

# Onondaga County Legislature

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## WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE REVIEW OF THE 2015 TENTATIVE BUDGET PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE DEPARTMENTS SEPTEMBER 16, 2014 DAVID H. KNAPP, CHAIRMAN

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mr. May, Mrs. Ervin, Mrs. Williams, Mr. Jordan, Mr. Holmquist

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Mr. Kilmartin

**ALSO PRESENT:** Chairman McMahon, Mrs. Rapp, Dr. Chase, Mr. Plochocki and see also attached list

Chairman Knapp called the meeting to order at 2:21 PM and welcomed everyone to the opening session of the 2015 budget review, adding that he looks forward to a good debate over the next few weeks and sharing a lot of information.

**SOCPA (Including CNY Regional Planning Board) - pg. 3-151:** Andrew Maxwell, Planning Director, Don Jordan, Jr., Deputy Planning Director, Robin Coon, Administrative Assistant; Daniel Hammer, Management Analyst, Emilie Tisch, Management Analyst; David Bottar, Executive Director-CNY Regional Planning Board

Mr. Maxwell distributed the following:

<p>2015 ANNUAL BUDGET Ways &amp; Means Committee Report</p> <p>SYRACUSE-ONONDAGA COUNTY PLANNING AGENCY</p> <p>JOANNE M. MAHONEY, COUNTY EXECUTIVE ANDREW M. MAXWELL, DIRECTOR</p>  	<p>Table of Contents</p> <p>Section 1: 2014 Accomplishments</p> <p>Section 2: 2015 Budget Overview Appropriations Personnel, Salaries, and Other Expenses Contract Services</p> <p>Section 3: 2015 Strategic Priorities</p> <p>Section 4: 2016-2018 Strategic Priorities</p> <p>Section 5: Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board</p> 
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**Key Accomplishments – County Planning Division**

*Our mission is to provide and promote effective planning throughout the County to ensure a high quality built environment, cost effective infrastructure, stewardship of natural resources, and economic growth, within the County's fiscal ability.*

In 2014, County Planning staff:

1. Enhanced engagement with towns and villages in support of municipally led planning and zoning projects, comprehensive plans, and infrastructure planning.
2. Presented approximately 600 planning and zoning cases to Onondaga County Planning Board. Conducted multi-agency coordinated reviews with municipalities and project applicants on complex cases.
3. Hosted the Onondaga County Planning Federation's 26th annual Planning Symposium for hundreds of planning and zoning board members, agencies and citizens throughout CNY.
4. Acted as staff to Onondaga County Legislature's Agriculture & Farmland Protection Board, including local review of a record 23 farms pursuing funding under the State's conservation easement program.
5. Provided support to the Onondaga County Agricultural Council, including advancement of council funding requests, subcommittee research, and project initiatives.
6. Completed the annual addition of properties into certified Agricultural Districts and the eight-year review of Agricultural District 3 (per NYS regulations and County Legislature resolution 71-2004).
7. Worked with the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, DOT's, agencies and municipalities on bicycle, pedestrian and "complete streets" planning efforts, including the Sustainable Streets (Sidewalk) Initiative, Erie Canalway Trail, Bicycle Corridor Study, Onondaga Lake, and Honeywell Reuse studies.
8. Participated in new and ongoing local community planning projects, including:
  - Otisco Lake Watershed Management Plan
  - Other SMTCC: I-81, Lysander Comprehensive Plan modeling, Wayfinding Study, Long Range Plan
  - CNYRPDB Regional Partnership for Comprehensive Planning
  - Onondaga County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Planning
  - FOCUS, Citizen's League, Syracuse 20/20, Greening USA, CNY Vitals, etc.
  - Onondaga County Council on Environmental Health
  - Environmental Reviews for CDBG Program
  - US Census / NYS Data Center Affiliate



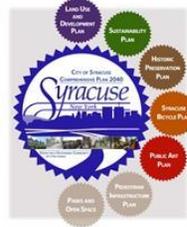
2014 KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS – COUNTY PLANNING

**Key Accomplishments – City Planning Division**

*The City Planning Division is a team of professional planners dedicated to providing the highest level of service and leadership in urban planning and design, public art, environmental initiatives, and historic preservation to promote and enhance the livability and prosperity of the City of Syracuse.*

In 2014, City Planning staff:

