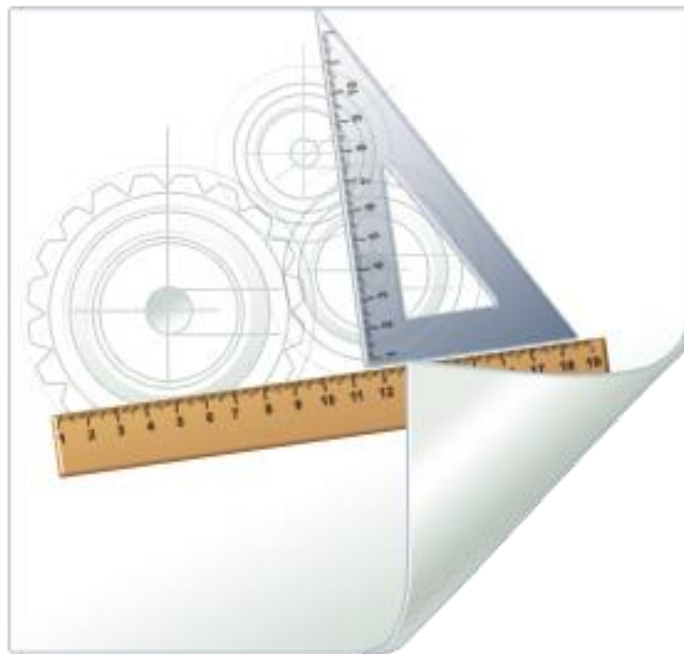


# **Annual Report 2012**



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

***Mission Statement***

*The Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development serves to promote the sound and orderly economic and physical growth of Broome County and its constituent municipalities. It provides technical planning guidance and assistance to the County Executive and County Legislature and implements projects and programs designed to improve the economy, environment, and physical infrastructure of the county. The department extends professional services to local municipalities and other public and private entities in the areas of land use planning and zoning, grantsmanship, economic development, cartography, community assistance, research and infrastructure development.*

## **2012 Staff**

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### ***Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development***

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Elaine Miller

### ***Planning and Economic Development***

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Frank Evangelisti, Chief Planner  
Lora Zier, Senior Planner  
Beth Lucas, Senior Planner  
Lori Darling, Senior Account Clerk  
Beverly Townsend, Keyboard Specialist

### ***Geographic Information System***

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Douglas English, GIS Administrator  
Joseph Gaynor, GIS Specialist  
Brian Damour, GIS Technician

### ***Environmental Management Council***

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Administered by Beth Lucas, Senior Planner

### ***Binghamton Metropolitan Transportation Study***

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Cynthia Paddick, Executive Director  
Nancy Dutta, Traffic Engineer  
John Sterbentz, PTP, Transportation Analyst  
Scott Reigle, PTP, Senior Transportation Planner  
Jennifer Yonkoski, Senior Transportation Planner  
David Galindez, Account Clerk

## **2012 Overview**

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Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development begin the year with an ambitious agenda driven by a set of objectives established by staff and County Administration. Many of the objectives were accomplished during 2012, however; a significant amount of staff time was diverted to tasks associated with the historic flooding that resulted from Tropical Storm Lee in September 2011. Tens of thousands of residents and businesses were impacted by the flooding as the Susquehanna River reached a record crest, spilling over the flood walls and flood gates that have protected our community for nearly a century. In the City of Binghamton alone, 20,000 residents were ordered to evacuate and all roads in the city were closed to traffic as the Susquehanna River rose 11 feet above flood level, sending water toppling over retaining walls, bridges, and into the downtown area. Binghamton was cut off and closed down. Major roads that people traveled on everyday were completely flooded. The Towns of Conklin, Kirkwood, Vestal, and Union were also significantly impacted.

The Office of Planning and Economic Development participated in a major effort to provide assistance to business owners and operators in cleaning, repairing, and rebuilding their properties so that they could once again open their doors and conduct business. Assistance was also provided to local farmers impacted by flooding. This was accomplished through the administration of three grant programs funded through the NYS Office of Community Renewal under the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Relief Program, CDBG-DR.

Another major initiative undertaken in 2012 involved the Department's participation in the planning for a high-tech transfer incubator, including development of a business plan and securing funding through the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) and the Economic Development Administration, (EDA). The CFA resulted in an award of \$7 million for construction of the Incubator. An award from the EDA is anticipated in 2013. This funding is in addition to \$2 million committed by the Industrial Development Agency in 2012.

Building on the momentum of these and other accomplishments, the Department has adopted an ambitious agenda for the upcoming year. The following is a list of 2013 work plan highlights, followed by more details regarding the activities and accomplishments from 2012.

## **2013 Work Plan Highlights**

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- **Southern Tier High Tech Incubator**
  - The Office of Planning and Economic Development will continue to participate with a team of stakeholders to oversee the continued development and construction of the new incubator in downtown Binghamton.
  
