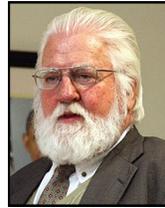




2014 Annual Report

Message from the Chair *Dennis A. Fagan*



I am pleased to have chaired the Southern Tier Central Regional Planning and Development Board in its 45th year. The dedication and the insight of the board were what Chemung, Schuyler, and Steuben Counties envisioned in 1969 when they founded STC. The teamwork among the board members from the three counties is a great example of regional cooperation.

Along those lines, the STC staff demonstrates how shared services can work. From local government efficiencies to Geographic Information Services to flood mitigation, an STC staff member can work across municipal boundaries, providing assistance where it's needed.

As I finish my second year as chair, I'd like to thank both the board and staff for the high quality of their accomplishments and for the partnerships that should keep STC going for many more years.

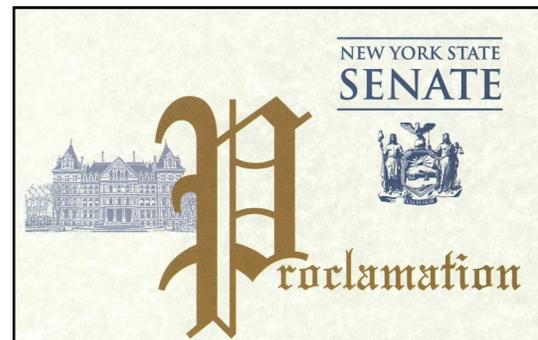
Executive Director's Report *Marcia D. Weber*



2014 marked the 45th year of the Southern Tier Central Regional Planning and Development Board (STC), and the agency is still going strong! For example, in 2014, STC's accomplishments include:

- Produced a Regional Leadership Conference that attracted over 400 participants for two days of training and networking.
- Presented testimony at a congressional briefing, where STC's Flood Mitigation Specialist spoke about the importance of stream gauge data. She also won the national 2014 Flood Risk Education campaign.
- Expanded its work with local government by surveying all 76 municipalities and using the data to provide training through a new, monthly "STC Planning School."
- Assisted sponsors with developing seven applications for Appalachian Regional Commission grants and ultimately recommending six for \$720,000 in ARC funding.
- Continued its work with the Southern Tier Network, completing a three-county fiber backbone and winning the 2014 NYS Economic Leadership Award at the NYS Broadband Summit.
- Provided grantwriting and development assistance to the Sustainable Keuka Lake project for watershed protection.
- Provided assistance with planning, computer technology, and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) at an affordable price to local governments and organizations.

We look forward to continuing our work with all of you in 2015!



New York State Senator Thomas F. O'Mara and Members of Assembly Christopher S. Friend and Philip A. Palmesano commemorated the 45th Anniversary of STC with a proclamation "to express their collective appreciation, gratitude, recognition and tribute for admirable citizenship, and for the achievements and contributions above and beyond the call of civic pride, duty and responsibility."

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) FY 2015 Funding Cycle



STC received seven interesting ARC applications, six of which were recommended to New York State Department of State for funding. The total ARC funding request from STC is for \$719,944 toward \$4.1 million in project costs.

- **Food, Fun, Family, and Fitness** program to promote activities that improve childhood health (Schuyler County Public Health)
- **Big Flats Water Department Improvements**, including a booster pump station and use of an interconnection with the City of Elmira water district to meet demand (Town of Big Flats)
- **Connectivity and Communications Provision for Incubator Works**, providing a broadband fiber link to the new business incubator in Big Flats (Alfred Technology Resources, Inc.)
- **Corning Manor Water Improvement Project** to alleviate health threats and replace undersized water lines (Town of Corning)
- **Painted Post Water Supply Improvements** to establish additional groundwater supply for current and future demands (Village of Painted Post)
- **Engineering Plan to Extend Water and Sanitary Sewer to the Hamlet of Kanona** to support future growth (Steuben County Industrial Development Agency)

Addison Main Street Project

STC completed administration of the Village of Addison project to improve the historic business district on Main Street. Funding from the New York Main Street program enabled improved façades on four buildings and remodeling of second story apartments in two other buildings. Addison's streetscape is now more historically accurate, and the project was a catalyst for improvement of several adjacent façades. The renovated apartments have been rented. This project was a successful outcome of the Village's comprehensive planning process, which identified redevelopment of the downtown historic district as a goal.



