

A Healthy Design for Madison County: Primer for Smart Growth

*Developed through a
partnership with:
Madison County Planning
Department and
Madison County Public
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September 2011*

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How do the specific characteristics of our community affect our quality of life? What steps can we intentionally take to ensure welcoming, safe, efficient, healthy and accessible communities while maintaining our agricultural, cultural and historic heritage? Can we embrace progress and still retain a place of natural beauty where families and individuals thrive? We have a vision of such a place. It's not a dream, it's a strategy...

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A Healthy Design for Madison County:

Primer for Smart Growth

Introduction

The layout, type, and development pattern of growth in a village, town or city directly impacts its economic vitality, livability, health, and environmental and cultural resources. Development decisions influence where people choose to live, how they can move around, what activities are available to them, and how they interact and connect with the people and places around them. The quality of life impact of these decisions necessitates that communities be designed with intention: in a way that reflects what the community values and supports the lifestyle people want.

In 2009, the residents of Madison County made clear their vision for a healthy Madison County:

“A place of natural beauty where families and individuals thrive.”

Madison County's vision - a blueprint for the future - will be achieved by an engaged community of all ages, cultures and talents and its dedicated leaders.

This vision characterizes our community by:

- *Welcoming neighborhoods and a sense of individual belonging*
- *Values that protect its agricultural traditions, rich history and natural scenic beauty*
- *Maintenance of its clean environment through planning and preservation*
- *Safe, affordable housing for all ages*
- *Access to affordable health care, education and recreation, promoting health and wellness for all*
- *Opportunities for ample employment and business prospects for all*
- *A dynamic partnership of citizens, government agencies, employers, faith based, educational, community, and service organizations*

This vision, established during the development of the 2009 Health Improvement Plan for Madison County, reflects a desire to retain the rural nature while also recognizing the need for growth, but doing so in a manner that is smart and healthy.

A quick scan of the landscape in Madison County reveals where policies have been successful in fostering this concept and where they have fallen short. Communities in Madison County deserve to retain unique local character and preserve rural landscape while also attracting new growth and development. They deserve to be vibrant places that are designed to accommodate people of all ages and that promote healthy places to live, work, shop, and enjoy.

A Healthy Design for Madison County, developed through a partnership with the Madison County Planning Department and the Public Health Department, is intended to specifically demonstrate how smart growth can be incorporated to accomplish the vision for a healthy Madison County. This document closely follows the 2010 smart growth publication developed by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) for rural communities entitled *Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities* but was tailored specifically to fit and highlight the communities of Madison County.

Section 1 uses recent trends to explain challenges the communities in Madison County are facing in the context of smart growth. Understanding the threats to smart growth in our communities also helps to further demonstrate its necessity.

Section 2 is framed around four goals that show how the principles of smart growth can be used to achieve more effective place making. Current local initiatives are identified throughout this section to showcase what different communities are currently doing and where future opportunities may exist.

Finally, the conclusion summarizes the primer and explains how the effort to incorporate smart growth principles will continue to move forward.

What is Smart Growth?

The New York State Smart Growth Cabinet defines smart growth as “sensible, planned, efficient growth that integrates economic development and job creation with community quality-of-life by preserving and enhancing the built and natural environments and promoting social equity. Smart growth encourages growth in developed areas with existing infrastructure to sustain it, particularly municipal centers, downtowns, “Main Streets”, urban cores, hamlets, environmental justice areas, Brownfield Opportunity Areas, historic districts and older first-tier suburbs...”¹

Those not familiar with smart growth may wrongfully perceive it as advocating “no growth” or “slow growth.” Instead, smart growth is a holistic approach to community planning and development because it does

New York State is making smart growth a priority:

In August 2010, New York Governor David Patterson signed into law the Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act. The law requires New York state agencies to use smart growth criteria when deciding to spend infrastructure dollars for transportation, sewer and waste water treatment, water, education, housing and other publicly supported infrastructure. The law, which took effect September 29, 2010, targets infrastructure investments toward Main Streets, downtowns, brownfield areas, central business districts and community centers; advocates for mobility choices; promotes mixed use development; and the preservation of natural resources and open spaces.

In August 2011, New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo signed into law the NYS Complete Streets Bill - a policy that mandates roads be designed and built for all users, including bicyclists, public transportation vehicles and passengers, motorists, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities. The legislation requires all state, county, and local transportation agencies to consider Complete Streets design principles on all projects which receive both federal and state funding.



Image 1

not refer merely to one component of planning and development but works to integrate natural resources, energy conservation, historic preservation, transportation, housing, economic development, and public health together to protect community assets, promote positive growth, and enhance livability to attract and retain people and business.

Why is Smart Growth Important?

Madison County is most easily identified as a place of historic main streets, beautiful view sheds, and acres of farmland. It is a place where commerce and business once grew along defining transportation corridors such as the Erie Canal and rail. The fact that places here were transportation hubs long before the automobile, is also one of the most significant features of Madison County as it is a key reason for the historic downtowns still present today. Equally important to Madison County's development story is that overall the area has not seen as much growth as in many neighboring places. Put these qualities together and Madison County is a unique place, a place where "old growth" – front porch neighborhoods, corner shops and restaurants, short blocks with pedestrian alley ways, architecturally distinctive buildings - still dominates.

Smart growth can be particularly important to rural places such as Madison County. Growth often occurs at a slower pace in rural places, but despite this, or perhaps even because of this, impacts can be significant. In fact, because growth happens more slowly, trickling in over time, changes are not often as noticeable and so may not seem to warrant as much attention when compared to a high growth area. However, the type of growth and development allowed to occur will eventually add up.

Growth done without intent can cut up the rural landscape, which threatens not only the scenic countryside that defines this area but the livelihood of agriculture, the number one industry in the County. Historic main streets and downtowns are also threatened if growth and development are allowed to casually spread out. When this happens it is not just the community character and sense of place that are threatened but also the way of life that is possible only when growth is targeted to a center. Moreover, this area is characterized by an interaction between land and place, where people highly value the natural resources and recreational opportunities; how these are protected, enhanced, and linked can have substantial impacts on the desirability of living in a rural area.

Today Madison County is at a crucial point. According to the 2010 US Census, Madison County had a 5.8 percent population gain to 73,442 which ranked as the sixth-highest increase among New York counties. Development too has been increasing and in many places expanding well beyond the original community centers. While this new growth and development brings many advantages and opportunities, it also means that it is critical that the communities of Madison County move forward with intent. How the places within Madison County decide to accommodate new growth is pivotal to the future quality of life. Madison County has the opportunity to leverage growth so it does not detract from what has defined this area for so long, but enhances it. Through several guiding principles, smart growth has been identified as a tool to help balance old and new growth. It focuses in on the key elements that can help retain what is important to a community while promoting a socially, environmentally, and economically viable future.

10 Smart Growth Principles

The 10 Smart Growth Principles are based on the findings of the Smart Growth Network, a network of non-governmental organizations. After identifying best practices, policies, and strategies and looking at experiences of communities around the country, the Smart Growth Institute developed these principles to help communities get the results they want from growth and development:

- 1) **Mix Land Uses**
- 2) **Take Advantage of Compact Design**
- 3) **Create a Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices**
- 4) **Create Walkable Communities**
- 5) **Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place**
- 6) **Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty, and Critical Environmental Areas**
- 7) **Strengthen and Direct Development Toward Existing Communities**
- 8) **Provide a Variety of Transportation Options**
- 9) **Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair, and Cost Effective**
- 10) **Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration**

Smart Growth in a Rural Community:

“A rural community that uses smart growth approaches has a vibrant downtown, with historical buildings that have been preserved, a walkable Main Street or two, and compact neighborhoods surrounding the downtown. It is a place with a small-town feel and sense of community that develop when you know your neighbors. Residents gather in town for important events, to shop, and to participate in civic activities. The local economy celebrates, protects, and supports the use of the land. Local businesses are encouraged to flourish, particularly those that support the community’s rural identity. Housing options support a variety of financial and lifestyle choices, whether old or newly constructed, in town or the countryside, in modest apartment buildings or single family homes. Underutilized lots in already developed areas are reused whenever possible, especially before using valuable undeveloped property for new construction, to control infrastructure costs, to preserve pristine land, and to provide more options for transportation. The community has articulated its joint vision for the future in policy documents so that developers and the broader stakeholder community alike have some predictability. With such a vision in mind, it becomes clear that smart growth strategies enable the entire community to benefit from its local rural heritage and resources, just as all can share jointly in its development and conservation.”

-ICMA, *Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities*

1. Mix Land Uses

Communities that separate homes, retail, public spaces, and jobs make the automobile the only transportation option. This creates a development pattern that requires large parking lots and wide roads, and it produces places that lack human scale. Allowing a good mix of compatible land uses and activities in close proximity to each other enables a dynamic place where people can more easily interact, incorporate exercise by running errands on foot or by bike, and be independent no matter their age. Having people live where they also shop and work allows a place to stay vibrant throughout the day and night; alternatively, when uses are separated a mismatch often occurs with empty residential neighborhoods during the day and dead retail districts that suffer from a lack of foot traffic and consumers in evenings or weekends.

2. Take Advantage of Compact Design

Proposing more density can sometimes be met with resistance because for some it conjures up negative images of crowding, but this is a misconception; applied correctly, compact design allows for mobility, privacy, recreation, and convenience. Density is what provides the opportunity for pedestrian friendly communities that support healthy and independent lifestyles for people of all ages. Taking advantage of density is what allows people to live within walking distance to many types of amenities such as parks, restaurants, and grocery stores. Living and working in healthy, walkable places is one of the most significant ways to combat rising transportation and energy costs. Appropriate density also helps preserve open space, farmland, and forest by keeping development from sprawling and consuming land haphazardly. The key to making density work is design: two neighborhoods with the exact same density can look and feel very different.

This	Not this
	
<p>Here people live where they also shop, exercise, and work.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Image 2</i></p>	<p>When uses are separated it makes the automobile the only way to get around.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Image 3</i></p>

“Americans spend nearly two thirds of their income on the combined costs of housing and transportation and are looking for affordable options to live closer to their jobs, school and amenities.”

— *Transportation for America* Director James Corless

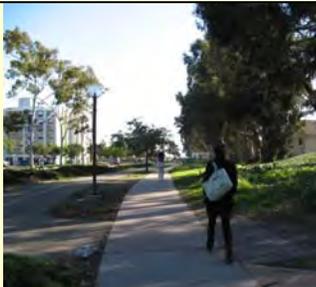
This	Not this
	
<p>These two neighborhood blocks look and feel very different, yet they have the exact same density of 11.7 units per acre.</p>	
<i>Image 4</i>	<i>Image 5</i>

“One thing we don't necessarily give enough thought to is the extent to which increased density and small town living may be compatible. After all, it's not as if classic small town America was built during the era of the automobile. A small town can be small without being super-sprawly or organized in such a way that the only way to buy anything is to drive 30 miles to a mall.”

— *Atlantic Journalist*, Matthew Yglesias

3) Create a Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices

Communities that provide a variety of housing options including single-family homes of all sizes, duplexes, small and large apartments, and studios above garages or shops are better able to accommodate the changing needs of the population including an older population that wants to age in place, young adults who live alone longer than before, and families that desire to live within a community rather than the suburbs. In other words, a mix of housing choices creates neighborhoods that are inter-generational, where people at different stages of life – single adults, families with children, and seniors – can live together. Housing options also help make sure that people with varied income levels have the opportunity to live near good schools, transportation, and amenities.

This	Not this
	
<p>Apartments (left) and single family houses (right) signify a neighborhood with a range of housing choices which can create inter-generational places.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Image 6</i></p>	<p>Whole neighborhoods where the houses are all the same type and price create homogenous and uniform environments.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Image 7</i></p>

“We need compact ‘walking neighborhoods’ that feature a mix of market-rate and affordable housing, convenient transportation choices, and easy access to jobs, medical services, and other daily needs.”

— *Smart Growth America Co-Chair and Former EPA Administrator Christine Todd Whitman*

4) Create Walkable Communities

The streets of a community serve many purposes besides carrying vehicles. Streets and sidewalks are often not thought of this way, but combined they are the largest public spaces in a community. Streets and sidewalks are places for art and culture, to sit to read or eat, exercise, people watch, and shop. Done correctly, walkable places are destinations. However, many elements allowed in towns deter pedestrians: buildings with large uninteresting, block facades; dark windows or raised retail that keeps people from seeing in; signs only oriented for the automobile; long, vacant spaces such as parking lots or unoccupied buildings; lack of infrastructure or places where there are no “eyes on the street” to keep people safe.

This	Not this
	
<p>Walkable places have a human scale defined by sidewalks, awnings, landscaping, and shops that “spill out” into the street.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Image 8</i></p>	<p>Without the right infrastructure and mix of uses it can be difficult or even dangerous for pedestrians.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Image 9</i></p>

“A city sidewalk by itself is nothing. It is an abstraction. It means something only in conjunction with the buildings and other uses that border it, or border other sidewalks very near it.”
 - *Journalist and Author of The Death and Life of Great American Cities Jane Jacobs*

5) Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place

Local governments that take control over the form and layout of their communities are concerned with more than aesthetics. The look of a community is more than what is visually appealing, it influences how people interact with, care about, and use the spaces in the community. Through historic preservation, quality new (re)development, and resource protection, it is an opportunity to retain uniqueness of a community and convey its story, culture, and history. When communities lose their sense of place or what it is that makes them unique, it can make it harder for residents to identify with the community and more difficult to attract new people to the area (after all, why here if “here” is like everywhere else?). This does not mean that communities should be afraid of change because putting to work new ideas and exploring different directions can keep a place viable. Ultimately, communities deserve to be places that reflect the values, history, and lifestyle the people that live there want.

This	Not this
	
<p>A unique sense of place is more than aesthetics; it can impact the quality of life and help preserve historic, cultural, environmental resources.</p> <p><i>Image 10</i></p>	<p>Not only is this type of development unattractive but too much generic development can strip a community of its unique sense of place.</p> <p><i>Image 11</i></p>

“We want to shape the future of our communities by building on the best of our past.”
 — Maine Governor John Baldacci

6) Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty, and Critical Environmental Areas

Once development happens, it is hard to take it back. Thus, it is imperative for communities to grow with intention. Haphazard growth cuts up the landscape and threatens the ability to protect natural lands for farming, recreation, and wildlife habitat. The environmental benefits of protecting land are numerous and include supporting public health, combating air pollution, providing erosion control, and recharging drinking water. Policies and codes must be designed to help communities target growth. Agriculture also plays an important role: when farming is economically viable working land is less likely to be subdivided or sold. Land trusts can also be an essential partner in helping to preserve key environmental resources in an area.

This	Not this
	
<p>To preserve the rural landscape and farmland, agriculture must remain a desirable, viable business.</p> <p><i>Image 12</i></p>	<p>Undeveloped land is hard to protect when development pressure outweighs the benefits of preservation.</p> <p><i>Image 13</i></p>

“It is vital that we find a way to accommodate more growth in our towns and cities or we are going to lose the rural character of our state.”
 — GrowSmart Maine President Alan Caron

7) Strengthen and Direct Development Toward Existing Communities

Some people will always want to live “away from it all.” Smart growth is not about banning people from doing this. It is about providing an alternative. Many people understand the benefits of living in their community centers and desire the lifestyle that means less commuting and more cultural, recreational, and entertainment amenities right outside their front door, but often this lifestyle is not an option. Currently, the housing stock in many downtowns is old, unsafe, or even non-existent. In many communities walking, biking or using the bus is not convenient and many of the businesses people use are no longer in the center but located out in the periphery. When the advantages of living in the existing community center are not available then it is no wonder people are not currently living there. Strengthening and directing growth back into community centers is vital to create attractive places that actually present a viable option for people to live and do business.

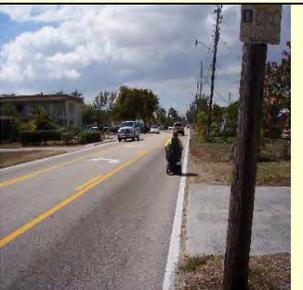
This	Not this
	
<p>To preserve existing community centers they have to be attractive places where people and businesses want to be. <i>Image 14</i></p>	<p>When growth and development continuously occurs on the periphery, community centers suffer. <i>Image 15</i></p>

“Simply put, there is no more efficient way to generate tax revenue than to develop the most valuable land in the city. That land is downtown.”

— Bank of America CEO Hugh McColl

8) Provide a Variety of Transportation Options

Communities can no longer be planned to accommodate only the automobile. With a multi-modal approach, pedestrian, bike, and transit options are also made a priority. Transportation options are not only necessary for portions of the population that cannot drive: the youth, elderly, physically challenged or less economically advantaged, but for everyone. In a time when obesity is an epidemic, transportation options provide a means for people to incorporate exercise into their daily routines. Making these options easy, safe, and convenient can also reduce traffic congestion, air pollution, and the need to build more roads or continuously invest in increasing their size.

This	Not this
	
<p>Mobility options are key to making healthy, functional communities. <i>Image 16</i></p>	<p>People and places suffer when priority is given only to the automobile. <i>Image 17</i></p>

“If you plan cities for cars and traffic, you get cars and traffic. If you plan for people and places, you get people and places.”

— Project for Public Spaces President Fred Kent

9) Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair, and Cost Effective

If development has not been occurring the way the community desires, there is a reason. Many times the rules in place do not match what a community says it wants. Local governments need to make certain that their policies, codes, and incentives are not unintentionally creating barriers to the type of development they wish to achieve. Policies and codes need to make it easier, not harder, for developers to do the right things. Similarly, there is a reason why most people are skeptical of new development: they look around and see what has already been built. New development needs to be done in a way that is predictable where a community knows what it is getting.

10) Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration

Citizen involvement is a key element in ensuring that growth reflects the desires of the community. Public involvement has a dual purpose as it also provides the opportunity to educate and empower more individuals to be engaged and take action within their communities. Unfortunately, most people do not become involved with these community issues unless they perceive that something is going to negatively affect them. This is important for local government and decision makers to understand in order to keep the process objective and reflective of what is good for the community as a whole and not just dominated by a few.

This	Not this	This	Not this
			
Developers will make what the community wants as long as the community is clear about what that is. <i>Image 18</i>	There is a reason that development looks the way it does: there are no rules in place to make it look it otherwise. <i>Image 19</i>	Collaboration can establish greater community understanding and help ensure that the needs of citizens are being met. <i>Image 20</i>	It is important that public involvement remain objective; development decisions should never be dominated by a few. <i>Image 21</i>

“We deserve good, thoughtful developers who preserve our lifestyle and who work with our community instead of dividing it.”
 — South Valley, New Mexico activist Pat McCraw

“Our big goal with all of this is education. That’s how people can take control of growth in their own community.”
 — Marc Hult, vice president, Smart Growth Coalition for Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky

Together, the 10 Principles of Smart Growth closely mirror the Vision for a Healthy Madison County. Smart growth approaches to development have been identified as a means to balance these many goals to ensure that communities are designed to function in a way that achieves desired economic, social, environmental, and public health outcomes. In order to accomplish smart growth, local governments will need to revisit existing policies, codes, and strategies to strategically incorporate the principles of smart growth into the decision making process.

Smart Growth at a Glance:

Table 1 Defining Smart Growth²		
	This:	Not This:
Density	Higher-density, clustered activities	Lower-Density, dispersed activities
Growth Pattern	Infill and brownfield development	Periphery and greenfield development
Land Use Mix	Mixed land use	Homogenous (single use, segregated) land uses
Scale	Human scale with smaller buildings, blocks and roads and an emphasis on the pedestrian	Large scale with larger blocks, wider roads. Less detail, since people experience the landscape at a distances as motorists
Services (shops, schools, parks)	Local, distributed, smaller. Accommodates walking access	Larger, consolidated. Requires automobile access
Transport	Multi modal transport and land use patterns that support walking, cycling, and public transit	Automobile oriented transport and land use patterns, poorly suited for walking, cycling and transit
Housing	Mix of housing choices allowing for multi generational communities	Neighborhoods with only homogenous housing types
Connectivity	Highly connected sidewalks, roads, and paths	Hierarchal road network with numerous dead end streets, cul de sacs, and unconnected paths and sidewalks
Street Design	Streets designed to accommodate a variety of activities. Traffic calming	Streets designed to maximize motor vehicle traffic volume and speed
Planning Process	Planned and coordinated between jurisdictions and stakeholders	Unplanned with little coordination between jurisdictions and stakeholders
Public Space	Emphasis on public realm (streets, sidewalks and public parks)	Emphasis on the private realm (yards, shopping malls, gated communities, private clubs)

Table 2 The Benefits of Smart Growth³		
Economic	Social	Environmental
Reduced Infrastructure Costs	Improved Transport Options and Mobility, particularly for non-drivers	Greenspace and Habitat Preservation
Reduced Public Service Costs	Improved Housing Options	Energy Savings
Reduced Transportation Costs	Community Cohesion	Air Pollution Reductions
Economies of Agglomeration	Preserves unique cultural resources (historic sites, traditional neighborhoods, etc)	Water Pollution Reductions
More Efficient Transportation	Increased Physical Exercise and Health	
Supports Industries that Rely on High Quality Environments (tourism, farming, etc)		

¹ New York State Smart Growth Cabinet, *Smart Growth History*, <http://smartgrowthny.org/index.asp>
 2 Litman, Todd. *Understanding Smart Growth Savings: What We Know About Public Infrastructure and Service Cost Savings, And How They are Misrepresented By Critics*, Victoria Transport Policy Institute, 17 June 2011, http://www.vtpi.org/sg_save.pdf
 3 Ibid

Image 1: Courtesy of Madison County Public Health Department

Image 2: Churchill, Chris, Times Union, <http://blog.timesunion.com/realestate/theres-demand-for-walkable-neighborhoods/7792/>

Image 3: Center for Environmental Law & Policy, <http://www.celp.org/exemptwells/exemptwells/overview.html>

Image 4: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, <http://www.lincolnst.edu/subcenters/visualizing-density/tour/t3.aspx>

Image 5: Ibid

Image 6: Maxwell, Kate, *Bedford, New York: a trip down revolutionary road*, <http://observer.guardian.co.uk/>

Image 7: Dean, Paul, <http://spyhunter007.com/>

Image 8: Cohen, Sacha, HouseLogic, <http://www.houselogic.com/articles/boost-your-neighborhoods-walkability/>

Image 9: Drive Fast for Lent, <http://drivefast.wordpress.com/tag/anti-immigrant-laws/>

Image 10: Ray Dronkers & Associates, <http://www.dronkers.com/tag/historic-preservation/>

Image 11: Thompson, Amanda, *A Municipal Planner's Call to Arms (and Legs, Hearts and Lungs)*, PlaceShakers and NewsMakers, <http://placeshakers.wordpress.com/2010/11/16/a-municipal-planners-call-to-arms-and-legs-hearts-and-lungs/>

Image 12: Baur, Gene, Gene Baur's Bloggings, <http://www.genebaur.com/blogengine.net/?tag=/farm+sanctuary>

Image 13: Wichita Eagle, <http://www.kansas.com/>

Image 14: The Guardian, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/travel/2009/dec/06/us-bedford-gere-war-of-independence-new-york>

Image 15: iNetGiant, <http://georgia.inetgiant.com/albanyga/addetails/commercial-in-colquitt-georgia/13612059>

Image 16: Pierce Trips, http://www.piercetrips.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=21

Image 17: Hollywood Florida, <http://www.hollywoodfloridausa.org/>

Image 18: Forster, Matt, <http://bigwordstravel.blogspot.com/2010/11/classiest-mcdonalds-ever.html>

Image 19: McIllinois, <http://www.mcillinois.com/13877/>

Image 20: Ohio Department of Transportation, <http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Pages/Home.aspx>

Image 21: Saint, P Michael; Favell, Robert J; Fox, Patrick F, *Nimby Wars: The Politics of Land Use*, at <http://urbanplacesandspaces.blogspot.com/2010/11/most-of-time-it-isnt-technology-its.html>

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Section 1: Challenges to Smart Growth in Madison County

Recent trends indicate why implementing smart growth approaches within the communities of Madison County is crucial. These trends give perspective on how the towns, villages, and city are currently growing and developing and provide foresight for what implications this may bring in the future. These trends illustrate how growth and development can influence a community's ability to preserve rural landscapes, enhance the attraction of downtowns, and create healthy places for people of all ages. Understanding how communities are growing in light of current policies can help to indicate what is currently working and where more attention may need to be focused in the future.