1. Successfully pursued adoption of the City's *Comprehensive Plan 2040* by the Common Council and began implementing and utilizing the Plan and its component parts.
2. Administered State and Federal grant programs within the City including:
  - NYS sponsored Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA), with two additional grants awarded,
  - NYS Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) for Onondaga Creek, including construction of the *Outdoor Classroom* Project, and one additional grant awarded,
  - NYS Environmental Restoration Program (ERP),
  - Federal Energy Efficiency Community Block Grant.
3. Managed local administration of New York Power Authority's energy Master Plan for Syracuse.
4. Directed the City's Historic Preservation program, including:
  - Staffed the Syracuse Landmark Preservation Board and facilitated a symposium on the reuse of historic religious properties,
  - Completed a city-wide comprehensive survey of historic religious properties, and assisted with multiple National Register nominations,
  - Completed a survey of the City's Washington Square neighborhood.
5. Provided staff services to the Syracuse Public Art Commission and initiated the related New City Park project, for the former Perseverance Park/Common Center site.
6. Provided technical assistance and guidance on urban design, planning and sustainability to citizens, developers, and other agencies during the City's highly regarded Pre-development process.



Source: Syracuse.com



2014 KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS – CITY PLANNING

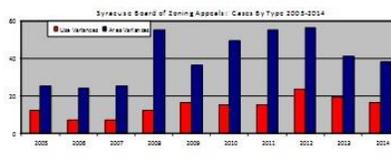
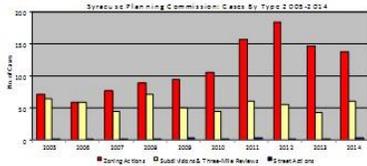


**Key Accomplishments – City Zoning Division**

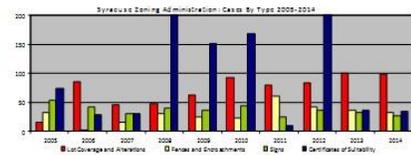
SOCPA's Division of City Zoning processes a large volume of inquiries and applications regarding City zoning and subdivision matters.

In 2014, Zoning Administration staff:

1. Provided staff services to the Syracuse City Planning Commission and the Board of Zoning Appeals.



2. Conducted administrative reviews of requests for sign permits, lot alterations, waivers of building and yard restrictions, fence restriction waivers, project site plans, and Certificates of Suitability, as authorized by the City Zoning Ordinance.



3. Continued to work with SOCPA GIS staff to maintain the City Zoning Atlas.

4. Began implementing and utilizing the City's adopted *Comprehensive Plan 2040* to guide the City Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, everyday administrative decisions, and applicants to ensure that zoning actions are contributing towards achieving the goals and visions set forth in the Plan.



2014 KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS – CITY ZONING

**Key Accomplishments – Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Division**

SOCPA's GIS division is responsible for building and maintaining the County's GIS. We create, acquire, and maintain a wide array of spatial datasets, maps, and applications that support government functions. The GIS has become an essential tool that is used by most County departments to maximize effectiveness and efficiency and improve decision-making. The GIS division also provides extensive spatial data support to the City of Syracuse and towns and villages in the County. GIS staff also manages, distributes, and supports the County's digital aerial photography program (Pictometry).

In 2014, GIS staff:

1. Implemented an Enterprise GIS for Onondaga County to support critical County applications such as asset management systems.

2. Provided spatial data support and mapping to County departments, municipalities, other government entities, and the public.



3. Continued to maintain the County-City GIS website that provides the public worldwide with access to 28 layers of County and City spatial data. Since the site went live in 2005, over 750,000 visitors from more than 80 countries have spent over 88,000 hours learning about Onondaga County. The site has saved the County over \$4.4 million if GIS staff had to handle the requests satisfied by the website. In 2014, the application was upgraded to improve the performance and functionality of the site. User feedback to the new site has been overwhelmingly positive.



4. Managed a *Pictometry* re-fly to capture current aerial photography of the County. The *Pictometry* software and high resolution images, which are used by County departments, the City, towns, villages, and other government entities in the County, result in time and fuel savings from reduced need for field trips and site visits. GIS staff will work to provide all eligible users with access to the new imagery.



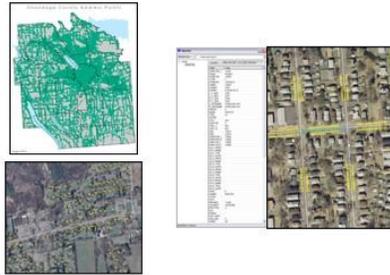
2014 KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS – GIS

**Key Accomplishments – GIS Division - 911 Address Administration Program**

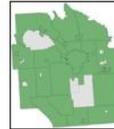
SOCPA's GIS Division's 911 Address Administration program supports the County's 911 system through three major activities: telephone data base quality control, address administration, and development and enhancement of digital geographic resources.

