

# Broome County

Department of  
Planning and Economic  
Development

# 2015

## Annual Report

Debra Preston, County Executive  
Frank Evangelisti, Director of Planning

# **Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development**

## **Staff**

### **Planning and Economic Development**

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Frank Evangelisti, Director

Lora Zier, Senior Planner

Beth Lucas, Senior Planner

Stephanie Brewer, Planner

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Kati Chen, Intern

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Administered by Beth Lucas, Senior Planner

# Annual Report

## DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

2015 was an exciting year for the Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development. The long awaited Regional Farmers Market broke ground on the campus of Cornell Cooperative Extension on Upper Front Street in the Town of Dickinson. After many years of planning, design, and grant writing, the year-round market is finally under construction. Another major development was the announcement that the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council won the \$500,000,000 prize under the Upstate Revitalization Initiative. One of the ideas from Broome County's comprehensive plan became a key initiative in the successful Upstate Revitalization Initiative plan: Creation of Innovation Districts in Binghamton, Endicott and Johnson City.

## MISSION

The Department of Planning and Economic Development provides professional services to many departments in Broome County Government, local municipalities as well as other public and private entities. These services include preparing comprehensive plans, researching land-use planning issues, preparing and administering grants, assisting with economic development, conducting environmental studies and assessments, carrying out reviews of development proposals, preparing tax maps, providing GIS mapping and coordinating municipal training on a wide variety of subjects.

Planning staff works in close collaboration with the Agency (Broome County Industrial Development Agency), Environmental Management Council, Binghamton Metropolitan Transportation Agency Planning Committee, the Broome County Land Bank, the Broome-Tioga Stormwater Coalition, and the NY Rising Community Reconstruction Board.

## 2015 PLANNING DEPARTMENT OBJECTIVES

- Effectively manage the Hotel–Motel fund to maximize its impact by leveraging the fund with other resources
- Aggressively pursue state, federal and other grant funding to meet County goals and objectives
- Work with municipal officials to coordinate reviews of development proposals
- Administer the expanded Susquehanna Heritage Area program to protect and preserve our cultural resources
- Conduct training and workshops for municipal officials
- Continue to expand the County’s GIS capabilities
- Collaborate with local municipalities to carry out the Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan
- Implement the County–Wide Comprehensive Plan
- Coordinate implementation of the FEMA mandated update to the Multi–Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Carry out the federally mandated Stormwater Management Plan by providing education and facilitating public participation for Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) Compliance
- Coordinate the Flood Task Force, administer flood related grant programs, and evaluate and implement new and better flood mitigation strategies
- Participate on the NY Rising Communities Reconstruction Board
- Assist with initiating an Upper Susquehanna Watershed Study in conjunction with the NYS DEC and the Army Corps of Engineers
- Complete Step III of the Endicott Johnson Industrial Spine BOA
- Oversee construction and start–up of Southern Tier Regional Farmers Market
- Provide support to the new Broome County Land Bank
- Begin monitoring program post EPA Clean–Up Cooperative Agreement for 312 Maple Street Remediation
- Provide support and assistance to Broome County municipalities for comprehensive plan development
- Participate on the Ag and Farmland Protection Board.

## UPSTATE REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE

The Broome County Comprehensive Plan included many important ideas and projects, but one stood out. Following a model developed in Barcelona, and carried out in New York City, Boston, Syracuse and elsewhere, we proposed developing Innovation Districts here in Broome County. Innovation Districts, which we called iDistricts, would work to: Create Clusters of Innovative People; Build Flexible Housing Options that Work for Flexible Lifestyles, and Provide Public Space and Programming To Foster An Innovation Ecosystem.

One iDistrict was proposed to be centered on the high-technology incubator proposed for Hawley Street in downtown Binghamton. This iDistrict would focus on technology transfer from Binghamton University into the commercial sphere. A second iDistrict was planned to be centered on the Wilson Hospital campus and the new Binghamton University School of Pharmacy in Johnson City and would be focused on innovations in health care, senior living, and the Johnson City Health and Culture District. A third iDistrict was designated for the Huron Campus in Endicott, the Center for Advanced Microelectronics Manufacturing, and would use the combination of ample low cost manufacturing space and discounted electricity to support electronics manufacturing firms. There are three key components of our proposed iDistrict program:

**Cultivators** are local development corporations, technical assistance providers, incubators, shared work spaces, and tech transfer offices

**Drivers** are research and technology-based institutions such as high tech firms, engineering and design companies, fabricators, and innovative medical practices.

**Vibrant neighborhoods** that feature cafes, small scale retail, walkable streets, attractive buildings, bike and pedestrian amenities, and a range of desirable housing options.

