth projection.

In summary, the 1968 General Plan proposed that:

- + Future major residential development should be channeled into Dryden village and along the NYS Rte. 13 corridor, with lesser levels occurring in the Etna and Freeville areas.
- + The better agricultural lands in the northeast portion of the town should be protected from extensive development.
- + Commercial development should be concentrated in specific areas and scattered; low density strip commercial development should be discouraged. Dryden village should remain the major commercial activity center in the town, with Varna and Freeville serving as secondary centers. The General Plan also considered as appropriate a "large regional shopping center" in the vicinity of Etna Road and Pinckney Road upon completion of the proposed limited access NYS Rte. 13.
- + Light industry should be encouraged in two locations: in the NYS Rte. 13 corridor in the vicinity of the NYS Rte 366 intersection, and on the northern edge of Freeville. The rationale for the Freeville location was proximity to both the anticipated limited access NYS Rte. 13 and (then) rail service.
- + Major development should be channeled away from the more rugged terrain of the Allegheny Plateau portion of the town and land uses in the area should be limited to farming and recreation or conservation-oriented uses.
- + The existing undeveloped lands in the immediate vicinity of Fall Creek and Virgil Creek should be preserved as open space and possible acquisition for public park and recreation purposes. These areas would tie together the villages of Dryden and Freeville and extend southward from Dryden to include Dryden Lake and areas beyond. The Plan also recommends that some 1,600 acres of land along Fall Creek and Beaver Creek upstream of Malloryville and extending to Cortland County be acquired as a nature preservation/wildlife refuge.
- + At least one larger park to serve the entire town and a number of smaller neighborhood-oriented parks should be established.

The 1968 General Plan dedicates an entire section to Fall Creek and issues related to water quality and its future use and use of the land along its banks. The plan envisioned Fall Creek and Virgil Creek as regional natural and open space assets. It goes into considerable detail in proposing a program to protect the two streams from inappropriate development, and to enhance public access to them.

## ***Future Land Use in the Town of Dryden: Alternatives and Recommendations, 1999***

**Sponsor:** Cornell University

**Adoption Date:** Not Adopted

Completed by the Department of City and Regional Planning at Cornell University in December 1999, this document includes an in-depth inventory and analysis of population and housing, public utilities, economic development, transportation systems, natural resources and recreation, and recommendations for further actions. Although not officially adopted by the Town, the document provided valuable information for local decision-making. Some of the data and concepts contained within ***Future Land Use in the Town of Dryden: Alternatives & Recommendations, 1990*** were incorporated into the 2005 Comprehensive Plan.

The ***Future Land Use in the Town of Dryden: Alternatives & Recommendations, 1990*** presented four possible scenarios illustrating how the Town might develop in the coming decades:

- + *Business as Usual.* This scenario assumes that the town will continue to develop in a dispersed, fragmented and somewhat random pattern. It is based on an analysis of past development patterns in the town and extrapolates them into the future.
- + *Cluster.* This type of development scenario would include provisions such as a Clustering for Open Space Conservation Plan (COSP), zoning, and subdivision design provisions that would channel future development away from key open space and environmental assets. The intent is to "cluster" development in those areas most suitable -- from an open space and environmental protection standpoint -- for development.
- + *Compact Center.* This approach focuses future growth and development in and around the existing population centers of Dryden village, Freeville, Etna and Varna, and Ellis Hollow at village-like densities of around four dwelling units per acre. In addition to its potential for preserving substantial quantities of open space, this scenario has the potential for revitalizing village and hamlet downtown areas and creating more intimate neighborhoods.
- + *Corridor Development.* Under this scenario future development in the town will be directed toward its major transportation corridors where public water and sewer services already exist or can be easily provided, and away from areas without such services or away from key open space and environmental assets. Provisions would be made to reduce the anticipated traffic and safety impacts to targeted highways, such as NYS Rte. 13, such as access controls and road infrastructure improvements. Depending on location within the corridor, small-lot (1/2-acre) residential development, mixed-use development, industrial development and more intensive commercial development would be allowed. Outside the corridors large-lot (5-acre) and rural residential/ agricultural/forest areas would be identified and zoned for lower intensities.

The key goals of each of the above scenarios were to accommodate the level of growth that the Town of Dryden is expected to experience over the next two decades, while at the same time preserve the town's important open space and environmental assets, and the rural character many residents enjoy.

In addition to the scenarios, the 1999 document outlined a Recommended Land Use Framework based on the following principles:

- + New mixed-use, compact development should be promoted in established hamlets and villages
- + Natural resources and groundwater should be conserved and protected
- + Agricultural and forest resources should be protected
- + Existing viewsheds and the sense of place many residents enjoy should be protected

The proposed Recommended Land Use Framework is also grounded in an analysis of the suitability for development of land

and natural resources in the various areas of the town. Attributes such as steep slopes, environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, riparian corridors, Cornell University lands, state forest land, Tompkins County Unique Natural Area and poorly drained soils have been identified and mapped. The result is a map showing areas where constraints to environmentally sound development exist and, conversely, areas where opportunities for environmentally sound development exist.

The Recommended Land Use Framework specifically recommends that the town:

- + Create new incentives to focus economic and residential development in or around hamlets and villages and in the industrial/commercial area along the western stretches of NYS Rte. 13.
- + Implement measures to better control development in areas such as northwestern Dryden, Ellis Hollow, the Dryden Lake vicinity and where scenic vistas occur along Rte. 13.
- + Implement measures to reduce development in the agriculturally important northeastern section of the town, and in the Allegheny Plateau hill country.

