



**Cortland County
Agriculture, Planning &
Environmental
Committee
Committee Meeting
~ Minutes ~**

60 Central Ave.
Cortland, NY 13045
www.cortlandcountyny.gov

Thursday, April 9, 2026

10:00 AM

Room 302

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM by Committee Chair McGovern.

Roll Call

PRESENT:	Legislator Reed Cleland, Legislator Paul Heider, Legislator Jason Prentice, Legislator Sandra Price, Committee Vice Chair Mitchel Eccleston, Committee Chair William McGovern
ABSENT:	
EXCUSED:	Legislator Beau Harbin
OTHERS PRESENT:	
Kevin Fitch	Chair of the Legislature (Left at 10:40 a.m.)
Ashley Millard	Deputy Clerk of the Legislature
Wendy Canfield	County Administrator Executive Assistant
Morgan Spaulding	Grants Administrator
Melanie Vilardi	Cortland County IDA/BDC Executive Director (left at 10:10 a.m.)
Ashley Riehlman	Cortland County IDA Community Relations Specialist (left at 10:10 a.m.)
Chris Newell	Legislator
Amy Buggs	Workforce Development Director
Amanda Barber	Cortland County Soil & Water Conservation District Manager (Late 10:10 a.m.)
Katee Padbury	Health Department Programs Coordinator
Kelly Guy	Cornell Cooperative Extension Executive Director
Ron VanDee	Legislator (late 10:10 a.m. - Left 10:40 a.m.)
Mike Opsteegh	Village of Homer Trustee
Jessica Leet	Planning Department Executive Assistant (REMOTE)
Nicole Compton	County Attorney Executive Assistant (REMOTE)
Lillian Jensen	Mobility Coordinator (REMOTE)
Andrea Herzog	Finance Director (REMOTE)

Approval of Minutes

1. March 12, 2026 - Agriculture, Planning & Environmental Committee Minutes

RESULT:	APPROVED
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Resolutions

ON MOTION OF WILLIAM MCGOVERN

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1.

Adopt Cortland County Public Transportation System Title VI Plan

WHEREAS, the Title VI Act of 1964 ensured that anti-discrimination is enforced throughout the work undertaken by all recipients of federal funding; AND

WHEREAS, the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) Title VI/Environmental Justice program serves, creates, implements and regulates procedures that comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Environmental Justice Executive Order 12898, Executive Order 13166, Limited English proficiency, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 and the Title 49 CFR Part 21; AND

WHEREAS, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires all applicants who receive federal funding ensure their programs, policies, and activities comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; AND

WHEREAS, Title VI provisions include, but are not limited to, prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of race, color, sex, age, nationality, religion, disabling condition, or being included within minority populations and/or low-income populations, as well as prohibits exclusion from participation, denial of benefits to, or others subject to discrimination under any program or activity administered by NYSDOT; AND

WHEREAS, Cortland County is an applicant on various types of transportation grants; AND

WHEREAS, Trisha R. Hiemstra PE, Director of Planning, is the Cortland County Public Transportation Title VI Officer; AND

WHEREAS, under the requirements of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), all recipients who receive Federal Funding must have a Transportation Title VI Plan and Procedures; AND

WHEREAS, the adoption of the Cortland County Public Transportation System Title VI Plan will fulfill the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requirement; NOW THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Cortland County Legislature be and hereby officially adopts the Cortland County Public Transportation System Title VI Plan.

RESULT:	APPROVED (6 TO 0)
MOVER:	Legislator Jason Prentice
SECONDER:	Legislator Reed Cleland
AYES:	Reed Cleland, Paul Heider, Jason Prentice, Sandra Price, Mitchel Eccleston, William McGovern
NAYS:	None
EXCUSED:	Beau Harbin

ABSENT:

ON MOTION OF WILLIAM MCGOVERN

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2.

Amend 2026 Budget – Rural Transportation Assistance Program

WHEREAS, the Rural Transportation Assistance Program (RTAP) is a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) program administered by the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) to support training and professional development; AND

WHEREAS, Cortland County can access RTAP funds directly to be reimbursed for individual training and professional development needs; AND

WHEREAS, RTAP funds are fully reimbursable, and no local matching share is required under the NYSDOT RTAP program; AND

WHEREAS, in order to attend training and professional development activities under RTAP, the County must amend the 2026 budget to reflect the increase in both estimated revenue and appropriations associated with these reimbursable funds; NOW THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED, the Cortland County 2026 budget is amended as follows:

Increase

Revenue	A56305 44589 RTAP	\$10,000
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Increase

Appropriations	A56305 54035 RTAP	\$10,000
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RESULT:	APPROVED (6 TO 0)
MOVER:	Legislator Paul Heider
SECONDER:	Minority Leader Sandra Price
AYES:	Reed Cleland, Paul Heider, Jason Prentice, Sandra Price, Mitchel Eccleston, William McGovern
NAYS:	None
EXCUSED:	Beau Harbin
ABSENT:	

ON MOTION OF WILLIAM MCGOVERN

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3.