- Trend 1: New Development
- Trend 2: Population Growth
- Trend 3: Rural Landscape
- Trend 4: Public Health
- Trend 5: Demographics

Trend 1: New Development

One of the key principles of smart growth is to strengthen and direct development toward existing community centers, but new development trends in Madison County indicate that growth is occurring away from the community centers. This type of development pattern suggests that communities are sprawling outwards which can have significant ramifications as it drains the vitalities of downtowns; increases dependence on the automobile simultaneously decreasing opportunities to incorporate fitness into people's daily routines; and competes with the protection of open space, farmland, and important environmental areas.

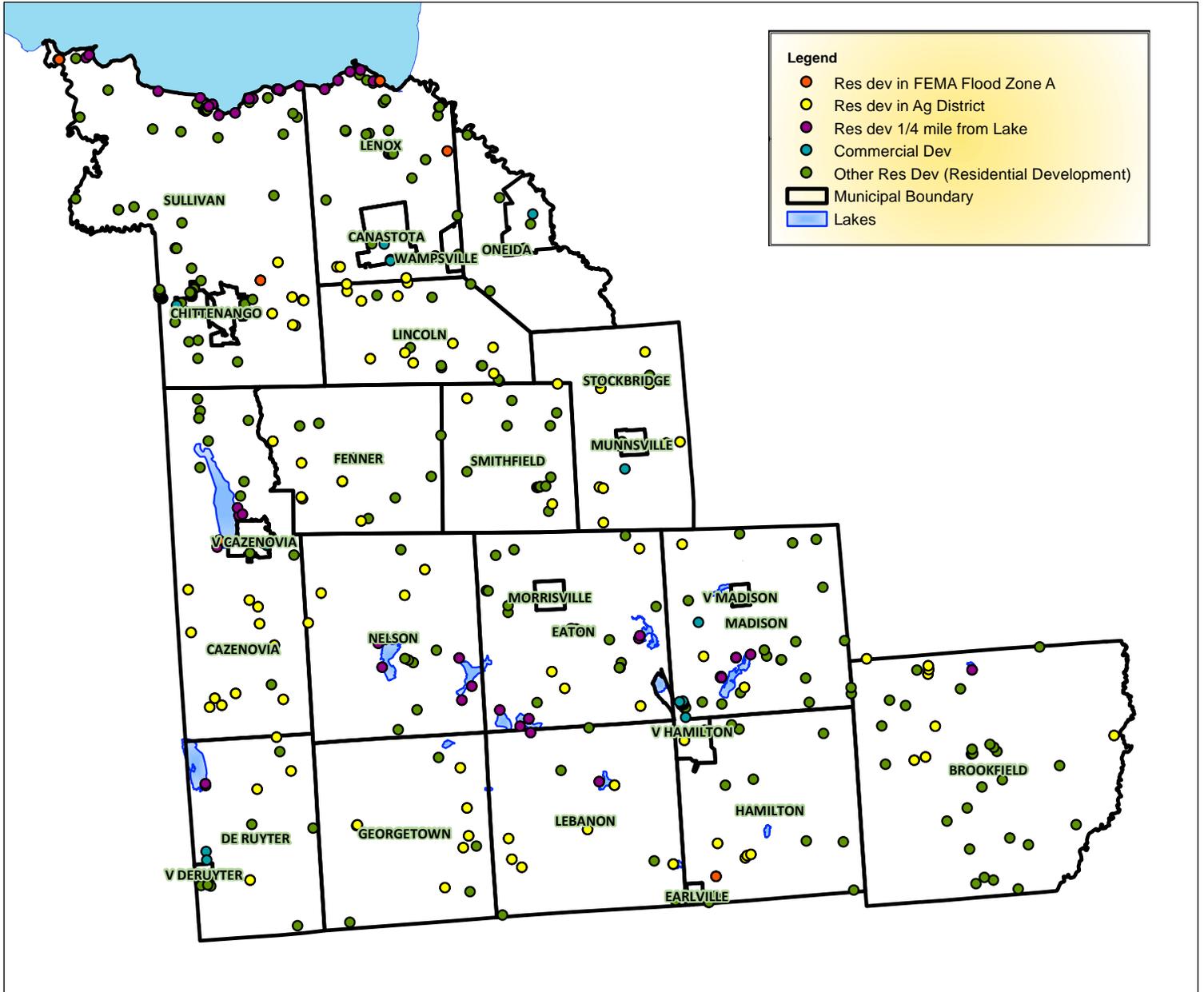
By using address data recorded from 2004-2010, trends in new development were determined for both residential and commercial properties.

Residential

From 2004-2010 there have been 428 new residential developments.

- *Towns* received 92.3% (or 395 of 428) of the new growth; the top three included:
 - Sullivan with 134 new residential developments (but only 22 occurred in the village of Chittenango);
 - Lenox with 37 new residential developments (but only 2 occurred inside the villages of Canastota and Wampsville); and
 - Brookfield with 37 new residential developments (does not have a village)
- *Villages* and the inner district of Oneida received only 7.7% (or 33 of 428) of new residential development; out of the 33 residential developments to occur inside these community centers:
 - Chittenango received 22 new residential developments;
 - V. Hamilton received 5 new residential developments; while
 - Inner city of Oneida only saw 2 new residential developments during this 6-year time period.
- There were even three places where the towns (Madison, DeRuyter and Eaton) grew, but the villages didn't at all. For example, in the Town of Madison there were 27 new residential developments, but none of these occurred in the Village of Madison

The points on this map, based on new address data, represent where growth has been going in Madison County from 2004-2010.



- Nearly 22% (or 94 of 428) of all new development occurred on property in an *Agricultural District*. There were four towns where over 50% of their new residential development was on property in an Agricultural District:
 - Stockbridge with 81.8% (or 9 out of 11) of new development in an Ag District.
 - Fenner with 60% (or 9 out of 15) of new development in an Ag District
 - Georgetown with 54.5% (or 6 out of 11) of new development in an Ag District.
 - Lincoln with 52.3% (or 11 out of 21) of new development in an Ag District.

- While a small percentage, 10 of the 428 new developments occurred inside a *100- year flood zone*.
- 13.3% (or 57 of 428) new residential developments occurred within *1/4 mile of a lake*.
- The types of residential units indicate the range of housing opportunities and choices which is a principle of smart growth. The vast majority of the new development was single family housing, while there were some apartments and duplexes constructed they were as add-ons or concentrated to specific areas.

Table 3: Residential Types Built in Madison County 2004-2010

Type of Residential	Amount	Comments	Percent
Mobile Home	29		6.78%
Single Family	242		56.54%
Apartment	7	most as add-ons to houses or barns	1.64%
Duplex	18	all in T. Sullivan	4.21%
Other	11		2.57%
Unidentified	121		28.27%
TOTAL	428		100.00%

Commercial

From 2004-2010 there have been 26 new commercial developments:

- Only 34.6% (or 9 of 26) of new commercial development occurred within the villages/city inner district while the remaining 17 (65.4%) have been built in towns.
- The types of commercial growth allowed in the towns were businesses like a Family Dollar Store, Car Repair Shop and Dental Office.
- The town which received 50% of this new commercial growth was Madison; this was largely due to the Sphere Retail Center (includes a Price Chopper) that was built.

Implications

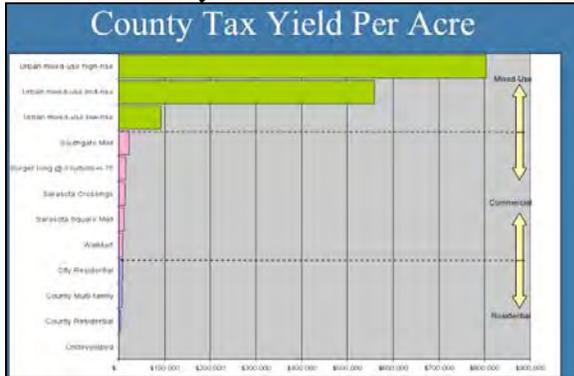
The trends of new residential and commercial development indicate problems with the ability of current policies to target growth and indicate a land use pattern that is spreading out.

Different land use types also bring in different levels of tax revenue. The results of a study done in Sarasota County, Florida that looked at the county’s property tax revenue per acre found that mixed use development overwhelmingly provides the biggest payback. It was found that big box stores in Sarasota such as Walmart and Sam’s Club, when analyzed for county property tax revenue per acre, produce barely more than a single family house; maybe \$150 to \$200 more a year or about \$8,350 per acre, however even their low rise (two to three stories with residential over retail) mixed use buildings bring in over \$70,000 per acre --- more than three times the return of their Southgate Mall which is the county’s highest-end commercial property with Marcy’s, Dillards and Saks Fifth Avenue department stores.¹

revenue per acre which coupled with the \$3,300 in property taxes per acre the store brings for the City is still only \$50,800 per acre in total taxes for Asheville. This is significantly less than the \$248,000 per acre in property taxes alone that the City receives for six story mixed use development downtown and only slightly more than the \$44,887 in property taxes (sales tax not included) that the City gets from three story mixed use developments.

At a time when local governments are struggling financially, it makes sense to evaluate different forms of development in terms of their potential for revenue. As local governments derive most of their working capital in the form of property taxes, these studies suggest that one of the best fiscal remedies for the future is downtown, mixed-use development.

Sarasota County: Tax Yield Per Acre²



Similar results were found in Asheville, North Carolina where sprawling development such as big box stores were once seen as desired largely because of their sales tax revenue. However, the study told a different story: Asheville receives 27 cents for every sales tax dollar collected, and as it is estimated that an average Walmart sells \$77 million of merchandise per year this means \$1.6 million in retail sales tax is being returned to Asheville.³ However, this amounts to about \$47,500 of sales tax

Trend 2: Population Growth

Madison County’s total population continued to increase from 1980-2010 but an increasing amount of that growth has occurred in the towns. From 1980 to 2010, towns saw a net gain of 7,211 people while the villages and city, the community centers of these towns, only gained 1,081 people.

Table 4: Population Change in Madison County

	1980	1990	2000	2010	Total 1980-2010
POP in City/Villages	31,895	32,492	31,173	32,976	1,081
POP in Towns	33,255	36,628	38,268	40,466	7,211
TOTAL	65,150	69,120	69,441	73,442	
% in City/Village	49.0%	47.0%	44.9%	44.9%	
% in Towns	51.0%	53.0%	55.1%	55.1%	

Overall, trends show that growth in towns (i.e. places outside city/villages) has gradually gained compared to growth in

community centers: the percentage of people living in towns is now 55.1% compared to 51% in 1980 and the percentage living in the city/villages is 44.9% compared to 49% in 1980.

Table 5 lists communities in order based on largest population size as of the year 2010. It is clear that the balance is shifting between the villages and towns with more and more of the population living outside the community centers.

Table 5: Madison County Population by Town and Village/City, 1980-2010							
Community	1980 POP	1990 POP	2000 POP	2010 POP	Btw 1980-1990	Btw 1990-2000	Btw 2000-2010
ONEIDA	10,810	10,850	10,987	11,393	40	137	406
SULLIVAN	9,081	9,888	10,136	10,258	807	248	122
CHITTENANGO	4,290	4,734	4,855	5,081	444	121	226
CANASTOTA	4,773	4,673	4,425	4,804	-100	-248	379
CAZENOVIA	3,281	3,507	3,867	4,251	226	360	384
V HAMILTON	3,725	3,790	3,509	4,239	65	-281	730
LENOX	3,197	3,447	3,679	3,775	250	232	96
EATON	2,475	2,630	2,678	3,056	155	48	378
V CAZENOVIA	2,599	3,007	2,614	2,835	408	-393	221
MADISON	1,918	2,458	2,486	2,703	540	28	217
BROOKFIELD	2,037	2,225	2,403	2,545	188	178	142
MORRISVILLE	2,707	2,732	2,148	2,199	25	-584	51
LINCOLN	1,722	1,669	1,818	2,012	-53	149	194
NELSON	1,495	1,892	1,964	1,980	397	72	16
HAMILTON	1,317	1,548	1,433	1,906	231	-115	473
FENNER	1,580	1,694	1,680	1,726	114	-14	46
STOCKBRIDGE	1,448	1,530	1,643	1,629	82	113	-14
LEBANON	1,117	1,265	1,329	1,332	148	64	3
SMITHFIELD	1,001	1,053	1,205	1,288	52	152	83
DE RUYTER	807	890	1,001	1,031	83	111	30
GEORGETOWN	779	932	946	974	153	14	28
V DERUYTER	542	568	531	558	26	-37	27
EARLVILLE	985	883	791	545	-102	-92	-246
WAMPSVILLE	569	501	561	543	-68	60	-18
MUNNSVILLE	499	438	437	474	-61	-1	37
V MADISON	396	316	315	305	-80	-1	-10
Total	65,150	69,120	69,441	73,442			
				Total lost	-464	-1,766	-288
				Total gained	4,434	2,087	4,289
				Net gain/loss	3,970	321	4,001
				% gain/lost	6.1%	0.5%	5.8%

City/Villages are in yellow. Red indicates a loss in population

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Implications

The fact that it is mainly the towns that are growing could indicate implications for the community to preserve the rural landscape, sustain vibrant main streets, and maintain village centers that are social, healthy places for people of all ages. This trend can also be costly.

When communities are spread out it is often more expensive to provide and maintain public infrastructure and services such as roads, water, sewage, garbage collection, schools, mail delivery, and emergency services. While rural residents traditionally require or accept lower levels of public services such as unpaved roads and provide their own water and sewage, as more and more people move out on the fringe, it can eventually put pressure on local governments to provide more services to low-density locations, despite their high costs.

As the trends show, the population in Madison County is moving away from community centers leaving a mismatch between the population and existing infrastructure. This creates a scenario where more sewers, roads, and services are demanded on the fringes while at the same time existing infrastructure is underutilized. One indication that this is occurring is increasing amounts of vacant residential and retail space in centers; these vacancies are eyesores with a variety of negative economic, fiscal, social and environmental impacts.

Refocusing growth to existing community centers can help to accommodate the rising number of people who do desire to live there and would if it were a viable option. According to the 2011 American Community Survey sponsored by the National Association of Realtors and Smart Growth America, a majority of Americans prefer to live in a mixed use community,

Community A	Community B
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are only single-family houses on large lots • There are no sidewalks • Places such as shopping, restaurants, a library, and a school are within a few miles of your home and you have to drive most places • There is enough parking when you drive to local stores, restaurants, and other places • Public transportation, such as bus, subway, light rail, or commuter rail, is distant or unavailable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a mix of single-family detached houses, townhouses, apartments, and condominiums on various sized lots • Almost all of the streets have sidewalks • Places such as shopping, restaurants, a library, and a school are within a few blocks of your home and you can either walk or drive • Parking is limited when you decide to drive to local stores, restaurants, and other places • Public transportation, such as bus, subway, light rail, or commuter rail, is nearby
<p>2011 American Community Survey - When asked to choose between these two different community descriptions, <i>a majority (56%) selected Community B</i> which describes a typical “smart growth” community, with a mix of various types of housing and businesses, more sidewalks and public transportation, but less parking.</p>	

near shops and services, where they have choices for walking, biking, driving or taking public transportation, over a sprawling one with large homes on a large lot distant from services. Equally telling, while 80 percent of those surveyed would prefer to live in a single-family, detached home, most respondents (59%) would choose a smaller home and smaller lot if it would keep their commute time to 20 minutes or less.⁴

It should be noted that this issue is less about deterring people from living outside community centers and more about ensuring the option exists for those that do wish to live in the center. Retirees, young professionals, and empty nesters are three large groups seeking out this lifestyle. The issue is that many community centers, after years of sprawling outwards, are struggling to regain the housing options, mobility choices, and amenities needed to attract people who are seeking out this way of life.

Trend 3: Rural Landscape

The number 1 industry in Madison County is agriculture. According to the most recent 2007 USDA Census of Agriculture the number of farms continue to rise in Madison County; similarly, the number of acres of farmland has risen over the last decade but is still below 1992 levels. There are more

small farms than in the previous decade as indicated by a declining median farm size but the larger sized farms are getting larger as indicated by the rising average size. Moreover, the majority of principal operators on farms in Madison County still report that their primary occupation is farming. However, that proportion has been declining with only 55.65% of farmers reporting farming as their principal occupation in 2007 as opposed to 70.82% in 1992.

Implications

Through various partnerships, Madison County and the State of New York have taken great steps to protect its agricultural industry. Keeping working lands profitable is one of the best ways to preserve rural land and combat sprawl. Haphazard land subdivisions, encroaching incompatible uses, and leap frog development all threaten the ability to maintain farm lands. As Madison County continues to grow and develop, targeted growth is crucial to maintain large tracts of working lands and to preserve prime agricultural soils.

A variety of land use tools exist to help communities do this with some of the most basic being comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances, and subdivision and site plan regulations. In fact, the New York State

Table 6: Madison County: Number of Farms and Farmers 1992-2007				
Year	2007	2002	1997	1992
Number of Farms	744	734	692	699
Land in Farms (Acres)	188,320	168,264	185,924	195,626
Average Size	253	227	269	280
Median Size	120	168	200	na
Principal Operator by Primary Occupation				
Farming	414	486	468	495
Other	330	248	224	204
TOTAL	744	734	692	699
% Farming	55.65%	66.21%	67.63%	70.82%
% Other	44.35%	33.79%	32.37%	29.18%

Source: USDA Census of Agriculture

Legislature states “among the most important powers and duties granted by the legislature to a city government is the authority and responsibility to undertake city comprehensive planning and to regulate land use for the purpose of protecting the public health, safety and general welfare of its citizens.”⁵ Despite this, some communities in Madison County have yet to adopt or take advantage of these tools. Out of the 15 towns in Madison County 7 do not have comprehensive plans and 4 do not have zoning; all have subdivision regulations. Of the 10 villages, 5 do not have comprehensive plans, 4 do not have zoning, and 4 do not have subdivision regulations.

One of the most treasured aspects in New York State is the home rule municipal law which grants significant authority to local governments. As a home rule state, municipalities are the ones granted the power to determine the majority of the land use decisions within their jurisdictions. Even so, 4 villages do not have planning boards. Without these tools and systems in place not only can it be difficult for communities to protect agriculture but also property values. These tools also help create environments where development decisions are predictable and fair (smart growth principle #9) which can attract business and economic development.

Table 7: Land Use Planning in Madison County	Comp Plan	Zoning Ordinances	Subdivision Regulations	Site Plan Review	Planning Board	
Oneida	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Towns
Brookfield	N	N	Y	Y	Y	
Cazenovia	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
DeRuyter	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Eaton	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Fenner	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Georgetown	N	N	Y	N	Y	
Hamilton	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Lebanon	N	N	Y	Y	Y	
Lenox	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Lincoln	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Madison	Y	N	Y	Y*	Y	
Nelson	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Smithfield	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Stockbridge	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Sullivan	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Villages
Canastota	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Cazenovia	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Chittenango	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
DeRuyter	N	N	N	N	N	
Earlville	N	N	N	N	Y	
Hamilton	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Madison	N	N	N	N	N	
Morrisville	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	
Munnsville	N	N	N	N	N	
Wampsville	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	

Source: *New York Land Use Tools: A 2008 Survey of Land Use Planning*, NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources
 * Information update since time of Survey

Comprehensive Plan	The overall guiding document for a community’s future growth and development. Developed by evaluating current trends, resources, and preferences of the community to create a common vision for the future and to establish and prioritize goals for the community.
Zoning Ordinances	Establishes appropriate land uses for designated areas. There can be any number and combinations of classifications such as residential, agricultural, and commercial.
Subdivision Regulations	Controls the division of a tract of land into individual lots by requiring development according to specific design standards and procedures adopted by local ordinance.
Site Plan Review	Applications for certain building permits require review to ensure development plans conform with a community’s adopted ordinances.
Planning Board	Members of the community who are appointed and given the authority to review the community’s established ordinances such as subdivisions, site plans, and special permits. Often responsible for drafting ordinances and updating planning documents such as comprehensive plans.

Trend 4: Public Health

The design of communities can directly impact public health. Many diseases are caused or exacerbated by elements of the built environment including cancer, heart disease, asthma, birth defects, behavioral disorders, infertility, and obesity.

Perhaps the most alarming of these is obesity. “Obesity and overweight are currently the second leading preventable cause of death in the United States and may soon overtake tobacco as the leading cause of death.”⁶ Moreover, it is expensive: “[t]he medical costs of obesity were as high as \$147 billion in 2008.”⁷ And more to the extent than many other health problems, obesity is controllable as it is often the case that different choices, such as in diet and exercise, can prevent it.

Table 8: Madison County: Percentage overweight and obese, 2008	
Adult Overweight & Obesity	56.6%
Child Overweight & Obesity	
2-5 years of age	45%
6-11 years of age	40.3%
12-19 years of age	37.3%

Source: Health Improvement Planning Report for Madison County, MAPP Committee, October 2009

In New York State, the percentage of adults who are overweight or obese increased from 42% in 1997 to 60% in 2008.⁸ Obesity among children and adolescents has tripled over the past three decades with a third of New York's children currently obese or overweight.⁹ In Madison County 56.6% of adults are overweight or obese as of 2008.¹⁰ The most shocking is the number of children in Madison County that are overweight or obese.

In order to understand health concerns in Madison County in more detail Madison

County Public Health Department developed a Health Improvement Plan for Madison County in October 2009. To develop this plan, a committee made up of community members and agency representatives was formed to identify and prioritize for action the public health issues deemed most important within Madison County. Cancer, heart disease, and obesity were the three health problems cited the most serious in Madison County by adults who were surveyed (trends of these and other prevalent diseases are found in Table 9). Maintaining healthy behavior and lifestyles and a clean environment were cited the most as having a positive impact on a person’s health. Many of the needs and strategies developed in the Health Improvement Plan are directly correlated to the principles advocated by smart growth.

Table 9: Madison County, NYS and US Health Indicators			
Indicator	US	NYS	Madison County
Diabetes (percent of total population):			
Diabetes prevalence in adults	8.3% ^a 2008	8.90% 2009	7.4% [*] 2009
Cancer Mortality (per 100,000):			
Breast	23.4 [*]	22.2 [*]	25.2 [*]
Cervical	2.3 [*]	2.6 [*]	2.6~ [*]
Colorectal	17.1 [*] 2006	15.8 [*] 2007	23.4 [*] 2003-2007
Heart Disease (per 10,000):			
Coronary heart disease hospitalizations	-	50.4 [*] 2008	51.9 [*] 2006-2008
Asthma (percent of total population):			
% of adults with current asthma (Age-adjusted)	-	9.7 2008-2009	13.8 2008-2009

* Rate age-adjusted to the 2000 US population

~ Fewer than 20 events in the numerator; rate is unstable a Median percent of States and DC

Source: New York State Department of Health, *Madison County Indicators for Tracking Public Health Priorities*

Implications

The design of the built environment, a result of decisions made by a community on land use, transportation, and environment, influences water and air quality, physical activity and safety, social capital and health equity, and consequently impact the physical and mental health of residents. Smart growth can make communities healthier places. For example, much of the design in communities has the unintentional consequence of creating places that promote sedentary rather than active lifestyles. One way this done is when communities separate land uses from each other. When home, work, shopping, and schools are isolated from each other people are dependent on the automobile to get each place they need to go. By advocating that many activities of daily living should occur within walking distance, smart growth has the advantage of designing places that promote physical activity.

Walkable places are achieved by targeting growth into centers to create mixed use spaces that provide a variety of housing options so people have the option to live, work, and play without always having to get into an automobile to go from one to the other. Implementing these principles of smart growth can help communities be places where people, no matter their age, have the opportunity to live and be healthy.

