

Chenango County Department of Planning & Development and Lt. Warren E. Eaton Airport

2021 Annual Report



Planning Staff:

Shane H. Butler – Director of Planning & Airport Administrator
Allison Yacano – Planner
Matt Gladstone – Planner
Steve Palmatier – Workforce Development Consultant

Airport Staff:

Frank Turner – Airport Operations

Director's Perspective - Looking back at 2021

Another year in the books, and another opportunity to reflect on everything we have accomplished in our department. This year is a little different though, and it's allowed us a different type of "aerial" perspective.

A new component of our office is now having administrative oversight of Lt. Warren E. Eaton Airport. It's another dimension and an opportunity for us to do even bigger things for the residents of Chenango County, and wow have we done some big things this year:

- Received a \$1.9 million grant from NYSOCR to implement a wireless broadband expansion in the City of Norwich and Town of New Berlin
- Applied for a \$5.2 million grant from NYSOCR to renovate the Red Mill Property in New Berlin
- Assisted with the \$10 million DRI award for the City of Norwich with Commerce Chenango

And yet, these big announcements shouldn't overshadow some of the little things we have done which make a big cumulative impact as well (in more detail further below):

- Completed an update of the Ag and Farmland Protection Plan and Chenango County All Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Awarded a \$15,000 NYSERDA Grant for Energy Upgrades upon the completion of our Solarize Program with Solstice
- Received a \$263,000 grant from NYSDOT to renovate the Jet Hangar
- Applied for a \$200,000 grant from ARC to renovate the Administration Building

All of these accomplishments, both big and small, are all with the hopes of making life better for everyone here in Chenango County. After all, it is our mission "To improve the quality of life in Chenango County by providing professional services and programs that promote economic vitality, environmental integrity, and strong communities."

With a staff full of energy, and deeper connections with our partner organizations throughout the County, I'd like to think we are doing a good job at accomplishing this mission and we will continue to do so into 2022.

Until next year, I hope everyone has a healthy and prosperous 2022!

Staffing Changes

Thank you to Colleen Bradley for her dedicated service and hard work in the Planning Office. Colleen was instrumental in starting our Climate Smart Communities initiatives and making substantial progress towards finishing the Ag and Farmland Protection Plan, among other projects during her tenure. Best of luck in your new adventure!

Welcome to our two new Planners, Allison Yacano and Matt Gladstone, who both started in July! Both are Norwich natives and graduates of SUNY Oneonta. Allison has been focusing her efforts on sustainability as part of our Climate Smart and Clean Energy Communities initiatives, and GIS Mapping. Matt has been focusing on agriculture and promoting transportation initiatives.



SUNY Oneonta Alumni Association swagged us!



We'd also like to introduce Frank Turner, Operations Manager at Lt. Warren E. Eaton Airport (OIC). Always a friendly face, Frank has worked at Lt. Warren E. Eaton Airport for the last 18 years, coordinating with business/charter flights, welcoming transient and resident pilots, fueling up aircrafts, plowing in the winter and mowing in the summer, and overall just making sure the airport is operating and looking the way it should on a day to day basis.

Reducing Our Carbon Footprint

As a part of the Clean Energy Communities pledge, the Planning Department chose two community campaigns to undergo. The two campaigns that were chosen were Clean Heating and Cooling, as well as Solarize Community Solar. By meeting their goal by getting 25 residents signed up and completing these high-impact actions, Chenango County is eligible for a \$15,000 grant from NYSERDA.

In May 2021, the Planning Department set out to provide residents of Chenango County with access to community solar, known as the Solarize Campaign. Community solar promotes a sustainable source of energy, as well as up to a 10% savings on electricity for residents. In coordination with Solstice, the campaign was able to enroll 26 residents of Chenango County in Community Solar! By meeting their goal, Chenango County was awarded the grant and is currently using the award to upgrade the interior and exterior lighting at the Lt. Warren E. Eaton Airport. With the installation of LED Lights, it is

anticipated that there will be an energy savings of at least 75% less than the incandescent lighting currently at the airport.