In 2014, Address Administration staff:

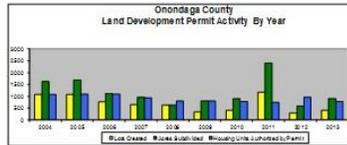
- Continued to provide critical mapping and spatial data support for the implementation of 911's new Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system. The spatial component of the new system provides 911 call takers with a great deal of information that can be critical in emergency response and can lead to improved response times and a safer community.
- Assigned new addresses and corrected existing addresses that don't work properly in the 911 system through agreements with 27 municipalities in the County and upon request for other municipalities. Staff also review proposed street names under Local Law 5-1972. Staff also performed quality control of telephone databases to increase the accuracy of the telephone location information that is supplied by the telephone companies to the County 911 system.



New Addresses Assigned	1,400
Addresses Corrected	640
Proposed Street Names Reviewed	40
Street Name Letters of Compliance Issued for Filed Subdivision Maps	160
Telephone Database Problems Corrected	430



- Continued to build the Agency's Land Development Monitoring system that tracks subdivisions, building lots, and municipal building permit and demolition data to help keep the emergency services address databases current.



2014 KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS – 911 ADDRESS ADMIN.

**2015 BUDGET OVERVIEW**

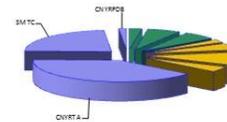


**570 Account Contract Services – 64% of 2015 Appropriations**

Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) - \$1.4 million  
SMTC is a Metropolitan Planning Organization required under Federal Transportation Law as a prerequisite to the allocation of over \$300 million in federal capital funds over the next 5 years. The County advances the SMTC operating budget with 100% federal reimbursement.

Central New York Regional Transportation Authority (CNYRTA) - \$2.4 million  
New York State mandated match for transit services.

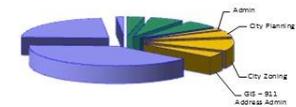
Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board (CNYRPDB) - \$86,027  
A five county (Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga, Oswego) planning organization funded by 1/3 land area and 2/3 population formula.



**SOCPA Programs – 21% of 2015 Appropriations fund SOCPA programs fully reimbursed**

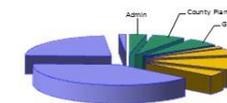
City Administration, City Planning, and City Zoning  
Funded by the City of Syracuse.

GIS – 911 Address Administration  
Funded by 911 Emergency Communications.



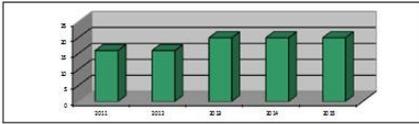
**SOCPA Programs – 15% of 2015 Appropriations**

County Administration, County Planning, and GIS



2015 BUDGET OVERVIEW - APPROPRIATIONS

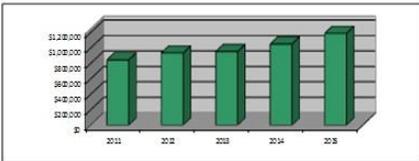
PERSONNEL



Notes:

1. Funded positions remained the same as in 2014.

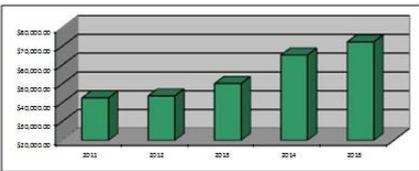
SALARIES



Notes:

1. Salaries increased (\$136,167) from the 2014 BAM due primarily to funds placed in contingency in 2014.

OTHER EXPENSES (300, 401, 408, 410, 413)



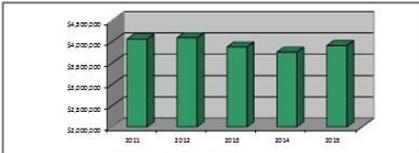
Notes:

1. All other expenses (300, 401, 408, 410, and 413 accounts) increased (\$7,010) from the 2014 BAM due primarily to increases in travel and training and software maintenance and licensing costs needed to support County departments and municipalities.



2015 BUDGET OVERVIEW – PERSONNEL, SALARIES, AND OTHER EXPENSES

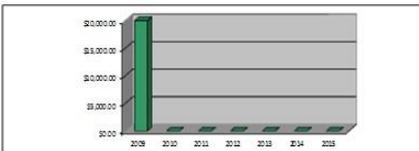
570 ACCOUNT CONTRACT SERVICES



Notes:

1. 570 Contract Services increased (\$153,987) from the 2014 BAM due to an increase in the estimated SMTC pass through funds.
2. CNYRTA and CNYRPDB funds remained the same as in 2014.

CONTRACTED AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT SERVICES



Notes:

1. Agricultural District services previously contracted to Cornell Cooperative Extension will continue to be done in-house. In 2015, SOCPA staff will complete the annual addition of properties to agricultural districts.



