



TOMPKINS COUNTY Building Code Administration and Operations Study

MARCH 2024



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We would also like to acknowledge the Chief Elected Officials from the participating municipalities. The Chief Elected Officials provided important perspective and input into the study process.

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Hon. Shawna Black, Chair, County Legislature
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Tompkins County established a Study Steering Committee. Their guidance and input were invaluable.

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I. Executive Summary

Study Purpose

The Tompkins County Legislature initiated the Tompkins County Building Code Administration and Operations Study as a means to identify potential opportunities to improve effectiveness and efficiencies through collaboration and sharing of services between and among the municipal building code operations within Tompkins County.

The study focused primarily on the municipal responsibility to administer and enforce the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code (Uniform Code) and the New York State Energy Conservation Construction Code (Energy Code). The Uniform Code, adopted by the New York State Legislature in 1984, has been updated and expanded over the past forty years. The Energy Code, originally adopted in 1979, had a material update in 2020. In Tompkins County each municipality administers and enforces these codes. Several municipalities have adopted stricter Uniform Code provisions, and five (5) municipalities have adopted stricter energy conservation codes than the Energy Code.

While the primary focus of the study was on the administration and enforcement of the Uniform and Energy Codes, the study also took into consideration the other responsibilities of the code enforcement officers. Some of these other duties assigned to the code enforcement officers include: 1) the administration and enforcement of local laws such as zoning and short-term rentals and 2) other assignments including assignment of 911 addressing, stormwater management and floodplain administration.

All the municipalities within Tompkins County participated in the study. It should be noted that the City of Ithaca indicated that shared staffing and other operations would not be feasible at this time due to the status of their workload and operational systems. However, City participants expressed interest in participating in potential collaborative opportunities such as enhancing specialty trainings and technical assistance services. The study analyses focused on the towns and villages but recognized that the City may participate in identified strategies and initiatives.

The County established a Steering Committee that provided guidance and direction throughout the study process. Using an iterative process with key stakeholders, the study process worked with County staff, municipal leadership, code enforcement officers, municipal planners, and other key stakeholders to frame opportunities into prioritized strategy areas with defined initiatives and readiness for implementation.

Key Considerations

Municipal Preference to Maintain Locally Delivered Code Enforcement Operations

The study process, in design and approach, always returned to the key municipal stakeholders to gauge their support to move forward with identified strategies. From project initiation, it was clear that the majority of the municipal leaders valued the delivery of code administration and enforcement at the local level, and they expressed minimal interest in exploring a county-wide administration and enforcement solution. Easy access to code enforcement officers for residents and having locally driven oversight and integration with other municipal functions were identified as key factors in coming to this decision. As

such, the study process respected this municipal perspective and did not explore county-wide consolidation as an option at this time.

Application of Lessons Learned from County-wide and Large Municipal Cooperative Operations

While a consolidated county-wide code operations solution did not emerge as an option, this study evaluated county-wide operations in New York State, identified a number of best practices from those systems and applied them to the local code enforcement delivery system in Tompkins County. Key opportunities identified included: centralization of staff recruitment, utilization of contemporary code enforcement workflow automation software systems, centralized presentment/prosecution of non-compliant cases, creative opportunities to use shared positions and/or circuit riders to increase efficiencies, address specialized needs, and solve workload challenges cost effectively.

Staff Turnover and Continuity of Services

Code enforcement staff turnover was identified as one of the most critical challenges; particularly given that the majority of the operations in Tompkins County are small. In fact, nine of the fifteen town and village operations rely on one full-time or one part-time code enforcement officer to support the entire operation. Turnover in a small operation presents enormous challenges for municipalities, the code enforcement officer community and community stakeholders. It often creates long-term vacancies and backlog issues.

Expanding Workload

All the municipal operations are experiencing increasing workloads. This reflects the ongoing expansion and complexity of the NYS Uniform Code and in particular the NYS Energy Code. Municipalities have also been introducing new and/or expanded local laws covering: zoning, stormwater management, enhancing energy conservation construction such as NY Stretch, and short-term rentals. The administration and enforcement of these laws are often assigned to the code enforcement offices. There has also been a positive surge in development and construction, particularly in multi-family residences in Tompkins County, which generates additional building permit and inspection work for code enforcement operations.

Impact of the Energy Code, Related Construction Technologies and the Electrification of Buildings

The expanding energy code and the increasing expectations related to energy conservation and the electrification of buildings and vehicles are placing additional time and complexity on each project review, as well as additional inspection requirements for new construction projects. Code enforcement officers must not only learn and apply the new codes to each project, but must also gain competencies in the new energy conservation construction materials, designs and technologies in order to competently review and approve plans and monitor construction through the inspection process. New technologies are emerging rapidly and are expansive, including air source and geothermal heat pumps, building envelope technologies and advanced window control systems to just name a few.

Standardization

Stakeholders identified inconsistencies in operations, workflow, forms, interpretation of codes, use of technology and communication both between and among municipalities as well as within municipalities as key challenges to effective and efficient operations. Each of the priority strategy areas present opportunities to increase standardization across operations in order to better support increased effectiveness and efficiencies; however, the study process identified that the greatest opportunity to achieve meaningful efficiency and effectiveness gains would be to standardize the use of technology automation tools for managing case workflows, documentation and communication across municipalities.

County and Municipal Fiscal Constraints

It became evident early in the study process that the County, City, towns and villages are challenged by both external and internal fiscal pressures. This reality presented a framework for the study analysis, discussions, and a prioritization of the identified strategy areas. Each municipality had to consider the possible strategies in the context of their overall municipal priorities and mandates. As such, the final set of priority strategies were selected and then designed to provide efficiency and effectiveness gains to provide relief to municipalities, and designed not to add to the fiscal pressures on the County, City, towns and villages.

Priority Shared Service Strategy Areas to Improve Efficiency and Effectiveness

Through a multi-stage process involving data analysis, stakeholder meetings, roundtable discussions, surveys, and strategy area ranking exercises, the Steering Committee, key stakeholders and the consultant developed a set of six priority strategy areas which are summarized below.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INCREASED EFFECTIVENESS THROUGH SHARED SERVICES

STRATEGY 1: COUNTY ASSIGNMENT OF NEW 911 ADDRESSES

Currently the 911 addressing process is conducted at the municipal level with review and assistance from the Tompkins County GIS Division. This shared service strategy proposes to streamline the property addressing process. Tompkins County Department of Emergency Response (DoER) would be the addressing authority, with the County GIS Division assuming technical responsibility for the assignment of the street name, property number, unit number and point location for new addresses being established within the nine towns and six villages in the County. This work would follow NG911 Standards.

This strategy would: (1) increase compliance with the national 911 addressing standards designed to ensure the best location information for emergency responders; and (2) centralize the creation of the addresses at the County level resulting in improved efficiencies and reductions in the workload of the code enforcement officers.

STRATEGY 2: COUNTY-WIDE OR SHARED BUILDING PERMIT AND CODE ENFORCEMENT SOFTWARE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The goal of this strategy is to implement a common building permit and code enforcement software management system throughout Tompkins County. The towns and villages would collectively develop and issue a cooperative inter-municipal Request for Proposals. Currently there are 5 software systems being utilized by 11 of the code enforcement operations, and there are five code enforcement operations that utilize a combination of excel and word documents to assist with management of operations.

Current software products offer code enforcement offices gains in efficiency and require limited municipal technology support. These factors, in combination with approachable pricing, present an opportunity to find a shared services solution. The technology solutions include automated workflow tools that generate significant efficiencies. The software solutions allow on-line application submission and automated creation of documents including permits and inspection reports. The products include automated notification systems, an on-line payment system, and a dashboard summarizing current workload, scheduling and fee calculation. Utilizing a software product would reduce time spent on repetitive tasks, phone calls,

scheduling, cutting and pasting documents, finding and filing documents, and improve communication with residents and contractors. Utilizing a shared automated workflow software service could facilitate the use of the same or similar permit application, inspection checklists and other documents across municipalities. This in turn would improve compliance by the public and contractors and would facilitate shared staffing and/or inter-municipal cross coverage. A shared system also offers opportunities to easily share information through inter-municipal agreements. There is significant opportunity for a high return on investment, standardization across municipalities and improved communication with residents, contractors and developers. The shared service procurement process is anticipated to generate cost savings. The greater the number of participating municipalities in the shared procurement, the greater the potential for higher pricing discounts.

STRATEGY 3: CREATE A PIPELINE OF CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS AND BUILDING SAFETY INSPECTORS

The decentralized code enforcement services model makes it difficult to maintain a pipeline of qualified code enforcement officers. The majority of code enforcement offices have only one staff person. This strategy proposes to address recruitment and retention on a centralized basis as a means to gain the economy of scale needed to attract a pool of qualified candidates. A targeted outreach and recruitment strategy is recommended using inter-connected initiatives applying a diversity and inclusion lens. The initiatives include:

- 3.A Develop a recruitment toolkit.** Institutionalize recruitment tools that were found to be most effective in an electronic toolkit. Examples of items for the toolkit would include recruitment template tools, community contacts for targeted recruitment and important civil service processes and timelines specific to code enforcement titles.
 - 3.B Streamline job titles, specifications and qualifications to optimize recruitment efforts.** Through a facilitated process, municipal representatives will work collaboratively with County Civil Service to update, create and streamline position titles and specifications to optimize the civil service process to support recruitment efforts for needed code enforcement positions. Through the study process it was learned that there are multiple job titles and often multiple specifications for the same title in use in different municipalities across the County. In some instances the titles may be streamlined and in other instances the job specifications could be streamlined including updates to the minimum qualifications. Streamlining the titles and updating minimum qualifications would reduce confusion by potential candidates as to job opportunities, facilitate recruitment of candidates across municipal lines, enable candidates to be eligible to test for positions in multiple municipalities and also address factors that currently limit a municipality's ability to hire existing certified code enforcement officers with permanent civil service status in other jurisdictions outside Tompkins County without having to be retested.
 - 3.C Centralize targeted recruitment efforts.** The study process identified three primary targeted recruitment approaches: 1) A transitional career initiative that targets potential candidates that have building construction and trades experience and/or firefighters who may be looking to transition to a second career; 2) An initiative that incentivizes candidates to obtain code enforcement officer and/or building safety inspector certification prior to municipal employment; and 3) A pathway for candidates from targeted community college degree programs and other educational programs by developing relationships with educational program leaders.
-

STRATEGY 4: SHARED COURT PRESENTMENT/PROSECUTION SERVICES

Ten Town and Village code enforcement officers recommended that the municipalities create a collective to seek and utilize shared presentment/prosecution services across municipalities. Code enforcement officers reasoned that each municipality handles so few cases each year that it is difficult to develop and maintain the expertise necessary to build the case and related documentation and to consistently prosecute/present non-compliant cases in court.

