

Seneca Falls Comprehensive Plan

Economic Development and Tourism
Element

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Topics to Cover

- I. Observations: image, impressions
- II. Data, future, trends
- III. Looking at the local economy from a comp
plan perspective
- IV. Discussion

I. Perspectives

View of the Tourist

- Scenic, quaint
- Historically significant, great architecture
- Growing retail interest
- Good lake access – visual and physical
- Great region... you want to go drive and see the vineyards
- Nice the first time; would I come again?

View of a Businessperson

- Great access to Syracuse and Rochester and highway
- Historic image is good
- Very small town – deterrent to some
- Land is available
- Sewer and water access is good
- Taxes are low...for now
- Located a bit beyond the ‘growth zone’

Therefore....

- Feels ‘up and coming’
- There is some evidence of growth in the Town and that is good
- It feels like a place that I’d keep my eye on.
- It feels like a place that I would come and visit again if I find some tourism gems.
- If I heard more, I would be interested...

II. Now let's look at some facts

Basic Economic Stats, Yr 2000

	Town*	Village	Total**
■ Housing Units:	1,031	3,136	4,167
■ Population:	2,389	6,958	9,347
■ Labor Force:	1,081	3,436	4,517
■ Prop Taxes	\$114,000	\$3.3 million	

*=Town data without Village data

**=Town including Village

Growth Returns to the Town

Comparison of Population Changes of Seneca County Municipalities

Municipality	1980	1990	2000	1990-2000 % Change
Village of Seneca Falls	7,466	7,370	6,958	-5.6%
Town of Seneca Falls	2,384	2,014	2,486	18.6%
Village of Waterloo	5,303	5,116	5,099	-.003%
Town of Waterloo	7,811	7,717	7,866	1.9%
Total for County	33,733	33,683	33,342	-1.0%

**Recent growth in the Town –
outside the village- is significant
given the overall low or no growth
trends in the county**

And....

- 2/3's of people work in county; 1/3 out of county
- 54% of people commute 20 minutes or less to work
- 33% travel 21-45 minutes
- 13% travel more

Occupational Breakdown

Occupation	Town %	Village %	# Total Persons
Managerial, Professional	31	32	1400
Service	19	17	831
Sales/Office	25	26	1129
Farming	0.4	0.6	18
Construction	6	6	271
Production	19	19	858
Totals	100	100	4517

Detailed Occupations of Town Residents

Occupational Category	'80	'90	'00	90-00 Chng
Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and mining	34	74	30	-59.5%
Construction	141	218	121	-44.5%
Manufacturing	3,439	1,180	1,027	-13.0%
Transportation	85	120	99	-17.5%
Communications (Information)	63	94	54	-42.6%
Wholesale Trade	110	86	159	84.9%
Retail Trade	720	677	581	-14.2%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	124	155	114	-26.5%
Business and Repair Svc and personal services	71	97	NA	NA
Entertainment/Recreation	240	71	261	267.6%
Health and Educational Services	900	828	1,055	27.4%
Professional services	1,035	*	237	NA
Other Services	*	257	236	-8.2%
Public Administration	217	393	273	-30.5%

What About the Businesses in the Communities?

Recent business and employment inventories Found approximately 2500 jobs located in Seneca Falls.

Gould Pump, Seneca County, Seneca Falls School District, the Chiropractic College and BonaDent were some of the largest employers.

Plus Assessor Business Estimates

- Assessor data suggest another 80-100 businesses – all small
- At an average employment of 4 jobs per business = 320 to 400 additional jobs. Most in the service and professional sectors.
- Therefore, total jobs in village and town might be around 3000

And Tourism....

