

# Oswego County, NY

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## ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

October 2017

Prepared for:

Oswego County, NY



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## About Camoin Associates

Camoin Associates has provided economic development consulting services to municipalities, economic development agencies, and private enterprises since 1999. Through the services offered, Camoin Associates has had the opportunity to serve EDOs and local and state governments from Maine to California; corporations and organizations that include Lowes Home Improvement, FedEx, Volvo (Nova Bus) and the New York Islanders; as well as private developers proposing projects in excess of \$600 million. Our reputation for detailed, place-specific, and accurate analysis has led to projects in 30 states and garnered attention from national media outlets including *Marketplace* (NPR), *Forbes* magazine, and *The Wall Street Journal*. Additionally, our marketing strategies have helped our clients gain both national and local media coverage for their projects in order to build public support and leverage additional funding. The firm currently has offices in Saratoga Springs, NY; Portland, ME; and Brattleboro, VT. To learn more about our experience and projects in all of our service lines, please visit our website at [www.camoinassociates.com](http://www.camoinassociates.com). You can also find us on Twitter [@camoinassociate](https://twitter.com/camoinassociate) and on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/camoinassociates).

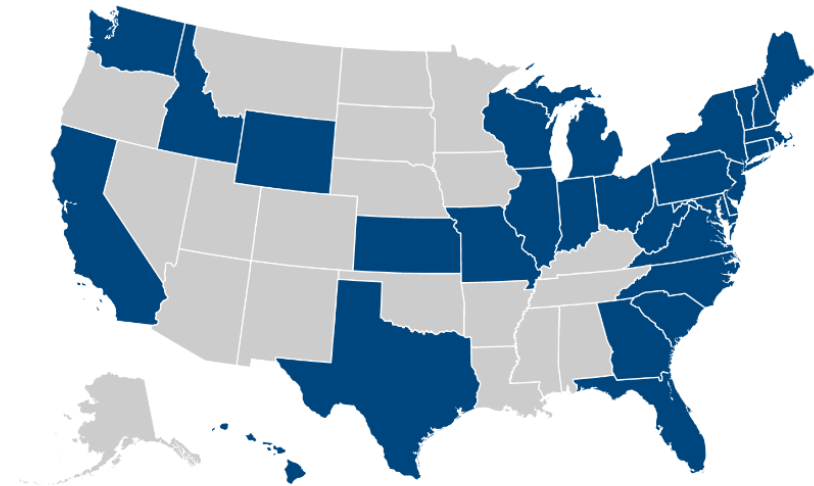
## The Project Team

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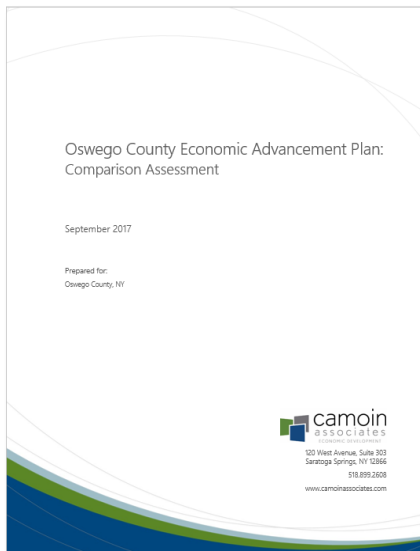
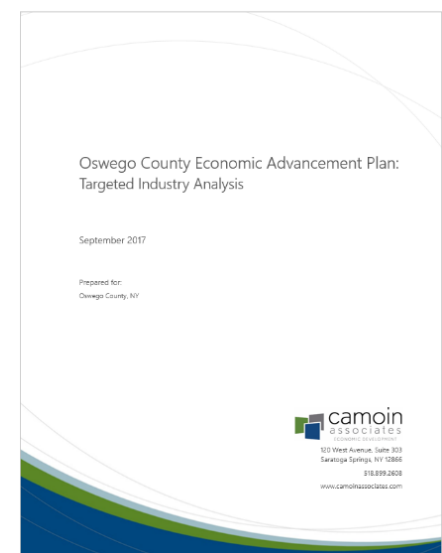
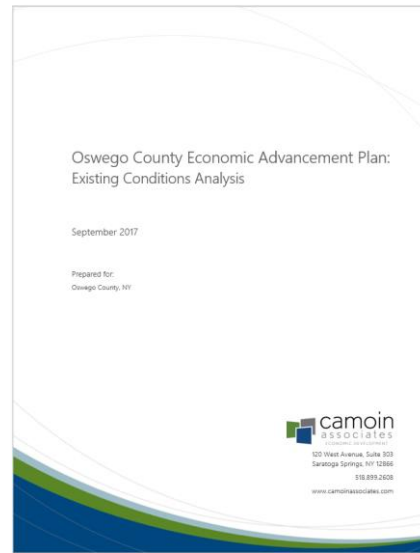
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## Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	1
Introduction	3
Methodology	5
Work Performed	6
Challenges and Opportunities	7
Vision and Mission	8
What does this mean for Oswego County?	10
Action Plan Matrix	11
Additional Guidance	17
Appendices	18
Appendix A: Existing Conditions Analysis	
Appendix B: Targeted Industry Analysis	
Appendix C: Comparison Assessment	
Appendix D: Infrastructure Analysis	
Appendix E: Oswego Economic Development Annual Performance Update – 2017	
Appendix F: Action Plan Matrix	



## Acknowledgements

The development of the *Oswego County Economic Advancement Plan* involved numerous members of the county and its communities. Below is a list of the people and organizations that made this effort possible. Oswego County stakeholders “wear many hats” in that many Steering Committee members have multiple leadership roles in the community, not all of which are reflected here, but which underscore the quality and commitment of the Steering Committee, whose members engaged with the Plan on behalf of all county residents.

### Economic Advancement Plan Steering Committee

Phil Church, Oswego County Administrator

David Turner, Oswego County Director of Community Development, Tourism, and Planning

Mike Treadwell, Executive Director, Operation Oswego County

Justin Rudjick, City of Oswego Community Development Director

Joe Fiumara, City of Fulton Community Development Director

Eric Behling, Behling Orchards

Kevin Gardner, Chair, Oswego County Legislature

Shane Broadwell, Oswego County Legislature

Tom Drumm, Oswego County Legislature

Roy Reehil, Oswego County Legislature

Shawn Doyle, Oswego County Legislature

Gary Toth, Chair, Oswego County Industrial Development Agency

## Interviews Conducted

Camoin Associates conducted in-person and telephone interviews with more than 40 Oswego County and regional stakeholders. Among these were business, education, healthcare, and labor leaders; local and county government officials; developers and entrepreneurs; and regional economic development and planning leaders. This broad group of people volunteered their time in support of Oswego County and its *Economic Advancement Plan*, providing valuable insight and ideas.