Broome County Planning took this idea to the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council as they formed their plan to compete for the \$500,000,000 Upstate Revitalization initiative. The Regional Economic Development Council embraced the idea and made Innovation Districts one of just four key components of their plan. On December 10, 2015, Governor Cuomo announced that the Southern Tier Regional

Economic Development Council was one of three winning proposals and would take home the half-billion prize.

In addition to the iDistrict funding, the Upstate Revitalization Initiative will underwrite the cost of a bike and pedestrian connection between downtown Binghamton and Binghamton University. This Route 434 Greenway was designed by New York State Department of Transportation, and will now be funded under the Upstate Revitalization Initiative.

## BROOME COUNTY REGIONAL FARMERS MARKET

We broke ground in 2015 on a project that has long been a dream in Broome County: A regional farmers market. The market was first proposed in the Agricultural Economic Development Plan adopted by the Broome County Legislature in 2001. The Planning Department followed up by hiring Market Ventures, Inc. to study the financial feasibility of a year-round market. That study, completed in 2009, concluded that there was sufficient consumer demand and adequate agricultural supply for a market and that the ideal site was Otsiningo Park.





Knowing that the market would be financially self-sufficient, Planning began writing grants and securing funding to build and operate the market. The department received funding from New York State Parks, the Low Income Investment Fund, and the Agency for the construction of the market and from the Broome County Farm Bureau and the Appalachian Regional Commission for startup of market operation.

Required archaeological survey work done at Otsiningo Park, however, uncovered findings that rendered the park site unsuitable for the farmers market. So the search was on for a new location. Many factors had to be considered for the new location including commercial potential, cost to develop, zoning, and acceptability to the numerous grant programs which were underwriting the project.

Numerous sites were considered, and some even had an engineering evaluation done, only to be dismissed by funders or for feasibility concerns. But Cornell Cooperative Extension came forward and proposed building the market on their campus at 840 Front Street in the Town of Dickinson.

This was a win-win for all involved. Constructing the market at Cornell Cooperative Extension cements their place as the center for agriculture in the region and the location is an attractive setting in a dynamic commercial corridor.

Many players were a factor in this winning effort. In addition to the funders and the elected officials who supported the project, key contributors include the Broome County Engineering Division, the staff of Cornell Cooperative Extension, Keystone Associates, Broome County Planning, and the Public Archaeological Facility at Binghamton University.





## AGRICULTURE TASK FORCE

The Agriculture Task Force was formed in 2014 to encourage collaboration between the various organizations seeking to foster the development of farming in Broome County. During 2015, the Agriculture Task Force worked with consultant Susan Payne to develop a Strategic Action Plan. The objectives of the adopted plan are:

- Engage in meaningful and on-going communications with members of the agriculture community to gain an in-depth understanding of their challenges and opportunities, and share information that impacts the viability of the industry.
- Collaborate with partner organizations to identify and advocate for ways to mitigate risk, leverage opportunities and promote the benefits of Broome County's agriculture community that will ensure its continued heritage, diversity, and viability as an economic development driver.
- Seamlessly connect the agriculture and forestry industry with resources to sustain and grow their businesses.
- Assist the agriculture community to promote itself as a valued asset and resource to various stakeholder groups such as state and local government, agencies, funding sources, interconnected industries, and the general public.
- Provide the agriculture and forest industry community with the education and technical information necessary for them to successfully pursue new markets and increase financial viability.

To help advance these objectives, the Planning Department secured a \$50,000 grant from the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets to update the County's 2001 Agriculture Economic Development Plan. The County is matching the \$50,000 grant with \$10,000 from the Hotel-Motel fund and \$40,000 of in-kind services. Requests for Qualifications were distributed late in the year. Hiring a consultant to prepare the plan update is expected in early 2016.

## COLESVILLE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Planning Department completed the update of the Colesville Comprehensive Plan in early 2015. The Town's previous plan was adopted in 1983. The Planning Department

began by assisting the Town with drafting and mailing a survey to Colesville residents. Survey topics included satisfaction with Town services, compatibility of various types of development, and the town's assets and shortcomings. Planning staff tallied the results and presented them to the Colesville Comprehensive Plan committee and ultimately at a public hearing for town residents. Staff also reviewed the Town's land use laws, inventoried Colesville's assets and drafted the chapters for the plan. A second public hearing was used to polish the draft plan.

## KIRKWOOD COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

With the completion of the Colesville comprehensive plan, Planning Staff began work on the update to the Town of Kirkwood plan. In 2015, a survey was completed and distributed to town residents, and the initial chapters of the plan were drafted. A focus of the Kirkwood comprehensive plan is expected to be the Upper Court Street commercial corridor. The Kirkwood comprehensive plan will be completed in mid-2016.

## BROWNFIELDS

### 312 Maple Street Remediation and Redevelopment

In 2010, The Planning Department was awarded over \$131,000 in funds from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for the remediation of 312 Maple Street in Endicott. The project was one of only 5 cleanup grant awards allocated in New York State in that round of federal funding. Broome County took possession of the property when it foreclosed on LMS of North America, the previous owner.

