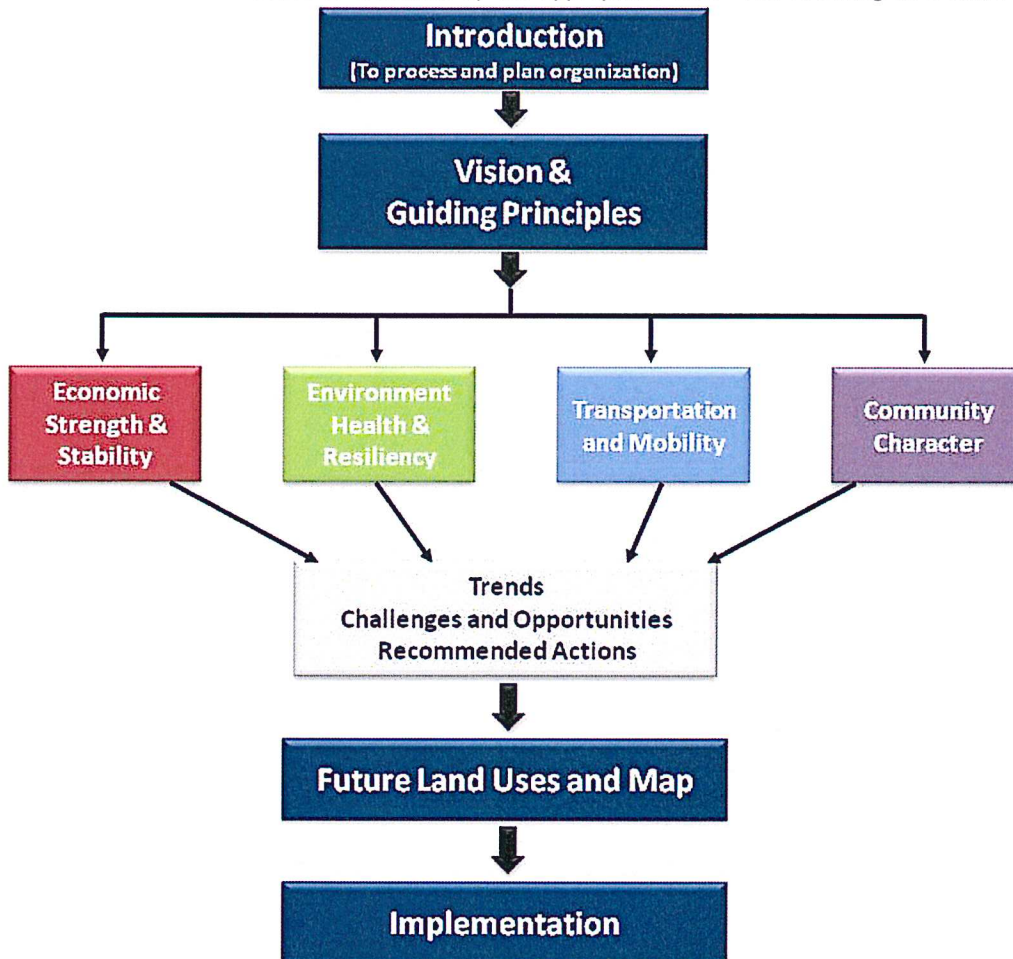


The Plan then looks at the future land use within the City and illustrates the City's vision for future land uses on a map. Finally, the Plan discusses implementation of the recommended action items.