- **Broome County Land Bank**
  - The Department will manage a land bank established to purchase, hold, manage, and/or develop tax foreclosed properties with the intention of stabilizing neighborhoods and other economic development purposes. It is envisioned that the Land Bank will function in a strategic fashion to facilitate the redevelopment of distressed properties with a focus on brownfield sites.
  
- **Community Development Assistance for Small Commercial Centers**
  - The Department will continue to collaborate with the *Western Broome Roundtable*, established in September 2012. In 2013, the Department will establish a downtown revitalization program with other small village centers such as Windsor, Deposit, Whitney Point, and possibly Lisle and Harpursville. The Department plans to pursue funding from local and state sources to assist the small commercial centers in their revitalization efforts.

- **Farmers Market**
  - The Department will continue to implement plans to construct a year-round Regional Farmers' Market at Otsiningo Park.
- **Microenterprise Grant Program**
  - The Department will begin to implement a \$200,000 loan program designed to stimulate the creation and expansion of microenterprises for the purpose of creating and/or retaining jobs for persons from low- and moderate- income families.
- **Greater Binghamton Innovation Center**
  - The Department will continue to manage the downtown facility, including staffing, budgeting, promotion, building concerns, and tenant recruitment
- **Hotel Motel Tax**

The Department will continue to manage the hotel/motel fund for Marketing and Economic Development and brownfield cleanup and redevelopment.
- **Planning and Implementation for Regional Waterfront and Trail Development**
  - Advance the Conklin Multi-use Trail project and Signage Plan - Assist with development of pedestrian and bicycle facilities through a corridor along Broome County Parkway and Powers Road across NY State Route 7 and into Schnurbush Park.
- **Flood Mitigation**
  - Complete a Hazard Mitigation Plan Update; maintain an advisory committee to oversee implementation of the plan; begin implementation the plan's recommendations.
  - Complete a Watershed Strategy, prioritizing the 3 worst flooding areas where an engineering solution appears to be a good choice. Implement the strategy.
  - Complete an investigation of high hazard dams and implement improvements where warranted.
  - Continue to lead the Flood Task Force.
  - Continue flood grant program to businesses until funds are depleted.
  - Manage a \$600,000 grant fund from NYS ESD for stream bank stabilization projects. This activity will continue throughout 2013 and will be coordinated with the Broome County Soil and Water Conservation District.
- **Comprehensive Planning/Land Use**
  - The Department will complete development a County-Wide Comprehensive Plan.
  - Continue the Department's role in land use reviews consistent with *NYS General Municipal Law (GML) §239 l, m and n*, which requirement seeks to promote coordination of land use decision-making and to enhance consideration of potential inter-municipal and county-wide impacts. The Department receives approximately 175-225 submittals annually.
- **Implementation of Environmental Remediation Programs and Projects**
  - EJ Industrial Spine Corridor Brownfield Opportunity Area - Apply for funding and begin project administration for Phase II environmental assessments, as well as architectural and engineering services, at 48 Corliss Avenue and 59 Lester Avenue in Johnson City
  - Brandywine Corridor Brownfield Opportunity Area - Complete the Nomiination Study and initiate the application for a Implementation strategy.
  - Complete the remediation of 312 Maple Street through NYS Environmental Restoration Program funds and the recently awarded EPA Cleanup grant

- ***Continue Historic Preservation and Revitalization Technical Assistance***
  - Complete a Multiple Resource Survey of the industrial properties of Broome County for National Register consideration
  - Direct and coordinate the local and state designation process for official designation of all or parts of Broome County in the Susquehanna Heritage Area program
- ***Continue to provide GIS data services and technical support***
  - Provide in-depth technical assistance to the Board of Elections for the creation of new Election Districts
  - Provide census data, analysis, and technical assistance to the Legislature for the upcoming redistricting of the County Legislative Districts
- ***Open Space Resource Inventory***
  - Organize and publish the numerous open space resource materials that have been collected by the Environmental Management Council
- ***Town and Village Board Visitation Program***
  - The Department will accompany the County Executive on a monthly visitation program to each Town and Village in an effort to exchange information and provide improved communication.

## ***Staffing***

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Staffing levels in the Office of Planning and Economic Development has been significantly reduced over the previous three years, with the most recent reduction having occurred at the end of 2011 by the elimination of a half-time position supported by the department and housed at the Broome County Industrial Development Agency. However, the Department continues to deliver a variety of existing and new initiatives despite these reductions. This has been accomplished in part by a highly educated, experienced staff, as well as contracting out tasks when necessary. It will be important to maintain our staffing level in the coming years in order to continue to provide high quality services to the County and to County Municipalities. It is also important to maintain an adequately funded “contractual services” budget to obtain necessary technical services that cannot be accomplished in-house.