In 2012, GZA GeoEnvironmental completed their remedial design for the site and implemented an enhanced anaerobic bioremediation. Through this process, a food grade material is pumped through a network of injection wells and this attracts microbes which feed on the contamination breaking it down into harmless constituent components. This resulted in all but removal of hexavalent chromium and a significant reduction in most TCE compounds with an expected rise in daughter compounds. This confirms that the injection wells are working as planned.

In 2014, the Planning Department secured an approximately \$58,000 grant to execute and implement an environmental easement, implement the site management plan and prepare required reporting. In 2015, the County signed the environmental easement for the property, signaling that the project had entered the final stages of the cleanup. When the cleanup is complete, the property will once again be on the tax rolls.

## 16 Emma Street Environmental Assessment

Broome County foreclosed on 16 Emma Street in Binghamton for failure to pay property taxes. To assist with its resale and redevelopment, the Planning Department contracted with Jennings Environmental Management to complete a Phase 1 Environmental Assessment of the site. The building was built in 1940 and originally used as a camera manufacturing facility. The Phase 1 assessment found two Recognized Environmental Conditions:

- On-site manufacturing uses which generated past spills, surficial releases, and on-site storage of hazardous waste debris.
- Adjoining coal yard, underground storage tanks and dry cleaning facilities and other uses present since at least 1950. These uses may have impacted soil and groundwater and have the potential for soil vapor intrusion.

## WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITIES REPLACEMENT PROJECT

Broome County Planning continues to support local municipalities in their efforts to improve housing quality for residents. In 2015, Planning secured a \$126,549 grant from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Public Infrastructure Program for the replacement of the wastewater facilities at Forest View Mobile Home Park in the Town of Windsor. Currently, the surface discharge levels at Forest View exceed effluent limits set by the New York Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and it is necessary for an alternative system to be constructed. This project involves the design, engineering and construction of a new sewage disposal system that safeguards the environment and improves the longevity of the wastewater facilities, and overall it protects public health and enhances the quality of life for residents. As a result of this grant, the replacement facilities will come at no cost to the residents. This project is anticipated to commence in

early 2016 with an initial environmental review of the site, followed by the selection of a consulting firm to assist with the management of the project.

## MICROENTERPRISE GRANT

In 2011, the Planning Department secured a Community Development Block Grant \$200,000 to foster economic development by assisting ‘microenterprises’. A microenterprise is a business with 5 or fewer employees. A total of 5 businesses throughout the County received grants through this program, and the grant was successfully closed out in 2015.

## RURAL BROOME COUNTS

Rural Broome Counts is a needs assessment project being conducted by Rural Health Network of South Central New York. The project is taking an in-depth look at the eleven rural towns in Broome County. These are the towns with less than 200 people per square mile. The Planning Department participated in the Rural Broome Counts kick off and has provided additional data and GIS support to the effort. The initial Rural Broome Counts assessment has been now been released and is online at <http://www.rhnsnyny.org/>



The plan is to update Rural Broome Counts every three years so in order to track rural Broome County’s status and provide information for other planning efforts such as the Broome County Community Health Assessment, Aging Services Plan, Coordinated Transportation Plan, and others.

## INTERSHIP PROGRAM

The County’s comprehensive plan calls on us to ‘Engage Our Students and Young Professionals’. As part of this effort, the Planning Department once again hosted an intern from Binghamton University. The 2015 spring semester intern was Kati Chen. Kati assisted with organizing the Art of Water educational event and she researched a number

of topics such as housing data for the Town of Dickinson Comprehensive Plan, form based codes for light industrial zoning, and patents filed by metropolitan area for use in the Upstate Revitalization Initiative plan. Kati also prepared two presentations for our use in training local municipal officials: Planning for Solar Energy and Planning for Wind Energy.

## OUTDOOR RECREATION MAPPING AND PROMOTION PROJECT

The Broome County Outdoor Recreation Mapping and Promotion Project was initiated in Fall of 2014, implementing recommendations from the Broome County Comprehensive Plan to assess and fill in gaps in data regarding outdoor recreation opportunities and enhance marketing of these opportunities. Broome County Planning began the Project with the goals of identifying, documenting, mapping and promoting the County's outdoor recreation resources. In order to establish a successful program, two key aspects were integrated: A complete, accurate, data set, and a modern, effective, sustained promotional strategy.

