# Table of Contents

## Introduction

**Page:** 3

## Symposium Agenda

**Page:** 5

## Policy Theme Workgroup Notes

- Agriculture & Food Systems 8
- Community Capacity & Social Networks 20
- Energy 24
- Environment, Land Use & Natural Resources 26
- Housing & Transportation 36
- Local & Regional Governance 39
- Rural Economic Development 44
- Rural Health Care 50
- Rural Schools & Youth 71
- Workforce Development 79

## Closing Session:

- Workgroups’ Top Three Recommendations 83
- General Discussion 89
- Legislative Panel Notes 92

## Appendix:

- Symposium Participants 94
- Workgroup Enrollment 105
- Symposium Evaluations 116
- Symposium Sponsors 120
- Listening Session Feedback Posters, by Policy/Theme area 129
On July 19-21 2006, over 190 people from across New York State gathered in Syracuse for the Future of Rural New York Symposium, an event organized by Cornell University and the NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources. The event attracted state legislators, state agency representatives, local leaders, Cornell Cooperative Extension educators, Cornell researchers, non-profit organization leaders, and other concerned citizens, to discuss specific program and policy recommendations for a variety of rural issues and challenges.

After opening remarks on Wednesday afternoon, including a brief discussion of the Rural Vision Project’s Phase I Report, and a presentation on the Concept Mapping Results, a panel representing the NYS Quality Communities project gave a thorough presentation of various projects and programs supporting rural issues.

At dinner that evening, we were honored to have Assemblyman David Koon, Vice-Chair of the NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources set out an inspirational charge for the Symposium participants. Senator George Winner, Jr. followed with additional words of encouragement and a sense of immediacy. Ron Seeber, Cornell’s Vice Provost for Land Grant Affairs introduced the Keynote Speaker, David Thornburgh of the Alliance for Regional Stewardship. David set the tone for the next two days, encouraging Symposium participants to use community based action when appropriate and to think regionally whenever possible. He emphasized making connections and creating a clear context for decision-making. In order to make an impact on rural areas across the state, Thornburgh suggested we start thinking in “campaign logic”; having goals, a purpose, rules and responsibilities clearly defined before embarking on a project. In order to be successful, he encouraged following a “to do” list of sorts, including: 1) Bounding the process rather than just having endless meetings; 2) Chart you achievement, step by step, breaking the long journey into small steps; 3) Have an Exit Strategy! Decide where and when the “end” will be. Take stock and evaluate; 4) Reflect on our own sense of possibility and community strength.

The goal of the Symposium was for participants to discuss specific program and policy recommendations for a variety of rural issues and challenges. The information gathered during the regional listening sessions, as well as other supporting material in the Rural Vision Project Phase I Report was referred to as a resource for these discussions.
Ten policy theme workgroups met over the course of the Symposium:

- Agriculture & Food Systems
- Community Capacity & Social Networks
- Energy
- Environment, Land Use & Natural Resources
- Housing & Transportation
- Local & Regional Governance
- Rural Economic Development
- Rural Health Care
- Rural Schools & Youth
- Workforce Development

Through a series of sessions, these ten policy theme area workgroups met to identify:

- Top Three Policy/ Program focal Areas
- Specific Policy/ Program Recommendations
- Intended Outcome(s)
- Current Policies/ Programs
- Barriers and/ or Gaps in Current Policies/ Programs
- Suggested New and/ or Revised Policies/ Programs
- If any Regional Variations/ Flexibility should be considered?
- Other Policy/ Theme areas that are connected to this particular policy/ program recommendation
- Relevant State Agency and Stakeholder Groups

On the final day, participants had the chance to visit other policy workgroups to comment on a specific policy or program recommendation offered. This final exercise encouraged participants to weigh in on important interconnections between thematic areas.

The closing general session began with a power point presentation of each policy workgroup’s top three policy/ program recommendations. A general discussion followed, and the Symposium was closed with comments from a panel of four members of the NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources whom we were honored to have present and participate for the duration of the conference.

The proceedings that follow include basic information on the Symposium, including: the Symposium Agenda, the notes from each Policy Theme Workgroup, the top three policy/ program recommendations from each workgroup, notes from the general discussion and the legislative panel during the closing session. In addition, the Appendix includes a list of the participants, a summary of the evaluations, a list of Symposium sponsors, and copies of the posters which adorned the walls of the corridors which provided comments gathered during the regional listening sessions for each policy/ theme area.
The Future of Rural New York Symposium  
July 19-21, 2006  
Wyndham Hotel, Syracuse, New York.

Agenda

Wednesday July 19:   The Present and Setting the Stage

1:30 and onward  
Registration -- **Foyer**
Display set-up

2:30-3:00  
**Collective Vision for Rural NYS – Phase I Report – Grand Ballroom**
Rod Howe, Assistant Director, Cornell Cooperative Extension
Robin Blakely, Extension Associate, Dept. of Development Sociology,
Cornell University

3:00-4:00  
**Concept Mapping Presentation of Rural Policy Issues - Grand Ballroom**
Tim Cullenen, Extension Associate, Community & Rural Development Institute,
Cornell University

4:00-5:00  
**New York State Quality Communities Panel – Grand Ballroom**
Charlie Murphy, Director, Division of Local Government, NYS Department of State, Moderator
Peter Manning, Quality Communities Program Manager, NYS Department of State
Rob Brooks, Program Administrator, NYS Governor's Office for Small Cities
Leslie Adler, RA, Director, Design Services Unit, NYS Division of Housing and Community Renewal
Jonathan Thomson, Economic Development Specialist,
5:00-6:00 Reception with cash bar -- **Foyer**

6:00-8:30 **Dinner – Grand Ballroom**
Professor Max J. Pfeffer, Chair, Dept. of Development Sociology, Cornell University
Host

The Charge for the next two days - Conference Objectives & Expectations
Senator George H. Winner, Jr., Chair,
Assemblyman David Koon, Vice Chair,
NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources

Ron Seeber, Vice Provost for Land Grant Affairs, Cornell University

Keynote Speaker: David Thornburgh, President and CEO, Alliance for Regional Stewardship

**Thursday July 20: Development of Program and Policy Recommendations**

7:30-8:30 Breakfast – **Grand Ballroom**

8:30-9:00 Review instructions for day: Inputs and Outputs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workgroup</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture and Food Systems</td>
<td>Adams</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Capacity and Social Networks</td>
<td>Bushnell</td>
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<td>Economic Development</td>
<td>Superior</td>
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<td>Energy</td>
<td>Shelby</td>
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<td>Health Care</td>
<td>Erie</td>
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<td>Housing and Transportation</td>
<td>Canal</td>
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<td>Land Use, Environment and Natural Resources</td>
<td>Champlain</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local and Regional Governance</td>
<td>Executive Board Room</td>
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<td>Rural Schools and Youth</td>
<td>Dewitt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Workforce Development</td>
<td>Suite 241</td>
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</tbody>
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9:15-10:30 Session I: 10 Policy Area Workgroups

10:30-10:45 Coffee Break

10:45-noon Session II: 10 Policy Area Workgroups

Noon-1:15 Lunch
40 Below, Mike Frame, Metropolitan Development Association
Pipeline 4 Progress Network, Mike Fuller, Committee for the Future
1:15 – 3:00  Session III: 10 Policy Area Workgroups

3:00 - 3:15  Coffee Break

3:15-5:00  Session IV: 10 Policy Area Workgroups

5:00-5:30  Facilitators, chairs and recorders meet
Room: Superior

5:30  Dinner on your own (hopefully with small engaged groups to continue a lively discussion; restaurant lists available at registration table)

Friday July 21:  Sharing Top Recommendations: Integration and the Future

7:30-8:30  Breakfast - Grand Ballroom
Instructions for Session V will be reviewed

8:30-9:30  Session V: Top 10 Policy/Program Recommendations that are the most interrelated

9:30-9:45  Break
Plenary Presentation and Discussion

9:45 – 10:15  Top Recommendations

10:15-11:00  Discussion of program areas that are the most interrelated
Also general recommendations

11:00-noon  NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources Panel
Professor Max J. Pfeffer, moderator
Senator George H. Winner, Jr.
Assemblyman David Koon
Senator William T. Stachowski
Assemblyman James Bacalles

Noon  Lunch and then safe trip home
AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS WORKGROUP

TOP THREE POLICY/PROGRAM FOCAL AREAS:

1) Connections: Connecting agriculture to communities and to health

2) Improved regulations, planning, and research and development of food and agricultural systems for competitiveness and sustainability.

3) Education (young, farmers, consumers, PUBLIC OFFICIALS) on agriculture and health

GENERAL COMMENTS:
- Farmland protection—continue/improve current programs
- NY is a very diverse state with respect to size and agricultural commodities

POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
Education of agricultural producers and potential producers

INTENDED OUTCOME(S)

- Increased participation in local government by agricultural producers
- More opportunities for existing farmers
- Reduced barriers to entry for new farmers

CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
- Beginning Farmer Program
- Farmworker Training Program
- Ag. and Tech. schools--offer full degree or short course program
- Council on the Environment?

BARRIERS AND/OR GAPS IN CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
- Funding
- Lack of broadband in rural areas
- Lack of a network to provide training

SUGGESTED NEW AND/OR REVISED POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
- Funding
- More opportunities for continuing education for farmers
- Expansion of network of trainers/educators
- DOE should mandate ag. education curriculum that is currently proposed (national ag. literacy standards), with collaboration between agriculture, education, and others within the community

WHAT, IF ANY, REGIONAL VARIATIONS/FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED?
State funding and standards and guidance administered locally
IDENTIFY OTHER POLICY/THEME AREAS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THIS PARTICULAR POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
- State learning standards (Education)
- CCE

IDENTIFY RELEVANT STATE AGENCY AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS:
- State Dept. of Ed. - Ag. and Markets
- CCE - Local school districts

**Education**

**POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:**
Education of:
- Consumers
- Agricultural Producers
- Government Officials

**INTENDED OUTCOME(S):**
Increase consumption of locally produced agricultural products

**CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:**
- Pride of NY - Dairy Princess program
- Ag. in the Classroom
- Farmer’s Market Nutrition Program, Five A Day, Eat Well Play Hard

**BARRIERS AND/OR GAPS IN CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:**
- Funding (lack of) for promotion and education
- Lack of knowledge by teachers regarding nutrition and agriculture
- Restrictions on Cooperative Extension nutrition educators regarding the audiences they can work with using federal funds
- Lack of support by localities for agricultural producers and direct marketing

**SUGGESTED NEW AND/OR REVISED POLICIES/PROGRAMS:**
- Increased funding for education and promotion
- Education of teachers regarding nutrition and agriculture
- Reduced restrictions on funding stream for Cooperative Extension
- Education of policy makers regarding nutrition and agriculture

**WHAT, IF ANY, REGIONAL VARIATIONS/FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED?**
Use state guidelines but with local administration

IDENTIFY OTHER POLICY/THEME AREAS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THIS PARTICULAR POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
- Current teacher certification standards

IDENTIFY RELEVANT STATE AGENCY AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS:
Improved Regulation, Research, Planning and Development of Agricultural Systems for Competitiveness and Sustainability

- **POLICY/ PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:**
  Provide incentives to encourage county partnerships in regional agricultural development.

**INTENDED OUTCOME(S)**
- Encourage regionalism
- Efficient allocation of resources
- Benefit a larger group
- Build horizontal and vertical agency cooperation

**CURRENT POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:**
- Ag. and Market resources for individual farms and county development
- “Pride of NY” plus geographical indications and other regional branding efforts
- Small scale food processor groups

**BARRIERS AND/OR GAPS IN CURRENT POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:**
- Short term view in planning
- Parochial thinking, turf-ism
- Fraud and waste
- Tax payer resistance to consider the public good

**SUGGESTED NEW AND/ OR REVISED POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:**
- Training programs for land use officials
- Funding for regional agricultural development specialists
- Increased funding for regional innovation

**WHAT, IF ANY, REGIONAL VARIATIONS/ FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED?**
Set general parameters and allow flexibility for regions to apply funds.

**IDENTIFY OTHER POLICY/THEME AREAS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THIS PARTICULAR POLICY/ PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:**
- Discretionary grant programs like the Governor's “Small Cities”
- County Farmland Protection Boards could be broadened to incorporate additional interests and opinions

**IDENTIFY RELEVANT STATE AGENCY AND STAKE HOLDER GROUPS:**
- Ag. and Markets
- Empire State Development
- CCE
- D O H
- Farm Bureau
- Dept. of State
- Regional Planning Agencies
- Cornell University
- Comptroller Office satellite training (monthly) - 4-H

**Connect Agriculture and Food to Rural Communities**

**(Connecting Commodities Produced—Institutional Purchases of Local Food)**

- **POLICY/ PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:**
  Identify voluntary partners → public schools, hospitals, prisons (single payer)

**INTENDED OUTCOMES:**
- Advocate/ Education with non-agricultural, voluntary partners
- Create an intermediate Regional Food → Facilitate institutional purchasing

**CURRENT POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:**
- Farm to School
- Small Farm Program
- Eden Alternative

**BARRIERS AND OR GAPS IN CURRENT POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:**
- No ability to single out NYS for purchase
- Supply— inadequate
- Processing
- Distribution
- Labor/ Equipment

**SUGGESTED NEW AND OR REVISED POLICIES/PROGRAMS:**
- Identify non-agricultural partners to advocate for agriculture (ie, health community)
- Economic development—mid-scale processing
- Media: Audio program – upstate
- Education about purchasing changes
- Research: nutritional superiority of local food

**WHAT, IF ANY, REGIONAL VARIATIONS/ FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED?**

**IDENTIFY OTHER POLICY/THEME AREAS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THIS PARTICULAR POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:**

**IDENTIFY RELEVANT STATE AGENCY AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS:**
- Dept. of Education
- Dept. of Health
- School districts
- Economic Development
- Hospitals

**TOP THREE POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS - SPECIFIC:**
1) Education of citizens, consumers, public officials, and farmers on critical agricultural and food issues, to improve competitiveness and sustainability.

(DETAILS)
- More coordination for education/promotion programs for teachers, farmers, policy makers
- Improve networking of all ag. stakeholders
- Mandate an agricultural education curriculum (eg, compliance with National Ag. Literacy standards)

2) Improve connection of agriculture and food to communities for enhanced agricultural profitability and community wellness.

(DETAILS)
- Increase purchase of NY agricultural products/ revise regulations to make it easier for NY institutions to prefer NY products
- Encourage agricultural resource groups (eg, morning coffee sessions) and identify non-agricultural partners who can help advocate for agriculture (eg, conservationists)

3) Improved regulation, planning, research and development of food and agricultural systems for competitiveness and sustainability.

(DETAILS)
- Funding for regional agricultural development specialist
- Increase funding for regional innovation (increase collaboration)
- Increase access to broadband and other communication and information technology
- Supply needed infrastructure/ coordinate needed infrastructure with businesses for processing and distribution

WHICH OF THESE HAS THE MOST CONNECTIONS TO OTHER POLICY THEME AREAS (OR, WHICH IS THE MOST INTER-DISCIPLINARY)?
#2) Improve connection of agriculture and food to communities for enhanced agricultural profitability and community wellness
→ (Health/ Education/ Agriculture/ Economic Development)

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS THAT CAME OUT OF YOUR DISCUSSION THAT ARE BROADER THAN YOUR POLICY THEME AREA:
- Water issues— as rest of country runs out of water, we need to protect our water supply
- Develop indicators for measurement and evaluation of policy impacts
- Energy issues related to agriculture/ growing energy resources and consumption of energy
- Not a lot of farmers in the room— check with farmers about these recommendations

INTERRELATED THEME: Improve connection of agriculture and food systems to communities for enhanced agricultural profitability and community wellness.
THAT CAME FROM: Agriculture and Food Systems

POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:
Research/ Remove barriers to promote eating simply/ eating more agricultural products

DETAILS:
- Promote environmental benefits of farmers as good neighbors
- Get rid of barriers/ reform school lunch programs— may be federal barriers to buying locally grown products
- Research potential benefits of nutritional superiority to eating locally grown food
- But be careful not to hurt NY farmers who sell goods up and down the east coast → So instead promote eating more simply/ healthily (eat Chilean peppers in January and NY peppers in July)
- Incentives for institutions (schools, hospitals, prisons, etc) to buy locally grown products when possible

SUGGESTED ADDENDA/ COMMENTS:
- Help smaller farmers to convert from conventional farming to specialty, value-added, or “organic” (recognizing that some people don’t like the word “organic” because it is too limiting)
- Overhaul milk pricing system
- Conduct audit of successful Northeast programs (including in Canada) and use models to come up with new ideas
- On the technology side— controlled environment agriculture(research what can be produced economically 12 months/ year, and support commercialization of the results of research, also need push on the marketing side of this)
- Mental health and stress of farmers— look at innovative programs to address this
- Youth interest— facilitate linkages to build this connection to farm/ ag.
- Support development of indicators for a variety of topics related to agriculture (environmental, viability, etc)

AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS (group notes)

- Connect Ag./ Food with Community and Health
  - How Ag./ Food fits in the whole community
  - Need studies to show fresh food is superior
  - Legislative action and funding to support this
  - Adopt a more preventative approach
  - Connect the eating part of food with agriculture
  - Services/ value added services to help farmers in direct marketing to serve senior citizens (eg. husk corn for them)
  - Look at food safety regulations to help food preparation at markets
  - Look at other regulatory barriers that stifle new enterprise → make regulations size specific
    - Help local small producers
- Look for opportunities for ag. community to be involved in community food distribution
- Public health/education/outreach to be active in promoting “farm to consumer”
  - Activist approach
  - Medical community involvement in outreach
- Make point: physical labor is good

Farmland Protection/Preservation: 1) Must make farm profitable; 2) Must develop opportunities for future farmers; 3) Continue current programs
- Ag. protection not green space preservation
- Prioritizing land for farming → Education
- Determining what constitutes farmland protection
- Make sure farmers can make a living on land
  - Sustainability
  - Diverse kinds of agriculture → small and large
  - What fits for particular land and soil
  - Enterprises consistent with local needs
- Greenbelt planning around urban centers for food security
- Develop options to preserve farm land (eg, farmers who can no longer farm)
  - Non-traditional farm transitions
  - Use current tools → change them to make them better
- Educate public about benefits of farms → not just economic contributions
- Farmer-friendly zoning

Make NY Farms Competitive and Sustainable
- Scale appropriate regulations
- Lower property taxes/ lower business costs
- Change basis for government funding from a land-based system
  - To? Income-based? Employee-based?
- Innovation is needed
  - Like with wine industry → legislation helped
  - Possible legislation to back up industry and promote innovation
  - Eg. cherry juice as a health drink
- Encourage cooperation to help traditional farmers
- Hooking up potential farmers with farms
- Technical innovations → get information to farmers
  - Need help from/ collaboration with commodity producers to increase and add value to products
  - Eg. NY Bold Onions
- Get into markets— Expand into markets

Economic Development
- Business climate
- Farms meeting market demand
- Combination with IDA and Agriculture → Why is agriculture always seen as the poor step-child to manufacturing?
  - Beginner Farmer Loan Program
- Think about livelihood and not just about “jobs”
- Get people to understand the benefits of buying locally
- Government needs to be involved in this
- Use local currency to support agriculture
- Ease regulations so that local institutions can purchase local products (incentives)

- Education and Research
  1) farmers, youth, young adults, immigrants—research needed for the education; 2) consumers—education of health benefits of agriculture and agricultural products; 3) officials—education to understand policy implications for agriculture
  - Research/studies for success or needs
  - Help make farming a viable lifestyle and career choice
  - Help future farmers get the skills they need
  - Educate public about farming
  - Research—like Farm Viability Institute
  - Connect agriculture to health—food/nutrition and also environmental health
  - Research smaller scale alternative enterprises—how to make them work?
  - Research how to make commodity production successful
    - Support delivery of this research
  - Get input to find out what research is needed
  - Ag. In the Classroom and Nutrition in the Classroom—bring back nutrition as part of the curriculum
  - Rural Schools—service learning
    - Need meaningful long-term projects

- Education of Citizens, Consumers, Public Officials, and Farmers on Critical Agricultural and Food Systems Issues to Improve Competitiveness and Sustainability
  - More funding and coordination for education and promotion programs—teachers, farmers, policy makers
    - Education of teachers at the elementary/secondary level on agriculture and nutrition
    - Fewer restrictions on existing extension education with respect to funding streams (reimbursement)
      - Eg., CCE limited on audience it can give information to at public sessions
    - Education of policy makers regarding nutrition and agriculture (local and state level)
    - Additional funding for current and potential agricultural producers—education/training
    - Continuing education programs for existing farmers
    - Improvement/expansion of network of trainers for producers
  - Improve networking of all agricultural stakeholders
    - Collaboration of agricultural educators and others in the community
    - Tell people what is currently happening—not limited to ag. production
  - Mandatory agricultural education curriculum
    - Compliance with the National Agricultural Literacy Standards

- Create Customers for Agricultural Products (Connects with “Connect Ag/ Food with Community”)
  - Market research—on messages that will attract customers (“triggers”)
  - Need to increase resources for creating customers for NY ag. products
  - Support for “Five A Day” (5-8) or similar messages—state marketing orders
  - What works?—general marketing vs. specific marketing
    - It worked in VT
- Is adding value truly profitable?
  - Need hard evidence to evaluate this
- Ramp up regional identity efforts

**Improved Regulation, Planning, Research and Development for Agriculture/ Food Systems Competitiveness and Sustainability**
- More consistency
- Integrate mediation/ alternative dispute resolution/ collaborative problem solving in community
- Get good information about the impacts of agriculture
- Infrastructure—need for processing plans, broadband, GIS
- Funding for agriculture that traditional banks do not do
  - Loans to fit size needs
  - No local banks in some areas of the state
- More education for local officials/ local planning boards/ lay members/ land trust members about agricultural issues
- Need for agricultural development specialists—county and regional
- Funding for regional agricultural development specialists
  - Review current capacity (eg. RCID and other models in existence)
- Increase/ change funding for regional innovation
  - Increase collaboration as a criterion for funding grants
  - Bring in connections to health, community development, etc
- State initiatives to improve rural transportation (roads, signage, drainage, bridges, paving)
- Coordinate infrastructure upgrades with businesses
  - Increase access to broadband and other communication and information technology
  - Identify resources that would be needed to develop business clusters related to food and agriculture
  - Support needed infrastructure for processing and distribution
  - Water/ energy

**Improve the Connection of Agriculture and Food to Communities, for enhanced agricultural profitability and community wellness by:**
- Increase the purchase of NYS agricultural products
  - Revise regulations to make it easier for NYS institutions to prefer NY state products over other products
  - Promote positive community aspects of agriculture, through developing and personalizing a media strategy on the importance of using local agricultural products: this may include
    - Using cable TV
    - Farm Bureau Billboards—what farms/ farmers do in their communities
- Improved communication between local agricultural community and the larger local community
  - Encourage agricultural resource groups (eg. morning coffee/ donut sessions)
  - Identify non-agricultural partners who can help advocate for agriculture (eg, health field, conservationists)
- Undertake research on the nutritional value of locally produced food vs. non-locally produced food
Overarching Theme: Improved regulations, planning, research and development of food and agricultural systems for competitiveness and sustainability
- Innovation is needed (eg, scale appropriate regulations)
- Education for public (and public officials) of importance of agriculture
- Need for agricultural development specialists at regional level

Connection:
- Connecting agriculture and food to communities
  → Link with local communities
- Connecting agriculture and food to health
- Regional identify efforts

Interrelated Theme:
- Improve connection of agriculture and food systems to communities for enhanced agricultural profitability and community wellness:
  - Farms need conservation plan for nutrient management to impact water quality → need to be environmentally sound
  - Promote what is being done to achieve soundness
  - Reform school lunch program → healthy choices and local products
  - Provide incentives (tax credit) for farm and families to engage in CSAs (Community Supported Agriculture)— use WIC or Food Stamps
  - Expand farmers’ markets to farm stands— make electronic redemption easier
  - Research/explore nutritive superiority of locally produced products
  - Determine (survey) what additional economic benefits are to the local community of buying local products
  - Create incentives for institutions (hospitals, schools, etc) to buy local produce
  - Schools be allowed to purchase local instead of from bid-list (federal regulations)
    - Does NYS need to make up the monetary difference from “penalty”? 
    - Need to find out what the policy is on this, etc
  - Collaborate with other states to encourage change in federal policy to support state/ regional food policy
  - Support development of indicators for community support for ag., environmental impact, local ag. viability, etc (supported by local communities and elected officials)
  - Low-interest grant loan fund for farmers who are converting from conventional to value-added production (including organic, sustainable, etc)
  - Overhaul of milk pricing system
  - Promote local systems to increase consumption of diverse and sustainable food production
  - Establish a working group to evaluate/audit programs that “do this” → share models (eg. Alberta) and their relevance to people’s lives
  - Provide education about “simple nutrition” to increase purchase to fresh produce
  - More research on what can be produced in controlled environments 12 months out of the year, and support for the commercialization of these results
  - Look at effects on mental health of farmers in enterprise development— relieves stress?
  - Promote youth opportunities in farm communities/on farms
- Ag in the Classroom, career days, guidance counselors, class field trips
- Incorporate agriculture into current curricular resources in schools
- Provide on-farm work experiences/internships for youth

AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS (2)
From inter-related theme discussion:

Environment ➔ promote what farmers are doing for the community, making them better neighbors
  - Environmentally sound
  - Promote environmental benefits

Promote local systems to increase consumption-driven/sustainable food products
  - Need policies to promote this

Health/Education
- Return school lunch program
- Healthy choices for children
- Introduce them to healthy eating
- Create incentives for institutions (schools, hospitals, prisons, etc) to buy locally grown products
- Farm to School Program ➔ remove barriers to this
- Allow schools to purchase locally instead of from bid lists ➔ barriers?
  - Federal barriers exist
  - Maybe NYS can make up the difference if federal policies penalize?
  - Collaborate with other states to explore this national issue ➔ try to change federal policy
  - Put it in dollar and cents terms
  - What does “local” mean?

Support development of indicators for a variety of topics related to agriculture (CSA, environment, viability)
  - Important to measure to assess the current status

Help for smaller farmers who are converting from conventional to specialty, value-added, or “organic” farming (is “organic” as a term too broad??)