Development of a designated panel of attorneys to present/prosecute non-compliant cases would create consistency and standardization across municipalities, centralize expertise, facilitate use of best practices, and potentially increase code compliance and reduce existing costs. Municipalities would individually contract for their own services, and it is envisioned that the service contract would be fee-for-service based. Consistent prosecution/presentment of non-compliant cases across the County would also send a clear and consistent message to non-compliant and fraudulent contractors; optimally resulting in reduced non-compliance of the Uniform Code, the New York State Energy Conservation Construction Code, the NYS Stretch Code and the Ithaca Energy Code.

STRATEGY 5: ESTABLISH SPECIALIZED SERVICES AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

The study process identified the need to prepare municipal staff to address the emerging challenges of administering and enforcing the New York State Energy Conservation Construction Code (Energy Code). The Energy Code, as expanded in 2020, establishes minimum requirements for energy-efficient buildings using a series of prescriptive and performance-related provisions. The code enforcement community, as well as design and construction stakeholders, not only need to master the codes but must gain competencies in the new energy efficient materials, technologies and building designs. Examples include air source heat pumps, charging stations and solar farms, as well as other renewable energy technologies.

5.A Establish specialized technical assistance and training programs for: 1) code enforcement officers and 2) residents, developers and contractors on the Energy Code and its related technologies.

Technical assistance for code enforcement officers is envisioned to include a pilot project, ideally grant funded, to provide the code enforcement community with access to energy conservation construction experts to guide the review of project plans and support the inspection process. The initiative would include a collective procurement of energy code experts for the pilot project and for technical services on a fee-for-service basis for interested communities.

Municipalities would expand competencies for residents and contractors through the establishment of a pilot third-party support provider program. Municipalities are permitted to allow permit applicants to utilize and pay for third-party support providers to check plans and inspect projects for compliance with the NYS Energy Code or locally adopted energy codes such as NY Stretch. Use of qualified third-party providers is voluntary for permit applicants.

5.B Expand the panel of third-party electrical and other specialty inspectors.

This strategy proposes to address the shortage of certified electrical inspectors and, to a lesser degree, plumbing inspectors. The existing pool of electrical inspectors in the region are having difficulty meeting current demand and will not have the capacity to address the anticipated increase related to new energy conservation technologies and the expected expansion of the Energy Code. Code enforcement officers identified that the issue is not a matter of finding additional certified inspectors but rather that they do not exist. This recommendation proposes the development of a collaborative with existing inspection vendors, workforce development

experts and industry stakeholders to develop solutions to create new certified inspectors.

STRATEGY 6: MUNICIPAL TO MUNICIPAL SHARED STAFFING

Eight municipalities expressed interest in the creation of new shared staffing arrangements as a means to address workload issues and succession planning in a cost-effective manner. In a decentralized code enforcement service delivery model, particularly in small operations with one or less staff, sharing staff between an among municipalities presents an opportunity to stabilize staffing and gain efficiencies with limited cost increases and without losing the locally administered and enforced code enforcement service delivery model which is valued by both communities and their leaders.

The municipalities identified three potential titles for sharing: code enforcement officer, building safety inspector and electrical/code enforcement officers. For example, multiple municipalities could share a building safety inspector to conduct the required annual building safety inspections of public assembly areas, multi-unit residential buildings and commercial spaces. In this example, the function would be carved out of the role of the existing code enforcement officer and could then be performed by a full time, part time or seasonal shared building safety inspector(s).

Supportive Initiatives

During the study process, several inter-governmental cooperation initiatives surfaced which address key objectives of the study and would be important to the overall effectiveness of code enforcement operations in Tompkins County and to the success of the prioritized strategies identified in this study.

Support Initiative #1: Develop 1) a uniform permit application with a uniform documentation list to accompany the permit application, 2) a uniform checklist of inspections and 3) a uniform fee schedule that can be utilized by municipalities.

Support Initiative #2: Evaluate cross-agency data exchange needs and establish cross-system protocols for information flow.

Support Initiative #3: Facilitate communication and establish interagency processes between code enforcement officers and county departments and/or between county departments that support compliance with all codes. An example topic is the sizing and siting of septic systems, which involves environmental health codes, the Uniform Code, local codes such as zoning, planning and short-term rentals and interfaces with municipalities, County Environmental Health and County Assessment.

Facilitation/Coordination Role

Development and implementation of shared municipal services is almost never easy. Successful shared service implementation requires a strong cross jurisdictional team and that team gains focus and strength through facilitation, coordination and support services. The transition phase of shared service projects is often the most difficult. In order to support the six identified strategies and three the initiatives above, it is recommend that facilitation and support resources be directed to each strategy area during the development, transition and initiative kick-off. It is anticipated that the resources will only be needed on a short-term and part-time basis (approximately 12 months). Envisioned coordination and support roles include:

- Coordinate meetings of the Code Enforcement Officers in Tompkins County.
- Maintain the schedule of the necessary action steps.
- Update and document progress.
- Facilitate process to support improved interagency work and information flows.
- Develop shared documents.
- Identify needed resources.
- Grant development.
- Liaise with County departments and other stakeholders as needed

In the current municipal environment of limited resources and highly competing demands, multi-pronged approaches are often deployed to facilitate and support of the development and start-up of projects. The Tompkins County Department of Planning and Sustainability has offered to provide a limited number of staff hours in 2024, and possibly beyond, to support implementation of the strategies that tie closely to the work of its Department (Strategies 2, 5, 6). The County Information Services/GIS operation has offered to be the facilitator for Strategy 1; however the timing of strategy implementation will need to consider and be coordinated with the overall Information Services/GIS staffing capacity and competing workload demands. County Planning staff will also assist in the identification and recruitment of other municipal or county staff/officials to facilitate Strategy Areas 3 and 4 and supports for the other initiatives. Utilizing content area experts and supports can best serve the implementation of a specific strategy area. Transitional short term facilitation and supports would also be eligible for inclusion in New York State's Local Government Efficiency Grant program given that the overall project will result in a number of efficiency and effectiveness gains with strong returns on investment.

Funding Opportunities

A number of the shared service strategy areas including the shared procurement of an automated workflow and data management system and the shared energy conservation technical assistance initiative would be eligible for grant funding offered through such agencies as the New York Department of State and the New York State Energy Research Development Authority, among others. These code enforcement shared service initiatives could also be included in a Tompkins County County-wide Shared Services Initiative (CWSSI) Plan and documented first year savings would then be eligible for a CWSSI matching grant equal to 100% of the savings generated.

II. Study Approach and Process

Study Approach

The Tompkins County Legislature initiated this study to review the delivery of building code administration and operations across the County and to identify potential collaborative and shared service strategies, which can support enhanced service effectiveness and generate efficiencies in service delivery. The primary focus of this study is on the administration and enforcement of the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code (Uniform Code) and the New York State Energy Conservation Construction Code (Energy Code). However, the majority of code enforcement officers throughout the County are also assigned responsibility for the administration and enforcement of locally adopted laws and codes, as well as for the oversight of other local programs and services. This study incorporated these additional responsibilities into the analysis. The project was organized into four (4) primary phases:

Task 1: Gather Data on Existing Conditions of Code Administration and Operations.

Task 2: Evaluate Potential Options for Shared Services, Coordination, Collaboration and Consolidation.

Task 3: Develop Details on at least four (4) prioritized Shared Services, Coordination, Collaboration, and/or Consolidation options.

Task 4: Stakeholder Outreach and Final Report.

Study Process Framework

Understanding Local Conditions and Code Enforcement Administration and Operations

To determine feasible shared Code Enforcement service options, the consultant team first examined local conditions, emerging trends impacting code enforcement operations, gathering and examining data about current operations. Understanding each department's responsibilities, programs, levels of service, service delivery models and the associated commitment of both financial and staffing resources was essential to the overall process. Individual and comparative evaluations of the current code enforcement operations were conducted. The study process included data collection and analysis of functions performed by each code enforcement office, organizational structures, staffing, workloads, the resources (financial, staffing, technology) utilized, service delivery methods and operational processes and workflows.

Establishment of Intergovernmental Steering Committee

Tompkins County established a Steering Committee comprised of: the Deputy County Administrator, the County Commissioner of Planning and Sustainability, the County Associate Planner, the Town of Caroline Town Supervisor, the Town of Ithaca Director of Zoning and Code Enforcement, the Town of Dryden Director of Planning, the County Clerk, the County Environmental Health Director, and the County Director of Assessment. The Steering Committee provided overall direction, guidance and input throughout the process. The Committee was actively engaged and participated in six (6) Steering Committee meetings held throughout the process.