By the end of 2014, data on recreational resources was collected and mapped through a stakeholder survey that was distributed to local recreation groups and other organizations with an interest in recreational resources, along with research by an intern, a graduate-level student from Binghamton University's Geography Department. Planning staff worked with the intern to identify gaps in the data that would require additional work to complete. One of the major pieces of missing data was electronically available maps of local walking and hiking trails, which became the major focus for 2015. Work began to map local trails along with various amenities throughout the summer and fall. So far trails at Otsiningo Park (Dickinson), Wolfe Park (Chenango), the Rail-Trail (Vestal), Chugnut Trail (Endicott), Binghamton University Nature Preserve (Vestal), Cole Park (Colesville), Downtown River Walk (Binghamton), the Glen (Union), and Whitney Point Reservoir have been completed. Planning will continue this work into 2016 on the remaining trails. A map of the trail at Wolfe Park is included in this report.

With the data collection nearing completion, the Department is beginning the process of developing marketing tools and a promotional strategy integrating the data that has been



# BROOME COUNTY OUTDOOR RECREATION

## Wolfe Park NatureTrail System Town of Chenango

### Features

-  Foot Bridge
-  Parking
-  Gazebo
-  Pond
-  Trail Information



collected. In 2015, the Department established a project committee made up of organizations with a vested interest in the project. These include Planning, GIS, BMTS, Health, Parks, the Agency and the Chamber of Commerce. The focus of this group will be to guide the project moving forward to ensure that products help achieve their goals as they pertain to the promotion of recreational resources. These individuals assisted the Department by reviewing information to be included in a Request for Qualifications for a firm to assist in this aspect of the project, expected to include development of an interactive mapping tool utilizing the existing database of outdoor recreation data, along with the development of a promotional campaign and marketing strategy centered on the mapping tool and other promotional materials. The goal is to utilize modern, effective strategies and technologies that meet the needs of the modern outdoor enthusiast. The Request for Qualifications is expected to be released by the end of January 2016. The project is expected to be completed within 2016.

## SUSQUEHANNA HERITAGE AREA MANAGEMENT

The Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development in partnership with the Tioga County Department of Economic Development and Planning, provides administrative and technical support for the Susquehanna Heritage Area. The Planning Department is tasked with implementing the



goals (preservation, education, recreation, revitalization, marketing and partnerships) and recommendations of the Susquehanna Heritage Area Management Plan Amendment, completed in 2010. The current plan builds upon previous Plans that have been developed since the Susquehanna Heritage Area was recognized by the New York State legislature in 1982.

The goal of the plan is to identify, promote, and develop the historic, cultural, recreational, and natural resources of an expanded Susquehanna Heritage Area, encompassing Broome County and Tioga County in their entirety. The plan guides the implementation of programs and projects to foster economic revitalization and enhance



quality of life throughout the region. In 2015, the Planning Department assignments included the following:

Grant Funding: The two counties and all 39 municipalities and the non-profit agencies are eligible to apply for State Heritage Area funding. In 2015, the Planning Department coordinated the Commission review of the projects applying for Heritage Area, Parks and Historic Preservation funding under the Consolidated Funding Application/Environmental Protection Fund application process. Under the direction of the Planning Department, the Commission reviewed three (3) projects applying for Heritage Area funding and provided the requisite resolutions of endorsement for these Heritage Area projects to advance through the grant application process in 2015. Two (2) of these projects also applied for Historic Preservation funding and the Commission also provided resolutions of support for these projects. The Planning Department provided technical assistance for the applicants; conducted outreach to the municipalities and non-profits; and coordinated the review process, including the applicant interviews in which the Commission met with the applicants, reviewed their projects and provided further technical assistance. In December 2015, the Goodwill Theatre, Inc. received Historic Preservation funding for the Cultural Anchor of Johnson City Health and Cultural Innovation District project, with the award totaling \$500,000 to complete stabilization work.

Education, Marketing and Promotion: Tasked with promoting education, promotion and partnerships, the Planning Department provided direction and coordination for the local participation for the *2015 New York State Path Through History Weekend* – an annual statewide event to promote the historical and cultural resources of New York State. Planning staff attended local meetings held at the Greater Binghamton Convention and Visitors Bureau providing technical assistance and direction for the local programming, conducted extensive outreach to the Broome County municipalities and historical and cultural groups garnering their interest and requesting their participation. Planning and GIS staff designed the promotional map and event descriptions designed to promote these sites and events and raise awareness of the historical and cultural resources of Broome County and the Susquehanna Heritage Area. In 2015, Planning staff began working on the same tasks for the *2016 NYS Path Through History Weekend* and working with GIS staff to design an interactive promotional map.

Municipal Representation: In 2015, the Planning Department began contacting the 23 Broome County towns and villages that do not currently serve on the Commission and Advisory Board to request their participation to give them a vote and a voice, an opportunity to network, promote their events and attractions, participate in Susquehanna Heritage Area and New York State Heritage Areas events, and to learn about grant funding opportunities. In 2015, the Town of Colesville agreed to participate in the Susquehanna Heritage Area program and send representatives to serve on the Commission and Advisory Board. Planning staff has continued this municipal outreach effort.