Overhaul milk pricing system

Make more use of mediation to help farmers

Conduct an audit of successful programs in the Northeast (including Canada)
  - Someone needs to bring these ideas together
  - Use models to come up with new ideas

Provide opportunities for farmers to engage in true CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) systems
  - Maybe a tax credit
  - Can food stamps be used to pay for CSA purchases?
- Expand WIC and senior benefits at farm stands and farmers’ markets
- Make the electronic redemption system easier—can currently only use at Farmers Markets, not vegetable and fruit stands (roadside stands)

Research to explore the potential nutritional superiority of homegrown food \(\rightarrow\) right now, we just have anecdotal evidence

NYS is a very diverse state, with respect to size/ agricultural commodities

Raise consciousness to purchase local products
- NY farmers export down the road
- NY farmers sell to supermarket brokers up and down the East Coast
- So, if research shows it is better to buy locally, this might actually not be the best for our farmers
  \(\rightarrow\) Instead, need to urge people to eat more simply
- Provide education on how to eat simply, low-fat, minimally processed, locally
  - “ok to eat a Chilean pepper in January if they eat a NY pepper in June”
  \(\rightarrow\) Encourage people to buy more in the produce aisle than in the processed foods aisle

Technology side: controlled-environment side of agriculture
- More research on what can be accomplished in controlled environments
- Support for the commercialization of the results of this research

Mental health and stress of farmers
- Look at innovative programs to address this

High school youth interest in agriculture \(\rightarrow\) facilitate linkages to farm/ ag.

Importance of water and energy

Farmers not “in the room” — need to run this by them
COMMUNITY CAPACITY AND SOCIAL NETWORKS WORKGROUP

TOP THREE POLICY/ PROGRAM FOCAL AREAS:

1) Policies and programs should include community capacity building and training, including state investment in professional staff for capacity building.

2) Community capacity issues should be included in school curriculum.

3) Facilitating connections and communications between and within governments and organizations, such as the use of advisory boards for planning, and the use of electronic communication (media, Internet).

GENERAL COMMENTS:
- Poverty = top issue to tackle
- Leadership training = means to tackle the issue
- Social networks = means to tackle the issue
- Need for a vision of community to inspire a better life
- Education, civic participation, and inclusiveness were central themes

• POLICY/ PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
Appoint a Governor’s Task Force to recommend ways to enhance overall civic participation and inclusiveness in rural areas. Ensure that the task force looks at the potential for K-12 education to prepare young people to participate in the civic life of their communities both while they are young and as adults.

INTENDED OUTCOME(S)
- Increase involvement/participation
- Increase representation of all groups in community
- Increase equal and open access
- Increase inclusiveness

CURRENT POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:
- EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission)
- Open meetings
- Quality Communities program rewards the creation of partnerships

BARRIERS AND/OR GAPS IN CURRENT POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:
- Lack of multiple nodes of communication
- Lack of public meeting places
- No rewards for inclusiveness
- Lack of understanding about reasons for low civic participation
SUGGESTED NEW AND/OR REVISED POLICIES/PROGRAMS:

WHAT, IF ANY, REGIONAL VARIATIONS/FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED?
Governor’s Task Force should represent various regions

IDENTIFY OTHER POLICY/THEME AREAS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THIS PARTICULAR POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:

IDENTIFY RELEVANT STATE AGENCY AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS:

- **POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:**
  State investment in regional entities for professional staff to promote local capacity building and inter-municipal cooperation through training, support, and technical assistance.

**INTENDED OUTCOME(S)**
- Increase access to expertise
- Increase participation (ensure broad base of participation)
- Increase equality of resources and assistance between communities
- Increase informed decision making

**CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:**
- Tug Hill Commission
- Appalachian Regional Commission - Southern Tier Central
- Rural Economic Assistance Program

**BARRIERS AND/OR GAPS IN CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:**
- Go it alone attitude
- Lack of knowledge of needs and gaps (lack of regional assessment)
- Fiscal, legal, insurance issues
- Distance, lack of communication infrastructure
- Lack of coordination and leadership
- Wide diversity of population and needs

SUGGESTED NEW AND/OR REVISED POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
(see recommendation above)

WHAT, IF ANY, REGIONAL VARIATIONS/FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED?
Do the regional definitions make sense?

IDENTIFY OTHER POLICY/THEME AREAS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THIS PARTICULAR POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
- All
- But especially Local Governance

IDENTIFY RELEVANT STATE AGENCY AND STAKE HOLDER GROUPS:
- Dept. of State, Small Cities - CCE
- Local government association

TOP THREE POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS – SPECIFIC:

1) Appoint a Governor’s Task Force to recommend ways to enhance overall civic participation and inclusiveness in rural areas. Ensure that the task force looks at the potential for K-12 education to prepare young people to participate in the civic life of their communities both while they are young and as adults.

(DETAILS)

2) State investment in regional entities for professional staff to promote local capacity building and inter-municipal cooperation through training, support, and technical assistance.

(DETAILS)

WHICH OF THESE HAS THE MOST CONNECTIONS TO OTHER POLICY THEME AREAS (OR, WHICH IS THE MOST INTER-DISCIPLINARY)?
Both are highly interrelated, especially with Local and Regional Governance.
The group did not prioritize, but we’d say go with #2.

COMMUNITY CAPACITY AND SOCIAL NETWORKS (group notes)

Community:
1) Leadership - core group, sustainability, structural, character and nature = empowerment
   - paid vs. volunteers
2) Connections - within and between communities/organizations
   - communications (electronic, multi-venue)
   - where do people have “social space” to connect?
3) Large agendas - broad issues
   - Vs.
4) Participation - youth, low income, etc.
5) Community Settlement Issues - commuting, household makeup, dispersion, etc
6) “Stayers” and “Leavers”— Who are they? What resources?
**Recommendations:**

1. Policies and programs should include community capacity and training as part of program development.
2. State investment in professional staff, including training and support for community capacity building (connected with #1).
3. Inclusiveness—broader use of advisory boards for planning, communications.
4. Schools/institutions should be included in any community programs.
5. Inter-community cooperation should be nurtured and supported in policy. Legal and fiscal constraints to inter-community cooperation should be removed.
6. State should support research and data-gathering on rural areas (including existing efforts).
7. Include community capacity issues as part of education curriculum (civics).
8. Community media.

Recommendations:

1. State investment in regional entities (rural health networks, REAP, nursing associations, etc.) for professional staff to provide local capacity building (leadership, civic involvement) and inter-municipal cooperation through training (use technology—broadband) and technical assistance.
   - Incentives for participation?

2. Appoint Governor’s Task Force to recommend ways to enhance overall civic participation and inclusiveness in rural areas.
   - Ensure that the Task Force looks at the potential for k-12 education to prepare young people to participate in the civic life of their communities, both while they are young and as adults.
   - Higher Education
   - Potential for the arts/community events and festivals.

Regional Variations→ Task force to represent various regions of the state.
ENERGY WORKGROUP

TOP THREE POLICY/PROGRAM FOCAL AREAS:

1) Capacity, utilization, storage and distribution of energy in NYS

2) Conservation and efficiency—how to improve or increase

3) Developing new sources (and uses) of energy in rural NY

GENERAL COMMENTS:
- Improved education and communication was an underlying theme throughout the discussion
- “Disconnect” was a word that kept coming up—for example, we have a disconnect between high price of energy and abundant supply capacity of energy
- “Barriers” was another underlying theme—for example, barriers to adopting new technology, etc

INTERRELATED THEME: Inventory of renewable energy resources and markets leading to development of new renewable energy sources.

THAT CAME FROM: Energy

POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:
“Energy Czar” for NYS, or the formation of a Rural Energy Alliance

DETAILS:
- Could/would Cornell serve as the hub for this “clearinghouse” website?
- Lots of opportunities for integration
- Is there a mandate in state government for various agencies to cooperate?

SUGGESTED ADDENDA/COMMENTS:
- Sharing resources between municipalities may help with energy efficiencies (e.g., purchasing of fuel)
- Opportunity—rural NY is “hopeful” that energy production may be a viable economic development opportunity in the near future
- Rural NY is not as organized as Urban NY when it comes to “lobbying” in Albany for their interests (hence, the recommendation for a Rural Energy Alliance)
- Energy development in rural NY must be tied to Economic Development

Energy: Interrelated Issues

- Cellulosic ethanol—potential for NY?
- What is going to work??—switchgrass, willow
- Inventory of resources
  - NY SISO
  - NYPA.gov
  - NYSERDA.gov
- Removing barriers to allow for sharing of transportation resources
  - Save money and gas!
- Waste for methane
  - right mix agricultural waste
  - manure and food waste
- Cornell as source of website
- Energy Czar vs./and Partnerships
  - * Energy Guru—apolitical
    - Collect all info. data at a central place and educate
- 70% of Rural NY = Agricultural
  - Rural Advocacy Group
LAND USE, ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES WORKGROUP

TOP THREE POLICY/ PROGRAM FOCAL AREAS:

Effective land use policy/planning protects our forests, farms, and natural resources. When these are protected, our rural communities become viable, which leads to an increased quality of life.

1) Technical assistance and education to local government institutions

2) Reform public education and teacher preparation
   = Grows awareness of environment and natural resources in our youth and our teachers

3) Infrastructure funding— incorporate Quality Communities initiatives

GENERAL COMMENTS:
- Property tax reform needs to happen
- More research needed on alternative energy

1) Provide Technical Assistance/ Education to Local Government Institutions

- POLICY/ PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
  - 4 hours/ year of education and training for planning and zoning boards— require land use training as one topic, with specialists on other local needs (combination of standardized and individualized topics).
  - Create incentives to discourage use of the “opt out” option for towns to participate.
  - Create a credential to recognize those who complete additional non-required training (could also be used by that person as a campaign platform).

INTENDED OUTCOME(S)
A) Enhanced knowledge of ways/ tools to protect environment/ natural resources
B) Certification program concept— recognition for additional effort and training

CURRENT POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:
That’s the issue—a lost of ignorance on the part of planning and zoning board members. They are charged with making decisions on topics they are not familiar with.

BARRIERS AND/OR GAPS IN CURRENT POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:
- How to fund these ideas?
- There would be a time and cost for volunteers to attend this training
- How would you enforce attendance at the training— ensure that someone did attend?
- (one idea: publicize the names of those who did attend; recognize their achievement— it would, in a sense, “shame” those who should have attended but didn’t)
SUGGESTED NEW AND/OR REVISED POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
- Money: allocate additional $ to NYS
  - Encourage development of programs and participation in programs
  - Matching funds
  - Incentives
  - Money to “institutions” (competitive funding) to develop programs and engage students/faculty to develop training materials—with an outreach component
- Be sure to certify trainers to develop programs
- State agencies should be challenged to recognize local governments as their customers.
- Make follow up help available if participants have questions
- Replicate the model of the Tug Hill Commission
- Have one dedicated regional specialist that functions as a “circuit rider” to assist these communities
- Re-fund the County Environmental Management Councils—they were useful
- How to accomplish some of this:
  - CD’s
  - Regional training
  - Teleconferences
- Improved outreach/notification of available training for people who need to be trained

WHAT, IF ANY, REGIONAL VARIATIONS/FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED?
Determine local governments highest needs (keep it localized), but always keep land use in the forefront.

IDENTIFY OTHER POLICY/THEME AREAS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THIS PARTICULAR POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
- Local Government
- Agriculture and Food Systems (maybe)
- Community Capacity

IDENTIFY RELEVANT STATE AGENCY AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS:
Many of them—coordination is key to being successful
State:
- Department of State
- Ag. and Markets
- Soil and Water Conservation
- SUNY
- SUNY ESF
- DEC
- Office of Real Property
- DOT
- Cornell
- Pace

Education Institutions:
- SUNY
- SUNY ESF
- Society of American Foresters
- Farm Bureau
- Empire State Forest Products Assoc’n (ESFPA)
- Assoc’n of Towns
- Assoc’n of Cities
- Conference of Mayors
- MPO’s
- Regional Planning Commissions
- NY Planning Federation
- Environmental Management Councils
- Cornell Cooperative Extension
2) Reform Public Education and Teacher Preparation

- **POLICY/ PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:**
  Begin a dialogue with relevant organizations recognized by State Ed. to incorporate local and relevant land use/ environmental topics into Earth Sciences and Biology curriculum.

**INTENDED OUTCOME(S)**
Rather than mandate, incorporate relevant, local, and topical land use/ environmental issues into curriculum, so that youth are exposed to “their” natural environment (what’s outside their door) and expose them to careers related to these areas so that they return to local communities.

**CURRENT POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:**
- Examples include Place-Based Curriculum— Catskills, History of NYS
- Ag. in the Classroom— has brought agricultural issues to existing curricula
- Schools teach mandates, but do not “localize” the issues

**BARRIERS AND/OR GAPS IN CURRENT POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:**
- State mandates do not allow for much time and/ or creativity to weave local issues into existing curricula
- Lack of awareness of rural issues by downstate legislators

**SUGGESTED NEW AND/ OR REVISED POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:**
- Weave local land use issues into existing curriculum/ subjects where it can be done
- Tie job opportunities related to these fields into the curriculum
- Ties in urban schools

**WHAT, IF ANY, REGIONAL VARIATIONS/ FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED?**
Should be flexible enough to incorporate your local land use issues— ie, Long Island weaves in coastal issues and North Country weaves in forestry and forest management

**IDENTIFY OTHER POLICY/ THEME AREAS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THIS PARTICULAR POLICY/ PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:**
- Rural Schools and Youth

**IDENTIFY RELEVANT STATE AGENCY AND STAKE HOLDER GROUPS:**
- State Department of Ed.  - Rural Schools Association
- NYS Association of School Boards - Any organizations recognized by State Ed.
- Universities— SUNY, ESF, Cornell
- Relevant state departments— DEC, Ag. and Markets
3) Tax Reform

- POLICY/ PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
  Reform forest tax law

INTENDED OUTCOME(S)
This reform would make is easier to administer and would encourage people to take advantage of this law, which would then keep land forested, in production, and out of development

CURRENT POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:
Current policy encourages de-forestation due to high taxes

BARRIERS AND/OR GAPS IN CURRENT POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:
Current policy encourages de-forestation due to high taxes

SUGGESTED NEW AND/ OR REVISED POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:
- Assessor training should be enforced on how to assess a forest (much like any assessment)
- Change the definition of “Real Property,” so as not to include timber

WHAT, IF ANY, REGIONAL VARIATIONS/ FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED?

IDENTIFY OTHER POLICY/ THEME AREAS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THIS PARTICULAR POLICY/ PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:

IDENTIFY RELEVANT STATE AGENCY AND STAKE HOLDER GROUPS:
- Real Property
- Forest Owners Association (NYFOA)
- Local Government
- Ways and Means (Assembly)
- DEC
- Rural Resources Commission
- Council of Forest Resource Organizations
- ESFPA (Empire State Forest Products Association

4) Infrastructure, Funding, Incorporating Quality Communities Concepts/ Principles

POLICY/ PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
Include Smart Growth principles as criteria for awarding points in grant applications so as to encourage development that protects farmland and revitalizes existing downtowns.

INTENDED OUTCOMES:
- Protects farmland and revitalizes existing downtowns
- Ties rural utility funding to Smart Growth
- Increases strategic planning
- More efficient use of money
- Keeps bus and homes downtown or in identified “nodes”

CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:

BARRIERS AND/OR GAPS IN CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
- Current policies do not make a connection to Smart Growth/Quality Communities principles
- = No money to fund updating of outdated master plans and farmland preservation plans

SUGGESTED NEW AND/OR REVISED PROGRAMS:
- Tie into Community Preservation Act
- Investigate how programs are funded and matched (ie, Purchase of Development Rights)
- PDR funding should require a conservation plan

WHAT, IF ANY, REGIONAL VARIATIONS/FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED?

IDENTIFY OTHER POLICY/THEME AREAS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THIS PARTICULAR POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:

IDENTIFY RELEVANT STATE AGENCY AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS:

TOP THREE POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS - SPECIFIC:

1) Integrate agriculture and farmland protection, natural resource protection, and environmental planning into a training curriculum that utilizes a variety of approaches for distribution and outreach such as focused curriculum development, creation of CDs, teleconferences, etc. for local governments.

(DETAILS)

2) Systemic change of NYS education that incorporates sustainable practices as a contemporary theme into earth science and biology curriculum.

(DETAILS)
- Place-based
- Hands-on

3) Include Smart Growth principles as a criteria for awarding points in grant applications so as to encourage development that protects farmland and revitalizes existing downtowns.

(DETAILS)
4) Reform Real Property Tax law.

(DETAILS)
- Reform forest tax law to increase enrollment in the program and make it easier to participate
- Change definition of “real property” so as not to include timber
- Develop training for assessors on Forest Assessment

WHICH OF THESE HAS THE MOST CONNECTIONS TO OTHER POLICY THEME AREAS (OR, WHICH IS THE MOST INTER-DISCIPLINARY)?
#1) Integrate agriculture and farmland protection, natural resource protection, and environmental planning into a training curriculum that utilizes a variety of approaches for distribution and outreach.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS THAT CAME OUT OF YOUR DISCUSSION THAT ARE BROADER THAN YOUR POLICY THEME AREA:

INTERRELATED THEME: Create a training curriculum for local government which integrates agricultural and farmland protection, natural resources protection, and environmental planning.
THAT CAME FROM: Environment, Land Use, and Natural Resources

POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:

DETAILS:
- Training should be for all local government officials—not just for local planning and zoning boards
- Incentives to get people to attend
- Does this training tie into #3 on the interrelated themes list?

SUGGESTED ADDENDA/COMMENTS:
- Connecting land use and transportation: (ties in with infrastructure recommendations)
  Local plans should include a transportation component—when a transportation project occurs, a community knows where its going, what it wants to look like, and can therefore work with the DOT to achieve the desired future
  - Make sure DOT is included
  - Include how to plan for transportation within your comprehensive plan
- Would be good if all communities were trained on the basic components/topics that should be in a comprehensive plan and all communities should include them in their plans—levels the playing field among communities
- DEC’s Project Wet and Wild curriculum has a strong educational component and should be involved and called upon (Project Learning Tree also)
- Timber Theft legislation includes a component for training local law enforcement about timber theft. Allows for, but does not fund... Continuing education is needed. This program should be looked at.
Training on “alternative” tourism/transportation (ie, snowmobiles and ATVs). While they may be harmful to the environment and natural resources, they add a lot to local economies and can be beneficial. Needs to be good recommendations and policies on how these should be implemented.

ENVIRONMENT, LAND USE, NATURAL RESOURCES - group notes

- Maintain rural character and farming → economic development
- Rural utilities funding—sprawl—connect to principles of quality communities—more than bankers—state and federal
- Forestry—real property services—need legislation changing how timber is assessed and taxed
- “Build Out Analysis” and cost of services—tools
  o Visual preferences surveys
  o Fundability
- PDR (funding incentives)
- Gravel mining and mineral rights
- Large lot zoning—education of planning and zoning boards and general public
- Technical assistance/institutional memory (home rule)—farmland and forest
- Open communication—up and down
- Forest plan education
- Collection system of what has been done—share information with other groups
- Coordination and sharing of resources
- Alternative energy sources—explore and educate
  o Need more research
- Awareness of rural issues by downstate legislators (and vice versa)—need for education
- Coordination at all levels—especially federal
- Make information user friendly—know the audience—marketing
- Higher standards—economic impacts/“what’s in it for me?”
  o Long term rather than short term thinking
  o Self-monitoring
- Subdivision laws need revision → improve land use policies/create vision (5 lot phenomenon)
  o Energy prices—impact on development
- People want to live in cities with others
- Problem of urban blight—need for mixed use development/vibrant urban cores
- Agricultural education and environmental education in schools
- Agri-tourism and environmental appreciation—trail riding/ATVs with respect for trails
- Earth science curriculum with a sustainable “spin”—ethics
  → Get involvement of State Dept of Education
- Re-vamp environmental education—applied and Northeast focus
- Field components (varied)—incubator type
- Figure out ways to reach more kids—and be much more relevant to local areas—and all academic levels (not just gifted kids)
- Involve private sector in experiences and overcome litigation concerns
  o Create partnerships
- Higher education needs to incorporate environmental work and prepare teachers beyond Cornell and SUNY ESP
- Transportation—highway and bridge system
  - Also concerns re: garbage coming in
- Close the loop—sustainability—the entire cycle
  - Environmental scorecard/footprint
- Community Preservation Act—LI now→ statewide?
  - Transfer tax to preservation projects
- Property tax system needs complete revision—switch to sales/income basis

**Education:**
- Curriculum set:
  - Legislative mandate (Irish potato famine)
  - Local level and individual schools
- State sets performance standards—tougher now
- Need to “thread” all through k-12 curriculum with examples (“stories”)
- Re-vamp curriculum to be more relevant, contemporary
- Dialogue with Board of Regents
  - Get buy-in from school boards, superintendents, NYSUT beforehand
- “Dinner conversations” with real-life knowledge
- Regents respond to job creation component—will retain kids in home community
- Countryside Exchange Program
- Place-based curriculum developed by local schools
  - Must work with the curriculum coordinator
- Virtual field trips via computer
- Rural schools losing large numbers of students
  - Connect to:
    - Reluctant to consolidate
    - Land use
    - Job creation
- Rural Schools Association—outreach
  - And other organizations recognized by state BOE
- Also benefits urban schools

**Infrastructure Funding/Development:**
- Incorporation of points for Quality Communities principles/plan or Smart Growth plan
- Advocate for rule change at federal level and recognize relation between utilities and development
  - USDA Rural Utility Program
- Tie rural utility funding to Smart Growth→ decrease sprawl
- Increase opportunities for affordable housing
- Increase strategic planning
- Revitalize downtown—keep businesses and homes downtown or in nodes to avoid sprawl
  - Makes the most efficient use of money (Rather than 20 homes in a 5 mile radius)
- Funds to update out-of-date plans
- Tie in with Community Preservation Act
Invest—How to revamp/re-engage?
- How programs are funded/matched?
- PDR and other programs
- PDR money should require a conservation plan
- Revisit a collaboration between NYSDAM and DEC and their programs

TAX:
- Reform Forest Tax Law to make it easier to administer and encourage people to take advantage of it
- Minimize double counting—assess whole parcel and then assess the trees
- Remove timber from the definition of real property
  - Why keep the trees in the forest?—too expensive
- Minimize sprawl
- Assessor training—accelerate the training
  - Require appraiser training course if over __ acres of forest in your municipality

= More equitable tax of forest
Sustain forest land
Preserve open space

Regionalism: Local government officials talking and working collaboratively
- Technical assistance and education to local government
  - institutional
- Reform public education and teacher preparation
  - begin dialogue with relevant constituents and groups related to earth science and biology curriculum
  - tie to jobs
- Infrastructure funding—Quality Communities concepts
- Tax reform—property tax reform
  - income and sales based
- Land Use Planning ➔ forest and agricultural land protection

= Economic viability of our rural communities and quality of life

Provide technical assistance/education to local government institutions:
- 4 hour education/training every year for planning and zoning boards
  - Require land use training specialists on individual topics
  - Incentives to discourage “opting out”
  - Credential for additional, non-required trainings
  - * training resource—create—curriculum development—consortium

Outcomes:
- enhance knowledge of ways/tools to protect environment/natural resources
- certification program concept
- how to fund?

Funding:
Allocate additional money to NYS
- Development
- Encourage participation
- Matching funds
- Incentivise
- Money to “institutions” (competitive) to develop programs and engage students and faculty in the development of training materials with outreach component
  - Certify trainers to deliver programs
Deter local governments highest needs → keep land use in the forefront

Barriers:
Time and cost to volunteers
Enforcement of requirements—publicize who attended, recognize achievements
Challenge agencies to recognize local governments as customers
Follow up if participants have questions
Replicate Tug Hill concept— one regional specialist, “circuit rider”

How?:
- Refund County Environmental Councils
- CDs
- Regional training
- Teleconferences
- Team with local government
- Create better notification of available programs
HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION WORKGROUP

TOP THREE POLICY/PROGRAM FOCAL AREAS:

1) Make use of shared assets to reduce redundancy in services

2) Local planning to require low income rental property development with new development

3) Increased state aid for rural affordable housing

4) Increased state aid for rural transportation

GENERAL COMMENTS:
- Program systems which do not necessarily meet individual needs—formula funding does not necessarily work
- Transportation/roads and bridges are taken for granted, but it is an aging infrastructure
- Local comprehensive planning needs to recognize/incorporate the role that transportation plays—more than placement
- Strengthen the transportation element of land use planning
- Developers should share the burden of affordable housing and transportation—create more public/private partnerships
- Need to educate low income citizens about predatory lending
- Local government needs to develop capacity to learn about the programs that meet community needs

INTERRELATED THEME: Create regional consortiums of initiatives
THAT CAME FROM: Housing and Transportation

POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:
Make use of shared assets to reduce redundancy in transportation services.

DETAILS:
- Investigate existing programs that utilize mobility manager—ie, Chautauqua Area Rural Transit System (CARTS) - see case study/resources [http://www.ctaa.org/ntrc/fountainebrief.asp](http://www.ctaa.org/ntrc/fountainebrief.asp)
- Investigate restrictions in existing regulations of each human services agency to remove prohibitions against sharing vehicles and services with other human services agencies
- Track transportation costs to see if there is a cost-benefit—look for economies of scale through coordination

SUGGESTED ADDENDA/COMMENTS:
- Contract with existing businesses (maintenance) rather than centralizing a service center
- NYERDA project—“Taxis” for disabled, contract with taxi service and taxi has vehicle equipped for special needs—but when not transporting disabled, would be available for transport of the remaining population
- Albany Co. is doing this—cost is comparable to cost of regular taxi with $15,000 premium at this time, Better fuel efficiency by 20%

**Research Needs:**
- Can savings/ benefits be accrued through cooperation/ aggregation of similar services?

**Related to HOUSING:**
- Research into ratios of thresholds between high-end and affordable housing:
  - What is the “cost” to a community when the “poor” (service providers, volunteers, etc) can no longer afford to live in, or are displaced from, local communities?
  - What sort of incentives would make a developer of high-end housing want to construct “lower end” affordable housing?
- Investigation of case studies: Burlington, VT; Santa Barbara, CA
  - Early on in the renovation/ rehabilitation of these cities they decided and planned for a diversity of housing needs—how did this happen?

**HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION group notes**
- Create more walk-able and bike-able communities
- Increase state aid for rural transportation
- Housing: options, incentives, affordable housing
- Increase state aid for affordable housing targeted to rural areas
- Local planning to require low income rental property development with new development
- Promote/ create more mixed housing (ie, seniors with low income)
- Protections from predatory lending practices
- Strengthen the transportation element of the land use planning process
  - Roads and bridges taken for granted
  - Aggregate existing elements of transportation services by different state agencies
    - Better planning through inter-agency coordination
- Better coordination and communication between state transportation programs and aid and local governments and service agencies
- Coordinate use of buses with not-for-profits, community groups
- * Make use of shared assets to reduce redundancy in services
- Work towards elimination of federal/ state restrictions preventing shared services
- Developer/ employer to provide transportation services to employees as condition of development/ expansion
- Better provide affordable housing near places of employment
- Developer/ employer to provide concessions for affordable housing
- Local housing needs targeted to specific community needs
  → Creation of systems versus individual needs

Make use of shared assets to reduce redundancy in services
- D.O.S. to act as an organizing mechanism
- Elevate awareness and understanding of available funding and service programs
- Current barriers: paperwork requirements, liability associated with shared services, municipal proprietorship
- Need a model – such as inter-municipal highway shared services program
- Must reflect nature of geographic regions
- State aid to be tied to shared services
- Association of Towns—better educate town officials

Local planning to require low income rental property development with new development
- Create incentives through permitting process to strike a balance between high end community housing
- Insure ability of service workers to remain proximate to community
- Governor’s Office of Small Cities has a program for community housing
- Current barriers: community resistance to low-income housing
- Displaced individuals due to new development
- Need state program to create a low income housing pool
  o Use federal UDAG program as model
- Incorporate local real estate market conditions

Increased state aid for the enhancement of rural transportation services
- Budget money for a laundry list of transportation services which supplements gaps in current programs
  o ie, transit coupons for elderly to go to the doctor, grocery store
- Provide needed transport services by coordinating resources through a “mobility manager”
  o ie, bulk gas purchases
- Inventory, expand, and coordinate existing services
- Need to loosen restrictions on state programs to facilitate coordination of services
- Specific to geographic demand
- Shared assets
- D.O.T.—identify restrictions on federal programs to facilitate shared assets and services

Increased state aid for rural affordable housing
- Dedicated state fund for down payment for homeownership
  o Possible revolving loan fund prepayment to fund this
- Increase homeownership in rural communities
- Expand upon current policies
- Current barriers: complexity of existing programs
- Housing Trust Fund bias in requirements in tax credits does not work for small projects
  o Revise HTF to accommodate more flexible housing
  o allow tax credits to be “gathered” for smaller projects
  o Make HTF more available for rural areas (smaller projects)
- Take into account non-traditional credit sources
- Account for variations in housing costs across the state
- HTF program needs to be modified to work for small projects
- Rental Housing Tax Credits
- DHCR, GOSC, Banking Dept.
LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNANCE WORKGROUP

TOP THREE POLICY/PROGRAM FOCAL AREAS:
1) Proportioning services to the capacity the government can provide—fiscal, professional, governance

2) Associating service with the revenue source to support it—this is more of a learning thing; catchment areas tied to services; property tax

3) Improve the management capacity of local government for support—sensitivity to diversity, ie: Tug Hill Commission, ARC Program, MPOs

4) Citizen education (including of elected officials) to understand local government—overcome apathy, develop sense of community

5) Linkage of local government to economic development—share benefits, develop capacity

GENERAL COMMENTS:
Topics discussed and identified fit into 5 major categories above:
4: Public misperception of government and diverse regions
1,2,5: Local government competing for property tax
1: Property tax
1,2: Rural areas do not have adequate base to support services never intended
1: Reform of school aid—CFE (Campaign for Fiscal Equity) funding—take schools off property tax (80% of local tax burden in many areas)
2,4: Level of service demand vs. unfunded mandates (eg, fire service training)
1,2: Realign service delivery at local government level (ie, roads, building code enforcement, zoning boards)—what’s the appropriate level to deliver services?—need proportioning of service delivery
4: Local taxpayers are not aware of town government, county government services, etc
3,4: Too many local government officials are elected to office (tax collector, town clerk)—need to professionalize (but can we find)
2: Medicaid tax has been capped; school tax has not
1,2: County budgets almost all state-fed mandate (same with schools)
3: Need more technical assistance for part time local government officials (eg, grant writing)
1,4: Recruitment and retention of volunteer fire and EMS services vis a vis volunteerism

• POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
Proportioning services to the capacity the government can provide

INTENDED OUTCOME(S)
- Sharing and/or transferring of services
- Improve efficiency of services
- Improve quality of services
- More flexibility to small towns, with no negative impact on large towns
CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
One size fits all

BARRIERS AND/OR GAPS IN CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
Requires revision/elimination of many current laws

SUGGESTED NEW AND/OR REVISED POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
- Remove 2nd class town classification in state law to give all towns flexibility in managing their affairs, and strengthen “home rule”
- Promote collaboration among state agencies, towards one stop regulation shopping
- Share real property tax administration costs proportionately across local governments that lobby taxes

WHAT, IF ANY, REGIONAL VARIATIONS/FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED?
More ability to cooperate and do things differently (as opposed to doing what we have always done)

IDENTIFY OTHER POLICY/THEME AREAS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THIS PARTICULAR POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
- Demands on real property tax base—Agricultural assessment, Medicaid, Healthcare, Education

IDENTIFY RELEVANT STATE AGENCY AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS:
- Association of Towns
- Department of State
- Conference of Mayors
- Legislative Commission on Rural Resources
- Comptroller’s Office
- STARR program

POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
Associating service with the revenue source to support it, including regulation reduction as appropriate.

INTENDED OUTCOME(S)
Analysis to capture appropriateness of service for various contexts and services

CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
Mandates issued without matching revenue and reality of implementation (eg, Medicaid, EI, 3-5, mental health, health care) are currently being paid out of local sales and property tax.

BARRIERS AND/OR GAPS IN CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:

SUGGESTED NEW AND/OR REVISED POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
Teleconference to discuss
IDENTIFY RELEVANT STATE AGENCY AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS:
- ORPS - Real Property Tax Alliance
- DOS - Assessor's Association
- AOT (?)

- POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
  Improve management capacity of local government, including training of the next generation towards enhancing engagement in local government

INTENDED OUTCOME(S)
- Increased professional management capacity among leadership (at all levels) towards enhanced mission delivery
- Citizen education
- Pipeline supply of qualified managers to meet demand (Local, State, and Federal levels)

CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
- While Public Administration Programs exist, the track is not strong enough to meet the targeted need
- Lack of opportunities and incentives

BARRIERS AND/OR GAPS IN CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
- Reduced funding resulted in program elimination
- Not part of current curriculum

SUGGESTED NEW AND/OR REVISED POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
- Expand governance knowledge into public education
- Local government intern program (MS public degree graduates)
- Consider sharing across counties (Tug Hill model, “circuit rider”)
- Any policy promoting shared services (ie, Shared Municipal Services Incentive grant-- SMSI)

WHAT, IF ANY, REGIONAL VARIATIONS/FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED?

IDENTIFY OTHER POLICY/THEME AREAS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THIS PARTICULAR POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
- Economic Development
- Education

IDENTIFY RELEVANT STATE AGENCY AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS:
- NYSED - Public Administration Programs
- ICMA (International City/County Management Association) - Local governments
- DOS - Economic Development
- Basically, all entities would benefit from this development
• POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION
Linkage of government to economic development.

INTENDED OUTCOMES:
- Healthy economic engine and a sustainable economy
- Reducing the cost of government towards increased economic development (new business moving TO New York as opposed to AWAY)
- Greater regional economic capacity

CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
Efficient and well-run governments can sink into financial crisis. Well-run and efficient governments are not enough to sustain a community under harsh economic realities (ie, Rochester).

BARRIERS AND/OR GAPS CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
Given that economies are larger than small communities, how do you balance and throw back to the smaller communities (enjoy the revenue benefits from the larger activity)?

SUGGESTED NEW AND/OR REVISED POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
- Focusing economic development aid on the regional versus local level
- More state support funding for regional programming

WHAT, IF ANY, REGIONAL VARIATIONS/FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED?
- Regional variations do exist—which region do you belong to for which purpose? → consider a way to align/address (be aware)
- Develop a strategy how to bridge the multiple regional variations

IDENTIFY OTHER POLICY/THEME AREAS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THIS PARTICULAR POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:

IDENTIFY RELEVANT STATE AGENCY AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS:
- Economic Development Corporation (EDC) / Industrial Development Agency (IDA)
- Local Governments
- Agriculture

Local & Regional Governance (group notes)
- Public misperception of government and diverse regions
- Local government competing for property tax
- Property taxes being used to support services that were never intended – purposes clouded
- Rural areas do not have adequate tax base to support services— link is broken
- Reform of school aid
  - CFE funding
  - Take schools off property tax – 80% of local tax burden in many areas
- Level of service demand vs. unfunded mandates— locals have no more to give
  - Eg. Fire service training
- Realign service delivery at local government level
  - Eg. Roads, building code enforcement, zoning boards
  - Proportioning of service delivery
- Local tax payers not aware of town government and county government services
- Too many local government officials are elected to office— need to professionalize
  - Eg. Tax collector, clerk
  - But can they find qualified personnel?
- Medicaid tax has been capped; school tax has not
- County budgets almost all state-federal mandated (same with schools)
- Need more technical assistance for part-time, local government officials (eg, grant writing)
- Recruitment and retention of volunteer fire and EMS services

Recommendations:
1) Proportioning the services to delivery capacity— fiscal and expertise
   - County and school budgets almost all state mandated
   - Recruitment and retention of volunteer fire and EMS
   - Local government competing for property tax
   - Property tax being used to support services for which it was never intended (clouded system)
   - Many rural areas do not have an adequate tax base to support services
2) Associating service with revenue source to support
   - Catchment areas tied to services
   - Property tax reform
3) Improve management capacity of local government (sensitive to diversity)
   - Examples: Tug Hill Commission, MPOs, ARC program, Regional Planning Councils
4) Citizen education to understand local government (including elected officials)
   - Overcome apathy
   - Create sense of community
5) Linkage of local government to economic development
   - Sharing benefits
   - Capacity
RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WORKGROUP

TOP THREE POLICY/ PROGRAM FOCAL AREAS:

1) Microenterprise

2) Funding and credit capital (exploring the overlap of policy areas)

3) Jobs

4) Regional Strategies

GENERAL COMMENTS:
- Coordination and consolidation of programs that support economic development
- Lack of understanding on the part of financial institutions about the needs and abilities of small businesses
- Intersection with workforce and type of jobs that can be created
- Regional consolidation of government

TOP THREE POLICY/ PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS - SPECIFIC:

1) Improve broadband infrastructure and access through legislation and redirection of existing economic development resources.

(DETAILS)
- Ability to generate income from home and ease traffic congestion
- Works with the broad geography in rural communities
- Would impact regional development in a positive way
- Wider markets and new opportunities for business

2) Initiate regional governance through legislation, including merging of services and incentives to those communities

(DETAILS)
- Provide more efficient government services through consolidation
- Develop an incentive fund of state surplus to reward and incentivize partnering and consolidation
- Create a taskforce to develop a comprehensive plan for regional governance ("Better, Smarter Government"), including an audit of local and regional services in NYS

3) Enhance ability to meet the credit needs of rural communities through more responsive commercial lending services; enforce CRA (Community Reinvestment Act)

(DETAILS)
- Develop more private investment in local communities
- Develop new finance models to reach under-served sectors
- State should create a larger guarantee program

4) Support microenterprise development at the local and regional level.

(DETAILS)
- State underwrite training programs for microenterprise
- Greater program awareness
- Connect colleges with micro-enterprise training programs
- Enhance communication about programs that are already in existence

WHICH OF THESE HAS THE MOST CONNECTIONS TO OTHER POLICY THEME AREAS (OR, WHICH IS THE MOST INTER-DISCIPLINARY)?
#2: Regional governance → Local and Regional Governance

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS THAT CAME OUT OF YOUR DISCUSSION THAT ARE BROADER THAN YOUR POLICY THEME AREA:
- Economic development is a central theme in rural areas, and impacts housing, poverty, etc.
- Housing rehabilitation, healthcare, innovative technology, taxes, etc. all have a relationship with economic development
- Consolidation and coordination of government services and programs
- Marketing and communication about programs is extremely important to rural business
- The fact that many state publications are outdated and certain tax guides are unchanged from 1996 has negative implications for business

INTERRELATED THEME: Regional Governance
THAT CAME FROM: Economic Development

POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:
Initiate regional governance through legislation, including merging of services and incentives

DETAILS:
- Need more efficient services
- Incentives for communities to share services
- Develop a taskforce to audit local governments to determine costs for merging, sharing, and consolidating services

SUGGESTED ADDENDA/COMMENTS:
- A contrary position is that consolidation of local government is actually more costly, and data shows that consolidation does not mean more efficient services
- Note that there is a difference between “consolidation” and “cooperation”
- Evaluate tax system with regard to local government
- Consolidation of economic development programs regionally, not necessarily governments
- Microenterprise: state support, local ownership
- Access to credit capital”-- need better focus of money towards communities
- Lack of systemic knowledge of rural areas and economies
- Need an audit of regional governance
- Fact: skilled young people are leaving—hinders workforce
- Empire State Development (ESD) programs—allocation/distribution of funding should funnel money into communities, not large companies
- Rural is good for NYS

**Rural Economic Development (group notes)**

- Microenterprise (9)
  - Agriculture and non-agriculture small business
- Natural Resources Enterprise
- Strategies in Rural Areas (1)
  - Housing and poverty
- Entrepreneurship
- Housing Rehabilitation
- Lack of credit and capital firm commercial lenders (9)
  - Commercial lenders do not have the expertise to recognize the potential of these businesses.
  - There is no coordination between banks, which could benefit from unified lending.
  - Greater risk of lending to rural businesses
- Innovative Technology (1)
- Quality of life
- Collaboration with universities (1)
- Healthcare
- Taxes
- Empire Zones for rural communities
- Retaining Skilled Youth
- Adapted reuse of existing resources (1)
  - Apply to Empire Zone program
- Center core of communities (4)
- Funding for communities (1)
  - Some communities do not avail themselves of the grants process
- Jobs (6)
  - Population loss.
  - How to attract people?
  - What types of jobs can be sustained in rural areas?
- Regional Government (5)
  - Home rule consolidation of governments
- Telecommunications infrastructure (1)
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Microenterprise</th>
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| Training - colleges | • How do entrepreneurs establish a relationship with colleges?  
• Colleges should coordinate partnerships with businesses  
• There is a lack of programs that provide microenterprises with technical assistance.  
• College extension expenditures are shrinking.  
• Lack of state funds for these extension programs.  
• SBDGs do not have experience with microenterprises |
| Program Awareness | • NYS must update public documents regarding establishing businesses and specific tax guides (e.g. sales tax for hotels/motels)  
• Administrative criteria for small businesses are too restrictive. It is not inclusive of rural businesses.  
• Businesses need a uniform system to deliver business services. Useful for all services and in particular lending sources. |
| Succession Planning | • Microenterprises often stop after businessman retires. How can these businesses be sustained? |
| Marketing | • How can small business improve their marketing? |
| Funding - intermediaries | • Community based groups need support  
• How can communities build the capacity of small businesses to acquire money? (Microenterprises currently rely on credit cards). |
Funding / Credit and Capital

- Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) – is too restrictive towards rural businesses. NYS Banking Department conducts audits of banks, but does not audit many rural banks. Rural community needs are not met.

- Rural employers find it difficult to get adequate services to run their businesses (i.e. pay employees with paychecks). Employees often drive many miles to cash their paycheck because of a lack of banks.
  - Technologies like a debit card allow businesses to pay their employees electronically and save money put. But they also put an additional burden on the small businesses where those employees spend their money because those small businesses do not have the equipment to process these transactions.

- Rural communities need a one-stop-shop for funding.

- Federal regulations are overly restrictive and disqualify many small businesses (e.g. the census tract).

- Study the barriers to accessing credit – disseminate studies appropriately

Who is not in the room?

- Businesses
- Banks – lenders
- SBA – Monthly loan process to assist businesses and more flexible loan repayment
- Programs.
- Farmers
- Youth
- Elderly
Jobs

What types of jobs can be sustained in rural communities?

How can we secure quality jobs with benefits?

How can we attract more people to rural communities?

Population Loss

Retaining Skilled Youth

Workforce Development

Telecommunications Infrastructure

Quality of life

Attractive viable communities

Cost of living

Skilled Labor / Good Universities / Colleges. Market schools to firms or individuals who would relocate. Knowledge economy. Schools should do a better job of putting students into internships or co-ops with local businesses.

Regional Strategies

Government

Home rule - consolidate government (towns, villages, school districts)

Center - core of communities

Team building (private model)

What is a region?
Conduct research on industry clusters, networks of suppliers and businesses and regional workforce commuting networks.

1) Governor / key legislators / State Controller should form a taskforce charged with developing a comprehensive plan for “better, smarter” government, which would begin with an audit of all of the municipal services in NYS.

2) Develop a strategic plan for streamlining government services.

3) Market this plan to the public.
**Regional Governance**

Consolidation of economic development programs

Energy (Regional Authority)

Shared Transportation Services

Study of constraints and opportunities

Workforce industry study

Discussions of consolidating school districts and shared resources with local community colleges and universities.

What is the process to get to regional governance?

Economic development is a different process regionally than shared services.

How governance be structured to share the benefits and burdens on locals?

How can regional governance mitigate the adverse property tax burden?

Clearly have a regional infrastructure; incentivizing communities to work together (i.e. quality amenities).

Define regional

Regional governance - no data indicates government consolidation provides more efficient services.

Research region to held develop a definition of “regional”

State should create uniform regional resources

Difference between cooperation and consolidation in terms of use

Build systems that local governments can work in

Regional sales tax to support sewers.

Better distribution of taxes/fees

Comprehensive review on what it takes to support government.

Regional governance or cooperation should serve needs and be promoted as working as a team versus consolidation

Housing goes with economic development.
RURAL HEALTHCARE WORKGROUP

TOP THREE POLICY/PROGRAM FOCAL AREAS—GENERAL:

1) Access—to quality, appropriate care, including:
   - resources and funds
   - insurance (uninsured, uninsured and increased affordability of insurance coverage)
   - also see vision statements #50,59, 71, 90, 40, 45

2) Promote lifelong focus on prevention and wellness for both consumers and providers (concept map statement #45)
   - new health paradigm approach embedded in every institution, family, school, church, provider, formal education/training of providers in colleges and universities

3) Technology related solutions, including:
   - reimbursement
   - E-infrastructure
   - E-health applications
   - state support

4) Address reimbursement needs
   - make more flexible and less bureaucratic
   - provide broader coverage
   - make more efficient

GENERAL COMMENTS:
- major interrelated issue is the need for health workforce recruitment, retention, deployment, and compensation
- change “the language” to value all health care workers
- new prevention paradigm—shift from “illness” to health promotion and disease prevention
- Access to small sample/targeted data needs to be improved for research and program planning

Access to Health Care

POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
In 7-8 years, achieve mandatory universal health care coverage in New York State.

INTENDED OUTCOMES:
Every citizen has access to affordable health care coverage.

CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
Medicaid, Medicare, Child Health Plus, Family Health Plus, Facilitated Enrollment

BARRIERS AND/OR GAPS IN CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
- Lack of integration of government insurance initiatives
- Perceived cost by private sector
- Perceived risk of “Hilary Syndrome” by state
- Law makers

SUGGESTED NEW AND/ OR REVISED POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:
- Establish minimum standards of coverage, including preventative (well care) and behavioral health eligibility criteria
- Establish a clearinghouse of existing resources-- insurance products
- Develop new legislation and insurance products
- Establish incentives to enroll
- Expand facilitated enrollment
- Establish multidisciplinary commission to oversee evolution to universal coverage and all of the above suggestions— include demonstration projects
- Cap local percent share working towards elimination of county share
- 3 years demonstration project for universal coverage @ 3-5 sites (urban, downstate, upstate, rural)
- Possible waivers
- RFP for planning grants; plan submitted for Regional Universal Care; plans evaluated

WHAT, IF ANY, REGIONAL VARIATIONS/ FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED?
Break demonstration into urban downstate, urban upstate, rural upstate

IDENTIFY OTHER POLICY/THEME AREAS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THIS PARTICULAR POLICY/ PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
- Workforce Development
- Community Capacity and Social Networks
- Economic Development
- Housing and Transportation
- Local and Regional Governance
- Rural Schools and Youth

IDENTIFY RELEVANT STATE AGENCY AND STAKE HOLDER GROUPS:
- DOH
- Legislative
- DSS
- Insurance Companies
- DOI

Access to Health

POLICY/ PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
Expand capacity of the Rural Health Network

INTENDED OUTCOME(S)
Improve access to rural health and healthcare services.

CURRENT POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:
- State DOH, Office of Rural Health, Network Development Program
- Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Rural Health Network Grants
- HRSA Network Planning Grants
BARRIERS AND/OR GAPS IN CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
Improved efficiency in the office of the State Comptroller to allow timely contract execution.

SUGGESTED NEW AND/OR REVISED POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
Guaranteed representation on NYS DOH regulatory advisory councils.

WHAT, IF ANY, REGIONAL VARIATIONS/FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED?
In this area, the program is currently well designed. It is flexible in nature.

IDENTIFY OTHER POLICY/THEME AREAS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THIS PARTICULAR POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
- Community Capacity and Social Networks
- Housing and Transportation
- Environment
- Workforce Development
- Economic Development
- Local and Regional Governance
- Schools and Youth

IDENTIFY RELEVANT STATE AGENCY AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS:
- DOH
- OMH
- OCFS
- Health Trade Associations
- OMRDD
- OASAS

Prevention/Paradigm Shift

POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
New York State Health Department introduce a wellness perspective that is not specific disease-focused, but more positively focused on living well. One umbrella division will be established to lead and facilitate this initiative.

INTENDED OUTCOME(S)
Programming from DOH will be more comprehensive and integrated. Public no longer bombarded by competing messages.

CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
Fragmented and disease-specific programs.

BARRIERS AND/OR GAPS IN CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
Internal resistance to change.

SUGGESTED NEW AND/OR REVISED POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
Cost-benefit analysis attached to demonstration projects. Big emphasis on cost-benefit analysis, demonstrating cost effectiveness.

WHAT, IF ANY, REGIONAL VARIATIONS/FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED?
Should be flexibility to address local needs.
IDENTIFY OTHER POLICY/THEME AREAS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THIS PARTICULAR POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
- Community Capacity and Social Networks
- Workforce Development

IDENTIFY RELEVANT STATE AGENCY AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS:
- NYS DOH
- Citizens of NY
- ODTA
- CCE

Prevention/Paradigm Shift

POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
To include basic competencies in wellness and prevention with current mandated academic competencies included in state testing. This is the first step towards a fundamental change in the way wellness is valued in the school.

INTENDED OUTCOME(S)
Schools will become receptive to wellness and prevention activities, since schools are judged by their success on these mandated tests.

Prevention/Paradigm Shift

- POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
1) Identify cost-benefit analysis data from other states demonstrating the cost-effectiveness of prevention programs
2) Undertake a cost-effectiveness demonstration project for prevention in rural NY

INTENDED OUTCOME(S)
There will be evidence to show that prevention is worth investing in.

Technology Related Solutions

- POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
  - NY State subsidized, centralized entity to coordinate broadband internet access.
  - Consideration of a legislative mandate for carriers to work together.

INTENDED OUTCOME(S)
Universal access to broadband services in NY State. High-speed internet.
  - Enhance entire community efficiency
  - Increase quality and efficiency

CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
- Arizona is currently subsidized state-wide.
- Pay for Performance task force.
Medicaid will cover tele-medicine for tele-stroke (pilot program)-- acute care, emergency care

**BARRIERS AND/OR GAPS IN CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:**

**SUGGESTED NEW AND/OR REVISED POLICIES/PROGRAMS:**
- Expanded distance learning and continuing medical education
- Offer incentives, low-interest loans, etc. to fund businesses utilizing access.

**WHAT, IF ANY, REGIONAL VARIATIONS/FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED?**
N/A—no variation

**IDENTIFY OTHER POLICY/THEME AREAS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THIS PARTICULAR POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:**
- Local Government
- Economic Development
- “All areas in this conference”

**IDENTIFY RELEVANT STATE AGENCY AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS:**
- All will benefit
- State Office of Technology
- Department of Education
- State Department of Insurance
- Department of Health

**Technology/Equipment Acquisition**

**POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:**
Make information technology equipment available and affordable on a state-wide basis with a special emphasis on rural areas. Ex: funding, tax incentives, low interest loans, HEAL NY

**INTENDED OUTCOME(S)**
Improved quality, retention of providers, improved efficiency, collaboration within providers and regions

**CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:**
- HEAL NY 1 (Healthcare Efficiency and Affordability Law) — with a 50% match
- Funding for technology infrastructure

**BARRIERS AND/OR GAPS IN CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:**
- not enough funding through HEAL NY
- not yet a priority for legislators

**SUGGESTED NEW AND/OR REVISED POLICIES/PROGRAMS:**
- expand HEAL NY
- access money—federal formula
  money to hospitals—expand this source

**WHAT, IF ANY, REGIONAL VARIATIONS/FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED?**
Focus on rural areas because they have limited access to services and a lower return on investment.
IDENTIFY OTHER POLICY/THEME AREAS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THIS PARTICULAR POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
- Workforce Development
- Local Government

IDENTIFY RELEVANT STATE AGENCY AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS:
- State DOH

Technology

• POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
New York State should promote effective regional electronic medical records involving multiple health systems and including pilot programs for capital and reimbursement incentive and technical assistance. Focus: HEAL NY money to EMRS with rural providers.

INTENDED OUTCOME(S)
- Better cooperation among competing health systems
- Improved retention
- Promotion of best practices

CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
Regional Health Information Systems

BARRIERS AND/OR GAPS IN CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
- Not enough funding
- HEAL NY funding is limited
- Funding is competitive
- HIPPA

SUGGESTED NEW AND/OR REVISED POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
- Increase HEAL NY money to target rural areas
- Recommended vendors for IT—consultants from State DOH, Office of Technology of NYS

WHAT, IF ANY, REGIONAL VARIATIONS/FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED?
Rural areas should be given priority.

IDENTIFY OTHER POLICY/THEME AREAS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THIS PARTICULAR POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
- Economic Development
- Local and Regional Governance
- Community Capacity and Social Networks
- Workforce Development

IDENTIFY RELEVANT STATE AGENCY AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS:
- DOH
Expand tele-health infrastructure and applications in Rural New York State. Need appropriate reimbursement through Medicaid.

**INTENDED OUTCOME(S)**
- Improved access
- Cost reduction
- Better access to data
- Improved quality
- Improved retention
- Promotion of best practices

**CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:**
- Tele-stroke pilot just began
- Child psychiatry (tele-psychiatry)

**BARRIERS AND/OR GAPS IN CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:**
- Professional practice issues
- HIPAA
- Reimbursement
- State regulations
- Security

**SUGGESTED NEW AND/OR REVISED POLICIES/PROGRAMS:**
Expanding on existing pilots that the state has funded.

**WHAT, IF ANY, REGIONAL VARIATIONS/FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED?**
More rural areas are in the greatest need, and should be given greater priority.

**IDENTIFY OTHER POLICY/THEME AREAS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THIS PARTICULAR POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:**
- Workforce Development
- Economic Development
- Local Governance
- Rural Schools and Youth

**IDENTIFY RELEVANT STATE AGENCY AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS:**
- DOH

**Reimbursement (for Prevention of Illness)—Health Promotion**

- **POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:**
Paradigm shift to “health” care rather than “illness” care.

