



Start where you are, Use what you have, Do what you can.

Arthur Ashe

Achieving the Vision

A year of work by County staff, the community, consultants and elected officials culminates with a vision for Broome County. We inventoried our assets, catalogued our deficiencies, did an extensive survey, held workshops, met with stakeholders and most of all we listened. We asked the community to imagine that they are a resident of the county 10 years from now, the comprehensive plan is done and implemented to great success, and they are writing a letter to a friend or family member who does not live here. In this letter we asked residents to tell us how do you want to be able to describe Broome County? This is what the community said:

The Vision: Our residents make Broome County an inviting place to live, work and play. Our students and young professionals are fully engaged in the community. We take pride in our safe, vibrant, attractive urban and village centers and the scenic beauty that surrounds our rural towns and villages. Because we proactively invested in our legacy sites, new ventures now flourish on former brownfields. Our healthy communities are sustained because municipalities have made a commitment to high standards in community services and building design and renovation.

Broome County communities remain strong and resilient in the wake of natural disasters and other challenges through our capacity for cooperation and by incorporating sound planning in all facets of public decision making.

With our partners in education, Broome County invests in our workforce, entrepreneurship, and innovation to continue our legacy as a leader in high technology development. As the birthplace of IBM and the simulation industry, we know the importance of fostering diverse, newly emerging industries such as renewable and clean energy, green technology, and advanced healthcare.

This vision statement encapsulates the aspirations of the community, and we now lay out vision items and an action plan.



Vision Item 5:

Investing In Our Legacy Sites

Nearly 90% of survey residents want to see infrastructure projects concentrated in the Triple Cities (Binghamton, Endicott and Johnson City) as a means of guiding where development takes place. Survey respondents also wanted to see industrial and commercial development concentrated in the Triple Cities, the smaller village centers and the larger suburban towns. Only one quarter of respondents wanted to see this type of development take place countywide including the rural areas.

Residents recognize that concentrating infrastructure saves tax dollars in the long run by allowing the County to focus on maintaining existing systems. But this approach takes more planning and forethought because there is a lack of developable sites within these areas. The majority of our available industrial building stock is not suited to modern manufacturing. It is older and does not have high bay space, and this is restricting new development opportunities. And some significant sites, like the former BAE Systems site in Johnson City and the former Vestal Nursing Center site in Vestal, need special attention because they are flood prone. BAE will soon be demolished, but the former Vestal Nursing Center may deteriorate as it sits idle. We need to develop reuse plans for these ‘bluefield’ sites which allow for their redevelopment while mitigating flood risk.

We need to continue to aggressively assess, **remediate**, assemble and prepare our legacy sites for redevelopment. And we should use all the mechanisms available, such as New York’s Shovel Ready program and the recently established Broome County Land Bank, to market and redevelop sites.

Vision Item 6:

Making a Commitment to High Standards in Services

We need to make a commitment to providing high quality services which take advantage of the latest innovations in social entrepreneurship and technology. We can begin by launching a 21st century website which is welcoming to new residents and business owners. This site would encourage tourism and be tied to successful local social media efforts such as BingSpot. We are the ‘Home to Innovation’ and we should look like it. Millennials expect a government website which accepts payments online, allows residents to reserve parks pavilions, and routs questions and concerns to appropriate departments. This fresh, vibrant portal would also enable county administration to track complaints that have been filed to ensure that there is appropriate follow up. If thoughtfully implemented, an advanced website would keep costs down by streamlining government services.