



Notes on a Sustainable Regional Economy from Sustainable Tompkins

www.sustainabletompkins.org

September 29, 2011

Ithaca, NY

1. The concept of sustainability requires a triple bottom line analysis of social responsibility, ecological stewardship, and economic viability over the long run. All investment and training should be focused on a sober forecast of future conditions related to population density and status of our life support systems (e.g. impacts of climate change on water and land resources).
2. In order to protect the interests of the most vulnerable in our communities, we should prioritize job development (not just profit development) and put people to work meeting our basic needs for food and energy security. That security can only be achieved by slowing the rate of climate change. Thus, we have to develop renewable energy infrastructure, not fossil energy infrastructure.
3. We need to invest in programs that strengthen household economies via greater capacity for self-provisioning and community-based sharing and trading networks. This creates buffering capacity with respect to the cash economy and improves resilience for individuals and municipalities.
4. Economic Justice and Equity may be the most strategic and sustainable economic development strategy available. This would reduce poverty, strengthen democracy and sense of shared community, reduce overhead of social service agencies, and increase support for investment in public infrastructure. All of this is part of a viable local economy.
5. We should hedge our bets on the future of high tech, tourism, health care, and global exports by taking precautionary step of assuring basic security via widespread and equitable employment and profit sharing in the food and energy sectors.

Building a Resilient, Fair, and Responsible Economy

The failures of global growth capitalism are apparent to anyone feeling uncertain about their economic future – from the Baby Boomer eyeing retirement with greatly diminished health and pension benefits, to the young graduate frustrated by the lack of opportunity, to the middle-aged couple underwater in their mortgage and trapped by rising property taxes and household debt.

As tough as we think our situation is, these pains and anxieties are modest compared to the traumas felt in other countries and parts of our nation due to the exploitative aspects of globalization. Thankfully, the antidote to this downward spiral lies in the hands of the people, in our communities. As globalization has funneled immense wealth to transnational corporations, while depleting resources and displacing people, a countering force based on the principles of sustainability, social justice, and local economies has emerged.

Localization of our economy is essential if we are to buffer ourselves from speculative bubbles and escalating food and energy prices. In a local economy, it is easier to prevent the corruption and abuse of power that comes with concentrated wealth. Connections are easier to see. Cause and effect are visible. Relationships are more accountable. Best of all, we have the capacity to strengthen our local economy by growing our already impressive reserves of social capital, natural capital, and financial capital.

Localization of the economy shifts the power from channels of accumulation for the few into channels of distribution for the many. Ithaca is very much a part of the re-localization movement taking root across the globe. We've been pioneers on many fronts for several decades, and now we see an even richer upwelling of creativity and empowerment underway. Our challenge is to design a local economy that works for everyone and takes advantage of the power of entrepreneurship, sharing, local supply chains, self-provisioning, and local investment.

It's important to recognize that the economy is more than cash or the stock market or the GDP. The "eco" in economy comes from the Greek word "oikos" for household, and historically most household economies were characterized by self-provisioning, sharing, and trading. These non-cash transactions are at the heart of local self-reliance, whether done by individuals, families, or communities. There's been a marvelous explosion of interest in local self-reliance over the past decade in our community as people have come together to teach each other skills, grow gardens, share resources, and trade just about anything. A sinking global economy is a major motivation, but participants are discovering a sturdy sense of resiliency from strengthened community ties and new abilities to provide for themselves. New social media platforms such as those provided by Share Tompkins make it easy to find each other.

Buying products and services from local businesses is fundamental to localization as it prevents leakage of dollars out of our community and into the hands of outside shareholders and corporate structures. Local First Ithaca, our local BALLE chapter, encourages the development of local supply chains to meet our needs, create jobs, and keep our money circulating in our

community. Equally important is the need to invest in our own community – through our purchases, through our local banks and credit unions, and via direct green infrastructure investments.

But our responsibility doesn't stop there. A truly sustainable and resilient economy must be based on principles of fairness and finding ways to share the wealth in a local economy so that the overall community can thrive. For example, the pipeline for green collar workforce training has to reach into diverse pockets of potential employees so that everyone in our community has a chance to participate in a local, clean economy. We also need to distribute workloads and profits such that everyone can be paid a living wage. Nurturing the entrepreneurial spirit needed for innovation and risk taking is most successful when everyone has a stake in the future – making worker-owned cooperatives an exciting tool for pooling resources and talent and sharing the profits.

We'll be visiting these topics and more at the next gathering of the Sustainable Enterprise & Entrepreneur Network (SEEN) from 5:30-8:00 on June 13 at La Tourelle on Rt. 96B. Our topic is "*Sharing The Wealth: Social & Economic Tools For Building Equity in a Sustainable Economy*" and our panelists include Dee Gamble, Green Jobs Coordinator for Tompkins County Cooperative Extension; Linda Holzbour, Community Organizer, Tompkins County Workers Center; and Joe Marraffino, Cooperative Organizer, Democracy at Work Network. You can get all the details at www.theseen.org or email Scott@greenresourcehub.org.

Gay Nicholson is President of Sustainable Tompkins and Treasurer for the Green Resource Hub.

Sharing and Self-Reliance in a Sustainable Economy

It was another serene summer evening as I joined TeeAnn Hunter, Town of Ithaca board member, for a tour of the town's West Hill community garden near the Linderman Creek Apartments. TeeAnn was the driving force behind the garden, leading the effort to win a Park Foundation grant for the garden's impressive deer fence. The large garden now serves a diverse mix of residents working the soil to grow their own organic fruits and vegetables. Sustainable Tompkins had supported the garden with \$750 in mini-grants to buy tools, seeds, and fruit trees; and I was pleased to see the red raspberry bushes donated from my garden in full bushy splendor, loaded with ripening berries.