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

The STC Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a concise source of regional development data, which is updated annually and used by local, county, regional, and state officials. Grant funding from the Economic Development Agency is available for economic development projects that create jobs and are consistent with the goals outlined in the CEDS. The 2014 CEDS identifies the following vital projects that address the region's greatest needs or enhance the region's competitiveness:

- Project Seneca: Regional Wastewater Treatment
- Project Seneca: Regional Waterfront Revitalization
- Monterey Shock Incarceration Facility Redevelopment
- Elmira College's Health Sciences Center Renovation
- Airport Corporate Park South Infrastructure
- Elmira Area Phase 1 Levee Study
- Southern Tier Regional Farmers' Market Building
- Redevelopment of Guthrie/Corning Hospital Site
- Corning Free Academy School Building Project
- Corning Area Phase 1 Levee Study
- Finger Lakes Highlands Business Park

Southern Tier Network (STN)



STC's Executive Director, chair of the STN Board of Directors, reports that construction of the Southern Tier Network backbone is complete: a ring of over 260 miles of dark fiber is fully operational. This project, which started almost a decade ago with ARC planning grants, includes Chemung, Schuyler, and Steuben Counties and has paying customers, including internet providers and other major telecommunications companies.

STN received the 2014 New York State Economic Leadership Award at the NYS Broadband Summit. The award celebrates the successful implementation of innovative, economically promising regional projects that enhance New York's economic fabric and quality of life.

The next STN project is to connect to Broome and Tioga Counties and to Cornell, Binghamton, and Alfred Universities, using a New York State grant and public and private matching funds.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE

Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

STC promotes improved utilization of computer mapping tools by providing technical support to install and customize Geographic Information System software.

Highlights from 2014 include:

- STC helped the Chemung County Storm Water Coalition streamline their field inspection process by eliminating the use of paper inspection forms, which had required manual data entry into the stormwater database. The Stormwater Technician can now use a tablet device to enter field data, location information, and pictures, which are stored online and then integrated into the Coalition's GIS database.
- STC worked with the Elmira Water Board to integrate computer-based mapping into their operations. STC installed the GIS software, developed customized menus, converted existing data into GIS format, provided additional GIS data, and trained Water Board staff to use the system.

Data and Resources

STC maintains current information about grant programs, researches specified subjects, and acts as the regional clearinghouse for: US Census data; labor, industry, and economic development data; and regional, county, and municipal data.



The STC library contains planning texts and other resources for use by member communities.

Regional Leadership Conference

The 2014 Regional Leadership Conference consisted of 24 training sessions over two days for municipal departments, code enforcement officers, highway superintendents, planning boards, zoning boards of appeals, and other interested individuals. Attendance at the conference totaled 400 individuals.



Computer Assistance



STC provides local governments with affordable technology assistance to increase the effectiveness of their operations (partially paid for by the Appalachian Regional Commission).

Accomplishments include:

- Implemented workstations in Windows 7 and Windows 8
- Transitioned networked systems to Windows 2012 Servers
- Migrated clients to cloud storage providers and backup methods
- Transitioned to new broadband providers, which offer greater bandwidth at cheaper rates
- Migrated municipal workstations to MS Office 2013
- Remotely resolved challenges through use of remote management tools

Training and technical assistance provided by STC improve the effectiveness and efficiency of local governments.

WATER RESOURCES

Sustaining Water Quality In Keuka Lake

The Strategy for a Sustainable Keuka Lake project is a three-year effort, led by the Town of Wayne, to protect the highly rated water quality in Keuka Lake. The project team, with help from college students and interns, is developing an action plan that recommends policy changes to protect the lake and preserve the quality of life in surrounding areas. Additional project activities include training for community leaders and education of watershed residents. This project is supported by the New York State Department of State with funds provided under Title 11 of the Environmental Protection Fund. Reports and project information are at www.sustainablekeuka.net.