Atom Avery, Developer  
Billy Barlow, Mayor, City of Oswego  
Barb Bateman, Vice President, NBT Bank  
David Bottar, Executive Director, CNY Regional Planning and Development Board  
Nick Canale, Owner of Canale's Restaurant and OCIDA Board Member  
Kevin Caraccioli, Caraccioli & Associates, PLLC, Attorney for City of Oswego, OCIDA, and OOC  
Pam Caraccioli, Deputy to the President for External Partnerships and Economic Development, SUNY Oswego  
Vince Carroccio, Director of Finance, Fulton Companies  
Pat Carroll, UA Local 73, Plumbers and Steamfitters  
Jeff Coakley, Chief Strategy Officer, Oswego Health  
Carla DeShaw, Executive Dean, Community Education and Workforce Development, Cayuga Community College  
Jeremey Dygert, Plant Manager, Champlain Valley Specialty  
Tom Fernandez, WoodBine Group  
Lou Fournier, President, Sutton Realty  
Terry Gorman, CEO, St. Lukes Health Services  
Tim Hardy, General Manager, Sunoco Ethanol  
Theresa Himes, President, Bosco & Geers Food Market  
Tom Iorizzo, Northeast Council of Carpenters  
George Joyce, CEO, Laser Transit  
Zelko Kirincich, Executive Director & CEO, Port of Oswego  
Jimmy Koid, President, K&N Foods

Vince Lobdell, Chairman & CEO, Healthway  
Christian Morgia, VP Sales, Eagle Beverage  
Joe Moribito, Developer  
Tony Pauldine, President, Pauldine Construction  
Tom Schneider, President and CEO, Pathfinder Bank  
Brandon Schwerdt, Manager, Oswego County Airport  
John Sharkey, Vice President, Universal Metal Works  
Kevin Shutt, Plant Manager, Novelis  
Rob Simpson, President and CEO, CenterState Corporation for Economic Opportunity  
Joseph Solazzo, Laborers International Union  
Morris Sorbello, Oswego County Legislator  
Mark Southwick, Plant Manager, Huhtamaki  
Deborah Stanley, President, SUNY Oswego  
Norm Swanson, President and Owner, WoodBine Group, Tailwater Lodge  
Michael Szidat, President, Felix Schoeller North America  
John Torrese, President, Oswego Speedway  
Chena Tucker, Associate Director, SUNY Oswego Office of Business and Community Relations  
Casey Walpole, Oswego County Labor Council, AFL-CIO  
Chris Weaver, Director of Employment & Training, Oswego County  
Bob Wilmott, Northeast Council of Carpenters  
Ron Woodward, Mayor, City of Fulton

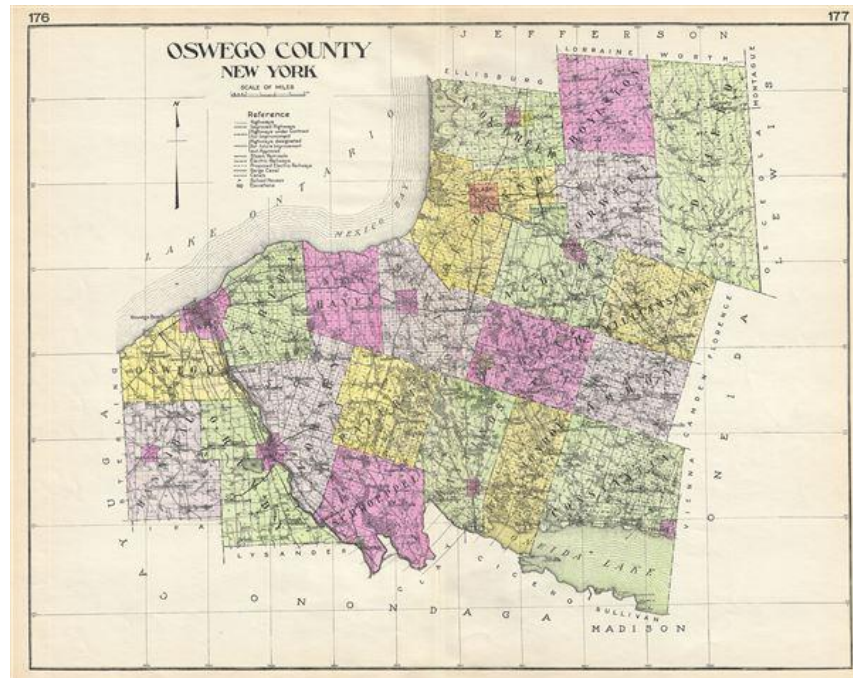
## Introduction

Oswego County is undertaking the creation and implementation of a multi-year economic advancement strategy that will significantly grow the local economy; spur large economic investment; establish the county as an economic engine in the region; reduce the local unemployment rate; and maximize economic diversification and resiliency across the county's communities.

To achieve this, the plan must contain specific goals, strategies, and implementation steps. It must also be embraced throughout the county in a coordinated, collaborative spirit that sustains long-term engagement by partners such as elected officials, education and training institutions, employers large and small, non-profits, and community organizations, as well as by economic development leaders at Oswego County and Operation Oswego County.

Sustaining this effort begins with understanding the questions "Where are we today?", "What direction should we go?" and "How do we get there?"

Camoin Associates was engaged to prepare an *Oswego County Economic Advancement Plan* to help answer these questions with research, data analysis, and interviews with key leaders and stakeholders in the county and the region. The county assembled a dedicated Steering Committee that guided the process and participated in workshops and document review, as well as strategy development and refinement. Camoin Associates also engaged Bergmann Associates, a nationally-known architecture, engineering, and planning firm, to perform an analysis of the physical infrastructure that supports the county's economy.



Oswego County leaders and stakeholders are already well aware of the challenges faced by communities, including a dwindling manufacturing base, a continuing risk of nuclear power plant closure, employees who work in the county but live elsewhere, and residents of the county who commute long distances to find fulfilling work. Additionally, the county is concerned with a high poverty rate, dislocated and discouraged workers, and slow population growth.

The county's strategic goals therefore go beyond economic growth and also focus on economic inclusion, where opportunities are available across the full spectrum of county

residents, and the benefits of growth are felt by all members of the community.