Primary Source Data Gathering:

The source data included collection, aggregation and evaluation of each municipality's code enforcement annual report (known as the Annual 1203 Report) submitted to the New York Department of State. Additional data evaluated included: municipal budget documents, civil service data, financial data,

census data, annual reports, personnel and wage data, existing inter-municipal agreements, and other municipal documents. In addition, multiple data sets were collected and analyzed for possible county-wide code enforcement operations for comparative purposes.

Active Engagement with Key Stakeholders

Significant effort was dedicated to active engagement with key stakeholders, as well as to supporting and facilitating the exchange of ideas between and among the stakeholders. Through multiple forums and methods, the strengths, weakness, threats and opportunities for improvement through shared services were discussed, evaluated and prioritized throughout the study process with code enforcement officers, chief elected officials, municipal planners and a host of community stakeholders.

Stakeholder Surveys

Initial stakeholder surveys were administered to the code enforcement officers, the chief elected officials and the municipal planners to gain perspectives on current operations, challenges and potential opportunities and concerns related to shared code enforcement services.

Stakeholder Interviews and Roundtables

Early in the process, during January and February of 2023, six stakeholder roundtables occurred including one with code enforcement officers, one with Chief Elected Officials, one with municipal planners, one with County department representatives and two with community stakeholders who interface with code enforcement operations. The roundtables not only solicited stakeholders for ideas, potential opportunities, and concerns regarding shared services/collaboration/consolidation scenarios but provided an opportunity to dialogue and develop a collective understanding of these challenges and potential opportunities.

A second roundtable occurred in May of 2023, with the chief elected officials, code enforcement officers and the municipal planners reviewing the findings from the evaluation of operations, the identified challenges, emerging trends and the potential strategy areas for development. The roundtable was focused on the identification of the top 5-6 priority strategy areas that would be further developed in the study.

A final roundtable with the municipalities occurred in August 2023, reviewing the priority draft strategies and soliciting feedback and further direction.

Building Permit and Code Enforcement Software Demonstrations

Three virtual demonstrations were offered and attended by municipal leaders, code enforcement officers, municipal planners, and members of the project Steering Committee.

III. Code Enforcement in New York State¹

New York State Roles and Responsibilities

In New York State, the task of developing and promulgating the Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code (Uniform Code) and State Energy Conservation Construction Code (Energy Code) is a State responsibility.

The New York Secretary of State has the responsibility to establish the rules and regulations prescribing minimum standards for the administration and enforcement of the Uniform Code and has adopted 19 NYCRR Part 1203 (Uniform Code: Minimum Standards for Administration and Enforcement). **Appendix A: Summary of 19NYCRR Part 1203** provides a brief overview of the minimum standards for a code administration and enforcement program at the local government level. The New York Energy Law §11-107 requires that the administration and enforcement of the Energy Code be conducted by the governmental entity responsible for administration and enforcement of the Uniform Code.

Municipal Roles and Responsibilities

Pursuant to Executive Law §381 each local government is responsible for administering and enforcing the Uniform Code and Energy Code within its boundaries. A local government that administers and enforces the Uniform Code and Energy Code is required to adopt local laws, ordinances, or other regulations that establish the local government's code enforcement program. The NYS Uniform Codes and Energy Codes are extensive and include multiple volumes and multiple editions of each volume; all of which are the responsibility of the local government code enforcement program to administer and enforce.

Municipalities employ code enforcement officers to ensure that new construction, and renovations to existing structures, conform to the Uniform Code and the Energy Code. Municipalities are responsible for reviewing and approving applications for building permits, issuing certificates of occupancy/compliance, temporary certificates, and operating permits. In the field, each office is responsible for conducting construction inspections, inspections prior to the issuance of certificates of occupancy/compliance, temporary certificates, and operating certificates. Depending on the scope of the project, a single non-commercial project could take as many as 6-8 on-site visits to conduct dozens of inspections. Larger commercial projects may require the code enforcement officer to be on-site significantly more. Code enforcement officers also provide customer service; guiding homeowners and builders through the permitting and building process and answering questions, which requires additional time. As necessary, each office has the authority to issue stop-work orders, revoke or suspend permits in the case of violations of the rules and regulations they are responsible for enforcing.

The second critical responsibility of building code administration and enforcement requires routine fire safety inspections of areas of public assembly, multi-family dwellings and dormitories within a community. The Uniform Code requires that safety inspections be conducted every 12-months for

¹ New York State Department of State Division of Building Standards and Codes, Administration and Enforcement of the Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code and the State Energy Conservation Construction Code, 2022

buildings containing public assembly space and dormitories, and every 36-months for multiple family dwellings (3+ units) and nonresidential occupancy buildings. Code enforcement officers are also required to respond to structure fires.

Each office is also responsible for taking, reviewing and investigating complaints, conducting related inspections, issuing notices of violation, monitoring for corrective action and taking necessary enforcement actions to obtain compliance. The offices are also responsible for pursuing enforcement actions and proceedings in consultation with their respective municipal attorneys as may be required to enforce applicable rules and regulations, to abate and/or correct conditions of non-compliance. Each office is responsible for maintaining proper records, preparing and submitting materials and annual reports to the New York Secretary of State and to the NYS Department of State as may be requested.

New York State Energy Code

The New York State Energy Conservation Construction Code (Energy Code) establishes minimum requirements for energy-efficient buildings using a series of prescriptive and performance-related provisions and was expanded in 2020. The Energy Code is based on a set of broad based principles that encourage the use of new energy efficient materials, technologies, building designs, and systems. The expanded Energy Code and the electrification of buildings and vehicles have placed a new set of expectations on the code enforcement community.

Five municipalities in Tompkins County go beyond the Energy Code. Three municipalities adopted the NYS Stretch Code and the City and Town of Ithaca adopted the Ithaca Energy Code.

County Roles and Responsibilities

Pursuant to Department of State regulation 19NYCRR Part 1201, counties are accountable for administration and enforcement of the Uniform Code with respect to:

- Buildings, premises and equipment in the custody of, or activities related thereto undertaken by, the respective county, and
- Buildings, premises and equipment in the custody of, or activities related thereto undertaken by, any special purpose unit of local government created by or for the benefit of the county.

Opt Out Provision

Executive Law §381 provides that a municipality may decline to be the entity enforcing the code within its boundaries. The municipality may adopt a local law stating that it will not enforce the code and responsibility for enforcement will pass to the county in which the particular municipality is located. If a county declines to enforce the code, it may likewise adopt a local law to that effect, and responsibility for code enforcement will immediately pass to the New York State Department of State.

Note: No municipality in Tompkins County has declined to administer and enforce the NYS Uniform Code and the NYS Energy Code.

Shared Service Models Authorized in New York State

New York State Executive Law provides municipalities with a range of options for the delivery of the Uniform Code and the Energy Code. Local governments may enter into an inter-municipal agreement with another local government or with its county government to administer and enforce the codes or parts of the codes. Municipalities are also authorized to operate joint code enforcement programs. In addition, local governments can choose to opt out of enforcing the codes entirely, shifting the responsibility to their county government. **Appendix B: Intergovernmental Cooperation Options** provides a detailed review of the legal options and references to relevant NYS laws.

Administration and Enforcement of Local Laws and Ordinances

Local governments have broad discretion in the design of their Uniform Code and Energy Code administration and enforcement programs. Municipal programs for administration and enforcement of the Uniform Code and the Energy Code may be combined with other programs in the municipality. Examples of local laws and/or programs that are often in the same department and often administered and enforced by the same staff include: zoning and other land use local laws; stormwater management and floodplain administration.

IV. Current State

Tompkins County Municipal Profiles

Tompkins County is comprised of nine (9) towns, six (6) villages, and the City of Ithaca. Each municipality in Tompkins County provides code enforcement services; however, the Village of Dryden contracts for services from the Town of Dryden for the provision of code administration and enforcement. The towns in Tompkins County include Caroline, Danby, Dryden, Enfield, Groton, Ithaca, Lansing, Newfield and Ulysses. The Villages include Cayuga Heights, Dryden, Freeville, Groton, Lansing and Trumansburg. **Table 1: Municipal Profiles** details the population, land area, population density and household units (excluding college dormitories). For purposes of the evaluation of code enforcement services, the population, land area, density and housing unit data for the towns reflect only the data for the area outside the villages.

Table 1: Municipal Profiles

Municipal Profiles				
	Pop ¹	Land Area ¹ (Sq. Mi.)	Pop/Sq.Mi. ¹	Housing Units ^{1,2}
Ithaca, City	31,853	5.4	5,899	13,861
Caroline, Town	3,376	54.8	62	1,541
Danby, Town	3,457	53.6	64	1,590
Dryden, Town	11,589	91	127	5,056
Dryden, Village ³	1,964	1.8	1,091	971
Freeville, Village	476	1.1	433	235
Enfield, Town	3,401	36.9	92	1,409
Groton, Town	3,567	47.7	75	1,359
Groton, Village	2,233	1.7	1,314	956
Ithaca, Town	17,954	27.3	658	6,984
Cayuga Heights, Village	4,055	1.8	2,253	1,683
Lansing, Town	7,976	55.9	143	3,588
Lansing, Village	3,715	4.6	808	1,764
Newfield, Town	5,184	58.9	88	2,445
Ulysses, Town	3,147	31.6	100	1,573
Trumansburg, Village	1,793	1.4	1,281	833
<i>Note 1: Town Data Excludes Village Data</i>				
<i>Note 2: Housing units do not include college dormitory rooms</i>				
<i>Note 3: Village of Dryden contracts with the Town of Dryden for Code Enforcement</i>				
<i>2021 ACS 5 Year Average, DP04</i>				

It is important in a review of opportunities for shared code enforcement services to consider the population, land area, density, housing characteristics within each jurisdiction as well as the proximity of each jurisdiction to another. Given the north-south orientation of Cayuga Lake, access from the northeast and northwest areas of the county requires traveling around the south end of Cayuga Lake. For example, travel from the Town of Ulysses to the Town of Groton can take up to 45-50 minutes one way.