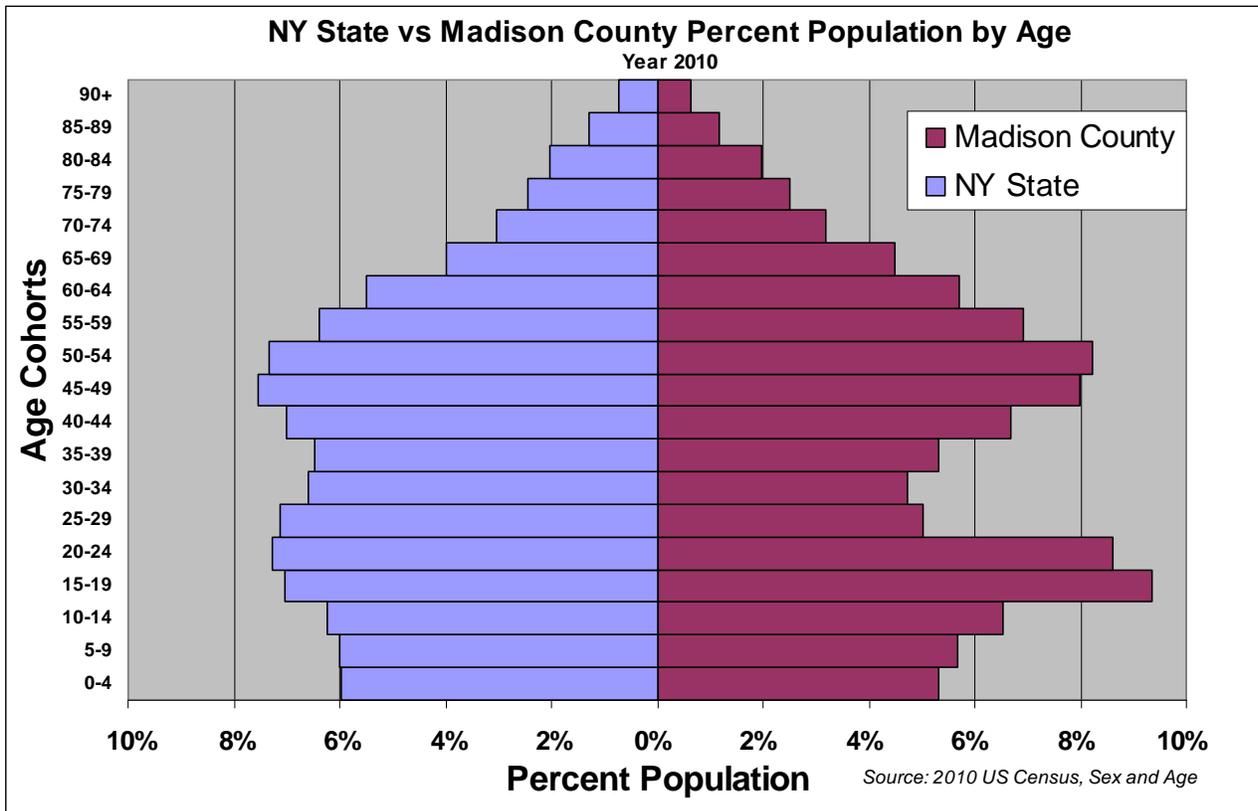
Trend 5: Demographics

2010 US Census data shows seniors increasing faster than younger populations, raising the nation's median age from 35.3 in 2000 to 37.2 in 2010. New York is even older with a median age of 38, and Madison County is even older than that with a median age of 39.5. Compared to the rest of the state and country, Madison County is also aging faster as indicated by 3.4 median age gain from 2000 to 2010. The higher median age is largely influenced by the fact that in 2010 Madison County also had a higher percentage of people age 65 and older compared to the New York and the country overall.

It could be the case that Madison County has a higher median age just because it has more seniors, but that is only part of the story. Madison County also has a proportionally less young (post grad), working age population and the number is decreasing from 19.4% of the population being 25-39 years old in 2000 to just 15.0% in 2010. This is significant as people in this age bracket represent a large portion of the most productive part of the labor force and is also the age cohort most likely to have children and raise families.

Table 10: Age Indicators for US, NYS, and Madison County						
	Median Age		% of Population ≥65		% of Population 25-39	
	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010
United States	35.3	37.2	12.4%	13.0%	22.2%	19.8%
New York	35.9	38	13.0%	13.5%	22.8%	20.2%
Madison County	36.1	39.5	12.5%	13.9%	19.4%	15.0%

Source: 2000 and 2010 US Census



The chart above shows age data broken down in four year intervals for Madison County and New York. It depicts higher numbers of seniors and fewer numbers of youth remaining to work and raise families in Madison County.

Implications

Seniors, age 65 and older, now number 35 million, but that is just the beginning: 77 million Baby Boomers, born from 1946 through 1964 are surging toward the gates of retirement.¹¹ Communities need to prepare for this unprecedented growth in the number of seniors. Part of that is taking into account that this elder population will differ from those of past decades: they will enjoy longer lives, better health and more active life styles than previous generations. Still, a growing and continuous challenge facing a majority of these seniors will be maintaining their precious independence. According to AARP, 89% of older people want to stay in their homes as long as possible.¹² To do

this, communities have to be designed in a way that will allow for people to “age in place.” Aging in place can mean a senior who is able to stay in his or her own home or the definition can be expanded to mean staying in the same community. Rather than watching seniors move for warmer climates or more age friendly places, communities are realizing there are things they can do to keep these vital members in place.

To ensure that environments meet the changing needs of older adults, new attention must be focused on housing, communities, and neighborhoods. AARP has identified three main ways communities can support the goal of helping seniors to age in place: affordable and appropriate housing, supportive community features and services, and adequate mobility options. Luckily, a lot of features which make a community more livable for seniors mirror smart growth principles and make the community more livable for everyone.

Identified barriers to aging in place include a lack of diverse housing options, rigid separation between different uses, automobile dominance, lack of walking options, and development patterns that favor expansion (sprawl) thereby making it harder for older adults to get around.¹³

Another challenge where smart growth can be of assistance is to retain and attract young professionals. Within Madison County, there are three well regarded higher education facilities, but, as the previously described demographics show, after graduation many of these students move away. It needs to be considered that today's young professionals are willing to relocate and are choosing where they want to live based on the culture and amenities available. In the 2000 Census, almost two-thirds (64%) of college educated 24-35 year olds said they looked for a job after they chose the city where they wanted to live.

There is fierce competition to attract young professionals who are considered a key part of the "creative class": "competition for future economic growth and vitality leaves [places] vying to attract and retain the young, well educated population within the U.S., commonly defined as 25-39 year olds with at least a bachelor's degree."¹⁴ While youth need jobs to stay in a community, the opposite can also be true: a critical mass of talented workers can attract firms.¹⁵

For rural areas such as Madison County it is especially tough as young adults with higher education, in particular, seem to be showing a preference for urban living. In fact, young adults with a four-year degree are about 94 percent more likely to live near urban neighborhoods than less-educated young professionals.¹⁶ It needs to be considered that small to mid-sized communities can provide what young professionals desire as

well. Young professionals demand opportunities for social interaction, high quality schools and parks, lively commercial districts, an abundance of cultural amenities, and transportation options, including convenient public transportation.¹⁷ Smart growth includes all of these things and can be applied to the smallest of downtowns. When communities, regardless of size, focus on creating energetic, vibrant places they can attract and retain young professionals, who in turn bring knowledge and innovation and create jobs within the community.

¹ Newsom, Mary, *Mixed-use Downtown Development Puts Standard Malls' Tax Yield to Shame*, Citiwire, July 2010, <http://citiwire.net/post/2133/>

² Sarasota County, Florida, *Smart Growth: Making the Financial Case*, September 2009(power point presentation to Sarasota County Board of Commissioners)

³ Langdon, Philip, *Best Bet for Tax Revenue: Mixed-Use Downtown Development*, New Urban Network, <http://newurbannetwork.com/article/best-bet-tax-revenue-mixed-use-downtown-development-13144>

⁴ National Association of Realtors and Belden Russonello & Stewart LLC, *The 2011 Community Preference Survey What Americans are looking for when deciding where to live*, March 2011, http://www.realtor.org/wps/wcm/connect/a0806b00465fb7babfd0bfce195c5fb4/smart_growth_comm_survey_results_2011.pdf?MOD=AJPERES

⁵ N.Y. GCT. LAW § 28-a : NY Code - Section 28-A: *City comprehensive plan*

⁶ New York State Department of Health, Obesity Prevention, <http://www.health.state.ny.us/prevention/obesity/>

⁷ Center for Disease Control, *Facts about County-Level Estimates of Diagnosed Diabetes and Obesity*, 2007, http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/pubs/factsheets/county_vlestimates.htm

⁸ New York State Department of Health, Obesity Prevention, <http://www.health.state.ny.us/prevention/obesity/>

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Madison County Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) Committee, *Health Improvement Planning Report for Madison County*, June 2008,

<http://www.healthymadisoncounty.org/MadisonHD/linkeddocs/data/data-improvement121509.pdf>

¹¹ Transgenerational Design Matters, Demographics of Aging,

<http://transgenerational.org/aging/demographics.htm#SwellingPopulation>

¹² AARP, Aging in Place, <http://www.aarp.org/home-garden/livable-communities/info-07-2010/aging-in-place.html>

¹³ Mia Oberlink, Opportunities for Creating Livable Communities, AARP Public Policy Institute Research Report, http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/il/2008_02_communities.pdf

¹⁴ Lombardi, Britton, *Educated (young) Workers and Regional Growth*, Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, February 2008, http://midwest.chicagofedblogs.org/archives/2008/02/the_young_and_r.html

¹⁵ Smart Growth America, *Smart Growth Helps Better Recruit and Retain Employees*, <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/issues/business/smart-growth-helps-better-recruit-and-retain-employees/>

¹⁶ El Nasser, Haya, *Young and Educated Show Preference for Urban Living Even Shrinking Cities See More Moving Downtown*, USA Today, April 2011, <http://www.usatoday.com/>

¹⁷ Smart Growth America, *Smart Growth Helps Better Recruit and Retain Employees*, <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/issues/business/smart-growth-helps-better-recruit-and-retain-employees/>

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Section 2: Goals to Accomplish Smart Growth

This section further illuminates the principles of smart growth by framing them around the four goals identified below. Strategies accompany each of these overarching goals to target specific ways smart growth can be used to enhance existing communities, support the rural landscape, build great new

places, and bolster the quality of life. Specific examples, concepts, and tools are identified throughout this section, many of which showcase what communities in Madison County are currently doing and where future opportunities may exist.

Goal 1: Help Existing Places Thrive	
Take care of assets and investments such as downtowns, infrastructure, and places that the community values	Strategies: A. Invest public and private funds in existing places and infrastructure B. Make policies and use tools that prioritize community centers C. Build on and enhance past community investments D. Collaborate and encourage community ownership
Goal 2: Support the Rural Landscape	
Create an economic climate that enhances the viability of working lands and conserves natural lands	Strategies: A. Ensure the viability of agricultural land B. Cultivate economic development strategies that rely on rural landscapes C. Promote rural products in urban areas and support other urban-rural links D. Link rural land preservation strategies to great neighborhoods
Goal 3: Create Great New Places	
Build vibrant, enduring neighborhoods and communities that people don't want to leave	Strategies: A. Build new places holistically and with intent B. Update policies to make it easier to achieve more livable, mixed use, and multi-modal places C. Make it a priority to build sustainably D. Educate and inform community members about the value of smart growth
Goal 4: Make Livable Communities for All Ages	
Create more livable communities for all residents to live, work, grow up and grow old	Strategies: A. Create places that allow seniors to age in place B. Target the needs of young adults C. Implement creative ideas to enhance quality of life

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Goal 1: Help existing places thrive

Take care of assets and investments such as downtowns, infrastructure, and places that the community values.

Recent trends, as described in the introduction, indicate people are leaving the community centers within Madison County and most development is occurring in the outskirts. In order for established cities, villages, and hamlets to continue to thrive they must persistently innovate and invest to realize the full potential of existing spaces. In light of the recent economic downturn, now is a great time to make taking care of existing places a top priority.

Through policies and strategies, local governments can prioritize investment into buildings and infrastructure already in place so communities can leverage and enhance existing assets before building new. Maintaining community centers has many benefits: it combats sprawl, injects new economic vitality to main streets, and helps

preserve local character. Improvements to existing assets can also attract people back into community centers by making them more attractive and functional places to live and work. There are plenty of opportunities to live a rural or suburban lifestyle in Madison County, but communities can also enhance the environment for those who want to live downtown.

Strategy 1a. Invest Public and Private Funds in Existing Places & Infrastructure

1. Fix-it-First

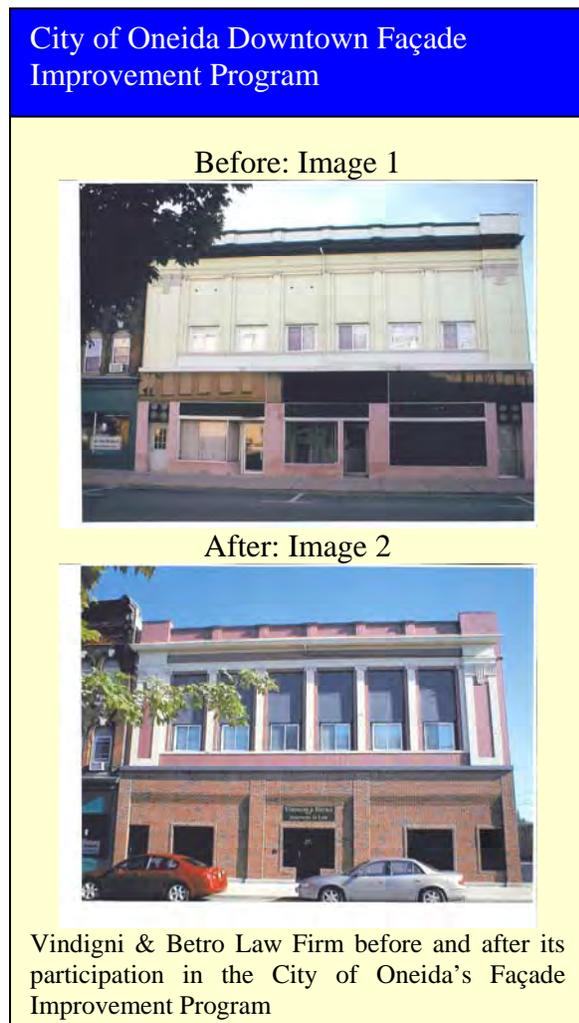
Communities should prioritize public funding to repair, restore, and conduct preventive maintenance on existing buildings and infrastructure. A fix-it-first approach can save money while creating and enticing better housing, retail and community space in our centers. By taking pride in the centers and focusing resources there, communities can also encourage private investment to follow suit. Public-private partnerships have proven to be a key ingredient for the successful enhancement of downtowns and main streets.

Strategy	Tools & Policies
Strategy 1a. Invest public and private funds in existing places and infrastructure	1) Fix-it-First 2) Revitalize Downtowns and Main Streets 3) Enhance Housing in Community Centers 4) Build to a Human Scale 5) Enhance the Public Realm
Strategy 1b. Make policies and use tools that prioritize community centers	6) Make Infill Development Priority 7) Power to Determine Infill Type
Strategy 1c. Build on and enhance past community investments	8) Encourage Adaptive Reuse/ Historic Preservation 9) Promote Parks and Natural Resource Areas as Destinations 10) Improve Streets and Streetscape
Strategy 1d. Collaborate and encourage community ownership	11) Promote Business Associations 12) Utilize Business Recognition Programs 13) Foster Community Ownership 14) Stimulate Local Government Collaboration & Partnerships

Façade Improvement Programs

Façade Improvement Programs are an example of a public-private partnership which are used to stimulate private investment in high-quality building improvements in order to complement and enhance downtown revitalization efforts. Typically with these types of programs the municipality shares the costs of improving building exteriors, thereby promoting joint public/private action and investment to contribute to the overall strength of downtown by making it a more attractive destination for shopping, dining, and services.

Grant in 2002 which was used to fund a façade improvement program. The program provided financial assistance to businesses interested in enhancing the exteriors of their buildings. The program only required owners to put 10% equity into the improvements while 50% would be funded by the grant and 40% by a loan. Twelve businesses were able to make improvements to the facades of their buildings using this program including Vindigni & Betro Law Office on Madison Street in downtown Oneida. The upgrades to the exterior of this building would have cost \$25,000, but through the program \$22,500 was offset by grant funds and a low interest loan. The program is closed out now, but funding may be available in the future to implement this program again.



2. Revitalize Downtowns and Main Streets

Restoring old buildings and revitalizing main streets is more than just bricks and mortar, it is economic development. A thriving downtown promotes tourism, housing, job creation, small business incubation, and maintains unique features of a community that contribute to a sense of place. It also alleviates the need to build on greenspace: instead of spending money and resources to accommodate growth outwards, communities can focus these to make the places they already have better.

While the characteristics of historic downtowns – most were originally built to accommodate mixed use in closer proximity with shorter blocks and more pedestrian alleys – are often seen as challenges by today’s development standards in lieu of traffic demands and parking availability, these surviving features are actually one of a community’s greatest assets and a great starting point when it comes to enhancing the principles of smart growth.

For example, the City of Oneida was awarded a Community Development Block

These features also make financial sense for small business development. Eighty-five percent of all new jobs in America are created by small businesses. Not only are business districts more successful when there is a diversity of businesses, but the diverse mix also involves a diverse range of rental rates. Occupancy is one of the few controllable costs for most small businesses. It is difficult to find diverse, rental options in newly built shopping malls. Through their diversity of spaces, older and historic buildings often provide the most affordable rent which can propel small business development.¹

Main Street Program

Main Street is a program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and since 1980 has been used by 2,000 communities across the country as a way to revitalize historic downtown and neighborhood commercial districts.² The Four-Point Main Street approach is based on organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring. Specifically, the Main Street program is a preservation-based economic development tool that enables communities to revitalize downtown and neighborhood business districts by leveraging local assets - from historic, cultural, and architectural resources to local enterprises and community pride. Currently, the only established Main Street Program in New York is a regional program created by the West Erie Canal Alliance.

While a program has yet to be established, Madison County is not new to Main Street. The National Trust Main Street Center (NTMSC) completed a three-day assessment visit in January 2010 to discuss the potential of establishing a Main Street Coordinating Program in Madison County. The visiting staff created a report after the visit outlining recommended next steps to implement the

program including creating a steering committee, establishing a budget and funding sources, and promoting the approach. Funding and concern about where the program would be housed kept the initiative from moving forward.

Main Street: A Regional Approach

In 2008, West Erie Canal Alliance (WECA) established the West Erie Canal Main Street Program (WECMSP) using funding received through a 2006-2007 NYS State Quality Communities Grant. Through their new main street program, WECA requested applications for interested member local governments to establish Main Street programs. Out of eleven that applied, three were selected by WECA: the Village of Albion in Orleans County, Village of Lyons in Wayne County, and City of Lockport in Niagara County. Those communities began to receive technical assistance and training from the NTMC and the WECMSP including Main Street Basic Training and New Manager Orientation, Resource Team Visits, and Work Plan Workshops. After much success, WECA is planning to accept applications in late 2011 to allow two more communities to join the WECMSP.

Since this time other surrounding counties have shown interest in creating a regional program with Madison County similar to the West Erie Canal Main Street Program. In June 2011, Madison County met with Herkimer, Oneida, and Oswego counties to discuss the potential of establishing and funding such a program. There is also potential to establish a regional program under the new Central New York Economic Development Regional Council, one of the ten councils recently created by New York State.

Finding funding for the Main Street program has been one of the main impediments to establishing it. However, even if funding is not available for this particular program, the key points of the program could be replicated. Having a dedicated person(s) working on these issues is an important first step. Some of the Main Street expense comes from hiring one regional coordinator and a project manager for each selected Main Street community. Even without this program, local governments could consider hiring at least a part time position to achieve similar results. Another significant feature of the Main Street program which contributes to its success and could be replicated is that it inspires the community to take ownership of the downtown and is based on a structure where community members get involved. Under the program volunteers are organized to serve on committees that fundraise, advocate, develop initiatives, and follow through on projects for the downtown.

Anchors for Downtown

When new development projects come to Madison County they should be leveraged to enhance the existing community by being built within the community, not outside of it. New development is an opportunity to establish yet another reason to come into the downtown rather than becoming another destination that draws people away from it. Rather than developing on large plots of greenspace on the outskirts of communities, new businesses should be anchors for the downtown. Businesses are often more comfortable and familiar working in suburban areas than downtown, so to make this happen requires a partnership between the local government and developer. In particular, downtowns should provide guidance with financing, parking areas, zoning, and building design.

While there is a love/hate relationship when it comes to big box stores, it has been demonstrated in many communities that even they can be successfully integrated into the fabric of the existing downtown. This resonates deeply as this type of development is the most notorious for developing on the outskirts. In other words, regardless of whether big box stores are good or bad for a community, showing that these large businesses can develop within a community means that most other businesses can too. A nearby example where this has been done includes the Wegmans built off Loop Road in the downtown of Auburn, New York.

Even Big Box Can Do It



Image 3

This is a rendering of a Walmart being built in Washington, D.C which will sit on only a 4-acre site and will be five floors, with small format retail lining the sidewalk, Wal-Mart behind, parking underground, and apartments on the upper floors. The design of this space demands a completely different type of interaction and use by the community. This does not have to just exist in Washington, D.C. While more of an extreme example, it demonstrates how development can be customized and integrated into the community.

Source: Steuteville, Robert, *Will Wal Mart Finally Build an Urban Store?*, New Urban Network, November 2010,

<http://newurbannetwork.com/article/will-walmart-finally-build-urban-store-13603>

3. Enhance Housing in Community Centers

One of the best ways to have a vibrant, active downtown is to have people live there. It sounds simple, but many community centers are struggling to supply a variety of viable downtown housing options despite a rising preference and demand for downtown living. Empty nesters and young professionals seeking cultural life and low-maintenance housing are key cohorts driving this resurgence. In many cases, people looking to live downtown are not looking to invest in a house, but they are looking for a first class apartment to rent.

Housing options downtown can be a huge boost for downtown economic development too. Foot traffic and purchasing on main streets increases with more residents living downtown; while each new downtown employee spends between \$2,500 and \$3,500 downtown each year, each new downtown resident spends anywhere between \$7,500 and \$14,000 annually in the downtown.³ As seen in Table 11, compared to the surrounding Mohawk Valley Region, Madison County has the highest percentages of people who commute into the county for work, but do not actually live here (32% in 2000). (Interestingly, Madison County also has the highest percentages of workers who

live here but commute out for work (49% in 2000.) This housing-job mismatch is an opportunity for Madison County to retain more of the workers that commute out.

Many factors play a role in where people choose to live, but available housing options are surely a significant part. Unfortunately, in many cases finding viable housing options downtown can be more difficult than on the outskirts. Where downtown options do exist, many are outdated and in need of serious renovation. In fact, in many cases housing in the community centers remains much older than on the outskirts. For instance, according to the Town of Madison’s most recent Comprehensive Plan 75% of homes in the Village of Madison predate 1939 while only 37.2% of the houses in the town predate 1939.

Local governments can assist landlords and homeowners to renovate or update their current units through grants and small loans. Local governments can work to redevelop existing vacant spaces in their downtowns into viable residential options. To attract new housing downtown, local governments first need to have a solid grasp on the amount and condition of current housing in their centers and corresponding demand in those spaces, which can be done by performing a market analysis. Considering

Table 11: Mohawk Valley Region Commuting Data for 2000 and 1990				
	Commuting In		Commuting Out	
	2000	1990	2000	1990
Fulton County	18%	15%	35%	31%
Herkimer County	21%	18%	41%	39%
Madison County	32%	30%	49%	47%
Montgomery County	31%	28%	38%	34%
Oneida County	18%	15%	12%	10%
Schoharie County	21%	15%	41%	39%

Source: New York State Department of Labor

what incentives are in place to encourage office or retail development to also provide above story housing is equally essential.

Creating New Housing Downtown

An 1827 circa building located in downtown Cazenovia, previously a bar and restaurant, is in the process of being renovated into a mixed-use building with a dance studio on the first floor and several upscale apartments on the upper floors. The developers knew there was a need for housing downtown and have been working closely with the Village with questions regarding installing items such balconies and an elevator. There are some existing spaces for parking, but tenants will be responsible for finding their own parking in the downtown.



Image 4

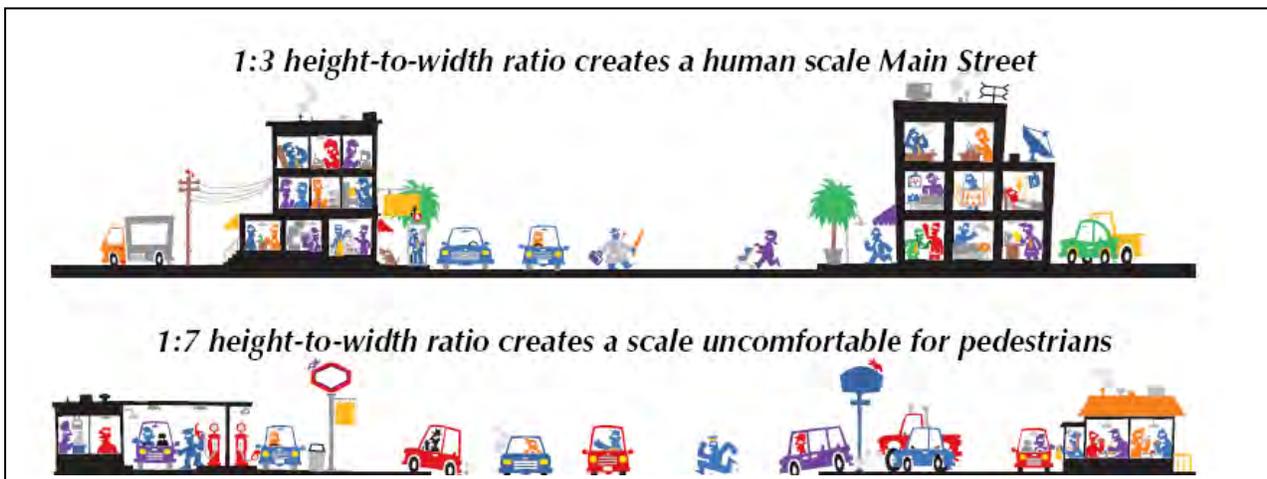
4. Build to a Human-Scale

Spaces are perceived differently walking at 2 mph than they are from behind a windshield at 30 mph. In order to sustain downtowns and main streets that are attractive destinations for people they must be built to a human-scale – a proportional relationship of the physical environment (buildings, trees, parking lots, streets, etc.) to human dimensions.