The ***Future Land Use in the Town of Dryden: Alternatives and Recommendations*** report provided background data and insights into the town that were important in the development of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan. The document also provided a palette of ideas and concepts that had the potential to provide for anticipated future growth in the town, protect the attributes that make it an attractive and unique place to live, and protect the many unique and valued ecological resources within its boundaries.

### ***Open Space Inventory of the Town of Dryden, 2003***

**Sponsor:** The Town of Dryden

**Adoption Date:** May 15, 2003

The purpose of this Open Space Inventory (OSI) was to identify, catalog, and map a variety of resources within the Town of Dryden. These include both natural and cultural resources as well as natural hazards. This inventory can be used to assist in land-use planning and policy decisions made by elected and appointed officials of the Town of Dryden, as well as its citizens. The document addresses resources on undeveloped land as well as areas with specific characteristics, such as recreational and historic resources, that could be of interest in discussions of the Town's land-use planning issues and policy concerns.

### ***Town of Dryden Comprehensive Plan, 2005***

**Sponsor:** The Town of Dryden

**Adoption Date:** December 8, 2005

The 2005 Comprehensive Plan provided a new framework by which Town of Dryden leaders and residents could guide the future growth and development of the town. The plan contemplated a 15-year time horizon and attempted to identify both issues that the community may face, and opportunities that it might exploit for the common good. The overall goal of this comprehensive plan is to promote the health, safety and general welfare of the people of the town of Dryden.

Major issues that were identified regarding roads in the town included:

- + Increased traffic through Varna, Freeville and Etna, and established residential areas such as along Ellis Hollow Road
- + Congestion on NYS Rte. 13
- + Traffic exceeding the posted speed limits, especially in the villages and hamlets, and Ellis Hollow

Critical issues in land use planning for the future of the Town of Dryden included:

- + The extent and locations of new residential commercial and industrial development
- + Balancing such development with the expressed desires of residents

- + Providing for appropriate levels of residential, commercial and economic development
- + Intensive development infringing on floodplain areas, wetlands, prime agricultural soils and steeper slopes
- + Development leading to the decline and, ultimately, deterioration and disappearance of historic structures
- + Gaps in the availability of some recreational facilities
- + Extension of municipal water or sewer service to limited areas within the town
- + Accommodation for additional dwellings due to population increase
- + Limited facilities to accommodate and encourage increased walking and bicycling

The following recommendations were made for addressing known issues and concerns in the town:

- + Preserve the rural and small-town character and quality of life in the Town of Dryden
- + Promote the long-term economic viability of the agricultural community in the town by preserving agricultural land resources without unduly infringing on property rights
- + Preserve and enhance the villages and hamlets within the town
- + Provide for a variety of options for town residents to purchase goods and services at locations convenient to home and work
- + Provide for a wide variety of employment options for town residents.
- + Provide for a variety of affordable, high-quality housing options for all town residents.
- + Preserve the natural open space resources, environmentally sensitive areas and unique flora and fauna of the town
- + Develop a system of park and recreational facilities designed to serve the variety of recreational needs of town residents in a cost-effective manner, and located as to provide easy access from major town population centers
- + Develop and maintain public facilities such as water, sewer and road infrastructure within the town
- + Ensure the provision of a comprehensive system of fire, police and emergency services to protect life and property throughout the town
- + Provide for a safe, efficient and diversified transportation system to serve the needs of all town residents.

### ***NYS Route 13/366 Corridor Management Plan, 2008***

**Sponsor:** Tompkins County

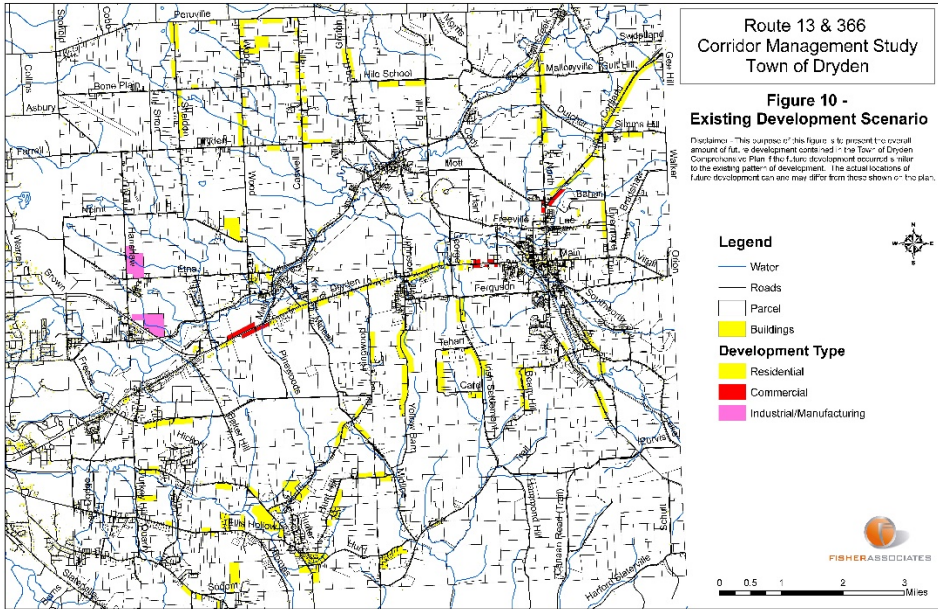
**Adoption Date:** June 2008

The Route 13/366 Corridor Management Plan was undertaken to assess the current development scenario along the corridor versus a nodal development scenario. Keys to the success of the CMP were to clearly define nodal development points that could accommodate the increase in development while safely and efficiently moving commuters into and out of Cornell, the City of Ithaca, Village of Dryden, Hamlet of Varna, and Cortland.

