

WARREN COUNTY 2040: DRAFT GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & PRIORITY ACTIONS- UPDATED 9/6/2024

Issue: Ongoing and projected demographic shifts in the County, including an aging and declining population, fewer young families, and smaller family size, have broad impacts on service needs, workforce, volunteer services, school size, and our economy.

Goal 1	Attract and retain younger residents while accommodating an aging population		
Objectives			
1	Adapt and Develop services and infrastructure to support an aging population		
2	Explore strategies to attract and retain younger residents and families		
3	Capitalize on regional and local growth to attract new residents and retain existing residents		
4	Address aging workforce and declining volunteerism to maximize human capital		
Priority Actions	Type	Involved Departments	External Partners
1	Explore Alternative Models to Deliver Services to Rural Portions of the County	Operations	DSS OFA Planning
2	Establish ongoing dialogue with younger residents to better identify local needs	Communication and Collaboration	Planning Public Affairs Workforce County Administrator
3	Increase County's participation in school civic programs to allow younger residents further opportunity to engage in local government	Technical Assistance; Communication & Collaboration	Planning Public Affairs Workforce
4	Explore Innovative Transportation Solutions for the County's Communities and aging population	Communication & Collaboration	Planning OFA DSS Workforce
5	Work with Partner Agencies to Expand or Support a Marketing Campaign to Attract New Residents	Communication & Collaboration	Planning Public Affairs
6	Provide opportunities for centralized services for municipalities where appropriate	Technical Assistance	HR IT
7	Consider providing expanded benefits and incentives to aid in recruitment and retention for local EMS and fire departments	Funding; Communication and Collaboration; Technical Assistance	Office Emergency Services
8	Support and expand Fire and EMS youth engagement activities to spur interest and involvement from young people	Funding; Communication & Collaboration	Office Emergency Services
			Local EMS & Fire, BOCES, Schools, SUNY ADK

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Issue: Aging housing stock, high costs, the additional pressures of STRs and second homes, and regulatory hurdles limit access to the housing needed to support a diverse economic spectrum of households and to attract new residents and workforce.

Goal 2	Improve Housing access and quality			
Objectives				
1	Increase the availability of affordable and diverse housing options consistent with local needs			
2	Improve housing quality to address aging housing stock and changing demographics			
3	Address the impact of tourism on the local housing market (i.e., STRs, seasonal workforce housing)			
4	Encourage new housing construction and renovation to meet current and future demands			
Priority Actions		Type	Involved Departments	External Partners
1	Educate the public on the role planning and zoning can have on housing potential while assisting in identifying a community-supported vision for increased housing	Technical Assistance; Communication & Collaboration	Planning	Municipalities
2	Explore creating a dedicated funding stream (i.e., transfer tax, occupancy tax, sales tax) to support housing needs	Legislative Action, Funding	Tourism Treasurer	
3	Develop a library of planning and zoning best management practices to improve housing development opportunities	Technical Assistance	Planning	
4	Leverage County-owned and foreclosed land to increase the housing supply	Legislative Action	Real Property DPW	
5	Support investment in housing for County's seasonal workforce	Funding	Treasurer	
6	Educate the public on the role planning and zoning can have on housing potential	Communication & Collaboration	Planning	
7	Consider increasing County staff resources to work on housing policies/initiatives	Funding; Communication & Collaboration	Planning	
8	Increase collaboration through the establishment of a Warren County Housing Task Force	Funding; Communication & Collaboration	Planning	EDC, Municipalities, LCLGRP, IDA

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Issue: The region relies on its main streets, hamlets, and downtowns as source of local identity, places of social gathering, and as a marketplace. There are opportunities to efficiently support and grow these County hubs to better support existing – and attract new - businesses and residents.

Goal 3	Support thriving main streets, hamlets, and downtowns			
Objectives				
1	Support downtown beautification for local communities and hamlets.			
2	Encourage infill development within the County’s downtowns, main streets, and hamlet areas			
3	Enhance the transportation network and walkability to support compact, efficient growth.			
4	Think holistically when making decisions related to housing, infrastructure, and transportation.			
5	Ensure transit access in the County is maintained and improved.			
Priority Actions		Type	Involved Departments	External Partners
1	Support local municipal infrastructure needs	Technical Assistance	GIS DPW	EDC
2	Prioritize Complete Streets improvements along County roads in the hamlets	Legislative Action; Communication & Collaboration	DPW Planning	A/GFTC, NYSDOT
3	Create an “Opportunity Fund” to support local revitalization initiatives that can be used as a match for grant applications	Funding	Planning Treasurer DPW	
4	Serve as a leader and partner to local municipalities to secure and administer funding that further enhances main streets, hamlets, and downtowns	Technical Assistance	Planning DPW	A/GFTC, NYSDOT
5	Establish regular communication with CDTA to coordinate on local transit access challenges and opportunities	Communication & Collaboration	Planning DPW	A/GFTC, CDTA

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Issue: Our world class natural environment, thriving tourism economy, and robust arts and cultural ecosystem are assets that can be further leveraged to expand economic opportunity and attract new residents in a manner that is supportive of our local residents’ and businesses’ interests. Communication, collaboration, and alignment of shared goals and objectives can have exponential benefits.