Commission and Advisory Board Meetings and Membership: The Planning Department continued to coordinate and facilitate the bi-monthly meetings of the Commission and Advisory Board rotating the meeting locations between Broome County and Tioga County and coordinates the Commission and Advisory Board membership. The Planning Department continued to serve as the Broome County Program Administrator, Commission Secretary and Commission Representative for Broome County Executive Debra A. Preston.

## MUNICIPAL TRAINING

Planning staff has coordinated and conducted training for local government staff and officials for many years. Changes in State law requiring ongoing training for planning commission and zoning board members, along with a reduction in state provided training opportunities due to budget cuts, have made these training programs increasingly important.

In 2015, the Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development partnered with the New York State Taxation and Finance Office of Real Property Tax Services to provide municipal training on agricultural valuation. This municipal training entitled *Agricultural Valuation* provided the following: an overview of the appraisal process as it applies to farm properties, covering the following topics: current vs. highest and best use; Opinion 10-45; dealing with multiple dwellings; land types and soil ratings; three (3) approaches to value and applicability to farm appraisals; and depreciation of farm structures.

Planning staff arranged for the BC GIS Administrator to provide municipal training on the new Broome County GIS on the same evening. The municipal training entitled *Broome County Internet GIS for Local Officials* provided the municipalities with tools to effectively use Broome County's revamped Geographic Information System, focusing on the new *Parcel Mapper*. This training session was targeted for both new and existing users of the *Parcel Mapper* as well as users of the previous *Unified Parcel Information System*, which was decommissioned in January 2015. The training covered topics such as basic map functions, data retrieval techniques, and additional data sources.

In addition, in 2015 Planning staff began researching the topics of Solar Energy and Wind Energy for future municipal training and contacting New York State towns that have adopted or that are adopting municipal ordinances covering these topics.

## LAND USE REVIEWS (239)

The Department has a legal obligation to conduct reviews and render advisory opinions on land-use proposals covered under NYS General Municipal Law 239 (l) and (m). The Department reviewed 170 cases in 2015.

## BROOME COUNTY CONSTRUCTION DATA REPORTS

As part of the annual reporting process, the Department prepared the 2014 Construction Data Report. This report, available on the County's website, provides an indicator of countywide growth and development patterns and trends, residential and nonresidential building data from municipalities, and tables and charts documenting annual building permit activity within the municipalities. The construction data is online here: [gobroomecounty.com/planning/pubs](http://gobroomecounty.com/planning/pubs)

## SEQRA REVIEWS

The Planning Department conducts mandated environmental reviews for a variety of County projects including grants, plans, and other projects. The most significant review in 2015 was the SolarCity Photovoltaic Installation project. Senior Planner Beth Lucas provided technical assistance to the Broome County Division of Engineering in completing the SEQRA review related to a project being completed in cooperation between SolarCity

and Broome County. In order to provide solar energy to Broome County as outlined in an established agreement SolarCity will install photovoltaic arrays on County property. In late 2015, the viability of sites on Broome County property near the Airport and the Landfill was explored, including the initiation of the SEQR review. Due to issues with the capacity of the electrical grid in that area, the process halted and those sites were withdrawn from consideration. New sites will be selected and evaluated for the project in 2016.

## WATERSHED FLOOD HAZARD MITIGATION ANALYSIS

The Broome County Watershed Flood Hazard Mitigation Analysis is being developed by the Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development with funding, in part, by a grant from the NYS Department of State Local Waterfront Revitalization Program. By taking a more comprehensive view of the watershed and including all the municipalities working together, it is easier to prioritize and identify strategies that may have broader impacts for managing flood water flow, and also to incorporate more proactive, innovative strategies.

The intent of this project is to develop a comprehensive view of our County's stormwater infrastructure in frequently flooded areas, and to provide local municipalities and agencies with a tool for making prudent individual and collective decisions about stormwater and flood management. The project will focus on incorporating a variety of tools and strategies including natural resource protection and restoration, maintenance or expansion of existing flood control structures, the use of better site design, green infrastructure, reclamations of paved areas, and standard stormwater management practices.

In early 2015, Broome County hired Woidt Engineering and Consulting to develop the plan with the assistance of the Planning Department. Phase 1 of the plan was completed in mid-2015. This part of the project focused on identifying and documenting flood hazards throughout the County and integrating them into a database used to monitor progress of flood mitigation activities county-wide. These hazards were also utilized to prioritize watersheds throughout the County based on the severity of impacts in the community. In the latter half of 2015, the focus of the project was Phase 2, which

includes the development of conceptual mitigation strategies in the 3 top priority watersheds, as identified in Phase 1. The development of mitigation strategies was completed at the end of 2015 and they are currently being integrated into a final report, expected in early 2016.