The Clean Heating and Cooling Campaign, in coordination with the Network for a Sustainable Tomorrow (NEST), residents and businesses will be able to upgrade their current heating and cooling technologies to more energy and cost-efficient ones. Currently, they are still on their way to the goal of meeting 25 participants.

Chenango County awarded \$15,000 for clean energy upgrades

CHENANGO COUNTY — The Chenango County Department of Planning and Development is pleased to announce that they have met the 25-subscriber goal of enrollment for their Community Solar Campaign. By reaching this goal, Chenango County became eligible to apply for Action Grants through the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority's (NYSERDA) Clean Energy Communities program. As a result, the County has been awarded \$15,000 for clean energy upgrades. The grant will be used to upgrade the interior and exterior lighting to LED's at the Chenango County Lt. Warren E. Eaton Airport in Norwich. By upgrading to more energy-efficient lighting, they anticipate an energy savings of at least 75 percent less than the incandescent lighting currently at the airport.

Chenango County awarded \$15,000 for clean energy upgrades —

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to facilitate solar panels on their homes or businesses. Residents who enrolled through the Community Solar Campaign are eligible to an estimated 10 percent savings on their monthly electric bill. "Spreading access to clean energy is a natural extension of our work to keep our community healthy and sustainable for years to come," said Shane Butler, Director of Planning for the Chenango County Department of Planning and Development. The 25 residents who have enrolled in Chenango County represent an estimated 250,791 kWh per year of electricity. This is the environmental impact equivalent of avoiding 467,855 pounds of carbon dioxide per year, or reducing passenger vehicle mileage by 464,484 miles per year. President and CEO of NYSERDA Doreen M. Harris said, "By expanding access to community solar, Chenango County is making a difference in the fight against climate change and saving residents' money while doing so. We applaud the county for its efforts in ensuring a healthier future, and helping us achieve New York's goals." A Clean Energy Community since 2018, Chenango County also became a New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Climate Smart Community in March of 2021. The pledge stresses an effort to decrease energy usage and shift to cleaner and renewable energy. To learn more about the NYSERDA Clean Energy Communities program, visit <https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/All-Programs/Programs/Clean-Energy-Communities>. —from the Chenango County Department of Planning and Development

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In addition to the Clean Energy Communities program, Chenango County is also a registered Climate Smart Community. Chenango County has pledged to act in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the everchanging climate. One action Chenango County has completed is the CSC Task Force. After being dormant for over 15 years, the Chenango County Environmental Management Council has been restarted. The EMC is focusing on hosting a river clean-up day, household hazardous waste day, among other events.

Countywide Hazard Mitigation Plan

On July 13, 2021, the Chenango County Multi-Jurisdictional All-Hazard Mitigation Plan was approved by FEMA and the NYS Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services. Having received the notification, the Chenango County Board of Supervisors adopted the plan on September 13, 2021, culminating an update process beginning in late 2019.

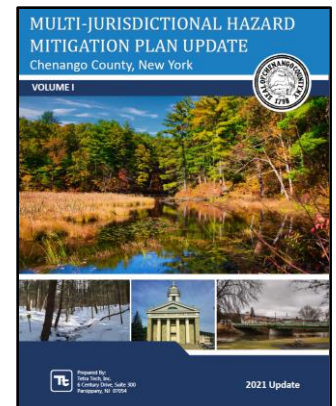
The finished plan can be viewed here:

<https://www.chenangocountynyhmp.com/>.

For our municipalities, the plan will provide a guide for how our municipalities have responded in the past and makes them eligible for grants to pursue additional projects listed in the plan to make them even more resilient to future hazards.

As the County Planning Department, we will be using the plan to respond to GML 239 Reviews when developments are happening within flood-prone areas, reaching out to municipalities to update each annex on an annual basis to make sure all the initiatives are current and notifying municipalities when eligible grant funds become available.

Thank you to the Hazard Mitigation Plan Steering Committee for providing their countywide insights and knowledge during the update, the Municipal Planning



Partnership comprised of local contacts from each of the county's 30 municipalities who worked hard to update annexes for each of their respective municipalities, and to our consultant TetraTech who went above and beyond to make sure the plan included everything our municipalities would need to apply for future funding sources.

