



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

**Annual Report
2010**

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.

2010 Staff

Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development

Frank Evangelisti

Planning and Economic Development

Gail Domin, Chief Planner
Lora Zier, Senior Planner
Beth Egitto, Planner
Lori Darling, Senior Account Clerk
Beverly Townsend, Keyboard Specialist

Geographic Information System

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

Environmental Management Council

Stacy Merola, Senior Environmental Planner

Empire Zone

Margaret Scarinzi, Empire Zone Coordinator

Binghamton Metropolitan Transportation Study

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

*Retired 10/2010

**Named Executive Director 11/2010

2010 Overview

Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development had a successful year despite restructuring and significant challenges brought on by the county-wide budget crunch. As a result of financial constraints, Planning lost one filled position (Senior Environmental Planner) and one vacant position (Economic Development Planner). Another position (Empire Zone Coordinator) was eliminated and those duties transferred to the Broome County Industrial Development Agency.

Key accomplishments for 2010 were as follows:

- Grand opening for the Intermodal Transit Terminal
- Demolition and remediation of 46 Corliss Avenue in Johnson City completed
- \$131,666 in EPA funds awarded to clean up 312 Maple Street in Johnson City
- Initiation of the *Police Consolidation Study* and the *Countywide Code Enforcement Feasibility Study*
- Coordination of the local response to floodplain changes proposed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency
- \$300,000 in State funding awarded for the Ross Park Zoo Amphitheater reconstruction
- Completion of the Susquehanna Heritage Area Management Plan Amendment
- Creation of a mineral rights database and associated leases, containing approximately 4,000 records dating back to 2002

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 2011 work plan highlights, followed by more details regarding the activities and accomplishments from 2010.

2011 Work Plan Highlights

- Planning and Implementation for Regional Waterfront and Trail Development
 - Collaborate with Town of Vestal to complete a countywide Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan identifying opportunities for public access and other waterfront revitalization projects along all Broome County waterways
 - Advance the Conklin Multi-use Trail project
- 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 Step II application, develop the nomination study, and initiate the targeted Step III BOA
 - 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
 - Complete the Susquehanna Heritage Area website design project funded through a NYS Heritage Areas grant
- Complete the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code Update for the Village of Whitney Point

- 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
- Planning and Implementation Related to Consolidation and Shared Services
 - Publish the *Police Consolidation Feasibility Study and Implementation Plan* to help municipalities make an informed decision about the most efficient and cost effective way to move forward with police services
 - Finalize the *Countywide Code Enforcement Office Feasibility Study* to analyze the administrative, fiscal, legal and political considerations incidental to cooperative code enforcement
- Open Space Resource Inventory
 - Organize and publish the numerous open space resource materials that have been collected by the Environmental Management Council
- Ross Park Zoo Amphitheater
 - Restore the streambed and construct a public performance amenity at Ross Park Zoo using a \$300,000 State grant

Personnel

A major personnel change in this past year, due to budget cuts, was the loss of the Senior Environmental Planner position, filled by Stacy Merola since 1999. Over the years, Stacy spent countless hours on numerous projects for the Environmental Management Council. This included the annual riverbank cleanup, the Joyce K.L. Smith photo show, and detailed analysis of various statewide environmental issues. She was known for her thorough approach, tireless work ethic and fierce advocacy. We wish Stacy well in her future endeavors.

Boards and Memberships

Planning staff continued to serve on numerous boards and committees in 2010. These include:

Aging Futures Partnership
 American Planning Association Upstate Awards Committee
 American Planning Association Upstate Chapter, Southern Tier Section Executive Board
 Binghamton Commission on Architecture and Urban Design
 Binghamton Intermodal Management Team
 Binghamton Local Waterfront Revitalization Program Waterfront Advisory Committee
 Binghamton River Trail Initiative
 BMTS Planning Committee
 Brandywine Corridor BOA Steering Committee
 Broome County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board
 Broome County Capital Program Advisory Board
 Broome County Community Health Assessment Steering Committee
 Broome County Inter-municipal Waterfront Revitalization Project Advisory Committee
 Broome County Water Quality Coordinating Committee
 Broome-Tioga Stormwater Coalition
 Chesapeake Bay Gateway Headwaters River Trail Initiative