2015 BUDGET OVERVIEW – CONTRACT SERVICES

2015 Strategic Priorities

- Pursue opportunities for planning, zoning, and GIS efficiencies made possible by the merger in 2013.
- Continue to pursue adoption and implementation of policies and recommendations of the Onondaga County Sustainable Development Plan and the City of Syracuse's Comprehensive Plan 2040.
- Continue and enhance SOCPA's service and utility to towns and villages through direct planning, zoning, and GIS assistance.
- Support and facilitate an open public process for major community planning projects, including the Interstate 81 project, transit opportunities, infrastructure planning, and the future of Onondaga Lake and its shoreline.
- Continue to support and facilitate the activities of the Onondaga County Planning Federation, including the Annual Symposium, with the goal of providing continuing education for local planning and zoning board members, agencies and citizens.
- Support the Agriculture Council and Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board. Work on new countywide food system policy, Farmland Protection Plan, and local advancement of NYS Farmland Protection Implementation Grant programs.
- Continue to administer the New York State Agricultural Districts Program, including the annual addition of land into State certified agricultural districts.
- Provide agency support and data to various community entities currently researching local infrastructure and governance.
- Continue to pursue and administer State and Federal grants that advance sound planning throughout the County.
- Continue to participate in the City's pre-development review process to facilitate development projects in the City and conduct coordinated reviews of projects throughout the County as a service to municipalities.
- Continue to provide staff services to the City Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals and assist the public with inquiries and applications regarding City zoning and subdivision matters.
- Begin major revisions to the City of Syracuse Zoning Ordinance and map consistent with the City's adopted Comprehensive Plan.
- Continue to develop the County's Enterprise GIS to support critical County applications and to make spatial data more readily available to County departments, municipalities, and the public.
- Provide GIS services to municipalities such as spatial data analysis and custom mapping, data creation and maintenance, and custom application development.
- Provide County departments, municipalities, and other eligible users with access to the high-resolution, oblique aerial photography that was captured in 2014.
- Continue to support the address and spatial data needs of the 911 department.



2015 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

2016-2018 Strategic Priorities

- Continue to identify opportunities to provide high-quality planning, zoning, and GIS services to municipalities.
- Continue implementing policies and recommendations of the Onondaga County Sustainable Development Plan and the City of Syracuse's Comprehensive Plan 2040.
- Enhance the offerings of the Planning Federation towards continuing education for planning practitioners in Central New York.
- Work directly with municipalities and the farming community to complete and implement local and regional approaches to farmland protection, food system planning and policy, and agricultural economic development in Onondaga County.
- Identify opportunities to streamline and simplify the planning process, within City and County government and for municipalities throughout the County, through technology, mapping and data sharing.
- Continue building and maintaining the County's GIS to meet the growing technological needs of County departments, municipalities, and the public.
- Continue to manage the County's aerial photography program.
- Continue to support the address and spatial data needs of the 911 department.
- Continue to provide staff services to the County Planning Board and the City Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, and Landmark Preservation Board.
- Continue to obtain grants to plan for the redevelopment of City brownfields, to implement sustainable upgrades in City operations, and to improve connections to Onondaga Creek and Onondaga Lake.
- Complete major revisions to the City of Syracuse Zoning Ordinance and map.
- Continue to collaborate with the SMTC and CNRPDB on planning, GIS, and other initiatives.



2016-2018 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Mr. Maxwell presented the following:

*Good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to present the 2015 budget for the Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency, or SOCPA. This afternoon I'm joined by our Deputy Director and GIS expert Don Jordan. I'll be leaning on Don to help with any questions about our GIS and Address Service operations. Robin Coon, our*

*Administrative Assistant, as well as Mr. David Bottar from the Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board, who you will hear from shortly. I'd also like to acknowledge Steve Morgan, Dan Hammer and Emilie Tisch from Management and Budget and thank them for all of their support through the budgeting process.*

*I know that you're kicking off your annual marathon of budget hearings today, so I want to thank you for your consideration and I'll be respectful of your time.*

*The Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency provides and promotes effective planning by the County and City, as well as our many Towns and Villages. Planning requires a long-range, comprehensive view to ensure high quality in the built environment, cost-effective infrastructure, stewardship of natural resources, and economic growth.*

*The Agency is comprised of five programs, including four main divisions. Our divisions include County Planning, City Planning, Geographic Information Systems, or GIS, and City Zoning. These divisions are overseen by our fifth program – Administration – which is charged with determining the long-term direction of the Agency, and provides for various administrative functions. As you know this structure was new to the Agency last year, and was established through a merging of City and County planning functions through a new agreement for SOCPA which was adopted by this body as well as the Syracuse Common Council.*