Population density is the highest in the City of Ithaca, the villages and the Town of Ithaca. While the villages continue to have the higher population concentrations within the towns, community stakeholders noted that the growth in housing is occurring outside the villages. 63% of the housing units in the County are concentrated in the City of Ithaca and the Towns of Dryden and Ithaca (including the villages within the towns), which account for only 27% of the County’s land area. The balance of the code enforcement operations serves the eleven (11) communities in the southern, western, and northeastern sections of the County. These 11 code enforcement operations cover 37% of the housing units but 73% of the land area.

Current Shared Service Arrangements

There are a number of shared service arrangements in place in Tompkins County currently and have been in the recent past. A number of these arrangements could be replicated and/or expanded moving forward.

- The Town of Dryden and Village of Dryden operate a joint operation, the Town performs the administration and enforcement of the Uniform Code and the Energy Code for the Village. In addition, the Town code enforcement officer also administers the Village Zoning Code, functions as the Village Floodplain Manager, and provides limited storm water management services for the Village.
- The Town of Ithaca has an inter-municipal agreement with the Town of Lansing to provide temporary code enforcement assistance to cover periods of vacancy for sick, vacation, etc.
- The Town and the City of Ithaca have an inter-municipal agreement to handle special projects.
- The Town of Danby provided temporary assistance to the Town of Caroline, while Caroline was recruiting a code enforcement officer to fill its single code enforcement officer position.
- The Town of Groton and the Village of Groton have an inter-municipal agreement to provide mutual assistance as needed.
- A number of municipalities have an agreement with Bolton Point Water System to conduct plumbing inspections.
- The Towns of Enfield and Newfield independently employ the same code enforcement officer.

Current Organizational Structures, Staffing and Titles

Organizational Structures

Municipalities have discretion in the design of their Uniform Code and Energy Code administration and enforcement programs. Multiple organizational structures are utilized within Tompkins County:

- Ten (10) of the seventeen (17) municipal operations are performed in stand-alone Code Enforcement Departments that report directly to the Chief Elected Official/Municipal Board. These include: the Villages of Freeville, Groton, Lansing, and Trumansburg and the Towns of Caroline, Danby, Groton, Enfield, Newfield and Ulysses.
- The Town of Ithaca code enforcement operations are performed by the Code Enforcement and Zoning Department. The department head is the chief code enforcement officer and reports directly to the Town Supervisor/Town Board.
- The Town and Village of Dryden code operations are performed by the Town Planning and Code Enforcement Office and the department head is the Director of Planning. The department also includes the Town Zoning Officer. Note: The Town Code Enforcement staff provides services to the Village of Dryden through an inter-municipal agreement.
- The Town of Lansing code operations are performed by the Planning and Code Enforcement Office with the Department head being the Director of Planning and Codes who is the Town

Planner.

- The Village of Cayuga Heights code enforcement operation is located within the Department of Public Works/Engineering. The DPW Superintendent is also the Village Zoning and Code Officer and the department head.
- The City of Ithaca has a Building Division within the Department of Planning, Building, Zoning and Economic Development.
- The County code enforcement operation is responsible only for County owned properties. The function is performed by the Director and Deputy Director of Facilities.

Nine (9) Towns and Villages have at least one (1) code enforcement officer working 40 hours/week, one (1) working 30 hours/week and five (5) functioning with a part-time code enforcement officer. The Towns of Enfield and Newfield both employ the same individual to be their respective part time code enforcement officer.

It is important to note that there are nine (9) municipalities that have only one full-time or part-time certified code enforcement officer in their operation. This leaves a municipality vulnerable should the employee leave service, particularly if it is not a planned exit. Without access to available certified code officers, municipalities are forced to turn to their neighboring communities for assistance. This situation has been further exacerbated by the recently adopted New York State law requiring new code enforcement officers to complete two-thirds of the required basic certification training before they are authorized to perform **any** code enforcement official functions.

NYS Certifications for Code Enforcement Officers and Building Inspectors

In New York State, code enforcement officers must become certified and maintain their certification in order to perform the fundamental functions of the job. Each municipality must appoint a code enforcement official and may hire additional code enforcement offers to assist in carrying out the function. The NYS code enforcement officer certification enables a person to carry out all responsibilities in the Uniform and Energy Codes. New York State has a second level of enforcement certification titled Building Safety Inspector. **Appendix C: Certification and Training Requirements for Code Enforcement Officers and Building Safety Inspectors** provides an overview of the required certification and training requirement of each of the certifications. The description below summarizes the activities each certification level may perform:

- **Code enforcement official enforcement activities include:**
 - Building safety inspector enforcement activities;
 - Review and/or approval of plans incidental to the issuance of a permit for the construction or alteration of buildings and structures;
 - Construction inspections performed during and/or upon completion of the construction or alteration of buildings and structures; and
- **Building safety inspector enforcement activities include:**
 - Fire safety and/or property maintenance inspections of existing buildings and structures.

Staffing

Staffing models vary from municipality to municipality reflecting each municipality's population, level of building and construction activity and the range of responsibilities assigned to the code enforcement operation. In total, in the Towns and Villages, there are approximately 20 full time equivalent code

enforcement positions, including support staff. Two municipalities have recently increased staffing due to the increased workload and another municipality has an expansion of staffing under consideration. **Table 2: Current Staffing by Title** presents the number of positions by title. Staffing is presented on a full-time equivalent basis (40 hours/week).

Table 2: Current Staffing

Town and Village Code Administration and Operations Staffing by Title							
Municipality	Position Title						
	Director of Code Enforcement & Zoning	DPW Superintendent/ Zoning Officer	Code Enforcement Officer (or related title)	Electrical & Code Enforcement Officer	Director of Public Works	Code Safety or Fire Inspector	Administrative Assistance
Caroline, Town			0.5				0.08
Danby, Town			1				
Dryden, Town & Village			2.5				1 shared w/ Planning
Freeville, Village			0.25				
Enfield, Town			0.58				
Groton, Town			0.75				
Groton, Village			0.5				
Ithaca, Town	1		0	4		1	2
Cayuga Heights		0.25	0		0.5	1	0.25 Clerk support
Lansing, Town			2				Share 1 w/Planning
Lansing, Village			1			0.25	Village Clerk assists
Newfield, Town			0.45				
Ulysses, Town			1			0.125	
Trumansburg, Village			1				

Note: Fire/Safety Inspections conducted by Fire Departments in City of Ithaca, Town of Danby and part of the Town of Ithaca.

Civil Service Position Titles, Job Qualifications and Descriptions

Separate from meeting and maintaining the NYS certifications, all of the positions are subject to NYS and County Civil Service rules. During the study process, the civil service specifications and minimum qualifications set for code enforcement officer and related titles were identified as a potential area for streamlining and updating as a means to support staff recruitment and retention. The qualifications impact eligibility, testing and the potential for lateral transfers for persons with permanent status. Careful understanding and consideration of these factors can facilitate recruitment, testing, lateral transfers and hiring of candidates while at the same time achieving the Civil Service purpose and rules related to public service employment in New York State.

The study identified seven (7) job titles and specifications that are utilized to support the code administration and enforcement operations within the town and villages in Tompkins County. It is important to note that for full time positions, the titles are classified as competitive which requires passing a written test and being reachable on the civil service test scoring list. Part-time positions are non-competitive and can be filled by appointment without a civil service test. These titles and specifications have been adopted by Tompkins County Civil Service and are outlined below.

<u>Tompkins County Title</u>	<u>Jurisdictions Identified on Specification</u>
Code/Fire Enforcement Officer	Any Jurisdiction
Code Enforcement Officer	Town of Ithaca and Town of Lansing
Zoning/Code/Fire Enforcement Officer	Various Jurisdictions
Zoning/Code/Fire Enforcement Officer	Town of Lansing
Electrical & Code Enforcement Officer	Town of Ithaca
Building Inspector	Multiple Jurisdictions
Code Safety Inspector	Town of Ithaca

Six (6) of the seven (7) job titles above (all but the Code Safety Inspector), upon completion of the required NYS certification requirements, can administer and enforce all of the Uniform Code and Energy Code. The Town of Ithaca’s Electrical and Code Enforcement Officer position requires higher qualifications to meet the higher level of job responsibilities related to electrical plan reviews and related inspections. There are similarities in qualifications and job duties among the other five titles; however, there are differences in typical work duties and in minimum qualifications that can impact recruitment, jurisdictional transfers, etc.

As part of the study, the job specifications utilized by municipalities in Tompkins County and a sampling of titles utilized in surrounding counties were reviewed to assist in identifying potential strategies. (See **Appendix D: Summary of Titles and Qualifications and Copies of Job Specifications**) This review identified a number of potential opportunities for municipalities to address their current job titles:

- Align titles, job responsibilities and minimum qualifications to best meet the needs of each individual municipality and to support recruitment strategies.
- Streamline the overall titles and specifications utilized in Tompkins County.
- Incorporate a review of the titles and specifications used in the region as part of a redesign.
- Consider the creation of new titles that create career paths such as Code Enforcement Officer Trainee, which is currently used in other jurisdictions.

The Tompkins County Human Resources Department administers civil service countywide, (exclusive of the City of Ithaca), and has indicated that the Department would work with a municipality, or a group of municipalities, to identify solutions to improve current job specifications. The Department offered to work with municipalities to update or create new job titles and specifications to better meet the contemporary workforce needs of municipalities.

Code Enforcement Officer Longevity

At the code enforcement officer roundtable, significant conversation centered on the need for succession planning. Code enforcement officers noted that a majority of the existing officers have been in their positions for a long time and there are a number that will be retiring at some point in the next 3-5 years. In fact, on the code enforcement officer survey, four (4) respondents indicated a good chance of retiring within three years (this is 27% of the code enforcement officers). Three (3) indicated they did not have plans to retire. Two (2) code enforcement officers have less than one year of experience, and the balance did not respond to the question.