Human-scale design is pedestrian friendly. It does not take much to deter people from choosing to walk; if a street or pathway is physically uncomfortable or unattractive, people will avoid it or choose to travel by car. Even if these deterrents are only along one segment in a downtown, it can be what keeps pedestrians from continuing, opting instead to stop and turn around. Barriers to walking include large set backs and parking lots that surround buildings which distort the human scale of the street by making things too far apart. Conditions such as long, block faces created by fences, buildings with solid walls or tinted windows which do not allow the pedestrian to look in also lack human-scale and make unpleasant spaces to walk.

Human-scale is detailed: pedestrians need interesting things to look at close at hand, such as windows, display cases, sidewalk cafes, and most of all, other people⁴.

Height-to-width ratios affect Human-Scale



Source: Oregon Department of Transportation, Main Street: A Handbook for Oregon’s Communities, <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/BIKEPED/docs/mainstreethandbook.pdf?ga=t>

Without human scale, pedestrians will feel unwelcome and go elsewhere. Some of the key elements to consider are the continuity of the building sizes, how the street-level and upper-level architectural detailing is treated, roof forms, rhythm of windows and doors, and general relationship of buildings to public spaces such as streets, plazas, other open space, and public parking.⁵

Development codes should promote buildings that orient entrances to street sidewalks, break up large areas of surface parking with pathways and landscaping, and provide direct, safe, and comfortable access to buildings for pedestrians. Business can promote a human-scale by designing the front of their buildings with awnings to protect pedestrians from the elements, orienting business signs to be easily read by the pedestrian, and investing in public streetscape outside the store front. Local governments can improve pedestrian walkways through installation of attractive lights, benches, and landscaping to visually show the priority the space places on people. Businesses and local government can also widen the public sphere by promoting “on-street” events and activities such as commerce (sidewalk sales) and dining (seating available along sidewalks).

Without some sort of mechanism in place, communities have little control over how a new building will fit within the downtown. Even though zoning may be in place, this typically only regulates the use of the building. Many communities are adopting Downtown Design Guidelines to ensure the placement and design of buildings will create an architectural fit and quality contextual design that promotes human scale and pedestrian space.

Creating a Human Scale



Image 5

Pedestrian passageways need active uses, especially entrances and store windows. Businesses can orient signs toward pedestrians.

Rather than approaching every new real estate development as a separate entity, downtown design guidelines take steps to ensure that new development is appropriately connected to the existing town layout, and meets certain standards. Establishing guidelines creates a common vision for the downtown and ensures that provide property owners, developers, and local government with criteria and guidance to implement that vision in order to create a more cohesive place in the downtown. The guidelines establish standards for site planning such as building location, setbacks, parking placement, and pedestrian pathways. It also addresses building design such as mixed use buildings, scale and massing, roofs and heights, facades, signs, transparency, and ways to detail the public realm.

The City of Oneida developed Downtown Design Guidelines in 1999 “to promote and encourage the preservation of historic resources, the enhancement of existing structures, the development of a strong economic base, a pedestrian friendly environment and an enhance quality of life.” These were not adopted at the time, but the City is currently looking to revisit them.

5. Enhance the Public Realm

The character of places is determined as much by their spaces as by the physical structures in those spaces. This is why design standards should pay particular attention to shaping and using public space—the “public realm.” The public realm includes spaces between and around buildings; these are the spaces that are used

freely on a day-to-day basis by the general public, such as streets, plazas, parks and public infrastructure. A high quality public realm creates a sense of place, promotes social interaction, and generates foot traffic.

Communities can analyze existing public spaces to determine how they are currently being used and the purpose that they serve to

Table 12: Guidelines for Great Public Spaces

1.0 Features and Elements	2.0 Activities and Sociability	3.0 Unique Qualities, Traits, Characteristics
1.1 What landscape and hardscape features are present? How do they contribute to the unique or special nature of the space? 1.2 How does the space accommodate pedestrians or others whose access to the space is by transit, bicycles, or other means? Is the space welcoming to those with physical disabilities or others with special needs? 1.3 Does the space accommodate multiple activities? 1.4 What purpose does it serve for the surrounding community? 1.5 How does the space utilize existing topography, vistas, or geography? Does it provide interesting visual experiences, vistas, or other qualities? 1.6 How are murals or other public art incorporated into the space?	2.1 What activities make the space attractive to people and encourage social interaction? 2.2 Does the space provide a sense of comfort and safety to people gathering and using the space? Does the space provide a friendly and welcoming atmosphere? 2.3 How do people interact with one another? Does the space encourage communication or interaction between strangers? 2.4 How does this place encourage use by a diverse cross section of the public?	3.1 What makes this public space stand out? What makes it extraordinary or memorable? 3.2 Is there variety, a sense of whimsy, or an atmosphere of discovery or pleasant surprise? 3.3 Is there commitment to maintain the space and to keep it a usable space over time? Does the public have a sense of ownership about the space? How has it changed over time? 3.4 Is there a sense of importance about the space? What characteristics or qualities contribute to this? 3.5 What is the history of the space, and how is it remembered or passed on from one generation to the next? 3.6 Does the space serve as a place of inspiration or contemplation, or is it considered sacred? 3.7 What is it about the space that contributes to a sense of community? 3.8 What makes this space special and worthy of designation as a Great Space?
Source: American Planning Association, <i>Characteristics and Guidelines for Great Public Spaces</i> , http://www.planning.org/greatplaces/spaces/characteristics.htm		

make improvements. A partnership between public and private entities is necessary in creating a successful public realm because many aspects of private property (such as building setbacks and facades) contribute to public space, making them key to great place making. With teamwork and appropriate criteria, public vision and private development can come together to create memorable, functional places. Guidelines and strategies to enhance the public realm can also be included within any established downtown design guidelines.

Strategy 1b. Make policies and use tools that prioritize community centers

6. Make Infill Development Priority

Targeting development into existing places is a great way to enhance current community centers. Infill allows for the new construction or renovation of buildings to provide more business, entertainment and downtown living options. Despite the many great things that can be done to community centers, it is equally important what is allowed or not allowed to develop outside community centers. Allowing new development to take place on undeveloped green spaces completely outside designated growth areas draws people away from existing assets and works against making compact places that are capable of supporting vibrant, pedestrian friendly places.

The difficulty of steering new growth into infill is painfully exhibited in many places. It is also happening here: as seen in the introduction, only 34.6% (or 9 of 26) of the new commercial development occurred within the villages/city inner district while the remaining 17 (65.4%) developments have been built in towns. By allowing development outside of the city, villages, and other designated growth areas, the

places in Madison County are encouraging leap frog development and sprawl. Without being able to target growth, communities are separating people from community centers and forcing them into their cars. Ultimately, by allowing this to happen, communities are making it harder for their centers to thrive.

Policy effects Infill Development

A main impediment of infill is that often current policies and regulations may inadvertently create incentives to build on greenfields by making it more expensive to build in existing centers. Other obstacles include misperceptions about the amount of built out space and a lack of creativity on using existing space. Moreover, the type of development in a downtown is equally important. For instance, it is hard for a downtown to be a viable place if the businesses only draw people at certain, limited times such as Monday through Friday from 9 am to 5 pm. As much as possible, downtowns need to be 18-hour destinations. This is accomplished through policies that promote mix use which can attract people to the downtown from morning to evening. The Village of Hamilton established the Partnership for Community Development to help ensure it was targeting the type of infill that would not only be successful but enhance the Village as well.

Other remedies include faster project approval and reduced impact fees to incentivize infill development. Many local governments also publicly invest in and redevelop underused sites to generate excitement that can encourage additional private infill development.⁶

Village of Hamilton Partnership for Community Development

The Village of Hamilton through the Partnership for Community Development (PCD), a non-profit organization, works with any business that wishes to open up in the downtown. Specifically, PCD works to match them to a building and space in the downtown that will bring the new business the most success and that will also work in favor of promoting a vibrant downtown. To make this successful, PCD strongly discourages any type of office space locating in ground floors and promotes only retail (shops and restaurants) on these bottom floors. This tactic works because the businesses that do the best in creating a walkable, exciting destination for the downtown are often businesses centered on food, art, and entertainment. PCD promotes this based on the understanding that it does not take much to discourage people from coming to and walking in the downtown. Filling downtowns with even a few bottom floors spaces wish uses such as offices, banks, and clinics quickly breaks up the cohesiveness and stimulation necessary to encourage people to walk. This has the compounded effect of making harder on other businesses in the downtown that thrive on having pedestrian traffic where passersby often stop in just because they are walking past.

Through the Hamilton Initiative, the village owns several of the buildings downtown. It is easy to control what they allow into those spaces, but PCD also works with other landlords to educate them about the importance of keeping the downtown alive by being selective on which tenants they allow into their spaces. PCD will even help other landlords with available space find tenants that will be viable for the space and supportive of the community character.

7. Power to Determine Infill Type

It is difficult to balance all of the often competing factors that accompany new development. The factors involved in reaching a decision on new development can also be many and complex: transportation patterns, aesthetics, opportunities for the creation of new jobs, wage scales and health benefits, impacts on existing businesses and employment, fiscal implications (positive and negative, local and regional), consumers' access to goods in the local market, the prices consumers pay for goods, the effect on national industries, the conditions of labor and the environment in other countries, and more.⁷ If in addition, the new development is a chain or big box store it can be especially difficult to implement creative strategies to create infill that is in line with all these objectives that also supports the existing charter of the community. However, it is possible and essential to creating better places envisioned by our communities.

Town Boards, Planning Boards, and communities in general often seem to underestimate the power they have over determining the type of development that comes to their areas. Developers will make what the community wants as long as the community is clear about what that is. Therefore, not only is it important to revisit and revise policies and codes as necessary to ensure they are supporting the creation of places the community truly want to see, but perhaps even more important is that those responsible in overseeing their approval feel empowered to uphold those policies so desirable infill development can truly be achieved.

In a time where bigger, faster, cheaper is the mantra, communities have to be prepared to

Subways around Madison County: An illustrative example demonstrating that developers will make what the community wants as long as the community is empowered and clear about what that is. These are all the same business but the type of space each creates and the uses it influences are very different (Images 6-11).



actively seek out other alternatives and hold to their community vision if they do not want to see their area lose its unique community character like what has happened to so many other places.

Strategy 1c. Build on and Enhance Past Community Investments

8. Encourage Adaptive Reuse/ Historic Preservation

In order to help existing places thrive, communities should focus on reusing historic buildings that are currently vacant or underutilized. Many of these buildings sit in the heart of the community centers. These buildings tell stories and maintaining them allows an opportunity to preserve an area’s heritage and strengthen its sense of place.

Many times reusing existing buildings, rather than demolishing and building new, can also conserve energy and resources. Twenty-four percent of most landfill sites

are made up of construction debris and much of that waste comes from the razing of existing structures.⁸ Solid waste landfill is increasingly expensive in both dollars and environmental inventory so preserving instead of demolishing out inventory of historic buildings reduces that construction waste. Federal and state funds are available to help better utilize these buildings in order to meet modern needs for office, retail and housing while still preserving historically significant places that have been in anchors in our communities for decades.

Creative Reuse

The Pottery, next to the Erie Canal in the Town of Sullivan, is underway to become a new residential, café and office space. The historic brick building was built in the late 1800s where pottery was manufactured until the mid 1920s. The building was listed on the National Registry for Historic Places in 2009. With the help of the Town of Sullivan, the owner was successful in securing a \$900,000 Restore New York grant and hopes to begin construction soon. Another wonderful advantage of rehabilitating this existing historic structure is its proximity to the Erie Canal trail which will provide the opportunity for residents to walk and bike for recreation or for transportation between communities, right outside their front door.



Image 12

The Pottery in the Town of Sullivan is an example of an adaptive reuse project

9. Promote Parks and Natural Resource Areas as Destinations

The many outdoor amenities throughout Madison County provide area residents wonderful recreational outlets and attractive tourism opportunities. The miles of horse trails, scenic bike trails, snowmobile paths, and multi-use trails for hiking, snow sports, and jogging are some of the greatest assets throughout Madison County offering many economic, ecological, and social benefits.

Trails in Madison County Working Group

The various trails that exist in Madison County are maintained by many different groups but much could be gained by planning, enhancing, and marketing these places together. A “Trails in Madison County” working group was organized in May 2011 and consists of a variety of key agencies, organizations, and foundations that work on the numerous trails throughout Madison County. One of the goals of this group is to produce a product that promotes the area’s recreational resources for economic development as a way to create healthier, more active communities that are also destinations to attract new visitors. In the future, having knowledge of all the trails throughout Madison County could be used for future efforts such as creating a greenway masterplan to enhance connectivity throughout the County. After all, trails are not only great for recreation but serve as a viable transportation option as well.

Greenway Masterplan

Communities throughout Madison County could benefit from the establishment of a new Greenway Masterplan. This type of plan typically inventories key hubs – major greenways and parks, sites – smaller, more isolated natural features and resource areas, and connectors – narrow linear features that provide some level of ecological or

Marketing Recreational Resources



Image 13

The Finger Lakes Tourism Alliance has created a new way to market their designated hiking and biking trails through a series of four sided cards attached together by a carabiner. This design is great for people on the go and provides an easy way to add more cards when new routes are developed. This is an example of the fun, new way the recently organized Trails in Madison County working group is hoping to promote this area's many recreational resources.

recreational linkage between hubs and/or site and then establishes goals to protect and enhance these features. Examples include identifying ways to enhance connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods, parks, schools, historical and cultural sites, and other trails and greenspaces and prioritizing new greenspace projects to expand recreational and transportation options.

Geocaching

A new sport that is getting both individuals and families engaged in the outdoors to experience the scenic, natural, historic, and cultural resources in an area is geo-caching. The basic idea of geocaching is to locate hidden containers, called geocaches, using a GPS device and then share your experiences online.⁹ Many caches are placed by individuals, but some local governments are using this popular new sport as an opportunity to strategically place their own cache boxes at places they want people to visit or learn more about. Several areas in New York have created their own regional geocache challenge which, as people move about to complete the challenge, is bringing tourism throughout the entire area.

Geocaching: Fun, New Way to Experience and Attract People to the Outdoors

The Great Lakes Seaway Trail GeoTrail is a series of geocaches located throughout the Great Lakes Seaway Trail region. The 518-mile byway is made up of five regions. Participants that find at least ten official Great Lakes Seaway Trail GeoTrail caches in a region are rewarded with a free commemorative GeoTrail Coin for that region.



Image 14

10. Improve Streets and Streetscape

Streets are more than just the means to carry traffic; taken together streets are often the largest public space communities have so their design is essential to placemaking.

Context-Sensitive Design

Context-sensitive design is used to make streets more compatible with adjoining land uses and more accommodating to all modes of travel. Techniques include more rigorous management of traffic speeds, narrowing the traffic realm while expanding the pedestrian realm, accommodating bikes and transit, using curb parking as a buffer between moving traffic and sidewalk activities, making walkways interesting and improving the sidewalk environment and ability of pedestrians to cross the street.¹⁰ Through investing in some of these strategies streets can be safe, functional places that can help communities grow in a sustainable way.

For example, a one-mile stretch of Route 5 in Oneida, from Seneca Street to the County line is going to get a face lift in Spring 2012. DOT officials are going to use \$1.5 million to resurface the highway, upgrade traffic signals and improve pedestrian access by providing much needed sidewalks on the north and south side of the road and crosswalks. The original plan to widen the corridor into 4-lanes with a raised landscaped median was abandoned due to funding and DOT determining that it would do little to increase traffic flow. This demonstrates that the answer to congestion is not solved by merely adding more lanes. Instead, the City of Oneida can use this upgrade as an opportunity to incorporate smart growth by investing in connectivity and promoting alternative transportation options. Through creative design and refocusing on the pedestrian, the corridor can become more functional and perhaps even alleviate the need for the widening originally anticipated with this project.

Current Rt 5. in Oneida



Image 15

Upgrades scheduled to Route 5 through the City of Oneida are an opportunity to create a safer, multi-modal corridor.

Establishing a committee that works on context-sensitive design issues is one way to know where to invest or which areas need the most attention. By designating a committee made up of key stakeholders and departments such as highway, planning, and public health, communities can ensure that roads are being looked at and designed holistically. This is even more pivotal now as New York State Senate has tied funding for roads to the Complete Streets Bill discussed previously in the Introduction. One established group that is touching on some of these issues is Village of Hamilton Pedestrian Safety Committee.

Village of Hamilton Pedestrian Safety Committee

In 2006, the Village of Hamilton Pedestrian Safety Committee was established in response to safety concerns for school children, but once started it soon became apparent there were many other issues. These included excessive vehicular speed on certain streets and in school zones, violation of pedestrian right of way in crossings, and vehicles parked in pedestrian crosswalks. Most recently the committee has been working on a Safe Routes to Schools grant and actively involved with the new design of the 5-point intersection downtown. The Committee also helps oversee the replacement sidewalk initiative which identifies sidewalks in need of repair and then uses designated village funds to help residents with up to \$600 in financial assistance to replace and maintain the village sidewalk infrastructure.

Strategy 1d. Collaborate and Encourage Community Ownership

11. Promote Business Associations

Local governments can empower downtown businesses in their communities to form business associations. A business association is simply a group of business owners that form together to share resources and creative ideas to improve the economic, cultural, and social roles they provide to the community. Business associations allow an outlet for owners to think and act together to promote businesses and market the downtown area as a whole. This can help make the entire downtown area a more cohesive destination that can help draw more people.

Business associations can also be a great place for local governments to turn to get

feedback and ideas and create public-private partnerships. For example, local business surveys could be distributed to these groups, to better access what would be most helpful to spur more economic development.

12. Utilize Business Recognition Programs

Business recognition programs are a way to encourage and reward businesses that enhance their buildings and outside streetscapes to better reflect the historic character to add architectural and economic value and contribute to the sense of place in the community. Strategies could be implemented to create friendly competition, develop press opportunities, and other incentives to inspire businesses to improve their buildings.

13. Foster Community Ownership

A wide sense of community ownership is essential to successful, large scale downtown redevelopment. When community members feel empowered to make a difference in their communities, more gets done. Many communities in rural places are short on staff but may find that community members are willing to serve if

Committee made of Volunteers

The Village of Cazenovia “view(s) its trees as an important community asset contributing to the scenic beauty, health, and environment of Cazenovia” and so in 2007 a Tree Commission was established as an advisory commission to the Village Board of Trustees to preserve, protect and enhance this resource. Specifically the Cazenovia Village Tree Commission, comprised only with volunteers, has several tasks including maintaining an on-going inventory of Cazenovia’s trees, providing for the replacement of diseased or dying trees, and increasing community knowledge in the selection, location, care, and maintenance of trees.

only an accessible outlet existed for them to do so. When areas of concern are identified in a community, local governments can encourage communities to take charge of the issue such as by forming a committee similar to what the Village of Cazenovia did with its Tree Commission, made up entirely of volunteers.

Beyond the usual public forums or meetings, local governments can also make public involvement more accessible. Local governments can find ways to use internet and social media outlets, such as Facebook and Twitter, which have become key ways many people communicate. Other lesser known web-based tools may be applicable such as SeeClickFix.

SeeClickFix

“SeeClickFix” is a web-based tool that allows anyone in the community to log on and voice any non-emergency concern that they believe needs improvement or deserves attention in their community. The value of SeeClickFix is it creates a centralized place for communities to express concern and receive feedback on maintenance and safety issues. It can empower everyone in the community to report and track issues because access to the site is available for free. SeeClickFix advertises this a great resource for local governments to not only respond to concerns in the community but also a way to prioritize issues that may need to be addressed earlier than others based on community input. Allowing the public to play a more active role in keeping existing assets in good condition can be instrumental in maintaining better places and communities. Go to <http://www.seeclickfix.com/> for more information. Some places will find their residents are already using this resource, but in order for it to benefit the community local governments must be active participating members as well.

14. Stimulate Local Government Collaboration and Partnerships

Community development encompasses a wide range of activities which can more easily be accomplished by working together. Through cooperation and coordination, local governments can learn from each other. In fact, one of the main goals of this primer is to showcase examples of what communities in Madison County are currently doing to share experiences, projects, needs, and goals.

Planning for a Healthy Madison County Newsletter

The first *Planning for a Healthy Madison County Newsletter* was sent out to city, town, and village planning boards in April 2011. This newsletter was developed based on efforts of the Community Economic Development Committee (members comprised of Madison County Planning Department, Madison County Public Health Department, City of Oneida, Cazenovia College, and Madison County Office for the Aging) in response to the feedback received from the Healthy Community Design Workshop held on October 26, 2010 which focused on smart growth.

This new bi-annual newsletter is one of many ways the Community Economic Development Committee is working to develop more specific examples and action items for implementing aspects of Smart Growth. For the second newsletter, to be sent Fall 2011, the Community Economic Development Committee will focus on the smart growth principle of walkability. A request was sent out to local governments to submit any current “walkability” initiatives or projects they are working on to be showcased in the upcoming newsletter. The hope is that each upcoming newsletter will provide examples of current initiatives in places throughout Madison County.

¹ Donovan Rykema, *Why Historic Preservation is Smart Growth*,
<http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/hp/smartgrowth/rykema.asp>

² National Trust for Historic Preservation, *About Main Street*,
<http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/about-main-street/>

³ Dugan, Matthew, *Trends in Downtown Revitalization*, *Virginia Review*, June 2005
<http://www.timmons.com/news-and-events/TrendsinDowntownRevitalization.asp>

⁴ Oregon Transportation and Growth Management Program, *Commercial and Mix Use Development*,
<http://www.oregon.gov/LCD/docs/publications/commixedusecode.pdf?ga=t>

⁵ Ibid

⁶ ICMA, *Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities*,
http://icma.org/en/icma/knowledge_network/documents/kn/Document/301483/Putting_Smart_Growth_to_Work_in_Rural_Communities

⁷ Milne, Janet, *Forward: The Big Box Challenge*, *Vermont Journal of Environmental Law* Volume 6 2004-2005,
<http://www.vjel.org/journal/VJEL10030.html>

⁸ Donovan Rykema, *Why Historic Preservation is Smart Growth*,
<http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/hp/smartgrowth/rykema.asp>

⁹ Geocaching, <http://www.geocaching.com/>

¹⁰ Smart Growth Planning, *Transit and TOD Strategies*,
<http://www.smartgrowthplanning.org/Techniques.html>

Image 1: Courtesy of Vindigni & Betro Law

Image 2: Courtesy of Vindigni & Betro Law

Image 3: Steuteville, Robert, *Will Wal Mart Finally Build an Urban Store?*, *New Urban Network*, November 2010,

<http://newurbannetwork.com/article/will-walmart-finally-build-urban-store-13603>

Image 4: Courtesy of Madison County Planning Department

Image 5: City of Santa Barbara,

<http://www.santabarbaraca.gov/>

Image 6: Courtesy of Madison County Planning Department

Image 7: Courtesy of Madison County Planning Department

Image 8: Courtesy of Madison County Planning Department

Image 9: Courtesy of Madison County Planning Department

Image 10: Courtesy of Madison County Planning Department

Image 11: Courtesy of Madison County Planning Department

Image 12: Courtesy of Madison County Planning Department

Image 13: Finger Lakes Tourism Alliance,

<http://www.fingerlakes.org/>

Image 14: Great Lakes Seaway Trail,

<http://www.seawaytrail.com/geotrail.html>

Image 15: Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, *Can We Create a Nice Place to Live?*

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2

Goal 2: Support the rural landscape

Create an economic climate that enhances the viability of working lands and conserves natural lands.

A large component of the sense of place in Madison County is its beautiful rural landscape, but like many rural places, maintaining it can be difficult. Development pressure, economic hardship, and the disconnect that often exists between communities and the agricultural industry all threaten farmland. Smart growth in rural areas means investing in the rural landscape and creating an economic climate that values working lands. One of the best ways to combat sprawl and conserve the rural landscape is to keep rural uses profitable. Madison County can continue to support farmers in order to create economic vitality throughout its communities and preserve its open space.