*This new arrangement has brought a variety of benefits including a more formalized reporting structure within the Agency; greater collaboration between County and City planning activities; a synergy of professional planning resources that have enabled the Agency to offer a greater level of support to our Towns and Villages; and enhanced and expanded GIS capabilities that enable the County, as well as other municipalities within Onondaga County, to make the best possible decisions about development, infrastructure and a host of other issues by maximizing our ability to understand and display the data available to us.*

*I just want to briefly run through a handful of highlights from the Agency's activities in 2014:*

- *We reached out to Town and Village officials, and provided assistance on a variety of planning efforts in Otisco, Clay, Cicero, Elbridge, Lysander, North Syracuse, Dewitt and other municipalities in the County. This included comprehensive planning efforts, zoning code revisions and data management, and is in keeping with our stated mission of being more proactive and service-oriented.*
- *We hosted the Onondaga County Planning Federation's 26<sup>th</sup> annual Planning Symposium to provide continuing education and state mandated training to hundreds of planning and zoning board members throughout Central New York.*
- *We provided staff services to the Onondaga County Planning Board to review approximately 600 municipal zoning and subdivision referrals, and conducted a number of multi-agency coordinated reviews with municipalities and project applicants on complex cases.*
- *We acted as staff to the County Legislature's Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board, including local review of a record 23 farms pursuing funding under the State's conservation easement program.*
- *We also have begun staffing the Onondaga County Agriculture Council.*
- *We were successful in pursuing the adoption of the new Comprehensive Plan for the City of Syracuse, and have begun implementation of the Plan, including our efforts to overhaul the City's zoning ordinance.*
- *We administered state and federal grant programs like the Brownfield Opportunity Area and Local Waterfront Revitalization Program.*
- *We provided staff support to the Syracuse Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, Landmark Preservation Board and Public Art Commission.*
- *Our GIS team implemented an Enterprise GIS for Onondaga County to support critical County applications, and provided assistance to various departments, municipalities, other government organizations and the public.*
- *Our GIS Division also upgraded the City-County GIS website that provides the public with access to 28 layers of spatial data. Since the site went live in 2005, over 750,000 visitors from more than 80 countries have spent over 88,000 hours learning about Onondaga County using this web application.*

- *And we continued to provide critical mapping and spatial data support for the implementation of 911's new Computer Aided Dispatch system.*

*I also want to mention a few of our strategic priorities for 2015:*

- *Last year we had a lively and much appreciated discussion about the draft Sustainable Development Plan. I want to reiterate my desire to work with you to modify, improve and ultimately adopt this Plan. As I have said in the past, I believe the parts of this Plan we agree on significantly outweigh the areas of disagreement, and adopting this Plan will help foster more robust and predictable growth and economic development in Onondaga County.*
- *In 2014 we have placed a renewed emphasis on providing top notch planning and GIS supports to the Towns and Villages of our County. We want to continue this mission in 2015, in part by realizing the GIS capacity we outlined last year. We are pleased that local municipalities are recognizing the power that GIS has to aid in making better planning, infrastructure and economic development decisions, and are excited to better meet these needs.*
- *You may notice an increase in our Travel and Training budget for 2015. The purpose of this increase is to facilitate the establishment of a sort of scholarship program for enhanced education and training opportunities for Town and Village planning and municipal officials. As we consider how to continue our mission of service to municipalities, I believe that providing opportunities for local officials to attend local and regional planning conferences will help them learn about best practices they can put to work right here in Onondaga County. I would look to consult with you about the details of such a program.*

*Looking at our budget numbers for 2015, we have a total local dollar budget of \$3,264,771. This is a slight increase from the 2014 modified number. This increase is attributed partly to the Travel and Training program I just mentioned, but is primarily due to standard salary and wage increases. Funded positions remain the same as in the 2014 budget.*

*You'll notice that even as a very small Agency, significant portions of our appropriations reflect programs and contract services for which we are reimbursed. 64% of our 2015 appropriations are in our 570 account for contract services, with \$1.4 million in federal funding passing through our budget to the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, \$2.4 million in state mandated appropriations to CENTRO, and just over \$86,000 going to the Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board. Further, 21% of our 2015 appropriations are reimbursed, with City Planning and Zoning services fully reimbursed through charges back to the City of Syracuse, and additional reimbursements from 911 Emergency Communications for GIS and Address Administration support. What remains is just 15% of our budget which goes primarily toward County Administration, Planning and GIS functions.*

*With that I would like to turn it over to David Bottar from one of our great partners - the Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board, to spend a few minutes discussing his organization and budget.*

Mr. Bottar thanked Mr. Maxwell and the committee, adding that he appreciates the opportunity to be here and has presented to the legislature for a number of years. Mr. Bottar presented the following:

Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board

The Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board (CNY RPDB) is a public planning agency that was established in 1966 by a joint resolution of Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga, and Oswego Counties under the provisions of Article 12B of the New York State General Municipal Law.