Code Enforcement Officer Compensation

There are nine (9) towns and villages that have at least one (1) full-time (40 hours/week) code enforcement officer or zoning/code enforcement officer. The 2023 salaries for full time code enforcement officers ranged from approximately \$51,850 to \$76,710 with an average salary of \$61,260

and median salary of \$60,000. There is one (1) code enforcement officer that works 30 hours/week and that salary when prorated to 40 hours falls within the salary range of the fulltime officers. There were four (4) municipalities with part-time officers working 16-23 hours/week. When translated to a rate per hour, there appears to be a significant range in rate per hour for the part-time employees. There is one municipality that operates with a part time officer working approximately 10 hours per week at a salary of \$13,260. The Town of Ithaca has a different model. There is a full time Director of Zoning and Code Enforcement with four electrical and code enforcement officers with an average salary of approximately \$70,100, reflecting the higher level of qualifications and responsibilities. In addition, the organization include one building safety inspector.

Employees in municipalities participating in the New York State retirement system are offered retiree benefits. The majority, if not all full-time employees are eligible for health benefits. The majority of the part-time employees currently do not receive health insurance benefits, with one exception.

Code Administration and Operations, Responsibilities and Workload

Uniform Code and Energy Code Workload

Every code enforcement operation in Tompkins County administers and enforces the Uniform and Energy Codes, and to varying degrees, is also responsible to carry out other functions assigned by their specific municipality. This section starts with a review of the Uniform and Energy Code activities. While a time study of work activities was outside the scope of the study and too burdensome for the code officers, this review of the workload activities provides a sense of the depth and breadth of responsibilities of the code enforcement community.

Each municipality is required to prepare and file a Part 1203 Annual Report with the New York State Department of State. The 1203 Reports provide detailed data on each municipality's NYS Uniform and Energy Code enforcement activity. The following series of tables provides a summary of the critical functions performed, based on the 1203 Annual Reports submitted in 2021. These data can be used to get a general sense of each municipality and the relative workloads for each of the operations.

Building Permits

During 2021, there were 2,663 building permits issued by all municipalities within Tompkins County.

Once the permit has been issued, a series of construction inspections and sign-offs are required. New construction inspections typically include:

- 1) Work site prior to permit issuance;
- 2) Footing prior to pouring concrete;
- 3) Foundation prior to backfill;
- 4) Preparation for concrete slab;
- 5) Framing;
- 6) Electrical, plumbing, mechanical, fire-protection, and other similar service systems;
- 7) Fire-resistant construction;
- 8) Fire-resistant penetrations;
- 9) Solid fuel-burning heating appliances, chimneys, flues or gas vents;

10) Inspections required to demonstrate Energy Code and ECS compliance, including insulation, fenestration, air leakage, system controls, mechanical equipment size, and, where required, minimum fan efficiencies, programmable thermostats, energy recovery, whole-house ventilation, plumbing heat traps, and high-performance lighting and controls;

11) Installation, connection, and assembly of factory manufactured buildings and manufactured homes; and

12) A final inspection after all work authorized by the building permit has been completed. Once the final inspection identified the project as in compliance, the municipality issues a certificate of completion or certificate of occupancy.²

The level of plan review and the number of inspections varies based on the type and size of the construction project. A new large commercial project can involve dozens of inspections requiring more frequent on-site visits whereas a new single- or two-family home project typically involves 6-8 on-site visits. The category of Other Permits includes projects such as upgrades to existing structures/properties and construction of sheds, plumbing work, decks, etc. which may require one to two on-site visits. Projects such as in-ground pool installations require more on-site visits. **Table 3: NYS Uniform Code – Number of Building Permits** reflects the number of permits issued by type by municipality in 2021.

Table 3: NYS Uniform Code – Number of Building Permits

NYS Uniform Code Number of Building Permits									
2021	Pop ¹	Total Permits	1&2 Family Dwellings & Townhouses		Other Residential		Non-residential		Other Permits ²
			New	Existing	New	Existing	New	Existing	
Ithaca, City	31,853	826	8	234	6	234	19	206	119
Caroline, Town	3,376	82	19	2	0	0	0	2	59
Danby, Town	3,457	99	10	9	0	0	5	0	75
Dryden, Town	11,589	197	17	58	0	2	1	10	109
Dryden, Village	1,964	56	0	32	0	0	0	3	21
Freeville, Village	476	8	0	3	0	0	0	0	5
Enfield, Town	3,401	51	6	14	0	0	1	1	29
Groton, Town	3,567	74	6	10	0	0	2	1	55
Groton, Village	2,233	72	2	44	0	2	0	2	22
Ithaca, Town	17,954	518	12	77	0	0	1	31	397
Cayuga Heights, Village	4,055	119	1	96	0	0	0	4	18
Lansing, Town	7,976	247	17	119	2	0	6	21	82
Lansing, Village	3,715	74	13	33	4	2	0	19	3
Newfield, Town	5,184	89	16	12	0	0	1	0	60
Ulysses, Town	3,147	82	9	30	8	7	0	0	28
Trumansburg, Village	1,793	66	2	64	0	0	0	0	0
Tompkins County	N/A	3	0	0	0	0	0	2	1
Total		2663	138	837	20	247	36	302	1083
<i>Note 1: Town Population Excludes Village Population.</i>									
<i>Note 2: Other Permits include: pools, sheds, decks, plumbing, HVAC, etc.</i>									
<i>Source: 2021 Uniform Code Part 1203 Reports</i>									

As the above Table indicates, there were 2,663 building permits issued in 2021, of which 826 were issued in the City of Ithaca and 1,837 were issued outside the City. As a means to gain an understanding of the magnitude of the code enforcement officer’s workload, an illustrative modeling of the estimated annual

² Town of Ithaca Director of Code Enforcement and Zoning

number of inspections and corresponding site visit was developed. Data on the actual number of inspections were not available, so the following assumptions were used to translate the number of permits into a rough estimate of on-site visits. The estimates were calculated based on the reported average number of inspections per permit and professional experience.

Type of Construction Permit	Estimated Average Site Visits/Permit
Single and Two Family Homes - New Construction	8 site visits
Single and Two Family Homes – Renovations	5 site visits
Multi-family Homes – New Construction	10 site visits
Multi-family Homes – Renovation	8 site visits
Other Permits	1.5 site visits

As **Table 4: Estimated Number of Construction Inspection Site Visits** depicts, this model would indicate that code enforcement officers conducted approximately 6,700 site visits to perform even more inspections (multiple inspections in a single site visit). One code enforcement officer indicated that recent large projects required 10-12 site visits and each inspection took approximately 1 hour. Depending on the number and type of inspections, site visits can take multiple hours, if not more, to complete. Given the relative difference in the level of commercial and multi-family housing structures, the City of Ithaca is not included.

Table 4: Estimated Number of Construction Inspection Site Visits

Estimated Number of On-site Inspections related to Building Construction Permits			
Illustrative Only			
2021	Pop ¹	Total Permits ²	Estimated Site Visits ³
Caroline, Town	3,376	82	267
Danby, Town	3,457	99	288
Dryden, Town	11,589	197	696
Dryden, Village	1,964	56	216
Freeville, Village	476	8	23
Enfield, Town	3,401	51	180
Groton, Town	3,567	74	209
Groton, Village	2,233	72	301
Ithaca, Town	17,954	518	1,335
Cayuga Heights, Village	4,055	119	547
Lansing, Town	7,976	247	1,102
Lansing, Village	3,715	74	482
Newfield, Town	5,184	89	288
Ulysses, Town	3,147	82	400
Trumansburg, Village	1,793	66	336
Tompkins County	N/A	3	18
Total		1837	6,683
<i>Note 1: Town Population</i>			
<i>Excludes Village Population.</i>			
<i>Note 2: The Data Source is the 2021 Uniform Code Part 1203 Reports.</i>			
<i>Note 3: Site Visits Estimated By Laberge Group using the following assumptions: 8 visits/new home construction; 5 visits per home renovation; 10 visits for new multi-family and commercial construction; 8 visits for multi-family and commercial construction and 1.5 visits per "Other Permits".</i>			

Energy Code

The New York State Energy Conservation Construction Code establishes minimum energy efficiency requirements for both commercial and residential construction. The Towns of Danby, Dryden and Newfield have adopted the NYS Stretch Code, and the City and Town of Ithaca have adopted the Ithaca Energy Code. Both local laws are more restrictive than the NYS Energy Conservation Construction Code. The NYS Stretch Code exceeds the NYS Energy Code in building envelope, lighting, electrical and compatibility with renewable energy and electric vehicles.³

Enforcement Officers administer and enforce the energy code in conjunction with the NYS Uniform Code. Enforcement includes acceptance of plan reviews and a series of inspections specific to the Energy Code. The expansion of the energy code, along with the ever-increasing technologies and anticipated electrification, administration and enforcement is becoming increasingly complex, particularly for commercial and large multi-unit housing projects. **Table 5: Energy Code Activity** summarizes the energy code enforcement activity involving 1,107 projects in 2021.