#### **Development Scenarios:**

The **Existing Development Scenario** is shown in **Figure 10**. The intent of the Existing Development scenario was not to identify individual parcels for development, but rather to identify the overall impacts to the NYS Route 13/366 corridor if development were to continue following the development trends at that time. The Existing Development Scenario assumes the remainder of the frontage along the corridor is developed as residential or commercial land use. The industrial development is focused near the airport in the western end of the Town, north of NYS Route 13. Consistent with historical patterns, no new development is proposed for the Village of Dryden. Outside of the corridor, scattered residential development fills out the remainder of the new dwelling units. Note that the Existing Development Scenario assumes the new residential development will have one dwelling unit per acre (or 1,800 total acres of residential development).



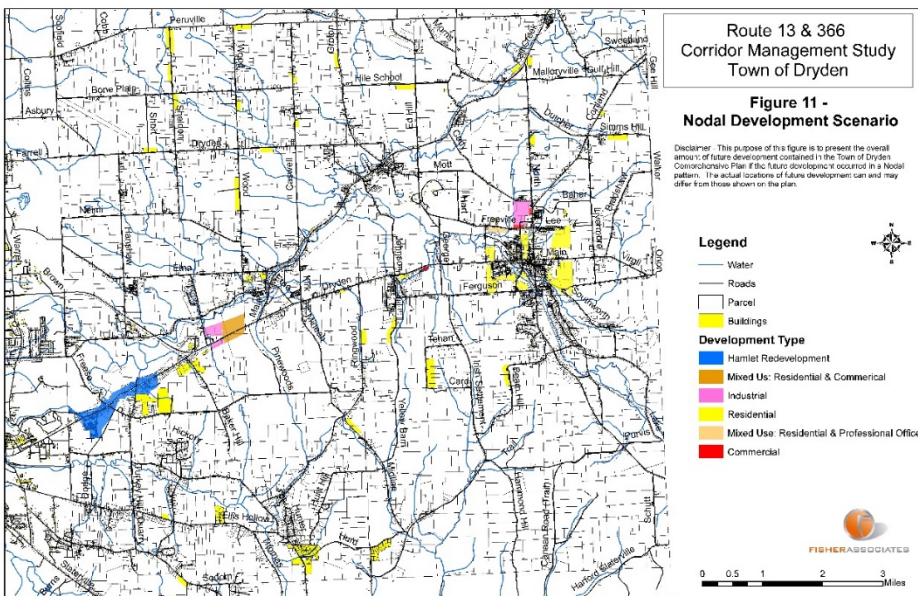


The **Nodal Development Scenario** is shown in **Figure 11**. This development scenario focuses the next 20 years of development at three distinct node points along the corridor. The graphic presents a drastic difference between the Existing Development Scenario shown in **Figure 10** and the Nodal Development Scenario. Most notably, the remaining agricultural / vacant frontage parcels along the corridor are left undeveloped under the Nodal Development Scenario. In addition, a significant portion of the scattered residential development shown in the Existing Development Scenario has been consolidated into the three node points. Under this development scenario, residential development density has been increased to an average of two dwelling units per acre, consistent with local planning efforts to reduce the overall amount of developed land. The first node point is the Hamlet of Varna. Many of the existing frontage parcels in Varna are either occupied by residential or commercial development or are environmentally sensitive areas owned by Cornell. The Nodal Development Scenario assumes that over time parcels will be developed to accommodate greater density and a mix of uses. The second node point is centered around the westernmost intersection of NYS Route 13/ NYS Route 366. This node point contains the NYSEG property. The area north and south of NYS Route 13, east of the NYSEG property would be developed

as a mix of industrial, commercial and residential uses. The third and largest node point is the Village of Dryden. Under the Nodal Development Scenario, a majority of the Village is developed as residential, commercial, or industrial land use. The commercial use is located along NYS Route 38, immediately adjacent to future industrial property. The Village will also see an area wide growth in residential property to virtually build-out the remaining portions of developable land.

Top issues recorded from Community Preference Survey:

1. High speeds and traffic volume



- through the corridor make accessibility on and off difficult and unsafe
2. Route 13 / 366 intersections are unsafe
  3. Separate through traffic from local traffic (Route 13 by-pass, new Route 13 location, frontage roadways)
  4. Concerns over cut-through traffic avoiding Route 13 congestion
  5. Character of Varna and lack of sidewalks
  6. Maintain open space / agriculture
  7. Utilize alternate modes of travel

The following specific **recommendations** were made in order to lay the groundwork for nodal development and/or address short term concerns consistent with a pattern of nodal development:

- + Work with NYSDOT to remove the existing passing zone through the Hamlet of Varna. This is an important first step in achieving the character desired by residents,
- + Contact NYSEG to explore the viability of removing, minimizing, or screening the power lines and substation in the overlap section of Route 13 and Route 366. This area is important for the nodal development pattern and anything that can be done to improve the viability of the node point should be explored.
- + Coordinate with TCAT on the number of routes and reliability of service in the area. Comments gathered during the study indicated the transit service was not as reliable as desired to use for the daily commute.
- + Work with NYSDOT on a redesign of the western Route 13/366 intersection to improve safety. This should include consideration of the applicability of a roundabout.
- + Work with NYSDOT on a redesign of North Road at Route 13 to make a four way intersection at the traffic signal at Bahar Drive (TCCC entrance road).