Strategy 2a. Ensure the Viability of Agricultural Land

1. Use Value Taxation

One of the more substantial expenses to farmers is property taxes. Agricultural assessments are available in New York to eligible farmers which allow land to be assessed at its current use value rather than at its highest market value. This keeps farming viable because farmers are taxed only for the agricultural use of their land not for what the land would be worth if it were to be developed. In New York, landowners must file for agricultural assessment annually. To apply for first time agricultural assessment, a landowner goes to the county Soil and Water Conservation District office. Unfortunately, some small farm operations find they do not qualify for tax exemptions under this program due to the requirement that “the annual *gross sales* of agricultural products generally *must average \$10,000* or more for the preceding two years.”¹ This is a challenge as small family farms have always characterized Madison County agriculture.

Strategy	Tools & Policies
Strategy 2a. Ensure the viability of agricultural land	1) Use Value Taxation 2) Land Trusts to Protect Open Space 3) Right to Farm Policies 4) Renewable Energy Development 5) Value-Added Farm Products
Strategy 2b. Cultivate economic development strategies that rely on rural landscapes	6) Purchase of Development Rights 7) Conservation Easements 8) Fee Simple Acquisition 9) Agritourism
Strategy 2c. Promote rural products in urban areas and support other urban-rural links	10) Direct Marketing to Consumers 11) Government and School Purchase of Local Products 12) Buy Local Campaigns 13) Organize a Food Council
Strategy 2d. Link rural land preservation strategies to great neighborhoods	14) Agricultural Zoning 15) Cluster Subdivision/ Conservation Subdivision

2. Land Trusts to Protect Open Space

Land trust organizations can work to protect historic, agricultural, and natural resources through a variety of conservation tools such as easements, public education, and natural resource management. Currently there are three such organizations in Madison County: 1) Southern Madison Heritage Trust is comprised of six towns in Madison County: Brookfield, Hamilton, Lebanon, Georgetown, Madison and Eaton.

2) The Great Swamp Conservancy (GSC) focuses on the towns of Sullivan and Lenox.

3) The Cazenovia Preservation Foundation (CPF) focuses on the Town of Cazenovia with influence in the towns of Fenner and Nelson.

As an example, CPF currently protects over 1,900 acres of farmland and open space through conservation easements and ownership.² The organization also maintains over 12 miles of public use trails and offers a summer walks program.³ Opportunities exist for similar organizations to work or be formed in the City of Oneida and the towns of Lincoln, Stockbridge, Smithfield and DeRuyter.

Organizing a designated non-profit land trust organization can also help leverage funds and bring in additional money to protect open space. For example, the New York State Conservation Partnership Program offers competitive grants to local land trusts to advance open space, farmland preservation, and resource conservation. This initiative has created land trust jobs, leveraged \$10 million in additional local funding and helped communities permanently conserve more than 11,000 acres of environmentally significant land across New York.⁴ In March 2011, all three Madison County land trust organizations received a total of five Conservation Partnership Grants through this program.

The money will be used to expand and further promote the missions of each of these organizations.

Farmland in Protection



Image 1

The SMHT holds a protective farming easement on this 31 acre property on Route 12B North of Hamilton, New York.

3. Right to Farm Policies

Madison County has dairy farmers, maple syrup producers, and many other agricultural industries, including a new resurgence in the hop industry. In order to continue to thrive, farming must be protected. “Right to Farm” policies are one way to protect farmers from nuisance lawsuits which can drive farmers off their land. This may especially be of importance in areas with increasing non-agricultural populations. As described in the introduction, nearly 22% of new residential development occurred in an Agricultural District from 2004-2010. In the towns of Lenox, Fenner, Georgetown, and Stockbridge over 50% of new residential development occurred in an Agricultural District. What does this say about growth?

If it continues, can Madison County preserve the rural landscape that has defined it for so long? Despite the growth occurring there, farms in an Agricultural District do receive important “right-to-farm” protections.

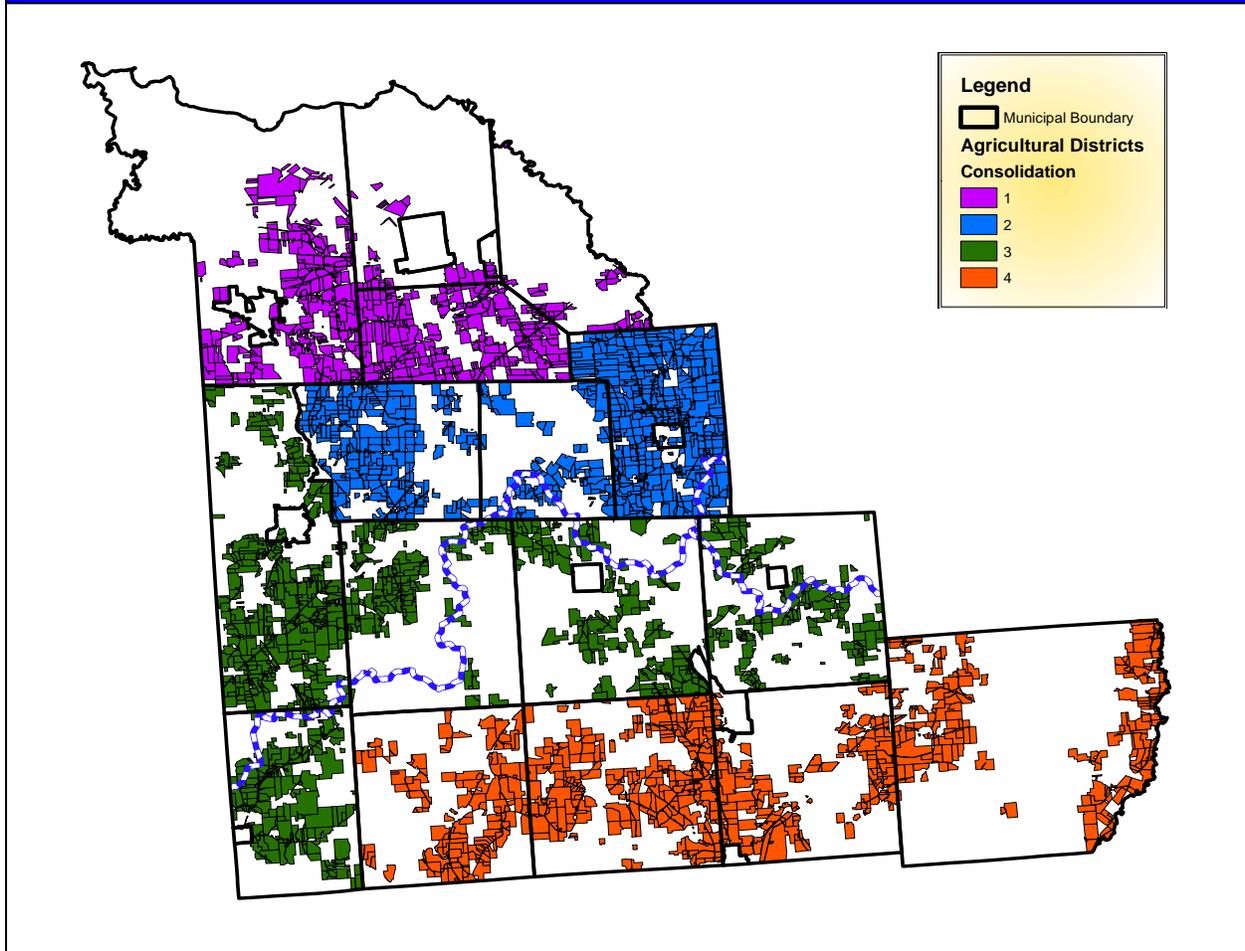
Agricultural Districts

Nearly 37% of land in Madison County is part of an Agricultural District. There are many benefits to being in an Agricultural District with the most significant often thought of as the “Right to Farm” protections. Agricultural districts do not preserve farmland in perpetuity but do help to keep farming as viable economic activity and can be used to help a municipality manage growth by identifying traditional

farming areas and then directing development away from those places. Land owners who own more than seven acres of land for farming purposes can join an Agricultural District during the open enrollment period which in Madison County occurs once a year usually in October.

Madison County Planning Department has been working with NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets on a consolidation effort to move from 13 districts to 4 districts. The four districts will be based on town boundaries to allow for a more coherent division. Consolidation is scheduled to be completed by 2013.

Madison County Properties in an Agricultural District & the 4 Proposed Consolidated Districts

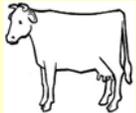


4. Renewable Energy Development

Farms across the country are now producing a different kind of harvest – renewable energy. Renewable energy is an opportunity to diversify the use of farmland to make it more profitable and remain in production.

The results of the 2009 On-Farm Renewable Energy Production Survey were released February 2011. This first-ever nationwide survey looked at renewable energy practices on America's farms and ranches.

Farmers in nearly every state reported savings on their utility bills. Savings were especially noticeable in New York, where average utility bill savings reported by respondents topped \$5,000 for 2009. According to the survey results solar panels were the most prominent way to produce on-farm energy, followed by wind energy. The data shows that New York is at the forefront when it comes to renewables, but that there is still opportunity to advance these initiatives on the state’s farmland even further:

Renewable Energy in New York State	
	NY is the #7 state in number of farms with wind energy production (58 farms with a total 65 turbines);
	NY is the #14 state in number of farms with solar energy production (156 farms with a total of 169 solar panels);
	NY is the #2 state with methane digesters on farms (16 farms with a total of 16 methane digesters).
	Overall, New York ranks #11 with total farms reporting wind turbines, digesters and/or solar panels. ⁵

Source: USDA Census of Agriculture, *On-Farm Renewable Energy Survey*

Recent renewable energy initiatives in Madison County demonstrate that there is still opportunity to assist farmers with these new technologies. For example, in January 2011 Madison County Agricultural Economic Development (AED) held a *Renewable Energy and Your Farm Workshop*, a conference to focus on various incentives and resources available to implement energy-efficiency practices and renewable energy technologies for agricultural businesses and rural landowners. AED wanted to use real examples from others farms, but found that many farmers have yet to install renewable energy technologies. In many cases, if people were using renewables it was to power their home not their farming operation. Some examples of current renewables sited on farms include:

Wind Energy – Since 2000, three wind farms have been sited on farmland in Madison County in the towns of Madison, Fenner, Stockbridge, and Eaton.

Solar – An 11.25 kWh, 45 panel photovoltaic system was installed at Our Farm in the Town of Cazenovia. They anticipate that it will supply 110% of the farm’s energy demand. A grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Rural Energy for America program was used to help pay for the system. Not only are the panels guaranteed to last 25 years, but the system should pay for itself within five to seven years.⁶

Biomass – Madison County has thousands of acres of fallow or marginal cropland that would be extremely well suited for willow growth. Harvesting willow can be used in power generation and cellulosic ethanol. In May 2009, Colgate University implemented a Willow Biomass Pilot Project by planting 60,000 8-inch willow shoots on a 7 1/2 acre

plot which will hopefully yield 900 dry tons of biomass over a 20-year period.⁷

Micro-hydro and Methane digesters – At this time none are known to be in place on any farms in Madison County.

Madison County Agricultural Economic Development (AED)

Renewable Energy and Your Farm Conference is just one example of the many events Madison County AED organizes throughout each year. To stay informed of other events and ways Madison County is promoting agriculture subscribe to the AED Weekly Newsletter at <http://madisoncountyagriculture.com/>

Renewable Energy Ordinances

One place local governments can help when it comes to assisting farmers with installing renewables on their land is with their community's codes. These new technologies

mean that codes and land use regulations in communities must be up to date. Many communities have already established ordinances to account for renewable energy development. One of the most recent to adopt wind ordinances was the Town of Madison in the summer of 2011.

When establishing renewable energy ordinances it is not only important to look at what other communities have in place, but also what incentives exist to promote renewables and how the regulations might stand to effect their feasibility. For instance, with some of the wind energy ordinances drafted for places in Madison County, it was found that some were specifying a low maximum tower height, such as to 80 feet, which would limit a farm's ability to take advantage of state incentives and curtail the energy generation capacity of the system.

“The average tower height, not including blades, for the applications NYSERDA has received under our Wind Turbine Incentive Program (PON 2097) has been 120 feet. PON 2097 bases its incentives on the predicted annual energy output of the turbine. The taller the tower, the greater the average annual wind speed, and hence, the greater the energy output. For example: If you installed a 10 kW wind turbine in the field just north of the Madison County Office Building on a 60' tower, (the tallest tower that can be used and maintain a total height of less than 80' when the blade radius is included) the system could be expected to generate 3,600 kWh per year and would receive a NYSERDA incentive of \$12,600. Increasing the tower height to 120' would increase the output to 6,700 kWh and the NYSERDA incentive to \$23,450. The increase in construction cost of the taller tower would be about \$6,000. In addition, turbines installed on taller towers tend to be quieter, since the wind is less turbulent. When dealing with settings other than residential (such as agricultural or non-commercial), limitations on tower height may also impose limitations on the size of the turbine blades, and thus limitations on the electrical rating of the turbine -- for example, it is impossible to construct a 75 kW system while keeping the height of the tower and turbine blade less than 80 feet and also meeting restrictions that the bottom of the blade shall be no closer than 30 feet to the ground surface.”

–Mark Mayhew, NYSERDA, Project Manager On-Site Wind Turbine Incentive Program, e-mail correspondence on April 5, 2011

5. Value-added Farm Products

Value-added products are created when an original raw product such as milk is taken to the “next step” to make items such as ice cream or cheese. These “next” items add value to the original product and provide an additional source of income for farmers.

Value-added Products in Madison County

In 2009, Madison County Agricultural Economic Development was successful in helping to secure two of only five USDA Value-Added Producer Grants awarded state wide. One of the grants awarded \$17,000 to help Kriemhild Dairy Farms, LLC, composed of four dairy farms in Madison County, make their Meadow Butter derived from grass-fed Holstein cows available at regional grocery stores and wholesale markets starting in the Spring of 2011. The other grant awarded to Meadowood Farms for \$28,467 will help the 200-acre sheep and beef farm in Cazenovia market a regional launch of Meadowood Farms’ sheeps-milk yogurt and cheeses.



Image 2

The logo for Kriemhild Dairy Farm’s new Meadow Butter

Source: Madison AED, *Madison County farms win 2 of the 5 Value Added Grants awarded to New York State,*

<http://madisoncountyagriculture.com/?p=322>

Typically, value-added products are accomplished in one of two ways: innovation or coordination.⁸ Innovation focuses on improving existing processes,

procedures, products and services or creating new ones; while coordination focuses on arrangements among those that produce and market farm products.⁹

Processing and Distributing Value-added Products

The challenge with making value-added products is that they require particular facilities and special machinery, often expensive. Moreover, when it comes to marketing the products it is often difficult to generate the volume needed to attract big food distributors due to reasons as simple as lacking enough space to store the products before shipping. As Madison County’s food industry continues to grow it will need to continue to look for ways to expand its food processing and distributing capabilities.

Nelson Farms

Nelson Farms, owned by Morrisville State College, is a key processor and distributor of value-added products in Madison County. With machinery such as a flott peeler that can peel hundreds of pounds of vegetables an hour and a packing machine that can add shelf life to multiple products, Nelson Farms bring farmers in from all over New York State and then some. Something new coming online soon is a full-line bottling system capable of handling up to 1,000 gallons per day. Nelson Farms has an ambitious, yet achievable goal with the new system: to handle enough volume to assist New York State maple producers in becoming number one in U.S. maple sales annually.



Image 3

Source: Nelson Farms,

<http://www.nelsonfarms.org/index.aspx>

Some of the many products made by Nelson Farms; also sold in Nelson Farms Country Store

Strategy 2b. Cultivate economic development strategies that rely on rural landscapes

6. Purchase of Development Rights

Ownership of land comes with many rights including the right to possess, use, modify, develop, lease, or sell the land. The purchase of development rights (PDR) is one of many tools developed to preserve agricultural land. PDR is a voluntary program where an agency, such as a land trust, makes an offer to a landowner to buy the development rights on the parcel. The land is still owned by the property holder, and the owner retains all other rights. The principal reason for PDR is too offset the fact that, increasingly, farmland and open space has been converted to other uses largely because the current agricultural value associated with land is substantially lower than the value that land has for development.¹⁰ With PDR, farmers receive the value their land would be worth if it were developed while having the ability to keep the land as agricultural.

In New York, the New York Farmland Protection Program started in 1996 as a program designed to offer grants to purchase the development rights of the farmland through a conservation easement. The primary purpose of this conservation easement program is to protect agricultural viability and soil resources. Since 1996, the program has awarded more than \$173.3 million for farmland protection projects, assisting local governments and their project partners in 29 counties to help protect 72,668 acres on 303 farms.¹¹

7. Conservation Easements

A conservation easement is a legal agreement between a landowner and another agency, such as any level of government or a land trust agency, that permanently limits

First PDR in Madison County



Image 4

Critz Farms located along Route 20 in the Town of Cazenovia specializes in pumpkins, apples, and conifer trees. In August 2009, the entire farm (240 acres at the time) was permanently protected through the New York State Farmland Protection Program “so as to remain forever development free and available for agricultural purposes.” The Town of Cazenovia was instrumental in helping Critz Farms through the process. It has been a win win. The program has allowed the owners to reinvest in and expand their farm, creating more jobs in the Town. Instead of waiting to retire and then subdividing land to sell, the owners used the money to invest in their retirement. This allowed the owner’s to invest in their retirement sooner and means more working farmland in the community will stay in place in the future.

Source: Critz Farms,

<http://www.critzfarms.com/index.html>

uses of the land in order to protect its conservation values. Conservation easements provide benefits to both parties: land of public interest is preserved, while land owners receive tax advantages including both immediate property tax and inheritance tax benefits.¹²

In December of 2010, the U.S. Congress passed an extension of the enhanced tax incentives for conservation easement donations. The tax credit will be in effect until December 31, 2011 and includes the following provisions¹³:

- Raises the income level against which a landowner can take a

deduction for donating a conservation easement from 30% of adjusted gross income to 50%;

- Allows farmers and ranchers who earn most of their income from agriculture to deduct from up to 100% of their adjusted gross income;
- Increases the number of years over which a donor can take a conservation easement deduction from 6 to 16 years.

8. Fee Simple Acquisition

A third way to conserve important land is through fee simple acquisition where an agency purchases the land outright.

Sensitive Lands Working Group

To preserve working lands (and other environmentally sensitive lands) many communities develop a plan to prioritize areas worth conserving. This can be part of the Greenway Masterplan previously discussed in Goal 1. Typically, a “Sensitive Lands Working Group” is established to help the local government in the identification, prioritization, and acquisition of environmentally sensitive lands. The group often helps to develop the acquisition/prioritization criteria and assess the merit of properties within identified areas of concern. Once the group prioritizes the targeted parcels, the next step is to identify funding sources to carry out the purchase of the lands.

9. Agritourism

An increasingly popular and ever growing opportunity for agricultural producers is agritourism. Agritourism is the act of visitors coming to a working farm or any agricultural, horticultural or agri-business operation for the purpose of enjoyment, education or active involvement in the activities of the farm or operation.



Image 5

Agritourism is a growing industry. Local governments can help by connecting agritourist destinations

Groups and families are increasingly seeking slower-pace vacations that allow opportunities to reconnect with nature. Through agritourism farmers can share their lifestyle while also adding an additional revenue source to keep their farms viable. Activities include farm visits and overnight stays at farm bed and breakfasts where visitors can have the opportunity to help with farming and ranching tasks. These types of tourist activities help to reconnect people with farms, and when they take away something special from the experience they are more likely to understand and support agriculture in the future.

NYS Farm, Apple, and Cuisine Trail

A successful way to promote agritourism is to market the entire area under some cohesive theme. Farms are inherently disconnected from each other, but through the right marketing an entire area can become known as an agritourist destination. A common misperception is that local farmers are competing against each other, but that is just not the case. More can be achieved by working together. One way to bridge the distance between farms and advertise an agritourism destination is through marketing a designated trail.

The NYS Department of Agriculture created the Farm, Apple and Cuisine Trail Designation Program in 2007. The program allows for the creation of 10 farm trails, ten apple trails and ten cuisine trails statewide. The trails must be made up of farm or food businesses that are in close proximity to each other, market their products in a cooperative manner, and utilize a map or highway signs to direct patrons to their respective operations. At this point only 3 cuisine trails, 1 farm trail and 6 apple trails have been designated.

The Cooperstown Beverage Trail runs 23 miles through Otsego County in central New York State and was the first official cuisine trail. The Trail boasts two breweries, a farm winery, and an historic cider mill where visitors can enjoy tastings, take a tour for a close-up look at how the beverages are made, or just walk around in the specialty shops. As an officially designated trail, the businesses along the trail were able to strengthen their relationship with their tourism agency. It has also made their association more legitimate which helps to compete for grants. Madison County has created similar types of trails to celebrate its bicentennial in 2006.

Connecting Agritourist Destinations

To celebrate its bicentennial, Madison County received funding to develop and designate four trails to commemorate and promote important historical buildings and features of our rural landscape. The four trails opened in 2006 and include: the Madison County Architecture and Preservation Trail, Madison County Freedom Trail, Madison County History Trail, and Madison County Hops Trail. There are opportunities to build on these and to create new trails with a farm focus to promote agritourism such as through the NYS Department of Agriculture Farm, Apple and Cuisine Trail Designation Program.

Strategy 2c. Promote Rural Products in Urban Areas and Support other Urban-Rural Links

10. Direct Marketing to Consumers

Farmers can increase their profits by directly marketing their products to consumers. Examples of these include farmers markets and community supported agriculture (CSAs). An innovative program found in the region is Central New York Bounty.

Buying Local Products Made Easy



Image 6

Central New York (CNY) Bounty is a year-round online farmers' market that offers more than 900 products to consumers and supports over 110 local small and mid-sized farmers and producers. Originally developed by Morrisville State College in 2007, CNY Bounty has continued to expand. CNY Bounty is currently undergoing remodeling, but is accepting wholesale orders from institutional buyers, restaurants, caterers, and grocery stores for delivery in Broome, Chenango, Cortland, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, and Tompkins Counties.

11. Government and School Purchase of Local Products

Local governments have the power to increase the viability of local products by purchasing them for its own institutions. Contracts can be set up with local and regional farmers to incorporate local

produce into an area's schools, prisons, and government offices. By working with local food systems to create communities in which there is ready and affordable access to fresh produce and healthy food, local governments play a key role in creating healthier communities. One such initiative is known as farm to school with the goal of matching students with the abundance of wholesome food produced by local farmers.

K-12 schools can implement a Farm to School Program by purchasing fruit, vegetables and other fresh products from local farms to serve as part of school meals and/or snacks. Food access obstacles such as neighborhoods with few stores that sell fresh food and the high cost of fresh foods relative to unhealthy alternatives make it difficult for many children and families to obtain the fruits, vegetables and other wholesome foods they need in order to maintain a balanced diet, but providing it to schools is one way to make a big a difference.¹⁴

The Farm to School Network will be one of the presenters at the Shades of Green in Madison County: A Green Living Experience workshop on February 24, 2012 (see page 76). The focus is to discuss ways that Madison County can better link farmers and local produce to its schools. To facilitate the discussion a panel is also being put together featuring Madison County K-12 educators and superintendents, Nelson Farms, and business owners and distributors that are successfully using local products. It is worth noting that CNY Bounty is currently delivering a substantial amount of food on a weekly basis to Hamilton College, but opportunities could exist to help expand this to K-12 education.

12. Buy Local Campaigns

Public awareness about the many health and economic benefits of eating locally grown foods has increased in part because of initiatives like "buy local" campaigns. Local governments can use "buy local" campaigns to market locally grown products and educate consumers on the benefits of purchasing food directly from their community's local farmers.

In 2007, Madison AED established an annual "Buy Local" Week. The event is held around mid July and is now four years running. In 2011, 6 restaurants, 40 farms, and 3 farmers' markets participated. The week long event concludes with an Open Farm Day to allow people to visit farms and actually see first hand what goes into making the food we eat.¹⁵

Other opportunities exist to remind and further educate people about the importance of buying local. The 100-mile diet challenge has been successfully used in other communities to encourage people to make conscious food choices. Inspired by a book by Alisa Smith and J.B. MacKinnon, this idea challenges people to restrict their diets to include only foods grown within 100 miles of their residence.

The popularity of local produce is even catching on in restaurants. Circa restaurant opened in Cazenovia in 2006 and arranges weekly deliveries of fresh produce and ingredients from local farms to create most of their menu items. One of the advantages of using local produce is that the dishes offered never stay the same; there is always something new to enjoy as the menu frequently changes based on what is in season.¹⁶ Education can be provided to other businesses on how to incorporate local produce into their stores and the benefits of doing so.

