

CHENANGO COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT 2019 Accomplishments



Planning Staff:

Shane H. Butler – Planning Director

Rena M. Doing – Senior Planner

Corey Katusha – Planner

Steve Palmatier – Workforce Development Consultant

We're on Facebook!



To better spread the word on projects, programs, and services being undertaken by our office and with our partners, we decided to create a Facebook page. We feel this provides us greater control over what and when information is published and allows us to disseminate information to a larger volume of people outside of subscription services like printed media.

Many of the grants and programs we are involved in require us to show a “good-faith effort” notifying targeted populations of available resources and information. By using the Facebook page, Chenango County can continue being compliant with these requirements while encouraging more participation from our residents.

We encourage you to “Like” and “Share” the page to spread the word and expand our viewer base. To find us, search for “Chenango County Planning Department” in the Facebook search bar. For those without Facebook, information will continue to be provided on our website, <https://www.co.chenango.ny.us/planning/>.

Greater Chenango Cares IRT

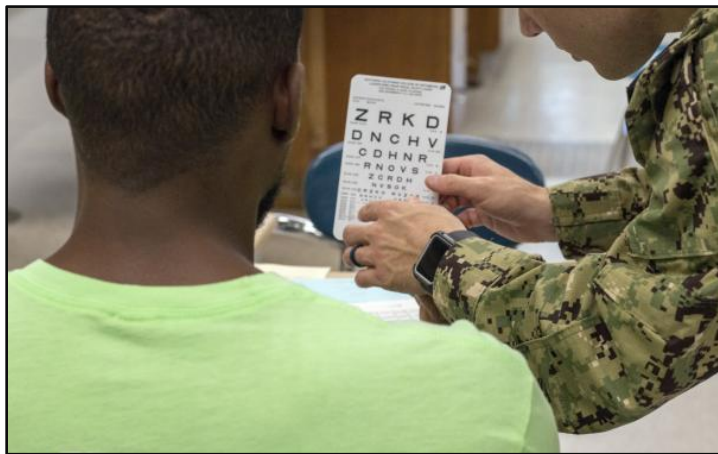


Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) is a Department of Defense (DoD) military training opportunity, exclusive to the United States and its territories, that delivers joint training opportunities to increase deployment readiness. Simultaneously, IRT provides key services (health care, construction, transportation, and cybersecurity) with lasting benefits for our American communities.

Based on successfully IRT's in 2015 and 2016, Southern Tier 8 applied to the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) in 2017 to hold an IRT mission in the Southern Tier in 2019. The plan was to have a site in both Cortland and Tioga County running simultaneously.

In December 2018, another application was submitted by Southern Tier 8 to hold an IRT in 2020 with a site in Chenango County. After receiving the application, the Department of Defense asked to combine both applications and add Chenango County to the 2019 mission. The Greater Chenango Cares Executive Committee, a partnership of the

following agencies: Southern Tier 8, Chenango United Way, Chenango Health Network, Chenango County Planning Department, Chenango County Fire and Rescue, Chenango County Sheriff's Office, Chenango SPCA, and the Norwich City School District, all agreed and preparations for the event began quickly.



The mission which ran from July 11th to July 20th, 2019, provided medical, optometry, dental, and veterinary services at no-cost. In addition, there was no residency or insurance requirements of the patients.

In total, the Norwich site served 1,131 patients (both human and animal) who received 6,160

procedures, equaling \$370,572.74 in no-cost services. At the Cortland site, 2,477 patients (both human and animal) received 15,121 procedures, equaling \$768,309.28 in no-cost services. The mission overall served 3,608 patients, receiving 21,281 procedures, with a total value of \$1,138,882.02 in no-cost services

Community organizations also provided additional services during the Greater Chenango Cares IRT. The Lourdes Mobile Dental Van, was on-site for 10 days, and provided 125 dental cleanings at no-cost to the patients. A value of approximately \$14,000.

The Lourdes Mobile Mammography van provided mammograms to 11 individuals at no-cost to the patients. A value of approximately \$7000.