Authorize Agreement with New York State Department of Transportation Federal 5311 Mass Transportation Capital Project Contract Number C006015 Mobility Management and Mobility Management (ADTAP)

WHEREAS, the Cortland County Legislature adopted Resolution No. 244-22, which authorized the County of Cortland to submit a request for the consolidated grant funds to the New York State Department of Transportation, pursuant Federal Section 5311, Title 49 United States Code, for the continuation of Mobility Management Program for contract period January 1, 2023 to March 31, 2029 and has a committed local share; AND

WHEREAS, the New York State Department of Transportation is requesting a resolution to indicate Cortland County’s acceptance of the Mass Transportation Capital Agreement under Contract Number C006015 to include specific PIN Numbers:

PIN Number 3790.00.103	Mobility Management
PIN Number 3790.05.102	2023 Mobility Management
PIN Number 3790.05.402	2023 ADTAP Mobility Management
PIN Number 3790.06.102	2024 Mobility Management
PIN Number 3790.06.402	2024 ADTAP Mobility Management

; NOW THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED, that the total project cost is \$791,752.97; AND BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that the County Administrator, upon review and approval by the County Attorney or designee, be and is hereby authorized to sign the New York State Department of Transportation Mass Capital Agreement Contract C006015 for specific PIN Numbers stated above.

RESULT:	APPROVED (6 TO 0)
MOVER:	Legislator Jason Prentice
SECONDER:	Minority Leader Sandra Price
AYES:	Reed Cleland, Paul Heider, Jason Prentice, Sandra Price, Mitchel Eccleston, William McGovern
NAYS:	None
EXCUSED:	Beau Harbin
ABSENT:	

ON MOTION OF WILLIAM MCGOVERN

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4.

A Resolution in Support of State Legislation to Protect Prime Farmland and Strengthen Standards for Siting Major Renewable Energy Facilities (A.10519/S.8712)

WHEREAS, New York State has established ambitious clean energy and emissions reduction goals that require timely deployment of renewable energy generation and supporting infrastructure; AND

WHEREAS, Cortland County supports the responsible development of renewable energy projects while also protecting public health, community character, local economies, and critical natural resources; AND

WHEREAS, agriculture is a cornerstone of Cortland County’s economy and contributes to Cortland County’s overall food security and resilience, as demonstrated by the statistics contained in the USDA 2022 Census of Agriculture; AND

WHEREAS, farmland conversion can be permanent, and large-scale energy projects sited on prime agricultural soils may reduce long-term agricultural productivity and undermine regional farmland protection strategies; AND

WHEREAS, the Office of Renewable Energy Siting and Electric Transmission (ORES) plays a central role in permitting major renewable energy facilities under Public Service Law Article 8, and statewide standards should provide clear, enforceable protections for agricultural lands, including prime farmland and

soils; AND

WHEREAS, A.10519/S.8712 (Woerner/Hinchey) would strengthen agricultural land protections by (1) defining “agrivoltaics” as the integrated, simultaneous production of solar energy and marketable agricultural products, (2) directing ORES to prioritize previously developed and underutilized sites such as brownfields, landfills, former industrial/commercial sites, dormant generating sites, and large built sites, (3) requiring enhanced evaluation of impacts to prime farmland and important soil groups, (4) requiring cumulative impact review and regional farmland considerations, and (5) strengthening decommissioning planning and financial assurances to ensure agricultural soils can be restored for future production; AND

WHEREAS, the bill would further support farmland preservation by establishing a farmland conservation fee for certain solar development on prime farmland, deposited into the state Agricultural and Farmland Viability Protection Fund, while exempting qualifying agrivoltaics projects to encourage dual-use designs that maintain active agricultural production; AND