Empire Zone Board
Endicott-Johnson BOA Steering Committee
Environmental Management Council
First Ward Redevelopment Plan Steering Committee
GIS Users Group
Greater Binghamton Council of Governments
Greater Binghamton Economic Development Project Team
Johnson City Health & Cultural District Steering Committee
Landfill Citizens Advisory Committee
Local Emergency Planning Committee
NYS Association of EMC's Board of Directors and Nominating Committee
NYS Heritage Area Advisory Council
NYS Heritage Area Association of Directors
NYSDEC *NY Recycles!* Steering Committee
NYS Region 7 Open Space Advisory Committee
Southern Tier East Regional Planning and Development Board
Susquehanna Heritage Area Commission

Grant Assistance and Project Management

The Department provides grant writing and grant administration assistance to other county departments, municipalities, commercial and industrial enterprises and various community organizations for projects such as infrastructure improvements, housing activities, and economic and community development projects. Several submittals developed in 2010 included the restoration of the Forum Theatre, construction of a Regional Farmers Market facility at Otsiningo Park, a micro-enterprise program for small businesses, manufacturing equipment for Impress USA, Inc., and an update of the multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan.

Greater Binghamton Transportation Center

On October 13th the ribbon was cut opening the region's newest intermodal transportation facility. The Greater Binghamton Transportation Center, at the corner of Henry and Chenango Streets, is now home to two commercial bus companies, Greyhound and Shortline/Coach USA, as well as the county's BC Transit Junction.

The Greater Binghamton Transportation Center not only provides inter-city and intra-city bus passengers with a state of the art facility from which to travel, it also provides a much needed facelift for a large section of the urban core. Unused and underutilized buildings were razed to make way for this development. An outstanding effort was made to restore the historic 1938 Art Deco façade and incorporate it into the new facility. The front façade retains the glass block, relief moldings and vertical neon sign displaying the "running greyhound" once again. A period diner was re-created along with other new commercial space and is available for lease. Construction started in 2008 and the total project costs were approximately \$14.7M, including \$9.1M from the federal government and approximately \$1.1M from the state. The County's share totaled nearly \$3.5M.



Code Enforcement Efficiency Feasibility Study

Each of Broome County's 24 municipalities is responsible for enforcement of the Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code in that municipality with varying office structures and strategies for enforcement. Broome County, with the Town of Kirkwood as a co-applicant, received a \$33,750 grant from the New York State Department of State's Local Government Efficiency Grant Program to develop a Code Enforcement Efficiency Feasibility Study analyzing the administrative, fiscal, legal and political considerations incidental to cooperative code enforcement. This includes analysis of the nature and scope of services and functions to be performed by each local government, the number and qualifications of staff necessary, how personnel and other costs will be shared or apportioned, the collection and distribution of fees, the responsibility for enforcement, and the liabilities of the parties, among others. The study is expected to be completed in early 2011 by the Center for Governmental Research Inc. of Rochester, NY.

Police Consolidation Feasibility Study Grant

Currently there are five municipal police departments in the urban core of Broome County, as well as a police force in the rural Village of Deposit, the Broome County Sheriff's Department, and the State Police. While there may be savings through consolidation of police forces, there are many uncertainties, including the impact on the level of police services, the logistics of combining forces, and the cost of streamlining equipment and operations. To address these issues, Broome County as a lead applicant, in conjunction with the City of Binghamton and the Village of Johnson City as co-applicants, has received a \$50,000 High Priority Planning Grant through the New York State Department of State's Local Government Efficiency Grant Program. In 2010, the funds were used to begin a Police Consolidation Feasibility Study and Implementation Plan to help municipalities make an informed decision about the most efficient and cost effective way to move forward with police services. The study is being conducted by Matrix Consulting Group of Palo Alto, California and its completion is expected in early 2011.