Other community organizations who provided information and services to the public were, Chenango Health Network, Fidelis, Catholic Charities of Chenango County, Chenango County Veterans Services, and the US Census Bureau.

In addition, 175 volunteers provided approximately 1,398 volunteer hours during the two-week mission. Volunteers provided service as intake and outtake volunteers, waiting room attendants, assisted with water distribution, patient runners, greeters,

parking lot attendants, etc., proving volunteerism is still alive and well in Chenango County.

An application for IRT Engineering has been submitted for Chenango County by Southern Tier 8 for 2021. For additional pictures and stories from previous missions, visit: <https://www.facebook.com/GreaterChenangoCares/> or <https://www.dvidshub.net/feature/IRTCortlandChenango>.

2020 Census

The 2020 Census will be extremely important to Chenango County because of the many ways US Census information is used. Census data is used to calculate representation at the Federal, State, and Local levels (including our own weighted voting system at the Board of Supervisors), used to distribute Federal and State funding to schools, fire departments, and hospitals, and to determine the needs of the population and gaps in services.

In our office, we use the Census information as background data when applying for grants and to track population trends when planning for the future direction of Chenango County.

To make sure Chenango County is counted, in May, the Planning Department reached out to various organizations regarding the creation of a Chenango County Complete Count Committee in partnership with the US Census Bureau. A collaborative including representatives from the County Planning Department, Area Agency on Aging, CDO Workforce, DCMO BOCES, Chenango Links, Guernsey Library, The Evening Sun, US Census Bureau, and other community volunteers has met multiple times to discuss opportunities and ideas to promote the 2020 Census to Chenango County residents.

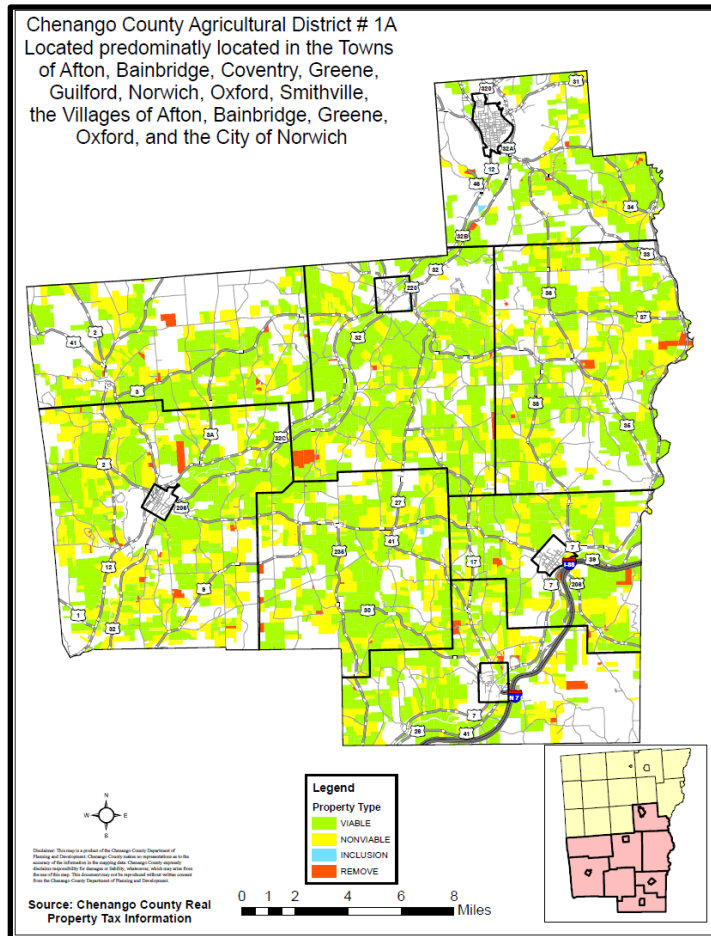
Outreach so far has included a presentation to the Chenango County Board of Supervisors, press releases in The Evening Sun, social media outreach, and information available on the county website. The Planning Department has applied for funds to provide greater outreach in 2020. We anticipate notification of an award in January with implementation shortly thereafter.