For ease of use, each section has an accompanying icon. In the implementation section, the interrelationship of each recommended action is identified by the appropriate icon. The following flow chart













# Vision and Guiding Principles

~~DISCLAIMER: THE FOLLOWING IS A DRAFT WORKING DOCUMENT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEE/CITY COUNCIL. IT IS NOT INTENDED TO BE FINAL AND MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.~~

## VISION STATEMENT

*Saratoga Springs is the "City-in-the-Country." This concept reflects a city with an intensively developed urban core and an economically vibrant central business district, with well defined urban edges and an outlying area of rural character, comprised of agriculture, open lands, natural and diverse environmental resources, and low density residential development.*

*The overriding philosophy that will guide future development of our "City in the Country" will be sustainability. Sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable development makes investments that yield long-term benefits for our community. Sustainable development enhances economic opportunity and community well-being while protecting the human and natural resources, upon which the future of our economy and our community depend.*

*Recognized for its commitment to history, health and horses, the City is a small, livable community with a strong sense of pride, family, and volunteerism. The City's vibrant, walkable core, stable neighborhoods and high level of mobility support regional economic growth and ensure its position as a world class destination for entertainment, education, and cultural activities.*

The Comprehensive Plan expresses the City's dedication to carefully balance growth and preservation in a manner that promotes diversity in

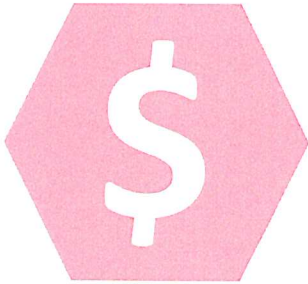




housing, commerce, and industry while it maintains and respects its open spaces and natural resources.

The following guiding principles reflect the City's goals and objectives in achieving this vision as well as the character and spirit of the Saratoga Springs community. Taken together, these guiding principles present a sustainable framework for a healthy, productive and creative City in the Country.

## 2.1 Economic Strength and Stability



- To preserve and enhance a City that is economically strong and adequately diversified to withstand cyclical changes in the economy; that creates economic and employment opportunities for all of its citizens
- To encourage development that benefits and does not burden our tax base and is based on sustainable concepts
- To preserve and enhance a City that is accessible and affordable to all income levels
- To foster job growth by retaining existing businesses and attracting new businesses within the City.
- To maintain the balance of land uses, economic forces and social diversity. Downtown is the key to the City's eEconomic health. Likewise, the City's open spaces resources constitute a vital economic component and valuable aesthetic and recreational amenity. It is the strength and preservation of these two distinct and unique attributes that assures Saratoga's continued success and sustainability.

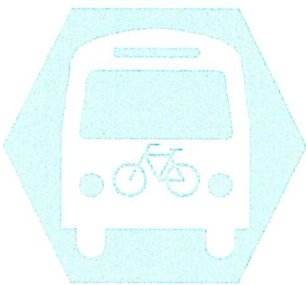


## 2.2 Environmental Health and Resiliency



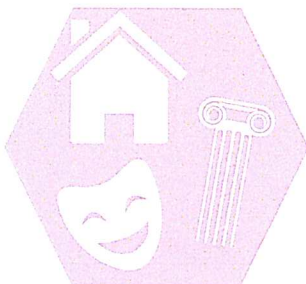
- To preserve and enhance a City that protects the natural environment, allowing all residents, regardless of income level, to live and recreate in an area that is beautiful, healthy, vital, and safe
- To maintain a City that is prepared for the impacts of climate change, that does not contribute to the degradation of the environment, that recognizes the blessings and inherent value of its natural resources, and protects and maintains them for the good of this community and future generations
- To create and maintain a City that ~~obtains~~ increasingly derives its energy needs ~~more on the use of~~ from clean and renewable energy sources that do not contribute to greenhouse gas emissions
- To re-establish health and wellness as one of the leading reasons why people and businesses shall choose to visit and/or locate in the City, making Saratoga Springs one of the healthiest places to live and work.