All across our community, people are stepping into their gardens to weed and water, and to revel in the joy of harvesting fresh, healthy food for their tables. During our visit, two older Ukrainian residents beamed with pride as we gestured our praise for their thriving plots of potatoes, tomatoes, currants, and dozens of other vegetables. I believe we all shared that curious mix of feelings that gardening brings: of soul satisfaction from the beauty of the textures, scents, and physicality of being in the garden; alongside a bit of pride about the exquisite taste and good health shared with those who will eat our harvest. But woven throughout the gardener's emotions is the sense of safety that arises out of the ability to feed oneself.

There are many reasons for the rapid increase in popularity of community gardens, but fundamental to the trend is the economic impact it has on households made vulnerable by the teetering global economy. For so many modern Americans, the garden is where they are rediscovering the oldest form of household economy – self provisioning. The more you can provide for yourself, the less money you have to spend on hiring others to do things for you, and the more autonomy and freedom you experience in your life because you are less dependent on a paycheck handed to you by somebody else.

When we garden, we reduce our need for grocery dollars in our household budget, but we are also likely to save a bundle of money on doctor bills down the road because of the outdoor exercise and healthier diet. Learning to sew and refashion clothing is another time-tested act of self reliance, as is learning to preserve food or repair your house, appliances, furniture, cars, and bikes. All of the above activities are well supported by local citizen groups and nonprofits providing training and support (see the Tompkins Sustainability Map at <http://maps.sustainabletompkins.org/>). There is a really rich local movement toward reclaiming skills that our grandparents typically possessed.

Right alongside the trend of "Do It Yourself" has been the instinct for sharing and trading as ways to replace cash flow in a household economy. Sharing comes naturally within families, among neighbors, and between gardeners; which often leads to swapping and trading. Extra garden produce, tools, knowledge, tips, child care, pet care, clothing.... the list is long of what people typically share or swap. Locally we've witnessed a boom in much broader sharing and trading networks as our community becomes ever more creative at using social media for shifting economic value away from cash transactions (for example Ithaca Freecycle, Share Tompkins, Ithaca Freeskool, crop mobs, Swidjit, Harvestation). The ethic of sharing is being rediscovered as people discover the good feelings of mutual aid and a lighter footprint on the earth.

The stock market is reeling again, Europe is nervous, U.S. democracy is on the ropes. Gardeners carry their harvest inside as the fireflies begin to dance, and feel comforted that this, at least, is within their control.

Gay Nicholson is President of Sustainable Tompkins and a long-time gardener.

Planning for Sustainable Regional Economic Development

Governor Cuomo recently announced a new approach to solving the state's growing economic problems. With the formation of 10 regional economic development councils, Cuomo hopes to channel all state and federal resources for job creation and business development through a more coordinated, appropriate, and community-based framework for growth. The Southern Tier regional council will be co-chaired by Cornell President David Skorton and Corning CEO Tom Tranter, and includes 30 municipal, academic, and business reps from the 8 counties in the region.

According to their public input survey, they want to develop a "5-year plan for long-term, sustainable regional economic development" based on "community-driven strategies for job creation" that "comprehensively address regional needs and priorities." The structure of the survey reveals assumptions that university-based tech transfer, gas drilling, agriculture, tourism, air and interstate transport, and existing global businesses are the primary engines for economic development and the likely sites for investment of public tax dollars. Absent from the survey are questions related to the elements of a truly sustainable economy or the distribution of jobs and investment across income classes.

Fundamental to a sustainable economy is the preservation of natural systems – our underlying life support that allows human societies to function. Also fundamental to the concept of sustainability is a focus on enabling the well being of *everyone*. If Cuomo and the regional councils are serious about long-term sustainability, they need to abandon the failed models of growth capitalism and globalization that tend to exploit natural systems, funnel wealth to elites, and utterly depend upon cheap fossil fuel. Designing for a sustainable and just economy is going to require radically different thinking on the part of the council members, who mostly represent institutions and industries following conventional economic models (which tend to engage in wishful thinking when it comes to calculations involving Earth's resilience or the Market's wisdom about fair distribution).

How we should approach the challenge of designing for a sustainable economy has a lot to do with what we perceive the future to be like. Sustainability advocates point to the negative trends around climate change, more costly methods of fossil fuel extraction, collapse of global markets, and dwindling global water supplies. This leads us to put the focus on rebuilding local economic networks with a strong emphasis on food and energy security, and protection of fresh water supplies. A focus on restoring our regional food system and developing fossil-free energy sources would put many people to work while safeguarding the core economy needed for our basic existence. The greatest resilience would come if we made sure that food and clean energy jobs were filled by those shut out of technical or higher education careers. Everyone's long-term interests will be protected when we design our economy to distribute ownership and profits throughout society. Historically, the upstate economy consisted of many modest-sized, locally-owned and interwoven enterprises. This supported a rich fabric of civic life, inventiveness, and pioneering social movements.

It might not be considered glamorous to invest in small enterprises, worker-owned cooperatives, and local food and energy systems, but the concept of sustainability isn't glamorous, merely pragmatic and fair. Spending our limited tax dollars on infrastructure and enterprises that rely on cheap fossil fuel and market demand in other countries is likely to be a poor investment given the trends we face. Putting a broad range of people to work in supplying our basic needs within our region will buffer us from perturbations in the global economy and prevent friction caused by high unemployment and destitution. High tech will certainly be a part of our future, but our universities, governments, and financial institutions need to make equal efforts to foster an economy that creates ownership and decision making power among people outside of the educated elite.