### ***Town of Dryden Recreation Master Plan, 2011***

**Sponsor:** The Town of Dryden

**Adoption Date:** June 2011

The Recreation Master Plan was developed by an appointed Steering Committee, Town government, Thoma Consultants, and the greater Dryden community. Through collaborative input, the purpose of the Plan evolved into the following:

- + To provide guidance and a framework for recreation decision-making based on public needs, priorities, and resource capabilities within the Town;
- + To provide an accurate inventory of the existing recreational facilities and open spaces located within the Town;
- + To identify and assemble the existing reports, studies, and inventories related to open space, recreational activities, facilities, and needs supplemented with information gathered from public participation.

A main issue with recreational facilities and programs that has the biggest impact on the residents of Dryden is ease of access and location. Locations of recreational activities and facilities should be distributed evenly throughout the Town. TCAT routes should be considered to allow for elderly residents to access key recreational locations. A space that can accommodate multiple activities is also needed in the Town of Dryden. One of the primary constraints to participating in department programs is lack of information.

Some recommendations listed in the plan to address these issues include:

- + Provide safe and well-maintained facilities.
- + Develop cost efficient methods for all maintenance practices.
- + Improve use of underutilized facilities.
- + Assist other providers with maintaining their facilities.
- + Develop additional multi-use trail links.

- + Plan and develop new Neighborhood Park facilities.
- + Plan and develop new Community Park facility.
- + Improve access to recreation information.
- + Establish partnerships for improved transportation for recreation.

### ***Varna Community Development Plan, 2012***

**Sponsor:** The Town of Dryden

**Adoption Date:** December 20, 2012

An amendment to the *Town of Dryden Comprehensive Plan (2005)*, the Varna Community Development Plan purpose was to serve as a guide for future development, provide opportunity for new uses, and improve the overall quality of life while protecting the character of the hamlet of Varna.

As part of the development of the plan, a community survey was distributed to 423 Varna area residents and business owners. Some of the key issues highlighted by the survey results include:

- + Conditions and aesthetics of the built environment.
- + Adequacy of facilities in addition to the levels of traffic.
- + Too much development, too fast.
- + Changing the character of the hamlet from a quaint, rural area to a transient, strip-development corridor with significant traffic.

It is essential to establish development controls in Varna that allow for growth to occur in such a way where building footprints, new uses and amenities fit in to the existing fabric of Varna. Using a form-based approach, the Varna plan helps preserve the quality of life and place of Varna, adding a new layer of character to the community. This plan strategically addresses those concerns by providing specific goals and objectives, a master plan with recommendations and guide for future development:

- + Protect and enhance hamlet character.
- + Develop a transportation system that is balanced, safe, and equitable for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists.
- + Protect and improve the quality of life in the hamlet.
- + Implement traffic calming strategies.
- + Introduce gateway treatments, mid-block median treatments, and intersection treatments.
- + Create links to nearby nature trails
- + Incorporate bicycle lanes/shared lanes, pedestrian pathways, sidewalks, street trees, medians, and designated crosswalks to form complete streets
- + Further small business ventures
- + Improve deteriorating houses and building front facades
- + Incorporate green space

### ***Tompkins County Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2013***

**Sponsor:** Tompkins County

**Adoption Date:** March 2013

The Tompkins County Planning Department (TCPD) organized the effort to update the Tompkins County Multi-Jurisdictional All-Hazard Mitigation Plan that was originally adopted in 2006. The efforts made to update the original plan were made possible by a grant from FEMA that was administered by the Tompkins County Planning Department. In addition to the



basic requirements of updating the plan, Tompkins County is seeking the integration of three new features: the involvement of all 17 jurisdictions in Tompkins County (including the Town of Dryden), the impacts and risks associated with anticipated climate change, and the impacts and risks associated with anticipated widespread shale gas drilling.

The prime objective of setting hazard mitigation and adaptation goals is to reduce or eliminate losses and damages from hazard events well in advance of hazard occurrence. It was important to create goals that were tangible. The goals identified below represent what the participants and municipalities were hoping to achieve through the implementation of the hazard mitigation plan.

Goal 1: Protect Life and Property

Goal 2: Increase Public Education, Outreach, and Partnerships

Goal 3: Protect and Restore Natural Ecosystems

Goal 4: Enhance Emergency Services

Vulnerabilities specific to Tompkins County that are identified in the ClimAID report (the Integrated Assessment for Effective Climate Change Adaptation Strategies in New York State) are potential flooding increases, milk production losses in a region dominated by dairy, and location at the front line for the state as invasive insects, weeds and other pests move north. In addition, the report highlights that some areas, including Tompkins County, are vulnerable in other ways: rural areas are more vulnerable to, and have less capacity to cope with, extreme events such as floods, droughts, ice storms, and other climate-related stressors; regions that depend on agriculture and tourism (such as fishing, skiing, and snowmobiling) may be especially in need of adaptation assistance; and low-income urban neighborhoods, especially those within flood zones, are less able to cope with climate impacts such as heat waves and flooding.

The potential for natural gas drilling related to the Marcellus and Utica Shale deposits in Tompkins County and throughout the Southern Tier Region of New York State, created a tremendous amount of concern in some communities regarding the possible environmental effects of the horizontal drilling process. While there were no horizontal natural gas wells within Tompkins County, it was estimated in 2011 that 39-percent of the land within the County was leased for potential future gas drilling operations.

