

OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES

Sustainability: *Tompkins County should be a place where the needs of current and future generations are met without compromising the ecosystems upon which they depend.*



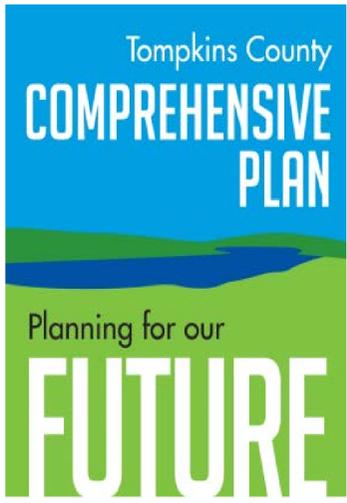
In the Plan, sustainability means preserving biodiversity and natural ecosystems and conserving resources to ensure their ability to sustain future generations. Advancing economic vitality, environmental stewardship, and social equity simultaneously – making sure that advancing one of these does not come at the expense of another.

Regional Cooperation: *Tompkins County should be a place where all levels of government work cooperatively to address regional issues.*

Tompkins is part of a broader geographic area and economic market that influences where we choose to live, shop, and visit.

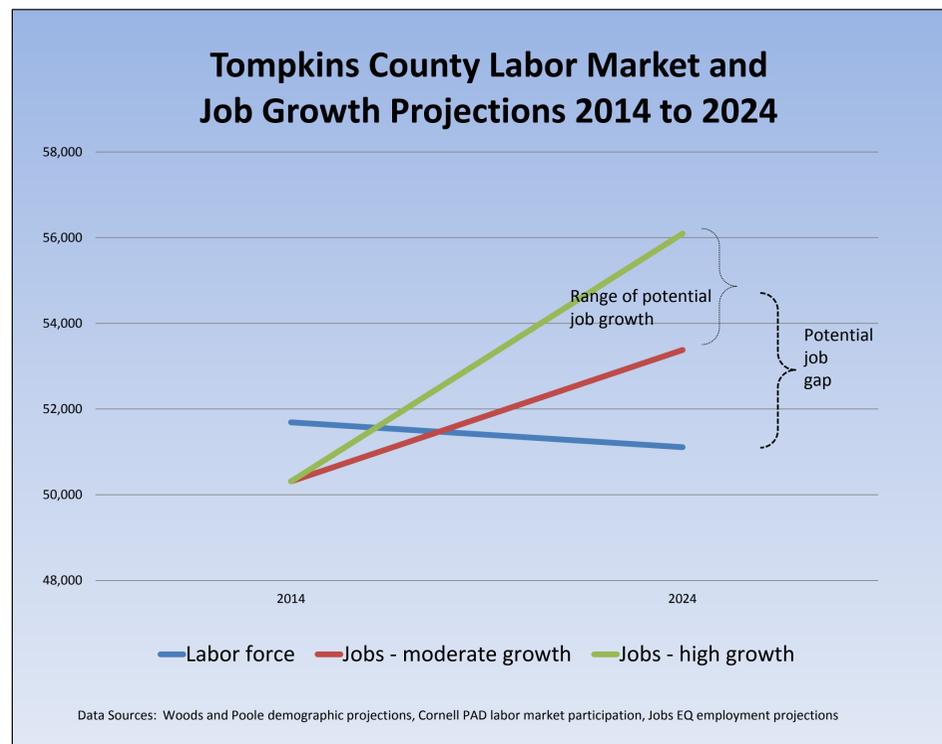
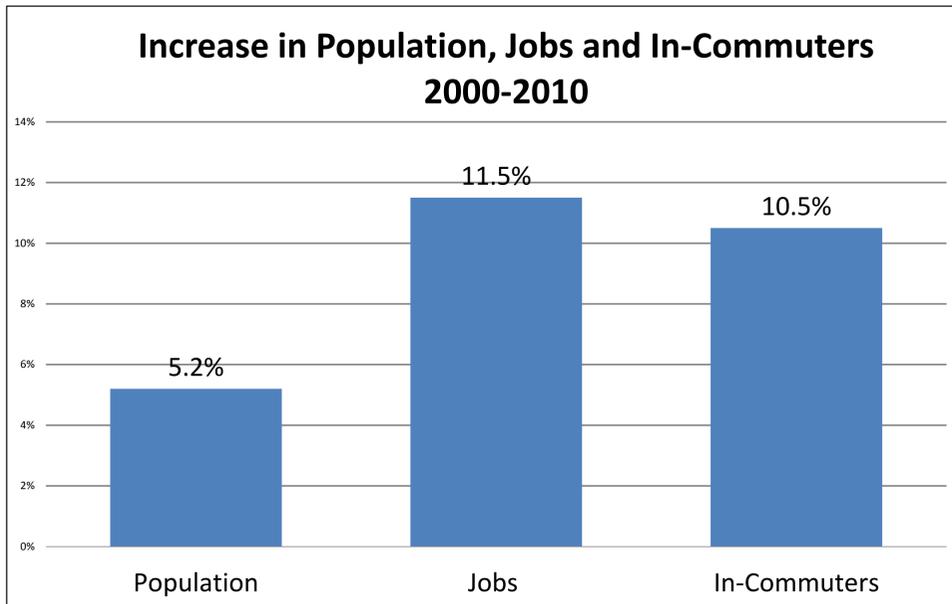
Fiscal Responsibility: *Tompkins County should be a place where taxpayer dollars are invested in public infrastructure and facilities in the most efficient manner possible.*

The County works to maintain a financially sound government for future generations without placing an undue hardship on its taxpayers. The County, towns, villages, and city work together to provide seamless service to residents.



