



Onondaga County Legislature

JAMIE McNAMARA
Clerk

JAMES J. ROWLEY
Chairman

TAMMY BARBER
Deputy Clerk

401 Montgomery Street • Court House • Room 407 • Syracuse, New York 13202
Phone: 315.435.2070 • Fax: 315.435.8434 • www.ongov.net/legislature

PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES – DECEMBER 14, 2022 TIM BURTIS, CHAIRMAN

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Gunnip, Ms. Kuhn, Mr. Knapp, Mr. Garland
ALSO ATTENDING: Chairman Rowley, also see attached

Chair Burtis called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m. *The minutes of the previous meeting have been distributed. There are no corrections to the minutes, and the minutes are approved.*

1. APPOINTMENT:

- a. **Confirming Reappointment of Joann Delaney to the Central New York Regional Market Authority**
(Sponsored by Mr. Rowley)

A motion was made by Mr. Knapp, seconded by Ms. Kuhn, to approve this item. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

2. SYRACUSE ONONDAGA COUNTY PLANNING AGENCY: Megan Costa, Assistant Director SOCPA

- a. **Calling for Adoption of the Onondaga County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan**
(Sponsored by Mr. May)

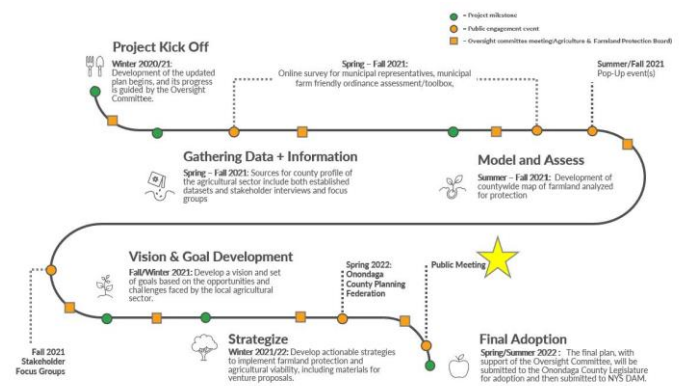
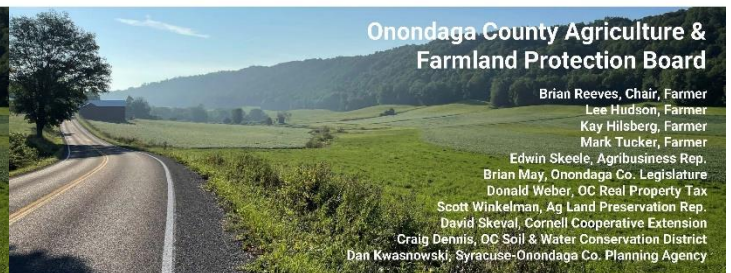
ONONDAGA COUNTY AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN

Onondaga County Legislature | December 14, 2022



ONONDAGA COUNTY AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN

Onondaga County Legislature | December 14, 2022



Assets + Analysis
Changes + Challenges
Ideas + Initiatives



ONONDAGA COUNTY
AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN



Agriculture +
the natural environment

- Abundant water
- Rich Soils



ONONDAGA COUNTY
AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN



Cultivated Land



Variety of types
20-30% grassland for pasture/hay

ONONDAGA COUNTY
AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN



Working landscape

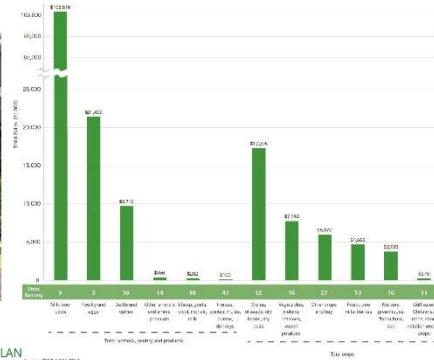
- Contributions of farming to our landscape and economy
- 623 Farms
 - \$178M direct sales
 - \$178M indirect sales
 - 1,399 seasonal or year-round jobs



ONONDAGA COUNTY
AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN



FARM SALES BY CATEGORY AND STATE RANK FOR ONONDAGA COUNTY



ONONDAGA COUNTY
AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN

Onondaga County's food distribution infrastructure is robust



Onondaga County farmers have higher than national and statewide participation in direct retail and wholesale sales.