Of the 22 identified hazards, the following 15 were noted as having the potential to be more impacted by climate change: severe storm, flash flood, infestation, ice storm, epidemic, severe winter storm, hurricane, extreme temperatures, ice jam, drought, lake flood, landslide, fire, utility fire, and water supply contamination. Flash flooding was determined to be a priority hazard event within Tompkins County due to its frequency as well as economic impacts related to property and infrastructure damage.

### ***Cleaner Greener Southern Tier: Regional Sustainability Plan, 2013***

**Sponsor:** Tompkins County, Southern Tier Central Regional Planning and Development Board, Southern Tier East Regional Planning and Development Board

**Adoption Date:** May 2013

The Cleaner Greener Southern Tier Regional Sustainability Plan promotes a future that is economically prosperous, environmentally sound, and socially responsible. The Region faces significant challenges in the areas of economic development, affordable living, land use, natural disasters, and natural resource protection. Since these issues relate to one another in complex ways, a comprehensive approach to sustainability planning is necessary. Understanding this need for a regional, integrated approach, community leaders came together to produce the Cleaner Greener Southern Tier Regional Sustainability Plan to revitalize the Region by creating a vibrant, resilient community that will support us, our children, and their children into the future.

The plans that resulted from the Cleaner, Greener Communities Program established a statewide sustainability planning framework that could aid in statewide infrastructure investment decision making. The regional sustainability plans outline specific and tangible actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; inform municipal land use policies; serve as a basis for local government infrastructure decision making; and help guide infrastructure investment of both public and private resources. The Cleaner Greener Southern Tier plan, in accordance with Cleaner, Greener Program guidelines, includes a greenhouse gas emissions baseline inventory, identifies short-term and long-term implementation strategies to meet the emissions goals, and establishes metrics for tracking regional progress.

The regional sustainability goals addressed by actions in the Plan's nine topic areas are outlined below:

- + Energy and Greenhouse Gas Emissions
  - o Reduce building energy use.
  - o Develop, produce, and deploy local renewable energy sources and advanced technologies across the Southern Tier.
- + Transportation
  - o Create a regional multi-modal transportation system that offers real transportation choice, reduced costs and impacts, and improved health.
  - o Reduce fossil fuel consumption and GHG emissions from transportation by reducing vehicle miles traveled, increasing efficiency, improving system operations, and transitioning to less carbon intensive fuels and power sources.
- + Land Use and Livable Communities
  - o Strengthen and revitalize existing cities, villages, and hamlets.
  - o Support development of housing that is energy and location efficient and offers choices to reflect changing demographics.
- + Economic Development
  - o Create and retain more good paying jobs by building on the Southern Tier's regional strengths, including advanced energy and transportation technologies, globally-competitive industry, and workforce development and technology transfer partnerships with educational institutions.
  - o Support tourism industry development with coordinated marketing, preservation, and enhancement of historic, cultural, educational, and natural resources and events.
  - o Support farming and related businesses to reinvigorate the rural economy, enhance residents' incomes and standards of living, and promote local food and agriculture.
- + Working Lands and Open Space
  - o Promote best management of fields, forests, and farmland to keep working lands in production, protect natural resources, and increase carbon sequestration.
  - o Preserve and connect natural resources, open spaces, and access to waterways, to protect regional environment, ecology, habitat and scenic areas, and support outdoor recreation.
- + Climate Adaptation
  - o Identify and plan for the economic, environmental, and social impacts of climate change.
  - o Minimize flood losses by preserving and enhancing floodplains and wetlands, and by limiting development in flood-prone areas.
- + Water Management
  - o Efficiently manage and upgrade existing water, sewer, and other utility infrastructure to support compact development and reduce energy use.
  - o Improve and protect water quality and quantity.
- + Waste Management

- Promote innovative waste reduction and management strategies that reduce the amount of material disposed of at landfills.
- + Governance
  - Increase collaboration among regional agencies, institutions, and local governments.
  - Increase fiscal efficiency and effectiveness in local government through energy and waste reduction, coordinated investments, and integrated planning.

In order to measure progress toward reaching the goals outlined in the Plan, specific targets have been established for indicators that use readily available data and which the Region has the capability to measure and track over time based on current available resources.

### ***Tompkins County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan***

**Sponsor:** Tompkins County

**Adoption Date:** June 2015

The purpose of the Tompkins County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan is to prioritize and guide the actions of county and town governments, agricultural agencies, businesses, farmers, and the community at large in responding appropriately to the needs, conditions and opportunities that will maintain a viable agricultural economy in Tompkins County.

The New York State requirements for updated County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plans include, but are not limited to:

- a) The location of any land or areas proposed to be protected;
- b) An analysis of the following factors concerning any areas and lands proposed to be protected:
  - a. Value to the agricultural economy of the county;
  - b. Open space value;
  - c. Consequences of possible conversion;
  - d. Level of conversion pressure on the lands or areas proposed to be protected;
- c) A description of the activities, programs and strategies intended to be used by the county to promote continued agricultural use.

As a working landscape, agriculture in Tompkins County plays a key role in defining the region’s agrarian culture and wide sweeping scenic vistas. These agricultural resources also contribute to the health of natural resources including forest land, soil and water resources including streams and wetlands. The relationship between working landscapes, natural and water resources may also be strained by a changing climate.