Table 5: Energy Code Activity

Energy Code Activity By Municipality						
	Pop ¹	Total Projects	New Commercial	New Residential	Existing Commercial	Existing Residential
			# New Projects Completed	# New Projects Completed	# Projects Completed	# Projects Completed
Ithaca, City	31,853	486	8	10	171	297
Caroline, Town	3,376	25	0	22	1	2
Danby, Town	3,457	25	4	12	0	9
Dryden, Town	11,589	28	2	16	6	4
Dryden, Village	1,964	10	0	0	6	4
Freeville, Village	476	-	0	0	0	0
Enfield, Town	3,401	27	2	5	0	20
Groton, Town	3,567	21	2	6	1	12
Groton, Village	2,233	48	0	2	2	44
Ithaca, Town	17,954	101	1	10	31	59
Cayuga Heights, Village	4,055	105	0	2	7	96
Lansing, Town	7,976	137	3	20	7	107
Lansing, Village	3,715	43	0	7	19	17
Newfield, Town	5,184	13	3	5	0	5
Ulysses, Town	3,147	14	0	4	0	10
Trumansburg, Village	1,793	22	0	1	0	21
Tompkins County	N/A	2	0	0	2	0

Note 1: Town Population Excludes Village Population.
Source: NYS DOS 2021 Energy Code Submissions Database

Stop Work Orders and Certificates of Occupancy/Compliance

Code Enforcement departments issue **Stop Work Orders (SWO)** when code enforcement officers determine the work is contrary to the provisions of the Uniform Code and/or the Energy Code, the site has unsafe work conditions or work is being performed without an active building permit or in violation of other local codes. A stop work order must state the reason(s) for its issuance and the conditions that must

³ New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, NYStretch Energy Code – 2020, July, 2019

be corrected before work will be allowed to resume. In 2021, there were a total of seventeen (17) stop work orders issued in nine (9) municipalities as detailed in **Table 6: Building Permit Activities**.

Upon final inspection and determination of compliance, code enforcement officers are responsible to issue a certificate of occupancy or a certificate of compliance for any work which is the subject of a building permit and required to comply with either or both codes and for all structures, buildings, or portions thereof, which are converted from one use or occupancy classification or sub-classification to another. Permission to use or occupy a building, or structure sub-portion, can only be granted by issuance of a certificate of occupancy or a certificate of compliance. There were a total of 1,959 certificates of occupancy/completion issued during 2021 as detailed in **Table 6: Building Permit Activities**.

Table 6: Building Permit Activities

Building Permit Activity				
	Pop ¹	Total Building Permits	Stop Work Orders	Certificates of Occupancy/ Compliance
Ithaca, City	31,853	826	3	593
Caroline, Town	3,376	82	0	13
Danby, Town	3,457	99	0	72
Dryden, Town	11,574	197	0	73
Enfield, Town	3,401	51	0	25
Groton, Town	3,567	74	1	65
Ithaca, Town	17,954	518	6	593
Lansing, Town	7,976	247	1	250
Newfield, Town	5,184	89	0	27
Ulysses, Town	3,147	82	3	52
Cayuga Heights, Village	4,055	119	0	75
Dryden, Village 1	1,979	56	0	7
Freeville, Village	476	8	0	3
Groton, Village	2,233	72	1	2
Lansing, Village	3,715	74	1	48
Trumansburg, Village	1,793	66	8	58
Tompkins County	N/A	3	0	3
<i>Note 1: Town Population Excludes Village Population</i>				
<i>Note 2: Village of Dryden Contracts with the Town of Dryden</i>				
<i>Source: 2021 Uniform Code Part 1203 Reports</i>				

Processing Time for Construction Permits and Advance Notice for Inspections

The processing time for issuing permits varies from municipality to municipality and is dependent on factors such as the type of permit, application packet completeness, fee payment receipt and sign off by other departments or entities, such as the Planning Board or Zoning Board of Appeals. Code enforcement officers reported anywhere from 1-2 days to 2 weeks to issue a permit for a simple project, assuming the application is complete and the fee is paid. Code enforcement officers indicated that larger projects typically take longer and can range from weeks to months depending on the complexity of the construction plans and the completeness of the packet.

Most code enforcement operations provide a checklist for the contractor/owner outlining the type and sequence of construction inspections that must be completed by the code enforcement officer throughout the project. The scheduling of inspections varies between municipalities and is often impacted by numerous factors. In smaller offices, with only part-time staff, scheduling of inspections will be dependent on the work days of the part-time officer. In a one person office or an office with less than one person, vacancies, vacations, trainings, sick and other leave time will cause delays in the scheduling of

inspections. As noted in the stakeholder input section, the varied and sometimes lengthy time to obtain an inspection is problematic for the contractor.

Fire Safety and Property Maintenance Inspections

Code enforcement programs are required to conduct fire safety and property maintenance inspections of all buildings that contain areas of public assembly, all multiple dwellings, dormitories, and all nonresidential occupancies as detailed below:

- Multi-family buildings must be inspected every three (3) years. County-wide, there are 1,595 multi-family buildings with 16,622 units. *831 of the 1,595 buildings are located outside the City of Ithaca.*
- Areas of public assembly require annual inspections. There are 533 buildings that house areas of public assembly. *210 of the 533 buildings are located outside the City of Ithaca.*
- Dormitories must be inspected annually. There are 112 dormitory buildings in the County. *The dormitories are concentrated in the City, the Town of Ithaca and Cayuga Heights.*
- Non-residential occupancies are required to be inspected every three years. There are 1,298 non-residential buildings in the County. *681 of the 1,298 buildings are located outside the City of Ithaca.*

A summary of the building safety inspections completed by each municipality in 2021 is depicted in **Table 7: 2021 Fire Safety Inspections.**

Table 7: 2021 Fire Safety Inspections

Fire Safety and Property Maintenance Inspections (Required by NYS Uniform Code)						
2021		Public Assembly Inspections	Building w/ 3+ Housing Units	Dormitory Buildings	Non Residential Buildings	Total Inspections
Ithaca, City	31,853	278	163	69	226	736
Caroline, Town	3,376	-	-	-	-	-
Danby, Town	3,457	1	-	-	-	1
Dryden, Town	11,589	4	2	-	2	8
Dryden, (V)	1,964	1	11	-	5	17
Freeville, (V)	476	2	2	-	-	4
Enfield, Town	3,401	5	6	-	3	14
Groton, Town	3,567	10	-	-	6	16
Groton, (V)	2,233	4	43	-	2	49
Ithaca, Town	17,954	11	58	35	15	119
Cayuga Heights, (V)	4,055	2	-	8	18	28
Lansing, Town	7,976	21	14	-	44	79
Lansing, (V)	3,715	15	27	-	39	81
Newfield, Town	5,184	4	7	-	5	16
Ulysses, Town	3,147	10	6	-	25	41
Trumansburg, (V)	1,793	24	19	-	20	63
Total		392	358	112	410	1,272
<i>Note 1: Town Population Excludes Village Population.</i>						
<i>Source: 2021 Uniform Code Part 1203 Reports</i>						

Based on the information reported, not all safety inspections are completed within the required time frames. It is problematic in smaller communities during periods of transition from one code enforcement officer to another. Municipalities also reported that they have difficulty getting access to individual dwelling units within multi-family buildings and must return multiple times, which impacts the completion of inspections. One code enforcement officer reported that each inspection can take on average two hours on site with additional time needed to complete required reporting.

Operating Permits

Operating permits are required for certain specified activities or for certain categories of building use. Examples include: manufacturing, storing or handling hazardous materials in quantities exceeding specified limits; hazardous processes and activities; use of pyrotechnic devices in assembly occupancies buildings containing one or more areas of public assembly with an occupant load of 100 persons or more; and buildings whose use or occupancy classification may pose a substantial potential hazard to public safety. As **Table 8: Operating Permits** indicates, four municipalities do not issue operating permits and all but five of the municipalities issued operating permits in 2021.

Table 8: Operating Permits

Operating Permits By Municipality & Type								
2021	Pop ¹	Operating Permits Required	Total Operating Permits	Hazardous Materials	Hazardous Process	Pyro	High Occupancy	Parking Structure
Ithaca, City	31,853	Yes	184	15	0	0	159	10
Caroline, Town	3,376	Yes	14	0	0	0	14	0
Danby, Town	3,457	Yes	1	0	0	0	1	0
Dryden, Town	11,589	Yes	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dryden, Village	1,964	No	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Freeville, Village	476	No	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Enfield, Town	3,401	Yes	3	0	0	0	3	0
Groton, Town	3,567	Yes	13	2	0	1	10	0
Groton, Village	2,233	No	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Ithaca, Town	17,954	Yes	33	1	6	0	26	0
Cayuga Heights, Village	4,055	Yes	2	0	0		2	0
Lansing, Town	7,976	Yes	11	1	0	0	10	0
Lansing, Village	3,715	Yes	22	1	0	0	21	0
Newfield, Town	5,184	Yes	7	1	0	0	6	0
Ulysses, Town	3,147	Yes	1	1	0	0	0	0
Trumansburg, Village	1,793	Yes	11	0	0	0	11	0
Tompkins County	N/A	No	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

*Note 1: Town Population **Excludes** Village Population.*

Source: 2021 Uniform Code Part 1203 Reports

Customer Communication and Support

Code enforcement officers spoke to the significant amount of time that is spent working with homeowners, commercial property owners and contractors to review projects, answer questions and provide technical assistance and guidance. This provides value not only to the customer, but increases code compliance and avoids problems during the construction project. Anecdotally, a few officers estimated that this accounted for 15-20% of their time.

Complaints

Administration and enforcement of the Uniform Code and Energy Code requires that each code enforcement operation establish a process to receive and investigate complaints regarding code compliance. Should code violations be identified, the code enforcement officer must work to ensure the owner resolves the issues. A number of tools including education, notice of violations, stop work orders, and civil and penal law interventions are utilized to remediate non-compliant code issues. Code enforcement officers acted upon 602 complaints received in 2021.

More Restrictive Local Standards

Executive Law §379 and Energy Law §11-109 both provide a process for adoption of more restrictive standards for construction and energy conservation as compared to the NYS Uniform and Energy Codes. In Tompkins County, the following municipalities have adopted more restrictive standards.

