

**Central New York Regional Economic Development Council  
Final Vision Statement**

**Vision**

*Innovation and collaboration will create opportunity for all who live and work in Central New York. We will take ownership over our future; operate in a nimble, efficient and effective manner; and leverage our many assets – natural, agricultural, geographic, economic, educational, cultural, and human – to form a diverse, sustainable and globally competitive economy while preserving and enhancing our region’s treasured quality of life.*

**Mission**

Central New York will be **rich in opportunity** – for our region's innovative businesses, for our world-class workforce, and for all our region’s residents.

We commit to investing in **targeted industry clusters** with comparative advantages and verifiable growth opportunities, including building on our region’s globally-recognized strengths in **clean-technology and renewable energy**, among others.

We will support our businesses’ efforts to compete in the global economy by increasing **exports to global markets**, attracting foreign investments, producing products and services that are sought-after around the world, and connecting Central New York to the world through expanded **broadband** infrastructure.

We will acknowledge that **small businesses** are driving our regional and national economy and we will align our local incentives to reflect that trend.

We will respect Central New York’s **agricultural and manufacturing** heritage, and will ensure a sustainable future for agriculture and manufacturing in the region by adapting these strengths to contemporary challenges. We will work to support value-added agricultural processing and to deliver locally-grown food products to broader markets.

We will support and nurture **innovation** in its many forms: through the creation of new products, new processes and new ventures; and through the application of new ideas to existing businesses to maintain and build competitiveness.

We will continue to grow Central New York’s “Eds and Meds” and expand our leading role in research and development while working to better leverage that R&D into new jobs. And we will expand our recent investments in **entrepreneurs and risk-takers**, including Central New York’s large student population, by providing the human, intellectual and financial capital to explore new ideas that support the social, economic and environmental progress of the region.

We will accelerate Central New York's emergence as a four-season **place of choice** and expand our efforts to attract and retain residents, students and visitors to the region.

We will recognize the central role that city, town and village centers play in driving growth in our region and we will build stronger and more **vibrant neighborhoods, municipal cores and mainstreets** by leveraging existing infrastructure, building human capital, and promoting density in development.

We will encourage and reward creativity and recognize the critical role that **arts and culture** play in vibrant communities. We will continue to promote Central New York as a world-class **tourism destination**, leveraging our unique location at the gateway to the Finger Lakes, Adirondack Park and St. Lawrence Seaway. And we will embrace historic preservation as an economic development strategy, preserving our region's unique architectural and **historic heritage** while building a new and dynamic future for Central New York.

We will make **smart land-use decisions** that respect the rural nature of much of our region while minimizing the long-term fiscal impacts of sprawl. We will look to redevelop existing buildings, brownfields and industrial parks before supporting new greenfield development.

We will maintain a **regional transportation system** (roads, rail, ports, and air) that will leverage Central New York's **geographic location** at the center of North America's most densely populated corridor – within a day's drive of more than 130 million people. We will provide affordable and convenient transportation access that moves both goods to market and people to work, orient our transit system around areas of economic growth, and support growth along corridors already available to public transit.

We will leverage our region's considerable **water resources**, respect our environment and accept that environmental stewardship and economic growth are not principles in conflict, but rather mutually-supportive elements of a **sustainable community**.

We will recognize Central New York's highly-skilled workforce as one of our region's unique assets and acknowledge that education is critical to the long-term economic success of individuals and our region. We will commit to providing access to high-quality primary, secondary and post-secondary **education** to our region's residents and aligning our region's **workforce development**, training and education programs with existing and forthcoming economic opportunities.

We will support our **first-rate healthcare** system as both a critical service to our community and a major economic engine for the region.

We will work to raise the standard of living for individuals and families in Central New York by prioritizing **quality jobs** with career ladders, not simply the quantity of jobs created. And we will do so in a way that embraces our region's **growing diversity** and allows for New Americans, immigrants, refugees and the traditionally under-served to share **equitably** in the benefits of our future prosperity.

Central New York will set the standard for cross-sector **collaborations** within the region, within the state and around the world because new and meaningful ideas emerge at the intersection of diverse, existing knowledge.

We will **advocate** for changes in state and federal policies – including tax and regulatory reform – that will further enhance our region's competitiveness by identifying both obstacles and opportunities, and by being engaged and educated participants in the legislative and regulatory processes.

Most importantly, we will **take ownership of our own future** by becoming as **nimble, efficient and effective** as we can be as a region – in particular through our **civic and governmental institutions** – to better enable the timely, complete and successful implementation of this vision for our region.

By holding ourselves and our partners **accountable** to this vision – through measurable outcomes – Central New York will be rich in opportunity for all who live and work here.