Amidst these challenges, Oswego County understands that it has valuable assets such as major employers already working cooperatively on economic development and workforce issues; the Port of Oswego and a high quality transportation network that connects the county to the world; education leadership at SUNY Oswego, Cayuga Community College, and CiTi; world-class outdoor recreation; a strong track record of economic development success by Operation Oswego County; and a simple, clearly stated desire across many stakeholders to pull together on behalf of their community.

Development of a strategic plan often uncovers unforeseen challenges, overlooked assets, and unexpected tactics. Oswego County, by contrast, has already been reviewing, planning, and discussing the critical questions of “Where are we today?” and “What direction should we go?” Much of Camoin Associates’ research supports and expands the county’s strong understanding of the “facts on the ground” and capitalizes on its unique assets. We also provide insight into how these elements interconnect, how they can either slow or encourage opportunity, and what aspects the county can control or influence. The transformative aspects of this project therefore are the increased collaboration and partnership and the targeted, focused steps that comprise “How do we get there?”

**This is an outstanding place for Oswego County to be: knowledgeable, committed, and ready to implement.**

## About this Report

The creation of the *Oswego County Economic Advancement Plan* was a multi-part effort to gather and interpret information, compile it into specific reports, and engage the

Steering Committee in the development of an action plan to serve as a “living” resource for implementation.

This report begins with an overview of the methodology, the work performed, and the documents created. Each document is attached as an appendix and each is formatted with an executive summary and key findings, with supporting research and data.

The report goes on to summarize the elements of the strategy development, including the vision and mission statements, and incorporates a larger sized *Action Plan Matrix*.

The last section of this report provides additional guidance on building organizational and collaborative capacity, and critical factors in economic development success, to help Oswego County begin its implementation of the *Economic Advancement Plan*.





## Methodology

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Camoin Associates strongly believes in strategic decision-making grounded in data and analysis. For this strategy, Camoin used Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI) data for its high-quality labor market data, economic analysis, and projections; IBISWorld for its leading global market research; demographic and socioeconomic data from Esri and the U.S. Census Bureau; and StatsAmerica for its interactive database of innovation activity and capacity. These data gave us very robust, highly useful, and comprehensive information on the historical and emerging trends of the industries in Oswego County, the Central New York Region, and beyond.

Our approach included substantial attention to interviews with local business and education, healthcare, non-profit, and government leaders. It also included interviews with regional economic development leaders and leadership at SUNY Oswego and the Port of Oswego, institutions located in the City of Oswego but serving the larger region. Using these data collection techniques in addition to traditional and industry-focused economic data analysis enabled Camoin to provide the Steering Committee with the foundational evidence on which to base their visioning and strategic planning.

We engaged Bergmann Associates, a nationally-recognized architecture, engineering, and planning firm, to prepare an *Infrastructure Analysis* that included more interviews and an on-the-ground overview of the county's energy, transportation, water and wastewater, and communications infrastructure.

At each stage of the process, Camoin reviewed its work with the Steering Committee, which included representatives from the Oswego County Department of Economic Development and Planning and Operation Oswego County, as well as legislative, business, and municipal leaders from throughout the county. Steering Committee members are listed above on Page 2.





## Work Performed

In the **Baseline Assessment** we helped answer the question “Where are we today?” by collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data on the county’s economy and economic development activities, including conducting more than 40 stakeholder interviews. We reviewed prior plans and initiatives at the local, county, and regional levels, and collected information about existing economic development capacity and marketing. From these efforts we created a base assessment of the county’s demographics, economy, and workforce. A workshop with the Steering Committee provided insight and direction. Camoin’s *Existing Conditions Analysis* and the *Infrastructure Analysis* prepared by Bergmann Associates present this assessment and are included as appendices.

In the **Competitive Positioning** phase, we addressed the question “Which direction should we go?” by taking a deep dive into strategic and emerging industries, focusing on strategies for business growth

and attraction in energy, advanced manufacturing, specialty and craft food opportunities, and tourism expansion. Analysis and findings are in the *Targeted Industry Analysis*. In the *Comparison Assessment* we benchmarked Oswego County key metrics across similar counties including Genesee, Wayne, and Ontario Counties and the Syracuse Metropolitan Statistical Area. Both of the reports mentioned above are included as appendices.

The **Strategy Development** phase focused on the question “How do we get there?” In this phase we met again with the Steering Committee to review and understand challenges and opportunities for economic advancement. This workshop tightened the focus on key industries, strategies, and tactics and launched the development of the *Action Plan Matrix*, which outlines five goals with supporting objectives and specific actions. For each objective, specific measures are identified including leaders and partners for implementation, priority, timeline, and performance measures. These goals are presented on the following page. The *Action Plan Matrix* was presented and refined at a final workshop and, as a foundation and guide for economic advancement activities, is presented in the body of this report.

An *Oswego County Economic Development Annual Performance Update – 2017* was created to provide a model “dashboard” measuring progress toward the Plan’s goals. This dashboard is designed to be updated as the county implements the plan, and includes instructions and data sources to support the ongoing effort.



## Challenges and Opportunities

Using the assessments of economic conditions, targeted industries, and infrastructure as a base, Camoin Associates conducted a strategic planning process designed to identify strategies to leverage the economic development opportunities facing Oswego County. This condensed SWOT analysis, was modified away from “threats”

and “weaknesses” to focus on challenges to overcome and opportunities to capitalize on. It also helped identify those assets that Oswego can capitalize on to improve their competitive position. Opportunities and challenges are environmental—they denote trends that are ongoing in the broader economy that influence the vision and mission. Opportunities are at left, with a “+” header and challenges are at right with a “–” sign header.



- Business Friendly Reputation
- Community Came Together
- Workforce/Lifestyle Alignment
- Energy Cluster
- NY Energy Market in Flux
- Multiple Workforce Investments
- Natural Water Resources



- Wastewater Systems
- Lack of Shovel Ready Sites
- Tax Abatement Skepticism
- ED Investment Hesitancy
- Cost of Doing Business
- Electric Grid Capacity
- Economic Inclusion

## Vision and Mission

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To guide policies and actions, the Steering Committee adopted the following vision statement and mission statement for the Oswego County Economic Advancement Plan:

### Vision

The Steering Committee adopted this vision statement for the Oswego County Economic Advancement Plan:

*Oswego County is a community that pulls together to advance opportunity and well-being for all of our residents. We measure success not only by growth in jobs, income, education, and entrepreneurship, but by how effectively we include all members of our community in the benefits of growth, creativity, and resiliency.*

*With internationally recognized historic and outdoor recreational activities, small city vitality, rural beauty, and a warm welcome for new residents and businesses, it's a great place to call home.*