Annual Visitation to County's Major Destinations*

- Seneca Lake State Park: 245,000
- Sampson State Park: 185,507
- Montezuma NWR: 138,200
- Cayuga Wine Trail: 80,000
- Seneca Wine Trail: 60,000
- Women's Rights Park: 23,000
- Seneca Falls Visitors Center: 20,000

Source: Seneca County Tourism office

**You should be getting more
people into Seneca Falls**

Many Assets

- National Park presence
- State Heritage Area
- National Register District
- Water – lake and canal
- Downtown improvements
- Great architecture
- B&B's
- Part of well-known travel region
- Great highway access
- 45 minutes from two metro areas
- Wineries pull people through the area
- Dedicated marketing organization

Tourism Challenges

- Retail sector is recovering, but not fully there yet. Same with dining.
- Entryways to the community need some sprucing up
- Image is not one of a place to stay for very long ... other attractions may tend to pull people through too fast
- Do you want to attract more people?

Tax Structure

- About \$424 million in taxable value in the Village and Town
- You raise about \$3.4 million in revenues for the Village and Town from property taxes
- The average Village home brings in about \$1200 to the Village. The average Town home brings in about \$82 to the Town.

Initial Conclusions from Above

Observations

- You've survived 25 years of economic stagnation pretty well and you are turning the corner.
- You took a big hit with the downsizings and closings of major employers and it takes time to recover.
- You've done many of the right things.

And...

- Your population is aging
- Young people aren't coming here as much as the past...true? Why? Jobs?, Schools?
- You have some unusual assets to work with (Landfill \$, methane, water power, etc.)

You have a variety of assets in your favor

- Land
- Sewer and water
- Great access to highways and markets
- Amenities and small town character
- Historical significance
- Low cost power

And....

- Your tax structure is appealing in the Town now due to the presence of the landfill. (What do you do with taxes when the landfill closes?)
- You have the luxury of having funds to invest in the future. (What do you do with them? Is there a capital plan for landfill revenue?)

III. What Can a Comp Plan Do?

A Comp Plan Perspective

- There are national/international forces: interest rates, standards of living/wage levels, recessions, wars, trade agreements, etc.
- There are regional issues: state and county taxes, road systems, educational systems, urban health and amenities, labor quality, housing costs, weather
- And, there are local issues

Economic Issues You Can Affect

- Land
- Infrastructure
- Local highways
- Schools
- Recreation
- Downtown Health
- Economic Development support and attitude
- Image
- Tourism infrastructure
- Zoning and other regulations
- Housing quality
- Public relations/marketing

Questions we should answer

- What type of economy would you like to have in the future?
- What is feasible?
- What type of economy might you become given reality and trends?
- How do you get there?
- What hurdles can be lowered?
- What incentives can be provided?

For Example:

What are You Shooting For?

- Current job base = about 3000 jobs
- Current labor force = about 4500
- Given that 25% of your labor force travels less than 10 minutes to work, maybe 1000 to 1200 residents are employed in your town/village businesses.
- If you lose a major employer, you might lose up to 500 resident jobs or close to 10% of your labor force might lose a job.

What Should You Target?

- Jobs? You will need to create 500 jobs to hold steady if your major employers decline. You will need more if you want to induce growth.
- Taxes? You will need \$142 million in value to replace your \$1 million per year in landfill fees.
- Visitors? You will need more to encourage businesses to invest and let them survive. 1000 visitors = \$20,000 in expenditures or more. You will need 100,000 visitors to generate enough economic activity to support 10 new small businesses.

IV. Three Questions for Discussion

1. What Kind of Economy do You Want to Have?

- Who do you want to be like?
- Who do NOT want to be like?
- Diversified or focused?
- Lot more growth or minimal growth?
- What do you think are your biggest opportunities?

2. How are you doing on these factors?

- Land
- Infrastructure
- Local highways
- Schools
- Recreation
- Downtown Health
- Economic Development support and attitude
- Image
- Tourism infrastructure
- Zoning and other regulations
- Housing quality
- Public relations/marketing

3. What do we want to know from the public?

- Are there issues that you wonder about in terms of public awareness or preferences?
- Do you face big decisions on which you want to test the public pulse?