**INTENDED OUTCOME(S)**
- Increased health outcomes
- Decreased cost for maintaining health insurance coverage

**CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:**
- Illness care is primary mode of service
- Physical activity and healthy eating programs are now beginning

**BARRIERS AND/OR GAPS IN CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:**
- Low sense of personal responsibility for health
- Lack of knowledge about cost of poor health behavior

**SUGGESTED NEW AND/ OR REVISED POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:**
- Incentives through tax system to employers to promote healthy behavior
- Smokers pay $10/ pack
- Workplace safety improved
- *Personal* responsibility for health promoted through a campaign

**WHAT, IF ANY, REGIONAL VARIATIONS/ FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED?**
- All of NYS
- Rural areas with smaller employers need to be included in programs

**IDENTIFY OTHER POLICY/THEME AREAS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THIS PARTICULAR POLICY/ PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:**
(We have an excellent model— traffic laws— requiring people to behave in a certain manner— drive safely and follow the rules. We need the same approach for health.)

**IDENTIFY RELEVANT STATE AGENCY AND STAKE HOLDER GROUPS:**
- NY DOH
- NY Department of Labor?

**Reimbursement— Long-Term Care**

- **POLICY/ PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:**
Maintain commitment to periodic adjustment of base rate.

**INTENDED OUTCOME(S)**
- Improve nursing homes
- Maintain viability of reimbursement
- Long-term planning

**CURRENT POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:**
1983-2002 budget re-base will be welcome relief. Proposed periodic adjustment must be maintained.

**BARRIERS AND/ OR GAPS IN CURRENT POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:**
- Single point of entry needs to assure appropriate level of care (for long-term care)
- Resistance to increased Medicaid costs due to dual-eligibles
- Consider state income tax rather than funding health care via property tax

**SUGGESTED NEW AND/ OR REVISED POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:**
- Comprehensive assessment of various levels of care in rural areas
- Increase look-back and asset test before Medicare benefits become Medicaid

**WHAT, IF ANY, REGIONAL VARIATIONS/ FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED?**
Less facilities (CCRC, SNF, etc.) in rural areas.
Rural: Access to appropriate level of care
All NYS: Financing
IDENTIFY OTHER POLICY/THEME AREAS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THIS PARTICULAR POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
- Access
- Single point of entry plan in formation

IDENTIFY RELEVANT STATE AGENCY AND STAKE HOLDER GROUPS:
- DOH
- OFA (Office for the Aging)
- NYSARH (New York State Association for Rural Health)

Reimbursement

• POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
Provide realistic reimbursement rates based on area/region’s true cost—not a “state wide” rate.

INTENDED OUTCOME(S)
Reimbursement that pays for a service, versus creating a loss for an agency by accepting an unrealistic rate.

CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
State-wide reimbursement rate (standard, regardless of true cost)

BARRIERS AND/OR GAPS IN CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
Provider’s costs are not covered, hence creating a debt situation for the agency.

SUGGESTED NEW AND/OR REVISED POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
Create rates (by individual county) that are realistic/up-to-date, based on regional analysis of current providers.

WHAT, IF ANY, REGIONAL VARIATIONS/FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED?
North Country requires more expensive solutions due to longer distances, hence increased costs for some health care agencies, but are only reimbursed for “local” care.

IDENTIFY OTHER POLICY/THEME AREAS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THIS PARTICULAR POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:

IDENTIFY RELEVANT STATE AGENCY AND STAKE HOLDER GROUPS:
- DOI
- DOH

TOP THREE POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS-SPECIFIC:

1) Access to appropriate, quality care: In 7-8 years, achieve mandatory universal healthcare coverage in NYS.

(DETAILS)
- Ensure every citizen access to affordable healthcare coverage
- Establish minimum standards of coverage, including prevention, behavioral health, eligibility criteria
- Mandate enrollment
- Establish multidisciplinary commission to oversee and evaluate
2) Technology-related solutions: look at NYS subsidizing a centralized (or at least regionalized) entity for broadband access and support legislation for carriers to work together.

(DETAILS)
- Consider offering incentives, low interest loans, etc to fund businesses utilizing access
- Provide for expanded distance learning and continuing medical education

3) Address reimbursement needs: Maintain state’s commitment to periodically update the base year for nursing home reimbursement.

(DETAILS)

4) Promote lifelong focus on prevention/wellness: Direct the State DOH to introduce a wellness perspective that is not specific disease focused, but more positively focused on living well.

(DETAILS)
- Establish a division for this purpose within the DOH
- Integrate this perspective throughout all of the other divisions of the Department
- Develop cost-benefit analyses and demonstrations that present results showing the effects of the wellness program/paradigm shift.

WHICH OF THESE HAS THE MOST CONNECTIONS TO OTHER POLICY THEME AREAS (OR, WHICH IS THE MOST INTER-DISCIPLINARY)?
- * Promote wellness/prevention paradigm
- Broadband access—subsidized, centralized

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS THAT CAME OUT OF YOUR DISCUSSION THAT ARE BROADER THAN YOUR POLICY THEME AREA:
1) Support health workforce recruitment, retention, deployment, and compensation
2) Promote collaboration between levels of government—federal, state, and local—and all sectors.
3) Alleviate local property tax pressures
4) * Incorporate the paradigm shift to health promotion and prevention in all facets of society, including insurance, tax law, education, etc.

INTERRELATED THEME: Universal Health Care Coverage with Wellness Focus
THAT CAME FROM: Rural Health

POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:
NYS policy on health care coverage

DETAILS:
- Link with lifelong wellness/prevention paradigm shift to lower healthcare costs
- Address influence/interests of:
  - Physicians
- Insurance companies
- Pharmaceuticals
- Employers

SUGGESTED ADDENDA/COMMENTS:
- Disparity issues need to be addressed: SES, race, and ethnicity essential for diversity/cultural competency to be addressed in health care provider education
- Commission on Health Care in the 21st Century results could radically change health care in NYS (report postponed until post governor elections)
- Patchwork approach at local level is not effective or sustainable (for example, research demonstrates that insurance must take place at state/federal levels to be sustainable)
- Rural Health Networks accessing state agency/legislative resource people/policy makers is essential
- Bias in point of entry system controlled by counties and concerns over impact of state’s proposed mega-waiver for long-term care (conflict with existing programs and policies such as PACE, and concerns over impact on rural LTC infrastructure)

RURAL HEALTH CARE (group notes)

Policy/Practice Recommendations:
Technology
- Look at NYS subsidizing a centralized (or regionalized) entity for broadband access
- Support legislation for carriers to work together
- → high speed access in rural areas
Reimbursement
- Maintain commitment to periodically update base year for Nursing Home Reimbursement
- Reimbursement for prevention
Access
- In 7-8 years, achieve mandatory universal health care coverage in NYS
- Every citizen should have access to affordable health care coverage
- Enrollment should be mandatory
Change Paradigm to Prevention
- Direct DOH to introduce a wellness perspective that is NOT disease focused
  - Establish a division for this purpose and integrate this perspective throughout the Dept’s other divisions
- Present a cost-benefit analysis of implementing such an approach

Inter-Disciplinary:
- Broadband access: subsidized, centralized: all
- Reimbursement: state/local government (and taxation), community capacity and social networks
- NYS Universal Health Care Coverage: all
  - eg, MA
  - Money to cover the uninsured
- Lower health care costs: all
- Wellness perspective within the DOH: economic development, agriculture, community capacity and social networks, workforce development, local government, schools and youth
  - And reimbursement for prevention

**Concerns:**
Universal health care coverage:
- # of uninsured
- Physician influence
- Pharmaceutical company influence
- Insurance company influence
- Employer/ business community influence

Wellness:
- Physician perspective on illness... “fixing”
- Race/ ethnicity/ SES data not collected
  - Disparity issues need to be addressed
- Reforms co-opted
- Patchwork approach

**Additional Info:**
- Health care provider education curricula... changes?
- Single point of entry vs. P.A.C.E. - long-term care
  - Olmstead decision
  - Change to (RUGs)/ DRGs - investment in community-based services
- Evolution of assisted living and impact on skilled nursing, etc
- N1 Aging 2010 (?)— research on health disparities
- Research: insurance coverage has to take place at state/ federal levels, vs. Practice: local initiatives can work
- Commission on Health Care in the 21st century closing commission results
  - “right sizing”
  - Power to radically change health care in rural NYS (ie, excess beds)
  - NB postponed report until post-election

**Caveats:**
Essential for diversity/ cultural competency to be addressed in healthcare provider education

**RURAL HEALTHCARE (group notes 2)**

**Issues:**
1. Access to health and health care
2. Long-term care, reimbursed
3. Uninsured— misinformation/ education
4. Health of minorities
5. Health Literacy
6. Migrant farm workers access to healthcare
7. Access and availability of services
8. Reimbursement is illness driven— must shift to prevention
9. Comprehensive, integrative health care
   - linking oral, behavioral, disability
10. Lack single-payer, universal health insurance in NYS
11. All health care worker shortage—especially rural
12. Strength-based, preventative→integrative health
13. Access, quality, affordability
   - Chronic disease, prevention
14. Lack of health information technology
15. Broad community-oriented public mental health

   * three themes
   * gaps

Rural Health Issues:
1. Awareness needs—especially with aging insurance programs
2. Education Law restrictions on scope of authority of Clinical RN Specialists to do school health physicals—can it be changed?
3. Interaction of Health- Transportation- Housing→New models
   - eg, CCRC’s
4. Prevention and Mental Health
   - especially for farm families
5. Quality parallels economic development
6. Recruitment and retention of primary care and mental health providers
7. Lack of providers
   - especially EMS, surge capacity, general workforce, tele-medicine,
   And lack of reimbursement
   - “Health Policy”
8. Funding Needs—Local, State, Federal
   - especially for emergency transport
9. Tele-psychiatry—especially children
   - include MA reimbursement
10. Tailor services to local needs
11. Recruit and retain health care workers
12. Wellness—Integration
13. Shift focus paradigm to prevention
14. Collaboration
15. Suicide, Dual Diagnosis

1. Access—quality, appropriate, care, resources, money, etc
   - CM #s 50, 59, 71, 90, 40, 45
3. Life-long focus on prevention (CM # 45)
5. Integration and collaboration between government levels and private/public sector
7. New prevention paradigm driving all institutions (eg, schools, church)
   - encouraged through incentives and institutional incentives
9. Reimbursable technology-related solutions (E-health applications)
   - state supported electronic infrastructure
11. Focus on disparity, especially of vulnerable populations
- minority, migrant, elderly

**Focal Areas:**
2. Access to insurance
   a) underinsured
   b) uninsured
   c) affordability
4. Reimbursement— more flexible, less bureaucratic
   - broader coverage, more efficient
6. Health workforce— recruitment, retention, and deployment
8. Adequate wages for front-line workers
   - eg. Primary, behavioral, and LTC
10. Client-centered, culturally/ community-sensitive
12. Recognize the importance of local initiatives and providing resources for them
14. State campaign for Universal Healthcare Coverage
16. De-siloing mental health and include both “mental health” and “substance abuse” under “Health Care”

**Interest Groups (inter-related)— Brought to the Table**
- Grassroots organizations and Community-based organizations
  - Human service organizations
  - Coalitions
  - Advocates
  - Policy-makers
  - Researchers
  - Faith-based groups
- Health Planners
  - Managed care organizations
- Providers
  - Nurses
  - Healthcare related workers and trades-people
  - Health care facilities
  - EMS
  - Emergency and critical care
  - Disaster and emergency planning
  - Professional organizations
  - Public health professionals
- Consumers
  - Aging population
  - Farmworkers
  - Uninsured
  - Minorities
  - New immigrants
  - Migrant farmworkers
  - Caregivers
  - Rural under-served community
  - Agricultural community
- Rural Health Networks (25)
  - Local
  - Regional
  - State
- Educators
  - Schools
- Area health education center
- Workforce specialists

**Interests Not Here:**
- Local government
- Media
- BOCES
- K-12 schools
- Hospitals
- Health educators
- Small businesses (employers)
  - Farmers
  - Extraction industries
  - Land-based industries
- Substance abuse
- Developmental disabilities
- Skilled nursing facilities
- Migrant health clinics
- Unions
- Volunteer EMS
- Dentists and dental professionals
- Third party payers
- Office for the Aging
- Other associations (eg, HANYS, MSSNY, NYSNA, HCA, etc...)

**Resources/References:**
- Jean Moore
- Behavioral Risk Factor Survey
- YRBFSS at county level (?)

**("Access" Focus Group)**
Expand Rural Health Network Capacity and Funding
- Improve access to rural health and health care services
- Community Needs Assessments
- Facilitation/ Collaboration

7-8 years, mandatory Universal Healthcare Coverage
- Establish minimum standards of coverage, including eligibility criteria (residency)
- Establish a clearinghouse of existing resources
  - Insurance products
- Develop new legislation
- Develop new insurance products
- Establish incentives to enroll
  - Otherwise enrollment is at point of service
- Incentives for preventative or well-care and behavioral health
- Expand facilitated enrollment
- Establish a multi-disciplinary commission to oversee evolution to universal coverage
  - And all of the above, including demonstration projects
- Establish medical ethics review committee to determine appropriate use of Medicaid
  - Publicly funded
- Cap local %
  - Working towards elimination of county share
- 1-3 years: demonstration project for universal coverage
  - 3-5 sites: urban (downstate), upstate urban, upstate rural
  - RFP for Planning Grants
  - Plans submitted for Regional Universal Coverage
  - Plans evaluated
  - Plans selected
  - Implemented
  - Outcomes measured

**Rural Health Focal Areas: Strategies and Ideas for Recommendations (additional group notes from newsprint)**

**Access to quality, appropriate care**
- Resources and funds
- Affordable insurance, especially for uninsured and underinsured

**Universal Coverage:**
- Access: statewide campaign for universal health care coverage
- Develop a universal healthcare system to ensure access to care for all
- Task force to discuss and come up with recommendations to implement universal health coverage
- Low cost health insurance for uninsured and underinsured
- Improve diversity of health workforce to improve cultural competency
- Massachusetts Health Program as model
- NYS legislation to create a single payer health insurance program in the state, with low cost overhead/administrative fees and coverage that includes prevention and behavioral health needs—will benefit business, health providers, consumers, and the economy
- Create singly payer system as pilot program
- Policy—It should be the policy of NYS that all New Yorkers will be adequately covered by health insurance at a cost not to exceed ___% of household income
- Program—DOH Medicaid will develop a buy-in program that will be offered to all New Yorkers not otherwise covered by health insurance
- Uninsured need to have access to healthcare and to Medicaid, FHP and CHP—Make Health NY more affordable!
- Expand facilitated enrollment to include assistance in enrollment in more than just government programs—serve everyone.

Rural Health Networks:
- NY S Rural Health Networks oversee access issues
- Further expand existing RHN’s capacity
- Fiscally support/expand RHN

Employer-Based Insurance:
- Educate small businesses on affordable insurance options like Healthy NY
- Create incentives for health plans to enroll individuals and small business in Healthy NY
- Pass law to encourage employers to maintain health insurance benefits, including retirement benefits

Specialty Care:
- More efficient regional distribution of specialty services (minimum set of services per county or region)
- Offer networking incentives, especially to diverse participants
- Develop evidence-based programs for providing in-home chronic care management
- Tele-medicine applications
- Distance learning applications
- Tele-conferencing applications
- Work to develop school-based health services, including mental health, dental, and primary care to increase access and limit barriers to care

Research:
- Examine current insurance law to decrease overhead costs to administer plans, and put this money towards decreasing the cost of plans
- Collect reliable data on the insurance status of the population

Government Regulations:
- Dismantle local DSS and integrate components into existing county departments
- Minimize regulations that inhibit collaboration on health care issues in general
- Government provide ongoing financial assistance for healthcare service non-profit agencies that lose money due to caring for the uninsured

Local Initiatives:
- Mobile medical units instead of patients driving to doctors, dentists, etc→ this is working well in Tioga County via Dental Van (call P.H. Dept. for details)

- Providers and managed care organizations brain-storming for better relations
- Address transportation issue related to access to healthcare; in some instances may mean bringing services nearer to customers
- Local consumer focus-groups to address local access issues
- Financing transportation to health care services in urban centers
- Explain and define availability and eligibility for available programs and what is needed for an individual to access that service→ then publicize everywhere and keep updated; also publicize where to get help in accessing the services

Workforce:
- Increase scholarships in high need areas for health workforce, including frontline workers (substance abuse, HHA, CNA)
- Make J-1 Visa Waiver process less cumbersome
- More funding to enhance recruitment and loan forgiveness opportunity to entice physicians to rural areas
- Program of recruitment and retention of rural health care workers may sponsor a local scholarship program to train nurses or other health care workers if they agree to stay and practice in rural areas

**Promote lifelong focus on prevention and wellness for consumers and providers**

**School/ Community Based Health Education:**
- Establish health education curriculum/ program that is developmentally age appropriate with physical, mental, emotional, psychological components— best practices
- Work with parents— teach children how to be healthy through role-modeling
- **Policy:** NYS will establish programs in the public education law that will promote healthy lifestyles, good nutrition, and health literacy— this program will address all phases of the life cycle
- **Program:** BOCES and community colleges will be mandated to deliver health literacy programs
- Increase physical activity → 1) create walk-able/ bike-able communities; 2) School PE— have gym class everyday in school
- Get junk food out of schools and other public facilities
- Change focus of health care expenditures to prevention education efforts (eg, reward schools with nutrition and exercise programs)
- Must include education regarding when and where to seek intervention
- State government initiative to support lifelong wellness by supporting/ marketing increased use of locally produced food→ benefits farmers, the local economy, energy policy, and increases focus on nutrition
- Develop new ways of celebration for workplaces that don’t involve cake and other junk food
- Have exercise time count as “work time”
- Educational programs in primary, secondary, higher ed., and adult ed. venues aimed towards informing these populations of factors that influence health— social, diet, nutrition, etc
- Change curricula for physicians, nursing programs
- Instill a value of comprehensive health that includes oral and mental health as part of overall health
- Chronic disease management demonstration programs with an evaluation component to identify best practices
- State Ed. Dept. endorse lifelong health and wellness for schools→ support with monetary resources

**State Public Health:**
- State government initiative to help expand the system of Rural Health Networks as a means to ensure locally-driven strategies for lifelong wellness and prevention
- Change medical model
- Bring state agency decision-makers together to coordinate and implement evidence-based practices (eg. Dept. of Ed., Governor’s Office, OMH, DOH, SUNY)
- Utilize state funding streams to promote localized (?) which include prevention
- Better funding for Public Health departments, as they become providers of last resort for rural communities

**Applied Research:**
- Document the benefit to society (in financial, productivity, quality of life terms) of preventing illness and injury
- Conduct reliable economic analysis on the value of prevention→ could include a demonstration
- In promoting prevention programs, show reasons why it works and why businesses, planners, etc should care
- Make the case to legislators and businesspeople using data that prevention is an investment with a good return
Financial Incentives:
- Offer financial incentives for people who adopt a “healthy family” program at home—have guidelines and a means of verifying
- Legislate financial incentives to schools, universities, churches, workplaces, etc. that incorporate health promotion
- Wage incentives for exercise and good nutrition practices
- Wellness won’t begin to occur until people realize true cost of unhealthy behavior→ change insurance model
- Financial incentive for being healthy→ reduced premium for a healthy person
- Pay people for screenings, etc – Like AFLAC cancer does

Media:
- Media blitz: specific issues and/or targeting specific populations

Technology-Related Solutions:
- Reimbursed
- Electronic infrastructure statewide (high-speed)
- Electronic health applications
- State support

Infrastructure Strategy:
- Affordable access to broadband
- Rural infrastructure for high-speed connections—no monopolies of service
- Improve/develop technology infrastructure to allow for optimal tele-health capabilities
- NYS government initiate and incentives to create high-speed internet access for all communities across the state—this will benefit economic development, healthcare, community development, etc→ all sectors of life
- NYS sponsored technological solutions (eg, high-speed internet connections)
- Have state go into high-speed business
- It isn’t the government’s responsibility to provide high-speed internet access!
- Supplemental funding to develop statewide broadband internet

Laws and Policy:
- Examine/amend legislative language
- Incentives for grants—electronic medical records implementation
- Legislation on state level to allow Medicaid reimbursement for tele-psychology and other tele-medicine
- State policy: It will be the policy of NYS to recognize tele-medicine as a legitimate means to deliver certain types of health care
- Program: NYS Medicaid and other private insurances will pay for certain types of tele-medicine
- Better integration of programs and initiatives at the state level
- Develop state initiatives to comprehensively campaign for, and finance, wellness and health promotion and programs
- University of Rochester has innovative program on home-based health technologies→ identify other best practices/best technologies
- Revise licensing laws for promoting E-health

Funding for Service Development:
- Access to money to buy equipment→ grants, loans, group purchasing
- Put forth funding to support regional technology infrastructure (e.g., shared EMR, PACS, imaging software)—maybe state funding

Reimbursement:
- Federal reimbursement needed via Medicare for tele-home health
- Create reimbursement codes for tele-health services, including mental/behavioral health
- Clarify reimbursement issues at the NYS level for tele (E-) healthcare—also Medicare at the federal level
- Amend/simplify reimbursement requirements for E-health services (tele-psychiatry)

Regional Collaboration:
- Encourage urban centers implementing health informational systems to be regional
- Share medical records electronically for more comprehensive, timely patient care among providers

Demonstration Funding:
- Demonstrations needed
- Tele-homecare demonstration program→ evaluation of impacts on patient outcomes and staff efficiency
- National experts assist NY with developing much-needed infrastructure
- Regional Technology Support Centers → IT support, scheduling, (interface?) forums (e.g., schools→hospitals→public health→ local practitioners)
- State needs to be sure that equipment is being used for healthcare, not just meetings!
- Conduct an inventory of existing technology assets→ develop a strategy to coordinate usage of these same resources

Address Reimbursement Needs:
- Structural change for reimbursement
- Increase flexibility, decrease bureaucracy
- Provide broader coverage
- Increase efficiency

Reimbursement Change for Long-Term Care:
- Improved reimbursement for long-term care
- Finance healthcare through income tax (state), not property tax

Reimbursement for Prevention:
- Medicaid, private, and Medicare—reimbursement demo which pays for keeping people healthy (P4P?)
- Adequate insurance reimbursement for preventative services
- Lower insurance rates for healthy lifestyles (e.g., non-smokers, physical activity)

Single-Payer System:
- Reimbursement-- single payer health insurance coverage for all!
- Look at Massachusetts program
- Less money on funding organizations (e.g., facilitated enrollers)→ more funding to health system

Rein in Insurance Company Greed:
- Realistic reimbursement rate based on area/region’s true cost—not a “statewide” rate
- Need legislation to allow physicians to collectively bargain to speak as one with insurance companies
- Create legislation that limits insurance company control over reimbursement rates
- Penalize insurers who decline claims just to delay payment (high % of denied claims are eventually paid)
- Streamline paperwork requirements of healthcare providers

Change to Reimbursement Levels:
- Policy: NYS will encourage payment of a living wage to frontline health workers
- Program: NYS Medicaid will pay rates that allow employers to pay employees a living wage—Includes programs regulated by OMH, DOH, OASAS
- Improve reimbursement for dental services under Medicaid
RURAL SCHOOLS AND YOUTH WORKGROUP

TOP THREE POLICY/PROGRAM FOCAL AREAS:

1) School as community center; community as school (ie, shared resources)

2) Ensure high quality education

3) A bridge out of poverty

4) Adequate, flexible funding

GENERAL COMMENTS:
- Early childhood education is essential
- Need for community capacity growth and awareness

• POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
School as community center; community as school (AP and/or dual credit needs to be available)

INTENDED OUTCOME(S)
Integrated services “officed” in school building

CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
Medicaid, Mental Health, and Education are treated as separate.

BARRIERS AND/OR GAPS IN CURRENT POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
- Board of Education
- “The way we’ve always done it….“

SUGGESTED NEW AND/OR REVISED POLICIES/PROGRAMS:
- Include healthcare family education and counseling
- Include shared broadband connection for computer labs—public

WHAT, IF ANY, REGIONAL VARIATIONS/FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED?
- Place-based education
- BOCES needs to be integrated more into “mainstream” education, thereby freeing up hard-pressed professionals
→ Promotes greater efficiency

IDENTIFY OTHER POLICY/THEME AREAS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THIS PARTICULAR POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
IDENTIFY RELEVANT STATE AGENCY AND STAKE HOLDER GROUPS:
- Healthcare
- Community Colleges

• POLICY/ PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
Ensure high quality education leading to success in school, employment, and civic engagement.

INTENDED OUTCOME(S)
Early childhood literacy

CURRENT POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:
Even Start/ Head Start are seeing reduced funding.

BARRIERS AND/OR GAPS IN CURRENT POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:
- School as the “enemy”— not enough family time
- Teacher retention is a real issue and hiring practices need to come into cyber age— offer loan forgiveness as an incentive, perhaps. State to provide bonuses to specific content area teachers.

SUGGESTED NEW AND/ OR REVISED POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:
- Include community colleges and PACE to be re-funded
- Active learning through internships
- Adult continuing education

WHAT, IF ANY, REGIONAL VARIATIONS/ FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED?
- Rural schools lack resources and capacity; state could fund field trips, for example.
  ➔ Assurance that rural kids have equal opportunity

IDENTIFY OTHER POLICY/THEME AREAS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THIS PARTICULAR POLICY/ PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:

IDENTIFY RELEVANT STATE AGENCY AND STAKE HOLDER GROUPS:

• POLICY/ PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:
Provide a bridge out of poverty

INTENDED OUTCOME(S)
Break the generational cycle of poverty

CURRENT POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:
½ day career education

BARRIERS AND/ OR GAPS IN CURRENT POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:
(for vocational education):
- Resistance
- Transportation
- Scheduling

**SUGGESTED NEW AND/ OR REVISED POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:**
- Prenatal through age 5 year programs are essential
- Year-round school to eliminate “summer set back”
- Tutoring, mentoring

**WHAT, IF ANY, REGIONAL VARIATIONS/ FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED?**

**IDENTIFY OTHER POLICY/THEME AREAS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THIS PARTICULAR POLICY/ PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:**
Adult education to be provided in local schools to provide model for kids → illustrate life-long learning process

**IDENTIFY RELEVANT STATE AGENCY AND STAKE HOLDER GROUPS:**
- PACE (Public Assisted College Education)
- Community colleges to provide AP classes
- DSS- Transitional Afterschool Program
- DSS- grant funded 6-8 week program with parents as partners afterschool

**POLICY/ PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION**
Statewide solution that takes into account rural school children and taxpayer equity

**INTENDED OUTCOMES:**
- Different rate per student according to need
- Reduce local tax share

**CURRENT POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:**
- State funding rate frozen
- “Shares” approach

**BARRIERS AND/ OR GAPS IN CURRENT POLICIES/ PROGRAMS:**
- Enrollment in rural schools is in decline
- How to fund early childhood education?