## 2.3 Transportation and Mobility



- To maintain a City that accommodates all modes of transportation including vehicles, freight, rail, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit, and people with disabilities
- To encourage walking, bicycling and mass transit to reduce traffic congestions and improve local air quality

## 2.4 Community Character



- To maintain a City that provides educational, civic engagement, artistic, cultural, and musical opportunities in a safe manner
- To maintain a City that includes diverse housing opportunities for all economic levels throughout the City
- To maintain a City that values historic preservation and architectural quality in its built environment



# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

3.0



**3.1 Economic Strength and Stability**

**3.2 Environmental Health and Resiliency**



**3.3 Transportation and Mobility**

**3.4 Community Character**



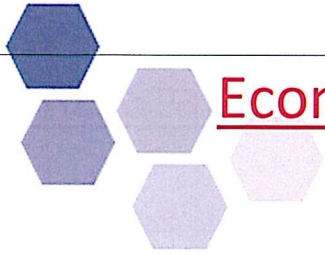




THE  
**SARATOGA**  
COUNTY CHAMBER  
www.saratoga.org







## Economic Strength and Stability

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Saratoga Springs' economic strength and stability are the foundation of this vibrant City. Driving the City's economic engine is our quality of life. To create sustainable growth, quality of life considerations should be a paramount financial consideration. Guiding principles for economic strength and stability include:

- *To preserve and enhance a City that is economically strong and adequately diversified to withstand cyclical changes in the economy; that creates economic and employment opportunities for all of its citizens*
- *To encourage development that benefits our tax base and is based on sustainable concept*
- *To preserve and enhance a City that is accessible and affordable to all income levels*
- *To foster job growth by retaining existing businesses and attracting new businesses within the City.*
- *To maintain the balance of land uses, economic forces and social diversity. Downtown is the key to the City's eEconomic health. Likewise, the City's open spaces resources constitute a vital economic component and valuable aesthetic and recreational amenity. It is the strength and preservation of these two distinct and unique attributes that assures Saratoga's continued success and sustainability.*





### Did You Know?

#### The United States

**NAVY** has a presence in Saratoga Springs.

**4 times** the impact on local economy as the Race Track

**\$1.3 billion** – Impact on Capital Region economy in 2009

The **Knolls Atomic Power** Laboratory Kenneth A. Kesselring site in Milton is one of only **2 places** in the world where nuclear-powered aircraft carrier and submarine training takes place

**9,971** – Total employment impact, including naval personnel and direct, indirect, and induced employment

Source: Saratoga Chamber of Commerce

## TRENDS

It should come as no surprise that one of Saratoga's greatest strengths is its solid footing in the tourism industry. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, nearly 11,000 people in Saratoga County are employed in the arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food service industries. More than 14,000 additional people are employed in the retail sector. According to the Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce 2012 Third Quarter Tourism Report, these two sectors make up nearly 25% of Saratoga County's working population.

According to the Saratoga Tourism and Convention Bureau, Saratoga County is also seeing positive gains in the lodging industry. Since 2010, occupancy rates have increased, and 37,000 group room nights were consumed, accounting for more than \$15 million in estimated economic impact. Expansion of the City Center has, and will continue to enhance those figures over the coming years due to increased conference bookings and the resulting retail, restaurant, and lodging economic benefits.

The City's economy, however, is supported by more than just tourism. Education, healthcare, and industry are also present and growing. Skidmore College, for example, has a significant impact on the City's economy. According to a report from Skidmore's director of community relations, the college's financial impact on Saratoga County has increased 10.2% over the past five years, equating to \$416.4 million when adjusted for inflation (2011-2012 figures). The United States Navy also has a strong presence in Saratoga.

Saratoga Springs is home to several manufacturing and distribution facilities providing long-term employment and attracting employees from the surrounding region. Quad Graphics, Espey Manufacturing and Electronics Corporation, and Saratoga Eagle are several key employers located within the City that have a national and international presence. The healthcare and wellness industry, including Saratoga Hospital, is also a major contributor to the local economy.

Saratoga Springs is proud of the locally owned and operated small businesses. These businesses represent the entrepreneurial spirit that filled the vacant downtown storefronts of the 1960s and 1970s and



continues to make Saratoga Springs the economically and socially vibrant community that exists today.

Saratoga Race Course has a \$186-212 million annual economic impact on the region (2011) and generates between \$4.5-5.5 million in tax revenues for the City and Saratoga County. Saratoga Casino and Raceway also significantly contributes to the City and region by employing 622 people with a payroll of over \$16 million.