Conklin Multi-Use Trail

Broome County secured a \$449,000 grant from the Transportation Enhancement Program Federal-aid program to fund a multi-use walking and biking trail in Conklin. The trail will connect the Broome Corporate Park with the neighboring community and Schnurbush Park, thus providing alternative transportation and enhanced recreational opportunities for industrial park employees and area residents. Broome County Department of Public Works completed preliminary design work for this project in 2010. In coordination with the Town of Conklin, public informational meetings were held in the fall of 2010 on the preferred design alternatives. The Final Design Report was then created by County DPW engineering staff and submitted to the NYS DOT for review and approval. The County will continue to work on the final design details with construction expected to begin in 2011 or spring of 2012.



Environmental Protection Fund

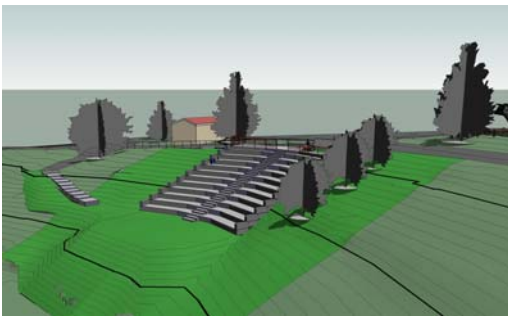
Staff provided extensive technical assistance to local municipalities and non profits for six applications to the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) Program in the categories of Parks, Heritage Areas and Historic Preservation. Projects included exterior rehabilitation of the First Presbyterian Church of Binghamton, the acquisition and stabilization of the Strand Theatre submitted by the Art Mission, Ltd., Johnson City improvements to the Northside Park pool, a boat launch project for the Town of Vestal at Castle Gardens, rehabilitation of the former Municipal

Building and Fire Station by Goodwill Theatre, Inc., and an acquisition and planning project for a TechWorks Museum in Binghamton submitted by the Center for Technology and Innovation, Inc.

In addition, Planning prepared an EPF application for Broome County under the Heritage Areas category for the restoration and rehabilitation of the historic Forum Theatre. The proposal included repair and replacement of the 1919 neo-classical façade and the 1946 art deco marquee. It also addressed the deteriorated conditions of the interior plaster work and finishes found in all the foyers, auditorium, balcony, mezzanine and proscenium areas. Planning staff supervised the development of a Condition Assessment report for the theatre, prepared by the consultant firm of Crawford & Stearns, Architects and Planners, of Syracuse, NY. It details the existing physical state of the theatre and the specific work needed to properly restore the facility, including a break-down of the estimated cost for each element of repair. This report will be extremely useful as the county moves forward with planning for future improvements and soliciting outside funding for the Performing Arts Center.



Design and Reconstruction of the Amphitheater at Ross Park



Through collaboration with the City of Binghamton and the Southern Tier Zoological Society (STZS), the Planning Department helped to obtain a \$300,000 award from the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Environmental Protection Fund Heritage Areas Program for the design and reconstruction of the amphitheater at Ross Park. The facilities at Ross Park, including the Amphitheater, are owned and maintained through a partnership between the STZS, the Discovery Center of the Southern Tier,

and the City of Binghamton. Constructed in the late 1970's, the amphitheatre served as a venue for various programs and events until the mid 90's when it fell into a state of disrepair due to the lack of funding. The deteriorating structure has led to violations of previous grant agreements associated with the facility. Recent discussions between County, City and Zoo officials have led to a renewed interest in the facility as a local asset, providing a community gathering place, expanded use of educational centers, and a potential source of revenue. While the funding was awarded to the City of Binghamton, Broome County will undertake grant administration and project management through an intermunicipal agreement. In 2010, Planning staff, along with representatives from the County departments of Public Works and Parks, the City of Binghamton and Ross Park Zoo worked to develop a vision for the project and schematic drawings were provided by Delta Engineers of Binghamton, NY. In 2011, upon completion of the grant agreement with the State, the project will move forward into the design phase, with a goal of beginning construction in 2012.