Below is a summary of the six main goals of the Tompkins County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan:

- + To encourage business development, expansion, and diversification, promote collaboration and networking, and improve access to support services and markets necessary for viable farm businesses.
- + Pursue a policy which encourages local production, educates farmers and consumers, and promotes consumption at every level (personal, institutional, etc.).
- + Support diverse farming opportunities through land use public policies and actions that protect farmland. Such practices, implemented across jurisdictions, should improve access to farmland and support operations that do not

- have adverse impacts to other farm operations or the environment.
- + Develop programs that improve understanding of farming practices and the contributions farmers make to our community.
- + Model and promote sustainable agricultural practices that encourage the protection and conservation of Tompkins County's agricultural and natural resources.
- + Create an environment that connects young people and others interested in farming with farming experiences and opportunities that result in future farmers and successful farm employees.

### ***Tompkins County Comprehensive Plan, 2015***

**Sponsor:** Tompkins County

**Adoption Date:** March 3, 2015

The Tompkins County Legislature first adopted a comprehensive plan in 2004. Entitled ***Tompkins County Comprehensive Plan: Planning for our Future***, that Plan contains principles, policies, and actions to guide the County and other community members as they make decisions that influence regional development, involve inter-governmental cooperation, and affect the quality of life in neighborhoods and communities. It provides a framework to address community goals in a proactive and coordinated manner. On December 16, 2008, the Tompkins County Legislature approved an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan to address the issue of energy and greenhouse gas emissions. This first full update of that Comprehensive Plan adds climate adaptation, a completely new element, restructures the strong communities section by also addressing healthy communities, adds the two overarching principles of fiscal responsibility and sustainability, and updates policy statements to make them more direct.

Tompkins County has been working to advance sustainability for many years. Tompkins County has made formal sustainability commitments, adopted policies, undertaken energy improvements to its facilities, installed renewable energy systems on all its buildings, taken actions within and between its various departments, and pursued a number of other efforts related to sustainability. Specific policies adopted by the County Legislature are:

- + Waste Reduction and Resource Management Policy (2007): to recognize the goals set forth by the Tompkins County Solid Waste Management Plan through procedures to reduce the amount of waste produced by County operations and maximize opportunities for reuse and recycling.
- + Facilities Management and Workplace Environment Policy (2009): to establish procedures for managing and operating facilities in a manner that provides clean, well-maintained, and energy-efficient workplace environments for staff and visitors. In 2005, the County entered into an Energy Performance Contract with Johnson Controls intended to realize over \$4 million in energy cost avoidance during the 15-year term of the contract.
- + Green Fleet Policy (2009): to reduce fossil fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions from County-owned vehicles and fuel-using mobile equipment.
- + Green Building Policy (2013): to use green building standards for all new construction and major renovations of County-owned buildings.

In order for Tompkins County to address the needs of the current community without sacrificing the quantity and quality of resources for future generations, sustainable actions should be considered:

- + Promote adaptation measures that lessen climate impacts on the local economy.
- + Encourage actions that protect vulnerable populations from the impacts of climate change.
- + Foster the expansion of a countywide trail network to promote alternative transportation.
- + Encourage municipalities to protect rural character and scenic resources by limiting sprawl.
- + Promote development of a strong land-based rural economy.

- + Increase the use of local and regional renewable energy sources and technologies.
- + Promote energy efficient housing.
- + Reduce the use of fossil fuels in transportation.
- + Support a pattern of land use that allows people to move efficiently and affordably.
- + Reduce the adverse impacts to native species and ecosystems caused by invasive organisms and climate change.
- + Protect farmland within the Agricultural Resource Focus Areas for agricultural use.
- + Manage stormwater runoff to protect fresh water sources from contamination.
- + Reduce greenhouse gas emissions to reach a minimum 80 percent reduction from 2008 levels by 2050 and reduce reliance on fossil fuels across all sectors.
- + Improve the energy efficiency of all components of the community energy system.
- + Reduce the amount of material disposed of in landfills.
- + Conserve natural resources that enhance carbon capture.

### ***Tompkins County Housing Strategy, 2017***

**Sponsor:** Tompkins County

**Adoption Date:** 2017

The 2017 Tompkins County Housing Strategy builds upon the 2015 County Comprehensive Plan to promote affordable, safe, energy efficient, and appealing housing through the year 2025. The plan was endorsed by unanimous vote of the County Legislature in 2017. The strategy identifies the types of housing the County will need, as well as areas deemed to be well-suited focal points of new development due to the existence of public services, transit, and existing development.

Target housing types identified in the plan are:

- + **Supportive Housing/Special Needs Beds** – Combines affordable housing with support services design to help individuals and families with special needs use housing as a platform for improving their overall physical and economic health. Unit needs are to be based the County’s Coordinated Assessment System which creates a single waitlist for available housing resources.
- + **Workforce Units** – Housing that is affordable for those earning 80 percent or less of Area Median Income (AMI). The County has identified a need for:
  - o 200 new rental units/year affordable for those earning up to 100% of AMI, for a total of 2,000 new rental units through 2025.
  - o 380 new ownership units/year for a total of 3,800 new ownership units through 2025
    - 300 single family homes/year: 90 homes/year in the \$150,000-199,999 price range, 210 homes/year at \$200,000+
    - 80 condominiums/year: 35 units/year in the \$150,000-199,999 price range, 45 units/year at \$200,000+
- + **Senior Housing** – Unlike typical workforce housing, Senior housing may have age restrictions or the provision of services. In addition to an increase in market-rate senior housing, the County has identified a need for 1 Medicaid Assisted Living Program facility and 100-200 subsidized senior apartments.
- + **Student Beds** – There is an existing 1,400-1,500 deficit in on- or off-campus, purpose-built student beds. In addition to meeting this deficit, purpose-built student beds will be needed to match any increases in student enrollment in order to prevent displacement of residents in non-student units.