The CNY RPDB is governed by a 35 member board of directors that is appointed by its five member counties. Members currently serving from Onondaga County include Khalid Bey, Marilyn Higgins, Andrew Maxwell, J. Ryan McMahon, Michael Plochocki, Kathleen Rapp, and William Southern.

The agency's proposed budget in 2015 totals \$1,828,945. These funds will support a professional staff of 12 full-time employees and a range of special purpose consultant services and project initiatives. Financial support for the agency is provided by member county contributions, state and federal grants, and contract service revenue. Financial contributions from member counties are projected to total \$185,401 in 2015, including a level funding amount from Onondaga County of \$86,027.

County financial support will be used by the CNY RPDB in 2015 to leverage federal and state resources to support the implementation of a comprehensive regional planning program in Central New York with a focus in the following program areas:

- Economic Development
- Environmental Management
- Land Use and Transportation Planning
- Energy Conservation and Alternative Energy Development
- Information, Research and Grant Assistance Services
- Regional Collaboration

CENTRAL NEW YORK REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD

DAVID BOTTAR, DIRECTOR



Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board



- CNYRPB Chair is Mrs. Rapp
- Level funding request to each member county for over 10 years
- Contract service revenue from municipalities or local development authorities who retain CNYRPB to assist with development of projects
- Economic Development program operates with a number of partners in Onondaga County and across the 5 county region
- Environmental Management focuses on water quality issues in CNY
- Try to foster 5 county regional collaboration through bimonthly board meetings

Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board

Major program initiatives that will be sponsored by the CNY RPDB in 2015 include:

- Management of the CNY Regional Sustainability Planning Initiative
  - Assist with redevelopment of the former Excellus Building into a mixed-use complex
  - Assist the OCIDA with development of the White Pines Commerce Park
  - Support development of the Syracuse Inner Harbor
  - Management of the CNY Enterprise Development Small Business Loan Fund
  - Participate in regional business recruitment and retention initiatives
  - Development of a regional telecommunication and internet broadband plan
- Management of the CNY Energy Challenge
  - Serve as a regional energy resource information center
  - Management of a wind energy resource site assessment program in Fabius
  - Development of a regional solar energy procurement program
- Management of the SMTC transportation planning program
  - Participation in the Interstate Route 81 –Challenge corridor planning initiative
  - Continue efforts to support development of the CNY Intermodal Rail and Inland Port Center
  - Assist with the development of the Onondaga Lake Loop-the-Lake and Erie Canal trails
- Continue administration of the CNY Stormwater Management Program
  - Implement a strategic regional green infrastructure design and construction program
  - Investigate the feasibility of developing a regional wetland banking program
- Complete a comprehensive inventory and GIS map of environmental and conservation assets in CNY
- Management of a regional municipal assistance comprehensive planning program
- Develop a regional recreation and heritage plan
- Maintain a regional information, research, grant assistance, and communication program
- Advocating local interest at the regional, state, and federal level
- Sponsoring bi-monthly regional board meetings and information forums

Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board



- More than planning activities, directly involved in project development across 5 county region, i.e. redevelopment of former Excellus bldg., prepared state grant application submitted this year, scored well by CNYRDC, if successful in statewide competition would expect project to receive \$2.3M and helping to lineup over \$15M in private bank financing
- Active small business loan program operating in conjunction with other public lenders, lent funds to over 60 businesses totaling over \$3.6M in Onondaga County, last couple of years obtained federal and state funds to recapitalize the loan pool – looking for opportunities in Onondaga County and welcome any inquires
- Solarize Syracuse part of solar energy program – helps local homeowners consider installation of solar facilities on roofs, held 9 neighborhood forums, over 600 homeowners attended and 450 signed up for feasibility assessment of their home for solar installation; have federal and state funds for municipal solar procurement program across entire region, will hire technical engineering expertise to work with local municipalities to identify solar deployment opportunities on their properties, want to pool bid document offering the marketplace a much larger project than municipalities could do on their own, could realize cost savings of 20%-30% if pool is large enough, just getting started important program with a lot of staff time in 2015, will help municipalities reduce electric costs via solar facilities
- Feasibility study completed by CHA in 2013 underscores development is feasible for CNY Intermodal Rail and Inland Port Center, working with 3Gi to pursue next step for the project
- Building on Onondaga County's Save the Rain initiative
- Just some of the projects they will be working on in the coming year with the County's support

Mr. Maxwell said they would take any questions the committee may have.

In answer to Mrs. Ervin, Mr. Maxwell said the travel and training increase (**pg. 3-151 Line A694010**) was not a big number, but was a significant percentage increase. They are talking about providing planning and municipality officials at the town and village level the opportunity to take advantage of some of the conferences in CNY and around the state. This is an idea, something they wanted to talk about today. There are a lot of great things going on around the country that local people could learn from. It has been a benefit to them and they would like to set something up where by it could be a benefit to others as well.