Expanding Broadband Availability

The solid foundation started in 2020 provided a huge springboard for our 2021 efforts to expand broadband availability across Chenango County. We continued a two-prong approach: advocacy and project implementation.

With our advocacy, alongside other municipal leaders and community partners, we met with Congresswoman Claudia Tenney on April 11th and Senator Chuck Schumer on June 1st to advocate for additional funding to expand broadband availability in Chenango County. We discussed our funding needs, our strategies for implementation, and an overall discussion of what is still lacking.

As part of the Regional Broadband Collaborative, on June 30th Southern Tier 8 launched The Better Connection Program, a crowdsourcing website which gathers information from participants on internet speeds, availability, cost, etc. The data gathered will be used by various groups to develop grant applications, challenge the FCC broadband availability maps, and to help develop a plan to serve those areas which do not have quality service.



On July 23rd, we were awarded a \$1.9 million grant as part of the NYS Community Development Block Grant (CARES Act) to expand wireless broadband service into the City of Norwich and Town of New Berlin. An RFP was issued in December and in early 2022 we will be awarding a contractor who will install and operate the system. Barring any COVID-19 related delays, all of the work will be completed by the end of next Summer.

Homeownership and Housing Initiatives with Greater Opportunities

In 2019 and 2020, Chenango County, with sub-recipient Greater Opportunities for Broome and Chenango, Inc. were awarded a \$500,000 NYS Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for the Chenango County Housing Rehabilitation Program and a \$350,000 grant for Homeownership IX. Due to COVID-19, both programs hit significant delays.



The Housing Rehabilitation Program was intended to assist approximately sixteen (16) low-moderate income owner-occupied households across Chenango County in correcting serious threats to health and safety issues to homeowners. Due to COVID-19, an extension was granted by NYS until May 2, 2022. We also had to reduce the number of households assisted due to higher than usual costs per household. In the end, we will have assisted twelve (12) households with this grant.

The Homeownership IX Program was intended to assist approximately fourteen (14) First Time Homebuyers in purchasing their first home. Due to COVID-19 related housing shortages and buyers choosing cash offers, this program has seen significant delays. Currently one (1) household has closed on a house, two (2) have received a commitment of funds, and six (6) have pre-approvals looking for a home. We anticipate requesting an extension on this program as well.

In December, we also applied for a \$5.2 million CDBG CARES Act grant to rehabilitate the Red Mill Complex in the Town of New Berlin. The property identified for the project is starting to pose a health and safety risk to the current twenty-nine adults and children residing in the existing units and is in dire need of rehabilitation. The project will involve the renovation of 18 permanent housing units (9 Two-Bedroom and 9 One-Bedroom), including gutting the building interiors, electrical, plumbing and heating systems, window sashes, exterior demolition, and renovation of the apartments. Of the eighteen units, sixteen are currently occupied, with two being vacant due to the number of needed repairs that are required to make the units habitable. The proposed project was developed in coordination with Chenango County to meet the need for an affordable and safe supportive housing program within Chenango County. The property is under the ownership of Greater Opportunities, who will serve as the primary entity for providing housing and support services to the individuals and families served through this project.

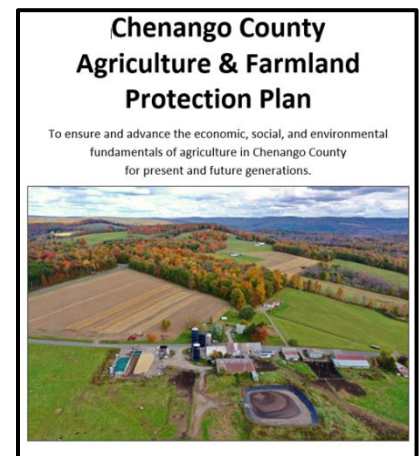
Thank you to the staff at Greater Opportunities for Broome and Chenango Inc. for their continued support and excellent work delivering these grants!

Ag and Farmland Protection Plan Update

Since Fall 2019, the Chenango County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board (AFPB), with support from the Planning Department, has been working on updating the Chenango County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan. Utilizing survey responses sent to over 500 landowners, additional research using a variety of outside studies, first-hand knowledge by those on the board, and data from the USDA Ag Census, the plan was updated with current information, trends, new markets and more, along with an updated set of goals.