Local Government Training

STC assisted with organizing and presenting at the yearly Keuka Land Use Leadership Alliance (LULA) training conference. This training was attended by more than 60 individuals who were there to learn more about policy tools and practices to better protect Keuka Lake. STC presented a visioning workshop to define community leaders' "vision" for the region. Participants also learned about designating scenic byways and tools to preserve scenic viewsheds.



Cornell Student Workshops

Two groups of Cornell University students, led by Professor George Frantz (City and Regional Planning Department), analyzed current conditions in the Keuka Lake watershed and suggested future planning options. They produced three excellent reports:

- 1) *Farmland and Agricultural Protection Plan*
- 2) *Waterfront Revitalization and Scenic Protection Plan*
- 3) *Viewshed Prioritization and Protection Plan*

All three reports have contributed substantially to the data collection, analysis, and recommendations for the Strategy for a Sustainable Keuka Lake. In addition, two of the reports won the 2014 Student Project Award from the NY Upstate Chapter of the American Planning Association.



Interns

Four summer interns (from Hobart William Smith Colleges, Alfred State University, and Cornell University) developed information and tools to support water quality protection in Keuka Lake. They conducted a community survey of more than 600 permanent and seasonal residents to gauge their opinions about changes to the local character, their willingness to take personal action to protect water quality, and their tolerance level for municipal regulations. The interns created excellent educational materials about agriculture, smart growth, sustainable building, steep slopes, and viewsheds, which highlight how these factors influence water quality. The interns also gathered GPS data for the most prized viewsheds around the lake, allowing STC to map and analyze the effect of potential development on the region's most impressive views.



Local Water Quality Programs

STC provides support for local organizations that promote water quality protection and improvement, including the Chemung, Schuyler, and Steuben County Water Quality Coordinating Committees; Seneca Lake Area Partners in Five Counties; Chemung County Stormwater Coalition; and the three-county Rural Stormwater Coalition.

FLOOD ASSISTANCE

STC Flood Assistance Program



STC Flood Mitigation Specialist, Janet Thigpen, testifying at a Congressional Briefing sponsored by the U.S. Geological Survey.

With rainfall increasingly concentrated in very heavy events (a 71% increase over 55 years in the northeastern U.S.), the region needs to be prepared for flooding and flash floods. STC provides technical assistance to help reduce future flood damage and promote improved public policies. In 2014, this assistance included:

- Helping building officials and others with floodplain development issues, including map information, permit applications, and evaluation of mitigation options
- Serving as the local contact for FEMA's flood hazard mapping project in the Finger Lakes Watershed
- Developing new tools and providing other support for local flood warning activities
- Testifying at two Congressional Briefings about the importance of stream gauges (which are needed for flood warnings and other purposes)
- Promoting improved state and national policies by drafting correspondence and meeting with Congressional staff as the Public Policy Committee Chair of the NYS Floodplain and Stormwater Managers Association
- Serving as a Chapter Director for the Association of State Floodplain Managers, a national professional organization



No Adverse Impact is a floodplain management strategy in which the actions of one property owner are not allowed to adversely affect the rights of other property owners.

Flood Resistant Communities

STC's Flood Resistant Communities project (supported by the New York State Department of State with funds provided under Title 11 of the Environmental Protection Fund) enables STC to provide planning, outreach, and other assistance to improve the resilience of local communities to future floods.

Public Education

Because well-informed citizens are able to make better decisions to protect themselves and their property from flooding, STC developed a regional Flood Education Plan that identifies key messages and outreach strategies. Youth education was conducted using an interactive model, for which STC received a national Flood Risk Education award. Adult education focused on disseminating information about changes to the National Flood Insurance Program. STC also provided information about flood risks at professional conferences (From Main Street to Eco-Districts and the Finger Lakes Research Conference).