Tompkins Weekly Signs of Sustainability

October 3, 2011

Worker Cooperatives Can Revitalize Our Economy

Leaders in the sustainability movement believe that the most promising economic development strategy available may be a focus on economic justice. This would reduce poverty and increase tax revenues, strengthen democracy and the sense of a shared future, reduce the tax burden for social services, and increase support for investments in education and public infrastructure. All of these are part of a viable and sustainable local economy.

Worker cooperatives can be an important tool in this strategy. According to the Democracy Collaborative at the University of Maryland, cooperatives can create a green and just economy by building community wealth "in which ownership is broadly shared, locally rooted, and directed toward the common good." Worker cooperatives are businesses owned and democratically controlled by their workers. They have been organized since the dawn of the industrial revolution and have been successful in virtually every industry - from mining companies, to robotics firms, taxi drivers, health care providers, food processors, to creative and technology firms - anywhere where the workers and their community would benefit from having a stake in their workplace and the incentive of receiving an equitable share of the fruits of their labor.

While worker cooperatives have been a steady presence in modern history, they have surged during times of economic dislocation, and rapid cultural and technological change. During the massive movement of capital and jobs out of the upstate region in the 1970s and 1980s, a wave of efforts to create and save jobs through cooperatives and employee ownership rose up in Jamestown, Herkimer, Saratoga, the Mohawk Valley, Ithaca and elsewhere.

The wave was given technical assistance by the NYS School of Industrial and Labor Relations and supported by government loans. State workers, researchers and organizers in Central New York were considered authorities throughout the country, structuring buyouts and training workers. In the mid-1980s the New York State Legislature formalized their support by writing a new article into State Corporations law recognizing the benefits of the worker cooperative model.

Worker cooperatives can have profound social benefits in terms of job satisfaction and empowerment of citizens through the everyday practice of democratic participation. They have also been shown to have significant economic benefits, both at an individual and regional level. Participation in decision-making and an equitable share of profits increases worker productivity and creativity, and decreases the need for supervision. A broad base of employee ownership increases economic stability by increasing the incentive for firms and workers to stay in the region and via the multiplier effect of worker/resident's local spending. Worker cooperatives also build and retain locally-rooted assets for workers who may have no other path to wealth creation or entry to the middle class.

In our current economic climate, worker cooperatives are increasingly being seen by governments, community groups, and workers as a valuable tactic to stabilize regional economies, create and retain local jobs, and create assets for residents, including those that may have no other path to enter the middle class. For example, *Cooperative Home Care Associates*, a NYC home health care business, has over 1,500 worker-owners and annual income of over \$40 million. The cooperative has helped raise the base pay for the entire sector of workers in the region, and has created full-time work and career paths in an industry notorious for its instability and low pay. South of Rochester, one of the oldest worker cooperatives in the country, the 35-year-old, and \$18 million per year food processor *Once Again Nut Butter* has grown and created jobs despite regional closures and layoffs.

The Finger Lakes and Southern Tier regions need a program to mobilize the creation of regional worker cooperatives. Worker cooperatives need technical assistance to get started. They need incubation services, connections with investments, and organizational development that is not available through existing business development agencies. This need exists in part because of the relative lack of familiarity that banks, attorneys, and workers have with the model, and also because of some unique aspects of the model itself.

Sustainable Tompkins is proposing a pilot project of an incubator and technical assistance center for worker coops. Let's make sure that economic justice is at the heart of our economic development strategy. It's good for business. Contact us at info@sustainabletompkins.org to learn more and get involved.

*Joe Marraffino is a Cooperative Organizer with Democracy at Work Network
Gay Nicholson is President of Sustainable Tompkins*

Theresa F. Alt

Ithaca NY 14850 (Tompkins Co.)

talt@igc.org

To: Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council

From: Theresa F. Alt

Re: Regional Needs and Ideas

Date: September 29, 2011

We don't need fracking. It will raise our cost of living, ruin the environment, and then be gone, leaving us holding the bag. *5 of your 8 areas could be adversely affected by fracking.*

Government should support only jobs that pay a living wage. In Tompkins County that means \$11.67/hour if health insurance is provided or \$12.78 without insurance. Anything lower just burdens social services, creates a local tax burden.

Tax breaks have not worked well in the past. Too often the money has gone into high executive salaries and profits. Focus on direct job creation. It will have a multiplier effect, as employed people start shopping locally.

Support training to help working people form cooperatives. This is a more stable form of business than sole proprietorships, small partnerships, or transient corporations. The rest of the world recognizes that, for instance, the Mondragon Cooperatives of Spain, a huge success story in a region that looks a bit like the Finger Lakes, have developed the cutting edge in management technique -- very cost-efficient thanks to a narrow ratio between high and low salaries.

A statewide single-payer health insurance system would remove a lot of obstacles to development.



BETTER HOUSING

for Tompkins County

BETTER HOUSING. BETTER LIVES. BETTER COMMUNITIES.

Date: 9.28.11
To: The Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council
From: John Spence
Executive Director
Better Housing for Tompkins County

Better Housing for Tompkins County has a thirty year history of working to provide the rural residents of Tompkins County with affordable housing options.

The TC Planning Department has done an admirable job documenting the growing need for affordable housing locally. The update to their 2006 comprehensive study of the subject will be released in the coming weeks.