THE ECONOMY

Principle: *Tompkins County should be a place where economic prosperity is accessible to all.*



DIVERSIFICATION: Focus economic development incentives and programs on sectors which hold the strongest potential to grow and diversify the local economy: manufacturing & high-tech, food processing and distribution, agriculture, tourism, and energy.

QUALITY OF LIFE: Encourage development that enhances and does not degrade the natural landscape, sense of place, and community character.

WORKING LANDS: Maintain economically productive rural lands to promote the vitality of rural areas and to preserve the rural character of the community.

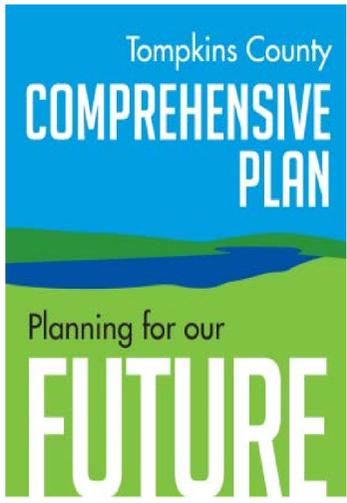
LIVING WAGE: Use economic development activities to encourage payment of a living wage.

LOCALIZATION: Promote the growth of locally-owned businesses to expand access to entrepreneurship opportunities and prosperity for residents.

WORKFORCE: Develop entry level jobs that align with the aspirations of job seekers and provide a sustainable career path through specific training programs.

It is the policy of Tompkins County to:

1. Support economic development that provides high-quality employment opportunities with living wages and benefits.
2. Promote the growth and development of local businesses and encourage the purchase of locally-produced goods and services.
3. Work with institutions of higher education to diversify and expand the local economy and enhance community vitality.
4. Promote innovation and technology transfer and attract and support people working to start and grow competitive businesses.
5. Support quality of life measures that enhance the local business climate and attract employees.
6. Promote development of a strong land-based rural economy.
7. Provide opportunities to all residents to develop the skills necessary to obtain high-quality employment.
8. Ensure the benefits and costs of economic development incentives are distributed equitably and there is an open and transparent process for decision-making.



HOUSING

Principle: *Tompkins County should be a place where housing is affordable, safe, and appealing.*

Housing Statistics for Tompkins County and Surrounding Counties

County	OWNER			RENTAL		
	Home-ownership rate	Median Home Purchase Price	Households with monthly owner costs exceeding 30% of income	Rental vacancy rate	Monthly gross rent exceeding 30% of household income	Median Gross Rent
Tompkins	55.6%	\$190,500*	28.9%	2.3%	57.0%	\$925
Cayuga	71.8%	\$110,000*	27.4%	6.6%	43.0%	\$649
Chemung	67.9%	\$110,000*	22.0%	3.7%	50.5%	\$686
Cortland	66.3%	\$115,500*	27.0%	7.0%	46.0%	\$684
Schuyler	81.1%	\$131,000*	28.4%	7.7%	35.9%	\$587
Seneca	75.0%	\$117,000*	29.7%	5.6%	44.4%	\$657
Tioga	79.9%	\$123,000*	25.8%	3.0%	40.4%	\$607

Sources: 2008-2012 ACS 5-Year Estimate; * 2013 Annual New York Association of Realtors Data

SUPPLY: Build new location-efficient housing units to increase housing supply and meet the housing needs of local workers and residents.

AFFORDABILITY: Improve the affordability of living in Tompkins County.

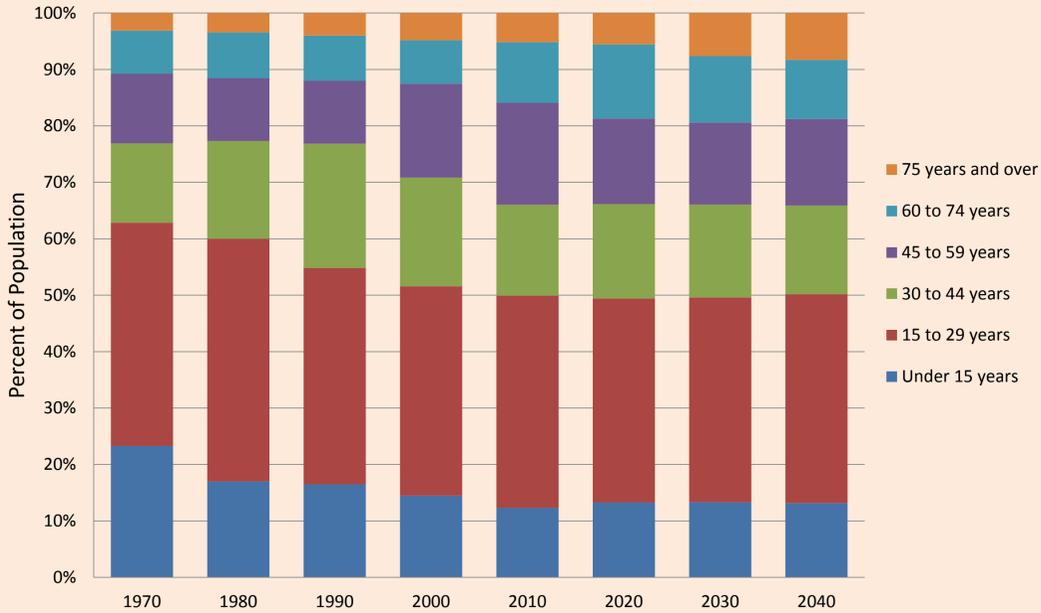
ENERGY EFFICIENCY: Upgrade efficiency of existing homes and promote construction of new energy-efficient housing.