WHEREAS, the legislation requires periodic reevaluation of these standards to incorporate new information and technology and to ensure continued effectiveness in balancing renewable energy development with the protection of a critical mass of farmland within each region; NOW THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED, that Cortland County supports legislation to amend the Public Service Law to strengthen farmland protection and food security considerations in the siting, design, construction, operation, and decommissioning of major renewable energy facilities, including by prioritizing previously developed sites and establishing clear standards for agrivoltaics; AND BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that Cortland County urges the New York State Legislature and Governor Kathy Hochul to enact this legislation to ensure renewable energy development proceeds in a manner that minimizes impacts on prime agricultural lands, supports regional farmland preservation objectives, and protects the long-term viability of New York’s agricultural economy and local food systems; AND BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that Cortland County calls for continued partnership among New York State, the counties, ORES, the Public Service Commission, and the Department of Agriculture and Markets to implement siting standards that promote clean energy while safeguarding critical working lands and ensuring meaningful local engagement and practical, enforceable decommissioning and restoration requirements; AND BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that Cortland County shall authorize the Clerk of the Legislature to forward copies of this resolution to Governor Kathy Hochul, the Temporary President of the Senate, NYS Senator Lea Webb, Assembly Speaker Carl E. Heastie, Assemblymember Anna Kelles, Assemblymember Jeff Gallahan, the chairs of relevant state legislative committees, ORES, the New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC), the Public Service Commission, the Department of Agriculture and Markets, and to the Town Supervisors and Village Mayors of the various Cortland County municipalities.

RESULT:	POSTPONED TO DATE CERTAIN MAY 13, 2026
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Monthly Reports

1. Cornell Cooperative Extension Monthly Report

RESULT:	COMPLETED
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2. Department of Planning & Economic Development Monthly Report

RESULT:	COMPLETED
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Discussion Items

1. **Direction with Economic Development Aspect**
2. **Potential Time Change for Committee**
3. **Climate Smart Communities Sub-Committee**

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:03 AM.

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cortland County

Kelly Guy: Executive Director

Highlights:

- Chamber of Commerce Showcase
- Ag Literacy Week Reading
- Cornell University Mid-Term Review of Camp Owahta Projects
- Collaboration with Onondaga County CCE for Workforce Development in Agriculture Grant
- Awarded \$25,000 grant for increasing youth involvement in the Cortland County Fair and creating an Agriculture Passport
- Offer on new Office Building at 997 McLean Rd accepted and working to close by May 30th

On the Horizon: Cornell Students workday at camp, SUNY Cortland Student workday at camp, National Volunteer Week Celebration, Maple Fest

South Central Dairy and Field Crop Program

Janice Degni: Regional Field Crops Specialist, Betsy Hicks: Regional Dairy Specialist

- **Beef Producer Roundtable: Herd Health April 15, 2026 : Beef Producer Roundtable: Herd Health & Farm Transition**
Owego, NY The program will feature Dr. Adam Murray of PRO-LIVESTOCK presenting "Vaccination & Weaning Considerations, Including Cost of Disease to Beef Producers," offering practical insights into herd health management and the economic impacts of disease in beef operations. Following the featured presentation, Kelly Jackson from CCE Tioga will give a short presentation on land access, land leasing, and succession planning, highlighting important considerations for both current and future farm operators. The evening will also provide time for networking and socializing with fellow producers, and will serve as the New York Beef Producers' Association annual meeting for Region 6. Refreshments will be available, and participants are encouraged to register in advance so organizers can plan accordingly for food and seating. Come connect, learn, and engage with others in the beef community!
- **Spring is here after a long winter.** Every spring, we pick up yardsticks and head out to the field to measure alfalfa heights on a weekly basis. Why do we pay such close attention to the growth of this one plant during the month of May? Research has shown that alfalfa height is a reliable indicator of forage quality for both alfalfa and grass hay. By tracking alfalfa heights each week, we can calculate growth rates and predict first cutting harvest dates to help farms achieve optimal forage quality. Alfalfa heights are easy to measure, and they are more accurate than other methods used to determine harvest timing. This program combines applied research and timely education to

influence management decisions that drive economic performance on dairy farms. Harvesting the first hay cutting at the right moment “defines the success of the forage making year” and provides the greatest opportunity to harvest a high concentration of quality feed. Farms that do a good job with first cutting can feed more hay and less grain, which leads to healthier cows, more milk, and lower feed costs.