## ***Boards and Memberships***

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Planning staff continued to serve on numerous boards and committees in 2012. These include:

- Southern Tier Economic Partnership (STEP)
- BCIDA – attend meetings and liaison
- Livable Communities Alliance Steering Committee
- REDC Infrastructure Work Group
- REDC Health Care Work Group
- REDC Regional Sustainability Work Group
- Coordinate Broome County Distressed Properties Committee
- Ag and Farmland Protection Board
- NYS DEC Region 7 Open Space Committee
- Southern Tier East Regional Planning Development Board
- Binghamton Housing Authority – Board
- Broome County Catholic Charities – Board

- BMTS Planning Committee
- BMTS - Board
- City of Binghamton Comprehensive Plan Committee
- Livable Communities Alliance
- Greenway Steering Committee
- Headwaters River Trail
- Aging Futures Partnership
- Greater Binghamton Council of Governments – Department is responsible for organizing meetings, providing agendas and minutes, maintenance of COG website and e-mail list.
- Broome Tioga Storm Water Coalition – Department is responsible for organizing meetings and training opportunities, maintenance of BTSC website, development of new programs and educational materials, and Riverbank Clean-Up program.
- Environmental Management Council – Department is responsible for planning meeting and preparing minutes and agenda's; coordinating with speakers and preparing materials for distribution. The Department provides technical assistance in the development of documents, letters and resolutions, acts as a liaison between the EMC and state and federal agencies and local departments, and maintains the website. Staff also coordinates related events such as Earth Day, Joyce K.L. Smith Environmental photography Competition and Show, and the Riverbank Clean-Up.

## ***Regional Plan Development***

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The Department oversees and administers the development of a variety of regional planning efforts. This service may include partnerships with other municipalities for a funding request and the subsequent administration and coordination of the project.

### **Broome County Countywide Comprehensive Plan**

For the first time in 50 years, the County is undertaking a countywide comprehensive plan. The plan, dubbed 'Building Our Future' will also update the economic development plan that was adopted in 2002 known as the BCPlan. In 2012, we formed a steering committee consisting of representatives of higher education, workforce development, the Office for the Aging, Public Works, the agricultural community, rural villages and urban centers. Over 1,000 residents responded to the comprehensive survey, and Planning Staff met with two dozen stakeholder groups to gather input. E.M. Pemrick was hired to prepare the economic development chapters of the plan. 'Building Our Future' will be completed in mid-2013.



### **Hazard Mitigation Plan**

This year the Department began the process of updating the Multi-jurisdictional All-Hazard Mitigation Plan for the County and its municipalities. The current plan is scheduled to expire in early 2013 and therefore is required to be updated this coming year. This plan is an opportunity to detail a variety of potential hazards that could affect some or all of our residents and will also allow the County and participating municipalities to be eligible for future mitigation funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The goal of the plan is to identify projects that can reduce damages from future natural and non-natural hazards which include Severe Storms, Flooding, and Severe Winter Storms. The study will focus on existing buildings and potential future development, infrastructure, and critical facilities that might be impacted and include a risk assessment and hazard mitigation strategy.

With the assistance of hired consultants, Tetra Tech Inc., the Department began outreach to the local municipal representatives for collection of background data, and initiated risk analysis and assessments. The plan is expected to be completed in early 2013. Once approved by FEMA the Department will work with local municipalities to ensure that it is adopted and therefore they are eligible for future FEMA assistance.

### **Susquehanna Heritage Area Management Plan Amendment**

The Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development in partnership with the Tioga County Department of Economic Development and Planning administers the Susquehanna Heritage Area. The Planning Department is tasked with implementing the goals (preservation, education, recreation, revitalization, marketing and partnerships) and recommendations of the



Susquehanna Heritage Area Management Plan Amendment, completed in 2010, which builds upon previous Plans that have been developed since the Susquehanna Heritage Area was recognized by the New York State legislature in 1982. The goal of the plan is to identify, promote, and develop the historic, cultural, recreational, and natural resources of an expanded Susquehanna Heritage Area, encompassing Broome County and Tioga County in

their entirety. The plan guides the implementation of programs and projects to foster economic revitalization and enhance quality of life throughout the region. In 2012 the Planning Department coordinated and facilitated an amendment of the 1987 Commission Agreement to reflect an expanded boundary and new composition of the Susquehanna Heritage Area Commission to allow the two counties and 39 municipalities to participate in the Commission.

In addition to the three original municipalities, an additional 36 municipalities (and non-profits within those municipalities) are now eligible to apply for funding through the Heritage Area Program of the Environment Protection Fund. In 2012 the Planning Department coordinated the Commission review of Broome County and Tioga County municipal and non-profit projects applying for CFA/EPF (Consolidated Funding Application/Environmental Protection Fund) funding under the Heritage Area, Parks and Historic Preservation categories. Under the direction of the Planning Department, the Commission provided the requisite endorsement for five (5) Heritage Area projects that was necessary for the projects to advance through the grant application process in 2012. Tasked with education, marketing and promoting partnerships, the Planning Department coordinated and facilitated the participation of the Susquehanna Heritage Area in the 2012 NYS Heritage Weekend – a statewide event designed to promote the historical and cultural resources of New York State. The Planning Department continued to update the Susquehanna Heritage Area website which was launched in 2011 with funding from the New York State Heritage Area Program. The project implements a key recommendation of the Susquehanna Heritage Area Management Plan Amendment which calls for the rebranding of the SHA program to reflect the expanded boundary encompassing all of Broome and Tioga Counties. The centerpieces for the rebranding effort are the new logo design and website.