### Mission

This following is a mission statement to accomplish the goals identified in this plan:

*The Economic Advancement Plan will promote targeted, sustainable, and well-planned development within Oswego County for the benefit of its residents, businesses, educational institutions, and community organizations.*

*It supports growth for industries that have a proven history in the County and establishes pathways for diversifying our economy, encouraging training and education, entrepreneurship, and the generation and commercialization of new ideas.*

*We will implement our strategies in the context of our County's vision of opportunity, regularly evaluate our outcomes to ensure we advance together, and engage the community to provide support and celebrate successes.*

To achieve the vision and mission the Steering Committee adopted the following five goals:

Goal	Motivation
<b>Goal 1:</b> Create a collaborative and cohesive economic development structure.	Oswego County must build institutional capacity to achieve its vision and goals. The economic development ecosystem is widening to include allies such as workforce initiatives. Establishing a clear, well-understood framework for cooperation among key entities makes it easier for businesses, community leaders, entrepreneurs, job seekers, and residents to see the breadth and depth of activities and understand how/who/why to access the resources.
<b>Goal 2:</b> Continuously engage community stakeholders around economic advancement efforts.	Economic development can be hindered when it is believed that its benefits only target businesses, and when the broader community outcomes are not well understood. Oswego County's goals include community development and economic inclusion as well as a vibrant economy. Inviting stakeholders across the spectrum of the community into the process, and continuing to engage them, will showcase the deep connections between economic development and community wellbeing, and create an ecosystem of resources and support for the County's initiatives.
<b>Goal 3:</b> Build momentum around targeted industries.	A targeted industry strategy identifies priorities for allocation of resources and lets potential new businesses know what industries will be welcomed by the community. It must include support to help existing industries stay competitive and grow as well as establish goals for business attraction. When deepening the economic development toolkit with entrepreneurial support and business plan competitions, targeting specific industries can expand the pool of participants.
<b>Goal 4:</b> Become recognized as a superior location for business attraction and growth.	Oswego County can build on its existing reputation for business friendliness and establish itself as a leader in attracting and growing businesses by identifying and enhancing the critical factors businesses need: solid infrastructure, clear planning and permitting, a trained and ready workforce, and well-located and infrastructured sites.
<b>Goal 5:</b> Tell the story – regularly publicize performance measures for economic advancement and diversification.	Economic advancement is created through incremental change over time across a broad range of community and investment indicators, many of which are long term or indirect. Publishing indicators and goals strengthens concept of forward motion and encourages (1) recognition of concrete achievements; (2) a "whole picture" approach connecting economic development and community wellbeing; and (3) objective evaluation of success and failure of initiatives.

## What does this mean for Oswego County?

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Transformative thinking, approaches, process, and actions are needed. All concerned need to come together to contribute to its success. Specifically:

Oswego County has a reputation for being friendly to heavy industry like metals and energy, which remain core drivers of employment and expertise. **This Plan is designed to elevate its visibility as a County that welcomes a broad range of businesses and entrepreneurial efforts**, especially startups moving into second-stage growth and needing well-priced sites and a ready workforce.

The Central New York Region experienced a severe recession after the financial crisis that began in 2008, but the de-industrialization of its economy and the job, wealth, tax, and population losses had been occurring for many years and in some cases such as steel and agriculture, for decades. In addition to the economic toll, a sense of “nothing here for me” and “nothing can be done” took hold in many households. This is not a unique phenomenon regionally or nationally, as people, particularly educated young people, become ever more mobile in search of fulfilling lives and careers. However, it has made it hard for some residents to see the positive changes and growth – the demolition of the Nestlé buildings and plan for a new grocery store in the City of Fulton is an example of a solid forward step that nevertheless, to those who remember the jobs and vitality of the chocolate plant, still feels like a loss. A critical element of the Economic Advancement Plan is therefore to tell the story, to talk about improvements and successes, and to **keep communities focused on how each action, however small, will build upon the others to implement concrete, tangible, positive change.**

In New York State, economic development funding and priorities have been heavily influenced by priorities set in the state capitol, Albany. The expectation – and accompanying financial incentives – that research universities will be dominant generators of new ideas and businesses, creates an uneven playing field for communities

outside of the orbit of these institutions. Regional assignments and support for targeted industries are often appropriate, but not always, and basic infrastructure investments, such as bridges and pipes in the ground, are not the priority they should be.

Against this backdrop, locally-based economic development may seem like an uphill struggle, but in fact Oswego County is known regionally for the outstanding performance of Operation Oswego County, and the success of Upstate Energy Jobs in persuading the state’s legislature to preserve critical nuclear generation capacity show **the community has been truly doubling down on grit.**

The *Existing Conditions Analysis*, *Targeted Industry Analysis* and *Comparison Assessment* present specific areas where Oswego County has had measurable success, such as growth in manufacturing, existing businesses reinvesting and expanding, and support for small enterprise. All of these are strongly affected by the activities of the county’s economic development leadership. **The goals and objectives recommended in the *Economic Advancement Plan* have been crafted not only to be appealing, but to be possible.**

**Stakeholders and leaders in the county are well aware of the major challenges and opportunities but need a work plan to get to where you want to be.** The need to expand wastewater infrastructure, diversify the economy and plan for possible nuclear facility closures, attract businesses with well-paying jobs, and leverage local assets like SUNY Oswego and the Port of Oswego are well understood. The difference the *Economic Advancement Plan* is designed to make is having specific, concrete objectives and actions that support the county’s goals, with tasks assigned and metrics recorded throughout implementation.

This is a work plan, and while vision and mission are essential framing elements, the *Economic Advancement Plan* requires a **roll-up-your sleeves effort**, something at which Oswego County excels.

## Action Plan Matrix

The Action Plan Matrix below lays out the detailed objectives and actions needed to accomplish each of the five goals for Economic Advancement Plan. For each objective, the lead and key partners are listed, along with the priority level, timeframe, and measures for performance and success.

### Oswego County Action Plan Matrix

#### Goal 1: Create a collaborative and cohesive economic development structure

Why this is critical: Oswego County must build institutional capacity to achieve its vision and goals. The economic development ecosystem is widening to include allies such as workforce initiatives. Establishing a clear, well-understood framework for cooperation among key entities makes it easier for businesses, community leaders, entrepreneurs, job seekers, and residents to see the breadth and depth of activities and understand how/who/why to access the resources.