AGING POPULATION: Retrofit existing housing and construct new units to meet the housing needs of the growing population of older adults.

HOUSEHOLD SIZE: Encourage construction of smaller housing units more suitable to shrinking household sizes.

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING: Increase the number of individuals in stable housing and able to live independently.

Age Distribution of Population: 1970 - 2040

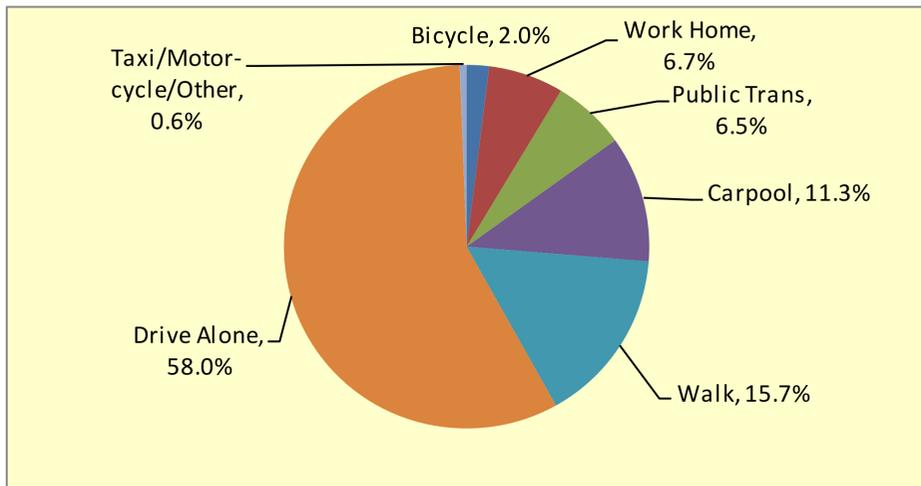


It is the policy of Tompkins County to:

1. Encourage a variety of housing options in development focus areas.
2. Support new development of housing whose total costs, including utility and transportation expenses, are affordable to households with a range of incomes.
3. Promote energy efficient housing.
4. Provide housing options for an aging population.
5. Maintain an adequate supply of housing for people requiring supportive services.
6. Improve the existing housing stock.

TRANSPORTATION

Principle: *Tompkins County should be a place where transportation choices are efficient, affordable, and healthy for people and the environment.*



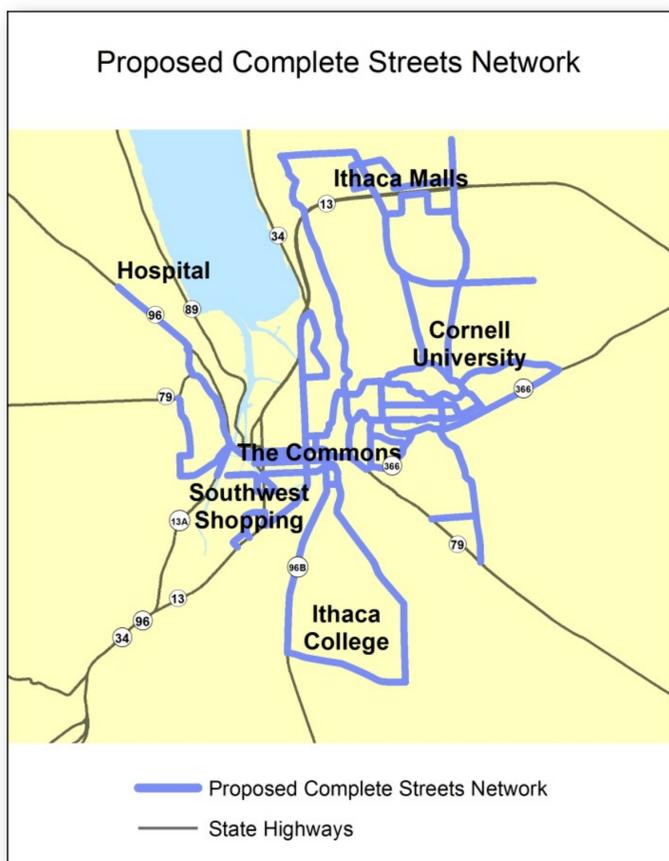
FOCUS INVESTMENT: Invest public funds in the most critical elements of existing transportation infrastructure and increase investment in facilities to support alternative modes.

SHIFTING FROM DRIVING ALONE: Expand the number and length of trails and bike lanes, and explore innovative carpooling programs.

COMPLETE STREETS: Construct a street network that is designed to provide safe access for people of all ages and abilities who walk, bike, drive, or use the bus.

AIR SERVICE: Promote the airport as a convenient and affordable place to fly into and out of and as a way to support the local economy.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS: Maintain focus on reducing the number of vehicle miles traveled while building a network of electric vehicle charging stations and working with consumers to purchase efficient vehicles.