### **Constitution Pipeline**

The Department coordinated presentations on proposed pipeline and participated on review committee for community grant program funded by the Constitution Pipeline. The project involves development of a major transmission pipeline to connect abundant Appalachian natural gas



supplies in northern Pennsylvania with major northeastern markets by 2015. Fifteen miles of the pipeline are proposed to be located in Broome County.

### **Multiple Resource Survey**

The Department completed a county-wide multiple resource survey of industrial properties, which resulted in 2 new designations on the National Register. Nationwide, tax credits are being used to make historic preservation financially feasible on large scale investments and smaller mixed used developments. The multiple Resource Survey will make it easier for properties to apply for designation.

**Broome County Construction Data Reports** – As part of the annual reporting process, the Department prepared the 2012 Construction Data Report. This report, available on the County's website, provides an indicator of countywide growth and development patterns and trends, residential and nonresidential building data from municipalities, and tables and charts documenting annual building permit activity within the municipalities.

### **Municipal Technical Assistance, Training, and Comprehensive Plans**

The Planning Department provides on-going community technical assistance, including the assistance to municipalities drafting or updating comprehensive plans. Assistance varies from the full spectrum of planning services to minor assistance such as mapping and/or community surveys. Highlights for 2012 were as follows:

#### **Municipal Training**

Planning staff has coordinated and conducted training for local government staff and officials for many years. Changes in State law requiring ongoing training for planning commission and zoning board members, along with a reduction in state provided training opportunities due to budget cuts, have made these training programs increasingly important. Topics covered in 2012 were:

- Broome County Comprehensive Plan / SWOT Analysis and Visioning
- Walkable Communities
- State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA)

#### **Village of Whitney Point Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code Update**

The Village of Whitney Point contracted with the Planning Department to update their Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code, which was completed during 2012. Staff completed an extensive field survey of the commercial signage in the Village and presented the findings and recommendations to the Village Board of Trustees. Staff researched and compiled model sign ordinances and took photography of model signage in other communities and presented this material to the Village Board. Staff prepared a survey which was mailed to Village property owners in January 2011 as part of extensive public outreach for community input. In 2012, the Village adopted the new comprehensive plan. This is the eighth municipal



comprehensive plan that the Planning Department has completed in the past 13 years.

### **Community Revitalization**

The Planning Department launched a community revitalization program in 2012 with a focus on historic downtowns in the Villages of Windsor and Deposit and neighborhood business districts in the Town of Union. Partnerships were forged with local volunteer organizations in each community formed around a common goal – redevelopment and revitalization. In September 2012, the Western Broome Roundtable was kicked off, followed by a SWOT analysis and visioning exercises. These efforts will be parlayed into funding requests through the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council in 2013.

### **Town and Village Board Visitation Program**

The Department accompanied the County Executive to Town and Village Board meetings throughout the County over a nine month period. The Visitation program was well received and will continue in the future.

### **NYSERDA “Better Buildings” Program**

The Department received a “Better Buildings” sub-grant from NYSERDA through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (AARA). Issued in connection with NYSERDA’s administration of a portion of a \$40 million Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant competitive award received from the U.S. department of energy (DOE). The Southern Tier will served as a “host community” for NYSERDA’s Green Jobs Green New York (GJGNY).

Broome County was awarded \$725,059, of which \$652,553 was re-granted to NYSERDA for energy audits to save utility expenses and provide financing to retrofit for energy efficiency. The grant covered nine counties and will be completed in the early part of 2013. During 2012, the Department developed a marketing plan for distribution of information to the public. An informational event was held in the fall of 2012 for which 11,000 mailings were sent out. Presentations were made at a luncheon open to the public at no charge on November 13<sup>th</sup> at the Holiday Inn Arena in Downtown Binghamton.

## ***Brownfields***

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### **Endicott-Johnson Brownfield Opportunity Area**

In 2012, Broome County was awarded a \$350,000 grant to begin an Implementation Study for the Endicott-Johnson Brownfield Opportunity Area. A state contract is expected in 2013. This will mark a new phase of the BOA project and will focus on Phase II environmental assessments and architectural and engineering services at 48 Corliss Avenue and 59 Lester Avenue in Johnson City. These prominent brownfield sites have been tied up in bankruptcy proceedings for over a decade. As they have now cleared the courts, the County has the opportunity to foreclose for unpaid property taxes. The final phase of the Endicott Johnson BOA will be a development plan for these significant sites, and a feasibility study for the Goodwill



Theater on Willow Street in Johnson City.