Goal 4	Strengthen and support existing and emerging economic sectors			
Objectives				
1	Create a more productive tourism economy with greater revenue, wage growth, and year-round operating potential			
2	Identify and mitigate the negative impacts of tourism (i.e., traffic, overuse, rental costs, etc.)			
3	Align County-wide economic development efforts to maximize public investment and economic benefits			
4	Ensure a consistent and coordinated approach to workforce education and training			
Priority Actions		Type	Involved Departments	External Partners
1	Update the review criteria upon which occupancy tax funds are distributed	Funding; Legislative Action	Treasurer Tourism	
2	Recognize the dominant economic sectors in Warren County and educate the public on employment shifts and trends	Communication & Collaboration	Planning Public Affairs	EDC
2	Expand tourism department’s focus to provide marketing and coordination support to the County’s arts and cultural institutions	Technical Assistance; Communication & Collaboration	Tourism	County arts and cultural institutions
3	Conduct an economic impact analysis of the County’s arts and cultural institutions	Technical Assistance	Planning Tourism	
4	Develop a tourism economy strategy to understand the impact of existing assets and programming and opportunities for new investment	Operations	Tourism	
5	Continue to build sustainable educational and training pipeline from K-12 to higher education to workforce in growth industry occupations	Funding; Technical Assistance	Workforce	EDC, BOCES, SUNY
6	Support EDC economic development initiatives	Communication & Collaboration; Operations		EDC
7	Inventory programs and incentives utilized by economic development, tourism, and workforce development departments and partners	Technical Assistance	Tourism Workforce	EDC

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Issue: The County’s natural environment is an incredible asset. Lake George, the natural landscape, and a diversity of outdoor offerings are the foundational attributes that make the County a great place. The threat of climate change, introduction of invasive species, and the ability to adapt to unknown threats are of vital importance. While the County and greater region are fortunate to have a broad group of not-for profits and other entities focused on these matters, continued diligence and investment is required.

Goal 5	Maintain and enhance environmental quality			
Objectives				
1	Adapt to climate change impacts			
2	Mitigate development impacts on natural resources			
3	Support and partner in natural resource management and research initiatives			
4	Collaborate with local and regional environmental agencies to strengthen efforts			
Priority Actions		Type	Involved Departments	External Partners
1	Implement and support water quality monitoring programs	Technical Assistance	Planning Soil and Water DPW	
2	Enhance inter-agency collaboration on invasive species (See also Goal 7, Action 2)	Communication and Collaboration	Planning	WCSWCD
3	Expand and promote higher education/business innovation associated with lake management/green jobs	Communication and Collaboration	Workforce	SUNY, BOCES, Workforce Development Board
4	Develop a natural resource inventory	Technical Assistance	Planning/GIS DPW	WCSWCD
5	Share information on climate change impacts on infrastructure vulnerabilities with local municipalities and educate on potential funding opportunities	Technical Assistance	Planning/GIS	WCSWCD
6	Continue and expand support for private septic system replacement programs	Funding	Planning	
7	Support municipalities efforts to improve and maintain wastewater treatment facilities	Technical Assistance	Planning	
8	Measure GHG emissions, set goals, and measure progress towards those reduction goals	Operations	Planning DPW	
9	Launch the County composting facility pilot project	Operations	DPW	

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Issue: The County owns and maintains property and infrastructure but has no long-term plan to guide future decision making around their long-term viability and potential alternate uses.

Goal 6	Develop and maintain a long-term plan for County infrastructure/assets			
Objectives				
1	Achieve a clear view of the County’s capital assets, current conditions, and operational and funding needs			
2	Develop a clear understanding of the County’s property			
3	Maximize County’s existing physical and cultural assets, before developing new assets			
Priority Actions		Type	Involved Departments	External Partners
1	Develop an asset management/capital improvement plan for all County facilities	Operations	DPW	
2	Develop a long-term plan for underutilized County owned property that identifies highest and best uses that align with community goals (e.g., environmental protection, economic development, outdoor recreation, social services, etc.)	Operations	DPW Planning Real Property	
3	Continue to identify and explore opportunities to address emerging needs that are consistent with the County’s asset management/capital improvement plan (e.g., composting facility, EMS training facility, emergency response center, regional morgue)	Operations	All	
4	Fund multi-year capital improvement plan as part of annual budget	Operations; Funding	All	
5	Formalize departmental and committee responsibility for transit planning and implementation.	Operations	DPW Planning	
6	Support investments in County facilities that play a role in the tourism economy (Up Yonda, Fish Hatchery, Bikeway, etc.) (See also Goal 6, Action 2)	Funding	Planning Treasurer	

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Issue: The County’s rural nature, the growing number of seasonal residents, the ever-changing landscape of government mandates, and a rapidly evolving information landscape have made it more challenging for residents to stay informed and engaged with County operations. Addressing this issue is essential to ensuring that Warren County residents can effectively participate in governance, understand how decisions are made, and improve efficiency in accessing community resources.

Goal 7	Improve Government Communication and Transparency			
Objectives				
1	Improve alignment of community priorities with the budget process			
2	Foster a sense of community and belonging for all age groups and backgrounds			
3	Foster community involvement through inclusive initiatives			
4	Cultivate communication strategies that prioritize responsiveness to community needs			
5	Encourage collaboration between local government and the community for shared goals and progress			
Priority Actions		Type	Involved Departments	External Partners
1	Hold regular community listening sessions around the County	Communication and Collaboration	Planning Public Affairs	
2	Streamline coordination with local partners	Communication and Collaboration	Planning Public Affairs	
3	Continue and expand opportunities to share key information about government spending and key initiatives (i.e., occupancy tax spending, budget transparency)	Communication and Collaboration	Public Affairs	
4	Hold a series of summits/information sessions to inform and update public about key Comp Plan priorities	Communication and Collaboration	Planning Public Affairs	
5	Encourage a standing County update section on local meeting agendas	Communication and Collaboration	Public Affairs County Administrator	