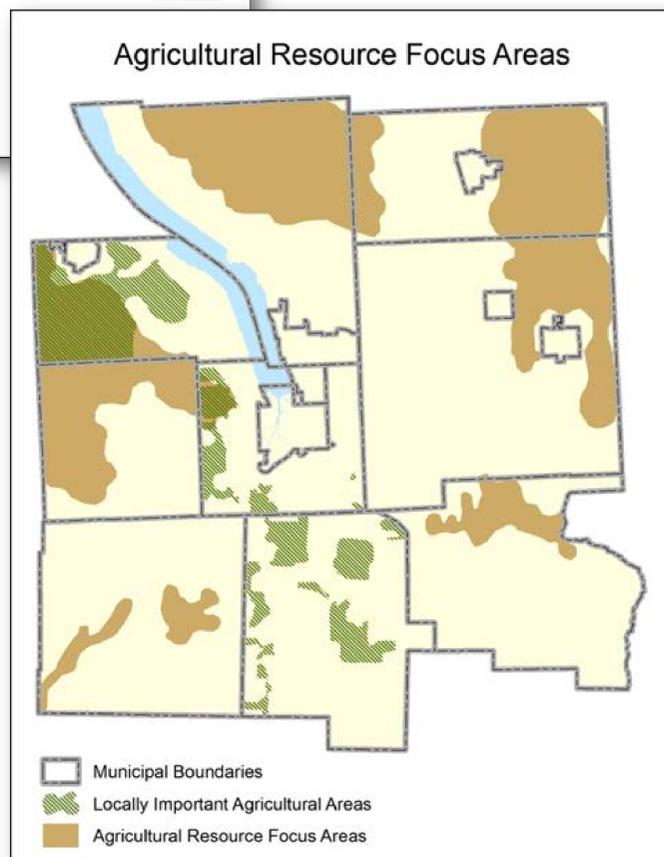


It is the policy of Tompkins County to:

1. Maintain and improve critical elements of the existing transportation network to support the safe movement of people and goods.
2. Reduce the use of fossil fuels in transportation.
3. Shift travel away from driving-alone to biking, walking, carpooling/ ridesharing, and using public transit.
4. Support a pattern of land use that allows people to move efficiently and affordably.
5. Provide for the safe and effective movement of freight to, from, and within the county.
6. Continue to provide airport services that support community and business needs.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Principle: *Tompkins County should be a place where natural features and working rural landscapes are preserved and enhanced.*



FRAGMENTATION: Work to reduce development along rural roads in the Natural Features Focus Areas to help decrease the fragmentation of rural landscapes and wildlife corridors.

ACCESS: Improve access to the region's natural areas to allow more people to enjoy the recreational opportunities these resources provide.

FARMLAND: Support active use of farmland which is increasingly threatened by encroaching development and reversion to forest.

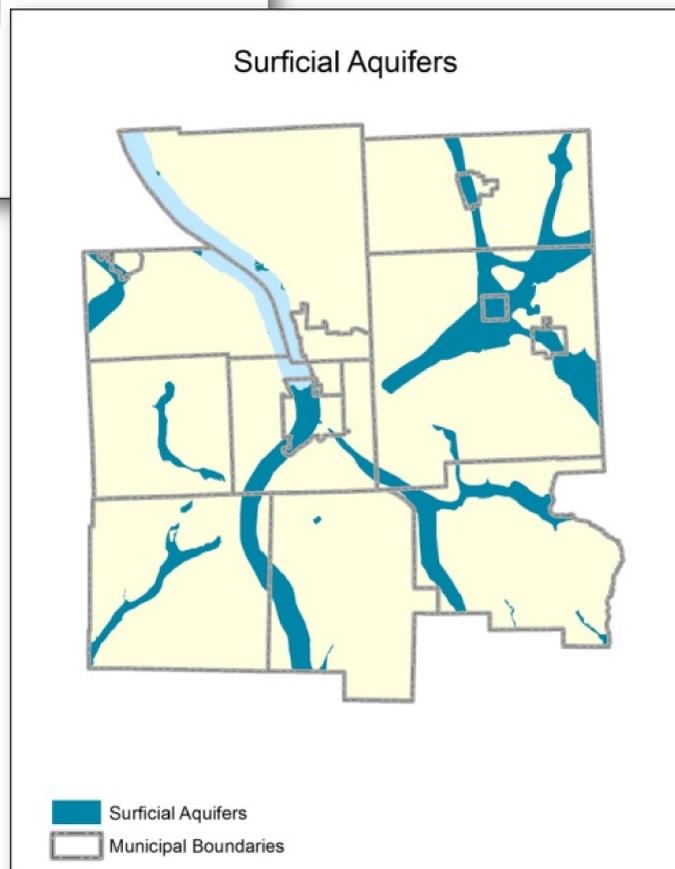
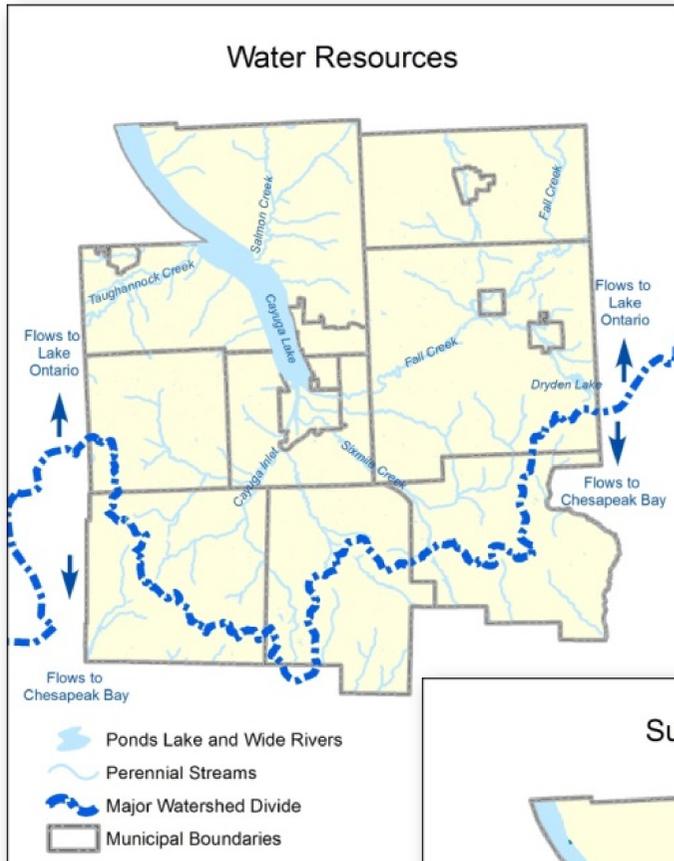
UNWELCOME VISITORS: Actively monitor the expansion of invasive plants, insects and animals into and within the region and conduct activities to control associated adverse impacts.