Town of Ithaca:	Ithaca Energy Code Town of Ithaca Sprinkler Law
City of Ithaca	Ithaca Energy Code Chapter VII of City Code: Residential Rental Units
Town of Danby	NYS Stretch Energy Code
Town of Dryden	NYS Stretch Energy Code
Town of Newfield	NYS Stretch Energy Code

Municipal Work Assignments

All the Code Enforcement Operations in Tompkins County have been assigned additional responsibilities beyond the administration and enforcement of the Uniform Code and the Energy Code. This includes the administration and enforcement of local laws and ordinances such as zoning, short and long-term rentals, stormwater management and floodplain management as well as other assigned responsibilities. One consistent assignment across municipalities is the addressing of new properties for emergency 911 purposes. **Table 9: Additional Assignments and Responsibilities** outlines the additional functions.

Table 9: Additional Assignments and Responsibilities

Municipality	Staffing	Responsibilities Assigned to Code Enforcement Staff <u>in Addition to</u> Administering and Enforcing the Uniform and Energy Codes
Cayuga Heights (V)	.25 Super. .5 Dir. Of PW 1 Bldg. Inspector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoning and ZBA and Planning Board Support • Planning • Stormwater Management Officer¹ • 911 Addressing
Dryden, (V)	Contract with the Town of Dryden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town CEO functions in the Village as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Zoning Officer ○ Floodplain Manager ○ Stormwater Management Officer • 911 Addressing

Municipality	Staffing	Responsibilities Assigned to Code Enforcement Staff <u>in Addition to</u> Administering and Enforcing the Uniform and Energy Codes
Freeville (V)	10 hrs./ week CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Floodplain Management • 911 Addressing
Groton (V)	1 PT CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforce Zoning Code • 911 Addressing
Lansing (V)	1 CEO 1 PT Fire Inspector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforce Zoning Code • Stormwater Management Officer • Planning • 911 Addressing
Trumansburg (V)	1 CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforce Local Laws and Ordinances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <i>Outdoor Seating/Open Container, Chicken and Sign Ordinances</i> • Perform SWPP reviews² • 911 Addressing
Caroline (T)	1 PT CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stormwater Management Officer • Floodplain Administrator <p><i>Note: The Town established a Zoning Commission to develop a Zoning Code. Upon completion, the code enforcement officer may assume responsibility for zoning enforcement.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 911 Addressing
Danby (T)	1 CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforce Zoning Code • Floodplain Administrator • Enforce Local laws and ordinances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <i>Timber Harvesting LL</i> • Function as Town Hall emergency mgt. & informal security coordinator • 911 Addressing <p><i>NOTE: CEO does not perform the fire safety inspections; the Fire Department performs them.</i></p>
Dryden (T)	2.5 CEO (serving Town & Village of Dryden)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performs most of the zoning review process & informs Planning Director of necessary actions • Stormwater Management Officer • Floodplain Manager • Town representative on the Cayuga Lake Watershed Inter-municipal Organization • Enforces the Stretch Local Law • 911 Addressing
Enfield (T)	1 PT CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 911 Addressing
Groton(T)	1 CEO (30 hrs./week)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforce Zoning & other land use laws such as solar and appliance installations • 911 Addressing

Municipality	Staffing	Responsibilities Assigned to Code Enforcement Staff <u>in Addition to</u> Administering and Enforcing the Uniform and Energy Codes
Ithaca (T)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform Electrical Inspections in-house • Enforce Other Local Laws: <i>Zoning, Sprinkler System, Flood Damage Prevention, Ithaca Energy Code, Outdoor Lighting, Food Truck, Building Construction and Fire Prevention (includes additional operating permits, dangerous building provisions, etc.), Noise, Property Maintenance, Rental Property, Special Land Use Districts local law, and New Neighborhood Local Laws.</i> • Review and comment on projects before the Planning Board • Draft amendments to local laws • Provide support to Town committees • Review and comment on all appeals to the Zoning Board • 911 Addressing <p><i>Note: The Fire Department conducts safety inspections in part of the Town</i></p>
Lansing (T)	1.3 CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO Functions as Zoning Officer • 911 Addressing
Newfield (T)	1 PT CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stormwater Management Officer • Local Laws and Ordinances <i>Stretch Energy Code</i> • 911 Addressing
Ulysses (T)	1 CEO 0.13 Building Safety Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assists Zoning Officer with enforcement • 911 Addressing
<p><i>Note 1: Stormwater Management Officer is an employee or officer appointed by municipality to accept and have reviewed stormwater pollution prevention plans (SWPPP), forward the plans to the applicable municipal board and inspect stormwater management practices. In Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) communities, these officers manage the MS4 requirements and provide a wide range of stormwater management interventions.</i></p> <p><i>*Note 2: Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) is a plan that evaluates potential pollutant sources at a construction site and selects and implements measures to prevent and controls the discharge of pollutants in stormwater runoff.</i></p>		

911 Addressing

During the stakeholder participation process, the topic of 911 addressing was raised by numerous Chief Elected Officials and code enforcement officers, and in fact, was identified as one of the key responsibilities recommended to be shifted from the local code enforcement officers to the County. Based on the level of interest, the following review of the current process was conducted.

Currently, local addressing is assigned by each municipality, and in all municipalities the function has been assigned to the code enforcement officer. Since the advent of enhanced 911 in the 1990’s, the municipalities have been working to improve the addressing to conform to 911 emergency response standards. The municipalities have been assigning new addresses in compliance with the 911 addressing standards and have been re-addressing existing addresses that do not currently comply with the public

safety needs relative to emergency call answer and response. Both County and municipal staff indicate that there remain addresses that do not meet the 911 addressing standards.

The County Department of Information Technology Services GIS Division currently manages the 911 master address database. The County and the municipal code enforcement operations have established an ongoing interface for 911 addressing. The County has established a process to evaluate the proposed address and/or to make an initial recommendation for an address to the municipality. The County has also established an on-line portal for municipalities to submit the proposed new address using a standardized form that the municipalities populate. The County then reviews the proposed address and sends back an address verification should the address meet the 911 standards. Should there be an issue, the County works with the municipality to make adjustments as required and the address verification is sent. The municipality then sends the address to a designated set of recipients.

Technology, Workflow and Document Management

Currently, municipalities use various technology tools to track and manage their administration and enforcement activities. Based on the continuum of required activities, code enforcement operations require strong organizational management necessary to efficiently manage cases throughout their life cycle, manage and store case files, generate reports, create documents such as permits, violations, stop work orders and quickly search and locate relevant information on new applications, past permits, violations, and other pertinent data. There is no statewide universal information management system utilized for code enforcement offices in New York State. As seen in **Table 10: Building Permit and Code Enforcement Software Management Systems**, there are a variety of vendor products and in-house created information management systems utilized by code enforcement operations in Tompkins County. Six operations utilize a combination of desktop tools for case and data management.

Table 10: Building Permit and Code Enforcement Software Management Systems

Building Permit & Code Enforcement Software	Total Municipalities	Municipalities
OpenGov	3	City of Ithaca, Towns of Ithaca and Lansing
Williamson	3	Towns of Enfield and Newfield, Village of Lansing
BAS by IPS*	3	Towns of Caroline and Dryden, Village of Dryden
CloudPermit	1	Town of Groton
On-line electronic forms interfaced with Laserfiche	1	Village of Cayuga Heights
Excel, Word, Paper	5	Towns of Danby and Ulysses, Villages of Freeville, Groton, Trumansburg and Tompkins County
<p><i>* IPS by BAS was recently bought by Edmunds. Edmunds now offers a cloud-based workflow building permit and code enforcement product called EGT Permit and Code Enforcement from their MCJS product line.</i></p>		

The current generation of Building Permit and Code Enforcement Software Management Systems are offering cloud-based services with material workflow automation features that often include: a communication interface with applicants, automatic generation, distribution and filing of documents, scheduling of inspections, calculation and automatic creation of project fee, and on-line payment options. These management software systems have a range of varying features and tools that facilitate the completion of field-based inspection reports using locally tailored, on-line inspection report forms with templated formats, drop down boxes and automatic population of fields. There is a wide range of pricing differentials among various products.

One study observation is that shifting municipalities to a shared building permit and code enforcement software system would be one of the most beneficial opportunities to impact both effectiveness and efficiencies of code enforcement operations. In addition to the transformative efficiency opportunities of the workflow automation features, utilizing a shared platform will support standardization across municipalities benefiting the code enforcement community and the building and development stakeholders as well. In addition, a shared software service would support shared staffing arrangements such as: inter-municipal backup coverage, temporary coverage and/or carve out of services such as fire inspections, specialized large project code enforcement services, etc. For a number of municipalities, access to County property data is made complicated by the systems used and complexity to transfer the needed data. Going forward, municipalities should strongly consider building permit software products that can interface with County systems such as the property database to provide automatic updates to the municipal code enforcement software.

Municipal Costs and Revenues

Code enforcement is a labor-intensive operation and primarily reflects employee salary and benefit costs. A rough estimate of the total operations of all the towns and villages is estimated at approximately \$2,425,000 for 2023. This estimate was calculated using the latest available municipal budgets and supplemented by the latest fiscal data submitted to the New York State Comptroller. In some instances, fringe benefit rates were estimated. It was not possible to isolate the costs for the enforcement of the Uniform Code and Energy Code. Ten (10) of the town and village code enforcement operations also enforce local zoning and other codes as well as perform other assigned functions and three (3) communities identified that they had additional assignments as well.

Permit and inspection fees are the primary sources of departmental revenues. The total fees for the relevant operations totaled approximately \$538,000 in 2022, representing 22% of the estimated total cost. Fees for zoning code enforcement or other functions were included in the total.