**SUGGESTED NEW AND/ OR REVISED PROGRAMS:**
Regents proposed bill

**WHAT, IF ANY, REGIONAL VARIATIONS/ FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED?**
Urban vs. Rural

**IDENTIFY OTHER POLICY/THEME AREAS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THIS PARTICULAR POLICY/ PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION**
IDENTIFY RELEVANT STATE AGENCY AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS:
- Family and Children - DHS
- * BOCES - More shared services

TOP THREE POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS - SPECIFIC:

1) School as community center

(DETAILS)
- Partnerships with health providers and other schools and organizations
- Encourage sharing resources (eg, broadband, transportation)
- Maximize BOCES and community colleges use of active learning
- Promote student engagement and community service

2) Ensure high quality education

(DETAILS)
- Include community colleges
- Increase recognition of technical programs
- Promote pre-K literacy

3) Provide a bridge out of poverty

(DETAILS)
- Vocational education
- PACE (Public Assisted College Education)
- Adult educational opportunities in local schools

WHICH OF THESE HAS THE MOST CONNECTIONS TO OTHER POLICY THEME AREAS (OR, WHICH IS THE MOST INTER-DISCIPLINARY)?
Both #1 (School as community center) and #3 (Provide a bridge out of poverty)

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS THAT CAME OUT OF YOUR DISCUSSION THAT ARE BROADER THAN YOUR POLICY THEME AREA:

**School Funding**
- Statewide solution that takes into account rural school children and taxpayer equity
- Reduce local tax share for education funding
- Unfreeze state funding rate
- Salary bonuses from state to teachers in certain rural districts/programs
INTERRELATED THEME: Community Capacity Building (and Transportation)
THAT CAME FROM: Rural Schools and Youth

POLICY / PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:
Remove regulatory and liability barriers to the use of school buildings as community centers and the sharing of transportation and other resources.

DETAILS:
- Increase shared use of existing transportation (e.g., agency and organization vans, school buses)
- Increase shared use of buildings, resources, organizations

SUGGESTED ADDENDA/ COMMENTS:
- Establish informal social networks (county-wide awareness)
- Credit incentive to businesses to subsidize tax of school districts

Rural Schools and Youth (group notes)

- Dialogue Across Agencies
  - State→local→communities
- Public School Funding Reform
  - Not tied to property tax
- Guidance Counselors in School→part of community
  - DOL→Develop website as resource
- Pre-K (Prenatal through 5)
  - At-risk youth
  - Respect for education
  - Special education
  - Daycare
  - Social services
  - Organizations:
    - Faith-based
    - Community-based
    - Peer-to-peer
    - 4-H
- School Based Health Centers
  - Personal wellness
  - Dental Van
  - Mental health counselors in schools
- School-Community Services Coordination
  - Flexibility in funding and spending
- High Needs Schools
  - Local knowledge
  - Math and science
  - Train more teachers in math and science
- Attract teachers (salaries?) - grants from NYS?
- Certification—multiple areas of science
- Science magnet schools
- Maintain small schools
  - * Taxpayer equity
→ Schools becoming smaller and more poor—economic gap
  - How to retain program?
  - How to teach children in poverty?
→ Educate community for change
  - Merging → problems: emotional, job loss, ownership, community identity
  - Shared services
  → Develop local solutions to maintain viable schools

1) School as Community, Community as School → Shared Resources
  - Involve youth
  - Focus on assets of community
  - Networks within poverty
  - Retain educators in district/area
2) Ensure High Quality Education
  - School is NOT the enemy
  - Range of expectations for schools
  - High quality education for educators
3) Provide a Bridge Out of Poverty
  - Break the poverty cycle
  - Pre-natal -5 → early intervention
  - Networks
    - Provide resources to parents to take care of children
    - Enhance education of community members through social market and cultural competency
4) Equitable, Adequate, Flexible, Efficient Funding
  - Reduce reliance on property tax
    - To what extent is property tax responsible for school funding?
  - Develop policy fit for rural areas → statewide solution for school funding that takes into account the needs of rural school children
  - Current funding is frozen → barrier: unfunded mandates
  - Need a solution for funding early childhood education
→ Streamline funding stream
→ Link to agencies serving children and families
→ Statewide solution to Campaign for Fiscal Equity
→ Child-based funding

Community:
  - Broadband sharing
  - Ensure that educators understand local communities
  - School-based Health Centers, Family Support Centers
    → Offer many services at one location
- Economical way to provide services
- Barriers: resistance to change, confidentiality regulations, bad experiences in school, BOCES scheduling conflicts

Suggested Policy Changes:
- Maximize use of BOCES—shared services (1-4)
- Regionalize services (4)
- Include community colleges (2,3)
  - Dual credit—high school seniors take college courses
  - * Online classes
  - AP classes
- Reinstate the PACE program (Public Assisted College Education) (2,3)
  - For those with dependent children
  - Pays for: transportation, child care, tuition
- Engage students in active learning (ie, internships) (1,2)
  - Funding
  - Promote partnerships with schools and health providers (1)
    - Workforce development (eg, dental hygienists, etc)
  - Retain educators and administrators (4)
    - Increase state share
      - Districts at different pay rates
      - Keep districts competitive
    - Loan forgiveness for teachers who stay in rural areas
      - Salary bonuses from state for teachers in certain rural districts
    - Promote literacy skills (2,3)
      - Pre-K → ongoing
    - Encourage sharing resources (eg. Broadband) (1)
    - Increase recognition for tech programs (2,3)
      - Applied learning
      - Improve access and scheduling
    - Promote summer learning experiences (3)
      - Enrichment programs
      - Summer school
      - After-school programs
    - Increase adult education opportunities (3)

Outcome: Increase access to quality of education and life by rural youth

Inter-related Themes:

1) Community Capacity
   - Social marketing—awareness of services available
   - Youth
   - Informal links
   - Local/ regional governance
   - Grange
- Transportation
- Website
- Increase civic engagement

→ lifelong learning communities

2) Poverty

- Transportation
  - Change regulations for liability insurance for small rural transportation services
  - Fund community transportation
  - Collaboration with different departments
- Shared resources—promote
  - Eg, shared school buses
- Health services
- Faith-based organizations
- **Informal networks**

- School as community center

BOCES—allow sharing resources and services (eg, broadband)
And community colleges
Partnerships with health providers and other organizations
Strengthen the voice of, and recognition of, small rural schools and BOCES

Outcome:
- Quality of life in rural areas
  - relates to education and youth
  - outmigration of youth
  - cost of living is too high

Telecommunications
- broadband
- legislation

Housing/Transportation
Local/Regional
- school boards
- property taxes
- land use/environment
- community capacity
  - civic engagement of youth
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT WORKGROUP

TOP THREE POLICY/PROGRAM FOCAL AREAS:
1) Provide infrastructure (labor website, local workforce website) to determine workforce opportunities on a regional basis

2) Create certification process (41 states have them)—include ESL

3) Create regional consortiums of all stakeholders

GENERAL COMMENTS:
- More outcome based
- Workforce Investment Board (WIB)’s focus on funding is not aligned with regional needs
- Core services for all but training for income eligible only
- WIBs and one-stops are reactive, not proactive

TOP THREE POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS - SPECIFIC:

1) Create a regional interactive data-based driven website that directly connects, links, and services all levels of education, business, employees, and job seekers, as well as human service agencies, towards current and future workforce needs.

(DETAILS)
- Ensure that the infrastructure exists to support needed systems—broadband, IT, etc
- Integrate and improve upon existing information service systems

2) Create a valid and reliable career readiness certification series for NYS utilizing the E77 and work keys.

(DETAILS)
- Create a certification process
- Soft skills and other regionally identified tracks (ie, health care, retail, etc.)

3) Create regional consortium of education and training providers to respond to, identify, and develop the educational and training needs identified in recommendation #1.

(DETAILS)
- Including BOCES, businesses, community colleges, high schools, VESID (Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities), health care organizations, economic development organizations, WIBs, retired professionals, and four-year universities
4) Secure a stable agricultural workforce.

(Details)
- Examine immigration proposals to better stabilize immigration workforce
- Develop an approach to address language and cultural barriers between immigrants and local communities

Which of these has the most connections to other policy theme areas (or, which is the most inter-disciplinary)?

#3—creating the regional consortium

General recommendations that came out of your discussion that are broader than your policy theme area:
- Other people are part of the process, but not here—DOL, DHCR, school counselors, chamber of commerce representatives, trade associations, county workforce development agencies, etc
- Community capacity: understanding how it is affected by the actions we take and the initiatives implemented through workforce development
- State legislators’ commitment to provide the necessary resources and policy directions to advance real job training and workforce development

Interrelated Theme: Create a regional consortium of education and training providers to respond to, identify, and develop the educational and training needs.

That came from: Workforce Development

Policy/Program Recommendations:
Bring all levels and entities together

Details:
- Make connections between schools and employers—guidance counselors more accountable
- Workforce Investment Board should be the HUB
- DOL has capacity to provide job trend information
- Need to provide high school students with access to this as job training and educational information
- All groups involved should be able to formulate and create model without too much funding
- We already have the tools, programs and technology in place
  ➔ JUST BRING IT ALL TOGETHER
  * Get model from Richard Merchant (North Country) to put forth as a road map to this recommendation

Suggested Addenda/Comments:
- Make sure to utilize CCE
- Currently we do not do a good job of maximizing our assets with schools and colleges
- This will take time to develop, but we cannot wait for government to do it for us
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT (group notes)

Who isn’t here?
- Department of Labor
- NHCR (affordable housing)
- High school guidance counselors
- Workforce needs representatives interacting with school educators
- IT resources to efficiently develop appropriate workforce
- County workforce development representatives
- Youth
- Immigrant labor
- Employers

Our Charge:

Determine where policies and programs relating to workforce development need to focus and make recommendations.

1) Provide infrastructure and ability for education and training through Labor-based website (broadband and IT)
- Determine top business and workforce opportunities with viable data—regionally
- Dept of Ag., Empire State Development, Dept. of Labor, Dept of Ed.

Intended Outcomes:
- Have viable labor data (current and projected) on a regional basis to be accessible and available via “Labor-based Website”

Current Policies:
DOL—Job Title/ Labor Market Analysis
- How far does it project?
- How effective has it been?
- How sensitive is the filter?

Barriers:
- Lack of math and science skills
- Lack of writing skills

2) Create a certification process that is standardized, job specific, and regionally based
- BOCES, 11th grade, community college, ESL for migrant workers (testing and remediation)
- Include soft skills and specialized areas (regionally identified tracks)
- Challenges: funding and turf issues—money comes from different sources
- Needs to be valid and recognized by employers

3) Create a regional consortium of educational and training providers
- BOCES, retired professionals, unions, economic development, business chambers, community colleges, high schools, health care organizations, colleges and universities, vocational institutions (ie, VESID, WIB)
4) Need for legislative involvement – how to respond to and develop

5) Secure a stable agricultural workforce
- Develop an approach to address language and cultural barriers between immigrants and local communities
- Examine current immigration proposals to better stabilize immigrant workforce

Go Zones:
- Encourage rural youth entrepreneurship
- Develop larger/more qualified labor force
- Adapt curriculum to keep students more technologically advanced
- Promote business involvement in rural areas to prepare students for employment
- More mentoring and internships for rural youth
- Greater involvement by community colleges with business and students
- Combat “brain drain” in rural areas (refer to Paul Eberts’ paper)
- Strengthen connection between universities and industries
  → Add primary and secondary education
- Improve and expand upon agricultural education

Comments:
- Workforce development needs to be more outcome based
- Some WIBs focus on money without alignment to regional needs
- Core services to all; training to income eligible
- WIBs and one-stops are reactive and not proactive
WORKGROUPS' TOP THREE PROGRAM/POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

TOP 3 POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:

AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

1. Education of citizens, consumers, public officials and farmers on critical agriculture and food issues to improve competitiveness and sustainability.

2. Improve connection of agriculture and food to communities for enhanced Ag profitability and community wellness.

3. Improved regulation, planning, research and development of food and ag systems for competitiveness/sustainability.

TOP 3 POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:

COMMUNITY CAPACITY & SOCIAL NETWORKS

1. Appoint a Governor’s task force to recommend ways to enhance overall civic participation and inclusiveness in rural areas.

2. State investment in regional entities for professional staff to promote local capacity building and inter-municipal cooperation through training, support, and technical assistance.
TOP 3 POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

1. Improve broadband infrastructure and access through legislation and redirection of existing economic development resources.

2. Initiate regional governance through legislation, including merging of services and incentives to communities.

3. Enhance the credit needs of rural communities through more responsive commercial lending services.

TOP 3 POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:

**ENERGY**

1. Appropriate funds to develop an inventory of renewable energy resources and markets.

2. Grow pool of “energy consultants” to assist with conservation, project development, etc.

3. Streamline regulatory and funding processes.
TOP 3 POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:

**HEALTH CARE**

1. Access to appropriate quality care: in 7-8 years achieve mandatory universal healthcare coverage in NYS.

2. Technology related solutions: look at NYS subsidizing a centralized or regionalized entity for broadband access and support legislation for carriers to work together.

3. Address reimbursement needs: maintain NYS’s commitment to periodically update the base year for nursing home reimbursement.

4. Promote lifelong focus on prevention/ wellness.

TOP 3 POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:

**TRANSPORTATION**

1. Make use of shared assets to reduce redundancies in transportation services.

2. Budget funds for a laundry list for transportation services.
TOP 3 POLICY/ PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:

**HOUSING**

1. Dedicate state funds for down-payment for home ownership, home owner counseling, revolving loan repayment.

2. Dedicate state funds for rental assistance.

3. Provision for incentives for landlords to provide housing to income-eligible persons.

TOP 3 POLICY/ PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:

**LAND USE, ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES**

1. Integrate Ag and farmland protection, natural resource protection, and environmental planning into a training curriculum that utilizes a variety of approaches for distribution and outreach.

2. Systematic change of NYS education that incorporates sustainable practices as a contemporary theme into earth science and biology curriculum

3. Include Smart Growth principles as a criteria for awarding points in grant applications so as to encourage development that protects farmland and revitalizes existing downtowns.

4. Reform real property tax law.

p. 86
TOP 3 POLICY/ PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:

**RURAL SCHOOLS & YOUTH**

1. School as Community Center.

2. Ensure high quality education

3. Provide a bridge out of poverty.

TOP 3 POLICY/ PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

1. Create a Regional interactive data-based driven website that directly connects, links and services all levels of education, business, employees and job seekers as well as human services agencies.

2. Create a valid and reliable career readiness certification series for NYS utilizing the E77 and work keys.

3. Create regional consortium of education and training providers - to respond to and identify and develop educational and training needs.

4. Secure a stable agricultural workforce by examining immigration proposals and addressing language and cultural barriers between immigrants and local communities.
TOP 3 POLICY/PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:

**LOCAL and REGIONAL GOVERNANCE**

1. Proportioning services to the capacity the local government can provide.

2. Associating service with the revenue source to support it, including regulation reduction as appropriate.

3. Improve management capacity of local government including training of the next generation towards enhancing engagement in local government.

4. Linkage of local government to economic development.

A SAMPLING OF GENERAL COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Economic development is a central theme in rural areas that impacts housing, poverty, etc.
2. Marketing and communication about programs is extremely important to rural business.
3. Revitalize the NYS Rural Development Council
4. Public education!! Need more on energy conservation, assistance programs, available technology, etc.
5. (Energy) Simplify! Overabundance of information, assistance programs, that in some cases, lead to confusion and are not user friendly.
6. Incorporate the paradigm shift to health promotion and prevention in all facets of society, including insurance, tax law, education, etc.
7. Develop indicators for measurement and evaluation of policy impacts.
8. Energy issues related to agriculture/ growing energy resources and consumption of energy.
9. People that are critical to the process, but were not present here.
SYMPOSIUM CLOSING SESSION - GENERAL DISCUSSION NOTES

Jennifer Drumluk:
Economic Development Recommendation: need to support microenterprise development at the local and regional level

Education and training vs. taxation—permeates all different groups
- need to have concerted effort
  - non-profits, state agencies, universities, etc
  - training of local government officials
Property taxes affect everyone’s interests, from forestry to agriculture to community development

Barry Brogan, NYS Association Rural Health:
- Property tax reform
- Bedroom and second home communities are threatened, inflated land prices cause neighbor’s assessments to go up → “domino effect” → displacement of local neighbors and long-term residents who cannot afford to stay
- “threatens the fabric of our communities” when young people and seniors can’t afford to live there

David Brown, Cornell, Development Sociology:
Lack of systemic, trusted information about these issues need consideration of how to support continued research on socioeconomic and environmental change in rural areas

Mary Jo Dudley, Cornell Migrant Program:
Broader discussion to include how low-income communities are/are not included issues of access to technology
- Talk with low-income community members about what they need

Paul Lehmen, Cornell Cooperative Extension:
In some states the land grant mission has responded well to these challenges
- As a system, we in NYS need to rise to this challenge
- Rural communities need to band together
- Need to take leadership and make sure this doesn’t just gather dust
- Reiterate the case for improved communication and technology in rural areas

Beth Claypool, Cornell Cooperative Extension:
We talk about “them,” but we need to involve “them” in the discussion about planning
- Recognize different training styles/needs
- Get the teachable community actively involved in the planning

Dennis Donahue:
4-H is integral to the development of the workforce in rural communities
- Encourages youth to test and explore the workforce
- Program needs continued support and additional resources
Al Cardillo:  
Concern about the shortage of health workforce → Lack of access → Need for a set of essential services  
- Both professional and paraprofessional  
- Very very important

Sharon Mathe:  
How to utilize school as community center? → Foster integration both ways → Create beneficial relationship  
- Partnerships, sharing of resources  
- Use variety of mechanisms to bring the community together  
- Family support center  
- Maximizing use of BOCES and active learning  
- Continuous, lifelong learning (including adult education)  
- Broadband access

Leanne Avery:  
Need to hear from more youth at these proceedings  
- Especially those who are in poverty or marginalized

Barry Brogan:  
Rural Health Network system → visionary idea  
- 35 networks in upstate NY  
- Allows local communities to solve local problems with local solutions  
- Integral role: needs assessment, local solutions

Tom Bailey:  
Educational funding as a priority  
- Major debate in legislature as CFE campaign concludes → can’t lose sight of the fact that rural areas also need resources, in addition to NYC  
- Again comes back to property taxes  
- Only thing with schools that people really vote on is the taxes...

Debbie Payne:  
Is representing lower income people—received assistance, pursued education  
- Attended TCCC through PACE program, majored in Adult Education  
→ Support is critical– the idea that there are people behind you...  
- Community and personal support cannot be legislated → empathy and support  
- “Go out and encourage someone who is poor, someone who is marginalized!”  
- You can’t legislate kindness

Rod Howe:  
Confidence for both individuals and communities to move forward  
→ How can programs and policies help instill this confidence?

Forestry representative:  
Need to also talk to “downstate” assembly members, whose thoughts and priorities are so different  
- As a group, we need to increase our network and interactions
Travis Park:
Started out pointing out all the negatives/deficiencies with rural education, but today looked at a vision
- Many myths about upstate NY (rude, close-minded, etc) are a lot of BS
- There is a lot of wealth in rural NY communities and people
- Need something that we can all rally around in upstate NY to pull people together (slogan) ➔ market this special characteristic of rural NYS
- Oftentimes we concentrate on the negatives/deficiencies, but we also need to focus on successes and what we are doing well so we can move forward and towards our vision

Paul Eberts:
This conference is the start and not the finish—Need to continue this work
- Issue: Are we effective?
- We don’t even know because we don’t have good assessments of programs
- Assessment: Are people feeling better about where they are today versus where we were 5 years ago?
- Can’t lose track of the low income people/people who are not typically included
SYMPOSIUM CLOSING SESSION - NYS LEGISLATIVE PANEL

Max Pfeffer, Chair, Department of Development Sociology, Cornell University:
- Emphasize need to return to our communities and continue the energy generated at the Symposium
- Dedication and interest—need to build on this
- Call for sharing resources, inter-organizational cooperation→ We can all work on this
- Need for training, information dissemination→ Can also happen informally through how we interact with one another

Senator George Winner, Chair, NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources:
- Population loss→ congressional representation→ decreased funding
- Economic development→ increased jobs→ increased population→ increased revenue from private investment and tax revenue
- Higher education opportunities in NYS are numerous (over 100 private institutions)
- Technology transfer is important

Assemblyman David Koon, Vice-Chair, NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources:
- Don’t wait for government to follow through→ go back to our local areas and get started!!
- Can’t always rely on government to get things done
- Connect with representatives and let them know what bills you support
- Tell NYC legislators that rural areas need attention
- Coordinate groups and visit Albany and lobby
  - Call ahead and make appointments
  - Not just rural legislators, urban ones too

Senator William Stachowski, Member, NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources:
- I’m an “Urban guy”— in order for the rural issues to be recognized and potential solutions funded, we need to connect urban problems with rural ones to catch urban legislators support
  - “Hook your problem to theirs”
- Many rural and urban problems are the same.

Assemblyman James Bachalles, Member, NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources:
- “Regional concept” is important— small places need to act as part of a region
- Re-sale of lakeside property→ increased taxes
- Broadband access will increase rural economic development with fiber cables
- How quickly will broadband be distributed to rural areas with Verizon having a statewide franchise?
- Increased parental involvement is key → cant legislate this
- Reinforcement of important themes
Comments and Questions for Panel:
(25 year old) There are few good jobs for NEW college graduates → need for more internship opportunities

“Elitism of housing” → how to give “teeth” to the regulations to force/help local communities control 2nd housing property value inflation and support/build affordable housing
- Local zoning → get involved

Emergency Services → high percentage are volunteers and their numbers are dwindling
- “Regionalization” — on paper sounds great, BUT (in Delaware County at least) in rural areas the city in the region keeps most of the funds
- Grant applications often have urban-biased criteria
Abdella, Ann  
Chautauqua County Health Network  
300 Foote Ave.  
Jamestown, NY 14701  
Phone: 716-664-8445  
Fax: 716-664-8447  
Email: ann.abdella@wcahospital.org

Abbrecht, Diane  
Board Member  
PO Box 416  
2663 Main St.  
Whitney Point, NY 13862  
Phone: 607-692-7669  
Fax: 607-692-7670  
Email: dianealbrecht@stny.rr.com

Alexander, Collene  
NYSARH  
200 Washington Street  
Suite 302  
Watertown, NY 13601  
Phone: 315-836-1577  
Fax: 315-836-1580  
Email: collene@nnyruralhealthcarealliance.org

Antonio, Malka  
CaRDI MSP Student  
39 Warren Hall  
Ithaca, NY 14853  
Phone: 607-592-0792  
Fax:  
Email: ma285@cornell.edu

Avery, Leanne  
SUNY Oneonta  
224 Human Ecology  
SUNY Oneonta, NY 13820  
Phone: 607-436-3146  
Fax:  
Email: averylm@oneonta.edu

Bacalles, James  
NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources  
105 E Steuben St  
Bath, NY 14810  
Phone: 607-776-9691  
Fax: 607-776-5185  
Email: bacallj@assembly.state.ny.us

Bailey, Thomas  
REAP  
56 Main Street  
Owego, NY 13827  
Phone: 607-687-8258  
Fax: 607-687-3619  
Email: tbailey@htva.net

Bartimole, John  
Southern Tier Health Care System, Inc.  
Southern Tier Health Care System, Inc.  
One Blue Bird Square  
Olean, NY 14760  
Phone: 716-372-0614  
Fax: 716-372-5217  
Email: jbartimole@sthcs.org

Bartow, Jr., John  
NYS Tug Hill Commission  
317 Washington Street  
Watertown, NY 13601  
Phone: 315-785-2380  
Fax: 315-785-2574  
Email: john@tughill.org

Beaulac, Lee  
Rural Opportunities, Inc  
400 East Avenue  
Rochester, NY 14607  
Phone: 585-340-3366  
Fax: 585-340-3309  
Email: lhauer@ruralinc.org

Bodden, Thomas  
The Association of Towns of the State of New York  
146 State Street  
Albany, NY 12207  
Phone: 518-465-7933  
Fax: 518-465-0724  
Email: tbodden@nytowns.org

Bishop, Patricia  
NY Rural Health Care Alliance  
200 Washington Street  
Suite 302  
Watertown, NY 13601  
Phone: 315-836-1579  
Fax: 315-836-1580  
Email: patt@gmailruralhealthcarealliance.org

Brach, Ronald  
NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources  
NYS Commission on Rural Resources  
Legislative Office Building  
Albany, NY 12247  
Phone: 518-455-2544  
Fax: 518-426-6960  
Email: brach@senate.state.ny.us
Breen, Jennifer  
NYS Governor's Office for Small Cities  
4 Empire State Plaza  
Suite 600  
Albany, NY 12223  
Phone: 518-474-2057  
Fax: 518-474-4247  
Email: jbreen@smallcities.state.ny.us

Brogan, Barry  
NYS Association for Rural Health  
P.O. Box 891  
Saranac Lake, NY 12983  
Phone: 518-891-9460  
Fax: 518-891-9461  
Email: barry@behaviorhealthnet.org

Brooks, Rob  
NYS Governor's Office for Small Cities  
4 Empire State Plaza  
Suite 600  
Albany, NY 12223  
Phone: 518-474-2057  
Fax: 518-474-5247  
Email: rbrooks@smallcities.state.ny.us

Brown, David  
Cornell University  
Warren Hall  
Ithaca, NY 14853  
Phone: 607-255-3164  
Fax: 607-254-2896  
Email: DLB17@cornell.edu

Brunett, Dana  
Rural Opportunities  
400 East Avenue  
Rochester, NY 14607  
Phone: 585-340-3385  
Fax: 585-340-3309  
Email: dbrunett@ruralinc.org

Calcagni, John  
NYS Dept. of Public Service  
3 Empire State Plaza  
Albany, NY 12223  
Phone: 518-473-6060  
Fax: 518-473-9999  
Email: johncalcagni@dps.state.ny.us

Calcagni, John  
NYS Dept. of Public Service  
3 Empire State Plaza  
Albany, NY 12223  
Phone: 518-473-6060  
Fax: 518-473-9999  
Email: jcc@dps.state.ny.us

Canfield, Caryn  
NYS Assembly, Program and Counsel  
Program and Counsel  
Room 513 Capital  
Albany, NY 12248  
Phone: 518-455-4355  
Fax: 518-455-4128  
Email: canfieldc@assembly.state.ny.us

Carlton, Jacqueline  
Seven Valleys Health Coalition  
10 Kennedy Parkway  
Cortland, NY 13045  
Phone: 607-756-4198  
Fax: 607-756-1092  
Email: jackie@sevenvalleymhealth.org  
charlotte@nysdra.org

Caterina, Vincent  
Associate Examiner  
110 State Street  
Albany, NY 12236  
Phone: 518-402-4564  
Fax: 518-402-4436  
Email: vcaterina@osc.stste.ny.us