It is the policy of Tompkins County to:

1. Preserve natural features and ecosystems, especially within the Natural Features Focus Areas.
2. Protect farmland within the Agricultural Resource Focus Areas for agricultural use.
3. Reduce the adverse impacts to native species and ecosystems caused by climate change, including invasive organisms.
4. Promote best management practices that protect natural resources and productive working lands.
5. Improve public access to outdoor recreation resources and opportunities.

WATER RESOURCES

Principle: *Tompkins County should be a place where water resources are clean, safe, and protected.*



CAYUGA LAKE WATER QUALITY:

Continue to stay abreast of any potential actions by DEC to address the amount and concentration of phosphorus in the southern end of Cayuga Lake.

STREAM CORRIDORS: Establish stream corridors to protect water quality, stabilize stream banks, and trap sediment and nutrients in runoff.

WETLAND PROTECTION: Preserve wetland functions: filtering toxins, nutrients, and sediment; temporarily storing floodwaters; providing valuable habitat for diverse species; and maintaining water flow during dry periods.

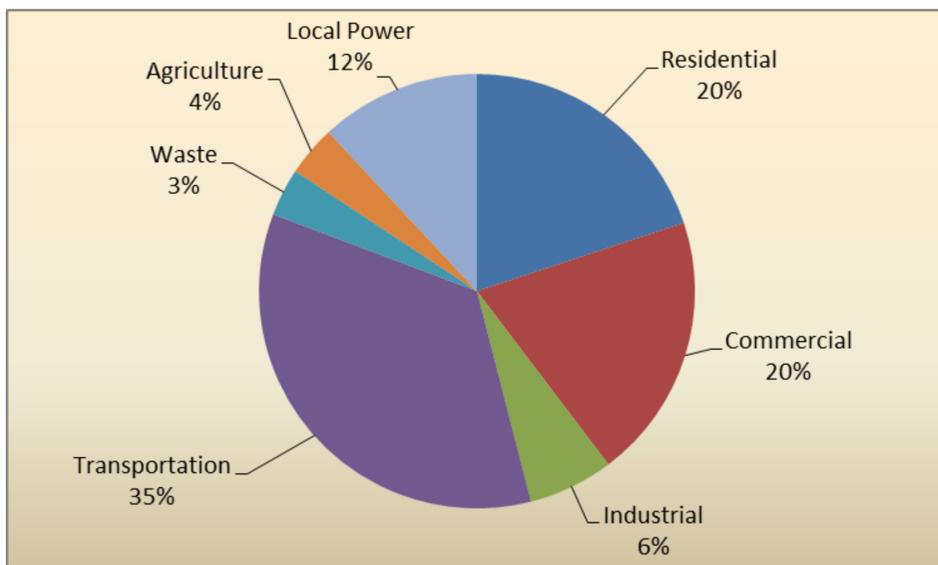
AQUIFER RECHARGE AREAS: Work with local municipal officials to protect identified aquifer recharge areas.

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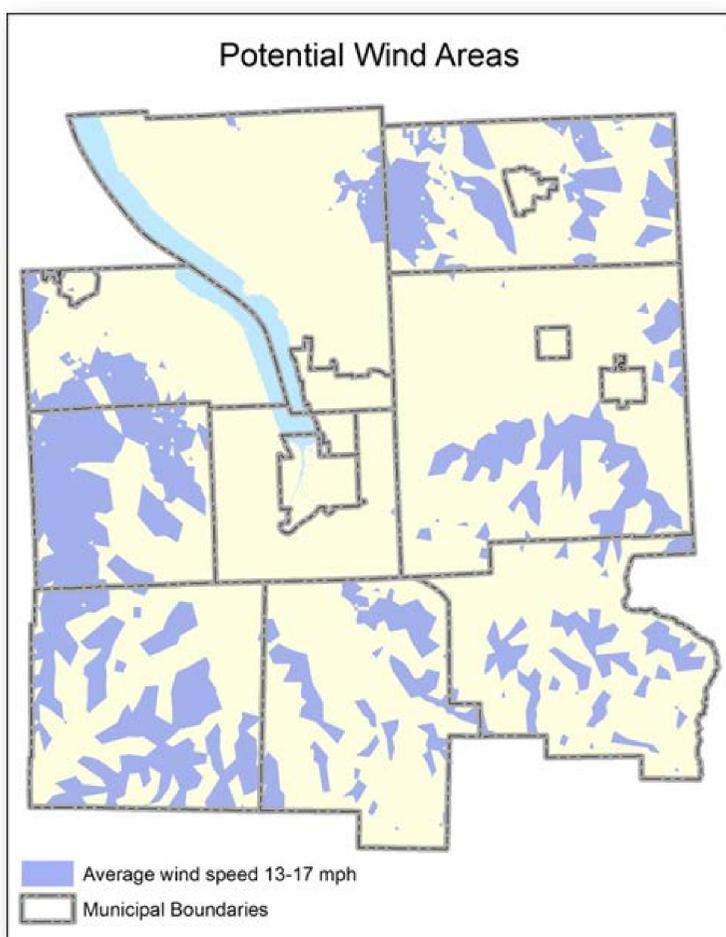
1. Protect the ecological, economic, and recreational functions of Cayuga Lake.
2. Protect aquifers from contamination by limiting development within groundwater recharge areas.
3. Protect streams and their watersheds to maintain water quality, manage stormwater and flooding, and enhance ecological diversity.
4. Preserve existing wetlands and restore wetland functions.
5. Support water-dependent or –enhanced development of the urban waterfront while conserving important natural resources and providing public enjoyment of the waterfront.