The 2006 Affordable Housing Needs Assessment (AHNA) focused on the need for newly constructed units to meet the growing demand. That study stated that 54% of the 3,894 new units required by 2014, rental and for-purchase, need to be affordable by families earning 80% of median household income. The majority of those 2,114 units need to be rental properties; 1,316 vs. 798.

We at Better Housing agree with those findings. We have a proposal being submitted in the next application round for tax-credit funding to support the construction of 65 new units of affordable family rental units in the Village of Lansing. The proposed location is close to Cornell and other employers such as Borg Warner, and is on established sewer, water and public transportation lines. Residents will be able to walk to many of the services offered in the Village of Lansing such as shops, restaurants, movie theaters, and the YMCA.

New, affordable housing options close to services and to employment should be a priority when considering the high number of commuters who daily drive in to their jobs in Tompkins County, more than 14,000 in 2006.

The AHNA did not address is the need for funding for the rehab and repair of Tompkins County's aging housing stock. That need is significant given the age of many of the homes in rural districts, the pockets of poverty that exist in the county, and the expenses associated with maintaining and heating such homes through our long winters.



Last year Better Housing applied to HOME for \$400,000 to be used in 15-18 housing rehab projects. We have had success in partnering with other agencies to leverage additional funds to provide energy improvements along with structural repairs. We were not funded last year but Bishop Sheen of Rochester received \$500,000 for housing rehab projects that could only be spent in Tompkins County! And this was on top of \$200,000 they had not spent for the same purpose from a previous grant! \$700,000 for Tompkins County housing rehab projects being administered from an office in Rochester when there is a local agency with a superb reputation for managing such programs located within the County makes no sense.

We have resubmitted the application to HOME and hope that the Governor's interest in the efficient use of public funds brings about a different result.

We are being told that funding applications for affordable housing projects, new and restorative, will now go through the Regional Economic Development Councils. But we haven't been told what that might mean in terms of priorities, eligibility, or agency, county, or district collaborations.

How will the creation of the Development Councils impact the funding that is available to support rural affordable housing? Any clarification would be greatly appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,


John Spence

Jeff Furman

Ithaca, NY 14850

August 31, 2011

Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council
c/o David Skorton, President, Cornell University
Day Hall
Cornell University
Ithaca, NY 14853

Dear members of the Southern Tier Regional Council:

I would like to present some thoughts for economic development in the Southern Tier focusing on Tompkins County.

By way of background, I have more than 30 years experience in small business consulting and development, with degrees in business and law. I wrote the first business plan for Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream and have been and continue to be deeply involved with its economic growth, and particularly the implementation of many of its socially responsible initiatives. Currently, I am Chairman of the Ben & Jerry's Board of Directors.

Throughout all my professional life, I have held a steadfast commitment that businesses can and should operate using a socially responsible model. At Ben & Jerry's, we demonstrated that it is right, powerful, and possible to lead a company using social values. Today, a growing number of small businesses operate with economic, social, and environmental missions, often referred to as "triple bottom line" companies. It is through this lens that I make the following observations about the potential for innovative, cutting edge economic activity for our area.

Tompkins County is well positioned to become one of the US hubs for social entrepreneurship because of its history, its community and human resources, and the close cultural and political fit with socially responsible economics. Here are some of the reasons I believe we should be working toward such a vision.

First, we can capitalize on the national trend. Most MBA programs, including Ithaca College's new Park Center for Business and Sustainable Enterprise and Cornell's Johnson School of Management now include course work in social entrepreneurship. You may be aware that several thousand MBA students attend an annual Net Impact Conference, eager to learn more about successful socially responsible businesses. Tens of thousands of ordinary citizens attend Green Festivals around the country, building the market for products that protect our environment. Other values-led economic initiatives include a national movement to establish B-Corporations, massive small scale alternative

energy research and development, local food movements, a revolution in green building technologies, and so on. Some grow to scale, some are bought by large multi-nationals, some stay small, and some close their doors.

Second, the reach for Tompkins County to become a hub isn't that far. Already, Ithaca and its surrounding area regularly win national recognition for beautiful scenery, recreation opportunities, clean air and water, a well-educated and civic-minded populace, good public schools, rich cultural life, a reasonable cost of living for some, strong human service sector, a well established Farmers Market and growing organic farm network, good labor practices, etc. This demonstrates that we already possess the most important element for a magnet hub: *a highly sought-after quality of life that draws and retains creative, talented people.*

Third, these businesses are frequently concerned with the environment, so they have better environmental practices and are more likely to be engaged in the green market sector, such as R&D and manufacture of renewable energy resources. One example: a new company in Tompkins County that makes tiny batteries that can be recharged by the vibrations of a car. Another example: Comet Skateboards located in Ithaca three years ago because the owner wanted to manufacture a biodegradable product, and the research firm that created the eco-friendly materials was located here. In the area of agriculture, the region (and whole state for that matter) has seen steady growth of local foods and organic farms. In the past 20 years, the number of regional Community Supported Agriculture farms in our area has grown from 3 to 25. This year in Tompkins County alone, sales to CSAs will top \$1 million, according the Cornell Cooperative Extension.

Fourth, by focusing on extending our most important assets for further development, we carefully and consciously create business practices that protect those assets. Socially responsible businesses require a diverse economy with synergistic relationships with other sectors of the community, including education, research firms, financial investment, and a flexible, educated workforce.

Fifth, moving in this direction requires little financial resources and no risk. We do not need to create the "brand"; it already exists. Instead, we need to package it and promote it with appropriate incentives. I know there are hundreds of young entrepreneurs seeking a place that will support both their business and quality of life aspirations.