13. Organize a Food Council

Many counties do not have a governing body in place to illuminate the impact of food production and consumption or to make recommendations for promoting sustainable development of a local food system. One solution many local governments have used to address this gap is to set up a Food Council. A food council is a group of stakeholders that provides support to governments and citizens in developing policy and programs related to the local food supply.¹⁷ The structure of a food council will vary depending upon the character of the community it serves, but its members should have a solid understanding of the local food system and represent a diversity of community interests.¹⁸ Many food councils are designed to advise governments on policy, while others focus their energies on work within the community.¹⁹ Many surrounding cities and counties have discussed starting food councils. The recently established Utica/Oneida County Food Policy Council is the first to be created.

Strategy 2d. Link rural land preservation strategies to great neighborhoods

14. Agricultural Zoning

The creation of an agricultural zone, as part of a community's land use regulations, is a common, widely used tool to protect farmland. Ag zones preserve farmland by protecting it from other incompatible land uses. Typical uses allowed in an ag zone are very limited beyond farm use. Without an agricultural zone any type of development can build on prime agricultural lands. Moreover, when an ag zone is established it can protect farmers from nuisance problems that sometimes arise when incompatible land uses are built next to farmland. An ag zone also usually regulates that the

Growing Interest in Food Councils

The Utica/Oneida County Food Policy Council is spearheaded by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Oneida County and Rust To Green Utica and is a coalition of city and county governments along with more than two dozen not-for-profit organizations, educational institutions, community coalitions, private sector businesspeople, farmers and local citizens. The goals of the Food Policy Council are to increase food security, improve health and increase the sustainability and profitability of the local and regional food system.

Funding is fueling the initiative: In March 2011, Cornell Cooperative Extension and Rust To Green received a highly competitive \$100,000 U.S. Department of Agriculture's "Hunger Free Communities" grant for the project. Then in July 2011, the Utica/Oneida Food Council received a \$7,500 grant from the United Way to create an 'information warehouse' for a map of the area's entire food system, identify gaps in that system and help the Food Policy Council develop a plan to deploy existing assets.

Source: Groom, Debra S., *Utica/Oneida County Food Policy Council Working Group receives United Way grant*, The Post Standard, July 2007, http://blog.syracuse.com/farms/2011/07/uticaoneida_county_food_policy.html

minimum lot area of parcels in the zone be at least several acres protecting working lands from being subdivided into numerous small lots. Many various examples exist that can be used to model the development of a new agricultural zone or to update an existing one.

15. Cluster Subdivision/ Conservation Subdivision

The cluster subdivision or conservation subdivision helps to prevent development from unnecessarily consuming large amounts of land which can divide wide open spaces into fragments that are useless for agriculture, wildlife habitat, or other rural open space purposes. Rather than divide a track of land into equal parts and then develop each one, a cluster subdivision promotes the development to be concentrated to certain sections while the additional land that would have been allocated to individual lots is left as preserved open space.

The Town of Cazenovia incorporated conservation subdivision regulations into their code and also made it the preferred subdivision methodology in all cases of new subdivisions and resubdivisions.

¹ NYS Department of Taxation and Finance Office of Real Property Tax, *Agricultural Assessment Q&As*, <http://www.orps.state.ny.us/pamphlet/exempt/agasses.s.htm>

² Madison County Courier, *Grants Boost Local Land Conservation*, March 2011, <http://www.madisoncountycourier.com/2011/03/19/grants-boost-local-land-conservation/>

³ Ibid

⁴ NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, *New York State Conservation Protection Program*, <http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/48901.html>

⁵ USDA Census of Agriculture, *On-Farm Renewable Energy Survey*, <http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/index.asp>

⁶ Potrikus, Alaina, *Cazenovia Farm Powered by New Solar Panels*, The Post-Standard, http://blog.syracuse.com/farms/2011/08/cazenovia_farm_powered_by_new.html

⁷ Colgate University, *About, Environmental Efforts*, <http://www.colgate.edu/home>

⁸ Boland, Mike, *What is Value-Added Agriculture?*, AgMRC, http://www.agmrc.org/business_development/getting_prepared/valueadded_agriculture/articles/index.cfm

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Daubenmire, Joe and Blaine, Thomas U. , *Purchase of Development Rights*, University of Ohio Fact Sheet, <http://ohioline.osu.edu/cd-fact/1263.html>

¹¹ Haight, David, *AFT Study Finds Slow Down in New York's Efforts to Protect Farms —Farmers and Rural Economies Feeling the Effects*, American Farmland Trust, <http://www.farmland.org/news/pressreleases/new-york-farmers-rural-economy-pace.asp>

¹² ICMA, *Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities*

¹³ The Land Trust Alliance, *Frequently Asked Questions about the Enhanced Easement Incentive*, <http://www.landtrustalliance.org/policy/tax-matters/campaigns/incentive-faqs>

¹⁴ The National Association of Counties (NACO), <http://www.naco.org/Pages/default.aspx>

¹⁵ Madison AED Buy Local Week, <http://www.madisoncountyagriculture.com/buylocal/week/>

¹⁶ Circa, <http://circarestaurant.net/>

¹⁷ NACo, *Counties and Local Food Systems Ensuring Healthy Foods, Nurturing Healthy Children*, http://www.farmtoschool.org/files/publications_133.pdf

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ Ibid

Image 1: Southern Madison Heritage Trust, <http://www.smht.org/>

Image 2: Madison County Agricultural Economic Development, <http://madisoncountyagriculture.com/?p=553>

Image 3: Nelson Farms, Nelson Farms Marketing Distribution Catalog, <http://www.nelsonfarms.org/index.aspx>

Image 4: Critz Farms, <http://www.critzfarms.com/>

Image 5: Traynor, Caitlin, *Aga Polluza showcases Madison County agriculture*, The Oneida Daily Dispatch, <http://www.oneidadispatch.com/articles/2011/05/01/news/doc4dbdc3211bb63484280070.txt#photo1>

Image 6: Central New York Bounty, <http://www.cnybounty.com/>

3

Goal 3: Create great new places

Build vibrant, enduring neighborhoods and communities that people don't want to leave.

Communities have seen what new, auto-dependent development looks like and what it does to places: it isolates people, strips the area of its sense of place, and sprawls out into farmland and natural resources. Communities need to build attractive, functional new places to draw people into the main streets and surrounding neighborhoods.

A quick scan of the landscape in Madison County shows where current policies have been successful in creating great places and where they have fallen short. Local governments should learn from what has been done in the past and reach out to other counties, communities, and agencies to update their plans and align their policies to target future growth into sustainable places where people want to be. The principles behind smart growth can help build stronger,

more vibrant communities that provide the opportunities and the quality of life necessary to retain current residents and attract new ones.

Strategy 3a. Build New Places Holistically and with Intent

1. Develop a Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan is the policy document used by many local governments to create and guide a vision for the future. The end product is a public document that allows everyone to understand the community's goals, objectives, and strategies to implement the collaboratively defined vision.

The value of the Comprehensive Plan is that it can identify places worth preserving and prioritize goals for the community's future development. Action items are created to achieve the vision for the community through recommendations such as zoning laws, overlay districts, budget allocations, and public investments. (More details about

Strategy	Tools & Policies
Strategy 3a. Build new places holistically and with intent	1) Develop a Comprehensive Plan 2) Balance Grey and Green Infrastructure 3) Maintain Distinctive Local Character
Strategy 3b. Update policies to make it easier to achieve more livable, mixed use, and multi-modal places	4) Create Multi-modal Transportation Options 5) Promote Traditional Neighborhood Development/ Mixed-use development
Strategy 3c. Make it a priority to build sustainably	6) Encourage Green Building 7) Use Green Growth Recognition 8) Implement Green Incentive Programs 9) Apply Low Impact Development 10) Invest in Climate Action Planning
Strategy 3d. Educate and inform community members about the value of smart growth	11) Engage the Public 12) Educate New Generations

the importance of developing a Comprehensive Plan was stated earlier on page 20.

This tool is most useful when it entails a visioning process where community members and stakeholders are invited to take part. In order to reach and educate more of the public about smart growth and planning issues, it would be advantageous to visit schools, neighborhoods, and community groups rather than relying on attendance at public involvement meetings alone. This will ensure wide spread public input and perhaps spark new community interest in people who might otherwise not



Image 1

Town of Madison public meeting to update the Town's Comprehensive Plan, June 2011

get involved.

More is also gained when towns and villages work together to make a single Comprehensive Plan. For example, while each will administer the Plan separately, the Village and Town of Cazenovia made a combined Comprehensive Plan because both “recognized that planning for ‘smart growth’ would best be achieved in unison.”¹

It is also important that towns and villages with working comprehensive plans make them accessible to the public. One way is to make them obvious on local government websites so residents and visitors alike can

know what the community values and what it is working towards. Resources should continue to be made available to towns and villages that have yet to take advantage of using the comprehensive planning process.

2. Balance Grey and Green Infrastructure **Public Facilities and Grey Infrastructure**

Sprawling growth extinguishes downtowns, creates greater auto-dependence and can be expensive by putting a strain on community infrastructure. Smart growth advocates for compact design that strengthens and directs development toward existing communities. Communities need to use new growth to its advantage, and one of the best ways to do that is to ensure that public facilities are placed appropriately and that infrastructure is laid out in a way that facilitates the creation of desirable places. Where public buildings, parks, and schools are placed and how streets are laid out has a direct impact on how communities develop and how people interact with their community.

The public facilities of a local government should lead by example to create the public realm, incorporate green design, and support compact development. The placement of public facilities influences where private development will occur, can promote mixed use areas, and create amenities needed to retain businesses and residents. The type of infrastructure provided, especially streets, is directly tied to the type of development pattern that can be achieved and where new growth areas will occur. The type of street pattern and placement needs to be thoughtfully laid out as it influences how people will choose to live, travel, and shop.

Green infrastructure

Just as local governments invest and make plans for grey infrastructure - such as hard surface roads, they also need to invest in green infrastructure. Green infrastructure is

concerned with the natural environment and is “the interconnected network of open spaces and natural areas, such as greenways, wetlands, parks, forest preserves and native plant vegetation, that naturally manages stormwater, reduces flooding risk and improves water quality.”² Green infrastructure usually costs less to install and maintain when compared to traditional forms of infrastructure³ and includes items such as rain gardens, landscaping with native trees, green roofs, swales, porous pavement, and greenways.

A balance of “grey” and “green” infrastructure projects is necessary for holistic planning. Besides enhancing water quality, trees and plants supported by green infrastructure projects take in CO₂ and other pollutants to increase air quality, reduce traffic noise, make areas more aesthetically pleasing, and provide shade or protection for pedestrians. Local governments should strive to be leaders in using and showcasing innovative green infrastructure techniques to encourage private development to follow suit.



Image 2

A rain garden is installed in front of the Water Department building in the Village of Skaneateles

3. Maintain Distinctive Local Character

Each of the communities in Madison County has a unique sense of place; many with interesting historic buildings, local shops and restaurants, and public art that let residents and visitors know that they are in a distinctive place. Newly created places need to reflect this local character too. To achieve this, communities must build with intent and articulate through plans, strategies, and policies what it is that makes them distinctive and then mobilize to promote and enhance these unique features. Designing unique, attractive and texturized places that incorporate history and values will keep the communities in Madison County memorable places worth visiting and living.

The use of form-based codes is one example of a tool available to help communities articulate and retain distinct local character. One of the easiest ways to understand form-based codes is to compare it to zoning regulations, currently more commonly used.

Zoning vs. Form-based Codes

Zoning:

As in many other places, the prominent tool used to guide growth in Madison County has been zoning. Zoning is currently in place in the city of Oneida, eleven of the towns and six villages (see page 20). Zoning typically works by dividing the whole community into sections such as residential, agriculture, and commercial. For each of these zones permitted uses are then listed, i.e. any unlisted uses are prohibited. A zoning schedule is attached which usually states requirements such as minimum setbacks, maximum impervious surface, and minimum lot size.

Form-based codes:

Form-based codes are another method communities can use to guide growth either

Table 14 Zoning vs. Form-based Codes	
Conventional Zoning	Form-based Codes
1) Focuses on use of land	1) Focuses on form of buildings and space; less emphasis on use
2) Little control on the look of the building façade and placement creates random layout	2) Considerable detail laid out for what a building is required to look like creates a predictable layout
3) Usually applies to large areas	3) Usually applies to specific areas
4) Often ignores building’s interaction with streets, other buildings and open space	4) Focus is on creating the public realm
5) Mostly text documents	5) Usually highly illustrated documents
6) Elements include zoning districts, variances, subdivision and sign regulations	6) Elements include a regulating plan, building form and public realm standards
7)Addresses minimum setbacks, parking requirements, etc	7) Addresses building placement, materials and design, maximum setbacks
8)Primarily controls growth by deliberating what uses should go where in a community	8) Primarily controls growth by establishing a cohesive urban design for buildings and spaces

in addition to zoning or as a complete replacement to zoning. Form-based codes are land development regulatory tools which put primary emphasis on the physical form of the built environment with the end goal of producing a specific type of place.⁴

The main emphasis of zoning is on land use, but form-based codes focus on the public realm— the buildings, streets, and open space — to create a cohesive and memorable place. Form-based codes allow developers/building owners greater flexibility in permitted land uses in exchange for more control over physical form and layout of the development. With a focus on creating human scale (page 34), form-based codes typically regulate items such as the relationship between building facades and the public realm, the form and mass of buildings in relation to one another, and the scale and types of streets and blocks.

Since form-base codes lay out specifically what the community wants development to look like, developers and the community also have a clearer understanding of what the final outcome will be (smart growth principle #9). By focusing on creating a predictable public realm and physical form, form-based codes have been credited with being more effective than traditional zoning for creating places that exemplify smart growth and have become increasingly attractive to communities that want greater control over how their spaces look and feel.⁵

Elements of successful form-based codes include⁶:

- 1) Regulating Plan- designates the locations where different building form standards apply, based on clear community intentions regarding the physical character of the area being coded
- 2) Building Form Standards- regulates the configuration, features, and functions of

buildings that define and shape the public realm

3) Public Space Standards- specifies elements within the public realm (e.g., sidewalks, travel lanes, on-street parking, street trees, street furniture, etc.)

Communities that decide to implement form-based codes over zoning usually do so in segments, starting with a specific planning area such as a neighborhood or district. When this is done the code often resides within the structural and legal framework of conventional zoning until the community is confident form-based codes can replace zoning and be applied throughout the entire community.⁷

The use of form-based codes has not been implemented in any Madison County communities yet, but some have structured their zoning regulations to take into account the importance of urban form. For example, the Village of Cazenovia has zoned certain areas in their community in a Historic Preservation Overlay District and requires any new development or certain modifications to the buildings in those districts to undergo review by a Historic Preservation/Architectural Advisory Review Committee. This committee works to protect and enhance the distinctive elements of Cazenovia's historic, architectural and cultural heritage.⁸ Another effort has been the Downtown Design Guidelines that the City of Oneida has explored implementing (pg 35).

Strategy 3b. Update Policies to Make it Easier to Achieve more Livable, Mixed-use and Multi-modal Places

4. Create Multi-modal Transportation Options

Transportation plans within Madison County need to support multi-modal transportation

options including transit, walking, and biking to create vibrant, accessible places which can attract people and allow them to stay in place as they age.

“According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), over 300 pedestrians were killed on New York’s roadways in 2009 -- more than 45 other states. Twenty-six percent of all traffic fatalities in New York State in 2009 involved pedestrians, which is more than double the national average.”⁹

The Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan was completed in May 2010 by the Madison County Planning Department. The purpose of this effort is to update the current system to better provide transportation options especially for persons with disabilities, elderly populations, and individuals with low incomes.

Transit

Madison Transit System is overseen by the Madison County Planning Department and operated by Birnie Bus, Inc.



Image 3

One of ten buses that provide public transit in Madison County. Information on routes and stops can be found at www.ridemts.org.

The Madison County *Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan* was adopted in 2010. Its primary focus is to update of Madison County’s bus transportation system. A Transportation Steering Committee has been established to coordinate with all current transportation providers in the County to update the existing routes to eliminate service duplications, better use local, State, and Federal Transportation dollars, and provide better service for all users.¹⁰ Part of providing better service will include making the system more user friendly such as by posting signage along the routes near designated stops.

When it comes to deciding to take public transit, it is often the first trip that is the hardest. Figuring out stops, times, and routes for the first time can be confusing so there is a barrier to people giving it a try,

especially when it is easy to opt for a vehicle instead. However, if people tried it and found that it was easy to do they might be more apt to ride it again or even incorporate it into one or two trips they do a week. To encourage people to try transit, some communities have promoted free days or commute-to-work challenges.

To better understand how the general public currently perceives and uses the transportation systems in Madison County, a public survey was developed and distributed. The results (Table 15) indicate that many are not aware of the current system, and the ones who are, do not find it very user friendly. Interestingly, nearly a quarter of respondents said they would take public transit if they had a better understanding about how to do it.

Table 15: Madison County Transit General Public Survey Results March 28, 2011		
Questions	Positive Responses	Percent
1. Do you currently ride Public Transportation?	27	22%
2. Are you aware your county has Public Transportation?	59	48%
3. Would you recognize your local transportation logo?	32	26%
4. Would you recognize your local transportation bus?	46	38%
5. Have you ever seen a bus schedule in your county	34	28%
6. If yes was it clear and easy to understand?	17	14%
7. Is the schedule effectively meeting your needs?	14	11%
8. Are your current transportation needs within the county?	52	43%
Would you consider using Public Transportation?	53	43%
If no, Why?		
Inconvenient	38	31%
Too Costly	1	1%
Ride Too Long	30	25%
No Service	31	25%
Do Not Know How	28	23%
Unsafe	1	1%
Unreliable	2	2%
Other	5	4%
Source: Madison County Transportation Steering Committee, Madison County Social Marketing Survey Results		

Real-time Bus Locator System

One of the main hindrances to taking public transit is timing: if the bus is delayed the rider has no idea how long he or she will have to wait. The anxiety of not knowing if the bus is really coming or how timely it will be deters a lot of potential riders and makes it difficult for those that do depend on it to get them to work, doctor appointments, and other daily activities. This is especially true in rural areas where buses typically only come by stops every couple of hours, leaving the rider with a lot of uncertainty if the bus is not right on time.

Now, tech companies, such as TransLoc, are offering a way for riders to see exactly where buses are at all times. Buses are equipped with GPS devices so people can track the bus from any web-based device. By providing riders with real time information, it makes public transit much more convenient and dependable. For example, when riders can better gauge when a bus will arrive, it means less time waiting at the bus stop out in rain or snow.

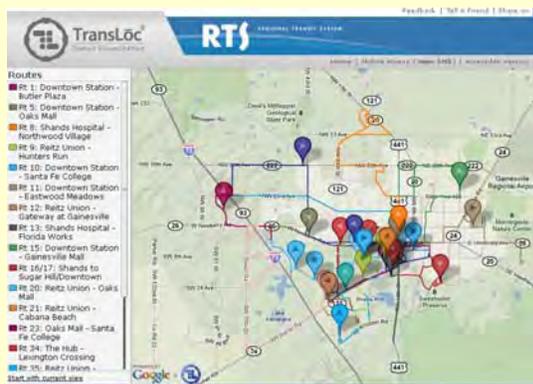


Image 4

Transit Visualization Systems allow a rider to track a bus in real time.

Walkability

“Although 41% of all trips made in the United States are one mile or less, fewer than 10% of all trips are made by walking and biking.”¹¹

An essential attribute of creating a vibrant and accessible place is walkability and all transportation plans need to reflect this. From economic, environmental, community, and public health perspectives there are many benefits to maintaining and creating more walkable places. Living in a walkable place often means living in a more exciting place where there are a variety of things to do close by and where you have a chance to meet and interact with others. If an area is walkable, it often indicates more compact development allowing for the preservation of agricultural land and open space.

When people live and work in close proximity to shops, restaurants, and community gathering places they are able to incorporate walking and biking into their daily routines which can lead to significant health benefits. Increased walkability lessens driving needs and leads to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions; even if households living in walkable areas do not walk to every destination, they still have shorter trips, which means less overall fuel consumption.

Walkability allows people to grow old in place. Often the effect of living in a car-dependent area means losing independence and freedom if you lose or do not have the ability to drive. Creating walkable places can also make neighborhoods and streets safer by keeping “eyes on the street.” For all these reasons, realtors are finding an increasing demand for homes in walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods and living in these types of neighborhoods can increase property values.¹²

Features that make a neighborhood walkable according to Walkscore:

- **A center:** Walkable neighborhoods have a center, whether it’s a main street or a public space.
- **People:** People attract more people and help businesses to flourish.
- **Mixed income, mixed use:** Affordable housing located near businesses.
- **Parks and public space:** Plenty of public spaces to gather and play
- **Pedestrian design:** Buildings are close to the street, parking lots are regulated to the back
- **Schools and workplaces:** Close enough that most residents can walk from their homes
- **Complete street:** Streets built in a grid-like pattern and designed for bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit.

Source: Walkscore, *Why it Matters*, <http://www.walkscore.com/>

The features (to the left) closely follow the 10 smart growth principles; therefore, if there are pedestrians out walking or biking, chances are the development pattern is in line with smart growth, i.e. the right scale, a mix of destinations, and appropriate streetscape. Walkability and smart growth are directly linked where each can be used to measure the other.

One tool used to gage the walkability of an area is found at www.walkscore.com. Walkscore calculates the walkability of an address point through an algorithm that awards points based on the distance to amenities in a variety of categories including restaurants, stores, and parks. It is based on the premise that the number of nearby amenities is the leading indicator of whether people will walk. It then gives the address a walkability score from 0 to 100.¹³ Walkscore also provides other tools such as “walkability heat maps” that could be useful to better understand and take inventory of where the most and least walkable places are in a community.

Walkscore using a Chittenango Comparison



The address of Hickory Hills Apartments in Chittenango receives a walkscore of ‘22’ when it is entered into the system. The score signifies that the apartments are “Car-Dependent” with the meaning that almost all errands require a car. Winding, unconnected streets detract from the walkability in this area as well.



To compare, housing located near the community center (used here as the intersection of Russell Street and Genesee Street) receives a score of 60 indicating that living here provides amenities within walking distance.

Walk Score	Description
90-100	Walker’s Paradise – Daily errands do not require a car.
70-89	Very Walkable – Most errands can be accomplished on foot.
50-69	Somewhat Walkable – Some amenities within walking distance.
25-49	Car-Dependent – A few amenities within walking distance.
0-24	Car-Dependent – Almost all errands require a car.

Walkability Survey

The Community Economic Development Committee is in the process of using the Sidewalk and Streets Survey developed by AARP to better understand walkability issues in Madison County communities. The survey allows users to walk key routes in their community and then rank each route according to indicators such as connectivity, safety, and accessibility. The survey is currently being piloted in the City of Oneida with several community groups identified to become involved and participate in the process. The feedback will provide the City of Oneida insight into how current streets and sidewalks are being used and what can be done to improve them.

Biking

Factors that make communities walkable – such as complete streets and compact design – often go with making them bikeable too. However, some additional considerations are necessary such as providing bike racks along sidewalks and on the front of buses.



Image 5

Bike racks can double as public art such as the one installed in the Village of Hamilton

Extra infrastructure provisions also have to be made such as designated bike lanes or shared-use lanes and trails. People who bike as a means for alternate transportation have

different needs than people who bike for recreation; these different needs should be addressed and incorporated appropriately in street, park, and community plans.

Encourage Biking

Bicycle Benefits is a nation-wide program that not only encourages biking, but promotes businesses and provides savings to those that choose to bike. Stores register with the program and then place the easy-to-spot Bicycle Benefits decal on a front window signaling to customers that if they choose to bike to this business they can receive discounts or rewards. By supporting the biking community, businesses in turn get more of their business. To get these perks, bikers must also be participants in the program by registering for an all-weather reflective sticker to put on their helmet. This system encourages more bikers to wear helmets when they ride.

Good Nature Brewery in Hamilton, New York is an example of one business in Madison County that is currently participating in the program.