ENERGY & GHG EMISSIONS

Principle: Tompkins County should be a place where the energy system is climate neutral.



2008 Community GHG Emissions by Sector



CHANGING BEHAVIOR: Work to influence people to take actions that have a big impact on cost savings and ghg emissions by understanding root causes for inaction.

EFFICIENCY: Get consumers' attention when they are replacing high-cost items to educate on high mpg vehicles, Energy Star appliances, energy efficient homes, combined heat and power systems, and advanced air-source heat pumps.

RENEWABLES:

- Support programs like Solar Tompkins to double the number of PV installations in one year.
- Support Black Oak Wind Farm in its efforts to be NYS's first community-owned wind farm.
- Build the infrastructure necessary to expand wood pellet use for home and business heating.
- Nurture the growing interest in micro-hydro power from naturally flowing streams

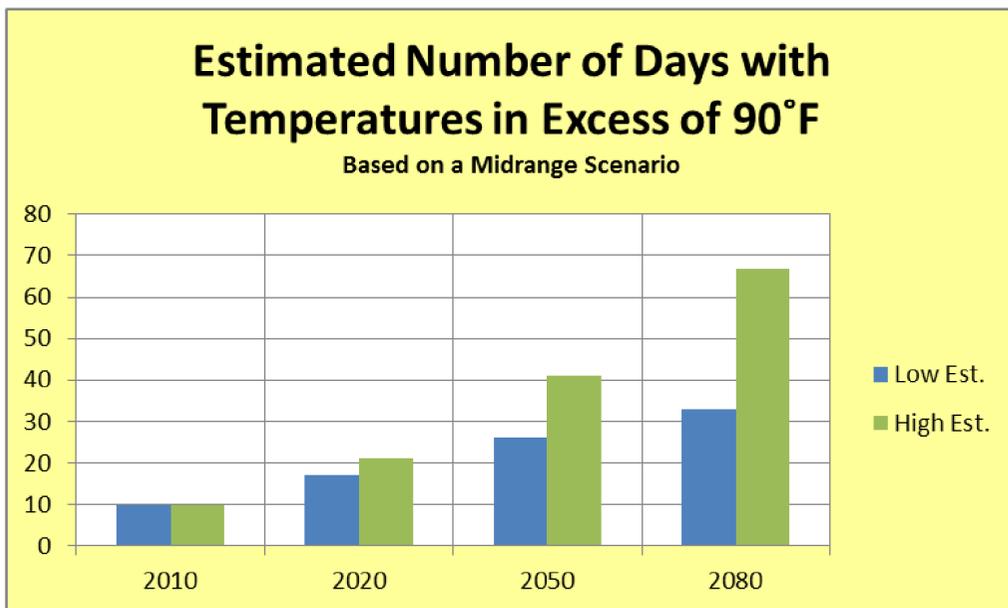
WASTE: Expand curbside pick-up and backyard composting and promote buying at one of the 40+ reuse stores in the County.

It is the policy of Tompkins County to:

1. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reliance on fossil fuels across all sectors.
2. Improve the energy efficiency of all components of the community energy system.
3. Increase the use of local and regional renewable energy sources and technologies.
4. Increase carbon capture and storage in the county's forests, wetlands, and soils.
5. Reduce the amount of material disposed of in landfills.

ADAPTATION

Principle: *Tompkins County should be a place where the entire community is prepared for the economic, environmental, and social impacts of climate change.*

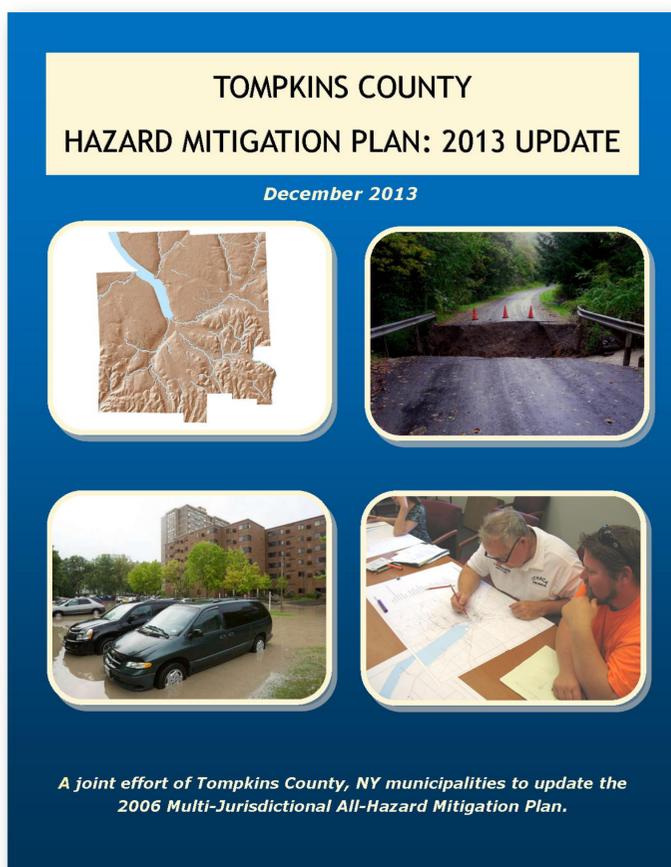


COMMUNITY RISKS: Climate-related risks include heavy downpours; heat waves and summer drought increases; and ecosystem changes leading to increases in invasive insects, weeds, and other pests.