Chairman Knapp said that towns and villages are where the “rubber hits the road” and if they can get additional help and training it would be great. Mr. Maxwell said many of the town and village planning board members are volunteers who put in a lot of hard work and this could be a real benefit to them. So much of the planning work is done at that level and they want to help support it. Chairman Knapp agreed, adding that it could alleviate problems down the road.

In answer to Mr. May, Mr. Andrews said that the divisional structure, put in place last year, is a very good balance. They are not a big agency and the division structure allows them to meet their obligations to the boards and commissions they staff, a primary function for them at both the city and county level. They are not the agency that has planning authority per se, they staff the boards and commissions that do. With a small staff they struggle to do all that they are asked to do, but feel that they are absolutely meeting their obligations. They have talked about growing their capacity on the County Planning and GIS side, particularly with all that they have done with the GIS Enterprise Server project. They are receiving more requests from towns and villages and are struggling to keep up with those requests, but the staff working hard to do this.

Mr. May said that one of the bullets (**see 4<sup>th</sup> slide**) mentioned the hard work of Megan Costa and the Farmland Protection Board members in the last round of farmland protection grants. Extensive work and time was put into this and it was unfortunate that the process ended the way that it did. However, areas have been identified in which they can help fortify a critical industry in this County with farmland protection or ways for farmers to stay in agriculture and to develop and grow smartly. A plan needs to be in place to accommodate this process and ensure that farmers making application have an opportunity to get into the system. This was disappointing. Mr. Maxwell responded:

- Scrambled with the changes made this year at the state level, program structure and emphasis placed on different aspects was a real challenge; appreciate the patience of board members and everyone involved

- Remain committed to figuring best possible approach without knowing what will happen at the state level, collaborative partnership between SOCPA, board members, farmers, Soil and Water, Cornell Cooperative Extension and so on, doesn't have the answer today, are doing work relative to the ag districts and ag council, want to be a part of this, real challenge with staff capacity, don't no if the state program will be funded, lack of predictability is hard, important industry in our county, want to be a positive part of this discussion and will try to provide support

Chairman McMahan asked Mr. Maxwell to talk about last year's consolidation, the experiences and where they are today. Mr. Maxwell said the first thing they saw was the benefit of having City and County planners working together. These are all very capable staff members who already knew one another and had worked together in different ways, but getting the staff working together in a unified way was something that brought out everyone's abilities and expertise more so than ever before. Additionally, their interactions with the city, towns and villages are more proactive. They have spread the word about the services that they can provide and are working with more municipalities than ever before. Services are provided at no additional charge, as they are County taxpayers who pay for all of those in the agency. They have done some "back of the envelope" estimates as to the dollars saved at the town and village level, if those municipalities were to hire their own people or a planning consultant, and would be happy to share that information. In addition, the clarity that they now have in their structure is a benefit to everyone as far as the transparency. **Chairman McMahan asked to be provided with specifics on the support services provided to towns and villages.**

**Chairman McMahan said that predevelopment meetings are very valuable for potential development projects and asked if they tracked the number of meetings they have had on different projects. Mr. Andrews said that he doesn't think they track them, but will go back to the work plan and see.** They have been doing more of these and try to express to both applicants and municipalities that they are here to support the process. The earlier they know about projects the better and the more they can help to streamline and deal with hurdles associated with development at different levels. Providing coordinated review meetings is something that they try to do, but it is at the discretion of the applicant. **Chairman McMahan added that they are doing this in the City now.** Mr. Maxwell agreed, adding that they do dozens of them a year. **Chairman McMahan said that this was information he was looking for. Mr. Maxwell responded that they track this and will provide the numbers.**

In answer to Chairman Knapp, Mr. Maxwell clarified that his position and administrative functions are a 50% split, County Planning and GIS divisions are funded via County local dollars, 3 positions in County Planning and 5 in GIS with 2 positions fully funded by 911 and City costs are 3 positions in City Planning and 6 in City Zoning. Chairman McMahan referenced **pg. 3-154** and reiterated that the City Zoning and City Planning is covered by the abstract, the administration line is a split and County Planning and GIS lines are local County tax dollars. Mr. Maxwell confirmed this was correct.

Chairman Knapp asked if they expected to exceed their 2014 budget on any lines, adding that this will be a standard question for everyone. Mr. Maxwell said they have had a few minimal budget transfer and are not looking at budget overages. Chairman Knapp said this was appreciated. Mr. Maxwell then apologized saying that they might, he doesn't want to make any promises.