A draft plan was made available on the Planning Department website in July and a public comment period was held to solicit any additional feedback.

Feeling confident in the plan, the AFPB adopted the plan on August 20th, and referred it to the Ag, Buildings & Grounds Committee, and was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on Monday November 8th, 2021.



Transportation as a Barrier

Since late 2017, the Planning Department has been contracted by the Rural Health Network of South Central New York to help residents of Chenango County gain access to transportation.



Our plan for 2020 was to attend as many community events as possible to disseminate fliers and meet with people to spread the word about what programs Getthere has to offer. With the COVID-19 pandemic putting a pause to that, we had to hold off on meeting with the public face to face.

In 2021 with life starting to return to normal we saw it fit to make it to as many public events as we could like we wanted to the previous year. Staff from the department went to multiple events where we informed community members about Getthere and the services they provide. Many of the people that stopped at the Planning Department booth took home informational packets and brochures so they could read more about it and pass along the information to friends and family.

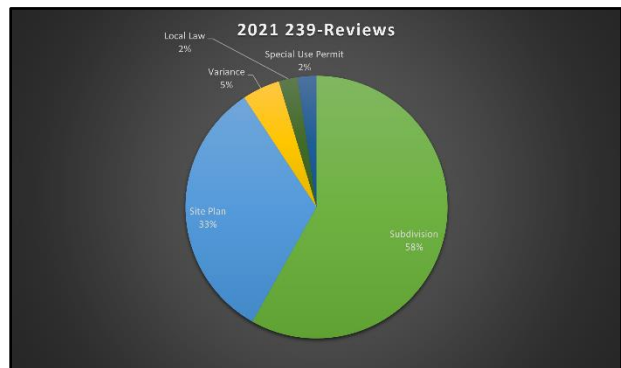
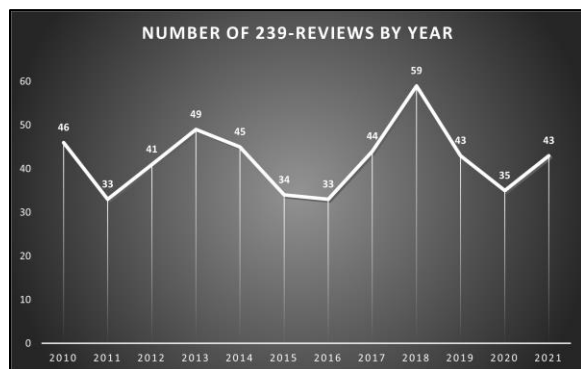
As a part of our idea to get the informational handouts out in the community and into the hands of those who can benefit from the services, department staff called health care facilities, senior living facilities and nursing homes to first off make sure they were aware of Getthere and what they do but also, but also to provide them with educational handouts. Along with the Quarterly County Coordinated Transportation Committee, we have worked to find solutions to the transportation related issues we are seeing in

our county. With COVID-19 still causing problems in all aspects of life, we plan to continue to provide transportation related solutions to make these times a bit easier and less stressful for all members of our community.

Planning Board Report

General Municipal Law 239-m requires the referral of certain proposed city, town and village planning and zoning actions to the county planning agency or regional planning council. Certain actions include adoption or amendment of a comprehensive plan, adoption or amendments of a zoning ordinance or local law, issuance of special use permits, approval of site plans, use or area variances, or other authorizations under provisions of a zoning ordinance or local law, so long as those actions are within 500 feet of certain parameters including but not limited to; State or County roads or highways, municipal boundaries, county or state parks, or the boundary of any farm located in an agricultural district.

The Planning Department coordinates this review process by accepting the applications from municipal boards, referring to outside agencies for feedback if necessary, creating aerial maps of the location, sending applications to County Planning Board members, providing professional input, and sending corresponding decisions by the County Planning Board back to the referring municipality.



The County Planning Board provided 43 239-Reviews in 2021, up from 35 in 2020. Of those reviews, 25 were for subdivisions, 14 site plan reviews, two variances, one local law and one special use permit. Four applications were referred to NYSDOT for their supplemental review.