Areas deemed as well-suited focal points for development have been classified in the following categories:

- + **Urban Center** – The Urban Center includes portions of the City of Ithaca, the Towns of Ithaca and Lansing, and the Villages of Cayuga Heights and Lansing. It is the center of historic employment, retail, service, and government center for the surrounding region; has a dense internal transit system; has water and sewer infrastructure; and

supports the greatest diversity of housing, business, and employment. The Urban Center is expected to develop at least 350 units annually (not including student beds) to meet workforce housing goals.

- + **Nodes** – Whether established or emerging, Nodes are areas that are walkable in size and have public water and sewer systems capable of supporting dense and diverse development. Established nodes have a mix of housing types, diverse businesses and services, and employment opportunities whereas emerging nodes lack this mix of land uses. Nodes can accommodate infill development, consuming less land and making more efficient use of existing facilities and services. Nodes are expected to develop 50-100 units annually to meet workforce housing goals.
- + **Rural Centers** – Rural Centers are also walkable in size. They usually have a mix of residential development, employment, businesses, and services. The difference between Nodes and Rural Centers is the lack of water and sewer infrastructure in Rural Centers. Rural Centers are expected to develop 30 units annually to meet workforce housing goals.

The County plan has identified the following Development Focus Areas within the Town of Dryden:

- + **Rural Centers** - Etna and the Village of Freeville
- + **Emerging Nodes** – New York State Electric and Gas Area near the intersection of NY-366 and NY-13
- + **Established Nodes** – the Hamlet of Varna and the Village of Dryden

### ***Town of Dryden Natural Resources Conservation Plan, 2017***

**Sponsor:** The Town of Dryden

**Adoption Date:** November 2017

This Natural Resources Conservation Plan (NRCP) for the Town of Dryden is intended to inform and guide Town decision-makers, natural resource managers, and interested citizens. It forms the basis for a vibrant and healthy lifestyle for a diverse and growing community. Any loss of a diversity of habitats endangers the ability of our landscape to maintain its rich variety of species, and therefore to maintain the benefits to humans that this biodiversity and functioning ecosystems provide. Climate change is going to put extra stress on many of the species in these systems, as warming winters, longer summers, and possibly deeper droughts in summer are already having important effects on biological communities in our area.

This Plan recommends general measures that can be applied to both Town-wide and site- specific land use decisions. To directly lessen the threats to biological resources, this plan outlines the following general principles of biological conservation that strongly affect the ability of the various species to persist in landscapes dominated by humans, and recommends the following actions:

- + Protect areas representing all significant landforms, including the array of elevations and surficial geology, that are representative of the enduring features of the Town.
- + Protect habitat areas in large, broad configurations, with broad connections to other habitat areas, to allow animals and plants to move freely and safely between habitat areas.
- + Protecting high-quality representatives of all ecologically significant habitats.
- + Protecting habitat complexes critical to known species of conservation concern (see lists at end of this report).
- + Avoiding fragmentation of large forests and large meadows by roads, driveways, clearings, and structures.
- + Direct human uses toward the least sensitive areas, and minimize alteration of natural features, including vegetation, soils, bedrock, and waterways. Maintain broad buffer zones of undisturbed vegetation and soils around ecologically sensitive areas.
- + Encourage sustainable forestry practices in working forests, and sustainable agricultural practices that build living soils and conserve water.
- + Work with landowners to increase access for responsible hunters in order to maintain deer herds compatible with sustainable woodland diversity.



The NRCP provides a basis for the Town to protect important landscapes, ecosystems, habitats, and species of conservation concern, and improve the resiliency of local ecosystems to existing and new environmental stresses, including those brought on by climate change and increased human population. To accomplish these goals this Plan incorporates basic biodiversity conservation principles, and recommends general measures that can be applied to both Town-wide and site-specific land use decisions. Protecting large, contiguous land areas will help to protect the habitats of area-sensitive wildlife species that require large habitat patches to fulfill their life history needs, and will protect the array of natural communities in each area, including those of which we are yet unaware.

The Town of Dryden also recognizes that local agriculture brings innumerable benefits to the local economy, to local food security, to the scenic character of the landscape, and to the culture of the human community. Maintaining our ability to produce food locally has obvious advantages in the face of unstable and unpredictable energy supplies, and the worldwide imperative to reduce carbon emissions. This Natural Resources Conservation Plan places a high priority on support of active farms and conservation of the best farmland soils to maximize the current and future potential for farming in the Town. The Plan also promotes best farming practices that improve soils, conserve water quality and quantity, enhance wildlife habitats, reduce wildlife mortality, and increase resiliency to the effects of climate change. The Town can promote local food production and markets through strategic conservation of working lands and high-quality farmland soils, partnering with other organizations and government to build new infrastructure and services, and offering events and educational programming to foster production and consumption of local agricultural products. Protecting the best farmland soils, whether or not they are actively farmed at present, will help to ensure the future of viable agriculture in the Town.

### ***Cayuga Lake Watershed Restoration and Protection Plan, 2017***

**Sponsor:** Cayuga Lake Watershed Intermunicipal Organization

**Adoption Date:** March 2017

Since the first Plan was issued in 2001, new challenges have arisen that negatively affect water quality and quantity and the seemingly modest goal of a sustainable, healthy watershed. These challenges include climate change and extreme weather, resulting in the need for farmers and other producers to adapt; shifting patterns and seasons for wildlife, birds, tree species, other plants and biota; and shifting political and economic priorities that can quickly affect our ability to protect natural resources.