Training

To build local capacity for effective management of floodplain development, STC provided training about FEMA Elevation Certificates (which document building elevations for compliance and flood insurance) and conducted Planning Board training using a tabletop floodplain model.

Planning Assistance

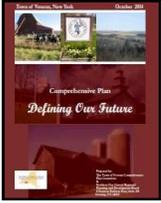
STC promoted land use decisions that reduce flood risks by providing information and assistance to communities that were developing comprehensive plans and revising local regulations. This included drafting zoning revisions for the Town of Big Flats Conservation Zone in order to better promote uses that are compatible with flood hazards.

Community Rating System (CRS)

STC continued to provide information and assistance with municipal Community Rating System programs, which implement flood damage reduction activities to qualify for flood insurance discounts. STC facilitated the formation of a CRS Users Group, with the initial meeting focused on recent changes to the rating criteria that will affect local programs.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING

“HELP!” Planning Assistance for Communities



Many municipalities find that their budgets are too tight to have a professional planner on staff. STC has been able to help seven of these communities by providing partially subsidized planning assistance.

Highlights include:

- Following adoption of the updated Town of Veteran Comprehensive Plan, STC began revising Veteran’s zoning law.
- STC provided the Town of Corning Planning Board with recommended changes to the zoning law based on the Town’s Comprehensive Plan and will spend coming months working through the revisions.
- The Town of Campbell has worked with Steuben County and STC to bring together interested communities along the Cohocton River to discuss the feasibility of a river trail and potential sources of planning funds.

Additional planning support included: review of zoning laws, assistance with monthly building proposals, assistance with public outreach and communication, grant writing, and updating of comprehensive plans.

STC also responded to a myriad of phone calls with planning questions, such as: “I am at a zoning board of appeals meeting and we are not sure what constitutes a quorum...Did our motion pass?” or “Does the building project within my Village need a SWPPP?” or “What is a SWPPP?” [It is a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan.] STC can answer these and other questions or connect municipal leaders to someone who can provide additional assistance.

STC is a resource that all 76 municipalities within Chemung, Schuyler, and Steuben Counties should have on speed dial: (607) 962-5092.

Comprehensive Planning for Painted Post and Riverside

STC prepared a successful grant application to develop comprehensive plans with the Village of Painted Post and the Village of Riverside. This project will be funded by Governor Cuomo’s Cleaner, Greener Communities Program, which is administered by the NYS Energy Research and Development Authority. The plans will formalize residents’ preferences for the future of the community and provide recommendations for guiding development in the village (through eco-friendly design guidelines and updated zoning laws). The joint planning process will enable efficiencies between the communities when formulating design guidelines and provide an opportunity for compatible zoning along their common border.

STC Planning School

STC initiated a Planning School that meets monthly to provide local governments with ongoing training about effective municipal planning. Topics in 2014 included: financial planning for municipalities, infrastructure, road maintenance, public participation in planning, and sources of data. The attendees have been exposed to great resources like the NYS Open Book website (www.openbooknewyork.com), a resource that allows the public to investigate local government revenues and expenditures.



“Land-use zoning directly increases property values by restricting the supply of land to certain uses and by removing harmful nonconforming uses.”

- John F. McDonald and Daniel P. McMillen, The Economics of Zoning

Sustainable Planning in Schuyler County

STC is working with Schuyler County and several municipalities to write comprehensive plans and land use laws that incorporate sustainable development and energy efficiency values. This project is supported by Governor Cuomo’s Cleaner, Greener Communities Program, which is administered by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA). In 2014, STC attended planning board and town board meetings to find municipalities that are committed to the process and goals of this project.

Over the next two years, STC will assist with revising the Countywide Comprehensive Plan to incorporate appropriate recommendations based on the goals of NYSEDA’s Cleaner, Greener Communities Program. STC will also work with four municipalities (Towns of Catharine, Dix, and Reading and Village of Montour Falls) to update their plans and laws based on local goals as well as appropriate Cleaner Greener Principles. Further, STC will develop a “Guide to Planning in Schuyler County” to help other municipalities incorporate such principles into their own process. This will be followed by training on the guide and other tools developed for this project.