Claypoole, Elizabeth  
CCE Wayne County  
1581 Rte 88N  
Newark, NY 14513  
Phone: 315-331-8415  
Email: eac9@cornell.edu

Cullenen, Tim  
Cornell University CARDI  
39 Warren Hall  
Ithaca, NY 14850  
Phone: 607-254-4688  
Fax: 607-254-4688  
Email: tac26@cornell.edu

Culhane, Cathy  
Region Director  
PO Box 7378  
100 South Clinton Street  
Syracuse, NY 13261  
Phone: 315-448-0470  
Fax: 315-448-0476  
Email: internny@clinton.senate.gov

Cardillo, Alfredo  
Executive Director for Health, Council on  
Health Care Financing  
New York State Senate  
Legislative Office Building (90 SS, Rm 204)  
Albany, NY 12247  
Phone: 518-455-2067  
Fax: 518-426-6925  
Email: cardillo@senate.state.ny.us

Cashman, Craig  
Opportunities for Chenango  
44 West Main Street  
P.O. Box 470  
Norwich, NY 13815  
Phone: 607-334-7114  
Fax: 607-336-6958  
Email: CCashman@ofcinc.org  
Email:
Cunningham, Deborah  
Coordinator for Educational Management Services  
State Education Department  
Room 876 EBA  
Albany, NY  12244  
Phone: 518-474-6541  
Fax: 518-474-1983  
Email: dcunning@mail.nysed.gov

Davis, Marjorie  
Grange Member  
2936 Cty Rd. 16  
Georgetown, NY  13072  
Phone: 315-837-4741  
Fax:  
Email: mmdavis@oves.org

DeOrdio, Janet  
NYS Canal Corporation  
P O Box 189  
Albany, NY  12201-0189 USA  
Phone: (518) 471-5027  
Fax:  
Email: janet_deordio@canals.state.ny.us

DeVoe, Ted  
NYS Governor's Office of Small Cities  
4 Empire State Plaza  
Suite 600  
Albany, NY  12223-1401  
Phone: 518-474-2057  
Fax: 518-474-5247  
Email: amirl@smallcities.state.ny.us

Dillard, Helene  
NYS Canal Corporation  
P O Box 189  
Albany, NY  12201-0189 USA  
Phone: (518) 471-5027  
Fax:  
Email: jdykeman@frontiernet.net

Donahue, Dennis  
NYS OCFS Commission for the Blind  
2 Clinton Sq. Ste 105  
Syracuse, NY  13202  
Phone: 315-425-5425  
Fax: 315-425-5416  
Email: dennis.donahue@ocfs.state.ny.us

Dudley, Mary Jo  
Cornell Migrant Program  
321 Warren Hall  
Cornell University  
Ithaca, NY  14853  
Phone: 607-687-4020  
Fax: 315-362-4449  
Email: jdykeman@frontiernet.net

Dudrick, Julie  
Colgate University, The Upstate Institute  
13 Oak Drive  
105 East Hall  
Hamilton, NY  13346  
Phone: 315-228-6878  
Fax: 315-228-7254  
Email: jdykeman@frontiernet.net

Dwyer, Donna  
NYS Office of Temporary & Disability Assistance (OTDA)  
Career Center  
1006 Oneida Plaza Drive  
Oneida, NY  13421  
Phone: 315-363-2400  
Fax: 315-363-4449  
Email: donna.dwyer@otda.state.ny.us

Earle-Richardson, Giulia  
New York Center for Agriculture Medicine  
Bassett Healthcare  
One Atwell Rd  
Cooperstown, NY  13820  
Phone: 607-547-6023  
Fax: 607-547-6087  
Email: gearlerichardson@nycamh.com

Falcao, Elizabeth  
Director  
100 W. Seneca Street  
Ithaca, NY  14850  
Phone: 607-273-8686  
Fax: 607-273-3002  
Email: elaf6@cornell.edu

Fagan, Andrew  
CCE Tioga County  
56 Main Street  
Owego, NY  13827  
Phone: 607-687-4020  
Fax: 607-687-3619  
Email: agf1@cornell.edu

Fowler, Carla  
NYS Tug Hill Commission  
NYS Tug Hill Commission  
317 Washington Street  
Watertown, NY  13601  
Phone: 315-785-2380  
Fax: 315-785-2574  
Email: carla@tughill.org

Donna Dwyer
cornell.edu
Frame, Michael  
New York State Urban Council  
109 South Warren Street  
Suite 1900  
Syracuse, NY 13202  
Phone: 315-422-8284  
Fax: 315-471-4503  
Email: mframe@mda-cny.com

Frost, Kelly  
New York State Grange  
43451 NYS Rte 37  
Redwood, NY 13679  
Phone: 315-482-9408  
Fax:  
Email: kfrost@lafargeville.csd.org

Fuller, Michael  
Pipeline 4 Progress  
PO Box 797  
Corning, NY 14830  
Phone: 607-426-8019  
Fax: 607-732-4800  
Email: fullermw@yahoo.com

Fuller, Susan Day  
Fuller Communications  
468 E. Main St. Suite  
P.O. Box 310  
Malone, NY 12953  
Phone: (518) 483-7154  
Fax: 518-483-7443  
Email: sf Fuller@fullerventures.com

Garcia, Margorie  
Adirondack Community Action Programs Inc.  
7572 Court Street  
PO Box 848  
Elizabethtown, NY 12932  
Phone: 518-873-3207  
Fax: 518-873-6845  
Email: acapcsbg@yahoo.com

Glasbergen, Karen  
Opportunities for Chenango, Inc  
44 West Main Street  
P. O. Box 470  
Norwich, NY 13815  
Phone: 607-336-2101  
Fax: 607-336-3089  
Email: kglasbergen@ofcinc.org

Glasgow, Nina  
Cornell University  
332 Warren Hall, Dept. of Dev. Soc., Cornell  
Unive  
Ithaca, NY 14853  
Phone: 607-255-1689  
Fax: 607-254-2896  
Email: ng14@cornell.edu

Goldberg, Greta  
Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council  
City Place  
50 West Main Street, Suite 8107  
Rochester, NY 14614  
Phone: 585-454-0190  
Fax: 585-454-0191  
Email: ggoldberg@gflrpc.org

Goodsell, Martha  
NY Farms  
125 Williams Road  
Candor, NY 13743  
Phone: 607-659-3710  
Fax: 607-659-3710  
Email: nyfarms@ clarityconnect.com

Grantham, Deborah  
Cornell University CCE  
307A Rice Hall  
Ithaca, NY 14853-5601  
Phone: 607-255-4931  
Fax: 607-255-4662  
Email: dgg3@cornell.edu

Grusenmeyer, David  
Outreach Coordinator  
New York Farm Viability Institute  
159 Dwight Park Circle, Ste. 104  
Syracuse, NY 13209  
Phone: 315-453-3823  
Email: dgrusenmeyer@nyfarmviability.org

Gregg, Louise  
IV County Network Manager, Chenango, Delaware, Otsego, & Schoharie  
Chenango County ADAS  
105 Leilani’s Way  
Norwich, NY 13815, NY 13815  
Phone: 607-337-1680  
Fax: 607-336-1380  
Email: louiseg@co.chenango.ny.us

Gryczko-Avellaneda, Larisa  
Tioga Co. Rural Economic Area Partnership (REAP)  
56 Main Street  
Owego, NY 13827  
Phone: 607-687-8258  
Fax: 607-687-3619  
Email: avellaneda@co.tioga.ny.us

Gustin, Laura  
Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency  
Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency  
1150 University Ave.  
Rochester, NY 14607  
Phone: 585-461-3520  
Fax: 585-461-0997  
Email: lauragustin@flhsa.org

Gilchrist, Brian  
CCE Washington County  
415 Lower Main Street  
Hudson Falls, NY 12839  
Phone: 518-746-2560  
Fax: 518-746-2419  
Email: btg5@cornell.edu
Haab, Michelle  
Rural Health Network of Oswego County  
157 West First Street  
Oswego, NY  13126  
Phone: 315-343-2344  
Fax: 315-343-0442  
Email: mhaab@cnymail.com

Hamilton, Stephen  
Cornell University  
501F Day hall  
Ithaca, NY  14853  
Phone: 607-255-3956  
Fax: 607-255-8767  
Email: sfh3@cornell.edu

Hanlon, Mike  
President  
Box 65  
Cayuta, NY  14824  
Phone: 607-594-4600  
Fax: 607-594-4604  
Email: mike@cothtonhanlon.com

Harrson, Roberta  
CCE of Onondago County  
Cornell Cooperative Extension, Onondaga Co.  
220 Herald Place, 2nd Floor  
Syracuse, NY  13202  
Phone: 315-424-9485  
Fax: 315-424-7056  
Email: rmh27@cornell.edu

Hasrich, Michael  
CCE Chemung County  
425 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Elmira, NY  14904  
Phone: 607-734-4453  
Fax: 607-734-7749  
Email: msh21@cornell.edu

Hayes, Ron  
Office of Southern Tier and Western  
Transportation Strategy  
50 Wolf Road  
6th Floor  
Albany, NY  12232  
Phone: 518-810-9951  
Fax: 518-457-6067  
Email: rhayes@dot.state.ny.us

Herrick, Sally  
NYS Office of Children & Family Services  
NYS Office of Children & Family Services  
52 Washington Street, Room 309 South  
Rensselaer, NY  12144  
Phone: 518-473-8455  
Fax: 518-474-8957  
Email: Sally.Herrick@ocfs.state.ny.us

Hirschel, Thomas  
Development Sociology Cornell University  
Dept. Development Sociology  
Cornell University  
Ithaca, NY  14853  
Phone: 607-255-1688  
Fax: 607-255-2231  
Email: tth4@cornell.edu

Hildebrandt, Pam  
Director  
PO Box 184  
34570 State Hwy 10  
Hamden, NY  13825-0184  
Phone: 607-865-6531  
Fax: 607-865-6532  
Email: pmh26@cornell.edu

Holko, John  
Lenape Resources, Inc.  
9489 Alexander Road  
Alexender, NY  14005  
Phone: 585-344-1200  
Fax: 585-344-3283  
Email: jholko@lenaperesources.com

Hummel, Cynthia  
Excellus BlueCross BlueShield Utica Region  
12 Roads Drive  
Utica, NY  13502  
Phone: 315-798-4249  
Fax: 315-798-4249  
Email: Cindy.hummel@excellus.com

Hyatt, Joyce  
Chemung Valley Rural Health Network  
Chemung Valley Rural Health Network  
103 Washington Street, P. O. Box 588  
Elmira, NY  14901  
Phone: 607-737-2826  
Fax: 607-737-2016  
Email: jhyatt@stny.rr.com

Kay, David  
Local Government Program Cornell  
38 Warren Hall  
Cornell University  
Ithaca, NY  14853  
Phone: 607-255-2123  
Fax: 607-255-2123  
Email: dlk2@cornell.edu

Kennedy, James X.  
Cayuga Co. Community Health Network, Inc.  
188 Genesee St.  
Carr Bldg. Suite 207  
Auburn, NY  13021  
Phone: 315-252-4212  
Fax: 315-252-3678  
Email: director@cayugahhealthnetwork.org

Kiley, Lawrence  
Rural Schools Association  
111 KENNEDY HALL  
CORNELL UNIVERSITY  
ITHACA, NY  14850  
Phone: 607-255-8056  
Fax: 697-255-7905  
Email: lak35@CORNELL.EDU
Koon, David
Assemblyman
268 Fairport Village Landing
Fairport, NY 14450
Phone: 585-223-9130
Fax: 585-223-5243
Email: koond@assembly.state.ny.us

Kraly, Ellen
Upstate Institute Colgate University
The Upstate Institute
East Hall
Hamilton, NY 13346
Phone: 315-228-6623
Fax: 315-228-7840
Email: ekraly@mail.colgate.edu

Kromphardt, Heidi
NYS Assembly
Empire State Plaza, Agency 4, 5th floor
Albany, NY 12248
Phone: 518-455-4031
Fax: 518-455-5573
Email: kromphh@assembly.state.ny.us

Lehman, Paul
CCE of Niagara County
4487 Lake Avenue
Lockport, NY 14094
Phone: 716-433-8839
Fax: 716-438-0275
Email: pel5@cornell.edu

McCarthy, Anne
Program Coordinator
188 Genesee St., Suite 207
Auburn, NY 13021
Phone: 315-252-4212
Email: tobaccodeefree@cayugahealthnetwork.org

Mancuso, Beverly
CCE Genesee County
420 East Main Street
Batavia, NY 14020
Phone: 585-343-3040
Fax: 585-343-1275
Email: blm34@cornell.edu

Manning, Peter
NYS Department of State- Local Government
41 State Street, Ste 900
Albany, NY 12231
Phone: 518-473-3355
Fax: 518-474-6572
Email: PManning@dosstate.ny.us

Mast, Julia
Grange Member
4848 Co. Rte 10
Cameron, NY 14819
Phone: 607-776-3625
Fax:
Email: mastifarm@aol.com

Mathe, Sharon
Healthy Community Alliance, Inc.
26 Jamestown St.
Gowanda, NY 14070
Phone: 716-532-1010
Fax: 716-532-1011
Email: smathe@communityalliance.org

Maxwell, Amy
Agriculture Teacher
PO Box 517
East Broadway
Salem, NY 12865
Phone: 518-854-7600
Fax:
Email: alswezey@yahoo.com

Madden, Karen
NYS Dept. of Health
Corning Tower Room 1119
Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12237
Phone: 518-474-5565
Fax: 518-473-6195
Email: kam13@health.state.ny.us

Mapes, Jeff
NYS DEC - Div. of Lands and Forests
NYS DEC - Div. of Lands and Forests
625 Broadway, 5th Floor
Albany, NY 12233-4250
Phone: 518-402-9405
Fax: 518-402-9028
Email: jamapes@gw.dec.state.ny.us

Mastronardi, Karen
NY FarmNet Human Services - Cornell University
414 Warren Hall
Cornell University
Ithaca, NY 14853
Phone: 607-252-1603
Fax: 607-254-7435
Email: kjm54@cornell.edu

May, Carolyn
Onondaga County Office of Economic Development
421 Montgomery Street
Syracuse, NY 13057
Phone: 315-435-3770
Fax: 315-435-3669
Email: cmay5@twcny.rr.com
Parra, Pilar A.
Research Associate
3M7 MVR
Nutritional Sciences
Ithaca, NY 14853
Phone: 607-255-0063
Fax: 607-255-0178
Email: pap2@cornell.edu

Pattison, Mark
Local Government Services & Economic Dev.
NYS Office of the State Comptroller
LGSED, 110 State Street
Albany, NY 12236
Phone: 518-474-4037
Fax: 518-486-6479
Email: mpattison@osc.state.ny.us

Pfeffer, Max J.
Development Sociology Cornell University
133 Warren Hall
Cornell University
Ithaca, NY 14853
Phone: 607-255-1676
Fax: 607-254-2896
Email: mjp5@cornell.edu

Philo, Christina
NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources
NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources
Agency Bldg 4, 12th Floor
Albany, NY 12248
Phone: 518-474-4037
Fax: 518-486-6479
Email: Philoc@assembly.state.ny.us

Potter, Nancy
CCE Tompkins County
Cornell Cooperative Extension-Tompkins County
615 Willow Ave
Ithaca, NY 14850
Phone: 607-272-2292
Fax: 607-272-7088
Email: np20@cornell.edu

Reilly, John
Policy Analyst
90 South Swan
Albany, NY 12247
Phone: 518-445-7966
Fax: 518-455-3999
Email: Reillyj@sente.state.ny.us

Reinbolt, Gary
WSKG Public Broadcasting
WSKG Public Broadcasting
PO Box 3000
Binghamton, NY 13902
Phone: 607-729-0100
Fax: 607-729-7328
Email: Gary_Reinbolt@wskg.pbs.org

Richardson, Darcy
Colgate University, The Upstate Institute
Colgate University, 13 Oak Drive
103 McGregory Hall
Hamilton, NY 13346
Phone: 315-228-7222
Fax: 315-228-7254
Email: drichardson@mail.colgate.edu

Rogers, Patrick
Institute for Human Services
6666 County Road 11
Bath, NY 14810
Phone: 607-776-9467
Fax: 607-776-9482
Email: rogers@ihhsnet.org

Ross, Bonnie
Senior VP
3170 West Street
Suite 150
Canandaigua, NY 14424
Phone: 585-396-6461
Fax: 585-396-6674
Email: bonnie.ross@thompsonhealth.com

Roush, Kathy
Tioga Co. Rural Economic Area Partnership (REAP)
56 Main Street
Owego, NY 13827
Phone: 607-687-8258
Fax: 607-687-3619
Email: kroush@stny.rr.com

Salo, John C.
Rural Health Network SCNY
PO Box 416
2663 Main St.
Whitney Point, NY 13862
Phone: 607-692-7669
Fax: 607-692-7670
Email: jsalo@ruralhealthnetwork.org

Sebber, Ronald
Cornell University
451 Day Hall
Ithaca, NY 14853
Phone: 607-255-0970
Fax: 607-255-0134
Email: rs60@cornell.edu

Seeber, Ronald
Cornell University
451 Day Hall
Ithaca, NY 14853
Phone: 607-255-0970
Fax: 607-255-0134
Email: rs60@cornell.edu

Root, Charles
OCFS Regional Coordinator
2 Clinton Square
Suite 105
Syracuse, NY 13202
Phone: 315-423-5486
Fax: 315-423-5499
Email: Charles.Root@ocfs.state.ny.us

Rossi, Teresa
chief counsel
Room 814, LOB
Albany, NY 12054
Phone: 518-475-0695
Fax: 518-426-6976
Email: rossi@state.senate.ny.us

Rough, Neil
Cornell University CaRDI
39 Warren Hall
Ithaca, NY 14853
Phone: 607-255-1693
Fax: 607-255-2231
Email: ns31@cornell.edu

Seem, Robert
Cornell University
Dept. of Plant Pathology
630 W. North St.
Geneva, NY 14456-0462
Phone: 315-787-2388
Fax: 315-787-2389
Email: rcs4@cornell.edu

Scholes, Keith
Rural Opportunities Inc.
400 East Avenue
Rochester, NY 14607
Phone: 585-340-3315
Fax: 585-340-3309
Email: kscholes@ruralinc.org
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title/Position</th>
<th>Address 1</th>
<th>Address 2</th>
<th>Address 3</th>
<th>Phone 1</th>
<th>Phone 2</th>
<th>Phone 3</th>
<th>Fax 1</th>
<th>Fax 2</th>
<th>Fax 3</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seymour, Carolyn</td>
<td>Ex. Dir. CHRIC Policy Director</td>
<td>2 Academy St</td>
<td>Mayville, NY 14757</td>
<td>Albany, NY 12243</td>
<td>518-486-9599</td>
<td>518-474-5281</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Carolyn_Seymour@chric.org">Carolyn_Seymour@chric.org</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharkey, Bob</td>
<td>Policy Director</td>
<td>40 N. Pearl St.</td>
<td>Albany, NY 12243</td>
<td>518-402-9405</td>
<td>518-402-9028</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:bob.sharkey@otda.state.ny.us">bob.sharkey@otda.state.ny.us</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheehan, Francis</td>
<td>NYS DEC Ex. Dir. CHRIC Policy Director</td>
<td>2 Academy St</td>
<td>Mayville, NY 14757</td>
<td>Albany, NY 12233-4250</td>
<td>518-402-9405</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sipple, John W.</td>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>421 Kennedy Hall</td>
<td>Corning, NY 14830</td>
<td>607-936-3755</td>
<td>607-962-2844</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:jsleve@corninggas.com">jsleve@corninggas.com</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleve, Jerry</td>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>330 W. William St.</td>
<td>Ithaca, NY 14853</td>
<td>607-255-3005</td>
<td>607-255-7905</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith, Kevin</td>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>317 Washington St</td>
<td>Watertown, NY 13601</td>
<td>315-778-7652</td>
<td>315-785-2574</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:kev@tughill.org">kev@tughill.org</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stachowski, William</td>
<td>State Senator</td>
<td>2030 Clinton Street</td>
<td>Buffalo, NY 14220</td>
<td>716-826-3344</td>
<td>716-823-6372</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:senstachowski@yahoo.com">senstachowski@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stern, Robert</td>
<td>Director, CNY Field Office</td>
<td>43 Warren Hall</td>
<td>Ithaca, NY 14850</td>
<td>607-255-9510</td>
<td>607-255-2231</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:hks22@cornell.edu">hks22@cornell.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strachan, Heather</td>
<td>Director, CNY Field Office</td>
<td>317 Washington Street</td>
<td>Watertown, NY 13601</td>
<td>315-426-3946</td>
<td>315-426-3950</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:huasjss@omh.state.ny.us">huasjss@omh.state.ny.us</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suarez, Julie</td>
<td>New York Farm Bureau</td>
<td>159 Wolf Road</td>
<td>Albany, NY 12205</td>
<td>607-255-7756</td>
<td>607-255-7905</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweeney, Dennis</td>
<td>Rural Schools Association</td>
<td>111 Kennedy Hall</td>
<td>Ithaca, NY 14853</td>
<td>518-431-5618</td>
<td>518-431-5656</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: The above table contains contact information for various individuals associated with different organizations in New York State. This information is typically used for communication purposes.*
Telega, Stanley
Agricultural Specialist
90 State Street
Suite 600
Albany, NY 12207
Phone: 518-434-4157
Fax: 518-434-4247
Email: swt2@cornell.edu

Ten Eyck, Jeffrey
NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets
384 Champlin Road
Grono, NY 13073
Phone: 607-838-3353
Fax: 607-838-3353
Email: jeff.teneyck@agmkt.state.ny.us

Thomas, Clifford
NYS Office of Central & Northeast Transportation Strategy
50 Wolf Rd.
Albany, NY 12232
Phone: 518-457-7475
Fax: 518-457-6067
Email: cthomas@dot.state.ny.us

Thomson, Jonathan
NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets
10B Airline Drive
Albany, NY 12235
Phone: 518-457-7076
Fax: 518-457-2716
Email: Jonathan.Thomson@agmkt.state.ny.us

Thornburgh, David
Alliance for Regional Stewardship
16 Sheridan Avenue
Albany, NY 12210-2714
Phone: 518-486-7027
Fax: 518-474-3637
Email: mark.twentym@orps.state.ny.us

Traylor, John
OSC Local Government Services
110 State Street
Albany, NY 12210-2714
Phone: 518-474-6454
Fax: 518-486-6479
Email: jtraylor@osc.state.ny.us

Turner, Elizabeth
Colgate University, The Upstate Institute
13 Oak Drive
105 East Hall
Hamilton, NY 13346
Phone: 315-228-6623
Fax: 315-228-7254
Email: eturner@mail.colgate.edu

Van De Valk, Lawrence
LEAD New York
114 Kennedy Hall
Cornell University
Ithaca, NY 14853
Phone: 607-255-6891
Fax: 607-255-7905
Email: lv4@cornell.edu

Van Tol, Hubert
Rural Opportunities, Inc
400 East Avenue
Rochester, NY 14607
Phone: 585-340-3324
Fax: 585-340-3309
Email: hvantol@ruralinc.org

Vierea, Wayne
Opportunities for Chenango, Inc
44 West Main Street
P.O. Box 470
Norwich, NY 13815
Phone: 607-336-2101
Fax: 607-336-3089
Email: wviera@ofcinc.org

Welch, Nancy
CCE of Hamilton County
PO Box 7
Rt. 8
Piseco, NY 12139
Phone: 518-548-6191
Fax: 518-548-7306
Email: naw5@cornell.edu

Whitcomb, John
Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station
245 Roberts Hall
Ithaca, NY 14853
Phone: 607-255-2552
Fax: 607-255-9499

Whitman, Delos
NYS Dept. of Labor
State Campus Bldg 12 Room 266
Albany, NY 12240
Phone: 518-457-6798
Fax: 518-457-5240
Email: delos.whitman@labor.state.ny.us

Whitwood, Carrie
Allagany/Western Steuben Rural Health Network, Inc.
85 North Main Street, Suite 4
Wellsville, NY 14895
Phone: 585-593-5223
Fax: 585-593-5217
Email: whitwoodc@awsrhn.org
<table>
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<th>Position</th>
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<th>Phone 3</th>
<th>Email 1</th>
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<th>Email 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wickham, Lindsay</td>
<td>Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency</td>
<td>3348 Coykendall Rd. Watkins Glen, NY 14891</td>
<td>Phone: 607-535-3072 Fax: 607-535-3072 Email: <a href="mailto:nylwickham@fb.org">nylwickham@fb.org</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winner, George</td>
<td>NYS Senator</td>
<td>228 Lake Street</td>
<td>Elmira, NY 14902 Phone: 607-732-2765 Fax: 607-732-2832 Email: <a href="mailto:winner@senate.state.ny.us">winner@senate.state.ny.us</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winters, Richard</td>
<td>Housing Outreach Coordinator</td>
<td>p.o. box 111</td>
<td>north creek, NY 12853 Phone: 518-251-9910 Fax: 518-689-5959 Email: <a href="mailto:rwinters1@nycap.rr.com">rwinters1@nycap.rr.com</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wright, Judith</td>
<td>American Farmland Trust</td>
<td>26 Mary Street</td>
<td>Auburn, NY 13021 Phone: 315-255-2508 Fax: 315-255-3643 Email: <a href="mailto:jlw4220@yahoo.com">jlw4220@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyman, Marilyn</td>
<td>Cornell University</td>
<td>906 Greene County Office Building</td>
<td>Cairo, NY 12413 Phone: 518-622-9820 Fax: 518-622-0115 Email: <a href="mailto:mfw10@cornell.edu">mfw10@cornell.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhang, Jun</td>
<td>Cornell University</td>
<td>17 Warren Hall</td>
<td>Ithaca, NY 14853 Phone: 607-254-7217 Fax: 607-255-2231 Email: <a href="mailto:jz246@cornell.edu">jz246@cornell.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Registered: 177
**Community Capacity and Social Networks** - Session Enrollees