The Implementation Study will build on the Step II Nomination Plan completed in 2009 utilizing a \$155,000 grant from the New York State Department of State. The Planning Department hired Clough Harbour and Associates of Albany, NY to prepare a Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) plan for central Johnson City. This area was once the industrial heart of Broome County, but is now marked by abandoned industrial buildings, a blighting influence on the surrounding area.

### **312 Maple Street Remediation and Redevelopment**

In 2010, The Planning Department was awarded over \$131,000 in funds from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for the remediation of 312 Maple Street in Endicott. The project was one of only 5 cleanup grant awards allocated in New York State for this round of federal funding. Broome County took possession of the property when it foreclosed on LMS of North America, the previous owner. This award brings the total brownfield grant funds secured by Broome County Planning to over \$1,000,000. During the second quarter of 2012, GZA GeoEnvironmental completed their remedial design for the site and implemented an enhanced anaerobic bioremediation. Through this process, a food grade material is pumped through a network of injection wells and this attracts microbes which feed on the contamination breaking it down into harmless constituent components. When the cleanup is complete, the property will once again be on the tax rolls.

### ***Stormwater Management Program***

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

Planning staff managed the Coalition's activities and completed the Coalition's Stormwater Management Plan Program annual report. This report is a compilation of the activities of all regulated municipalities under the state regulations, as well as Coalition wide activities for submittal to the NYSDEC.

As part of meeting these requirements staff coordinated the annual Riverbank Clean-up. The event was held on October 20<sup>th</sup>. Over 75 volunteers participated to collect almost a ton of trash from the County's riverbanks.

In the coming year the group plans to initiate a media campaign to raise awareness about the importance of stormwater management, as well as accompanying educational programming and events. The Coalition also intends to support projects within the regulated communities that support innovative stormwater management practices.

### ***Flood Mitigation and Recovery***

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#### **Broome County Flood Task Force**



The Broome County Flood Task Force continues to serve as a clearinghouse for municipal officials on information related to flood mitigation, floodplain mapping, and flood insurance. For 2012, the Flood Task Force discussed Community Recovery Strategies, funding programs such as the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery program, FEMA Levee Certification Process, analysis of Broome County watersheds, status of stream gauge funding, and recent changes to the National Flood Insurance Program.

### **Broome County Watershed Assessment**

The Planning Department contracted with Woidt Engineering to assess three of Broome County's flood control structures, Finch Hollow Dam 1, Finch Hollow Dam 1A, and the Patterson-Brixus Dam, to ascertain whether they could be improved to provide better flood protection. During the 2011 flood, these structures triggered their spillways for the first time in their history. Woidt Engineering completed their data gathering during 2012 and, they are expected to issue their findings in 2013.

### **2011 Flood Recovery**

Recovery from the devastating floods of 2011 continued throughout 2012. The Planning Department undertook the following recovery initiatives:

- **Flood Mitigation Workshop:** The workshop was held in Union Endicott High School in early 2012. Attendees heard presentations by New York Department of Environmental Conservation, Broome County and Bradford County Soil and Water Conservation Districts and Woidt Engineering, a private consulting firm. Topics included levee and floodwall design, flood insurance, and how streams and rivers function.
- **Open House for Flood Impacted Residents:** Planning Staff coordinated an open house at the BU Events Center to provide flood impacted residents with information on financial assistance, mitigation, flood safety, legal issues, and counseling services. Participating agencies included Catholic Charities, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, FEMA, local law firms, Faith Partners in Recovery, local code officials, Broome County Mental Health, Natural Resources, Conservation Service, New York State Attorney General, New York State Comptroller, Broome County Council of Churches, Project Renew, New York State Office of Emergency Management, ACCORD, and Broome County Social Services.
- **Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery:** Planning Staff completed an intensive needs assessment to assist New York State in allocating approximately \$14 million in flood assistance to local municipalities. Ultimately the State decided to use the entire pool of funds to cover the non-federal share of needed repairs to flood damaged infrastructure. Planning Staff continued to cooperate closely with New York State on the administration of this program.
- **Financial Assistance to Flood Impacted Businesses and Farmers:** Planning Staff administered three grants to provided assistance to flood-impacted businesses and farmers. The grant totals are as follows:

Agricultural and Community Recovery Fund	\$208,470
NY Main Street Program	\$350,000
Community Development Block Grant	\$150,000

## ***Broome County Land Bank***

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In early 2012 Broome County Planning applied for designation as a 'Land Bank'. This is a new economic development tool in New York, but it has been used successfully for redevelopment in many other parts of the country. The initial application for a land bank was rejected by Empire State Development, but County Planning worked on a resubmission which was due to New York State in January of 2013. The goals of the proposed Broome County Land Bank are as follows:

- Stem Disinvestment in the Neighborhoods Surrounding Abandoned Properties
- Protect the Public Health and Safety by Securing and Remediating Abandoned Properties
- Return Vacant, Abandoned, and Tax-Delinquent Properties to Productive Use
- Turn Vacant Spaces into Vibrant Spaces
- Provide a Mechanism for Coordinating Reuse of Flood Impacted Properties, Primarily for Hazard Mitigation Efforts
- Promote Increased Levels of Home Ownership

Through a 'Land Bank', the County can take ownership of distressed properties, and promote their redevelopment through a market based approach.