ONONDAGA COUNTY
AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN



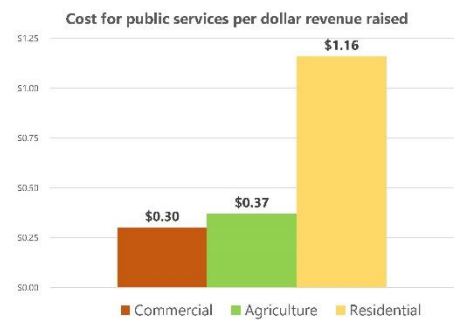
Agritourism has multiple benefits



ONONDAGA COUNTY
AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN



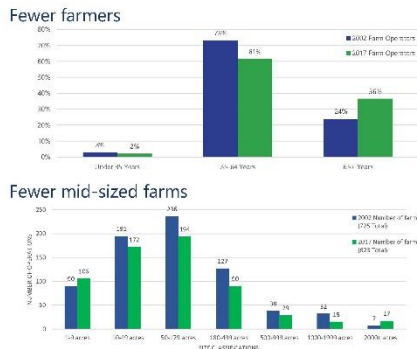
Farmland is a good municipal investment



ONONDAGA COUNTY
AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN



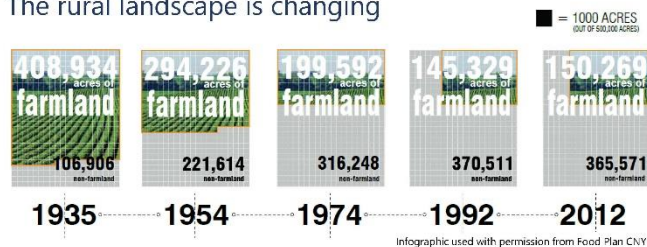
Agriculture is changing



ONONDAGA COUNTY AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN



The rural landscape is changing

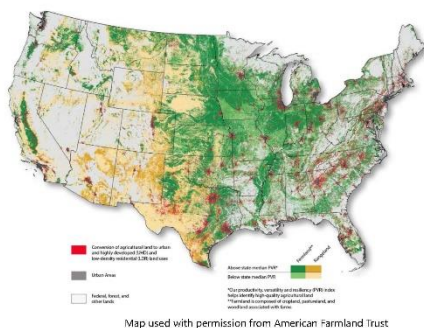


ONONDAGA COUNTY AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN



Agricultural land is a national commodity

Some of our best farmland in all 50 states is threatened.



ONONDAGA COUNTY AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN



Land competition continues to grow. Despite the benefits, continuing agricultural operations on land with solar is a new challenge for farmers and rural communities.

ONONDAGA COUNTY AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN



Ideas + Initiatives: Current Initiatives



ONONDAGA COUNTY AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN



Planning Resources

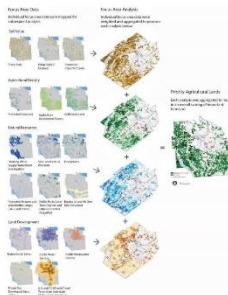
Farm-Friendly Toolbox agriculture.ongov.net/toolbox



ONONDAGA COUNTY AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN



Mapping Important Farmland



ONONDAGA COUNTY AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN



ONONDAGA COUNTY AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN



Farmland Protection



12,000+ acres
34 projects
\$26 million



ONONDAGA COUNTY
AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN



Vision

The state of agriculture in Onondaga County has seen significant changes over the years. Through it all, local agriculture remains a critical part of its economy, food system, and landscape. The county is gifted with highly productive agricultural soils, a legacy of farming operations and know-how, and an environment that supports a highly diverse array of agriculture and opportunities to engage with the local food system. This plan honors the strengths of Onondaga County's agriculture and reflects these strengths in a vision for the future of agriculture throughout the county.

Onondaga County is a dynamic agricultural community of vibrant, resilient, and experienced farm operators and farm-related entrepreneurs who are the stewards of local viable farmland and the food system.