On the Horizon: 2026 Business Development and Marketing Monthly Webinar Series, Virtual Climate Resiliency Webinar & Workshop Series, NY Annie’s Project: How to Diversify or Scale with Confidence for Profitability Team Events Calendar: https://scnydfc.cce.cornell.edu/events.php?date=01_2026

4- H Team

Rebecca Ireland-Perry: 4-H Team Leader, Abby Thomas: 4-H/Agriculture Educator

Highlights:

- Public Presentations were held in March, with many youth selected to go on to the South Central District 4-H Public Presentations to be held in April.
- Tractor certification class has started, and is ongoing through to the beginning of May. We have 15 participants this year.
- Regional horse quiz bowl and hippology, and regional dairy quiz bowl competitions were held on March 21st. Cortland County youth did well. One individual was eligible to go on to the state horse bowl contest. Five youth are eligible to go on to the state dairy bowl contest.
- We are still in the midst of Cortland Jr Fair planning. Fair will be July 7-11th, come and see all the wonderful accomplishments of the 4-H youth!
- We are working with 5 SUNY Cortland students through their Community Innovation Lab to help develop marketing strategies and materials for our 4-H Market Sale.
- We have 22 kids signed up for the Market Sale this year. We plan to have 5 Turkeys, 16 pens of chicken with 3 chickens in a pen, 11 lamb, 1 goat, 8 swine, and 1 beef steer. The Market Sale will be July 10th at 6 pm at the fairgrounds.
- Ag Luncheon March 19th, it was a lovely lunch with a nice awards ceremony followed by break-out panel sessions on stress and success and ag business.
- Master Gardener Volunteers held a pruning workshop at Hollenbeck’s, with Matt Hollenbeck teaching the Master Gardeners how to properly prune their apple tree.
- Cornell’s Organic Field Crops Conference in Waterloo, NY March 6th. Knowledge about how to incorporate ag technology into your farm to help improve your farm’s efficiency.
- Ag literacy Week March 16th-20th, this year’s book was called Seasons on the Farm. Kids got to listen to a story about life on the farm thought each season and then got to make their own season wheel coloring each season and what they would see each season. 326

kids participated this year ranging from k-5th grades. This year's schools who participated were Homer, McGraw, Cincinnati.

On the Horizon: Planning for annual Dairy Rodeo in May, which is a hands-on day for youth to learn to fit and show a dairy calf. We are bringing back our Livestock Rodeo in May, which is a day for youth to learn about showing and fitting livestock such as swine, meat goats, and beef cattle.

Camp Owahta

Rachel Bortin: Outdoor Recreation

Director **Highlights:**

- Purchased a side-by-side for 4-H Camp Owahta! It will assist us with maintenance, transporting around camp and in emergencies
- Attended four Career Fairs; SUNY Cortland, SUNY Oswego, TC3 and Ithaca College
- Attended the Showcase Event at the JM McDonald Sports Complex. Built up excitement for camp and summer camp positions
- Connected with Rural Health Institute of NY to brainstorm ways to support the youth mental health crisis by offering collaborative youth mental health first aid trainings in the community
- Attended the Tri-State Camp Conference
- Ongoing Summer Camp 2026 Interviews. We have secured a Camp Kitchen Manager and one Lifeguard, and two counselors.
- BOCES Trade Teachers: Chris and Steve came out and walked camp to brainstorm projects the BOCES students could do at camp. We discussed building new stairs to a few cabins, painting and installing lattice, fixing the exit signs and repairing the floor in the boys bathroom.
- Surpassed the number of camp registrations from summer 2025!

On the Horizon:

- Creation of a new 4-H Camp Owahta Instagram account, Registering for a Train the Trainor Course in youth mental health first aid, Cornell AAP Project-Service Day At Camp!

Attending the CNY Maple Festival- displaying a camp table. Hosting the SUNY Cortland Big Event at 4-H Camp Owahta. Attending the Central NY Regional Job Fair. Sending out 4-H Camp Owahta postcards to Cortland County school districts. Cleaning and fixing the camp garden. Camp Director Spring-In Service at 4-H Camp Shankitunk. Scheduling and confirming a handful of volunteer group workdays.



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

April 2026

Administration



- **SAVE THE DATE!! Annual Municipal Official Training April 29th**



- **Tracking Dashboard & Updating Website**



- **Broadband Project** – Continuing Collaboration with ConnectAll



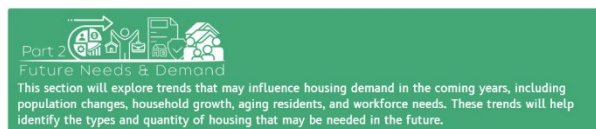
- Accepted into **Rural Energy Academy**
 - o 3 month technical assistance **sprint** to help counties navigate energy-related challenge



How to Use This Report

This report will be intended to support decision-makers, community leaders, housing providers, and residents as they work to better understand housing conditions in Cortland County and identify opportunities for improvement.

It will be organized into three sections that examine current housing conditions, analyze emerging trends, and present strategies that communities can use to support housing development and affordability.