The central goals of the Restoration and Protection Plan (RPP) are to inspire, to prioritize actions and strategies, and to bring about legislative change vital to protecting and preserving Cayuga Lake and its watershed. By supporting this plan, the Intermunicipal Organization (IO), municipalities, farmers, residents, private and public partners, and watershed stakeholder nonprofit organizations can build a productive economy that sustains a healthy watershed. Watershed protection goals and actions include:

- + Minimize nonpoint source pollution of surface and groundwater.
- + Remediate existing water pollution and water quality degradation.
- + Preserve open space, wetlands and riparian areas for effective water quality protection.
- + Support economic activities consistent with watershed protection.
- + Provide programs to educate the public and public officials of issues pertaining to the watershed.
- + Implement comprehensive plans, zoning and natural-resource laws to support watershed protection.
- + Work together with other municipalities to secure funding to implement the RPP.

## ***Town of Dryden Water and Sewer District Consolidation Study, 2017***

**Sponsor:** The Town of Dryden

**Adoption Date:** March 2017

The objective of this study is to identify the potential for interconnected and interdependent systems of individual districts to be operated, maintained, and administered as a single entity. Completion of this study also provides the Town with useful information when applying for funding that may be available to support consolidated district infrastructure improvements at equalized rates for the benefitted users. Relative to furthering the Town's land use and economic development planning efforts, the data contained in this study can inform where district expansion, in keeping with smart growth concepts, could be appropriate.

The principal goals of initiating a consolidation proceeding for the water and sewer benefit districts are:

- + Achieve a more manageable approach to budgeting and funding for improvements, repairs, and maintenance of the systems.
- + Greater efficiencies in planning for improvements and replacement of aging infrastructure.
- + Increase productivity and transparency in the budgeting process.

It is recommended that the following existing water districts be included in a proposed Town of Dryden Consolidated Water District (CWD): Varna (SW1), Snyder Hill (SW2), Monkey Run (SW3), Hall Road (SW4), Turkey Hill (SW5) and Royal Road (SW6). It will become the function of the CWD to operate, maintain and repair all of the water system infrastructure including, but not necessarily limited to, the following: water pipes of all materials and diameters, fire hydrants, valves, service laterals up to the customer's curb valve; the Monkey Run pump station; the booster station on Snyder Hill Road; and the 0.2 MG and 0.4 MG welded steel water storage tanks known collectively as the NYSEG Tanks.

It is recommended that the following existing sewer districts be included in a proposed Town of Dryden Consolidated Sewer District (CSD): Varna (SS2), Monkey Run (SS4), Turkey Hill (SS5), Peregrine Hollow (SS6) and Royal Road (SS7). It will become the function of the CSD to operate, maintain and repair all of the sanitary sewer infrastructure including, but not necessarily limited to, the following: gravity and force main pipes of all materials and diameters, manholes, service laterals up to the customer's property line; the Varna Sewage Pump Station; and the Lower Creek Road Sewage Pump Station.

The recommendations from the 2017 plan were implemented in 2019.

## ***Town of Dryden Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan, 2018***

**Sponsor:** Town of Dryden

**Adoption Date:** March 2018

The Agriculture Plan for the Town of Dryden serves as a **guidance document** for town officials to consider for the protection of valuable agricultural lands, in particular those with high quality soils that occupy the northeastern area of the town, and it serves as a reference for planning and agricultural economic development. The plan provides details on development and other pressures on farming, existing land use policies, farming resources and enterprises, along with recommendations to ensure a viable future for farming in the Town of Dryden. The recommendations in this plan reflect current conditions and therefore, in order to remain relevant, the plan will require that changes in agriculture and the community be monitored over time.

Farming in the Town of Dryden generates a total of \$15 million in agricultural product sales, nearly one quarter of the total

agriculture sales for the entire county. Farmers utilize 14,836 acres of land or about one-quarter of the town's land area. In the past 10 years, there has been an 11% (1,495 acres) increase in land that is owned or rented by farmers. The increase in farmed land demonstrates the demand for farmland and the viability of farming in the area. Farmers must remain vigilant in their farming practices to prevent point source and non-point pollution of nearby waterbodies. This is done by following best management practices and through the installation of infrastructure to minimize and capture potential runoff.

Dryden farmers (full and part-time) and non-farming agricultural landowners indicate a strong desire to keep their land in agriculture and productive farming into the future. Farmers feel the encroachment of development in Dryden's farming areas and it is of concern. There is documented rural housing growth outside of the villages and hamlets which is likely to continue as a trend. Given that the majority of farmland in the northeastern part of the town is located along three major transit routes out of the county, there is also significant pressure to locate businesses along these routes (Routes 13, 366, and 38). Increasing development, including large scale industrial solar development, will also influence what rural landowners who rent to farmers will do in the future.

Location of areas/land recommended for protection for agricultural use:

- + Town of Dryden farmland in NYS Agriculture District #1. Ensure that town staff and officials are knowledgeable about NYS Agricultural District Law, and refer to the Law and related Guidance Documents when drafting new or updated town plans, zoning, and other laws.
- + Town of Dryden farmland in the Northeast Tompkins County Agriculture Resource Focus area.
- + Actively farmed land and land with prime soils and soils of statewide importance.
- + Support farmers and rural landowners interested in applying for state and federal grant funding for purchase of development rights on farmland which is most threatened by development.

Priority Actions/Recommendations:

- + Increase general awareness and support for the Town's agricultural industry
- + Create a supportive environment for farming in the town
- + Protect the best farmland and encourage environmental stewardship
- + Ensure farm-friendly zoning and other legislation
- + Strengthen the farm economy and future viability of farming