Susquehanna Heritage Area Logo & Website Design

The Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development, on behalf of the Susquehanna Heritage Area (SHA), received a New York State Heritage Area Program grant of \$15,050 for website design and development of a new logo. The firm of L & P Media was hired to provide website and graphic design services for



the project. Staff, in conjunction with the Susquehanna Heritage Area Commission and other municipal representatives, has overseen the project development and was instrumental in the design of the website and logo. Staff provided the text and photography for the website and will maintain the website once launched. 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 newly expanded boundary encompassing all of Broome and Tioga Counties. The centerpieces for the rebranding effort are the new logo design and website. The project will be completed in March 2011.

Regional Plan Development

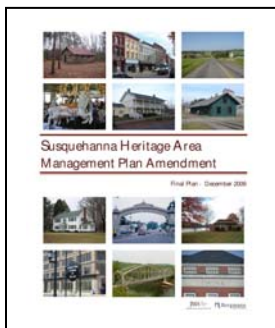
The Department oversees and administers the development of a variety of regional planning efforts. This service may include partnerships with other municipalities for a funding request and the subsequent administration and coordination of the project.

Countywide Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan

Through a partnership with the Town of Vestal, the county is coordinating a study, funded in part by the NYS Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP), to identify public access options and propose integrated strategies for development along the four inland waterways in Broome County. There are twenty-two municipalities located on the Susquehanna, Chenango, Tioughnioga or Delaware Rivers, with a variety of economic and recreational opportunities. In 2010, Peter J. Smith Company Inc. of Buffalo, NY was selected to produce the study in partnership with a consortium of municipal representatives. Field work began in the late fall and draft boundaries were submitted for review by the year's end. In 2011, focus groups and public informational meetings will be held with continued work on the proposed boundary and project identification. The final plan will be completed by the summer.



Susquehanna Heritage Area Management Plan Amendment



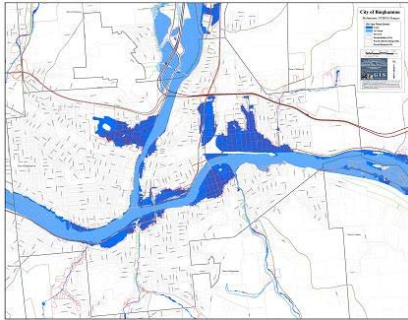
The Susquehanna Heritage Area (SHA) Management Plan Amendment, completed in early 2010, builds upon previous Plans that have been developed and implemented since the Susquehanna Heritage Area was recognized by the New York State legislature in 1982. The goal of the plan is to identify, promote, and develop the historic, cultural, recreational, and natural resources of an expanded Susquehanna Heritage Area, encompassing parts of Broome and Tioga Counties. The plan amendment was prepared for the SHA Commission and Broome County Planning by Bergmann Associates of Rochester, NY and funded through an \$80,000 NYS Department of State Quality Communities Program Grant. It identifies strategies for the

enhancement of unique cultural and natural resources in Broome and Tioga Counties and will guide the implementation of programs and projects to foster economic revitalization and enhance quality of life throughout the region. The Planning Department coordinated and facilitated the state and local approval process as well as the environmental review process throughout 2010. Conditional approval was granted in December and it is expected that the NYS Heritage Area Law will be amended to recognize the expanded boundary in 2011. Planning continues to coordinate the administration and implementation of this program with the existing SHA Commission and Advisory Board, along with representatives from communities and organizations in Broome and Tioga Counties to be officially recognized in 2011.