Image 6

A business owner places his Bicycle Benefits decal up in his front store window

Source: Bicycle Benefits,
<http://www.bicyclebenefits.org/>

A key concern with biking is safety. People might be more apt to take a quick bike ride to a lunch destination, a short trek to the store or a daily commute to work if it were safer to do so. One way other communities are helping facilitate people who may choose to bike is by creating a tool that makes it easy for bikers to identify safe routes. This is often a web-based tool that features an interactive map of the community's street network; detailed with paved shoulders, bike lanes, and trails. This type of tool allows bicyclists to know what a route will be like, even if they have never taken it before, and helps reassure them that they can reach their destination without unexpectedly arriving at a point that puts them in danger. Gathering these features all into one map is also an opportunity to enhance understanding of bicyclists needs such as classifying most used routes, analyzing solutions to high traffic areas, and identifying places that lack connectivity. An example of such a tool is Bike Tallahassee which can be accessed at <http://www.biketallahassee.com/>

Complete Streets

Obviously when it comes to transportation, one of the most influential aspects to the quality and character of the mobility in a community is its street design. Communities throughout the country have been rethinking how they design their streets. Rather than just focusing on traffic flow for the automobile, communities are now advocating for "complete streets."

Complete streets means taking a more holistic approach to street design to better provide for all modes of transportation including walking and biking. While there are many elements that go into making a complete street design some of the most important for facilitating smart growth are access management and connectivity.

- Access Management

Access management is a way to decrease the number of conflict points between a pedestrian/bicyclist and car through the "systematic control of the location, spacing, design, and operation of driveways, median openings, interchanges, and street connections to a roadway."¹⁴



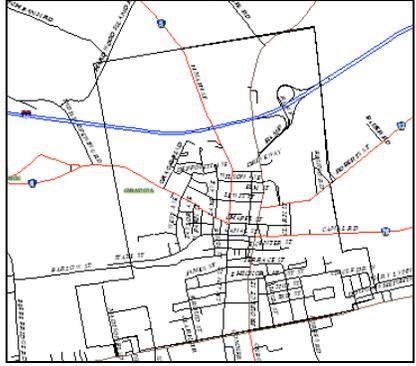
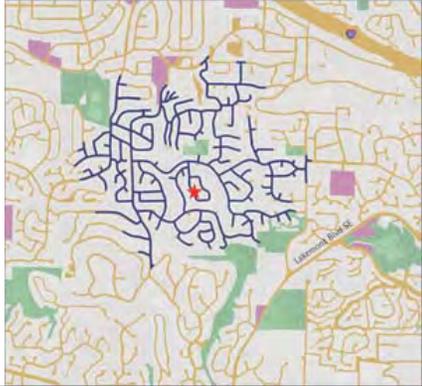
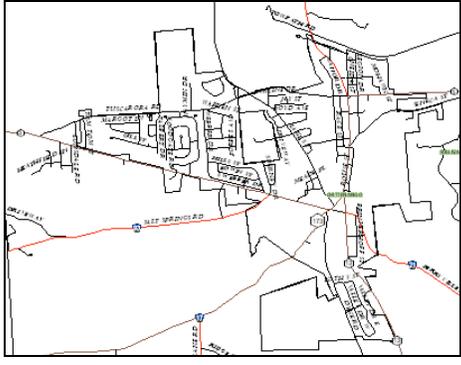
Image 7

When driveways are too wide and lack curbs and discernable boundaries it creates confusion for motorists and very unsafe conditions for pedestrians.

Conflicts points are used to describe the accident potential of a roadway. Conflict points increase when there are no clear boundaries between roads, driveways, and pedestrian paths such as in Image 7 above.

Multiple driveways also create unsafe streets. Driveways are one of the most dangerous places for pedestrians: every sidewalk or path that crosses a driveway represents at least four potential pedestrian/vehicle conflict points.¹⁵ Yet think how streets often times have an entrance and exit driveway for each business. The way these driveways connect to the roadway also has an impact. For instance, driveways and intersections designed at 45 degree angles encourage drivers to slow down when turning while those designed with a curved radius promote doing so at a faster speed.

-Connectivity

Connectivity: Grid vs. Curvilinear Street Design	
<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">One-mile walk in a grid-network street design</p> 	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Example: Village of Canastota</p> 
<p>Grid-like street networks, the prominent way early streets were laid out, encourage multiple transportation options because orientation is easier, more walkable space is created, and distance between stores and services is shortened which makes walking and biking more feasible. The design creates multiple intersections which creates more conflict points but it also slows traffic, and slower traffic often creates more desirable places for the pedestrian. While this design does enhance connectivity, it can also mean more land is consumed by streets, leaving less land available for other uses. The village of Canastota most closely resembles this grid design.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">One-mile walk in a curvilinear street design</p> 	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Example: Village of Chittenango</p> 
<p>Contemporary streets are now more likely to be laid out in a curvilinear design usually typified in a subdivision with winding streets and cul-de-sacs. Curvilinear streets are designed to maximize traffic flow (speed) and driver comfort, but accessibility is low; it's not unusual to see only one path in and out of an entire neighborhood. The loops can be confusing and take longer to walk or bike than grid systems making it extremely difficult to get anywhere without the use of a car, creating auto-dependence. And because automobile traffic is concentrated on fewer streets, it requires wider, higher speed, multilane arterials that provide further disincentives and barriers to pedestrians. However, the design can be used to decrease through traffic and often less land has to be dedicated for streets allowing more land to be put to other uses. The village of Chittenango most closely resembles this design.</p> <p>Maps on left courtesy of Sightline Institute. http://www.sightline.org/</p>	

The way streets are laid out directly impacts how communities are built up and used affecting safety, functionality and aesthetics. The two extremes of street design are the traditional grid and the curvilinear design. Both designs come with trade-offs, but they do not have to be mutually exclusive. Communities should identify the needs of their existing community and neighborhoods and work to ensure their policies and laws facilitate a street design that fits those needs. Likewise, when new development is on the table its street design should be looked at very closely to make sure it does not hinder desired street activity.

While the impact of street design cannot be overstated, in many cases design is above local control especially regarding any federal and state roads that run through a community. Local governments still benefit by staying abreast of innovative transportation initiatives such as the New York State Department of Transportation (NYS DOT) GreenLITES program.

5. Promote Traditional neighborhood development/ mixed-use development

One of the easiest ways to create compact places that allow people to walk and mingle is through taking advantage of mixed use. Mixed use allows people to work, live, and play all within the same area. As discussed previously, one of the potential problems with zoning, the key tool used to regulate development, is that it focuses heavily on isolating and separating uses from one another.

Strict parking standards are another example of a type of current policy that can hinder compact, mixed-use development. Rigid parking space requirements can make it difficult for infill development and the redevelopment of older, centrally located buildings in downtowns to occur. Many

GreenLITES



Image 8

New York State Department of Transportation created the GreenLITES Project Design Certification program to set clear standards for sustainable, holistic road design. GreenLITES also provides the opportunity to distinguish innovative transportation projects and advance best management practices. The program is voluntary and can be applied to any federally funded project. It is self rated by a project sponsor which can be a New York State local government. Specifically, a sponsor uses the GreenLITES scorecard posted on the Departments' GreenLITES Project Design Certification page to evaluate and rank their project. Projects are given points for elements such as context sensitive solutions, land use/community planning, stormwater management, recycled materials, enhancing traffic flow and improving bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The project is then assigned a NYS DOT certification level of Certified, Silver, Gold, or the highest level, Evergreen. The first projects to use the GreenLITES program were in late 2008.

downtown buildings existed before parking standards were put in place and are now considered to be non-conforming uses. This makes it difficult to redevelop these buildings into mixed-use spaces as most new uses could not possibly provide for parking often set at suburban standards. Communities need to ensure that strict parking standards do not strip away the economic value of older, vital community buildings that otherwise could have

enormous potential to bring new growth into centers.

In order to redevelop existing buildings in community centers into the best use, communities can promote “park once and walk” strategies and support shared lot parking. Shared lots take advantage of the fact that different land use types need parking at different times of the day, so the demand at any given time is less than the aggregation of demand of the individual uses. In addition, parking space requirement relaxation can have positive effects of limiting impervious surfaces and controlling stormwater runoff.



Image 9

Strict parking rules mean that parking lots often sit empty for at least some portion of the day. Shared use parking is an opportunity to capitalize on all available parking in a community.

The placement of parking is also important. Parking lots, especially directly in front of businesses, make for dead spaces that are visually unattractive and extremely hard for pedestrians to walk to and between building entrances. Multiple driveways are dangerous to pedestrians and bicyclists.

One of the best reasons to live downtown is having amenities close and the ability to walk to most destinations; if community centers are not designed to do this, they remove one of the biggest reasons people would choose to live within the downtown or along main streets. Ultimately, communities need to place a priority on people if they want to create successful mixed use, compact walkable development. Through design and creative solutions to parking requirements, places can attract people, not just cars, to their community centers.

Strategy 3c. Make it a Priority to Build Sustainably

6. Encourage Green Building

The internationally recognized Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards developed by the U.S. Green Building Council seek to reduce the energy use and environmental impact of the built

Examples of LEED Facilities in Central New York Region			
Name of Facility	Location	Facility Owner	LEED Rating
Additions & Alterations to 283 Genesee St	Utica	Adirondack Capital LLC	Gold
C&S Corporate Headquarters Addition	Syracuse	C&S Companies	Certified
CAYUGA - ONONDAGA COUNTY BOCES	Auburn	CAYUGA - ONONDAGA BOARD OF COO	Silver
Enable - Growing Beyond Limitations	Syracuse	Enable	Certified
Griffiss Institute Expansion	Rome	Mohawk Valley EDGE	Silver
Marcellus Free Library @Upper Crown Mill	Marcellus	Marcellus Free Library	Silver
SENECA MEADOWS EDUCATION CENTER	Seneca Falls	Seneca Meadows Inc (IESI)	Gold
RobsonWoese	Syracuse	RobsonWoese	Certified
Residential Mental Health Unit - Marcy C	Marcy	NYS Dept. Of Corrections	Silver

environment and can be integrated into to any building type and any building lifecycle phase. Buildings receive a score based on energy savings, water efficiency, carbon dioxide emissions reduction, improved indoor environmental quality, and stewardship of resources. LEED ratings start at “certified” and go up to silver, gold, and platinum.

As part of the DEC Climate Smart Communities Resolution adopted in February 2011, Madison County pledged to “strive to implement energy efficient design standards such as U.S. Green Building Council Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design standards for new local government buildings.” At this time there are no LEED certified buildings in Madison County, but three facilities are currently undergoing the LEED certification process:

- 1) State Police Troop D Headquarters in Oneida (slated to open June 2011),
- 2) Fitness center on Colgate’s campus (opened January 2011),
- 3) Price Chopper in the town of Madison (opened May 2009).¹⁶

All three anticipate earning LEED Silver upon completing the commissioning process. Local governments should take tours of these facilities to familiarize themselves with the LEED process and outcomes.

Some other opportunities that exist to integrate LEED design standards include the potential reconstruction of the public library in Oneida. The current vision for the library includes using green construction to save on energy costs. In support of this priority, the library Board of Trustees toured the Marcellus Library which is certified LEED Silver.

Marcellus, NY Library is Certified LEED Silver



Image 10

The LEED Silver library in Marcellus is now a source of pride in the community with tours available upon request.

When the Board of Trustees for the Marcellus Free Library got together to discuss the building of a new library they decided early on they were going to use the LEED process to get the most energy efficient facility possible. By choosing both an architect and construction firm familiar with the LEED process, the Board had little difficulty through the process despite it being their first experience with LEED. The Board and community have been very happy with the results: the Library was once located in a 4,500 square foot older home with energy costs of about \$1,000 a month, but when the new facility opened in June 2008 it more than doubled the space without any increase to their energy costs! Some of the LEED features that made this possible include a geothermal heating/cooling system, high levels of insulation, reliance on daylight, and artificial lighting controlled by sensors.

7. Use Green Growth Recognition

When private business owners enhance their buildings to better incorporate sustainable design, they should be recognized. Formal recognition of buildings that exemplify smart growth characteristics can reward developers or building owners who construct and maintain facilities that are in line with community priorities. Drawing attention to quality building can also help inform others of the advantages these projects bring to the community and can help encourage building owners to continue to update, change and make improvements to their buildings.

Westchester County, New York created The Westchester Green Business Challenge as a friendly competition for businesses. Through this program, participants are acknowledged for achievements in greening their operations through the Business Council of Westchester, Westchester County Government and media recognition. The Green Business Challenge helps participants move down the path towards environmental sustainability, and, in some cases, towards third-party green building certification through the ENERGY STAR and LEED rating systems.

Specifically, if a business decides to participate in the challenge they receive an interactive Green Business Challenge Scorecard which Westchester County developed in partnership with ICLEI for Sustainability. The scorecard outlines up to 82 actions that can be taken to make the business “greener.” The business uses it to input their current practices to create a baseline score and is directed to targeted resources to help improve their performance. After the business makes improvements, they submit an updated scorecard and the Business Council of Westchester

and Westchester County show off their achievements.¹⁷

8. Implement Green Incentive Programs

Incentive programs can also be used to encourage green growth and innovation. Onondaga County’s Industrial Development Agency has developed an innovative payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) program to encourage private buildings to use LEED. The opportunity might exist for Madison County to adopt this innovative program in partnership with Onondaga County as a way to attract and encourage green growth to the region.

The Green Pilot Tax Credit program in Onondaga County

To encourage the construction of new LEED certified buildings, Onondaga County offers a Green Building (Payment in Lieu of Tax) PILOT Tax Credit program. Implemented through Onondaga County’s Industrial Development Agency it is the first in the region. The credit will reduce property taxes for qualifying projects. The amount of the credit increases as the level of LEED certification increases.

Welch Allyn, a medical equipment manufacturer, will be the first to take advantage of this program with their new headquarters building. Onondaga County has learned from their experience with Welch Allyn and has modified the PILOT program to better account for certain aspects such as the lag time that often occurs before a building is designated LEED.

Source: Onondaga County,

<http://www.ongov.net/sustainability/building/economic.html>

9. Apply Low Impact Development

Smart growth acknowledges the link between the environment and public health and impact of the built environment on both. Low-impact development can minimize the

environmental impact of built areas, promote the attractiveness of an area, and foster pedestrian activity. Low impact development is a smart growth tool that can simultaneously promote public health by protecting air and water quality and creating a healthier public realm such as encouraging daily physical activity.

New growth usually means more roads, more parking lots, and more built out space which combined creates a lot of additional impervious surfaces and potential impact on water quality. While the need to control stormwater runoff in rural areas is often not as urgent as in urban places, strategies should be in place for new development to keep impervious surface to a minimum and to manage stormwater as close to its source as possible. Strategies include natural landscaping, green roofs, rain barrels and permeable pavements.



Image 11

An innovative new way to surface parking lots, trails, and plazas is flexi-pave. It is made from recycled tires and provides a porous surface without sacrificing strength.

The product has become popular and can be found in many places. Some include the sidewalk along the 500 block of Tully Street in Syracuse, the patio area at Rosamond Gifford Zoo in Syracuse, and Beard Park in Fayetteville, New York.

One obvious area to foster low-impact development to decrease impervious surface and the potential impact on air and water quality is for communities to rethink parking

standards. A quick scan of the landscape brings to view that much of new development “swims” in seas of primarily vacant, black pavement. Most communities in Madison County set minimum parking space requirements, which do little to incentivize the policy of minimizing site disturbance and the construction of impervious surface. Requiring absolute numbers for parking spaces based on project type does not always make sense because there can be many ranges of development in each type. Moreover, parking lots are often designed to accommodate the rare, maximum capacity event (ex. Day-after-Thanksgiving shopping), but this might not be the best means to achieve smart growth. It was discussed earlier (pg 70) how strict parking standards can also make it difficult for redevelopment or infill development and impede walkability in community cores.

Dealing with parking can be politically challenging, but the public is more likely to accept it if they know that the revenues will be used to make public spaces more pleasant. One tactic some communities have adopted is to gradually take away a small percentage of parking spaces every year. Over time these spaces can be reused into some other more active form of community space that gets people out of their cars, reduces greenhouse gas emitted from eliminating or shortening automobile trips and decreases impervious surface.

10. Invest in Climate Action Planning

Communities across the country are realizing the benefits of developing climate action plans which can save money, create jobs, mitigate carbon emissions, and promote renewable or alternative energy sources. Through collaboration, an energy vision for the community is identified. The plan includes an inventory of current energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions

to design effective energy programs and action steps to reach the vision. It is tied to smart growth because an important element of using energy more efficiently requires responsible land use and transportation planning. Madison County is currently in the process of developing its first Climate Action Plan.

A variety of tools exist to help communities inventory their current energy consumption including U.S. EPA Portfolio Manager which is a free software program developed to track a building's energy use. To gage a better understanding about how the building is performing, it also ranks the facility's energy consumption against other similar buildings across the country.

To motivate individuals to take action, Madison County became a U.S. EPA ENERGY STAR Pledge Driver. To date, 75 people have taken the pledge in Madison County. To encourage others to take the pledge please visit Madison County's home page at www.madisoncounty.org.

Strategy 3d. Educate and Inform Community Members about the Value of Smart Growth

11. Engage the Public

If local governments really want to support smart growth they have to have people in the communities behind them. Currently, it is not uncommon to hear people say things like, "I am not going to go to a business if I cannot park right in front of it." However, would a person say this if they truly knew what they were sacrificing in order to have that happen? Only until people truly understand the benefits of smart growth can they be expected to support it. If people actually knew how their community could be safer, more economically sound and

Madison County Climate Action Plan



Image 12

In August 2010, the Planning Department submitted Madison County as an applicant for the Climate Change Innovation Program (C2IP) administered by the Central New York Regional Planning & Development Board (CNY RPDB). Madison County was chosen by CNY RPDB for the program and is now one of nine communities receiving technical and financial assistance to develop policies and strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote clean energy alternatives. C2IP is a three year program that upon completion awards participants with funding in the form of a grant up to \$30,000 for feasibility studies or demonstration projects that enhance energy efficiency. This program was created as a sub grant to the U.S. EPA Climate Showcase Communities Program. To develop the greenhouse gas inventory Madison County became a member of the international organization, ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability.

Source: Madison County Planning Department, 2010 Annual Report

interesting through smart growth, they might be more willing to do things like park once and walk. Through education people can realize the benefits of smart growth and become advocates for it.

Madison County Website

To engage the public, Madison County can continue to enhance its website as a one stop place for residents to find information they need to make greener choices, learn about new initiatives, and educate themselves on the importance of smart growth issues.

Events and Workshops

Madison County can reach out to individuals, businesses, and schools by providing interesting seminars, workshops, and speaker series to educate and provide resources to implement smart growth initiatives.

Mark your Calendar for SHADES of Green in Madison County FREE workshop event.



Image 13

Madison County is currently planning **SHADES of Green in Madison County: A Green Living Experience** to be held on February 24, 2012 at the STUAC Conference Center at Morrisville State College. With over twenty speakers, the full-day event will feature four breakout sessions on Energy/Greenhouse Gas Reduction, Sustainable Diet, Cradle to Cradle Design, and Smart Growth. Each breakout session has three tracks to cater to either the individual/family, business/school or community/local government. The event is free to attendees and is also a great opportunity for planning board members to receive training credit. More information on the event will be available after October 2011 at www.greenmadisoncounty.com

12. Educate New Generations

One of the best possible ways to ensure for smart growth in the future is to educate future generations about its importance. One interesting way to incorporate these topics into the school curriculum is a program called "Box City."

Box City



Image 14

Box City is a hands-on, interdisciplinary experience in community planning and design where students actually develop a scale-model community. The project helps children think about what makes a good city, village, or town and how the design of the built and natural environment influences the quality of life in a community. There are several different groups that provide the materials for the Box City Program including CUBE, Center for Understanding the Built Environment. If children are educated about these issues and learn to take pride in where they live, they may be less likely to leave and more apt to be civically involved as adults.

Source: CUBE,

<http://www.cubekc.org/index.html>

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http://www.villageofcazenovia.com/downloads/Cazenovia_2008_Comprehensive_Plan.pdf

² Center for Neighborhood Technology, *What is Green Infrastructure?*,

<http://greenvalues.cnt.org/green-infrastructure>

³ Ibid

⁴ Form-Based Codes Institute,

<http://formbasedcodes.org/>

⁵ SERA, *A Primer on Formed-based Codes*,

http://www.town.simsbury.ct.us/Public_Documents/SimsburyCT_PlanningZone/A%20Primer%20on%20Form-Based%20Code.pdf

⁶ Form-based Codes Institute,

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⁷ Rangwala, Kaizer, May 2009. *Hybrid codes vs. Form-based Codes*, New Urban News,

[http://www.formbasedcodes.org/files/Hybrid_Codes\(2\).pdf](http://www.formbasedcodes.org/files/Hybrid_Codes(2).pdf)

⁸ Village of Cazenovia Code, http://www.ecodes.generalcode.com/eCode360_redirect.asp?url=http://www.ecode360.com/?custId=CA1699&refId=1699_A

⁹ New York State Senate,

<http://www.nysenate.gov/press-release/senate-passes-complete-streets-legislation>

¹⁰ Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan Madison County, New York May 2010,

<http://www.ridemts.org/Final%20Coordinated%20Transportation%20Plan%20small.pdf>

¹¹ America Walks, *Walking Facts*,

<http://americawalks.org/resources/walking-facts/>

¹² CEOs for Cities, *Walking the Walk Report*,

<http://www.ceosforcities.org/work/walkingthewalk>

¹³ Walkscore, <http://www.walkscore.com/>

¹⁴ Oregon Department of Transportation, *Glossary of Terms and Acronyms*,

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¹⁵ Iowa State University Institute for Transportation, *Access Management Tool Kit*,

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¹⁶ Migdail-Smith, Liam, *Supermarket Opens in Madison*, The Oneida Daily Dispatch, May 2009,

<http://www.oneidadispatch.com/articles/2009/05/12/news/doc4a0a458a17ad9095644375.txt>

¹⁷ Westchester County, *Westchester Green Business Challenge*,

http://climatechange.westchestergov.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2584&Itemid=4501

Image 1: Madison County Planning Department

Image 2: McChesney, Charles, *Green roofs, rain barrels, other changes can keep rain water out of Central New York sewers*, The Post Standard,

<http://www.syracuse.com/poststandard/>

Image 3: Madison County Planning Department

Image 4: TransLoc, <http://transloc.com/>

Image 5: Morris Auto Sales,

<http://www.morrisautosales.net/id5.html>

Image 6: Bicycle Benefits,

<http://www.bicyclebenefits.org/>

Image 7: Iowa State University,

<http://www.intrans.iastate.edu/pubs/access/toolkit/>

Image 8: All America Auto Transit,

<http://www.aaat.com/shipping-a-car-to-new-york.cfm>

Image 9: The Salt Lake Tribune,

<http://www.sltrib.com/sltrib/home/51461436-76/lot-towing-tow-car.html.csp>

Image 10: Courtesy of Madison County Planning Department

Image 11: Grand Rapids Michigan,

http://www.grcity.us/index.pl?page_id=6149

Image 12: Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board,

<http://www.cnyrpd.org/programs/energy.asp>

Image 13: Courtesy of Madison County Planning Department

Image 14: CUBE, <http://www.cubekc.org/index.html>

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4

Goal 4: Make livable communities for all ages

Create more livable communities for all residents to live, work, grow up and grow old.

Residents of Madison County are enjoying longer and healthier lives. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, there are 10,239 individuals in Madison County age 65 or above—or about one in every seven residents is age 65 or older. Over the next 25 years, that number is expected to double.¹ This dramatic trend creates both new challenges and new opportunities. Compared to previous generations, today’s seniors are generally healthier, wealthier, and better educated.² “Communities that can capitalize on the diverse assets of older adults may find ways to stabilize the costs of governing and providing services, create new opportunities for economic growth, and provide a better quality of life for residents of all ages.”³

At the same time, Madison County is losing much of the 25-39 year old population. In 2000, 19.4% of the population in Madison County was between 25-39 years old, now it is just 15%. This represents a challenge as

communities hope to retain young professionals and families.

Growth and development provide an enormous opportunity to make communities healthier places that are inclusive to people of all ages. Each day, decisions affecting quality of life are made by elected officials, planning and zoning boards, and economic development leaders. Understanding the impact and needs of different demographic groups on a community will enable them to plan for and identify new opportunities to enhance the quality of life for all residents.

4a. Create Places that Allow Seniors to Age in Place

Communities built around the smart growth principles provide more opportunities for senior residents to continue leading full lives on their own. According to AARP, nearly 90 percent of seniors want to stay in their own homes (and communities) as they age, often referred to as “aging in place.”⁴ However, seniors often lose their ability to live on their own when they lose their ability to drive. In communities built around the principles of smart growth, losing the ability to drive does not have to mean losing mobility and freedom.