- **Housing Workgroup**



- **Micron Steering Committee**

Snowmobile Grant



- 2025 – 2026: **Phase 3 – Review** of monthly Expenditures for the 2025–2026 season

Grants & Initiatives



- Brownfield Opportunity Grant – **AWARDED!**
- County Infrastructure Grant Program – Application due April 30th
- **Marathon Substation Modernization Project:** (\$7-8M Total project)
 NYSEERDA Resilience Grant Application – **Selected**
 (\$2,594,400)



&



ARC IJA Pre-Application – **Selected** – Full application next (\$900,000)

Regional Partnerships



- Clean Energy Programs
- Vacant Rental Properties (VRP)



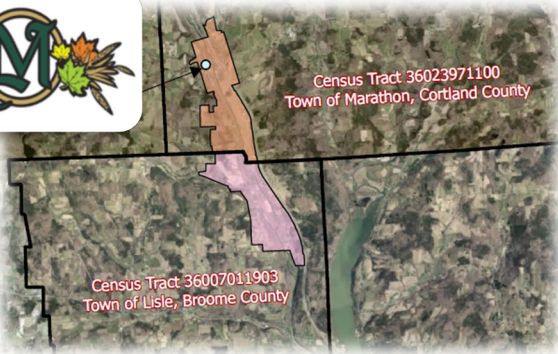
- ARC Workshop/Applications
- Sustainability Group
- Housing Initiatives

GIS

Cortland County's ArcGIS Applications	November Total views/usage	December Total views/usage	January Total Views/usage	February Total Views/usage	February Total Views/usage
GIS Portal (Website Hub)	6855	7157	8156	6443	7675
Instant App (Parcel Viewer)	1337	1123	1283	1033	1344
Workspace (Parcel Viewer)	1049	1114	1294	1125	1211
E-911 and Postal Addressing (Website Hub)	143	119	162	186	204
Abutter Map (Parcel Viewer Tool)	65	54	45	51	35

****2026 Parcel Viewer Updates Coming Soon!!**

Featured Maps:



**Real
Property Tax
Services**

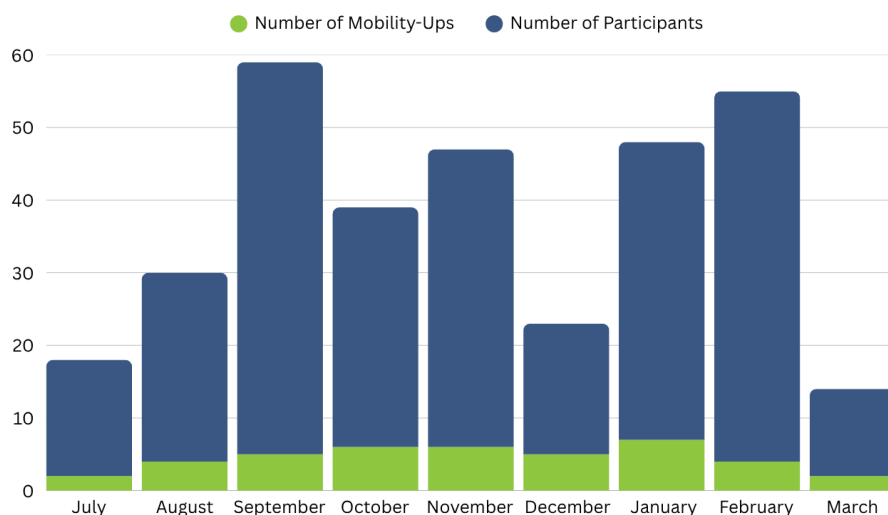
Cortland County Planning Board

- **GML 239 Reviews**
 - 3 Returned for local determination
 - 2 Staff Reports
- **Featured GML's**
 - Town of Cortlandville – Cortland County Agriculture Corporation – Fairgrounds Building
 - Town of Solon – Solon Zoning Law