VULNERABLE POPULATIONS: Work to identify and reduce risks to specific groups, including the elderly and health-compromised, who are particularly vulnerable to climate hazards like heat waves.

NATURAL AND PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE: Promote the protection of floodplains, stream buffers, and wetlands for their critical function in water management in our changing climate.

CLIMATE IMPACT INFORMATION: Support regular sharing of updated climate information and its impacts to local infrastructure with local municipal officials.

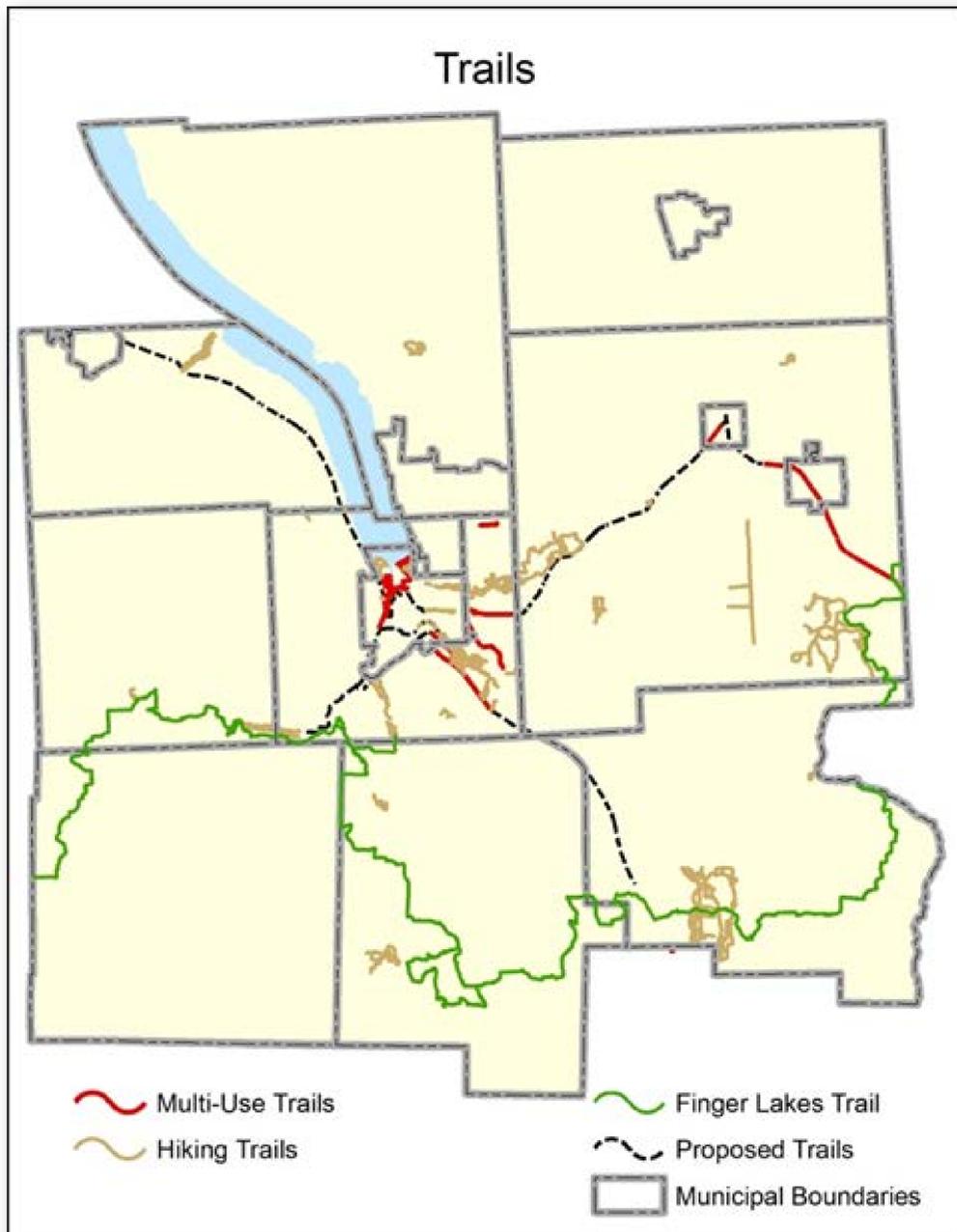


It is the policy of Tompkins County to:

1. Maintain floodways and limit development within floodplains to reduce damages from floods.
2. Improve connectivity of open space to prevent fragmentation of ecosystems and isolation of plant and wildlife populations.
3. Promote adaptation measures that lessen climate impacts on the local economy.
4. Encourage actions that protect vulnerable populations from the impacts of climate change.
5. Prepare for community recovery in the event of disaster.

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Principle: *Tompkins County should be a place where the built environment promotes healthy, safe and active lifestyles.*



PARKS, TRAILS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES: Expand access to recreational opportunities supporting healthy activity regardless of age, ability, or access to a personal vehicle.

STREETS AND ROADS: Reduce the number of accidents involving people traveling by foot, bicycle, or vehicle.

NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN: Retrofit existing development and construct new development to ensure easy access by foot, bicycle, and transit between the places where people live, work, learn, shop, and play.