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 2010 were as follows:

FEMA Releases Preliminary Flood Maps



In early 2010, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) began the process of revising flood maps. As part of this effort, FEMA de-accredited all local levees and floodwalls in Broome County, placing approximately 6,500 structures into the Special Flood Hazard Area. This action is despite the fact that the local levees have been fully maintained and have historically passed inspection by the Army Corps of Engineers. Preliminary assessments and past performance indicate that the levees are functioning properly. Broome County Planning responded by:

- Helping to host community meetings informing officials and the public about the upcoming map changes. FEMA officials discussed the maps, appeals and review process, map adoption process, floodplain regulations and flood insurance.
- Reconvening the Flood Task Force to keep stakeholders informed and involved.
- Advocating for comprehensive levee safety legislation to our Senate and House Representatives.
- Working to lower flood insurance rates by bringing municipalities into the Community Rating System (CRS). The CRS recognizes and encourages community floodplain management activities that exceed the minimum National Floodplain Insurance Program requirements. The Planning Department hosted a workshop which helped communities understand the CRS program and application process. We expect to work with the participating communities to carry out some of the CRS related tasks, such as informing residents about flood insurance.

The most promising initiative may ultimately be a mitigation project being discussed for Robinson Street in order to remove the Brandywine Corridor from the revised floodplain. During 2010, Planning staff worked with FEMA and the City of Binghamton to assess the feasibility of a new floodgate on Robinson Street at the railroad overpass. Assessment of that potential project is ongoing.

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 2010 were:

- The Greater Binghamton Greenway
- Agricultural Districts
- Introduction to the National Flood Insurance Program's Development Requirements

Village of Whitney Point Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code Update

During 2010, the Village of Whitney Point contracted with the Planning Department to update their Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code. 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. The survey responses will serve as the basis for recommendation considerations that will be included in the updated comprehensive plan and zoning code.



Brownfield Redevelopment

Brandywine Corridor Brownfield Opportunity Area



Broome County Planning secured a \$175,500 grant from New York State to prepare a Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) plan for the Brandywine Corridor. This 137-acre swath of land in the heart of Binghamton is the gateway to the community. A BOA plan for this area can help to focus public and private sector investment and help the community achieve its vision. The County hired Elan Planning and Design of Saratoga Springs, NY to coordinate this effort. During 2010 two public meetings and numerous steering

committee meetings were held. Late in the year, Elan produced a draft study and a final report is expected in early 2011.

Endicott-Johnson Brownfield Opportunity Area

Using a \$155,000 grant from New York 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.



The Step II Nomination Study was finalized in 2009, and in 2010 the Planning Department substantially completed the application for Step III Implementation funds. The next phase of the project 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 clear the courts, the County now 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.

46 Corliss Avenue Investigation and Demolition

Located in the EJ BOA, 46 Corliss Avenue is a former industrial site that was constructed in the Endicott-Johnson industrial spine in the 1890's. In late 2009, demolition began on the deteriorated property. It was demolished through the combined efforts of the Restore NY Program, the Broome County and Town of Union Planning & Economic Development Departments, and the Village of Johnson City. Vacant since 1993, the building originally housed Marshall Furniture and later the Ozalid Company.

The Town of Union used \$57,397 of Community Development Block Grant funding to leverage a Restore NY grant totaling \$471,568 for the demolition and cleanup of this abandoned industrial property. Broome County allocated \$83,000 of Hotel/Motel tax dollars to cover the additional costs associated with engineering services, project supervision, and asbestos air monitoring along with an additional \$25,000 for contingency funding.

With the site cleared, an adjacent manufacturer is purchasing the property to expand their operations. This is the first step towards creating the 'Willow Street Business Park' as called for in the EJ BOA Nomination Study.

312 Maple Street Remediation and Redevelopment

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. When the clean up is complete, the property will once again be on the tax rolls. This award brings the total brownfield grant funds secured by Broome County Planning to over \$1,000,000.

Stormwater Management Program

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 contributed to the development of the Coalition's Stormwater Management Plan Program annual report. Staff compiled data from all necessary County Departments pertaining to the County's Stormwater Management Program. Staff also collected data from all regulated municipalities and compiled the information into the full Coalition's Annual Report for submittal to the NYSDEC. Staff, along with other Coalition members, organized and conducted the required public meeting.