Facilitator- David Kay, Chair- Assemblyman Bacalles, Recorder-Bob Stern

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enrollees</th>
<th>Organization/Position</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bartow, Jr., John</td>
<td>NYS Tug Hill Commission</td>
<td><a href="mailto:john@tughill.org">john@tughill.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown, David</td>
<td>Cornell University</td>
<td><a href="mailto:DLB17@cornell.edu">DLB17@cornell.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Busche Cross, Betsy</td>
<td>Colgate University Center for Outreach, Volunteerism &amp; Education</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ebusche@mail.colgate.edu">ebusche@mail.colgate.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garcia, Margorie</td>
<td>Adirondack Community Action Programs Inc.</td>
<td><a href="mailto:acapcsbg@yahoo.com">acapcsbg@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gryczko-Avellaneda, Larisa</td>
<td>Tioga Co. Rural Economic Area Partnership (REAP)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:avellanedal@co.tioga.ny.us">avellanedal@co.tioga.ny.us</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hirschl, Thomas</td>
<td>Development Sociology Cornell University</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tah4@cornell.edu">tah4@cornell.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kennedy, James X.</td>
<td>Cayuga Co. Community Health Network, Inc.</td>
<td><a href="mailto:director@cayugahealthnetwork.org">director@cayugahealthnetwork.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kraly, Ellen</td>
<td>Upstate Institute Colgate University</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ekraly@mail.colgate.edu">ekraly@mail.colgate.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orton, Oliver</td>
<td>New York State Grange</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ksorton@juno.com">ksorton@juno.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pfeffer, Max J.</td>
<td>Development Sociology Cornell University</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mj5@cornell.edu">mj5@cornell.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rogers, Patrick</td>
<td>Institute for Human Services</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rogers@ihhsnet.org">rogers@ihhsnet.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholes, Keith</td>
<td>Rural Opportunities Inc.</td>
<td>k <a href="mailto:scholes@ruralinc.org">scholes@ruralinc.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith, Kevin</td>
<td>NYS Tug Hill Commission</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kev@tughill.org">kev@tughill.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Session Total:** 13
**Rural Economic Development**

Facilitator- Jennifer Drumluk, Chair- Senator Winner, Recorder- John Reilly

**Enrollees:**

Antonio, Malka  CaRD I MSP Student  ma285@cornell.edu
Beaulac, Lee  Rural Opportunities, Inc  lhauer@ruralinc.org
Breen, Jennifer  NYS Governor's Office for Small Cities  jbreen@smallcities.state.ny.us
Brunett, Dana  Rural Opportunities  dbrunett@ruralinc.org
Cashman, Craig  Opportunities for Chenango  CCashman@ofcinc.org
Cullenen, Tim  Cornell University CaRD I  tac26@cornell.edu
Dennis, Stephen  Hornell-Corning-Steu ben Empire Zone  steve@hornellny.com
Drumluk, Jennifer  Cornell University Office of Economic Development  jmd229@cornell.edu
Dudrick, Julie  Colgate University, The Upstate Institute  jldudrick@mail.colgate.edu
Frame, Michael  New York State Urban Council  mframe@mda-cny.com
Fuller, Michael  Pipeline 4 Progress  fullermw@yahoo.com
Martino, Terry  Adirondack North Country Association  anca@northnet.org
Miskell, Sean  Cornell University  srm46@cornell.edu
Morey, Nancy  Opportunities for Chenango, Inc  nmorey@ofcinc.org
Navone, Sperry  Chief of Staff for Senator George H. Winner, Jr.  navone@senate.state.ny.us
Reilly, John  Policy Analyst  Reillyj@sentle.state.ny.us
Richardson, Darcy  Colgate University, The Upstate Institute  dricharlson@mail.colgate.edu
Stachowski, William  State Senator  senstachowski@yahoo.com
Ververs, Douglas  CCE Cayuga County  dhv1@cornell.edu
Walsh, Patricia  NYS Department of State  PWalsh@dos.state.ny.us
Whitcomb, John  Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station  jgw2@cornell.edu
Winner, George  NYS Senator  winner@senate.state.ny.us
Zhang, Jun  Cornell University  jz246@cornell.edu

**Session Total:** 23
**Workforce Development**

Facilitator- Marilyn Wyman, Chair- Assemblyman Koon, Recorder- Sperry Navone

**Enrollees:**

Borfitz, Joanne  
Central New York Area Health Education Center  
jborfitz@cnyahec.org

Brooks, Rob  
NYS Governor's Office for Small Cities  
rbrooks@smallcities.state.ny.us

Calhoun, Cathy  
Regional Director  
internsyr@clinton.senate.gov

Donahue, Dennis  
NYS OCFS Commission for the Blind  
dennis.donahue@ocfs.state.ny.us

Dudley, Mary Jo  
Cornell Migrant Program  
cfmp@cornell.edu

Dwyer, Donna  
NYS Office of Temporary & Disability Assistance (OTDA)  
donna.dwyer@otda.state.ny.us

May, Carolyn  
Onondaga County Office of Ec. Dev.  
cmay5@twcny.rr.com

Merchant, Richard  
Executive Director  
rkm@nahecnet.org

Reinbolt, Gary  
WSKG Public Broadcasting  
Gary_Reinbolt@wskg.pbs.org

Telega, Stanley  
Agricultural Specialist  
swt2@cornell.edu

Wyman, Marilyn  
Cornell University  
mfw10@cornell.edu

**Session Total:** 11
Agriculture and Food Systems

Facilitator- Beth Claypoole, Chair Senator Stachowski, Recorder- Sheila O’Sullivan

Enrollees:

Canfield, Caryn  NYS Assembly, Program and Counsel  canfic@assembly.state.ny.us
Carter, Charlotte  New York State Agricultural Mediation Program  charlotte@nysdra.org
Claypoole, Elizabeth  CCE Wayne County  eac9@cornell.edu
Fagan, Andrew  CCE Tioga County  agf1@cornell.edu
Fuller, Susan Day  Fuller Communications  sdfuller@fullerventures.com
Gillespie, Gilbert  Cornell Cooperative Extension  gwg2@cornell.edu
Goodsell, Martha  NY Farms  nyfarms@clarityconnect.com
McCormick, Richard  Southern Tier East Region Planning Development Board  rmccormick@steny.org
Palmer, Mary  Region 6 Program Manager NY SAMP  mpalmer45@frontiernet.net
Salo, John C.  Rural Health Network SCNY  jsalo@ruralhealthnetwork.org
Seem, Robert  Cornell University  rcs4@cornell.edu
Suarez, Julie  New York Farm Bureau  nyjsuarez@fb.org
Thomson, Jonathan  NYS Department of Ag & Markets  Jonathan.Thomson@agmkt.state.ny.us
Welcome, Frank  Cornell University  ftw2@cornell.edu
Whitman, Delos  NYS Dept. of Labor  delos.whitman@labor.state.ny.us

Session Total: 15
Land Use, Environment and Natural Resources

Facilitator- Brian Gilcrest, Chair- Senator Stachowski, Recorder- Caryn Canfield

Enrollees:
Canham, Hugh  New York Forest Owners Association  hocanham@esf.edu
Frost, Kelly  New York State Grange  kfrost@lafargeville.csd.org
Gilchrist, Brian  CCE Washington County  btg5@cornell.edu
Grantham, Deborah  Cornell University CCE  dgg3@cornell.edu
Hanlon, Mike  President  mike@cottonhanlon.com
Kay, David  Local Government Program Cornell University  dlk2@cornell.edu
Leighton, Sharon  NYS Canal Corporation  sharon_leighton@canals.state.ny.us
Manning, Peter  NYS Department of State- Local Government  PManning@dos.state.ny.us
Mapes, Jeff  NYS DEC - Div. of Lands and Forests  jamapes@gw.dec.state.ny.us
Moore, Ruth  NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation  ramoore@gw.dec.state.ny.us
O'Sullivan, Sheila  Legislative Commission on Rural Resources  osulliva@senate.state.ny.us
Sheehan, Francis  NYS DEC  fesheeha@gw.dec.state.ny.us
Street, Philip  NYS Tug Hill Commission  phil@tughill.org
Ten Eyck, Jeffrey  NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets  jeff.teneyck@agmkt.state.ny.us
Twentyman, Mark  NYS Office of Real Property Services  mark.twentyman@orps.state.ny.us
Wickham, Lindsay  Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency  nylwickham@fb.org
Wright, Judith  American Farmland Trust  jlw4220@yahoo.com

Session Total: 17
Rural Health Care

Facilitator- Nancy Potter, Chair- Assemblyman Koon, Recorder- Al Cardillo

Enrollees:

Abdella, Ann
Chautauqua County Health Network
ann.abdella@wcahospital.org

Albrecht, Diane
Board Member
dianealbrecht@stny.rr.com

Alexander, Collene
NYSARH
collene@nnyruralhealthcarealliance.org

Bacalles, James
NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources
bacallj@assembly.state.ny.us

Bartimole, John
Southern Tier Health Care System, Inc.
jbartimole@stths.org

Bishop, Patricia
NY Rural Health Care Alliance
patty@nnyruralhealthcarealliance.org

Brach, Ronald
NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources
brach@senate.state.ny.us

Brogan, Barry
NYS Association for Rural Health
barr@behaviorhealthnet.org

Cardillo, Alfredo
Exec. Director for Health, Council on Health Care
Financing
cardillo@senate.state.ny.us

Carlton, Jacqueline
Seven Valleys Health Coalition
jackie@sevenvalleyshealth.org

Dunlap, Helen
Health Ed. Project Developer
struralhlth@dctnet.net

Earle-Richardson, Giulia
New York Center for Agriculture Medicine
gearlerichardson@nycamh.com

Falcao, Elizabeth
Director
ea6@cornell.edu

Glennon, Nina
Cornell University
ngl14@cornell.edu

Gregg, Louise
IV County Network Manager, Chenango, Delaware, Otsego, & Schoharie
louiseg@co.chenango.ny.us

Gustin, Laura
Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency
lauragustin@flhsa.org

Haab, Michelle
Rural Health Network of Oswego County
mhaab@cnymail.com

Hildebrandt, Pam
Director
pmh26@cornell.edu

Hockenberry, Sandy
Network Director
struralhlth@dctnet.net

Hummel, Cynthia
Excellus BlueCross BlueShield Utica Region
Cindy.hummel@excellsus.com

Hyatt, Joyce
Chemung Valley Rural Health Network
jhhyatt@stny.rr.com

Koon, David
Assemblyman
koond@assembly.state.ny.us

Madden, Karen
NYS Dept. of Health
km13@health.state.ny.us

Mastronardi, Karen
NY FarmNet Human Services - Cornell University
kjm54@cornell.edu

Moore, Jean
Center for Health Workforce Studies
SUNY School of Public Health
jmm04@health.state.ny.us

Oakley, Kenneth
WNY Rural AHEC
koakley@r-ahec.org

Ogden, Gary
Allegany Co. Dept. of Health
ogdengaw@alleganyco.com

Orton, Allison
New York State Grange
ksorton@juno.com

Parr, Pilar A.
Research Associate
pap2@cornell.edu

Philo, Christina
NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources
philoc@assembly.state.ny.us

Potter, Nancy
CCE Tompkins County
np20@cornell.edu

Ross, Bonnie
Senior VP
bonnie.ross@thompsonhealth.com

Roush, Kathy
Tioga Co. Rural Economic Area Partnership (REAP)
kroush@stny.rr.com

Snedeker, Neil
Mercy Flight Central
nsnedeker@mercyflightcentral.org

Spinner, Phyllis
Herkimer County Health Network
pjspinner@herkimercounty.org

Straussman, Jeannie
Director, CNY Field Office
huasjss@omh.state.ny.us

Edwards, Tina
Chenango Health Network
tina@chenangohealth.org

Whitwood, Carrie
Allegany/ Western Steuben Rural Health Network
whitwoodc@awshrhn.org
Session Total: 38
Housing and Transportation

Facilitator- Bobbie Harrison, Chair- Assemblyman Bacalles, Recorder Teresa Rossi

Enrollees:

Dykeman, Janine  FarmNetJd3ykeman@frontiernet.net
Glasbergen, Karen  Opportunities for Chenango, Inc kglasbergen@ofcinc.org
Harrison, Roberta  CCE of Onondago County rmh27@cornell.edu
Hayes, Ron  Office of Southern Tier and Western Transportation Strategy rhayes@dot.state.ny.us

Seymour, Carolyn  Ex. Dir. CHRIC Carolyn_Seymour@chric.org
Sharkey, Bob  Policy Director bob.sharkey@otda.state.ny.us
Thomas, Clifford  NYS Office of Central & NE Transport. Strategy cthomas@dot.state.ny.us
  Colgate University, The Upstate Institute eturner@mail.colgate.edu
Van Tol, Hubert  Rural Opportunities, Inc hvantol@ruralinc.org
Viera, Wayne  Opportunities for Chenango, Inc wviera@ofcinc.org
Winters, Richard  Housing Outreach Coordinator rwinters1@nycap.rr.com

Session Total: 11
**Local and Regional Governance**

Facilitator- Paul Lehman, Chair- Senator Winner, Recorder- Ron Brach,

**Enrollees:**

Bodden, Thomas  
The Association of Towns of the State of New York  
tbodden@nytowns.org

Caterina, Vincent  
Associate Examiner  
vrcaterina@osc.state.ny.us

DeVoe, Ted  
NYS Governor's Office of Small Cities  
amirl@smallcities.state.ny.us

Fowler, Carla  
NYS Tug Hill Commission  
carla@tughill.org

Goldberg, Greta  
Genesee/ Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council  
ggoldberg@gfhrpc.org

Lehman, Paul  
CCE of Niagara County  
pel5@cornell.edu

Mancuso, Beverly  
CCE Genesee County  
blm34@cornell.edu

Murphy, Barbara  
NYS Dept of State  
CMurphy@dos.state.ny.us

Olczak, Jessie  
NYS Division of Budget  
bdo1cz@budget.state.ny.us

OSC Local Government Services  
jtraylor@osc.state.ny.us

Traylor, John
Energy

Facilitator- Larry van de Valk, Chair- Senator Winner, Recorder- Heidi Kromphart

Enrollees:
Calcagni, John  NYS Dept. of Public Service  jic@dps.state.ny.us  johncalcagni@dps.state.ny.us
Hastrich, Michael  CCE Chemung County  msh21@cornell.edu
Holko, John  Lenape Resources, Inc.  jholko@lenaperesources.com
Kromphardt, Heidi  NYS Assembly  kromphh@assembly.state.ny.us  rossi@state.senate.ny.us
Rossi, Teresa  chief counsel
Schwartzbach, Neil  Cornell University CaRDI  ns31@cornell.edu
Sleve, Jerry  Vice President  jsleve@corninggas.com  ljv4@cornell.edu
Van De Valk, Lawrence  LEAD New York
Visalli, Joseph  NYSE RDA  jrv@nyserda.org
Wells, Earl  President  ewells@e3communications.com
## Rural Schools and Youth

Facilitator- Nancy Welch, Chair- Assemblyman Koon, Recorder- Christina Philo

### Enrollees:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Affiliation</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Avery, Leanne</td>
<td>SUNY Oneonta</td>
<td><a href="mailto:averylm@oneonta.edu">averylm@oneonta.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bailey, Thomas</td>
<td>REAP</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tbailey@htva.net">tbailey@htva.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cunningham, Deborah</td>
<td>Coordinator for Educational Management Services</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dcunning@mail.nysed.gov">dcunning@mail.nysed.gov</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davis, Marjorie</td>
<td>Grange Member</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mddavis@ovcs.org">mddavis@ovcs.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doty, Brit</td>
<td>Mithoefer Center for Rural Surgery</td>
<td><a href="mailto:brit.doty@bassett.org">brit.doty@bassett.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton, Stephen</td>
<td>Cornell University</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sfh3@cornell.edu">sfh3@cornell.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herrick, Sally</td>
<td>NYS Office of Children &amp; Family Services</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Sally.Herrick@ocfs.state.ny.us">Sally.Herrick@ocfs.state.ny.us</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hinchclif, Diana</td>
<td>Office of Governmental Relations,</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dhinchcl@mail.nysed.gov">dhinchcl@mail.nysed.gov</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiley, Lawrence</td>
<td>Rural Schools Association</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lak35@CORNELL.EDU">lak35@CORNELL.EDU</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masti, Julia</td>
<td>Grange Member</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mastifarm@aol.com">mastifarm@aol.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathe, Sharon</td>
<td>Healthy Community Alliance, Inc.</td>
<td><a href="mailto:smathe@communityalliance.org">smathe@communityalliance.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maxwell, Amy</td>
<td>Agriculture Teacher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:alswezey@yahoo.com">alswezey@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moore, Donna</td>
<td>Sr. Professional Development Specialist</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dmm51@cornell.edu">dmm51@cornell.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orton, Ryan</td>
<td>New York State Grange</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ksorton@juno.com">ksorton@juno.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park, Travis</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tdp9@cornell.edu">tdp9@cornell.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Root, Charles</td>
<td>OCFS Regional Coordinator</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Charles.Root@ocfs.state.ny.us">Charles.Root@ocfs.state.ny.us</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sipple, John W.</td>
<td>Cornell University</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jws28@cornell.edu">jws28@cornell.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strachan, Heather</td>
<td>Cornell University</td>
<td><a href="mailto:hks22@cornell.edu">hks22@cornell.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweeney, Dennis</td>
<td>Rural Schools Association Cornell University</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dms234@cornell.edu">dms234@cornell.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welch, Nancy</td>
<td>CCE of Hamilton County</td>
<td><a href="mailto:naw5@cornell.edu">naw5@cornell.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Session Total:** 20
EVALUATIONS

Future of Rural New York Symposium
July 19 – 21, 2006
Syracuse, NY

33 Evaluations Submitted

1. As a result of my participation in the symposium, I feel part of an initiative that will move program and policy strategies forward for improving the quality of life for individuals, families and communities in rural New York.

   Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Not Sure  Agree  Strongly Agree
   1                   2             3             4              5
   15%                 76%            9%             4%             9%

2. I have confidence that collectively, we have the ability to build on assets and overcome many of the challenges facing rural New York.

   Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Not Sure  Agree  Strongly Agree
   1                   2             3             4              5
   18%                 51%            30%           5%             45%

3. I enjoyed the camaraderie and spirit of the symposium.

   Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Not Sure  Agree  Strongly Agree
   1                   2             3             4              5
   55%                 45%            4%             5%             45%

4. I intend to go back and share with my colleagues ideas and discussions from the symposium.

   Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Not Sure  Agree  Strongly Agree
   1                   2             3             4              5
   48%                 52%            5%             4%             52%

5. I am leaving the symposium with a fresh perspective on the opportunities facing rural New York.

   Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Not Sure  Agree  Strongly Agree
   1                   2             3             4              5
   18%                 64%            18%           48%            52%

6. The best idea/strategy I heard was:
   - Sharing recourse, experience, knowledge
   - Sharing Ideas
   - Cooperation
• Training and education for local government officials
• Schools as Community Centers
• Continues networking between the sectors brought together here - and raising awareness of our inter-connectivity.
• Broadening involvement in community development.
• Education in schools on many of the issue- civic, environmental, etc.
• (Re)connect with Cornell Cooperative Extension
• Remove timber from the definition of real property for local property tax assessment.
• Real property, tax reform/ direct technical assistance to local government.
• Integrated technology integrated on locally and regionally driven levels
• Regionalization, shared resources.
• The use of existing organizations to move forward or build on what was discussed here - for example: rural health networks.
• Education crossed all program areas- while fine tuned to program areas, believe it can cross lines and gain general support from the “big” picture.
• Broadband to rural NY. Improve education system re: Ag, natural resource management - local threads. Reform deal property tax laws.
• Broadband for business development and education (not just for entertainment) in all rural areas. Single pay or health system in NYS.
• Reform property tax. This cuts across many issues and is one of the major factors driving the decline of rural NY.
• Partnerships between groups and interests to achieve goals for the future.
• Improving local community capacity.
• Ideas for regional cooperation.
• Controlled environment food production (very fascinating!)
• That working together, which seems so obvious, was heard by many agencies in attendance. Maybe some of these agencies won’t be so territorial.
• Linking ideas/ initiatives across specific issue interests e.g. healthcare and workforce and education and local governance and economic development, ag and food systems and housing.
• Hearing diverse perspectives as well as commonalities on issues. I enjoyed hearing and participating in topic group small group discussions.
• Call for sharing of resources in private and public sector.
• Land Grant System stepping up to the plate in processing these ideas and system wide leadership.
• It was important simply to bring various stakeholders together to engage in a discussion, rather than the specific solutions/ directions.
• Educate and involve youth

7. The best part of the symposium was:

• Attendance, participation by State Legislators who acted, reacted as part of the group. Did not just listen but contributed as part of the group.
• Meeting others who had same concerns I had.
• Networking
• Small Group discussions and networking
• Having legislators there.
• Thursday we were willing to tackle a difficult issue.
• Wrap up session w/ legislative panel.
• Meeting People
• Open discussion
• Meeting with Paul Eberts.
• Thursday “fleshing out” of top issues, listening to different people’s views of things. Many good people in attendance.
• Thursday group sessions
• Positive up beat feeling that while challenges exist we can move forward.
• Meeting and discussing issues with people with different viewpoints.
• The time to network and move from one session to another (Friday morning) and the staff’s willingness to discuss concerns and their honesty in the “newness” of this exercise.
• Group size was good – length of time good.
• Intervention by experts.
• Great process and facilitation. Active group participation in PM is good idea. The synergy of having so many stakeholders together in one place discussing issues.
• Thursday small group, facilitated discussions.
• Ability to meet and interact with people from different organizations and backgrounds.
• Networking with local gov’t/local owners/legislative commission.
• Hearing and learning ideas and knowledge of other participants.
• I like the focus on one topic and not jumping around – topic to topic – so that there is a consolidated, focused discussion on one topic area.
• Thursday discussion groups.
• Networking with other participants.
• Connecting to knowledgeable resource people.
• Best strategy: the importance of civics awareness and participation; the power of planning/zoning boards in rural development and revitalization and also in open land preservation. Civics and land use are important and need to be emphasized again!
• Interaction with a group of people whom I have not interacted with before.
• Painful but rewarding tasks and commitment of group to complete session requirements.
• Network and great dialogue, lots of energy in the rooms to move things forward

8. Other comments:

• The Symposium must be continued annually if we hope to benefit rural NY
• What’s next?! I hope to encourage more participation from people from the North Country.
• Need to have a comprehensive final report that is widely distributed. Need this to be produced quickly.
• Wednesday set up was useful to the symposium goals.
• The process needs to be explained up front, perhaps an outline of the process in the folders. Further support to the facilitators so progression occurs. All in all this was a good start – would like to see this process continue and expand.
The full day (Thursday) should straddle an evening, so we have a chance to “sleep on” or think through the initial ideas being proposed.

Very interesting the almost everyone came back to education in their themes.

I hope there is a follow-up (in person) to this symposium perhaps on a bi-annual basis.

Overall discussions very enlightening - if the involved people continue to share, meet and talk, we can make the changes we need. I believe we need at least a 2 pronged approach - short time <5 to 10 yrs> and long term <20-50 yrs> relative to the need to change mindset - we have what we have today - it is what it is - and we need to work with the systems in place. We struggle with why it should matter to the players we have - long term we need to start earlier in understanding about govt. and why it is important to evolve this system. The system was built in 1800's - life is so different. While it will take enormous effort to change the system, change the system we must in order to succeed, we need to keep our eye on the goal/ the mission - we all have opinions and expertise, we need to work with that.

Need more local government officials and farmers and rural forest landowners reacting to the findings. Where is the rest of SUNY?

Need to concentrate on positives.

I think this symposium should be held every 18 months, so that the momentum is not lost. Also, regional discussions should also begin - as regions may have unique needs/ strengths - this may need to initially be facilitated/ coordinated by Cornell until it is established.

Well organized! Keep the dialog/ input flowing especially to populations not at the listening sessions, symposium, power networks. (e.g.) leverage community action programs, ethnic/ cultural (people of color), networks, youth voices

Education only occurs when someone truly wants to be informed - if there is no desire, there will be no education. Housing is important to rural communities and very little outreach was made to invite representation from the housing sector.

The process of distilling information led to leaving out key issues - in particular the requirement for “interdisciplinary” directed the group away from some of the more substantial suggestions. The structure of the activity excluded low income people, and while some of their advocates were present, the solutions tended toward mechanism and tools that are familiar to those present - web, technological approaches - that are beyond the slope of those who are struggling for survival/ success. For example, as educators we look toward more education as part of the solution. It is more difficult to establish the mechanisms that will allow those who may be marginalized to have access to education in the absence of transportation, childcare, loss time pay, etc.

Let’s get to work.
The Association of Towns of the State of New York, established in 1933, is the primary rural government association in New York. New York's 932 towns cover all of the rural land in the state and are full-service "Home Rule" governments. The Association serves a membership consisting of 98% of town governments by providing training programs, research and information services, technical assistance, legal services, insurance programs and a variety of publications to member towns. It provides advocacy in Albany and Washington, monitoring legislation and regulatory action, lobbying and presenting initiatives solely on behalf of towns. The Association gains all of its revenue from dues and activities and receives no State or federal assistance.

With more than 3,000 students, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS) in Ithaca, NY is the second largest undergraduate college at Cornell University. In national surveys we rank as the best college of agriculture and related sciences in the country. Our faculty and staff and teaching and research facilities are among the finest available anywhere, and the College's educational programs are carefully designed to ensure that every student's education is geared to contemporary, real-world issues. Through teaching, research, and extension, we strive to improve the nation's food supply and maintain its safety, to enhance the environment, and to help people improve their lives. The Land-Grant Mission, Applied Social Sciences, Environmental Sciences, and New Life Sciences are the foundation of the College, where 26 academic departments offer unique programs that contribute to the overall excellence of the College. The CALS Office of Land Grant Affairs (OLGA) supports the Land Grant Mission of the College and University by facilitating applied research, extension and other forms of outreach that address the needs of society and produce diverse public benefits. OLGA actively works in collaboration with other administrative offices in CALS to support Land Grant Mission initiatives and communicate program impacts to stakeholders.
CaRDI History

Since 1990, the Community and Rural Development Institute has strengthened Cornell's role as a leader in responding to current and emerging needs in community and rural development. Working with Cornell faculty and staff—including Cornell Cooperative Extension's network of county offices—and other state and regional institutions, CaRDI is a center of dialogue and collaboration addressing needs at the local, state, and national levels.

Our Mission

The Institute will benefit communities at the state, regional, and national levels, individual Cornell faculty, staff, and students, by accomplishing the following objectives:

1. Foster communication and collaboration among existing community and rural development research, extension, and teaching programs at Cornell, and monitor trends in community and rural development.
2. Serve as a point of entry to Cornell for policymakers, practitioners, and faculty and academic staff at other institutions interested in community and rural development.
Cornell Cooperative Extension is a key outreach system of Cornell University with a strong public mission and an extensive local presence that is responsive to needs in New York communities. The Cornell Cooperative Extension educational system enables people to improve their lives and communities through partnerships that put experience and research knowledge to work.

The nationwide network of Cooperative Extension programs began in 1914 as a means of applying land-grant university research in understandable and useful ways to farmers and rural families. Today, Cooperative Extension serves urban, suburban, town and rural areas by offering programs in five broad areas: Agriculture & Food Systems; Children, Youth, & Families; Community & Economic Vitality; Environment & Natural Resources; and Nutrition & Health.

Cornell Cooperative Extension operates on the Cornell campus through the leadership of faculty and staff in departments in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and the College of Human Ecology, with contributions from the College of Veterinary Medicine.

Our county-based Cornell Cooperative Extension associations and the New York City office provide 56 portals to Cornell University. Extension educators in these locations form powerful community-university partnerships with the Cornell campus, and involve local constituents to address the issues and concerns of New Yorkers.