One of the largest construction projects in the Northeast is underway in the neighboring Town of Malta. GlobalFoundries, a full-service semiconductor foundry, is constructing “Fab 8.1” at an estimated cost of \$6.9 billion. Fab 8.1 has generated 10,000 construction jobs and 2,000 permanent jobs. The planned expansion, or Fab 8.2, is anticipated to cost \$14.7 billion and generate an additional 3,700 jobs. (Business Review) This development is bringing people from around the world looking for a world-class destination to live and play. As part of an area deemed “Tech Valley”, Saratoga Springs is in a prime location to attract research and design facilities and incubators, as well as work with higher education institutions in the technology sector.



#### ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The ongoing growth the City is experiencing is attributable to the high quality of life enjoyed by our residents and businesses. While cities in our region are still experiencing stagnant growth rates, an ever-increasing number of people are discovering the advantages of our community. The City’s natural resources and its intrinsic desirability as a destination location play a major role in providing economic opportunity.

A healthy balance of economic activities will ensure a sound future, encourage a diverse community, and help our community to make rational decisions based upon long-term financial needs. Maintaining Downtown as the City’s economic center continues to be a vital goal. It is imperative to continue strengthening the successful, compact, and defined commercial and pedestrian center.

Efforts to strengthen and enhance this area through infill development and reuse are integral to the overall success of the City. The City will need to continue to evaluate and ensure the appropriate infrastructure is in place to support sustainable growth.



### Did You Know?

#### The **Saratoga Performing Arts Center (SPAC)** is a

premiere venue for music and the performing arts.

**110**-feet high (**10** stories)

Sheltered seating for **5,200** people

Sloped lawn provides space for additional **20,000** people

Located in heart of **Spa State Park**

Annual features include:

- New York City Ballet
- Philadelphia Orchestra
- Freihofers Jazz Festival
- Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center
- Opera Saratoga
- Saratoga Wine & Food Festival

**2014** – Russia’s Legendary Bolshoi Ballet, one of just three appearances in U.S.

**40,231** – Largest Crowd The Grateful Dead, 1985

**19** – Most Performances James Taylor

**10 years** – Longest Performing Relationship Ray Charles and Chicago

**19** – Most Sold-out Shows Dave Matthews Band

A balanced approach to encourage development that is complementary to the existing Downtown will strengthen the overall long-term economic stability of the City. Supporting a diverse economic base is a key aspect of that stability.

### RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

#### Local

- 3.1-1 Maintain the Downtown as the economic center of the community, including the primary retail and commercial center.
- 3.1-2 Encourage adaptive reuse of vacant buildings and infill.
- 3.1-3 Support the viability and growth of the community's unique institutions (e.g. Skidmore College, Saratoga Hospital, SPAC, Saratoga Spa State Park, and the racetracks) and community-based arts and cultural programs through strong partnerships.
- 3.1-4 Foster more intensive collaboration between the City and other entities such as the Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Business Association, the Saratoga Tourism and Convention Bureau, the Saratoga Springs City Center, Special Assessment District, Saratoga Economic Development Corporation, the Prosperity Partnership, and the Saratoga County Economic Development Agency.
- 3.1-5 Use creative placemaking as a tool to rejuvenate structures and streetscapes and to improve local business viability.
- 3.1-6 Develop and incentivize a program to encourage business growth in underutilized commercial areas.
- 3.1-7 -Develop a strategic plan to promote a diverse local economy including agriculture, forestry, tourism, technology, and manufacturing.
- 3.1-8 Promote the creation of youth programs and internships to provide summer job opportunities.
- 3.1-9 Promote existing and create new opportunities and marketing for local craft persons and artists.
- 3.1-10 Develop programs that promote independently owned local businesses.



***Did You Know?***

The **Saratoga Springs City Center** is a key economic driver.