	Objective	Actions	Lead and Partners	Priority Level	Timeframe	Measures for Progress and Success
1.A.	Lead implementation of the Economic Advancement Plan	1) Make sure the Strategic Plan never sits on a shelf; assign tasks, monitor and report progress, and provide public updates. When specific Plan-related actions are undertaken, make sure participants/stakeholders see that they are part of the Plan implementation. 2) Schedule a one-year review that evaluates progress including accomplishments and outcomes - identify lead for this review well in advance and assign resources. 3) Engage in regular, open, targeted coordination with City of Oswego's DRI activities and other significant economic development initiatives in municipalities throughout the county. 4) Updates to Strategic Plan should be implemented at least every 4 years and should reflect effects of partner activities on development as well as actions specific to the Plan: recognize critical role of actions outside of Plan by partners such as the DRI, City of Oswego, City of Fulton, etc.	OOC, County, City of Oswego, City of Fulton	High	Ongoing	Completion of Actions and public sharing of accomplishments. Complete annual review of progress. Number of participants coordinating with leads on each action.
1.B.	Enhance collaboration among the key organizations promoting growth and community development, including organizations actively involved in economic development activities and allies in areas such as workforce, education, and infrastructure, and the Port of Oswego	1) Review and strengthen existing collaborative efforts, identify areas for performance improvement, identify effective relationships and ensure their continuity and clarity. 2) Establish a framework to facilitate quarterly meetings among leaders and stakeholders in existing organizations and allies to review common issues and efforts, and discuss how to work more collaboratively. 3) Identify common opportunities and goals and support efforts undertaken within allied organizations. Discuss organizational strengths, reduce overlap, and target resources for maximum effectiveness.	All organizations with leadership from OOC, County	High	Begin before end of 2017	Number of organizations participating in meetings. Satisfaction with process among participants.
1.C.	Create a single portal for economic development that showcases the cooperative approach in the County and is easy for newcomers to access	1) Maintain existing organizational websites but enhance the user experience and sense of "pulling together." 2) Engage a website developer to bring existing information under a common brand and portal. 3) Evaluate online presence from multiple points of view; resident, entrepreneur, business leader, investor, and ensure that both new and sophisticated visitors easily find information and links. 4) Design website to promote a consistent, coherent image or "brand" for Oswego County's business climate.	OOC, County	High	Portal open within 9 months	Number of unique website visits, number of updates per year, bounce rate, average session time.
1.D.	Broaden sources of funding for economic development	1) Work cooperatively to enhance the quality of CFA/Grant applications from entities throughout Oswego County by targeting specific businesses or industries that match well with each set of annual goals. Highlight enhanced collaborative efforts when working with CNYREDC. 2) Develop and strengthen connections to angel investor and venture capital networks; discuss a regional or collaborative effort to reach investors in metro areas (Boston, NYC) with CenterState CEO. 3) Include discussions of funding approaches when organizations "brainstorm" under Action 1.B.	All, including regional economic development organizations	Medium	Ongoing	Quality of CFA/Grant applications submitted by organizations throughout Oswego County. Number and dollar amount of projects awarded funding.



## Goal 1: Create a collaborative and cohesive economic development structure

Why this is critical: Oswego County must build institutional capacity to achieve its vision and goals. The economic development ecosystem is widening to include allies such as workforce initiatives. Establishing a clear, well-understood framework for cooperation among key entities makes it easier for businesses, community leaders, entrepreneurs, job seekers, and residents to see the breadth and depth of activities and understand how/who/why to access the resources.

	Objective	Actions	Lead and Partners	Priority Level	Timeframe	Measures for Progress and Success
1.E.	Expand capacity of programs supporting business attraction and expansion, including improving access to capital	1) Continue to identify and monitor successful programs that can serve as models. 2) Support NYS EDC efforts to preserve and enhance the ability of economic development organizations to provide financial assistance that is in line with the organization's mission and the community's goals.	OOC, County	Low	Ongoing	Programs identified and EDC efforts supported.
1.F.	Work with SUNY Oswego to envision creative uses of university resources and industry and employer-based solutions to university needs	1) Maximize use of campus; support university efforts to introduce off-season life-long learning programs similar to Elder Hostel, which invites retirees to participate in educational and cultural activities on college campuses during the summer. 2) Support the university's efforts to retain and recruit retired/returning graduates, particularly alumni in their late 20s/early 30s who want a family friendly community. 3) Work with university on a needs gap, including research and development space that could be available cooperatively at manufacturing facilities, rather than reproduced on campus.	SUNY Oswego	High	Ongoing	Contacts made, discussions held, Number of projects or initiatives resulting.

## Goal 2: Continuously engage community stakeholders around economic advancement efforts

Why this is critical: Economic development can be hindered when it is believed that its benefits only target businesses, and when the broader community outcomes are not well understood. Oswego County's goals include community development and economic inclusion as well as a vibrant economy. Inviting stakeholders across the spectrum of the community into the process, and continuing to engage them, will showcase the deep connections between economic development and community wellbeing, and create an ecosystem of resources and support for the County's initiatives.

	Objective	Actions	Lead and Partners	Priority Level	Timeframe	Measures for Progress and Success
2.A.	Broaden the economic development marketing network to reach stakeholders outside of the business and development community	1) Identify and coordinate a system of Community Advocates who share success stories, information, and events. Should be community members with wide existing networks, who are trusted. A school district participant can strengthen the connection between economic development and primary education. 2) Keep them up to date, and feed them information and talking points so they tell the story on social media. 3) Tell the success stories about businesses that do well and connect this to metrics and goals for county wellbeing - another audience for existing OOC marketing and public engagement efforts. 4) Identify internal audiences and methods of reaching them. 5) Identify external audiences and methods of reaching them; continue to implement actions that are successful. 6) Include SUNY Oswego faculty, staff, and student populations in audience groups.	Chambers of Commerce - County Tourism/Public Information Office, OOC, Centerstate CEO and businesses	High	Begin within 6 months of Plan adoption; ongoing.	Community Advocates on-board, number of posts, number of followers.
2.B.	Shift thinking from "tourists" to "visitors" to capture business travelers, family visits, second homeowners, parents of SUNY Oswego students	1) Tourism is something to "attract" from outside but amenities are also a major factor in local quality of life and business location decisions. Integrate information and celebration of the County's unique tourism assets – e.g. waterfront, fishing, snow sports – into the general conversation about community and economic development. 2) Use Community Advocates to lead a conversation and specifically integrate language about tourism into other communications. 3) Target owners of second or vacation homes with information and marketing.	Chambers of Commerce, County Tourism/Public Information Office, Centerstate CEO	Low	Ongoing	Posts referencing tourism. Mail or emails to second homeowners.
2.C.	Connect existing education and training initiative information to create a continuum of resources for residents and businesses of all ages and skill/education levels	1) Identify resources and gaps - what, where, and who are their programs for; which target audiences are not well reached. For example, lack of childcare, location of training, and available transportation can restrict participation. Put these on the table for discussion under Objective 1.A., "Enhance collaboration." 2) Share intelligence about potential employers and employer trends with workforce and training stakeholders as early as possible to speed up availability of suitable workers. 3) Bring primary education stakeholders into the mix with initiatives to engage younger residents.	County, OOC, Citi, CCC, SUNY Oswego, Labor Unions	High	12-18 months	Resources and gaps identified. Meetings and communications. Number of educators involved.