Land Use Reviews (239)

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 most significant projects reviewed by the Department in 2010 were as follows:

- Site Plan and Special Use Permit for the construction of a 4-story, 173,000 square foot student housing development in the City of Binghamton

- Site Plan Review and Area Variance for the demolition of the former Binghamton Press building and construction of a new three-story, 84,877 square-foot medical building for United Health Services in the Town of Vestal.
- Site Plan Review for the development of the 91,112 square foot manufacturing building with an 80,000 square foot future expansion area for the Impress Manufacturing Facility at the Broome Corporate Park in the Town of Conklin
- Site Plan Review and SEQR Environmental Assessment Form Review for the construction of a new 61,000 square foot Price Chopper Grocery Store and adjacent 9,000 square foot future retail use in the Town of Chenango

Geographic Information System (GIS) Administration

Natural Gas

The GIS Unit continues to be involved with natural gas development in varied ways. The GIS Administrator is a member of the County's Natural Gas Development Team, which meets to discuss the issues of natural gas development regarding county government. He also created a database to track where subsurface-rights owners were different from the surface owner. The goal was to easily map the location of leased land in the county and to establish a comprehensive database focused solely on this topic. The GIS Technician maintains this database, receiving monthly updates on gas-related filings from the Clerk's Office. He has also used the online Clerk's System to gather lease data dating back to mid-2002. In total, nearly 3,800 records have been entered into the database so far.

Beginning in June, PDF maps of leased properties in the county were created and placed online monthly. The GIS Unit also fulfilled several map requests from area gas coalitions and created maps for the proposed Environmental Assessment Form for the leasing of county land.

Online Presence

The GIS Unit continues to provide a robust GIS website with both static and interactive maps. In 2010, the site received nearly 160,000 visits. When viewed in the context of all county web pages, we ranked third for all of 2010, with only the County's home page and B.C. Transit ranking higher. Throughout the year, many enhancements were made to the site:

- *Unified Parcel Information System (UPIS)*
The UPIS saw the addition of the preliminary FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) data, 2-foot contours generated from the 2007 LiDAR, updates to the slope and hillshade layers, and a new local landmarks layer. The ability to link from a selected parcel to the preliminary FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps was added as well. A new function that allows the direct-linking into Image Mate Online (IMO) was also added to the UPIS based on a new parcel boundary layer that is updated monthly, but does not include any attributes.
- *Census Tract Locator*
The Census Tract Locator underwent a major redesign in 2010. The locator now displays which census block groups are within a census tract, along with population information for the selected block group and tract, as well as links to the Census website with more detailed information.

- *Online Map Collection*
Additional map sets were added to the online map collection in 2010. A set of maps depicting the FEMA SFHA changes was created. As mentioned above, natural gas leased property maps have been added monthly since June. A development activity section was added which includes 239 Review and Construction Report maps. Finally, a new category of Historic Map Books was created and two books added: the 1876 Atlas and the 1901 Plat Book. These are based on digital photos taken by the GIS Technician which were converted to PDF format and placed online. It is our goal to place more historic maps online in this manner.



City of Binghamton

The GIS Unit continues to provide GIS and mapping services to the City of Binghamton per an inter-municipal agreement. In 2010, an average of nearly 43 hours of service per week was provided in addition to over 475 map projects being created. City departments utilizing our services the most include: Police, Assessment, Planning, Public Works, and Building & Code.

- *Crime Mapping & Analysis*
The GIS Specialist provided weekly, monthly, and year-to-date information to the City of Binghamton Police Department. The crime data was broken out into maps, charts, and graphs for the City police as needed. This all fell under information used for long term planning and administrative/strategic analysis. The GIS Specialist also engaged in some short term problem solving through tactical analysis of burglaries and robberies in the City. Each day the GIS Specialist reads, analyzes, and records information from burglary and robbery reports and then alerts appropriate personnel of any discovered patterns, relationships, or serial events. The GIS Specialist has also ventured into the practice of predicting/forecasting serial crime. This was attempted when a serial robber hit in the city and surrounding area starting in the fall of 2009 and going into the summer of 2010.