Sixth, triple bottom line businesses are typically strong supporters of charities and community services, thus providing additional resources to assist those who may need government services. Also, these businesses often compensate employees well, strengthening regional economic vitality.

I have had the good fortune in my life to meet and work with many people who have created and built businesses that operate from a strong social perspective. Despite hundreds of success stories, many still doubt that such a movement is real. But those of us who have lived through it know differently.

I believe that we now have the place, energy, need, and potential resources to create a magnet center for social entrepreneurship that opens up a promise for the future. I am happy to help in any way I can. You can reach me at jfurman@twcny.rr.com or at 607-

Sincerely,

Jeff Furman

Presented September 29, 2011, at the Women's Community Building, Ithaca, New York, to the Southern Tier Economic Development Council:

Good evening. I am Tom Shelley. I have lived in Ithaca for 36 years. I am retired, since 2003, from Cornell University's Department of Environmental Health and Safety where I worked for 17 years as a chemical and laboratory safety specialist. I now volunteer for a number of organizations, all related to the local sustainability movement. I am member of the board of directors of Sustainable Tompkins and current board chair. I also chair for TCLocal, a research organization dedicated to the pending energy descent and community resiliency issues. I volunteer for five programs at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County, in a wide variety of capacities. I am involved in several local, sustainable and urban agriculture projects. I have been for some time a member of the City of Ithaca Conservation Advisory Council and I am a newly appointed member of the City of Ithaca Comprehensive Plan Committee. I have also volunteered, as a presenter, for Shaleshock, Gas Free Seneca, the Committee to Protect New York, DRAC and several other related organizations.

My comments this evening are my own, but they also convey the sentiments of a wide variety of and very large majority of the individuals to whom I relate in my volunteer activities.

- 1) We facing an energy descent. As global demand for energy expands, and as fossil fuels are used up we will have less energy of all forms and at increasingly higher costs—economic, social, and environmental. We can not pretend to carry on business as usual in these times and we need to prepare our communities for a very different future than the one conjured up by “business as usual”. In this regard, programs to reduce and conserve our energy use will better prepare us for the changes ahead. Energy will be the limit to our growth and any growth must be sustainable. We must strive towards a model of steady state growth and renewal instead of the constant increased consumption of materials and energy, all of which will hit a succession of peaks over time.
- 2) We are also, more rapidly than once supposed, being affected by climate change. From state agencies to local governments there have come many proposals to reduce the rate of CO₂ production. Hundreds of mayors, college presidents, CEOs of large corporations and other leaders have signed such climate change conventions. It must be the goals of any economic activity to respect and further the climate change goals of local governments. Thus any heavy industries or polluting extractive industries are going to defeat the local and regional climate change goals and must be disallowed. Once again, developing an economy based on local carbon neutral sources of energy and the means to ensure that local programs to reduce and conserve energy are effective will help us meet, not defeat, our collective climate change goals.
- 3) We must first develop a sustainable regional economy that reinforces our traditional industries—agriculture and farming, the wine industry, education and tourism. These core industries need our on-going support and development.
- 4) We need to develop new, sustainable economic activities that promote the above stated goals of CO₂ reduction, energy conservation, the development of non-fossil fuel energy sources, community resiliency, and sustainable growth. Some things that could be done are:
 - a) Small business development. We need many local firms, small businesses that can support the above goals. While high tech spin-offs re helpful to local economies they generally fit more into the “business as usual” model than not. Lots of new, start up firms need to developed, especially in the energy efficiency and conservation arena.



Empire State Future

A Project of the Tides Center

We are a coalition of 49 organizations working to revitalize New York's main streets, town centers, and urban areas. Our top priority is to link smart growth principles to the far-reaching land use and development decisions that are made every day. Smart growth can help restore prosperity and maintain our quality-of-life in New York by building a healthy economy. Smart growth entails offering real choices in transportation, housing, and employment, while respecting farmland, open space, and natural and historic resources.

Empire State Future (ESF) supports the widespread use of smart growth values in order to:

- Advance sustainable and equitable growth across New York State
- Restore prosperity and reduce poverty by reinvesting in existing population centers
- Promote development organized around public transportation and pedestrian circulation in mixed-use and mixed-income urban, suburban, and rural centers
- Discourage urban sprawl and low-density, automobile-based development
- Build affordable, accessible housing for the full range of residents, especially in expanding areas
- Strengthen rural economies by protecting open space, farmland, and water supplies
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and energy demand
- Maximize public return from public infrastructure investments.

Our three-year old non-profit advocacy group promotes common ground between developers and environmentalists. We believe in growth that brings jobs, stability and prosperity. Growth can substantially improve our communities if it is sustainable and sensitive to context. ESF supports expansion that serves all New Yorkers by turning smart growth principles into common practice.

New York's regions face highly varied land use and development challenges. New York City, projected to add one million people in a generation, will need to clean up and reuse brownfields, expand transit capacity, address housing affordability and upgrade the electric grid while wrestling with social equity, environmental justice and gentrification concerns. New York's fast-growing suburbs – Orange, Dutchess, Putnam and Suffolk Counties, are projected to grow rapidly over the next 25 years. Their challenges will include maintaining quality-of-life, historic village character, family farming and water quality.