## ***Regional Farmers Market in Otsiningo Park***

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The long planned regional Farmer's Market in Otsiningo Park took major strides forward in 2012. The Planning Department secured an additional \$100,000 from the Low Income Investment Fund for the construction of the market in the Park. This is added to the \$400,000 New York State Parks grant that Planning secured in 2011. The project is expected to open in 2013.



## ***Land Use Reviews (239)***

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The Department has legal obligation to conduct reviews and render advisory opinions on land-use proposals covered under NYS General Municipal Law 239 (l) and (m). The Department reviewed more than 200 cases in 2012. The most significant projects reviewed by the Department in 2012 were as follows:

- Rezoning and SEQR Full Environmental Assessment Form Review for the rezoning of a 45-acre portion of property along NYS Route 12 from Agricultural to Planned Development District Commercial for future commercial development within the 45-acre change of zone in the Town of Chenango.
- Site Plan Review, Area Variance and Special Use Permit (Aquifer Permit) Review for the reuse of industrial property for National Pipe and Plastics, Inc., a PVC Pipe extrusion company with storage of petroleum products, area variances for height and setbacks of structures in the Town of Union.
- Village of Whitney Point Comprehensive Plan Adoption and SEQR Full Environmental Assessment Form Review following completion of the Comprehensive Plan Update by the Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development.

- Site Plan Review for the development and operation of a distribution center for road salt transfer from storage to railroad cars delivering product to New England states in the Town of Conklin.
- Town of Chenango Adoption of Local Law: Town of Chenango Road Preservation Law.

## ***Geographic Information System (GIS) Administration***

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### **Online Presence**

The GIS Unit continues to provide a robust GIS website with both static and interactive maps. In 2012, the site received nearly 160,000 visits. When viewed in the context of all county web pages, we ranked third for all of 2012, with only the County's home page and B.C. Transit ranking higher. Throughout the year, some of the following enhancements were made to the site:

- *Unified Parcel Information System (UPIS)* - The UPIS saw the addition of the 2011 (urban) and 2012 (rural) NYS aerial photos, election districts, polling places, primary aquifer, and updates to the county legislative districts layer. The ability to label a coordinate point was added as well.
- *Online Map Collection* - Additional maps were added to the Online Map Collection in 2012. A Natural Gas Section was added that include the leased property maps that continue to be added monthly. This section also includes a drilling restrictions map based on the draft SGEIS. New county legislative districts, state assembly, state senate, and congressional district maps were added. Finally, several new local election results maps were added for various races.

### **County Departments**

The GIS Unit continues to support nearly all county departments in some capacity with mapping, data, and analysis. Some highlights include:

- *Emergency Services* - continued to assign all 911 addresses within the county, including secondary and sub addresses; continued to provide support for NY-Alert addressing requirements; developed river response/rescue tile and overview maps; produced Spedie Fest and Dick's Open vendor layout maps.
- *Real Property* - continued to support tax mapping functions in GIS format; continued to provide PDF tax maps and access to RPS data online through Image Mate at our website.

- *Planning* - provided maps for the comprehensive plan; provided GIS data for the hazard mitigation plan update; mapped unique natural areas; produced maps for the new incubator project.
- *Elections/Legislature* - finalized county legislative district maps from redistricting and made available online; fulfilled many various map and data requests for Elections.

### **City of Binghamton Departments**

The GIS Unit continues to provide GIS and mapping services to City of Binghamton Departments per an inter-municipal agreement. In 2012, an average of nearly 43 hours of service per week was provided in addition to nearly 500 map projects being created. Some highlights include:

- *Police* - continued to provide weekly, monthly, and year-to-date map, charts, and graphs for long term, strategic/administration planning; supported Operation Impact activities; provided support for the establishment of a City Crime Intelligence Center; participated in various meetings.
- *Planning* - provided mapping for the CADE grant; created various Restore-NY maps; mapped the new village urban overlay zoning district.
- *Building and Code* - various building permit, code violation, and vacant property maps provided; FEMA buy-out maps produced.
- *Public Works* - produced and updated a sewer GIS geodatabase for use in Cartegraph.

### **Natural Gas**

The GIS Unit continues to be involved with natural gas-related activities. The natural gas database continues to be maintained with lease and other gas-related information, updated on a monthly basis. PDF maps of leased properties in the county are also created on a monthly basis and placed online. The GIS Unit fulfilled several other natural gas-related mapping requests from area coalitions, among others. Finally, 911 addressing of natural gas infrastructure such as pipelines and compressor stations proceeded.