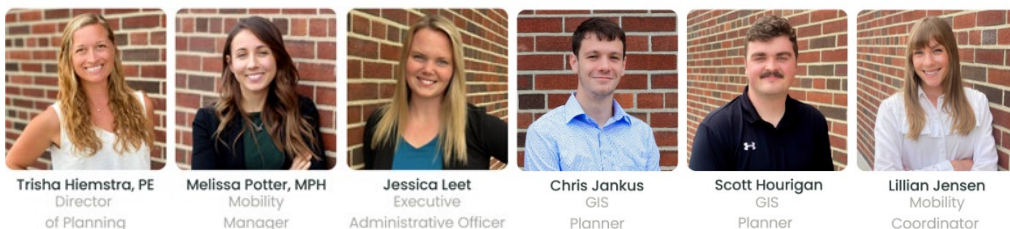
Mobility Management

- ❖ 2026 Site Review Preparation
- ❖ Centro Operations
 - Visit and Tour of Centro Facility in Syracuse
 - Shuttle Service to CNY Maple Festival April 18th & 19th (*Flyer & Carpool Attached*)
 - Centro Route Changes went into effect March 2nd – *Receiving Positive Feedback*
- ❖ Connectivity Subcommittee
 - Ongoing coordination with the Health Department on walk audits, sidewalk Inventory and GIS Mapping in progress
- ❖ Collaboration & Grants
 - Roadway Departure Safety Action Plan Grant - Local Road Safety Plan – Due April 17th
 - Working with the Community Foundation on reducing transportation barriers for public outreach events
 - Collaborating with ATI on Age Friendly Grant and CAPCO on ITN America Technology
 - Working with GIS Planner to create more maps for accessibility via public transit to medical facilities, grocery and non-profit agencies
- ❖ Travel Training
 - Case Management and development of custom travel plans and paratransit service applications for individual riders
- ❖ Education & Outreach
 - In March, attended 3 Job Seeks Workshops
 - Mobility Meet-ups Program
 - Completed 45 meet-ups, serving 305 participants (*Graph Below*)
 - Attended Tompkins County Coordinated Plan Meeting
 - Tabling at County Office Building April 18th from 9am-1pm for CNY Maple Festival Shuttle Service

Total Number of Mobility Meet-ups and Participants Served



OUR TEAM:





Department of State
Local Government

SAVE THE DATE

Training for Local Officials

Thursday, April 29, 2026

At 5:00 PM to 9:00 PM

SPONSOR



Planning Department

The training will be provided by the NYS Department of State for local governments, with a deep dive into the **common** issues our local Planning and Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) members are currently facing.



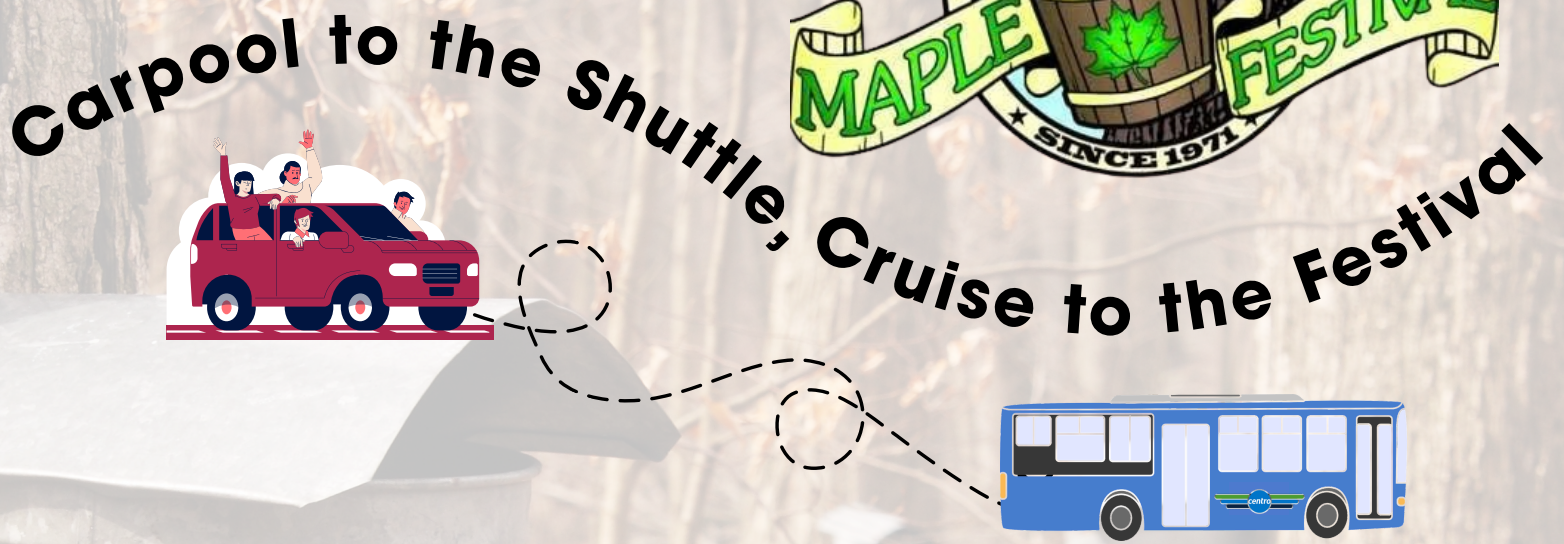
TAKE CENTRO TO MAPLE FEST!