## BROOME COUNTY STREAM RECOVERY PROJECT

In cooperation with the Broome County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), Broome County continued administration of a grant from Empire State Development's Hurricane Irene-Tropical Storm Lee Flood Mitigation Grant Program for a series of projects to stabilize and restore streams at high priority locations throughout the County and prevent future flooding damages. The grant funds, totaling \$653,032, are intended to reimburse local municipalities (Towns of Union, Vestal and Windsor) and Broome Soil and Water Conservation District for projects that they managed under this program. By the end of 2015 8 out of 9 of the projects have been completed and funds reimbursed to the managing entity. The final project, being managed by Broome SWCD is expected to be completed in early 2016.

## HIGH HAZARD PIPELINE INVENTORY

The Department was awarded a grant from the US DOT for a Technical Assistance Grant to develop a High Hazard Pipeline Inventory. The grant totaling \$47,945 covers 100% of the cost to hire a consultant to assess the hazard vulnerability of pipelines at stream and river crossings due to flooding and erosion. The intent of the study is to establish a relationship with pipeline owners to ensure pipelines are properly maintained to mitigate potential hazards. The RFQ for the project will be released in early 2016.

## Other Hazard Mitigation and Flood Activities

- The Senior Planner and Director of Planning gave presentations to the Chamber of Commerce at their June "Eggs and Issues" event focused on flooding and flood mitigation activities.
- The Department began participating in the Project Advisory Committee for the Stream Corridor Management Plan (SCMP) that will be developed for the Upper

Delaware River Tailwaters area, which includes portions of the Town of Sanford. This project is expected to take up to two years to complete, ending in 2017.

- In late 2015, staff began participating in the “Living With Water Project”. Cornell’s Department of Natural Resources is taking the lead on this project through their Rust to Green program, a university–community partnership conducting action research focused on transitioning Binghamton and other NYS Rust Belt cities to a more resilient future. The project is currently in the initial planning stages, and in 2016, will mainly be focused on planning programming this fall to commemorate the 10th and 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 2006 and 2011 floods, respectively, and educate residents and decision makers about flooding and the role of the river in our lives.

## STORMWATER

### The Art of Water Event

The Department hosted an intern for the spring semester in 2015 who focused on planning an educational event, the Art of Water. The event, held in May, intended to provide education for the general public focusing on water quality, resiliency and sustainable stormwater management. Components of the event included participation from local organizations and businesses, educational information regarding stormwater protection, and a tour of a local green roof. A local chalk artist participated in the event, providing a 3D chalk art piece with a water theme, and several student bands from Binghamton University provided music. In addition, the event featured a raffle for a rain barrel which was painted at the 2015 MuralFest that took place in advance of the event. The event was attended by about 100 people, with the green roof tour being the most popular activity.

## Broome–Tioga Stormwater Coalition

Broome County is a member of the Broome–Tioga Stormwater Coalition (BTSC), a group of regulated municipalities that collaborate to address local stormwater issues and meet federal and state stormwater mandates. Planning staff works with other BTSC members on implementation and compliance by providing public education, opportunities for public participation, and training and outreach services. The BTSC's Public Education and Participation Committee continues to develop stormwater awareness messages and brochures, among other items as required by State stormwater regulations.



A major activity of the Coalition with administrative support from Planning and the Southern Tier East Regional Planning Development Board (STERPDB) was the creation of organization bylaws. This was necessary due to an update to the Memorandum of Understanding establishing the Coalition which was adopted by all members in 2014. The bylaws were necessary to establish protocol for the group with consideration to the use of funds collected as a membership fee, per the updated MOU.

Senior Planner Beth Lucas provided administrative support for the Coalition's programs and initiatives, and served as the Chair of the group during the first quarter of 2015, and the Vice–Chair of the group for the remainder of the year. A major task was the completion of the Stormwater Management Plan Program annual report for the full BTSC, which was completed in partnership with the Southern Tier East Regional Planning Development Board. Planning specifically is responsible for documenting activities related to public education and public participation activities conducted throughout the year. The Annual Report is a compilation of the activities of all regulated municipalities under the state regulations, as well as Coalition wide activities for submittal to the NYSDEC.



Public education and participation activities included attendance at local events, such as the annual Earth Fest and coordination of the annual Riverbank Cleanup. The Riverbank Cleanup was held on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. Roughly 200 volunteers participated to collect about

1.5 tons of trash from the County's riverbanks. The BTSC was also a partner in the Art of Water event, described above.