Strategy	Tools & Policies
Strategy 1a. Create places that allow seniors to age in place	1) Create Inter-generational Neighborhoods 2) Encourage Developers to Design with Seniors in Mind/ Universal Design 3) Support Active Aging 4) Make Transportation that is Friendly for Seniors
Strategy 1b. Target the needs of young adults	5) Encourage Up-scale Rentals for Young Professionals 6) Design Safe Places for Families
Strategy 1c. Implement creative ideas to enhance quality of life	7) Foster Active Design 8) Strengthen Sense of Community/Social Capital 9) Incorporate Community Projects: Community Gardens and Composting 10) Employ Health Impact Assessments

For these reasons older adults — particularly empty-nesters and new retirees — are rejecting sprawl and demanding more compact, mixed-use, interesting, walkable, and vibrant communities.⁵ Gas prices, the desire for exercise, independence, and social interaction, as well as driving restrictions, are leading them to seek stimulating places to live that accommodate their changing needs and lifestyles.⁶



Image 1

A Senior Group in Albert Lea, Minnesota takes a stroll along a multiuse path

Using smart growth to help seniors remain independent is an opportunity to redirect money back into community centers. The median monthly cost for nursing home care in 2009 was \$5,243 — more than five times that for seniors living at home, according to a study published in the 2010 issue of Health Affairs.⁷ Instead of moving into nursing homes or other care facilities, seniors can remain in or relocate to community centers in Madison County. If local governments use smart growth to create the types of communities seniors are demanding, there is an opportunity to keep and even attract aging seniors, often cohorts of society with stable income and low risk of crime, which can further help revive downtowns and mainstreets.

All the policy tools already mentioned in earlier sections including creating transportation options, streetscape, and

mixed use can be applied to seniors, but there are also needs and concepts specific to seniors that deserve more attention.

Livable New York Communities Manual

Image 2

Livable New York: Sustainable Communities for All Ages is a great resource manual initiated by New York State Office of the Aging. The resource manual is written by authors across the state and is a living document which means that it will continue to expand as more articles are submitted. To date the resource manual includes over 120 articles in order to provide communities technical assistance to help them respond to and meet the needs of the aging population. This Resource Manual can be found at <http://www.aging.ny.gov/livableny/ResourceManual/Index.cfm>

1. Create Inter-generational Neighborhoods

One of most important aspects to retaining seniors is housing. For many reasons, seniors' needs and expectations for housing change with age. Creating inter-generational neighborhoods with housing options is one way to make communities more livable places for seniors.

Despite the fact that traditional nuclear families occupy only one in four

households, the housing type most supported by land use codes is single family housing⁸. A mix of housing choices - single-family homes of all sizes, duplexes, small and large apartments, and studios above garages or shops - creates neighborhoods that are inter-generational, where people at different income levels and stages of life – single adults, families with children, and seniors – can live together. This range creates more supportive housing arrangements: seniors, who are more likely to be home during the day, enhance safety by keeping “eyes on the street” and children that live near by can assist seniors by doing yard work.

Adding flexibility and provisions for mixed use to current land use regulations is a critical step toward creating not only a range of housing types but also the ability for seniors to live close to services. With a mixed use neighborhood, seniors can choose to live within walking distance of basic amenities, such as health facilities, libraries, drug stores, grocery stores, and banks.

Current land use regulations, such as zoning, often focus on separating uses from each other and tend to create homogeneous neighborhoods. Often codes prohibit the placement of services and housing in the same buildings and encourage large lot sizes which can prevent the development of smaller, more affordable housing.

Communities are discovering new ways to incorporate more viable housing choices for older adults such as:

- Shared Living Residence:

This is where a small group (typically, three to ten) of unrelated people share a housing unit including the expenses and tasks of running the household. Residents may be all elderly

Madison County Age Friendly Community Survey
<p>Madison County Office for the Aging recently distributed an “Aging Friendly Community Survey” throughout the City of Oneida. The survey was also taken directly to seniors who live in the Oneida Towers – a 100-unit apartment complex located in the downtown – to create a subgroup of the Oneida senior population. Some of the results:</p> <p>Location matters for seniors’ housing costs: Out of the 19 seniors who took the survey throughout the City of Oneida, 14 (74%) answered that they spend <i>more</i> than 30% of their monthly income on housing. This is significantly different than the answers received from the subgroup of seniors at the Towers: out of the 36 people who took the survey there, 26 (72%) said they spend <i>less</i> than 30% of their monthly income on housing.</p> <p>Seniors want transportation options: When asked if public transportation were available where they lived, 15 of the 19 (74%) who took the survey in Oneida said they would use it. 30 out of 36 (83%) in the Towers said they would use it.</p> <p>Seniors do not want to move: Even if they have difficulty accessing things, both sets of survey respondents indicated that they do not want to move. 16 of the 19 (84%) surveyed throughout the City of Oneida and 26 of the 36 (72%) surveyed in the Towers said they have not considered moving.</p>

adults or an inter-generational mix of older and younger adults. Typically, with this housing option all residents share a kitchen, dining room, and living room/areas, but each resident has their own private bedroom. Essentially, residents live together "as a family." They share meals, companionship, socialization activities which can especially be attractive to residents who are capable of independent living, but whose circumstances make them unable or unwilling to continue living alone.⁹

- Cottage Community Zoning:

Cottage community zoning sets maximum square footage standards for both the housing units and for the lots which helps to create more affordable housing options. This can be an effective alternative for various population groups in a community, including older people, single individuals (both with and without disabilities), young couples who are just starting marriage and careers, and single parents.¹⁰

2. Encourage Developers to Design with Seniors in Mind/ Universal Design

As seniors age, many become more limited or are more likely to have a physical disability; therefore, many find that even the design of their home can pose challenges. Ultimately, the design of a home can make the difference between aging in place or having to move to another setting. Universal design is generally defined as including those features that enable people of all ages and abilities to enjoy an environment or product.¹¹ Demands and codes can incorporate this concept to provide a strong incentive to build with universal design features.

When housing is built or renovated this is an opportunity for developers to design some units with seniors specifically in mind. AARP identified housing features that

seniors find are especially important in the later years as they begin to experience reduced eyesight, poorer balance, reduced flexibility, etc.¹² These features are ranked by the percentage of seniors who said these were important:

- Safety features such as non-slip floor surfaces (80 percent)
- Bathroom aides such as grab bars (79 percent)
- A personal alert system that allows people to call for help in emergencies (79 percent)
- Entrance without steps (77 percent)
- Wider doorways (65 percent)
- Lever-handled doorknobs (54 percent)
- Higher electrical outlets (46 percent)
- Lower electrical switches (38 percent)

3. Support Active Aging

Exercise is important for everyone, but opportunities to engage in physical fitness can be more challenging for the elder population. More than one-third of Americans over 65 report no daily physical activity.¹³

Communities can promote "Active Aging" by helping to make more accessible self-directed physical-activity opportunities which include walking, biking, fitness trails and similar activities that are appropriate for participants at various fitness levels and functional ability. The U.S. EPA has developed the *Building Healthy Communities for Active Aging* program to raise awareness across the nation about healthy synergies that can be achieved by communities combining Smart Growth and Active Aging concepts.¹⁴



Image 3

Exercise parks for seniors provide a way to stay physically fit while creating a communal space to meet up and socialize.

Some communities are building parks and public spaces specifically with seniors in mind such as by offering gentle exercise equipment to help older people improve their strength, balance, and flexibility. These types of exercise parks can be strategically located such as beside a kids' playground or sports field to encourage parents and grandparents to exercise while they watch their children play.

4. Make Transportation that is Friendly for Seniors

“Each year more than one million Americans aged 70 and older stop driving and become dependent on others to meet their transportation needs.”¹⁵ Building ‘choice’ back into the transportation network has to be a priority if communities are going to be places where seniors can age in place. Although there will always be people who will say ‘the bus is not for me’ or ‘I’d rather drive than walk,’ it is not really about that. Instead, it is about providing people with more choices than are currently in place. More transportation options give all people, not just seniors, the chance to stay active and independent. Research shows that just a half-hour of activity three times a week can greatly improve health and sense of well-being.¹⁶

Transportation Challenges for Seniors

More than 50% of non-drivers age 65 and older - or 3.6 million Americans - stay home on any given day partially because they lack transportation options.

Older non-drivers have a decreased ability to participate in the community and the economy. Compared with older drivers, older non-drivers in the United States make:

- 15% fewer trips to the doctor;
- 59% fewer shopping trips and visits to restaurants;
- 65% fewer trips for social, family and religious activities.

More livable communities have lower rates of staying home, and higher rates of public transportation use and walking among non-drivers aged 65 and over.

- 61% of older non-drivers stay home on a given day in more spread-out areas, as compared to 43% in denser areas;
- More than half of older non-drivers use public transportation occasionally in denser areas, as compared to 1 in 20 in more spread-out areas;
- One in three older non-drivers walks on a given day in denser areas, as compared to 1 in 14 in more spread-out areas.

Linda Bailey, *Aging Americans: Stranded Without Options* Washington, D.C. : Surface Transportation Policy Project, April 2004), <http://www.transact.org/report.asp?id=232>.

For many it is hard to comprehend what it would be like to live without a car, but this is the reality that many seniors confront everyday. Everyone ages; so while some people may not see themselves as bus riders or frequent pedestrians right now it is important to consider the current transportation system and what it would mean for mobility in the future. Having the *choice* to get to downtown shopping or

cultural events on a person's own terms and schedule, rather than waiting for a friend, taxi, or on-call van, can ensure independent living for much longer.¹⁷

4b. Target the Needs of Young Adults

5. Encourage Up-scale Rentals for Young Professionals

Using the principles of smart growth is an opportunity to attract and retain young professionals, defined as college educated 25-39 year olds, who are looking for walkable, mixed-use communities that provide amenities right outside their back door. These concepts along with ideas to implement them have been discussed previously throughout this document, but recent trends provide more insight into what communities can do to become places that talented young professionals want to live.

For example, more than ever, young professionals are opting to continue to rent rather than buy their own home. This has to do with lifestyle preferences and also the current economic situation. Tight credit standards and high down-payment requirements are keeping many out of the housing market.¹⁸ Young professionals, who would normally be considering entering the housing market for the first time, are instead turning to high quality or upscale rental options. Communities that respond to this shift in housing demand can increase their ability to attract and retain this age group.

Redeveloping Downtown Housing Space

A focus of the City of Albany Downtown Housing Initiative is downtown housing revitalization to create highly desirable upscale housing in historic buildings, especially where upper floors have been vacant or under-utilized. While this example is from a large urban area, the need to provide viable rental housing options, revitalize downtowns, and the process to accomplish it is much the same as it would be in other places.

One project to stem from Albany's effort was the redevelopment of a historic building which sat vacant for over a decade located in the downtown along North Pearl Street. The building is now home to seven new upscale apartments. After researching the market needs of the area, the City reached across agencies and departments to respond to the identified needs. The City also applied for a New York Main Street grant to help fund the redevelopment of the space. The City believes that providing high quality rental options will help attract young professionals who are more likely to work in the City short term, say three to four years.

Source: Lucas, Dave, *Area City Looking to Attract Residents Downtown*, WAMC, <http://www.publicbroadcasting.net/wamc/news.newsmain/article/1/0/1605441/WAMC.New.York.News/Area.City.Looking.To.Attract.Residents.To.Downtown>

6. Design Safe Places for Families

The age cohort between 25-39 years is also the age group most likely to be raising families. Much of the current development pattern seen today was influenced during the 1950s when families sought the comforts of the suburbs, thought to offer better schools and a safer environment to raise children.¹⁹ As families moved out, the way neighborhoods were built changed such as placing homes around cul-de-sacs. Another top priority was to separate homes from all other uses to create strictly residential areas. This had many effects, but one main result is that in many cases these types of neighborhoods isolated children from other activities such as school, the library, shops, and recreational centers.²⁰

While this development pattern is still present today, new trends indicate a growing demand by families to return to community centers. Parents today are more focused on a work-life balance.²¹ “The trend...signals a generational attitude shift: Many millennials and younger Gen-Xers say their American dream is not a big house and yard in the suburbs. It’s walking to work, no lawn mowing, more family play time and culture at their doorsteps.”²² Smart growth advocates believe that through the principles of smart growth, communities can accommodate this demand by refocusing on building family friendly communities within their centers.



Image 4

Community centers can be great places for families

4c. Implement Creative Ideas to Enhance Quality of Life

‘Livability means being able to take your kids to school, go to work, see a doctor, drop by the grocery or post office, go out to dinner and a movie, and play with your kids at the park, all without having to get into your car. Livability means building the communities that help Americans live the lives they want to live--whether those communities are urban centers, small towns, or rural areas.’

~Secretary Ray LaHood, U.S. Department of Transportation

7. Foster Active Design

Much of the current built environment has the unintentional consequence of creating places that promote sedentary rather than active lifestyles. For example, much of community design separates home, work, shopping, and schools, and in doing so makes people dependent on the automobile to get anywhere. By advocating that many activities of daily living should occur within walking distance, smart growth has the advantage of designing places that more easily allow people to incorporate regular physical fitness into their daily routines.

Some communities are taking this a step further and developing plans to incorporate active design back into the built environment. Active design is environmental design that encourages stair climbing, walking, bicycling, transit use, active recreation, and healthy eating.²³ Businesses can get behind this effort too because healthy communities mean healthier workers which means less sick days and medical costs for their employees. It can also mean more customers and sales by increasing the amount of foot traffic passing by their stores.

NYC Active Design Principles

In 2010, New York City developed *Active Design Guidelines: Promoting Physical Activity and Health in Design* to address and educate those responsible for the planning and construction of buildings, streets, and neighborhoods about opportunities to increase daily physical activity. The ultimate goal of the *Active Guidelines* is to make New York City an even greater place to live, by creating an environment that enables all city residents to incorporate healthy activity into their daily lives.

The NYC Active Guidelines was developed with two main design sections: Urban Design: Creating an Active City and Building Design: Creating Opportunities for Daily Physical Activity. Many of the elements in the first section mirror smart growth almost exactly, such as the recommendation to “design accessible, pedestrian-friendly streets with high connectivity, traffic calming features, landscaping, lighting, benches, and water fountains.” The second section takes it a step further to more fully articulate how to make communities places that encourage daily physical activity such as “increase stair use among the able-bodied by providing a conveniently located stair for everyday use, posting motivational signage to encourage stair use, and designing visible, appealing and comfortable stairs.”

Many elements needed for people to be healthy are universal so while these guidelines were developed for an urban place there are still lessons that can be learned and applied to rural communities. Developed by the New York City Departments of Design and Construction (DDC), Health and Mental Hygiene, Transportation (DOT), and City Planning it also demonstrates another way planning and public health can partner resources together to make healthier communities.

8. Strengthen Sense of Community/ Social Capital

Social capital is often defined as “the fabric of a community and the community pool of human resources available to it.”²⁴ In other words, it is the individual and communal time and energy that is available for such things as community improvement, social networking, civic engagement, personal recreation and other activities that create social bonds between individuals. It reflects community cohesion, and a sense of belonging, valuing nearby friends and acquaintances with whom a person can interact regularly and provide physical support if necessary.

Social capital has been left out of much community planning in the recent past which has instead been driven by the needs of the automobile and commuting to work – going in a straight line from point A to point B as quickly as possible, and not valuing the creation of spaces where people can gather and build a sense of community. Future planning and design should take into account the amount of time and outlets that are available for community involvement activities such as neighborhood improvement projects and neighborhood association events

Studies have shown that with increased walkable, mixed use neighborhoods higher levels of social capital are realized. One such recent study from the University of New Hampshire’s Natural Resources and Earth System Science (NRESS) program, has found that neighborhoods that are more walkable had higher levels of social capital such as trust among neighbors and participation in community events.²⁵ Moreover, those who have higher levels of positive social capital have been shown to have a higher quality of life through better

health and economic opportunities, among other things.²⁶

According to Canadian life satisfaction expert, Professor John Helliwell, “The single biggest factor [into why people are happy] is the extent to which people think their neighbours can be trusted... Neighbourhoods that work, in the sense of producing trusting neighbours, are ones where they spend a lot of time with each other, thinking about each other and doing things with each other. In places where that’s natural or easier to achieve, it happens more readily.”²⁷

Community cohesion and social capital require the security and attractiveness of walking conditions, including the quality of sidewalks and crosswalks, minimal motor vehicle traffic volumes and speeds, and amenities such as shade and shelter from rain, landscaping and gathering spaces. These factors can be improved through *streetscaping* (improving the function and esthetics of streets), *traffic calming* (designing streets to reduce excessive traffic speeds and volumes), and security improvements.²⁸

9. Incorporate Community Projects: Community Gardens/ Composting Projects

Community Gardens

Community gardens can offer an outlet for people to gain access to fresh, healthy produce while offering an opportunity to create a community project. Community gardens can take on many forms: there are communal gardens where all the members share in all the work and all the benefits or plotted gardens where each member maintains and gets the bounty only from his or her own plot. Regardless, the important feature is that the community itself is usually involved in developing and constructing the garden and largely responsible for maintaining it afterward. This can make it a source of community pride.

Community garden projects are an opportunity for people to learn from each other and socially interact with their neighbors. While they provide opportunities for education and exercise, they are also a way to preserve open space. Moreover, these projects can bridge a link between the agricultural industry and the community. Community gardens are also a great place to showcase and apply environmental practices such as composting and reusing rain water through rain barrels.



Image 5

This neighborhood came together to complete a community project to paint a well-used intersection

In 2009, through a NYS Department of Health Healthy Heart Grant, Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) of Chenango received funding to expand a community garden in Norwich, NY, establish five new community gardens, and create 8-10 satellite container gardens throughout Chenango County, NY. To accomplish the gardens CCE is reaching out to various groups. Some of the efforts to date include:

-Roy Chamberlin Memorial Community Garden, Norwich

This garden was started in 1996 but was expanded to 44 plots in 2010 through the new initiative. The City of Norwich generously allows use of the land and provides running water. Management of the garden has been transferred to CCE Chenango.



Image 6

The Roy Chamberlin Memorial Community Garden in Norwich, New York

-New Community Garden in Oxford

The Oxford Community Garden is a new garden that opened in May 2010. It has 19 plots.

-Container Gardens

Three of the container gardens were started in 2010 including at an office space, at the County Mental Health Building, and at a daycare facility. Other possible sites that would be considered are senior housing centers, apartment complexes, mobile home parks, or other workplace.

Composting

Schools are a great place to start community projects including community gardens and composting.

Composting Project

Pine Grove Middle School in Syracuse, New York composts its school lunch scraps which are later used on the school's flower beds. This has been a great program to educate kids about environmental stewardship by reducing the waste stream. Pine Grove's composting project started in 2009 with just sixth-graders, but in 2010 expanded to the entire school. Ten children volunteer to be "compost hosts" at lunch to help other kids decide what can be composted and what cannot. When lunch is over, custodians empty the compost bins into a compost station that has been constructed on the side of the school. The idea to compost at Pine Grove originated with a high school college-level public affairs class where high school environmental science students conducted an assembly at Pine Grove to teach students about composting and how to do it correctly. It has been very successful and is planned to be implemented in other schools in the school district.

Source: Doran, Elizabeth, *Students at East Syracuse Minoa middle school composting lunch scraps; end product will go on school's flower beds*, The Post Standard, http://www.syracuse.com/news/index.ssf/2010/12/students_at_east_syracuse_mino.html

10. Employ Health Impact Assessments

Land use, zoning, and community development policies and programs of the past have contributed, with both a positive and negative impact, in shaping the current health status of communities. The Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is a valuable tool designed to support and enhance public policy and educate local decision makers about: the health impact of such policies, projects and programs; demonstrate a health gain or loss as an outcome of those policies and; achieving equalities in community health through effective partnering throughout the process. The HIA can provide a forum for public input throughout the planning process, elevate health issues as to their proper order of importance in the planning process, and ultimately create policies and programs that will enhance the positive, and reduce the negative impacts on overall community health.

An important aspect of a Health Impact Assessment is its use in determining the health impacts of land use planning and community design decisions *before* they are finalized. The results therefore are used, pro-actively, to better inform the decision-makers.

HIAs are necessary when health is not considered in the process and there is still time to affect change in a decision before it becomes final. Ideally, however, health elements should be included at the beginning of the planning process.

For instance, the Madison County Transportation Steering Committee, composed of both transport providers, users and planning agencies included health language in the *Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan for*

HIA Example: Oneida Hotel

In the City of Oneida's Comprehensive Plan one of their goals is to "*re-establish the downtown as the City's central business district.*" One of the several activities identified under this goal is to "*redevelop key vacant and underutilized sites located downtown.*"

The Oneida Hotel represents one of these key vacant sites. The hotel is currently vacant and has been for several years. A new owner has taken over the property and is looking at several options for its use. Among these options is 1) low income housing; and 2) mix of office/commercial on the first floor with middle or higher income apartments on the upper floors.

The health impacts of this building's use on the community had not been considered to date. City Officials are interested in determining the best use of this property and have asked the Madison County Public Health department to conduct an HIA that compares the building use options.



Image7

Madison County (this plan was discussed in more detail previously on page 64).

An important element of the *Community Transportation Plan* yet to be described is that it included language that recognizes the importance of integrating health into future transportation planning activities and, more specifically states any future transportation activities, “*should include ... health... assessment components to maximize their positive impacts and guide transportation strategy development and implementation activities.*”

The *Community Transportation Plan* will be shaped to find the answers to three questions about the future of transportation in Madison County:

- How can Madison County become and stay a healthy place to live and work? How do we build an environment that supports healthy living, preserves our natural beauty and resources, promotes our rural lifestyle and fosters economic prosperity?
- How does Madison County maintain a high quality of life for residents in its rural areas, while accommodating growth?
- How does Madison County increase opportunities for people, especially those vulnerable populations (e.g., elderly, disabled, low-income) to travel to, from, and around the county using alternative methods of transportation?

This demonstrates the synergy that can be created by pairing health with planning which can be applied to a variety of other projects.

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⁴ AARP, *In Your Home-Remodelers for Aging in Place Facts and Statistics*,

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⁶ Ibid

⁷ National Center for Policy Analysis, *Aging in Place-A Graceful Living Option for Seniors*,

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¹⁶ New York State Office for the Aging, Livable New York Resource Manual,

<http://www.aging.ny.gov/livableny/ResourceManual/ResourceManualTableofContents.pdf>

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²³ City of New York, *Active Design Guidelines Promoting Health and Physical Activity in Design*

²⁴ Center for Disease Control, *Social Capital*, <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/healthtopics/social.htm>

²⁵ Shannon H. Roger, John M. Halstead, Kevin H. Gardner and Cynthia H. Carlson (2010). *Examining Walkability and Social Capital As Indicators of Quality of Life at the Municipal And Neighborhood Scales*, Applied Research in Quality of Life, www.springerlink.com

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Image 3: Democratic Underground,

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Image 4: U.S. EPA, *Smart Growth*,

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Image 7: Courtesy of the Madison County Public Health Department

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Conclusion

Smart growth is an opportunity for Madison County to build its places with intent. This Primer identifies several strategies to help communities to put the principles of smart growth to use, including:

Focus in on key needs like enhancing housing options in community centers (pg 33) and creating multi-modal transportation options (pg 63)

Learn from others to create anchors for downtowns (pg 32), community gardens (pg 87), and green incentive programs (pg 73)

Create new partnerships such as Trails in Madison County Working Group (pg 40) or to organize a Food Council (pg 57)

Apply concepts such as human scale (pg 34) and universal design (pg 82)

Understand innovative new programs such as GreenLITES (pg 70) and LEED (pg 71)

Rethink the status quo such zoning vs. form-based codes (pg 61) and low impact development (pg 73)

Learn from community input including Madison County Age Friendly Community Survey (pg 81) and Madison County Public Transit Survey (pg 64)

Take advantage of available tools such as walkscore (pg 66) and health impact assessments (pg 89)

Discover new opportunities such as the Shades of Green in Madison County Green Living Workshop (pg 76)

Implement new ideas like real time bus locators for the public transit system (pg 65), geocaching (pg 41), and Bicycle Benefits program (pg 67)

Make new plans like a greenway masterplan (pg 40), climate action plan (pg 74), or a plan with a sensitive lands working group (pg 54)

Madison County's Health Improvement Plan identified numerous goals and objectives for improving both the health and quality of life in Madison County. In order to implement some of the suggestions identified in the plan, the Community Economic Development Committee was formed and made up of a cross section of County departments, local college and education representatives, non-profits, and advocacy groups. The group has worked for months now on a variety of topics, but all have centered on advocating smart growth and healthy community design within Madison County. This document represents the springboard with which we will move these ideas forward and is intended to be an educational resource for municipalities and local officials at all levels of government within the County. More can be expected in the way of model local codes, implementation steps, staff assistance, and toolkits, that we will use to help municipalities move these from concepts into action items. The hope is to make Madison County an even healthier and more enjoyable place to live, work, and grow old.