The GIS Specialist also participated in training classes for Crime Analysts offered by the NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services and passed a certification exam for a Crime Analyst Level I. The GIS Specialist has participated in numerous meetings with village, city, town, county, and state representatives under a state backed Operation Impact grant. These meetings are meant for sharing information and services in hopes of establishing a working relationship between all parties to realize potential advantages of working together, sharing data, and getting crime analysis from one centralized information hub. Going forward, the goal of the GIS Specialist as a Crime Analyst will be to continue improving upon relationships among local law enforcement agencies (including correction agencies). It is also to inform them about the great potential that exists with having all of their data under one system so they can help a Crime Analyst provide them with important up-to-date information on crime and offenders in our area.

Empire Zone

This year saw an end to the Empire Zones Program as the Program was closed to any new entrants in June 2010. Any business in the Program prior to its sunset was 'grandfathered' and is expected to see the full life of its benefits. The Empire Zone office operated throughout all of 2010 with the Coordinator continuing local administration of the Program and providing technical assistance to the 'grandfathered' businesses. Those functions were transferred to the Broome County Industrial Development Agency in 2011. The Acting Commissioner served as Chairman on the Empire Zone board for 2010.

Environmental Management Council



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 Environmental Planner provided technical, bookkeeping and other support services.

The EMC hosted a variety of speakers and offered informative presentations. Topics included the County Planning Department's projects and priorities, the Binghamton Metropolitan Transportation Study's long range plan, the county-wide Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan, public safety aspects of Marcellus operations, an overview of the effects of EPA's Chesapeake Bay nutrient reduction mandates at the Binghamton-Johnson City Sewage Treatment Plant, and public health concerns and responsibilities related to gas well drilling.

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.

The Natural Resources Committee continued to be a forum for air, land and water issues. Focus areas for 2010 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 2011.

The Recycling and Waste Management Committee (RWMC) continued to address local recycling and disposal options, researched and monitored recycling trends, and continued to advocate for recycling provisions at public facilities and events. The EMC promoted the importance of proper solid waste disposal, including recycling of household hazardous waste and electronics and helped with outreach for County-sponsored recycling and special collection events. The Senior Environmental Planner also provided technical assistance to the Landfill Citizens Advisory Committee (LCAC) in regards to road modifications associated with the new section of the landfill. In 2011 the County's Division of Solid Waste Management will no longer contract with the Planning Department for public input and education services for assistance to the LCAC. As a result, the EMC will address solid waste issues on an as needed basis, and RWMC will meet only when called to task.

Once again, the EMC coordinated and participated in the following Special Events:

- 14th 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.
- 25th Broome County Riverbank Clean Up – On October 2nd, 211 volunteers collected 1.26 tons 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 on April 24th at MacArthur School in Binghamton. This event raises awareness about local environmental issues, promotes membership opportunities and recruits volunteers.



Binghamton Metropolitan Transportation Study

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 2010, BMTS achieved significant accomplishments across its mandated work in short range planning, long range planning, and project programming.

Capital Program Update: 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, SAFETEA-LU, expired on March 31, 2010. Congress has passed another extension, but has not yet passed an authorization for a new multi-year program. The BMTS Policy Committee adopted the 2011-2015 Transportation Improvement Program on July 1, 2010. The process was very difficult as members were faced with transportation needs that far out-weighed the available funds. BMTS staff is continuing to work with NYSDOT to identify the most critical projects that can be funded in the constrained program and to work with local governments to ensure timely development and construction of the projects that are on the current Transportation Improvement Program.

Progress was made on some important local projects:

- Court Street Gateway: Due to funding constraints the Court Street Gateway project was split into two phases. Phase 1 of the project will involve the reconstruction of Court Street from Exchange Street to Water Street and is scheduled to begin construction during 2011. The remainder of the project from Exchange Street to Chapman is now part of Phase 2, with funding undetermined.
- NY 201 over NY 434 and Vestal Road: The project will replace 2 deficient bridges and address safety needs. NYSDOT received design approval in 2010 and construction will begin in 2011.
- Interstate 86 Designation - NY 17/I-81 at Prospect Mountain: This project is in final design and will replace the bridges carrying the highway over the Chenango River. It includes major reconstruction of the interchange to reducing weaving requirements and improve geometrics. Slated to begin construction in 2011, with an estimated cost approaching \$500 million, this will be the largest construction project in the region since the construction of the Interstate highways.