The College of Human Ecology at Cornell University: Where academic excellence, groundbreaking research and interdisciplinary learning combine to develop leaders, solve problems and enhance communities. From science and health to policy and design, the College of Human Ecology takes an Ivy League education and focuses it on real challenges and opportunities in today’s world.
Concept Systems, Inc. is a small consulting firm based in Ithaca, NY. Our primary consulting emphases are in:
1) strategic issues identification planning and action management (task force formation and implementation);
2) evaluation planning and implementation in both large initiatives and individual programs; research instrument
development; 3) multi-method social research inquiry, and 4) professional workforce and training needs assessment
and the development of training courses and materials for professional development in targeted areas such as
chronic disease program management.

Concept Systems, Inc. is the developer and sole licensor of the Concept System, an integrated software and
community involvement approach to group decision making, problem solving and planning. For more
information, please visit www.concepts systems.com or email us at csiinfo@concept systems.com

As the Land Grant University for New York State, Cornell University discharges its responsibility for research in
the agricultural and related sciences through the Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station in Ithaca and
the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva. It is the mission of the experiment stations to
provide the fundamental knowledge and the research base for sustaining our agriculture and food systems,
protecting our environment and natural resources, and improving our communities throughout New York State as
well as contributing the New York State share to the national agricultural research program.

The Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station encompasses several units of on the Ithaca campus. While
the majority of its current programs and activities relate to the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, research is
also supported in the College of Human Ecology, College of Veterinary Medicine, and Division of Nutritional
Sciences
The Governor's Office for Small Cities administers the community development block grant program which provides funding to small counties, cities, towns, and villages to revitalize neighborhoods, expand affordable housing, improve community facilities and services, and for economic opportunities.
The New York State Legislative Commission on the Development of Rural Resources was created by the state Legislature recognizing that the economic and social well-being of all New Yorkers is closely related to the state’s rural resources, both human and physical, and that rural areas offer an important alternative to urban and suburban living. Created in 1982, as a bipartisan agency in the state Legislature, the Commission’s charge includes: examining the impact of rural resources upon the state’s economy; reviewing existing laws and regulations as they pertain to rural resources; assessing the effectiveness of programs designed to promote rural viability, and making recommendations and sponsoring legislation in the state Legislature to enhance and protect rural resources.

Ten members of the state Senate and Assembly are appointed by the state Legislature’s leadership to serve on the Rural Resources Commission. An important impact of the Commission’s endeavors has been to increase the sensitivity of state government to the unique needs of citizens in rural areas. Rural New York’s population of 3.5 million people is relatively small and dispersed compared to the state’s urban population of 15.5 million.

The Commission’s scope of work and focus encompasses all aspects of rural life. Included in the Rural Resources Commission’s action program are agriculture; economic development/employment; education; environment/land use/natural resources; local government (structure, functions, finance); health/human services; housing and community facilities; transportation; and technology development.

Current members of the Rural Resources Commission are: Senator George H. Winner, Jr., Chairman; Assemblyman David Koon, Vice-Chairman; Senators Mary Lou Rath, James W. Wright, William T. Stachowski, and David J. Valesky and Members of the Assembly Darrel J. Aubertine, Barbara S. Lifton, James Bacallas, and Daniel J. Burling. The Commission may be reached by calling 518-455-2544 (Senate); or 518-455-3999 (Assembly) or e-mail ruralres@senate.state.ny.us
The State Comptroller is New York State's chief fiscal officer. As head of the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC), Alan G. Hevesi is charged with auditing government operations and operating the New York State and Local Retirement System. OSC monitors, reports on, and coaches local governments and other public entities, and works to ensure that government at all levels is performing its responsibilities in an efficient, effective, and timely manner. As part of this commitment, OSC also offers proactive services such as training and technical assistance. Comptroller Hevesi's mission is to make OSC itself an organization which will inspire public confidence, not only through the integrity of its own operations, but also by becoming a model which other governmental entities will willingly seek to emulate. For more information about OSC and its resources, visit our website at www.osc.state.ny.us.

Pipeline 4 Progress Network (P4P) is a public forum for young people and talented individuals living and working in the Southern Tier. P4P offers you access to community, business and political leaders to voice your ideas and concerns about our region... professional development ideas... and an array of network, leadership and volunteer opportunities.

We are office workers, health care professionals, educators, marketing experts, government employees, financial consultants, non-profit administrators, technology wizards, legal advisors, insurance adjusters, mortgage originators, journalists, museum curators, multimedia specialists, managers, civil engineers, and self-made entrepreneurs.
We play basketball at the YMCA, work out at the gym, volunteer in the community, donate to the Arctic League, take classes in the evening, attend Clemens Center events, play guitars in local bands, and serve on local boards and advisory committees. We sip cappuccinos while meeting with clients and guzzle coffee working on an important business proposal.

We recognize the potential residing here and the important role we play in our region. By joining the hundreds of other talented, bright minded and forward thinking individuals like yourself, you have the opportunity to infuse your perspectives into community discussions and initiatives that promote economic and cultural growth.

Members of Cornell University's Department of Development Sociology (formerly Rural Sociology) have had a long history of research, extension and education relevant to rural New York. The Rural New York Initiative is a Departmental effort to further strengthen this engagement, enhancing the Department's capacity to interact with policy makers and other stakeholders around the state and provide critical and up-to-date information on rural New York people and communities. The Rural New York Initiative is therefore an effort both to integrate our own rural New York activities, as well as to develop stronger connections and networks across the state with others engaged in and concerned with social scientific research and community development efforts relevant to rural New York.

The overarching Goals of the Rural New York Initiative include:

- Strengthening intra-Departmental synergies and collaborations, and providing institutional and technical resources to support the Department's applied research efforts focused on rural New York;
- Networking with a broad range of researchers, institutes and stakeholders across the state to build and sustain a broad inter-institutional dialogue about key issue areas as well as to disseminate rural New York-focused Departmental work;
- Establishing the Department of Development Sociology as a key source of social scientific research-based information on rural New York.

Please visit our website at http://rnyi.cornell.edu
The Quality Communities Initiative demonstrates New York State's commitment to working with local government leaders and community organizations to find smart, innovative solutions to strengthen our economy, environment, and improve the quality of the place we call "home." The Quality Communities Working Group brings 25 state agencies together and coordinates state policies within a series of principles that strengthen partnerships with local communities. The QC Grant Program helps advance local projects, and the QC Awards for Excellence recognize outstanding achievements in our communities. The Department of State supports the QC Initiative by organizing conferences and roundtables and through its training programs and website.

LISTENING SESSION FEEDBACK POSTERS, BY POLICY/ THEME AREA

In the corridors adjacent to the meeting space at the Future of Rural New York Symposium, large posters were hung which displayed comments from regional listening session participants in each thematic policy area. Many Symposium participants expressed interest in having copies of these posters, and so we have included them in the proceedings.
AG & FOOD SYSTEMS:
Rural Vision Project Listening Session Feedback

- Make agricultural development as important as traditional development
- Nurture entrepreneurial spirit & increase entrepreneurship programs
- Provide guidance counselors with more agricultural information
- Create new technologies to help greenhouses reduce energy costs
- Connect corporate agribusiness to local farm business producers
- Make production agriculture less reliant upon migrant labor
- Help large, production agriculture farms to expand with a plan
- Create a more sophisticated marketing plan for New York agricultural products
- Support and provide long-term incentives for agricultural industry and manufacturing
- Research other agricultural ventures that have potential for success
- Create more loyalty to New York agriculture in restaurants and groceries
- Promote greater state support for marketing of state agricultural products
- Create an incentive program for farms to improve or expand production capabilities
- Make the agricultural industry more attractive to young people
- Encourage farmers to actively participate in the political process, run for local village, town & county office
- Provide additional support to small farms in terms of education, marketing and financial assistance
- Implement program to provide start-up funding for young farmers
- Improve and expand agricultural education
- Create more effective farm to school programs
- Stimulate agricultural entrepreneurship
- Educate farmers on marketing skills
- Integrate school lunches and local produce
- Provide long-term agricultural planning
- Encourage public to support local agriculture
- Create more farmers markets
- Implement higher prices for agricultural products
- Increase public knowledge of agriculture and food
- Every elementary school should have a school garden
- Create more equity between small and large farms
- Provide a capital-gains exemption for farm transfers
- Use multiple methods of farmland protection
- Industry develop a long-term vision for regional dairy
- Community and farmers working together
• More money for agencies that support agriculture
• Promote careers in agriculture
• Greater recognition of value of farming and forestry
• Improve farm-neighbor relations
• Increase support for dairy industry
• Increase farm subsidies
• Develop agricultural markets other than the dairy industry
• Improve economic viability of agricultural services
• Increase the interest in value-added agriculture
• Implement mentoring program for young farmers
• Shift from dairy and production agriculture to other forms
• Combat loss of farms
• Reduce the amount of food that is imported into the state
• Increase agricultural income
• Create a mechanism to transfer active farm ownership
• Protect small and specialty farms
• Encourage mentoring relationships for young farmers
• Encourage niche-specific agricultural enterprises
• Implement cooperative farm groups
• Create community and farm partnerships
• Provide free legal services to farms
• Explore international market opportunities
• Implement small farm cheese processing regulations
• Explore and increase agri-tourism opportunities
• Greater connection of agriculture to nutrition and health
COMMUNITY CAPACITY AND SOCIAL NETWORKS:

Rural Vision Project Listening Session Feedback

- Increase availability of cost effective, high speed internet access across the state
- Recognize crossroads and community willingness to leave globalization trend
- Recognize that rural resources should not be viewed or treated as a commodity (as having little value)
- Create more opportunities for corporate funding and sponsorship of programs
- Identify and minimize regulatory barriers that impede sharing services
- Analyze the impacts of sharing services between communities
- Community engagement and involvement in local problem solving and decision-making
- Create parenting classes & promote parental involvement
- Eliminate the disconnect between youth, community and elderly
- Teach youth more local history to instill a sense of community pride
- Encourage intergenerational connections in the community
- Redefine role of migrant workers and role in community
- Increase spirit of volunteerism
- Examine relationships between cities and rural areas
- Develop more inclusive community planning
- Instill sense of place and pride
- Return to family values
- Recruit young families to communities
- Maintain good faith-based services
- Encourage civic engagement of local citizens
- Maintain and expand social networks
- Acknowledge changing family structures and schedules
- Create more local cultural festivals
- Create more racial and ethnic diversity
- Implement mandatory volunteer service in schools
- Promote community sustainability
- Combat isolation of elderly
- Sharing of community resources
- Increase citizen involvement on the state level
- Create a working parents program
- Engage the elderly as volunteers in the community
- Increase quality of life and culture in rural areas
- Increase standard of living
• Promote employers that support community engagement
• Create changes in people's lives
• Less duplication of social services
• Create innovative social networks
• Reinvent local community
• Enhance relations between rich and poor
• Increase engagement in community at an earlier age
• Move away from faith-based initiatives
• Promote a more holistic approach to community
• More financial focus on rural areas
• Empower extension services to coordinate services
• Increase funds for CCE programs
• Focus on small-scale changes, not large
• Find ways to keep youth in community
• Develop more recreational opportunities
• Improve town-gown relations
• Increase facilities for elderly
• Capitalize on intellectual capital
• Eliminate the property tax
ENERGY: 
Rural Vision Project Listening Session Feedback

- Address regulations on methane production
- Increase wind energy production
- Increase utilization of vacant land for biofuel development
- Create fuel subsidies
- Research & develop means to improve alternative energy sources
- Build ethanol production facilities
- Increase number of methane digesters on farms
- Create incentives for local energy production
- Research thermal heat usage
- Utilization of ethanol and biomass as energy alternative
- Improve local and regional distributive capacity of biofuels and renewable sources
- Create a greater range of incentives for energy and alternative energy research
- Find affordable ways to heat large rural homes
- Improve rural energy distribution system
- Increase education regarding energy
- Cooperate with universities for research and development on energy issues
- Reduce energy costs
- Decentralize energy facilities
- Educate the Army Corps of Engineers on new and existing technologies
- Increase money to develop local energy production
- Become more energy self-sufficient
- Create more regional energy production
- Implement a sun-grant initiative
- Pay households and businesses for energy they create
- Improve the amount of working capital for power plants
- Increase energy efficiency for homes and businesses
- Increase percentage of new construction and existing buildings that are green buildings
- Increase research on green building technologies
- Make older housing stock more energy efficient
- Fuel public transportation with locally created fuel
- Improve education awareness of energy issues in K-12 curriculum
- Provide incentives for IDA to seek green business expansion and biofuel industry growth
ENVIRONMENT, LAND USE, & NATURAL RESOURCES:
Rural Vision Project Listening Session Feedback

- Educate new landowners to have understanding of agricultural production practices
- Become more proactive to ensure environmental standards are met
- Improve integration of environment, natural resource and land use issues
- Increase money for environmental management programs
- Demand statewide certification of local officials in environmental policy
- Make New York City accountable for reservoir usage
- Make changes to solve problems with current zoning regulations
- Reform of property tax policies to protect forested land from parcelization
- Promote a narrower definition and clearer uses of eminent domain
- Implement regional land use ordinances that protect sensitive areas
- Connect county farmland protection efforts to regional land-use planning
- Increased funding for farmland protection and purchasing of development rights
- Index money received for farmland preservation due to cost of living
- Implement comprehensive watershed management strategies
- Give surplus land to builders to promote high-density housing
- Foster better communication between recreation people and service industry
- Do a better job of river and stream maintenance
- Improve air and water quality
- Increase funds to conservation programs
- Increase conservation education
- Make conservation a common value
- Make environmental regulations less restrictive
- Improve environmental quality
- Combat invasive weed species
- Increase recycling efforts
- Fund environmental reviews of farm plans
- Protect high-quality soils
- Fund environmental protection and remediation
- Promote better education regarding natural resources
- Promote brownfield clean-up
- Combat the explosive deer population through hunting
- Redefine CAFO regulations
- Recess fuel regulation and emission controls
• Improve waste management practices
• Make land more affordable
• More respect for land and open space
• Halt suburbanization and retain a working landscape
• Effective land use tools and regulations
• Reduce parcelization of land
• Create a viable working landscape in rural areas
• Encourage appropriate utilization of natural resources
• Impose mandatory land regulations
• Make zoning regulations more consistent across state
• Promote better forest management
• Increase land available for agricultural production
• Protect rural and agricultural land
• More integrated planning for land use management
• Implement managed forest production
• Increase funding to support preservation efforts
• Create more bike and hiking trails
• Combat urban sprawl and encroaching urbanization
• Create incentive zoning
HOUSING:
Rural Vision Project Listening Session Feedback

- Combat negative attitudes towards affordable housing in communities
- Create incentives to rehabilitate existing housing structures
- Increase funding for sewer/water infrastructure maintenance
- Increase funding for sewer/water infrastructure development
- Better allocate money between building new and rehabilitating old
- Give surplus land to builders to promote high-density housing
- Work with realtors to identify characteristics important to home buyers and sellers on what constitutes "rural living"
- Address regulatory issues for elderly homes
- Create smaller elderly housing developments
- Increased availability of affordable housing
- More high quality and high-end housing
- Reduce cost of home maintenance
- More low income housing
- Manufactured housing
- Combat high-price housing market and taxation
- Create nearby housing opportunities for farm employees
- Combat NIMBYism
- Increase range of housing options
- Build more apartments
- Increase funding for housing
- Increase amount of cluster housing
- Reduce isolation of rural youth
- Improve septic standards in rural areas
- Implement regulated planning for housing
- Upgrade older housing stock
- Solve the housing dilemma and taxation issues
- Provide more funds for home improvements
- Place a moratorium on new building in New York
- Provide a variety of housing alternatives
- Combat resistance to high density housing
- Offer adequate water and sewer services
- Reduce zoning regulations for current housing
- Create floating housing zones
TRANSPORTATION:
Rural Vision Project Listening Session Feedback

- Increase state aid for public transportation strategies
- Shift resources from road expansion project to public transportation
- Improved rural transportation system
- Public transportation system for seasonal workers
- Regional coordination for rural transportation system
- Find ways to decrease road maintenance costs
- Fuel public transportation with locally created fuel
- Implement a rural rail passenger service
- Find ways to provide public transportation despite low density
- Encourage companies to organize transportation and carpools to work
- Create more walkable and bikeable communities
- Improve road maintenance
- Make road names less confusing
- Change attitudes towards society's reliance on cars for transportation
- More trains and buses, passenger and freight
- More ferry service between Long Island and Connecticut
- Increase number of trains from Long Island to New York each day
- Increase transportation funds for after-school activities
LOCAL & REGIONAL GOVERNANCE: 
Rural Vision Project Listening Session Feedback

- Decrease amount of short-term decision making in local governments
- County legislature downsized and supervised by appointed overseer
- Create incentives for municipalities to increase coordination
- Provide planning and regulatory assistance for local governments
- Increase revenue sharing between school districts and other services
- Develop mechanisms for local governments to access regional research
- Increase regional coordination among local governments
- Make it easier for communities to consolidate or annex
- State should pay greater proportion of taxes than locality
- Create a separate county to protect eastern Long Island
- Encourage farmers to actively participate in political process and run for local village, town and county office
- Abolish State Department of Labor
- Consolidate duplicative government services
- Gain efficiency in government operations
- Decrease the levels of small government
- Make local government more acceptable to change
- More education for local government officials
- Reconsider effective governing programs
- Decrease layers of local government
- Redraw county lines
- Increase number of grassroots organizations
- Increase knowledge of political process and change
- Create one-stop shopping for rural state services
- Implement leadership development programs
- Reduce dependence on property taxes
- Implement controlled growth
- Promote long-term viability at the regional level
- Change political contributions for campaigns
- Reduce bureaucracy
- County legislature replaced by Board of Supervisors
- Reduce district gerrymandering
- Town managers outside of the political process
- Provide training in planning for elected officials
- Give county planning more authority
- Streamline the development approval process
- Reduce amount of central control from Albany
- Make healthcare a priority for government
- Create more refined valuation of property
- Decrease school district fragmentation
- Implement mandatory training for local officials
- Decrease community territoriality
- Help local governments with tax burden
- Promote better vision and long-term planning
- Promote joint comprehensive planning
- Increase regional planning
- More inclusion in community planning
- Shift tax from property tax to income and others
- Abolish the death and marriage taxes
- Institute regional sales tax
- Create more openness in government decision making
- Research alternative tax structures
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

Rural Vision Project Listening Session Feedback

- Eliminate the minimum wage and establish a living wage
- Provide incentives for IDA to seek green business expansion and bio-fuel industry growth
- Facilitate the growth of smaller producers through policy and regulations
- Address the impact of large corporations on employment
- Less reliance on prisons, gambling and waste management for economic development
- Make existing economic incentives applicable to rural areas
- Improve flexibility in the Empire Zone program for rural areas
- Promote creative tourism opportunities - scenic / natural destinations/ cultural
- Relate community colleges to local economic development needs
- Increase number of value-added manufacturing facilities in the area
- Create incentives for small and niche business development
- Increase communication with Canadian business and manufacturing
- Promote employers that support community engagement
- Recognize region as major economic development sector
- Raise minimum wage
- Improve business education of rural producers
- More appropriate economic training
- Encourage public to support local agriculture
- Strengthening the economic base
- Decrease cost of doing business
- Create niche industries & markets
- Combat loss of major industry in region
- Generate more value-added products
- Research ways to create and grow jobs
- Recruit young families to communities
- More funding for economic infrastructure
- Decrease regulations for developers and businesses
- Create more farmers markets
- Review and change existing marketing regulations
- Export New York wines worldwide
- Increase economic growth and local job opportunities
- Capitalize on intellectual capital
- Research impact and values of Empire Zone initiatives
• Amend laws to help reduce barriers to distribution
• Increase "Buy Local" programs
• Increase home-based businesses
• Change "bedroom" communities into new job centers
• Retain manufacturing facilities in the area
• Increase tax incentives and rebates to small businesses
• Conduct tourism market analysis in region
• Support small business incubation
• Economic development coordination between agencies
• Encourage internet businesses
• Better promotion of tourism
• Decrease the regulations on small business
• Institute a regional plan for economic development
• Create more and better manufacturing facilities
• More appropriate economic training
• Explore international market opportunities
• Increase telecommunication infrastructure
• Find ways to increase agricultural income
• Increase understanding of rural-urban interface
• Explore and increase agro-tourism opportunities
HEALTH CARE:
Rural Vision Project Listening Session Feedback

- Make state healthcare requirements less complex and time-consuming
- Implement a federal mandate on physical, mental and emotional health of youth
- Begin to prepare for impending retirement of rural doctors and nurses
- Increase reimbursement for travel and time for health providers in rural areas
- Reduce the amount of stress that influx of summer visitors put on local healthcare
- Increase access to insurance for small business and the self-employed
- Implement nutritional education initiative and programs for general public
- Increase access to dental and preventative care for children
- Improve recruitment and retention of healthcare professionals
- Improve and increase drug and alcohol treatment options
- Greater connection of agriculture to nutrition and health
- Increase number of home health aides and providers
- Make health insurance more affordable and accessible
- Improve retention and recruitment of medical personnel
- Authorize and implement school-based health clinics
- Focus on preventative healthcare
- Encourage health professionals to serve rural areas
- Increase awareness of public health issues
- Increase skilled healthcare availability
- Rural mental health care
- Rural dental care
- Make specialty healthcare services more accessible
- Offer reimbursements for health education costs
- Increase presence of prenatal care providers
- Need to attract healthcare professionals to region
- Increase nutritional education programs
- More accessible and affordable medical options
- Improve reimbursement rates for specialists
- Lift state regulations on telemedicine
- Increase number of rural healthcare providers
- Make prescriptions more affordable
- Create a database of available healthcare programs
- Increase child psychiatry options in community
• Improve sexual abuse training and counseling
• Promote universal healthcare
• Increase coordination between healthcare agencies
• Reduce healthcare costs for small businesses
• Improve access to alternative training for EMTs
• Promote appropriate location of healthcare facilities
• Need more hospital beds
• Eliminate Medicare D
• Create adequate home rehabilitation services
• Create a physician office in every community
• Decrease healthcare costs
• Implement school-based wellness initiatives
• Create long-term healthcare for seniors
• Create a single-payer system
• Provide affordable health insurance
• Make healthcare a priority for government
• Increase health education
RURAL SCHOOLS & YOUTH: 
Rural Vision Project Listening Session Feedback

- Structure grant programs so that rural schools are equally competitive
- Adapt curriculum to keep students technologically advanced
- Provide practical courses in life skills such as checkbook balancing
- Create vocational education geared towards providing living wage jobs post-high school
- Promote business involvement in schools to prepare students for employment
- Encourage SUNY and state government to help with tuition differential
- Encourage partnerships between schools and local businesses
- Promote physical education for physical and emotional well-being
- Teach youth more local history to instill a sense of community pride
- Improve education awareness of energy issues in K-12 curriculum
- Implement realistic and flexible national educational standards
- Relate community colleges to local economic development needs
- Change Regents requirements to include vocational education
- Implement a more complete health and well-being curriculum
- Nurture youth as future of the state
- Make youth services easier to access
- Increase access to youth recreational opportunities
- Combat drug use, gangs, etc
- Secure funding to establish more youth bureaus
- Encourage youth entrepreneurship
- Find ways to keep youth in community
- Decrease commuting time to schools
- Implement mandatory volunteer service in schools
- Reduce testing standards for young children
- Allow testing standards to adapt to workforce needs
- Increase after-school programming
- Refocus BOCES curriculum on current workforce needs
- Secure stable educational funding
- Create more programs in arts, sports and special education
- Implement mandated GED programs
- Create incentives for teachers to get into math and science
- Reduce the stigma surrounding BOCES
- Decrease educational mandates and increase local tax base
- Combat “brain drain”
- Make rural areas more attractive for potential teachers
• More attention placed on gifted
• Reevaluate Regents requirements
• Increase health education
• Refocus attention on basic education
• More regional control over funds and allocation
• More early intervention for at-risk youth
• Eliminate Regents Program in New York
• Encourage career awareness at an earlier age
• Increase salaries for rural teachers
• Improve quality of community college education
• Increase access to college-level courses
• Need more long-term educational funding
• Eliminate tenure for teachers
• Better utilize distance learning
• Integrate school lunches and local produce
• Implement early childhood monitoring and development
• Increase stability in school administration
• Implement required high school vocational training
• Implement school-based wellness initiative
• Implement breakfast programs for older students
• Combat disastrous drop-out rates
• Increase transportation funds for after-school activities
• Better preschool preparation for children
• Retain village and small-town, neighborhood schools
• Reform school tax formula
• Increase state funding for school districts
• Make higher education more affordable
• Find ways to combat low academic achievement
• More equitable distribution of funding
• Consolidate rural schools with low student populations
• Provide universal Pre-K programs
• Increase career guidance for students with disabilities
• Teach entrepreneurial skills
• Raise high school graduation rate and GED completion
• Cultivate technological exposure in schools
• Examine different funding options for schools
• Find ways to eliminate violence in schools
• Combat adolescent suicide and self-mutilation
• Increase intra-school district collaboration
• Combat teen pregnancy
• Enforce mandatory consolidation of schools
• Expose youth to local agricultural produce and production
• Provide every child with their own laptop
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT:
Rural Vision Project Listening Session Feedback

- Promote more mentoring and internship education for youth
- Promote business involvement in schools to prepare students for employment
- Make the agricultural industry more attractive to young people
- Nurture entrepreneurial spirit & increase entrepreneurship programs
- Encourage businesses and students to better utilize community colleges
- Decrease regulations for workforce training and development
- Address the pending loss of baby boomers in the workforce
- Strengthen connection between universities and industries
- Encourage partnerships between schools and local businesses
- Greater involvement by community colleges in rural areas
- Improve access to good, quality daycare services & options
- Promote employers that support community engagement
- Take employer input for BOCES and redesign curriculum for future job needs
- Refocus BOCES curriculum on current workforce needs
- Promote diversity and cultural sensitivity in the workplace
- Create more adult education opportunities at local schools
- Provide incentives to recruit workers to rural areas
- Increase career guidance for students with disabilities
- Provide childcare for evening and night-shift workers
- Implement required high school vocational training
- Create a web-based system to connect employers to secondary education
- Create more cultural diversity in workforce
- Use technology for training opportunities
- Offer and promote career fairs
- Stabilize immigrant workforce
- Create more knowledge-based jobs
- Find sources of available labor
- Create a larger pool of labor
- Find ways to get decent migrant labor
- Capitalize on intellectual capital
- Create a more qualified labor force
- Promote careers in agriculture
- Encourage career awareness at an earlier age
- Increase education capacity in medical fields
- Teach entrepreneurial skills
- Increase telecommunication infrastructure
- Reduce the stigma surrounding BOCES
- Expand internship and job-shadowing opportunities
- Implement mandated GED programs