## Goal 3: Build momentum around targeted industries

Why this is critical: A targeted industry strategy identifies priorities for allocation of resources and lets potential new businesses know what industries will be welcomed by the community. It must include support to help existing industries stay competitive and grow as well as establish goals for business attraction. When deepening the economic development toolkit with entrepreneurial support and business plan competitions, targeting specific industries can expand the pool of participants.

	Objective	Actions	Lead and Partners	Priority Level	Timeframe	Measures for Progress and Success
3.A.	Promote diversification and innovation within the energy cluster	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Promote Oswego County as a site for next generation nuclear facilities through the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Early Site Permit Application process.</li> <li>2) Evaluate and develop a plan to resolve transmission issues within areas of Oswego County. Monitor transmission bottlenecks, identify how they affect the County's ability to export electricity, and advocate for resolution.</li> <li>3) Follow regulatory approval process for small modular nuclear reactor technologies and continue the productive relationship with Exelon Corporation about future opportunities.</li> <li>4) Use the NY-BEST consortium for energy storage research and development as a resource for energy innovation networking. Innovation and commercialization goals of this organization also intersect with Objective 3.E., below.</li> </ol>	OOC, County, National Grid, Exelon Corporation, Syracuse University, Upstate Energy Jobs	High	3-5 years	Partnership efforts. Growth of energy related businesses and jobs. Adoption of new technology.
3.B.	Become known for advanced manufacturing expertise across a spectrum of industries	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Showcase what is already occurring in Oswego County: market existing training programs and publicize news about adoption of advanced manufacturing techniques by companies in the County. Identify platforms such as Expansion Solutions to tell the story.</li> <li>2) Promote the education and training of innovators and workforce by supporting collaboration between educators and employers and facilitating the collection and analysis of data to match training needs, job requirements and numbers, and workers and students in the "pipeline."</li> <li>3) Facilitate discussions with businesses who are planning to or need to adopt new techniques, including regular business outreach and roundtable or brainstorming sessions with educators.</li> </ol>	OOC, CCC	High	1-3 years	Number of publication activities. Number of jobs and \$ of investment in advanced manufacturing.
3.C.	Create a craft beverage industry	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Survey interested brewers, cider makers, and distillers to get an idea of what they need to succeed.</li> <li>2) Hold a business plan competition with the goal of opening new businesses in the county by 2018; participants may be from outside Oswego County as long as they open their business in the county.</li> <li>3) Offer to help competition winners with licensing and registration, business plans, and location identification.</li> <li>4) Seek grants to allocate seed money to competition winners.</li> <li>5) Invite local businesses such as Sunoco's 1886 Malt House and Champlain Valley Apples to partner/sponsor.</li> </ol>	OOC, CCE, NYS Ag. & Markets	Medium	2-3 years	Number of business plan competition participants and sponsors. Number of grant applications submitted and awarded.
3.D.	Leverage food processing expertise by continuing to support specialty food entrepreneurial development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Sponsor a business plan competition that is open to makers from outside the County as long as they will locate a facility here. Prioritize products that take advantage of local or regional produce.</li> <li>2) When a commercial space with a kitchen facility is available, work with the owner/lessor to promote the building and local food with a "Taste Oswego" event inviting existing local producers and the public. Have entrepreneurship resources such as mentors, culinary educators from CITi, Cayuga Community College, and SUNY Oswego's nutrition program available to discuss food trends and food businesses opportunities and challenges.</li> <li>3) Evaluate underutilized refrigeration capacity at K&amp;N Foods as part of the County's overall logistical and transportation assets to identify opportunities for storage as well as production.</li> </ol>	OOC, CCE, NYS Taste of NY	Low	3-5 years	Number of competition participants and sponsors. Number of co-events.
3.E.	Enhance entrepreneur development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Develop a roadmap to identify County and regional assets across the business development lifecycle from idea and incubation to commercialization and second-stage growth. Connect businesses with these resources and monitor progress and outcomes, including for non-County assets.</li> <li>2) Encourage existing businesses as well as startups to understand how this roadmap helps at different points on a development timeline.</li> <li>3) Continue and expand training programs and mentoring, and develop a "toolkit" that identifies business skills, guides entrepreneurs in their acquisition, and measures progress in knowledge acquisition.</li> <li>3) Focus a majority of incubation efforts on one or two targeted sectors.</li> <li>4) Regularly survey and benchmark entrepreneurial advancement and evaluate performance of system.</li> <li>5) Continue to hold the Next Great Idea (NGI) business plan competition on a biennial basis. NGI is open to applicants with an award of \$50,000 towards establishing a business in Oswego County.</li> </ol>	OOC	High	Ongoing	Number of assets on roadmap. Number of businesses accessing roadmap and resources. Number of NGI participants, sponsorship support, and sustainability of winners and outcomes of participants.

## Goal 3: Build momentum around targeted industries

Why this is critical: A targeted industry strategy identifies priorities for allocation of resources and lets potential new businesses know what industries will be welcomed by the community. It must include support to help existing industries stay competitive and grow as well as establish goals for business attraction. When deepening the economic development toolkit with entrepreneurial support and business plan competitions, targeting specific industries can expand the pool of participants.