23

GOALS & RECOMMENDATIONS



Enhance agriculture-related economic development activities and collaboration to capitalize on emerging markets, technologies, and incentives.

- **Agricultural Economic Development Coordinator**
- Food hub economic development
- Trainings offering certifications in value-added production and business development
- Broadband improvement
- Ag technological services (e.g., drones) to local producers
- Commercial kitchen for startup operations

ONONDAGA COUNTY
AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN



GOALS & RECOMMENDATIONS



Promote the importance of local agriculture and food systems throughout Onondaga County.

- **Agritourism support**
- Increase public awareness of the Onondaga Grown Campaign
- Grow OnFarm Fest programming
- Support the CNY Regional Market and other local farmers' markets, CSA, and similar opportunities

ONONDAGA COUNTY
AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN



Buy Local! It's Onondaga Grown!

- Encourages local spending
- Recognize local food
- Access to local products
- Relationships with our ag neighbors



ONONDAGA COUNTY
AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN



GOALS



Enhance agriculture-related economic development activities and collaboration to capitalize on emerging markets, technologies, and incentives.



Strategically protect agricultural lands throughout Onondaga County to sustain and improve its vibrant agricultural operations.



Promote the importance of local agriculture and food systems throughout Onondaga County.



Support the next generation of farmers and agricultural entrepreneurs in Onondaga County.



Continue to enhance the relationship between agriculture and the natural environment.

ONONDAGA COUNTY
AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN



GOALS & RECOMMENDATIONS



Strategically protect agricultural lands throughout Onondaga County to sustain and improve its vibrant agricultural operations.

- Increase funding/capacity to protect farmland
- "Strike the right balance" for solar development on farmland
- Provide adequate technical assistance for local land trusts
- Update comprehensive plans + local regulations to support agriculture
- Encourage towns to create their own agricultural protection plans
- Better utilize available mapping and land use tools for strategizing protection

ONONDAGA COUNTY
AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN



GOALS & RECOMMENDATIONS



Support the next generation of farmers and agricultural entrepreneurs in Onondaga County.

- **Community Greenhouse Initiative**
- Develop "New Farmer Program"
 - Incubator programs that provide land and other resources
 - Manager-in-training programs through mentorship
 - Technical assistance to link aspiring farmers with potential land or loan programs
- Trainings for high-tech agriculture
- Training for agri-service professionals to support succession planning and direct farmers to appropriate stress-related support services

ONONDAGA COUNTY
AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN



GOALS & RECOMMENDATIONS

 Continue to enhance the relationship between agriculture and the natural environment.

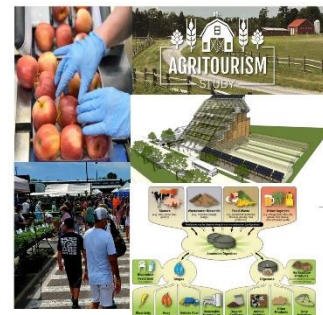
- **Agricultural waste stream analysis**
- Water quality evaluation and assistance
- Assistance for climate resiliency planning, nutrient management, precision technology
- Increase funding for programs that protect soil health
- Viewshed analysis to preserve important scenic and open space

ONONDAGA COUNTY
AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN



Recap of Venture Proposals

- Agricultural Economic Development Coordinator
- Value-added processing
- Agritourism support
- Community greenhouse
- Agricultural waste stream analysis



ONONDAGA COUNTY
AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN



Thank you!

Website:
agriculture.ongov.net

Email:
MeganCosta@ongov.net

Call:
(315)435-2611



ONONDAGA COUNTY
AGRICULTURE & FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN



Questions:

- Fewer and fewer local farmers at Regional Market because they cannot afford it anymore; any feedback on that?
 - It is mirroring the trends of fewer mid-sized farms and aging farmers; 36% of farmers are over 65
- We are looking at a lot of new development coming. Is the Farmland Protection continuing now?
 - State funding comes out every other year and expecting a new round of funding to be announced in spring 2023
 - Farmers interested in the program can apply now
 - When a farmer commits to the program, it lasts forever in perpetuity
- Solar farms...are we planning any in the area/County?
 - Yes; averaging about 10-20 per year