**A TWO-WAY SHUTTLE BUS SERVICE WILL RUN
BETWEEN THE CORTLAND COUNTY OFFICE
BUILDING AND THE VILLAGE OF MARATHON
EVERY 30 MINUTES DURING THE FESTIVAL
WEEKEND. THE FARE WILL BE \$1 EACH WAY.**

SATURDAY, APRIL 18TH: 9 A.M. TO 5 P.M.

SUNDAY, APRIL 19TH: 9 A.M. TO 4 P.M.





Make getting there easy!

Carpool with family and friend to the shuttle pick-up at the County Office Building, then sit back and enjoy a smooth, stress-free ride straight to the Maple Festival.

Grab a friend, share the ride, and enjoy the day together!

Please plan ahead for a ride both to and from the County Office Building, as the shuttle begins and ends at this location only.

**Questions? - Contact Mobility Management
to discuss your transportation plan**

**607-756-3416 or 607-758-5569
or by email mobility@cortlandcountyny.gov**





Rural Energy Academy

Rural Energy Academy Technical Assistance Cohort Syllabus

Monday, February 23: In-Person with a Virtual Option for Those Unable to Attend

Session One: Orientation: Foundations of Energy Technologies and Their Role in Energy Demand Growth

In this session, we will discuss the launch of Rural Energy Academy Technical Assistance. Cohort members will introduce themselves, share their prospective energy projects, and develop foundational understanding of critical attributes of energy development in a high demand energy environment.

Presenters:

- Rural Energy Academy Leads: National Association of Counties and the Mana Group

Intended Learning Outcomes

1. Set common expectations on what it means to participate in the REA sprint learning community.
2. Develop foundational understanding and critical attributes of energy development.
3. Build early relationships with fellow sprint cohort members.

Expected Reading and Time Commitment

- Three energy technology 101 primer documents
- Estimated time commitment: 45 minutes of pre-session preparation, 90-minute session

Thursday March 5th, 2026 2:00-3:30 p.m. ET: Virtual

Session Two: County Leadership in Rural Energy Development: Community Engagement, Promoting Transparency, and Public Communication

This session will compare effective approaches, strategies, and methods for engaging community stakeholders and examine community engagement resources found in the BRECC Toolkit. Participants will make a plan for communicating with community stakeholders about potential energy projects in your community.

Planned presenter organizations:

- NACo, The Institute for Rural Collaboration, and Real AZ

Intended Learning Outcomes

1. Compare effective approaches, strategies, and methods for engaging community stakeholders.



Rural Energy Academy

2. Make a plan for communicating with community stakeholders about a potential energy project in your community.
3. Build deeper relationships with fellow sprint cohort members.

Expected Reading and Time Commitment

- Exploring the BRECC Toolkit
- Estimated time commitment: 30 minutes of pre-session preparation, 90-minute session

Thursday March 12th, 2026 at 2:00-3:30 p.m. ET: Virtual

Session Three: Bringing Value to Your Community: Economic Benefits, Tax Revenue, Payment In Lieu Of Taxes (PILOT), and Accessing Revenue Bonds

In this session, we will examine case studies, examples, and models for generating tax revenue over the duration of an energy project and explore how revenue bonds might support energy project development in your community. Participants will make a plan for communicating tax and bond decisions to community stakeholders.

Planned presenter organizations:

- University of Texas, TX counties

Intended Learning Outcomes

1. Analyze case studies, examples, and models of/for generating tax revenue over the duration of a potential energy project.
2. Analyze how revenue bonds might support energy project development in your community.
3. Make a plan for communicating tax and bond decisions to community stakeholders.

Expected Reading and Time Commitment

- Read taxation on energy projects case study
- Estimated time commitment: 45 minutes of pre-session preparation, 90 minute session

Thursday March 19th, 2026 at 2:00-3:30 p.m. ET: Virtual

Session Four: Open Office Hours and Workshop Time (Optional Attendance)

Thursday April 9th, 2026 at 2:00-3:30 p.m. ET: Virtual



Rural Energy Academy

Session Five: Planning for Project Benefits in Your Community: Workforce Development, Corporate Philanthropy, and Short-term vs. Long-term Benefits

This session will evaluate community engagement models that lead to improved workforce development outcomes. Participants will analyze approaches to maximizing short-term and more enduring economic, environmental, and social benefits tied to energy developments in your community.

Planned presenter organizations

- Coalfield Development, the Mana Group, and Rivian Foundation

Intended Learning Outcomes

1. Evaluate community engagement models that lead to improved workforce development outcomes.
2. Analyze approaches to maximizing short-term and more enduring economic, environmental, and social benefits tied to energy developments in your community.