	Objective	Actions	Lead and Partners	Priority Level	Timeframe	Measures for Progress and Success
3.F.	Connect established employers with innovation resources	Use existing Business Retention and Expansion visits and other outreach efforts specifically to ask about potential for innovation and resources needed; provide resources for the innovation as if it were presented by an entrepreneur. Machine shop owners, discussed below in 3.G., should be among the first targets for discussions.	OOO	Low	Ongoing	BRE visits.
3.G.	Convene a machine shop working group or task force and conduct a study of assets and needs for this cluster	<p>1) Convene a regular working group of machine shop owners and managers, at least semi-annually, to discuss opportunities, challenges, areas for collaboration (especially training) and to identify marketing opportunities such as trade publications, conferences, and web-based organizations or outlets.</p> <p>2) Promote Oswego County as having significant machine shop expertise. At a minimum, publish a directory of machine shops with information regarding capabilities. Evaluate sending a representative to trade shows.</p> <p><u>Actions 3 through 6 may be undertaken by a consultant or researcher</u></p> <p>3) Identify areas of expertise, including both the ability to make products and the ability to integrate new technology into existing processes.</p> <p>4) Develop a marketing plan to promote machine shop assets as a cluster.</p> <p>5) Survey machine shop owners about what resources are needed for expansion and process improvement, e.g. training, space, equipment leasing, connections to suppliers and new customers.</p> <p>6) Survey other businesses about how/whether their machine shop needs are met in-County, what is purchased from more distant suppliers, and why.</p>	OOO	High	Ongoing	<p>Participation in semi-annual working group meetings.</p> <p>Publication of directory.</p> <p>Number of new jobs and \$ investment in machine shops.</p> <p>Amount of in-county sales by machine shops.</p>
3.H.	Launch an "Outdoor Oswego" effort to leverage tourism assets for recruiting outdoor recreation equipment manufacturing	<p>1) Have "Outdoor Oswego" or similar catchphrase become a byword for cooperation among makers and users, not just a marketing slogan for tourism. Integrate the chosen term in both tourism and economic development materials, including materials provided to prospective employers promoting Oswego County's lifestyle.</p> <p>2) Define "equipment" to target sport fishing, boating, and hunting products and accessories that are used in the County. ATVs and snowmobiles are manufactured in large centralized facilities but parts and aftermarket accessories such as mufflers may be suitable.</p> <p>3) Facilitate a working group to seed a cluster of related businesses in this sector. This group should include businesses that use equipment such as sport fishing expedition providers and snowmobile club leaders as well as existing equipment manufacturers. Early activities can include identifying and finding financial resources to attend trade shows, mentoring for entrepreneurs, and a business plan competition to attract entrepreneurial and small manufacturers of equipment used in the County. If interest grows strong, support separate groups for fishing/hunting, boating, and snow sports.</p>	Chamber(s) of Commerce, County Tourism, OOO	Medium	1 year	<p>Participation in working group meetings.</p> <p>Use of catchphrase in marketing materials.</p> <p>Number of new jobs, \$ invested, companies in targeted sector.</p>
3.I.	Expand funding for tourism projects	Actively seek tourism projects to support for state funding in 2018 Consolidated Funding Application round; underscore tourism and visitor benefits when seeking funding for related projects such as craft brewing.	OOO, County Tourism	Medium	Spring 2018	Increase in tourism related applications.
3.J.	Continue efforts to secure National Park Status for Fort Ontario and National Marine Sanctuary designation for Lake Ontario	<p>1) Continue to work with National Park Service and NOAA to provide information for their discovery/decision processes.</p> <p>2) Continue to work with state and federal elected representatives to get support in Congress for any supporting legislation.</p>	County Tourism, Oswego County Legislature, state and federal electeds	Medium	1 - 5 years	<p>Increase in visitations at Fort Ontario, Safe Haven.</p> <p>Development of new amenities for Lake Ontario visitors.</p>

## Goal 4: Become recognized as a superior location for business attraction and growth

Why this is critical: Oswego County can build on its existing reputation for business friendliness and establish itself as a leader in attracting and growing businesses by identifying and enhancing the critical factors businesses need: solid infrastructure, clear planning and permitting, a trained and ready workforce, and well-located and infrastructured sites.

	Objective	Actions	Lead and Partners	Priority Level	Timeframe	Measures for Progress and Success
4.A.	Develop a track record of successful infrastructure projects	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Identify and establish funding for completion of strategic projects such as the sewer project at the Oswego County Airport in Volney.</li> <li>2) Continue to discuss long-term strategies for water and wastewater with regional partners.</li> <li>3) Establish pathways for collaboration and coordination around the core ideas of service expansion, development opportunity, and cost reduction.</li> </ol>	Oswego County, municipalities	High	Ongoing	Dollars of funding for projects. Gallons of increased capacity and miles of pipes. Acreage connecting to system.
4.B.	Enhance the County's critical role in the regional transportation and logistics network	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Use the Strategic Plan's Infrastructure Analysis to publicize transportation assets and their interconnectedness; community and business stakeholders as well as the transportation industry benefit from understanding the many resources.</li> <li>2) Identify existing and potential major transportation and logistics hubs where multiple resources are available (for example rail/truck/warehouse at one site.)</li> <li>3) Strengthen the Port of Oswego's ability to attract businesses with a cooperative and continuous evaluation of opportunities and barriers; explore County business process improvements such as non-disclosure agreements and permitting clarification.</li> <li>4) Continue to think regionally about transportation and logistics, and maintain a voice in planning and decisions.</li> <li>5) Continue efforts with NYS DOT to enhance access to I 81 in Oswego County.</li> </ol>	County, Port of Oswego	Medium	1-5 years	Number of new jobs and capital investment in logistics and transportation businesses. Dollars of increased sales and revenue for existing businesses. Partnership efforts with other regional hubs.
4.C.	Establish a process for planning large-scale site development that can be implemented across the County as parcels become available for specific projects	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Identify stakeholders such as community leaders, large landowners, businesses, and school districts, and invite them to join the planning processes, with opportunities for the general public to participate.</li> <li>2) Evaluate the potential to partner with large landowners and developers for cooperative investment such as public/private partnerships and special districts to have users pay for infrastructure.</li> <li>3) Treat workforce as part of the infrastructure - identify skills, availability, and training opportunities located in proximity to sites and fill training gaps. Assess workforce regionally to include those within commuting distance.</li> </ol>	Oswego County Planning, Workforce Development Board, OOC	Low	1-5 years	Number of involved participants, number of projects engaged in and outcomes.
4.D.	Review permitting processes and identify areas for improvement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Periodically review processes at County and municipal levels and identify areas where projects are delayed or incur excess costs; open a dialogue with municipalities about improvements that facilitate projects but retain local review where important. Survey projects about process after completion.</li> <li>2) Publish a consolidated "guidebook" to permitting processes throughout the County; promote on economic development as well as planning websites and make it searchable by community and project type.</li> <li>3) Partner with the Tug Hill Commission to explore potential areas for General Environmental Impact Statements (GEIS) to guide and facilitate development suitable for those areas.</li> <li>4) Work to encourage consistency in land use planning throughout the county as a way to streamline development efforts.</li> </ol>	Oswego County, municipalities	Low	Ongoing	Assessment of processes completed. Guidebook published. GEIS pilot project.
4.E.	Promote workforce training as a major business attraction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Continue to connect employers to the county's unique programs and support existing employer engagement; establish a system to track potential instructors, corporate partners to be ready when new training is needed.</li> <li>2) Continuously update workforce stakeholders about industries targeted, and industries expressing interest, to enhance their ability to train a workforce ready by project completion.</li> <li>3) Support grant writing efforts with information on how workforce initiatives fill countywide goals, employer information, and success stories.</li> </ol>	OOC, Workforce Development Board, CCC, Citi	High	1 year	Number of discussions, and issues resolved collaboratively.