A motion was made by Mr. Knapp, seconded by Ms. Kuhn, to approve this item. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

b. Personnel Resolution, Dan Kwasnowski, Director SOCPA

- Need to increase staff. Happy for the work but cannot do it without more people, especially with the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan and Plan Onondaga. Need to recruit at a higher level than normal
- Planner IV – Management/Confidential; Grade 35. This person can be tasked with a housing study and can oversee planning projects with Towns and Villages within the County without much oversight. Recruit utilizing a national search
- Planner III – Can oversee staff and run programs. Qualified planning position with strong education in planning and experience. Can oversee job titles of Planner I, and Planner II
- Planner II – Senior planning position; very capable; good at research. Can also create planning documents. Oversee federation and conference and putting together webinars and educational materials for Towns and Villages. Less supervisory role; Grade 13
- Planner II, III, and IV range in salary from \$70k to \$90k

- Assembling a variety of projects within the County that will exceed anything that has been done for a very long time. More people are needed to manage those projects and contracts with consultants
- Did Plan Onondaga (Plan) develop before, during or after Micron decision? Before
- Will the Plan now need some modification because Micron will be very transformative for our region?
 - There is a large percentage of the workforce that commutes into the County for work everyday
 - The idea of the Plan is to create a high quality of life to entice people to move here
 - Currently work closely with employers who have a hard time filling jobs for various reasons
 - The short answer to the question is: the Plan stays the same, but the scale increases with Micron coming in
- Inner Harbor – working with the aquarium will be able to help people work together
- Planner II and Planner III; are they both union positions?
 - Yes, both are CSEA union positions
 - Currently no List, new hire would be hired provisionally
 - Have an existing employee to possibly move to Planner II, possibly Planner III position
 - Potentially shifting some people up
- Fundamentally, your interactions with the Towns have always been an advisory role, correct?
 - Yes
- Do you foresee that changing?
 - No, SOCPA is a resource for local government, to help navigate problems. Worked hard over the last 4 years to build relationships with Towns and Villages
- Will these additional positions be for countywide new development as well as rehabilitation in surrounding areas? Where is that in this?
 - That is the whole theme of housing and neighborhoods; Sam Gordon has a strong sense of what this question is asking. For example: Take an older home and add a bathroom, it becomes more marketable. There are also neighborhoods where street lights can be added
- Thank you to Dan Kwasnowski and his Team for the collaborative approach and efforts since he came in
- How is the Market study, what is the plan for that?
 - Will write an RFP once this meeting is over. Trying to tag on with the City in order to coordinate the two studies
- Dan, where do you see your role with Micron coming in? Is there a way to help the Towns prioritize different developments and areas?
 - There are areas that have not had plans for years. We can bring resources for similar planning to Towns and also able to plan infrastructure along with providing consultants and expertise

A motion was made by Mr. Knapp, seconded by Ms. Kuhn, to approve this item. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

- 3. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Marty Skahen, Director Community Development**
- a. Expressing Support for Onondaga County’s Application for Restore NY Funding for the Milton Corner, LLC Restoration Project**
- The Village of Solvay was the only municipality in the severe to moderately distressed areas who had a project that met the criteria of the grant. (Syracuse City was not considered due to the recent passing of the Castle project)
 - \$10.5M project; requesting \$2M grant
 - Corner of Milton Avenue & Cogswell Avenue
 - Intent to build a 3 story building
 - 12,000 square feet of retail on first floor
 - 32 apartments with 25% committed as affordable housing units
 - Intent to apply was sent on November 29, 2022; currently waiting to hear back
 - Application is due January 27, 2023 and must include a resolution from governing body in support of project
 - Project is fully supported by the Village of Solvay

A motion was made by Ms. Gunnip, seconded by Mr. Garland, to approve this item. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:38 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



TAMMY BARBER, Deputy Clerk
Onondaga County Legislature

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
DATE: DECEMBER 14, 2022

NAME (Please Print)	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
Marty Stecher	Community Development
Megan Boston	SOCCPA
Dan Kwashowski	Soc PA
Kristi Suda	Finance
Darci Lesnick	Leg.
Jim Bebe	Leg.