HOUSING DESIGN: Build and retrofit housing to enable those of varying ages and abilities to live independently.

HEALTHY FOOD: Promote access to healthy food at local farmers markets, shops, and farm stands.

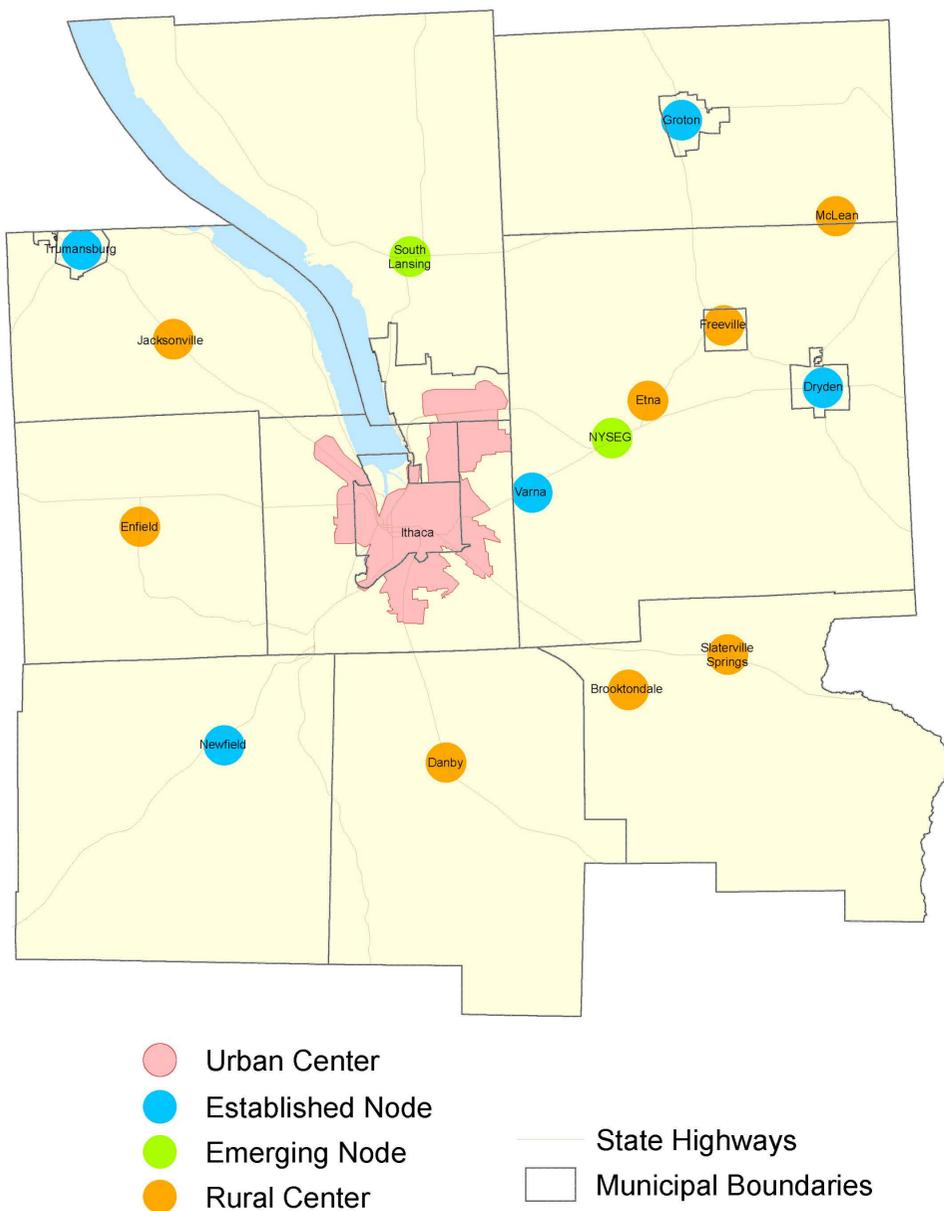
It is the policy of Tompkins County to:

1. Promote bicycling and walking throughout the county by making these transportation modes safe, efficient, and appealing options.
2. Encourage the development of lively streets with a variety of opportunities for daily activity, recreation, and social interaction.
3. Foster the expansion of a countywide trail network.
4. Encourage efforts to improve the accessibility of the built environment to allow everyone to participate in community life.
5. Promote parks, community facilities, recreational activities, and networks that support regular social interaction and physical activity.
6. Discourage land uses that threaten community health and safety.

DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

Principle: *Tompkins County should be a place where new development is concentrated in compact, walkable, mixed-use communities.*

Development Focus Areas



MIXED USE: Successful development focus areas will include places to live, work, shop, and access services. Mixing these uses within small areas will strengthen them as social and economic centers.

CONNECTIONS: Provide pedestrian facilities to make walking attractive. Provide and maintain transit connections between the Urban Center and the other Development Focus Areas.

INFRASTRUCTURE: Make improvements to existing public water and sewer systems to support compact mixed-use development.

INFILL DEVELOPMENT: Developing vacant or underutilized land within existing communities consumes less land and takes advantage of existing facilities and services.

SPRAWL: Development outside the Focus Areas should not require the expansion of water, sewer, or transit services and should fit the character of the rural landscape.

It is the policy of Tompkins County to:

1. Strengthen downtowns as retail, service, employment, and community centers.
2. Encourage municipalities to protect rural character and scenic resources by limiting sprawl.
3. Promote more housing and mixed-use development in Development Focus Areas.
4. Support land use policies and regulations and public infrastructure improvements to encourage private investment in the Development Focus Areas.
5. Preserve and enhance the distinct identities and historic character of existing communities.