In answer to Chairman Knapp, Mr. Morgan confirmed that the abstract was decreasing \$40,000. The consolidation happened midyear in 2013, too late to charge the typical amounts on the 2013 abstract, therefore 2014 included a portion of 2013 and the 2014 charges.

Chairman Knapp said that back when they discussed consolidation they talked about strategic code and zone ordinances and asked what they were. Mr. Maxwell responded that as part of the code and zoning work they have been reaching out and working individually with different municipalities and expressing their support for local planning efforts. One thing they have talked about with the Home Builders and Remodelers Association of CNY is their interest in seeing coordination between municipal code officials. This is a discussion piece, they want to be involved to the extent that municipalities would like them to. They believe there is some opportunity, but it is a bit of education at the town and village level and they are not looking to force their way into it.

Chairman McMahon asked what happens in the event that the planning staff working with individual boards come across an issue that is much the same for interpretation, yet the City Planning staff interpret it one way and the County Planning staff interpret it in another. Mr. Maxwell responded that staff board work is part of the reason for their division structure. Individuals charged with staffing each board are charged with interpreting whatever is relevant at the divisional level. Legal interpretation comes from the City's Corporation Counsel and County Attorney's office. They have some separation and he believes it makes sense. They haven't had an incident where a disagreement pulled people in different directions and he attributes this to the structure.

Mr. Holmquist apologized for being late and going over anything that may have already been covered. As stated last year, he objects to the homepage of [ongov.net](http://ongov.net) advertising the Agenda 21 Sustainability Plan as if it was a County document and the policy of Onondaga County. The Legislature does not support this. He is frustrated and realizes that it is very unlikely that this is Mr. Maxwell's decision. The County Legislature is charged with policy and budget and hasn't funded this, doesn't support it, isn't going to support it and yet it remains at the top of the homepage when thousands of County and City residents are interested in other issues, i.e. applying for a pistol permit.

Mr. Holmquist said that he was not expecting a reply, but someone needs to answer this. Chairman Knapp said the message was sent and received. Mr. Maxwell said that he fondly recalls the discussion from last year and appreciates the dialogue on the issue. As mentioned before Mr. Holmquist entered, the plan is still on his plate and something that he would like to work on with the legislature, understanding that in its current form it is not acceptable to Mr. Holmquist and a number of his colleagues.

In answer to Mr. Jordan, Mr. Maxwell reiterated the travel and training increase (**pg. 3-151 Line A694010**) was relative to their desire to provide opportunities for town and village planning board and town board members to attend local and regional planning conferences. Conferences have been a benefit to SOCPA and is a door that they would like to open for them, acknowledging all the hard work that they do at that level. This is something they believe will elevate the overall planning capacity as a community and something he wanted to explore with the Legislature.

Mr. Jordan said that contractual expenses were spread out amongst different parts of their budget in the breakout book and asked him to elaborate. Mr. Maxwell responded that the 570 account (**pg. 3-151 Line A695700**) outlines a number of items which are mostly pass-through funds; federal funds pass through their budget for SMTC. Mr. Jordan asked if contract services were being provided by SMTC for the full line of their budget. Mr. Maxwell said not for the full line - Centro and the Regional Planning and Development Board account for the rest.

Chairman Knapp said legislators appreciated their time and the well-organized presentation. Two things he would like to highlight on their way out 1) he assisted Lafayette with their farmland protection program and wanted to thank Don Jordan for his help with the process – provided a lot of backup material and great maps, 2) appreciates SOCPA stepping up with Matt Millea and Justin Sayles leaving the Agriculture Council there was a state of flux and they graciously stepped in to help get things on an even keel. Mr. Maxwell responded that they were happy to do it and are still getting their arms around it. Mr. Knapp said it was a good organization, doing great things and they really appreciate it.

The meeting was recessed at 3:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



KATHERINE M. FRENCH, Deputy Clerk  
Onondaga County Legislature

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: **2015 BUDGET REVIEW OF PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE DEPARTMENTS & AGENCIES**

DATE: **September 16, 2014**

NAME	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
PLEASE PRINT	
David Skend	CCE Onondago
Diana Lamson	" "
KRISTINA FORREADE	CCE Onondaga
Cashin Potter	CCE Onondago
Jessi Lyons	" "
Steve Butler	CNY Arts
Carol Sweet	AcRA
MARK Burger	on cdy SWCD
Spencer Givens	" BOD
Craig Dennis	" BOD

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: **2015 BUDGET REVIEW OF PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE DEPARTMENTS & AGENCIES**

DATE: **September 16, 2014**

NAME	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
PLEASE PRINT	
Jin Mahany	County Leg.
SUSAN HORN	Wescock Legal Aid
James Samill	Tussock Legal Aid