Upstate's rural areas are experiencing employment and population loss, youth flight and an aging population. These ills and aging infrastructure afflict upstate's cities and first-ring suburbs.

bob re compost

Faced with ongoing population stagnation and decline, it is not fiscally sustainable for New York State's numerous shrinking jurisdictions to continue to add new infrastructure. Extending roads, bridges, curbs, schools, water and sewer further into the countryside, while continuing to maintain older urban infrastructure, is counterproductive. This is highlighted when municipal services including: health, education, police, and fire, are provided to small, inefficiently-scaled communities spread out county-wide. The result is a piling on of debt, costs and services, consequentially leading to increases in property taxes or dramatic cuts in services. Neither is desirable as both extends the vicious fiscal cycle that now distresses much of Upstate New York.

Our coalition seeks to address this growing economic imbalance by building on the existing public investments in infrastructure and community. Doing so provides citizens with neighborhoods built in a fiscally sustainable fashion. These are places where families feel safe, homes are affordable, and schools, stores, and recreation are nearby. We seek places that promote a healthy lifestyle, where citizens are offered the prospect of walking, riding a bike, taking public transit or driving short distances, as they choose. In short, we seek ***livable communities with fiscal and environmental sustainability***.

Putting smart growth principles into action is a *win-win* for many of our cherished values. Smart growth means not using public funds to encourage or induce sprawl, allowing for better schools and safer neighborhoods by strengthening the financial underpinnings of urbanized areas. This advances the cause for environmental justice by expanding choices and affordability in housing, and by creating jobs closer to homes. Smart growth decreases energy-dependent activities and supports public transit, in effect reducing development pressure on our farms and forests.

In a distressed economy, the application of smart growth principles is essential. Taxpayer provided public funds are used wisely and conservatively when they are invested in growth that is equitable and sustainable. This is the type of growth that creates sustainable long-term jobs. Smart growth allows a right-sized American Dream to thrive in a new and changing century.

To advance our mission, Empire State Future works in several vital program areas:

Policy and Governance

On September 1, 2010, the Public Infrastructure Priority Act was enacted by the Governor. ESF is committed to work with our allies and coalition partners to insure that state agencies will fully implement and comply with the reform. In addition, we will: continue to advocate for future bills that encourage smart growth and draw attention to the use of state funds that is -- or is not -- consistent with smart growth principles.

ESF and our partners support the following efforts: Full funding of the Environmental Protection Fund, Complete Streets legislation, Land Banking Authority, Higher Speed Rail, Tax Increment Financing, Brown Field Opportunity Areas, and Work Force Housing. ESF will lead collaborative efforts to advance our mission.

Demonstration Initiatives

ESF will engage in regional efforts to link affordable housing initiatives with smart growth efforts including: Transit Oriented Developments, Brownfield Opportunity Areas, infill infrastructure, comprehensive planning, and urban revitalization. We selectively assist local efforts to remove, “right-size” or re-envision obsolete or underused transportation infrastructure. We assist efforts to bring Broad Band to the Adirondack and Catskill regions.

Communications & Outreach

Our coalition looks for opportunities to educate the public, civic organizations, local elected officials, and news outlets about smart growth principles and the current state of land use practices in New York State. We strive to highlight the possibilities for better outcomes, and garner editorial support for our objectives. We seek to make the important connection between long-term financial integrity, enlightened land-use and development planning obvious across New York. We highlight smart growth news and developments via www.empirestatefuture.org.

To expand our reach and advance our goals, we expand the ESF membership geographically and functionally. We provide assistance to interested and capable organizations around the state who want to join the smart growth campaign.

Support

ESF is funded by membership dues and foundations including the JM Kaplan Fund, New York Community Trust, Rochester Area Community Foundation, Ford Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, Surdna Foundation, and the Fund for the Environment & Urban Life- The Oram Foundation, Inc.

Organization

The Empire State Future coalition includes the following organizations:

Adirondack Council*	Local Initiatives Support Corporation, Buffalo	Rochester Regional Community Design Center
American Farmland Trust	Natural Resources Defense Council	Scenic Hudson*
American Institute of Architects – New York	The Nature Conservancy - New York	Sierra Club – Atlantic Chapter
American Institute of Architects – New York State	NeighborWorks – Rochester	Smart Growth America
American Planning Association – Upstate	New York Civic	Sustainable Hudson Valley
Audubon New York	NYS Assn. of County Health Officials	Sustainable Long Island
Bike Walk Alliance of Westchester & Putnam Counties	New York Planning Federation	Sustainable Saratoga
Binghamton Regional Sustainability Coalition	New York State League of Conservation Voters*	Sustainable South Bronx
Catskill Center	New York State League of Women Voters	Syracuse First
Centerstate Corporation for Economic Opportunity *	New York State Urban Council – Syracuse	The Stakeholders Inc.
East Coast Greenway Alliance	Orange County Citizens' Foundation	Tri-State Transportation Campaign
Environmental Advocates of New York*	Parks and Trails New York	The Urban Land Institute - New York
FXFOWLE, Architects	Partners for a Livable Western New York*	VISION Long Island*
Green Village Consulting	Pattern for Progress	WEACT for Environmental Justice
IBI Group - Consulting, Philadelphia	Preservation League of New York State	Wildlife Conservation Society
Jonathan Rose Companies	Project For Public Spaces	Sustainable Hudson Valley
Leyland Alliance	Regional Plan Association*	

An Advisory Committee comprised of eight member organizations (designated by an asterisk) oversees policy, approves budgets, and provides guidance to the Executive Director. Empire State Future is a project of the Tides Center, a 501(c)3 organization. The Tides Center is the fiscal and administrative host.