Agriculture

Eight-Year Review of Ag District #1A

In 2019, the Chenango County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board conducted the eight-year review of Chenango County Agricultural District #1A.



Article 25-AA of the Agriculture & Markets Law provides for a locally initiated mechanism at the county level in the creation, modification and approval of Agricultural Districts. Accordingly, counties manage the preliminary stages of creation or modification of an Agricultural District. Thereafter, the Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets certifies that a district meets the purpose and intent of the Agricultural District Law after the county submits a resolution approving or modifying a district.

Per Section 303-a, review of existing Agricultural Districts are conducted every eight years from the anniversary date of district formation. During this eight year review period parcels may be added or removed from the district.

As part of the review, the Planning Department sent 3,880 worksheets to landowners currently in the district. Of those, the 1,101 responses were sorted and used to determine if the property was still being used for farming, consists of viable or nonviable farmland, or if the property owner wishes to be removed from the district. Worksheets returned with "Please Remove", "Not Used for Farming", etc., were removed from the district. Property owners that did not respond and whose properties are less than one (1) acre were also removed.

The results from the data showed that District #1A is composed of 63.8% viable farmland. This keeps the district above the 50% required by New York State Ag and Markets. The data was extrapolated to provide estimates of 101,637 acres in farms, 1,660 farms in the district, 93,937 acres farmed, and 7,700 acres rented and farmed. This

information was compared to the 2011 review of Ag District #1A to show that 1932 acres were added to the district.

Ag District Inclusions

Also as part of Article 25-AA of Agriculture & Markets Law, Section 303-b, the Chenango County Planning Department administers a 30-day inclusion period from February 1st to March 3rd (depending on how weekends fall on the calendar) where interested farmers can request adding land or removing land from one of the three locally approved, state certified Agricultural Districts.

For the 2019 inclusion period, four parcels totaling 272.61 acres were added to Agricultural District #1A and 3A.

Ag Tour for Legislators

The Chenango County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board held their 9th Annual Chenango County Ag Tour for Legislators on Friday, July 26th. The purpose of the Ag Tour for Legislators is to give representatives a first-hand look at agriculture in Chenango County. The tour allows our producers to connect and share their success stories, and struggles, with federal, state and local representatives who could offer help and support.



The first stop on the tour was SOVA Organic Farms located in Norwich. SOVA, which stands for “Stewards of Vast Abundance”, has certified organic soy-free eggs, pastured hens, pigs and goats. The property also has a 19th century home that was part of the

Underground Railroad, which acts as a bed and breakfast. The group was able to see how SOVA Farms processes their chickens for sale and look at their cold storage system.



The second stop on the tour was Kutik’s Everything Bees located in Oxford. We visited the newly constructed facility that processes the honey. The building was constructed to house larger extruders for honey processing. An addition to the old facility now houses a gift shop. Kutik’s

new construction not only increases production, but can also be used for education on bees and beekeepers. Kutik’s had been visited on a tour two years prior, but it was nice

to compare the changes and continued success Kutik's has had. Kutik's was nice enough to provide lunch on this year's tour and provide samples of ice cream from Gilligan's made with Kutik's honey.

The third and final stop was Peila View Farms located in Oxford. Peila View Farms recently started offering a corn maze experience. Last year was the first year of the corn maze and the Peila's had 3,000-4,000 visitors. This year's maze encompasses 9 acres and a theme that pays homage to the 80th anniversary of The Wizard of Oz. In addition to the corn maze is a petting zoo, hay bale climb and other activities for kids.

There were 34 attendees including four representatives from New York State including NYS Senator James L. Seward and NYS Assemblywomen Donna Lupardo, six Town Supervisors, one from the Future Farmers of America, among other local and regional representatives from agriculture and farm related agencies.