Expected Reading and Time Commitment

- Read workforce development case study
- Estimated time commitment: 30 minutes of pre-session preparation, 90 minute session

Week of March 26th: BREAK

Thursday April 2nd, 2026 at 2:00-3:30 p.m. ET: Virtual

Session Six: Open Office Hours and Workshop Time (Optional Attendance)

Thursday April 16th, 2026 at 2:00-3:30 p.m. ET: Virtual

Session Seven: Attracting Business and Capital Investment: Developing Relationships with Energy Developers and the Life Cycle of an Energy Development

This session will help participants better understand the life cycle of an energy development –including pre-development, construction, operation, and decommissioning. Participants will share effective and ineffective interactions between elected officials, developers, and community stakeholders.

Planned presenter organizations:



Rural Energy Academy

- RWE, Renewable NW

Intended Learning Outcomes

1. Understand the life cycle of an energy development from pre-development to construction to operation to decommissioning.
2. Compare effective and ineffective interactions between elected officials, developers, and community stakeholders.

Expected Reading and Time Commitment

- Read the energy project life cycle primer document
- Estimated time commitment: 30 minutes of pre-session preparation, 90 minute session

Thursday April 23rd, 2026 at 2:00-3:30 p.m. ET: Virtual

Session Eight: Land Use Policies: Zoning, Planning, and Permitting Energy Development

In this session, we will examine case studies, examples, and models for zoning, planning, and permitting energy development. Participants will make a plan for communicating zoning, planning, and permitting decisions.

Planned presenter organizations:

- Clean Tomorrow, Linn Co., IA, University of Michigan

Intended Learning Outcomes

1. Analyze case studies, examples, and models of/for zoning, planning, and permitting energy development.
2. Make a plan for communicating zoning, planning, and permitting decisions to community stakeholders.

Expected Reading and Time Commitment

- Read zoning, planning, and permitting case study
- Estimated time commitment: 45 minutes of pre-session preparation, 90 minute session

Thursday April 30th, 2026 at 2:00-3:30 p.m. ET: Virtual

Session Nine: Open Office Hours and Workshop Time (Optional Attendance)

Thursday May 7th, 2026 at 2:00-3:30 p.m. ET: Virtual



Rural Energy Academy

Session Ten: Managing Peripheral Challenges and Risks: Safety and Risk Management, End of Life Use, Decommissioning, and Repowering Planning

This session will help participants better understand essential components of a decommissioning plan and how repowering and end-of-life decisions can impact the long-term county responsibilities. Participants will analyze safety considerations, emergency coordination processes, and risk management strategies.

Planned presenter organizations:

- National Lab of the Rockies/Idaho National Laboratory, American Clean Power Association, Monterey Co., CA

Intended Learning Outcomes

1. Analyze safety considerations, emergency coordination processes, and risk management strategies.
2. Understand essential components of a decommissioning plan and how repowering and end-of-life decisions can impact the long-term county responsibilities.

Expected Reading and Time Commitment

- Explore health and safety impacts of solar photovoltaics study and example decommissioning plan guidelines for wind readings.
- Estimated time commitment: 60 minutes of pre-session preparation, 90 minute session

Thursday May 14th, 2026 at 2:00-3:30 p.m. ET: Virtual

Session Eleven: Legacy and Future Land Use Considerations: Preservation of Farmland–Balancing Agriculture and Solar Development, Brownfield Development, and Reclamation

In this session, we will compare perspectives on energy projects developed on zoned agriculture versus zoned brownfield or industrial land parcels by analyzing examples and approaches to co-mingling agriculture and solar development. Participants will also evaluate strategies for developing brownfield and reclaimed industrial sites for energy projects.

Planned presenter organizations

- Colorado Agrivoltaic Learning Center, Savion, Krebs Solar Grazing

Intended Learning Outcomes



Rural Energy Academy

1. Compare perspectives on energy projects developed on zoned agriculture versus zoned brownfield or industrial land parcels.
2. Analyze examples and approaches to co-mingling agriculture and solar development.
3. Evaluate strategies for developing brownfield and reclaimed industrial sites for energy projects.

Expected Reading and Time Commitment

- Read American Farmland Trust Smart Solar Guiding Principles
- Estimated time commitment: 15 minutes of pre-session preparation, 90 minute session

Thursday May 21st, 2026 at 2:00-3:30 p.m. ET: Virtual

Session Twelve: Open Office Hours and Workshop Time (Optional Attendance)

Thursday May 28th, 2026 at 2:00-3:30 p.m. ET: Virtual

Session Thirteen: Final Presentations to the Cohort