For additional information about Empire State Future, or to comment on this document, please contact our Executive Director:

Peter B. Fleischer

119 Washington Avenue, 3rd Floor, Albany, NY 12210

(518)427-5954

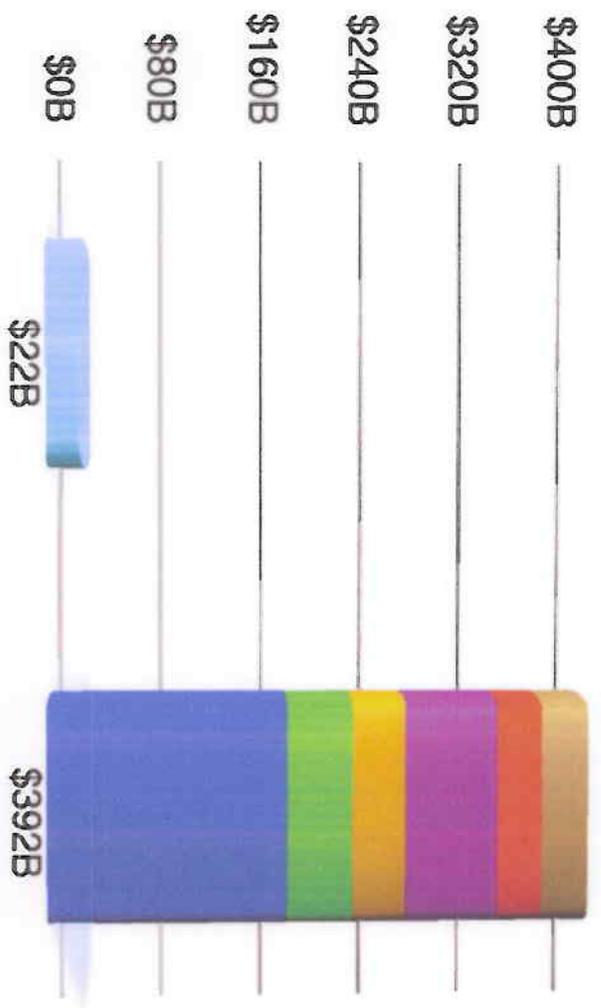
Email: pfleischer@empirestatefuture.org

www.empirestatefuture.org

Marcellus Shale: Gains, Risks, Tradeoffs

(Revenue estimates over 20-year extraction period)

Revenues from agriculture, wine, tourism



Potential gains to upstate economies from 20 years of extraction = \$22 Billion

Gas Wells **\$22bn**

Revenues from agriculture, wine, tourism

- Wildlife Watching **\$32bn**
- Hunting and Fishing **\$32bn**
- Grapes and Wine **\$68bn**
- Dairy Products **\$39bn**
- Farm Receipts **\$48bn**
- Tourism **\$173bn**

At-risk revenue from rich agricultural lands and products = \$155 Billion
 At-risk revenue from our attractions that bring visitors = \$237 Billion

Sources: USDA Nat'l Agricultural Statistics Service, NYS Dept. of Agriculture, stufaboutstates.com, NYS Agricultural Statistics Service, U.S. Census Bureau, Adirondack Base Camp, Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Times Leader. Full footnotes and calculation methods on following slide.

Marcellus Shale: Gains, Risks, Tradeoffs

Footnotes and Methodology

Gas Wells **\$22bn**

1 February 25, 2009 Times Leader. "Amid cheap gas, Pa. drillers carry on". State is not seeing the same reduction in Marcellus Shale drilling as other areas. By Rory Sweeney rsweeney@timesleader.com Staff Writer
http://www.timesleader.com/news/hottopics/shale/Amid_cheap_gas_Pa_drillers_carry_on_02-25-2009.html

The contribution value was computed using a 50 trillion cubic feet estimate of recoverable gas multiplied by 25% for the fraction in New York State; \$14 per 1000 cubic feet, the high price in summer 2008; 12.5%, royalty for land owners get. Not included in the calculation were upfront lease payments, nor costs imposed on localities and landowners due to damage to infrastructure, loss of use of farmland or loss of potable water.

Farm Receipts **\$48bn**

2 National Agricultural Statistics Services - see New York State and Cash Receipts link(at URL below) \$3.65 billion annually over 20 years = \$73 billion http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/New_York/Publications/County_Estimates/index.asp

Dairy Products **\$39bn**

3 Stuff about States. New York State, select dairy products. \$1.95 billion cash receipts in 2004. Original source: NYS Dept. of Agriculture. Cash receipts total \$39 billion over 20 years. <http://stuffaboutstates.com/new.york/agriculture.htm>

Hunting and Fishing **\$32bn**

Wildlife Watching **\$32bn**

4 New York total annual Hunting and Fishing income: \$1.6 Billion. Wildlife Watching \$1.6 billion. From U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service New York 2006 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation <http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/fishing.html>

Grapes and Wine **\$68bn**

5 New York Agricultural Statistics Service, op. cit: \$3.4 billion annually: New York's Grape, Grape Juice and Wine Industry Profile, Source, NY Agricultural Statistics, 2007-2008 Annual Bulletin, Table 34, over 20 years = \$68 billion

Tourism **\$173bn**

6 "Tourism Impact in the Adirondacks." The Marcellus Shale counties constitute about 17% of the \$51 billion spent in New York in 2007, or \$8.67 billion per year; this equals \$173 billion over 20 years. <http://www.adirondackbasecamp.com/2008/09/tourism-impact-adirondacks/>



League of Women Voters of Tompkins County

Ithaca, New York 14850

www.lwvtompkins.org

To: The Regional Economic Development Council for the Southern Tier

From: The League of Women Voters of Tompkins County

Sent by: Catherine Wagner, Chair of the Natural Resources Committee, cmw18@cornell.edu

The League of Women Voters of Tompkins County thanks you for your efforts to help the Southern Tier develop a vibrant, healthy and sustainable economy. We are optimistic that the plan you create will serve as a blueprint to broaden our economic base and stimulate economic growth, independent of the outcome of the statewide competition for support. With this in mind we want to make a few observations and suggestions.