**32,000-sf** Conference Complex

**242** room adjoining Saratoga Hilton Hotel

Annual Report (2013):

**230** Rental Days

**153,638** Guests

**\$28 million** – Potential Sales Generated

**\$423,000** – City and County Tax Revenues (each)

Source:

[www.SaratogaCityCenter.org](http://www.SaratogaCityCenter.org)

- 3.1-11 Promote the development of pools of capital to promote and expand local small business investments.
- 3.1-12 Create and promote a range of job opportunities, including those for young adults and professionals, within the community allowing residents to work in the City and encourage land uses that build long-term fiscal sustainability.
- 3.1-13 Maintain a diverse property tax base and accommodate a broad range of land uses while minimizing conflicts.
- 3.1-14 Supplement and support City code-enforcement in monitoring and informing property owners of needed code compliance actions.
- 3.1-15 Develop contingency plans to mitigate the impacts of any large decline from any single employment sector.
- 3.1-16 Encourage home-based businesses, in a manner consistent with the surrounding neighborhood.
- 3.1-17 Incentivize the burial or rerouting of utility lines within the City, where appropriate, and in conjunction with other infrastructure improvements to minimize impacts and costs.
- 3.1-18 Provide a clear process for developers regarding potential projects. The City should provide a “guidebook” which defines the development process and schedule for the public.
- 3.1-19 Encourage ~~development which~~ development that diversifies the City’s economic base, promotes year round economic benefits and activity, and brings new resources and people to Saratoga Springs.
- 3.1-20 Work closely with local businesses to help reduce operating costs and gain public recognition by adopting sustainable business practices.
- 3.1-21 Amendments to the Zoning Text and Map should be highly scrutinized, and standards established for City Council and Planning City Council, Planning Boards and Design Review Commission to use in evaluation.

**Regional and Beyond**

- 3.1-22 Foster strong partnerships among various civic stakeholders such as governments, private investment, not-for-profit organizations,



## Placemaking

'Placemaking' focuses on designing cities that cater to people, not just cars, through the development of lively neighborhoods, inviting public spaces and amenities to create a social life in public spaces.

An effective Placemaking process capitalizes on a local community's assets, inspiration, and potential, ultimately creating good public spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and well being. This in turn attracts visitors and residents that support the local economy.

### A form of Placemaking.... Horses – Saratoga Style

2 outdoor sculpture exhibits (2002 and 2007)

34 fiber glass horses decorated and sponsored by artists and local businesses



artists, and citizen groups to form a distinctly creative and welcoming community.

- 3.1-23 Work with County and regional economic development organizations and establish clear guidelines regarding the City's long-term economic growth and sustainability objectives.
- 3.1-24 Promote the City's connections to regional, national and international artists, musicians, businesses, and culture.
- 3.1-25 Establish services needed to attract global visitors and investors to the community.
- 3.1-26 Create better access to and from Albany International Airport for visitors, residents, business travelers, and employees.
- 3.1-27 Work with emerging industries and trends throughout the region, such as the Luther Forest Technology Campus, for future development.
- 3.1-28 Consider lobbying New York State for a change to condominium taxation.
- 3.1-29 Emphasize the City's strategic location and proximity to major activity centers and natural areas including the Adirondacks, Gore Mountain, Lake George, and the Hudson River.

### Tourism and Entertainment

- 3.1-30 Promote and accommodate an increase in visitors during fall, winter and spring by supporting the diverse recreational and entertainment amenities of the City.
- 3.1-31 Grow and expand heritage tourism opportunities by encouraging the use of historic preservation as an economic development tool.
- 3.1-32 Promote the City as a hub for sports tourism.
- 3.1-33 Promote the City as a place for bicycling, kayaking, hiking, and other outdoor activities and adventures tourism, and encourage related stores, clubs, and trails within the City.
- 3.1-34 Highlight proximity and connections to regional systems (Zim Smith Trail, Champlain Canalway Trail, and designated State Bike Route 9) and events (Tour de Cure, Lions Club Duathlon).
- 3.1-35 Recognize and establish a plan to offset the challenges facing the racing industry, both the Thoroughbred and harness track, due to