## Goal 4: Become recognized as a superior location for business attraction and growth

Why this is critical: Oswego County can build on its existing reputation for business friendliness and establish itself as a leader in attracting and growing businesses by identifying and enhancing the critical factors businesses need: solid infrastructure, clear planning and permitting, a trained and ready workforce, and well-located and infrastructured sites.

	Objective	Actions	Lead and Partners	Priority Level	Timeframe	Measures for Progress and Success
4.F.	Build strategically located spec buildings	1) Identify strategic locations where businesses will want to locate, using criteria such as location, services, and size. 2) Explore funding partnerships including public/private partnerships. 3) Create and maintain a profile of inquiries about sites and buildings, outcome of inquiries, and reasons if project was abandoned. Assign estimated dollar amount of potential development undertaken and not undertaken. Workforce data collected can be particularly useful for grant writing 4.E.3, above.	OOC	High	Ongoing	Number of sites identified, buildings built, inquiries logged.
4.G.	Highlight the unique cultural fit between County employers and workforce outdoor lifestyle trends and its natural and recreational assets	1) Ensure marketing materials to prospective employers include information on "tourism" activities that fit well within lifestyle preferences of residents and workers. This relates to Action 3.H., a business plan competition for outdoor equipment.	OOC, County Tourism, Planning and Public Information Office	Low	Ongoing	Materials and discussions updated.

## Goal 5: Tell the story - regularly publish performance measures for economic advancement and diversification

Why this is critical: Economic advancement is created through incremental change over time across a broad range of community and investment indicators, many of which are long term or indirect. Publishing indicators and goals strengthens concept of forward motion and encourages (1) recognition of concrete achievements; (2) a "whole picture" approach connecting economic development and community wellbeing; and (3) objective evaluation of success and failure of initiatives.

	Objective	Actions	Lead and Partners	Priority Level	Timeframe	Measures for Progress and Success
5.A.	Adopt and publish a performance dashboard with meaningful measures of economic performance	Use a visually appealing format with multiple indicators to create a "dashboard." Camoin Associates has provided the <a href="#">Oswego Economic Development Annual Performance Update - 2017</a> as a model that can be adopted.	OOC, County Planning	Medium	3 months after Plan adoption	Dashboard published.
5.B.	Establish long term targets and interim milestones to mark and celebrate progress	1) Continue to review and identify measures of economic diversity, demographics, real estate, and investment showing both infrastructure and business investment. The dashboard should be reviewed and updated annually, including changing or adding metrics. 2) Establish intermediate and long term goals for the metrics. For example, adding 1 new Advanced Manufacturing business each year or increasing the size of the commercial tax base to 25%.	OOC, County Planning	Medium	Ongoing	Data updated, targets established, metrics reviewed and revised.
5.C.	Use the metrics to identify successful initiatives and adjust or replace efforts not producing results	Establish a review process and timeline for evaluation. Also see Action 1.A.: collaborative group should discuss responses to ineffective efforts. Metrics include the Annual Performance Update and other measures identified for specific actions throughout this matrix.	OOC, County Planning	Low	Ongoing	Number of initiatives evaluated.
5.D.	Publicize tourism's economic impact - add statistics	Expand the Annual Performance Update to include tourism or create a tourism dashboard; include data such as the number of visits, visitor origin, and spending to show the connection between tourism and local quality of life.	County Tourism and Public Information Office	Medium	Ongoing	Metrics identified and published.

## Additional Guidance

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### Building Organizational Capacity to Achieve the Vision and Goals

*The following strategies related to building organizational capacity and engaging the community appear in the Action Plan Matrix:*

- 1.A. Enhance collaboration among the key organizations promoting growth and community development, including organizations actively involved in economic development activities and allies in areas such as workforce, education, and infrastructure and the Port of Oswego.*
- 1.B. Create a single portal for economic development that showcases the cooperative approach in the County and is easy for newcomers to access.*
- 6.3 Secure and maintain sufficient funding for initial startup capacity building and for ongoing operations.*
- 2.A. Broaden the economic development marketing network to reach stakeholders outside of the business and development community.*

### Organization of a Collaborative Partnership

The *Economic Advancement Plan* should be implemented by a collaborative partnership led by Oswego County and Operation Oswego County, with strong contributions from strategic partners.

Each partner should continue its own initiatives that support their core purposes such as community development (county and municipalities), overall business development and business-to-business (OOC), education, and transportation and logistics, etc.; but also, the participants should come together through a collaborative effort for the purpose of implementing and promoting the Plan.

The internet portal that showcases this cooperative approach, and the activities that broaden the economic development marketing

network, create a unified, welcoming presence that reflects Oswego County's ability to pull together its diverse and vital organizations and communities to achieve common goals.

### Factors for Economic Development Implementation Success

**Trust** both internally and externally amongst the economic development partners.

**Streamlined process and procedures** to help build trust.

**Strong leadership qualities** within the organization including among the board and stakeholders. These include: adaptability and strong leadership in periods of chaos or uncertainty.

**Engagement** among the leaders, and among the many stakeholders and organizations; Building capacity for functioning within a system composed of many networks and building leadership capacity for economic and community development through partnerships, alliances, and initiatives.

**Open and active communications** among the partners.

**Ability to respond and adapt** to changes in the external environment.

**Ability to build capacity and resources for business intelligence, working smarter** including data, research, digital technologies, and information resources.

**Incorporating new funding models** and reducing reliance on government entities.

**On-going assessment and evaluation** for continual improvement and effective/efficient use of funding.



## Appendices

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Under separate cover are six appendices containing the supporting research conducted to develop this Economic Advancement Plan, and the model for ongoing performance measurements. These documents are:

- *Existing Conditions Analysis*
- *Targeted Industry Analysis*
- *Comparison Assessment*
- *Infrastructure Analysis*
- *Oswego Economic Development Annual Performance Update – 2017*
- *Action Plan Matrix*

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