### ***Environmental Management Council***

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The Broome County Environmental Management Council (EMC), established in 1971 by the County Legislature, serves as a citizen advisory board to county government on environmental matters. The EMC conducts environmental research and planning, reviews environmental plans, reports and impact statements, and helps raise awareness through public participation and

education programs. A Senior Planner provided technical, bookkeeping and other support services.

The EMC hosted a variety of speakers and offered informative presentations. Topics included outreach for the County-wide Comprehensive Plan, the City of Binghamton's Energy and Climate Action Plan, an Overview of the circumstances surrounding the 2011 flood event, an overview of local geological history, a presentation regarding the Green Jobs, Green New York program from Cornell Cooperative Extension, an overview of the operations at Finger Lakes ReUse, a reuse center in Ithaca, and a presentation regarding achieving zero waste at home.

The Natural Resources Committee continued to be a forum for air, land and water issues. Focus areas included open space conservation, air quality issues, and natural gas drilling, among others topics. Members continued work on a Broome County Open Space Plan that aims to identify areas important for natural resource protection. The project is expected to be completed by the end of 2012.

In 2012 the EMC coordinated annual Joyce K.L. Smith Environmental Photography Show & Competition to celebrate Broome County's environment. An opening reception and awards ceremony was held and winning photographs displayed at the Broome County Public Library



The EMC reviewed and commented on significant state regulations, plans and impact statements. This included comments on the Proposed 6 NYCRR Part 247 that addressed setback, height and fuel use limitations, emission limits as well as nuisance provisions for new Outdoor Wood Boilers that have impact throughout the county. The EMC also sent a letter to the NYS Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation commenting on proposed snowmobile use in Chenango Valley State Park.

The EMC continued its collaboration with local educational institutions through a partnership with Binghamton University's Environmental Impact Statements class, attendance at Binghamton University's Fall Volunteer Resource Fair, and engaging local high school students at several meetings. In addition, the EMC sponsored an internship for one undergraduate student.

Once again, the EMC coordinated and participated in the

following Special Events:

- 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Joyce K.L. Smith Environmental Photography Show & Competition – Coordinated by the EMC to celebrate Broome County's environment. There were 325 entries from 109 photographers, and about \$300 in donations to the JKLS Memorial Fund. An opening reception and awards ceremony was held and winning photographs displayed at the Broome County Public Library.
- 27<sup>th</sup> Broome County Riverbank Clean Up – Over 200 volunteers collected more than a ton of debris and trash at locations along the banks of area's





rivers and tributaries. Once again, the event was organized in combination with Ocean Conservancy and the American Littoral Society (ALS).

- EMC members and staff also participated in Earth Day Southern Tier's annual Earth Fest. This event raises awareness about local environmental issues, promotes membership opportunities and recruits volunteers.

## ***Binghamton Metropolitan Transportation Study***

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The Binghamton Metropolitan Transportation Study (BMTS) Policy Committee is designated by the Governor of New York as the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) responsible for meeting Federal transportation planning requirements for the Binghamton region. BMTS staff is hosted by Broome County Government through a contract with the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), and is housed in the Department of Planning and Economic Development.

In 2012, BMTS achieved significant accomplishments across its mandated work in short range planning, long range planning, and project programming.

**Development of the Transportation Improvement Program:** The BMTS Transportation Improvement Program is a five year capital program that includes all of the projects in the metropolitan region that will be funded by the Federal Highway Administration or Federal Transit Administration. The program is typically updated every two years.

The Federal surface transportation program, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, MAP-21, PL112-41 was signed into law on July 6, 2012. It reauthorized the Federal surface transportation program through Federal Fiscal Year 2014. This is the first long term bill that has been passed since 2005. MAP-21 created a streamlined, performance based surface transportation program. It builds on the pedestrian, bicycle and transit policies that were established in 1991. Funding for MAP-21 was authorized for \$105 billion for FFY 2013 and 2014.

BMTS staff along with NYSDOT Region 9 and the BMTS Planning and Policy Committee's began developing the 2014-2018 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) in the fall of 2012, with the adoption of the program scheduled for June of 2013. The goals and objectives of the long range plan, Transportation Tomorrow: 2035 Creating a Sustainable Future guide the committees in prioritizing projects for funding.

Progress was made on some important local projects:

- Court Street Gateway: The Court Street Gateway was completed by the City of Binghamton in the fall of 2012.
- NY 201 over NY 434 and Vestal Road: This project was completed by NYSDOT in the fall of 2012.
- Interstate 86 Designation - NY 17/I-81 at Prospect Mountain: Work on the I86 project started in 2012. Work will continue on the project during 2013 and 2014. Phase two of the project is scheduled to begin in 2015.