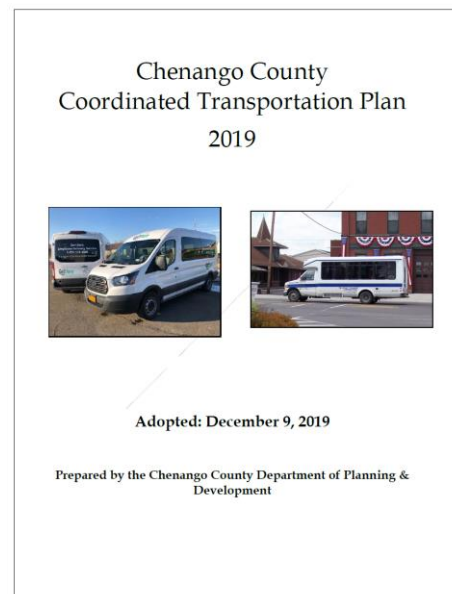
Transportation

Coordinated Transportation Plan

Since late 2017, the Planning Department has been contracted by the Rural Health Network of South Central New York to provide support and development of rural transportation and mobility services in Chenango County. A milestone in the 2019 contract was to develop a Coordinated Transportation Plan for Chenango County.

To that end, the Planning Department convened a Transportation Coordination Work Group, inviting transportation providers, service providers and organizations, Commerce Chenango, County Government, and other community members to take part in meetings generally held quarterly or more frequently as needed, to talk about transportation issues and ideas across the County. The Transportation Coordination Work Group has been used to review the plan and assist with developing goals and strategies brought to light during the development of the plan.

In 2017 and early 2018, the Planning Department implemented a Chenango County Community-Based Transportation survey. 180 responses were received from County residents, employers, and service/program providers. An additional survey was developed in 2019 but responses were limited and not tabulated. The information was used to develop the plan.



The Planning Department used the data collected through the outreach meetings and surveys, paired it with US Census Bureau statistics, and generated a Coordinated Transportation Plan for Chenango County, providing a more in-depth overview of the status of transportation in Chenango County and what can be done to consolidate efforts.

The plan was presented to the Planning & Economic Development Committee and approved by the Board of Supervisors on December 9, 2019.

Energy

Clean Energy Communities Project

Chenango County was awarded a Clean Energy Communities Grant for \$150,000 from NYSERDA to undertake energy upgrades to reduce the carbon footprint at the County Office Building. The project will be completed by March 31, 2021.

Housing

Housing Grants

Chenango County, with sub-recipient Opportunities for Chenango, Inc., submitted and was awarded a \$500,000 NYS Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for the Chenango County Housing Rehabilitation Program. The grant, which will run through 2021, or until funds are expended, will assist a minimum of (16) low-moderate income owner-occupied households across Chenango County in correcting serious threats to health and safety issues to homeowners.

An additional CDBG application for the Chenango County Homeownership IX Program has been submitted to NYS and an announcement on whether or not Chenango County was awarded is pending.

Technical Assistance

General Municipal Law 239-Reviews

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.

There were 43 239-reviews in 2019, down from 2018, but in line with the yearly average.

Planning Board Training

Members of our local Planning and Zoning Boards are required to have at least four hours of training each year to serve on their respective boards. In an effort to train as many members as possible, the Planning Department invites Local Government Trainers from the NYS Department of State to come to Chenango County and provide four hours of training on a variety of planning topics.

Each year we try to pick unique topics relating to experiences our Planning and Zoning Board members may encounter. This year's training covered two topics; State



Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and Solar Energy Regulation. Solar facilities have been expanding around the county in large numbers and we thought it was prudent for our Planning and Zoning Boards to understand regulations and best practices for development. We had 45 people from across the region attend the training!

Looking Forward to 2020

- 2020 Census Outreach
- Administration of Airport Grants for Lt. Warren E. Eaton Airport.
- Chenango County Multi-Jurisdictional All Hazards Mitigation Plan Update - Awarded \$112,500 from NYS DHSES
- Chenango County Housing Rehabilitation Program - Awarded \$500,000 with Sub-Recipient Opportunities for Chenango, Inc.
- Transportation to Employment Program (Contract with Getthere)
- And whatever else comes our way!