The Southern Tier is known for its good quality of life, as a place that is wonderful for raising families, and as a region having a healthy environment (including the water we drink and the air we breathe). It is also known for its strong presence of the arts, top educational institutions, and innovative industries such as Corning Glass. Its economic base includes agriculture and tourism as major factors. We ask that your plan include initiatives to expand our economy through the preservation and strengthening of this base with a focus on long-term stability, not short-lived benefits. It also must include new opportunities for those who are currently struggling economically, making use of our strong community colleges and, when appropriate, make use of the NYSERDA workforce training program.

Energy and our Natural Resources.

1. We have a talented and innovative workforce plus the presence of strong research and teaching institutions. This opens the possibility for the region to become a leader in both the R&D and manufacture of renewable energy resources. We hope the council will find ways to support the efforts that already exist and to help this activity flourish. To see a list of some of the "green" efforts already going on in the area an interesting source can be found at the website for Sustainable Tompkins at <http://www.greenresourcehub.org/directories>.
2. The Ithaca Journal has run a series of articles on local small but successful start-up businesses such as one that is making tiny batteries that can be recharged by the vibrations of a car. These companies and other small businesses should be looked at closely to figure out the keys to their successes.
3. The NYSERDA program for the state provides a number of opportunities for helping new "renewable and clean business start-ups" as well as workforce training. We should make use of these opportunities and increase public awareness of them.
4. It is critical that future economic development be done in a manner that is compatible with, not threatening to, agriculture, tourism, micro-brewing, viticulture, hunting, fishing, and other current economic activities. We believe that strong regulations and adequate protections must be in place to insure that if High Volume Hydraulic Fracturing is done in our region it does not put these at risk, possibly replacing them with a boom/bust economy. Some studies show that whatever boom occurs from fracking it will likely be small and short, most of the money will leave the state and most of the workers will be transient workers from out of state (in Pennsylvania the figure is around 70% non-local workers). We ask you to consider carefully the conclusions found in the papers "Unanswered Questions About the Economic Impact of Gas Drilling in the Marcellus Shale: Don't Jump to Conclusions" and "North American Shale Gas Plays: More Unanswered Questions" by economist Janette Barth and the recent study led by Prof. Susan Christopherson, Dept. of City and Regional Planning at Cornell.

League of Women Voters of Tompkins County

Agriculture.

Our agricultural land should be viewed as an asset with tremendous possibilities for growth both in the development and production of biofuels and as a response to the growing nationwide demands for "buying local", where local could mean as far as New York City or in some cases even within the U.S. We need to promote new activities such as these and dramatically expand those that already exist.

1. Cornell scientists have been experimenting with switch grass as a possible fuel and we are sure they are looking at other possibilities. Let's bring some of these to market so they can be tried as good renewable energy resources and support our local farmers at the same time.
2. There is growing interest in both organic farming and buying locally produced foods. In this part of N.Y. we have seen a growth in Community Supported Agriculture. In 1990 there were only 3 CSA's in the region. Now there are 25 in Tompkins, Schuyler, Cortland, and Tioga Counties, 3 of which were started this summer. The CSA's in Tompkins County serve 2,200 customers and sales in the area have returned over 1 million dollars a year to farmers. In addition, we have one of the best Farmers' Markets in the northeast plus many smaller ones.

Tourism.

Those of us who did not grow up in the Southern Tier recognize that its attractions are not widely known in other parts of the country or sometimes even in downstate New York. The development of the wineries to the level of international recognition has helped to bring attention to the Fingerlakes region, but the Southern Tier is often overlooked. We suggest the following.

1. Further development of "agritourism", which is becoming popular in many areas. Some efforts are going on in this region and they could be vastly expanded.
2. Expansion of trails in the Southern Tier for both hiking and winter activities. This is after all the land of snow and we can bring people here to enjoy it.
3. There are only a few wineries in the Southern Tier, but it may not be viable to develop more. There is, however, growing interest in micro-breweries and some, such as the Ithaca Beer Company, have been enlarging and attracting visitors. In Oregon they have become a major tourist attraction with some of them associated with large inns and B&B's.
4. It is possible that a major convention center could be developed and viewed as a place for retreats. A rural setting could make it attractive for businesses, particularly if there are easy ways to get to one of the local cities and transportation centers. There are two large hotels in the rural areas of Virginia and West Virginia that are 100-200 miles from Washington D.C. and are seen by D.C. businesses and government groups as wonderful places for meetings (plus a round of golf).
5. Marketing is of course essential. The Southern Tier is not included in many of the websites containing information on topics such as agritourism. We need to do a better job of bringing our region into focus.
6. Tourism is an area in which interregional efforts could be particularly valuable.

Transportation.

1. If high-tech and other businesses and industries are to grow and flourish in this region, transportation must be improved. The Southern Tier is known for being "centrally isolated" and we could counter this by building a central transportation hub. The hub could be connected to the major cities of the region by a system of commuter rail lines, with buses used for the areas not on a rail line.
2. Many of us have found that Cornell's Campus to Campus bus, with its wireless connection and snacks in the back, is a comfortable and quick way to get to N.Y.C. Ideally a good high-speed railway service to key major cities could be in our future. But short of that, a system of buses like the special Cornell buses plus expanded airline connections seems to be essential.