Workforce Development – Consultant's Thoughts

Steve Palmatier, President - Walking Ridge Development, LLC.

2020 was a year unlike any before. We were coming out of the first year of Covid-19 related issues. At the turn of the year, 2021 brought an uncertain future. But nevertheless, we hit the ground running, with plans to run many different beneficial projects and programs.

K-12 Education

Work at Oxford Academy began with the successful closeout of RoboRAVE which netted the school just over \$17,000.00. After this, the school was awarded a \$15,000 grant from Siemens to fund the preliminary work on the K-12 STEAM Program. This grant led to the creation of the Middle School's FABLAB which was designed by TIES. I assisted with the design and have been trained on most of the equipment. The



development of this program led to a grant from Northwest University that funded the purchasing of equipment and the implementation of the Fuse STEM education program.

Since October, I have been in the school two days per week to help bring the programs up to speed. With the new superintendent stepping in, I have assisted them in developing the Route 12 corridor initiative which we are hopeful will link schools and businesses along NYS Route 12 together to better align schools with the businesses.

In Norwich, I am working every day in designing the technology program. I am part of a team tasked with redesigning the technology space and curriculum. Like the grant Oxford received, Norwich may qualify for a grant from Siemens as the construction project develops. This project aims to build something that is relevant and interests the students.

In Unadilla, the SME Prime program has been fully funded by Corning, the Society of Manufacturing Engineers, and Walking Ridge Development. This program will bring over \$160,000 to the district as well as valuable expertise and training.

General K-12, including DCMO BOCES

This year I have served on the DCMO CTE Committee. There are ongoing discussions of the development of an entrepreneurship program. The idea is that this will be a program that covers all DCMO schools, or it may be deployed by individual schools. Two schools, Norwich, and Oxford, have interest in the program. With this, I have researched options for programming and the curriculum from Inhub. I have joined the group and have been reviewing the online training material. This year, I have implemented the "Job of the Week". This outline is sent to the schools I work with, as well as to Liz Rickard at C.O.R.E. We are developing a system to distribute this to a broader region and make it more engaging for students to use.

Colleges

This year I have served as a member of the Morrisville CTE Committee. This committee has helped to obtain funding for numerous programs at the school, including the Norwich Campus Nursing Program. In addition to this program, Morrisville has implemented a new building and curriculum at the main campus, dedicated to renewable energy. I have brought this to the attention of the Tier Energy Network with the hope of driving enrollment in this program. Due to a lack of enrollment at SUNY Morrisville, they have terminated the professor who was running the workforce development program using the SME ToolingU Modules. I am exploring other models such as the creation of a micro-credential linked to the SME CMfgA credential. I have had conversations with the Dean of the engineering school regarding this.

At SUNY Broome, I have assisted in the finding of people to serve on the DACUM Committee for the creation of a Mechatronics program at the school. There are ongoing discussions about how to redevelop the Morrisville program regionally, connecting SUNY Broome, Delhi, TC3 and Corning Community College.

Other Workforce Efforts

AMT launched a program in November using the SME model I developed with Morrisville and with additional guidance from the SME. Initially they will focus on two areas, the SME's CMfgA curriculum and then on to a Mechatronics program. I have assisted with the development of this and will attempt to offer some classes in Chenango County. Specifically, John Hillis, AMT staff and I are discussing how to offer the CMfgA course at Oxford school.

Business Development and Entrepreneurship Efforts

Stoyana has begun the development of a food product business based off a family recipe. Since then, we have scheduled a meeting between Stoyana, the Southern Tier Startup Alliance and me to discuss startup models. I have also introduced her to the Nelson Farms facility in Morrisville to assist her in developing a shelf stable product. I have also introduced her to Zaid at Norwich Meadows Farm. Zaid will be using seeds

from Bulgaria to grow the vegetables needed for the product. I have participated in multiple discussions regarding label design, product placement and marketing.

Regarding the meat processing facility in Sherburne, I have had numerous discussions with the consultant hired by Jim Webb. I have provided him with a list of people that should be considered with the project. These included Ken Smith at CCE, the Planning Department and Commerce Chenango. I have also provided a list of local and state programs that could support the development of the plant. These included the IDA, Startup-NY and others.