Workforce Development

Consultant: Steve Palmatier

I worked on many beneficial projects and programs in 2019, here are some notable highlights:

RoboRave 2019

A collaborative project between the Oxford Academy and Central Schools and Unadilla Valley School District, hosted in Oxford, NY, RoboRAVE NY is a competition featuring challenges involving Robots for students from second grade to adults. In some of these competitions Robots are designed to perform tasks (navigating a maze, follow a line pattern, joust, extinguish candles, sumo wrestle and deliver a set number of ping pong balls to a container. Other competitions include a “Shark Tank” style event where competitors pitch an idea for a robot that can solve a task that might be commercialized, Robo Ethics, an Oxford Style Debate on a topic selected by RoboRAVE International and a student art show around a locally selected theme.



Started in 2018 with 48 students participating from regional schools, the event expanded in 2019 to over 175 students attending including two teams from France and one from Colombia. One team from Oxford was also sent to the international competition in Albuquerque, NM, while another team went to Kaga, Japan to participate in the Sumo Wrestling Event.

Oxford will continue to host RoboRAVE NY in 2020 with signups already occurring. A blended team of young men and women from UV and Oxford will be sent to the San Francisco Bay event this spring.

Activities like this are important to our County, exposing students to technology that they will encounter in the workplace, allowing them to meet and interact with students from other countries and to compete in solving a problem; a true 21st Century skill. In

addition events like this help regional companies recruit and retain employees with children, giving them exposure to the type of event usually seen in more urban areas.

SUNY Morrisville Manufacturing Workforce Development Institute

Developed during 2018, this program saw significant growth in 2019 and continues to expand into 2020. Using a Blended Learning Model, SUNY Morrisville in collaboration with the Society of Manufacturing Engineers delivers general or job specific training, either at the worksite or one of the Morrisville campuses.

In 2018, instruction was provided to 12 students. In 2019, instruction was delivered to over 20 students at regional companies and provided training to 15 unemployed/under-employed Chenango County residents at two boot camps at the SUNY Morrisville Norwich Campus.

I was particularly pleased with outcomes for these participants with at least 12 obtaining and keeping jobs in manufacturing with local companies.

Unadilla Valley CSD Engineering/Manufacturing Lab Buildout

Assistance was provided to Will Rexroat, technology teacher at UV, in selecting a CNC Milling Machine and Lathe while at the SME Eastec show in West Springfield Massachusetts. At the same time, I introduced him to members of the SME Foundation which is the arm of the organization focused on education. This may lead to UV being designated as the third SME Prime School in New York State.



Looking Forward to 2020

For 2020, I plan on supporting the growth of the above programs while looking for additional opportunities.

One of these, the creation of a Center for Rural Entrepreneurship, which could, in my opinion, have the greatest impact on the regional economy and creation of wealth. I started preliminary discussions on this with SUNY Morrisville, The Upstate Institute at Colgate University and a number of regional economic development entities in November.

The nascent vision is a space where people with business or product ideas can come together, exchange skills and experiences, share office and support space and have equipment available to develop a product at least through the proof of concept / prototype phase. This is a model that is found in many of the larger cities in our region that needs to be scaled for our smaller rural communities.

I also represent Chenango County on a number of boards and committees in the region including:

- The SUNY Morrisville Advisory Norwich Campus Advisory Board
- Startup NY regional BOD
- Export NY regional BOD
- Chenango Memorial Hospital BOD
- Chenango County Blues Festival BOD
- NYS Department of Labor STEAM Council
- REDC Workforce Development Subcommittee
- Chenango County United Way ALICE Population Task Force

In addition I am a member of the following organization:

- The Society of Manufacturing Engineers
- The Council on Adult and Experiential Learning
- International Business Innovation Association
- The New York State Education Association

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.