Long Range Regional Transportation Plan: The BMTS Policy Committee approved our current transportation plan, *TRANSPORTATION TOMORROW 2030 ~ PLACEMAKING FOR PROSPERITY*, in September 2005. Federal law requires that MPOs update their long range plans at least every five years, to reflect changing conditions in demographics, population, economy and workforce, and transportation facilities and services. BMTS initiated its update with agreement from the BMTS Planning Committee and Policy Committee that much of “Placemaking” would remain in place, but a new element was added to address sustainability, global climate change, and greenhouse gas emissions from the transport sector. Climate legislation passed by the House of Representatives, and under consideration in the Senate, may require MPOs to undertake

such analyses. By including it in this Plan update, BMTS may find itself ahead of the curve.

The plan *TRANSPORTATION TOMORROW: 2035, CREATING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE* was approved and adopted on September 27, 2010 by the BMTS Policy Committee. The document is available on the BMTS website (www.gobroomecounty.com/bmts).

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 now has over 430 people had registered. 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.



BC Transit ~ Off-Campus College Transport Consolidation Study: The BMTS long range transportation plan identified as a goal the consolidation of transit services currently provided by Broome County, Tioga County, and Off-Campus College Transport (OCC-T). There is substantial duplication of service between BC Transit and OCC-T. The study examined both operational and financial consequences of a potential consolidation. The result could mean increased state aid to Broome County for BC Transit, more frequent service on certain routes at

peak times, and reduction in capital expenditures by Binghamton University. The report was completed in June 2010.

Main Street Corridor Plan: The BMTS long range ranked highly the need to guide transportation projects and development along Main Street using the principles of placemaking and context sensitive solutions in supporting community revitalization and economic growth. The Main Street Corridor Plan demonstrates the connectivity between transportation and land use and the importance of providing safe, efficient transportation to all users. The draft Main Street Corridor Plan was completed in 2010 and the final document will be available for distribution in early 2011.

Traffic Signal Maintenance Study: Among the municipalities in the urban area, only the City of Binghamton and the Village of Endicott employ their own signal technicians. During 2010 BMTS staff surveyed all municipalities with signal ownership to determine the number of signals they maintained, how they maintained them and the costs associated with this. The intent of the study was to determine if there would be a financial and efficiency benefit to developing a regional signal maintenance study. The results of this study will be available in Spring 2011.

Road Safety Assessment: Based on a technique called Road Safety Audit, the Road Safety Assessment template was developed under the auspices of the New York State MPO's Safety Working Group. It enhances the traditional traffic engineering study of high accident locations by using a multi-disciplinary team approach. By involving local police, transit operators, pedestrian planners, and other stakeholders in an actual walk through and observation of a problem street, a broader range of problems is often identified. Safety can often be improved for all users by low cost actions like changes to signs, signals, and pavement markings. In 2010, BMTS participated with AARP in conducting pedestrian safety audits at the following Binghamton intersections: South Washington Street and RT434, South Washington Street and Conklin Avenue, Conklin Avenue and Powers Road, and Conklin Avenue and Exchange Street.

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: Through the work of BMTS staff and a college intern, BMTS calculated accident rates on local roadways by using existing crash data and identifying high accident location on the local roadway system. This methodology will be used as a framework for future crash data analysis.

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 through 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 Committee looks forward to the 2011 Binghamton Bridge Pedal, which will be held for the first time on a Saturday (July 16th)!

As part of the commitment of BMTS to encourage bicycling throughout the region, the BMTS Bicycle Map was updated and will be available for distribution in early 2011.

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: Peter Andreasen, Supervisor, Town of Vestal
BMTS Planning Committee Chair: Luke Day, Commissioner of Public Works, City of Binghamton