HUMAN SERVICES

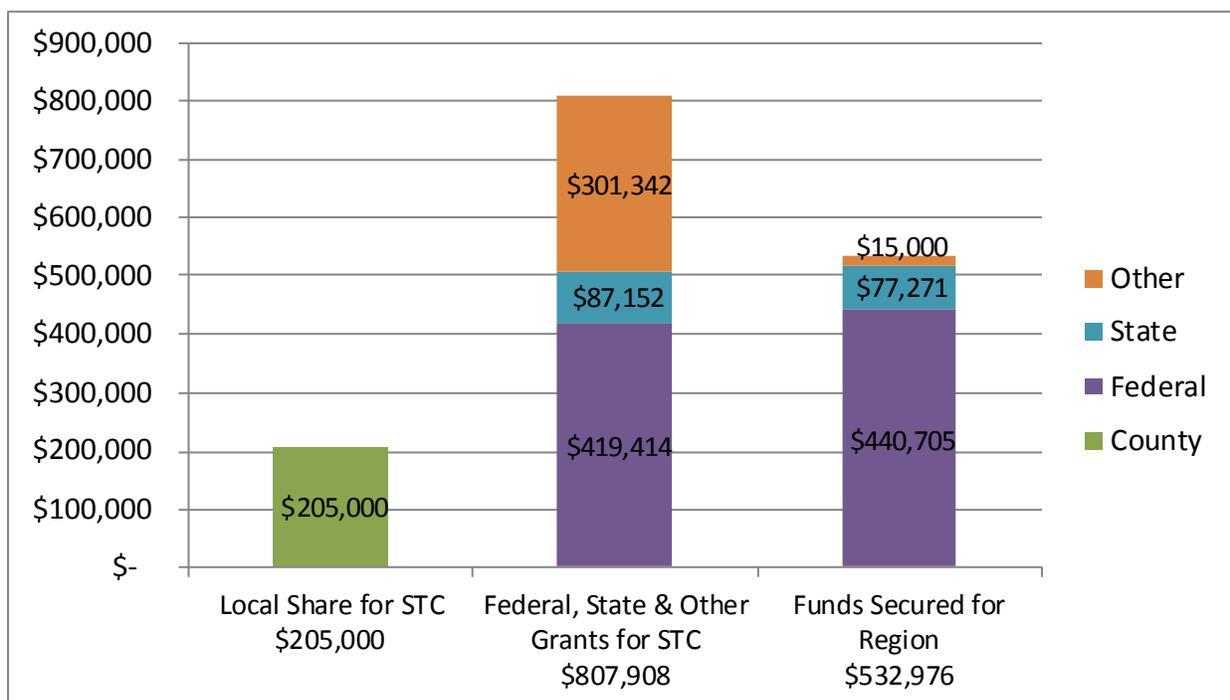
STC’s Regional Human Services Committee and the three county human services committees provide opportunities for service providers to share information across sectors and geographic regions, enhancing and complementing their expertise and understanding.

The details shared about conditions, programs, and needs in the three counties allow STC to target grants and to advocate for the region.

Activities described in this report were funded in part by the following Federal and State agencies: Appalachian Regional Commission, NYS Department of State, U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration, New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency through Section 604(b) of the Clean Water Act (administered by NYS Department of Environmental Conservation).

STC is also grateful for matching funds from Chemung, Schuyler, and Steuben Counties and Three Rivers Development Corporation.

2014 County Share Leveraged More Than \$1.3 Million for the STC Region



2014 STC Board of Directors

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Chair, Schuyler County Legislature

Vice Chair, Donna Draxler
Chair, Chemung County Legislature

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Philip Barnes, *Schuyler County Legislator*

Kathryn Bartholomew, *Environmental Representative*

Theodore Bennett, *Chemung County Legislator*

Amy Dlugos, *Steuben County Planning*

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Ernest Hartman, *Labor Representative*

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Shawn Hogan, *Municipal Elected Official*

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Kristin VanHorn, *Schuyler County Planning*

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