In 2014, the BTSC completed the development of a public education campaign, "Water from Rain", [www.waterfromrain.org](http://www.waterfromrain.org). The intent was to develop a memorable campaign, logo and educational

brand that would tie together all of the local efforts for stormwater education including general best management practice for residents and businesses, awareness and implementation of green infrastructure practices and flooding issues as they relate to stormwater management. The initial phase of the program has been focused on the best management practices for residents and homeowners, but the BTSC plans to expand the campaign to additional areas in the future. In 2015, promotional items were developed to bring awareness to the website and stormwater issues. These included promotional stickers and magnets.

## Other Stormwater Activities

- Senior Planner Beth Lucas provided technical assistance to members of the Junior League in their efforts to fund the construction of a Science Park at Kopernik Observatory and Science Center. The intent of the Science Park is to provide an interactive play area that contributes to their efforts in STEM education. A component of is the inclusion of green infrastructure components that will provide education tools for concepts of sustainable development and resiliency. We assisted the group in identifying possible funding sources and providing necessary data for grant applications.

## ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

The Broome County Environmental Management Council (EMC), established in 1971 by the County Legislature, serves as a citizen advisory board to county government on environmental matters. The EMC conducts environmental research and planning, reviews environmental plans, reports and impact statements, and helps raise awareness through public participation and education programs. Senior Planner Beth Lucas provided technical, bookkeeping and other support services.

The EMC typically meets bimonthly. In 2015, they met five times: January, March, May, July and November.



### EMC Speakers

The EMC hosted the following guest speakers:

- Daniel Schofield, Commissioner of Public Works, gave an overview of the ever changing recycling and electronics waste industries, operating a sustainable landfill, and other developments and initiatives in the County's Solid Waste and Recycling programs. (March)
- Adam Flint with the group Solarize Southern Tier East gave a presentation on their program which offers free energy efficiency home assessments, as well as opportunities for incentives for the installation of residential photovoltaic systems. (May)

### EMC Comment Initiatives

The EMC drafted and sent comment letters regarding the following issues:

- Letter supporting Broome County Planning's application for Brownfields Assessment funds to perform environmental assessments and end use plans for brownfield sites primarily in the Town of Union and the City of Binghamton.

- Comments submitted to the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation regarding the Environmental Impact Statement for the Constitution Pipeline and Wright Interconnect Projects.
- Letter of support for the Broome County Health Department's application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Lead Hazard Control Grant.
- Letter supporting the passage New York State Microbead-Free Waters Act (S3932) to prohibit the sale of personal cosmetic products that contain microbeads. While this law did not pass at the State level, a similar federal law was passed in December of 2015, making further pursuance of the act at the state level unnecessary into the future.
- Letter encouraging the treatment of trees affected by Hemlock Woolly Adelgid at Spring Forest and Floral Park Cemeteries. Letter was drafted and approved in late 2015, will be sent in January of 2016.

## EMC Reforming the Energy Vision Workshop

The EMC cosponsored a workshop in cooperation with the Binghamton Regional Sustainability Coalition and the Sierra Club to educate the public on the Reforming the Energy Vision (REV) Plan developed by New York State. REV is a major decision-making process intended to change the way utility companies are regulated in New York, determine who can own the state's energy resources, and determine how energy markets will be structured. The stated goal of the proceeding is to create a cleaner, more affordable, more modern and more efficient energy system in New York, through the increased development of distributed energy resources, like rooftop solar, energy efficiency, and battery storage. The workshop was held in advance of public meetings being run by NYS to inform them of the contents of the plan and the process for providing feedback. (November)

## EMC Natural Resources Committee

The Natural Resources Committee, a standing committee of the EMC, continued to be a forum for air, land and water issues. Focus areas included open space conservation, energy issues, and air quality issues, among others topics. Members continued work on

open space planning including updates to the inventory of the County's open space resources important for natural resource protection.

## EMC Special Events

Once again, the EMC coordinated and participated in the following Special Events:

- 28<sup>th</sup> Broome County Riverbank Clean Up – Approximately 200 volunteers collected almost two tons of debris and trash at locations along the banks of area's rivers and tributaries.
- EMC members and staff also participated in Earth Day Southern Tier's annual Earth Fest at the SUNY Broome campus. This event raises awareness about local environmental issues, promotes membership opportunities and recruits volunteers.

## GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS) DIVISION

### GIS Portal Website and Mapping Applications

The GIS Portal website and mapping applications were completely updated and replaced in 2015. The *Unified Parcel Information System (UPIS)* and other applications had served the public for over a decade but because the software and web server had not been supported in years, a new web server and mapping software were required. Upgrading the software meant that new applications had to be built, starting with a new parcel application.

Work began on the new *Parcel Mapper* application in late 2014 and was largely finished in early 2015. In comparing the *Parcel Mapper* to the *UPIS*, the available parcel information, layers, and functions are more or less the same. The major improvements are that the *Parcel Mapper* is much faster and parcel information is displayed in a better way. Basic information is displayed in a pop-up box from which users can access additional information such as street views, tax maps, demographics, and a parcel information sheets in PDF format. These sheets contain detailed parcel information as well as numerous links to even more information. Further, being a PDF, the document can be saved unlike in the previous application where parcel information was displayed in a web

window that could not be easily saved. Other improvements to the *Parcel Mapper* include a better-organized layer list/legend, better print outputs, and the ability to search for parcels from outside the application itself.