I am a member of several professional organizations and have been attending meetings that impact economic development in the county. Here are a few examples:

- Startup-NY
- Export-NY
- Global Hub for Soft Landings in New York's Southern Tier
- The Society of Manufacturing Engineers (SME)
- International Business Innovation Association
- Business Council of New York State
- NYSCATE

Lt. Warren E. Eaton Airport (OIC)

Lt. Warren E. Eaton Airport (OIC), owned and operated by Chenango County, is a general aviation airport located on State Route 12 in the Town of North Norwich. The airport is funded through the interest generated from a trust account set up by the Eaton Family and is managed by NBT Bank and the County.



For projects, Chenango County applies to FAA, NYSDOT, or other sources for grants. Depending on the program, these grants typically fund up to 95% of the total project cost. The remaining cost of the project is paid for using the interest from the trust fund. Additional revenues come from T-Hangar and Jet Hangar lease agreements, fuel sales, tie-down fees, and office rental.

Due to the interest generated from the trust fund and additional revenues, the County has not had to spend

any local share towards upkeep of the airport, personnel, or projects since it was purchased in 1986.

Frequent users of Lt. Warren E. Eaton Airport include businesses like NBT Bank, Chobani, Bailee Lumber, NYSEG, and Bonnie Plants, medical facilities like Chenango Memorial Hospital and LifeNet, residents and transient travelers from near and far. From time to time we also have military training exercises, non-profit organizations who transport patients to medical appointments via air (PALS), and aircraft manufacturers testing aircraft capabilities.

Other businesses and organizations have a permanent presence at the airport. Plane Leather Repair is an FAA approved Mobile 145 Interior Repair Station. They have been offering their services for several years and have a lease agreement with the County to use the facility.

In addition, the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Chapter 1204 is a group of aviation enthusiasts, aircraft builders, and pilots who get together with like-minded people to share ideas, exchange information, encourage safety, serve the local aviation community and have a lot of fun doing so. You may have seen them at Airport Community Day offering Young Eagle rides to youth aged 8-17. They also have scholarship opportunities for local students looking to pursue aviation related fields.

Just Jump Skydiving

In November, Just Jump Skydiving, a family owned business, took the leap and relocated to Lt. Warren E. Eaton Airport. They offer tandem skydiving to those new and experienced. We can't wait to see their business grow!



Grant Applications

In addition to stimulus funds through the various Covid-19 legislative initiatives, throughout 2021 a number of grant applications were submitted and awarded to Lt. Warren E. Eaton Airport including the following:

- Applied for \$200,000 from ARC to renovate the Jet Hangar and Administration Building
- Awarded \$263,000 from NYSDOT to Renovate the Jet Hangar
- Awarded \$285,000 from FAA for Taxiway Pavement, Lighting and Signage Design
- Awarded \$15,000 from NYSERDA for an Energy Assessment and LED Lighting Upgrade

Planning Department Goals for 2022

- 8-Year Review of Agricultural District #2A
- Complete additional Clean Energy Initiatives and Projects through the Clean Energy Communities and Climate Smart Communities programs
- Complete construction on the Chenango County Wireless Broadband Expansion Grant
- Closeout the Chenango County Homeownership IX and Chenango County Housing Rehabilitation Grants
- Complete the renovation of the Red Mill Facility in New Berlin alongside GOFBC
- Be in a “State of Readiness” for other large projects that might come our way!

Lt. Warren E. Eaton Airport Goals for 2022

- Increase utilization of the Airport alongside Av-Gas (100LL) and JetA fuel sales
- Apply for grants to replace the aging AWOS (weather station)
- Utilize funding from the 2021 Infrastructure Bill to replace aging infrastructure
- Increase opportunities for the public to interact with Lt. Warren E. Eaton Airport
- Begin the renovation of the Jet Hangar and Administration building



For more information about the Chenango County Department of Planning & Development, visit our website at <https://www.co.chenango.ny.us/planning> or contact us by calling (607) 337-1640 or emailing planning@co.chenango.ny.us. For up-to-date announcements, you can also “like” our Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/ChenangoPlanning>.