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In considering a Five –Year Strategic Plan for the Southern Tier, I offer these responses:

1. Obstacles or issues that adversely affect economic development in the Southern Tier:

- Corporate control of government
- Lack of long-term vision and plan
- Erosion of democracy; public apathy/feeling of powerlessness
- Lack of Seed Money
- Industrial Development Agency with environmental blindness
- Stalemates due to values clash: heavy industrialism v. clean energy
- Misunderstanding of what it means to have economic sustainability:
Growth v. Steady State Economy

2. Opportunities unique to the Southern Tier

- Well-respected universities and colleges: Binghamton University, Cornell University, Ithaca College, Broome County Community College
 - University collaborations with sustainable businesses
 - Student internship opportunities
 - Excellent research opportunities
- Many skilled engineers at Lockheed Martin and Raymond Corporation could transfer to more environmentally sustainable missions. Technical positions at Sanmina and EIT could similarly transfer to renewable energy positions.
- Destination for travelers who want to fish, hunt, hike, swim, kayak and canoe along our pristine waterways.
- The Treadway Inn and Riverwalk Conference Center are just two sites offering beautiful settings for state and regional meetings.

3. Assets specific to the Southern Tier

- Clean water, relatively clean air, and beautiful parks, streams, and lakes make this area suitable for families who want their children to be healthy and have open spaces to run, play, and learn.
- “Binghamton Rising” brings fresh ideas to the table on how to grow a vital community. Our area has demonstrated its commitment to a sustainable future.
- There is an interest in Biomass development in the Southern Tier. [Broome Biomass LLC]

4. Issues of inter-regional or statewide significance

- New York State could be a model of sustainable economic development.
 - Binghamton has completed its Climate Action Plan.
 - There is strong support for Smart Growth.
 - As there are increasing “global weirding” events around the world from excessive carbon emissions, we could be a model for other states and countries. Eyes of respect are currently on New York State as it holds the drills on horizontal hydrofracking and considers more life-sustaining options.
 - The Southern Tier offers a beautiful location for regional and state planning meetings.
 - As many states contaminate their water, air, and soil with chemicals, New York State could reinvest in agriculture, supplying New York City and Upstate with nutritious foods and beverages that do not have to travel long distances.
 - The ten regions designated by Governor Cuomo for this project could set localization goals, providing incentives to buy local products and develop businesses. This would reduce transportation costs, reduce externalized environmental costs and foster community respect and strength.