A new *Election Mapper* application to replace the *Voting Information System* was also developed in early 2015. There were no major differences between these two applications other than style and that in the *Election Mapper* elected official information is displayed as a separate PDF document that can be saved instead of a web window. And like the *Parcel Mapper*, users can search for their polling place and elected officials without having to enter the application itself.

The GIS Portal website itself was also redesigned in 2015 to be more visually appealing and useable. More images were used in place of text links and the map section of the website was totally redesigned using a tabbed system for better organization, resulting in better functionality. The ability to search for parcels, polling place and election officials, and demographic information was also added to the website so users would not have to open the respective applications to find this information.

In terms of usage, in 2015 the GIS Portal website received over 209,000 visits by over 82,000 unique users. The most viewed resource on the site was the new *Parcel Mapper* with over 109,000 views. Other popular resources were the parcel detail sheets with nearly 35,000 views and street views with over 13,000 views. The *Election Mapper* was viewed over 4,700 times and PDF tax maps were viewed nearly 4,900 times.

## GIS – County Departments

The GIS Division supports nearly all county departments in some capacity with mapping, data, and analysis. In 2015 we reached an agreement with BMTS to provide additional GIS and mapping services for them. Some highlights from individual departments include:

- Emergency Services: Continued to assign all 911 addresses within the county; assigned 911 addresses to the buildings at SUNY Broome; continued working with Emergency Services to implement new dispatch software which is entirely map-based

and is scheduled to go live in early 2016; continued to provide support for NY-Alert addressing requirements; produced Spiedie Fest and Dick's Open vendor layout maps.

- Sheriff's Office: Continued to provide weekly, monthly, and year-to-date maps and data for long term, strategic/administration planning; continued to provide access to online web maps using ArcGIS Online; maintained an Access database of cases for weekly report generation and to allow better search ability from user-selected criteria, based on weekly data extracts from the AS400.
- Real Property: Continued to support tax mapping functions; continued to provide PDF tax maps and access to RPS data online through Image Mate Online from our website.
- Planning/Economic Development: Provided various maps and/or data for several different projects and grants including the Colesville Comprehensive Plan, innovation districts, trail mapping project, land bank, and individual property maps for the Agency; conducted municipal training on using the new Parcel Mapper.
- Health: Contracted with the department to provide GIS and mapping services for the Creating Healthy Schools and Communities Program which should begin in 2016; provided various maps for projects and grants.
- Public Works: Created an application to determine potential sites for a solar facility; worked with Engineering on a project to map County road right of ways with a goal of providing this information online with a link to the scanned map or a map number so paper maps can be found in Engineering more efficiently.
- Elections/Legislature: Fulfilled many various map and data requests for Elections; created election results maps for select 2015 races which were placed online; produced maps of annual additions to agricultural districts for the Legislature.

## GIS – City of Binghamton Departments

The GIS Division continues to provide GIS and mapping services to the City of Binghamton under an inter-municipal agreement that expires in December 2019. In 2015, an average of nearly 23 hours of service per week was provided and over 450 map projects were created. Some highlights include:

- Police: Continued to maintain an Access database of Part I crimes for report generation and better search ability based on user-selected criteria; continued to provide weekly, monthly, and year-to-date map, charts, and graphs for long term, strategic/administration planning; provided support for the City Crime Intelligence

Center; utilized ArcGIS Online to create web maps for police use; participated in various meetings.

- Planning: Created a parking lot and bus routes map; provided mapping for various projects and grants.
- Building and Code: Created an online application to determine the Code Officer responsible for an address entered; various building permit, code violation, and vacant property maps provided.

## BOARDS AND MEMBERSHIPS

Planning staff continued to serve on the following boards and committees in 2015:

- Ag and Farmland Protection Board
- Agricultural Task Force
- Aging Futures Partnership
- Binghamton Commission on Architecture and Urban Design
- BMTS Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee
- BMTS Planning Committee
- Broome County Chronic Disease Leadership Team
- Broome County Environmental Management Council
- Broome Tioga Stormwater Coalition
- Communities Organizations Active in Disasters (COAD)
- Greater Binghamton Council of Governments
- Greenway Steering Committee
- Headwaters River Trail
- Livable Communities Alliance Steering Committee
- Local Emergency Planning Committee
- NYS DEC Region 7 Open Space Committee
- REDC Infrastructure Work Group
- Southern Tier East Regional Planning Development Board
- Susquehanna Heritage Area Commission and Advisory Board