**Broome-Tioga Greenride:** With the approval of the BMTS Policy Committee, a decision was made to support the development of a ridesharing website. The firm of Ecology & Environment, Inc of Lancaster NY was selected on the basis



of an RFP. Greenride has continued to grow, and is being marketed to the community through the BMTS website and also by the Mobility Managers that are housed at the United Way of Broome County. BMTS staff has continued outreach to local employers. In addition to Lourdes Hospital and United Health Services, Binghamton University and Delta Engineering are participating in an employer-based portal to Greenride that went live in 2010. Broome Community College has also been contacted and is interested in participating.

**The Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan:** The BMTS Coordinated Transportation Plan was originally completed in March 2007. During 2012 the plan was updated by BMTS staff with advisement by the Coordinated Transportation Committee. It is anticipated that the plan will be approved by the BMTS Policy Committee in early 2013.

**City of Binghamton Traffic Signal Warrants Study:** BMTS staff began work on the evaluation of 82 traffic signals owned by the City of Binghamton to determine if they were still warranted in accordance with the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). An initial list of signals proposed for removal was presented to the City in 2012. The City of Binghamton plans to begin removal of some signals in 2013. BMTS staff will continue to work with the City of Binghamton during this process.

**BMTS Pedestrian Plan Update:** The first BMTS pedestrian and Bicycle Plan was completed in 1996. The BMTS long range plan recommended updating and separating these two plans. The Pedestrian Plan was updated in 2012 with Policy Committee approval anticipated in early 2013.

**Greenway Sign and Design Guide:** Significant progress has been made in funding and constructing portions of the Greater Binghamton Greenway (GBG) multi-use trail system. As the trail pieces begin to connect, especially across municipal boundaries, there is need to articulate how the visiting public will be introduced to trail system. To have this trail system recognized as a regional, contiguous system, it is necessary to create a uniform design and plan for wayfinding, regulatory, warning and interpretive signing. In 2012 BMTS hired Haas Landscaping to develop this plan. During this study with much community support and advisory committee support a new name, "The Two Rivers Greenway" was branded for the trail system. The project produced sign locations, logos and costs. The next step is to construct the signs. The signs will be purchased and installed as a project on the BMTS TIP.

**Emergency Distribution Study:**

This study forecasted traffic conditions that could be expected during a public health emergency event within Broome County, specifically, one that requires the utilization of several designated points of dispensing (POD) locations to distribute medication or provide other health services to the population of the county. The analysis was conducted with the objective of minimizing traffic congestion and reducing travel time requirements for the affected population during this type of event, by optimizing POD site locations and developing traffic plans to increase the efficiency of a planned operation.

In order to estimate probable traffic conditions, the Binghamton Metropolitan Transportation Study's travel demand model was used to forecast traffic volumes, using an operational scenario based on the Broome County Department of Health's (BCDOH) Medical Countermeasure Dispensation Plan. Several alternative operational scenarios were evaluated.

**Traffic Safety Partnerships:** BMTS has ex-officio seats on a number of committees as a consequence of our traffic engineering expertise. These include the Broome County Traffic Safety Board, the City of Binghamton Traffic Board, and the NYSDOT Region 9 Site Impact Review Committee. In each case, these partnerships are designed to improve the safety of the travelling public. BMTS staff is also actively involved in a Statewide Safety Working Group (SWG) comprised of representatives from all of the New York State MPOs.

**Local Accident Rates, Pavement Inventory and Traffic Counts:** BMTS acquires and maintains an extensive data base of traffic accident rates, traffic counts and condition inventory of local roads.

**Pedestrian and Bicycle Planning:** One of BMTS' most active committees is the Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee. This group of volunteers meets monthly to review transportation plans and projects and provide feedback on how improvements can be incorporated that will enhance walkability and rideability, and in turn promote the use of non-motorized modes of travel. Education and promotion of bicycling and walking are also important components of the Committee's activities. Annual pedestrian safety displays at Binghamton Mets baseball games, and assisting the County's Traffic Safety Committee with bicycle safety and skills training (a.k.a. bike rodeos) in schools and the community are examples of outreach events. Perhaps the most popular annual event has been the Binghamton Bridge Pedal rides on the second Sunday of July. For a nominal \$2 registration fee, cyclists of all ages and skill levels enjoy a police escorted ride though downtown Binghamton streets, bridges, and riverside trails while simultaneously learning about historic and significant sites along the way. The inaugural event was held during 2006 and has consistently drawn over one hundred participants annually. The Binghamton Bridge Pedal was held on July 14, 2012.



**Public Health:** BMTS continues to partner with the Broome County Health Department in the Steps to a Healthier NY program. One of the focus areas of the program is physical activity and the contribution it can make to overall health. People are more likely to walk or bike to their destination when the transportation infrastructure provides a safe and convenient way to do so. In addition to promoting the construction of sidewalks and provision of bicycle facilities, BMTS works with local school districts through the Safe Routes to School program. By creating a safe, and sometimes parent supervised route, children can be encouraged to walk or bike.



BMTS Policy Committee Chair: Michael Marinaccio, Supervisor, Town of Dickinson  
BMTS Planning Committee Chair: Robert Bennett, Commissioner of Public Works, Village of Johnson City