The fees set for permits vary across municipalities. Some building permit fees are based on the type of project and further consider whether it is new construction versus renovation. Rate structures also differ by calculation of the rate within an established category. Some rates are flat, others assign a rate based on a range reflecting the size of the project either by square feet, improvement value or sometimes a combination thereof. In addition, there is a wide range of fees set for other permits and inspections. A number of the rate structures are greater than five (5) years old and some are older than ten (10) years. Modest updates to fee schedules could generate increased revenues, better reflecting the increased work required per permit.

Similar variations between municipal fees and rates exist across New York State. In 2021, the Tioga County Rural Area Economic Partnership commissioned the development of a standardized fee and rate structure for voluntary use by the municipalities. As of mid-year 2023, fifty percent of the municipalities in Tioga County adopted the schedule.

V. New York State Counties Performing Code Enforcement Functions

While a county-wide code operations solution was ruled out as an option very early in the study process, this study leveraged a number of opportunities learned from county-wide operations and applied them to the local code enforcement delivery model. A number of identified opportunities have the potential to generate increased effectiveness and efficiencies.

Findings from the 2020 CGR Report on Code Enforcement Shared Services⁴

There are eight counties that provide code enforcement services in New York State. A 2020 CGR Report prepared for Tioga County Rural Area Economic Partnership on shared services options for code enforcement included a survey of these eight counties which include: Wyoming, Warren, Washington, Seneca, Otsego, Jefferson, Lewis and Chenango Counties. Seneca County is the only county that provides code enforcement services on a county-wide basis. The other seven counties provide services for the majority of the municipalities, but not all municipalities within their counties. The CGR Study identified that:

- The shift to county delivery happened initially in 1984, with the adoption of the Uniform Code followed by another wave in the early 2000's with the update to the Uniform Code. Municipalities determined that they no longer wanted to administer and enforce the NYS codes.
- Six of the eight counties (all but Lewis and Wyoming) do not enforce local zoning or any other local laws or ordinances.
- There are multiple organizational structures utilized to provide the code enforcement services including the creation of a standalone department and others embedded the code enforcement function in another county department including public works, general services, and public health.
- "The bulk of municipalities covered are often happy to default to the county, avoiding the need to operate a local department and reducing direct costs by sharing it with the other municipalities in the county. Local regulations can be retained by employing municipal zoning enforcement officers."⁵

Seneca and Jefferson County Code Enforcement Operations

As part of this Tompkins County study, an overview of operations and interviews were conducted with county officials from Seneca and Jefferson Counties. Jefferson was chosen because it has the largest population of the eight counties and is closest in population to Tompkins County. Seneca County was chosen because it is the only county-wide operation and is in close proximity to Tompkins County.

Jefferson County

Jefferson County provides code enforcement services to 28 of the 42 municipalities located in the County, all of whom chose to opt out of building code enforcement. The City of Watertown, 5 towns and 8 villages have chosen to provide code enforcement services directly. Jefferson County Code Enforcement

⁴ Center for Governmental Research, Code Enforcement in Tioga County, A Report to the Tioga County Rural Area Economic Partnership, June 2020

⁵ Center for Governmental Research, Code Enforcement in Tioga County, A Report to the Tioga County Rural Area Economic Partnership, June 2020, p.34

is responsible for administration and enforcement of the Uniform Code and the Energy Code only. Administration and enforcement of local laws and ordinances, particularly zoning and other land use laws such as short-term rentals, floodplain administration, stormwater management, etc. continue to be performed by the local jurisdictions.

The population of the municipalities served by the Jefferson County Code Enforcement operation approximates 73,730 as compared to Tompkins County population outside the City of Ithaca of 73,452. In contrast to the similarity in population size, Jefferson County handled 545 building permits as compared to Tompkins County's 1,837 building permits (outside the City of Ithaca) in 2021 and Jefferson County's land area is 1,269 square miles as compared to Tompkins County's land area is 476 sq. mi.

The operation includes eight (8) staff: 1 Director, 2 Senior CEOs, 2 CEOs, 1 CEO Assistant and 1 Senior Clerk. In addition, the County has hired a pool of seasonal part-time retired firefighters to perform the annual assembly space inspections over the summer months. The 2023 budget totals \$668,991 (including fringe benefits) with offsetting revenues of \$100,000 for a net budgeted expense of \$558,991.

All permit applications are submitted in hard copy to the Code Enforcement Office located in Watertown. Code enforcement staff mobilize from their central office and are assigned geographically for efficiency purposes. With the large pool of code enforcement officers, the operation has the capacity to assign more experienced CEOs, as needed, to manage large construction projects. The staff work a 4-day, 10-hour schedule with varying fifth day off. The 5-day a week and 10-hour work day availability has enabled them to perform next day construction inspections on a fairly regular basis.

Officials indicated that they believe the municipalities and residents are generally satisfied with the services and that the county receives minimal complaints or concerns from municipalities or residents. Over the past years, additional municipalities have opted to shift code enforcement operations to the County and no municipalities have opted to take back code enforcement operations. Officials indicate that this is likely due to the fact that the county has operated the function in most communities for a long time and any concerns or issues have already been resolved.

Seneca County

Seneca County provides code enforcement services for all 14 municipalities in the County, all of whom opted out of the building code enforcement program. Seneca County's total population is 33,668 which is approximately half the population of the area outside the City of Ithaca in Tompkins County. Seneca County Code Enforcement is responsible for administration and enforcement of the Uniform Code and the Energy Code only. Seneca County land area is 390 square miles as compared to Tompkins County land area of 476 sq. mi. Administration and enforcement of local laws and ordinances, particularly zoning and other land use laws such as short-term rentals, floodplain administration, stormwater management, etc., continue to be performed by the local jurisdictions.

Seneca County's code enforcement operation had been housed in the Public Works Department, however given recent organizational changes, the Code Enforcement Operation will be moved to the County Planning Department. Seneca County Code Enforcement operates out of a central office located in Waterloo. Seneca County has five (5) code enforcement officers assigned geographically and one (1) experienced code enforcement officer is assigned to commercial and multi-family housing projects. The County Administrator indicated that the County has not had difficulty hiring and retaining staff. The County credits this to the full-time positions with competitive salaries and full-time benefits, particularly health insurance.

Seneca County did recognize that the administration and enforcement of the Uniform Code and Energy Code by the County with the planning reviews and zoning currently handled at the local level does involve a two-step process for certain customers. It is believed that the shift to geographic assignment in cases has alleviated some of the resident confusion and concerns with the division of responsibilities.

Observations from the Comparative Reviews

The aggregated workload levels of the Tompkins County municipal code enforcement operations (excluding the City of Ithaca) are materially higher than that performed by both Seneca and Jefferson County operations as outlined in **Table 11: Workload Comparison**. Estimated construction site visits were based on the same assumptions used for estimated Tompkins County site visits. (See page 24.)

Table 11: Workload Comparisons

Summary Uniform Code Workload Comparison			
Tompkins County Towns and Village Workload Compared to Seneca County and Jefferson County Code Enforcement Workloads			
2021	Tompkins County	Seneca County	Jefferson County
Total Building Permits	1,837	911	545
Estimated Total Construction Site Visits ¹	6,683	2,837	2,021
Est. Total Annual Safety Inspections	536	413	578
<i>Note 1: Site Visits Estimated By Laberge Group using the following assumptions: 8 visits/new home construction; 5 visits per home renovation; 10 visits for new multi-family and commercial construction; 8 visits for multi-family and commercial construction and 1.5 visits per "Other Permits".</i>			
<i>Source: 2021 1203 Reports</i>			

While the operations are different, and limited observations can be made in the comparison of workload data, there were identified positive features in both Seneca and Jefferson Counties that present opportunities for replication in Tompkins County as shared services or collaboration initiatives.

- **Assign experienced code enforcement officers handle complex large commercial and housing projects.** In Seneca County, a dedicated Senior Code Enforcement Officer handles the commercial and large projects county-wide. Officials indicate that this has improved project oversight, created needed consistency, and lessened issues with contractors on the complicated larger projects. In Jefferson County, while they do not have a dedicated officer, large commercial and housing projects are assigned to one of the more senior code enforcement officers.
- **Part-time, retired firefighters are certified building safety inspectors that perform public assembly safety inspections.** Jefferson County hires a pool of retired fire fighters to conduct public assembly fire safety inspections. Officials indicate that this has been a cost-effective and efficient means to manage the workload issues of the code enforcement officers.
- **Regional assignment of centralized code enforcement officers.** Both Seneca and Jefferson County operate centrally from the County seat. Staff mobilizes from the code enforcement office, however, they are assigned regions/territories based on geography to reduce travel time and to establish connections with communities.
- **Staffing Stability.** Both counties hire primarily full-time staff with benefits and neither County has experienced difficulties with recruiting or retaining staff.
- **Standardization** of operations, workflow, and tools, such as the building permit application and inspection schedules, fee schedules, etc., lends itself to economies of scale and efficiency.
- **Enhanced capacity gained from a pool of code enforcement officers.** A pool of officers enables the organization to have longer term experienced code enforcement officers, but also to quickly bring on new code enforcement officers that have mentors during their first couple of years. It also removes the “crisis” that occurs in smaller operations when their only code enforcement officer retires or leaves. The pool has enabled the operations to provide 1 business day turnaround on requests for inspections.

VI. Key Stakeholder Perspectives and Observations

Methods

The stakeholder input process was initiated in January of 2023, with a survey presented to each of three groups: the code enforcement officers, the chief elected officials, and the municipal planners and sustainability officials. Participation in the surveys and/or interviews was as follows: thirteen (13) chief elected officials, thirteen (13) code enforcement officers, and seven (7) municipal planners and sustainability officials. The findings from these surveys were summarized and used to organize a series of stakeholder roundtables.

Six (6) initial facilitated stakeholder roundtables were held in January and February of 2023. The roundtables were grouped as follows: code enforcement officers, chief elected officials, municipal planners and sustainability officials, community stakeholders (2 groups), and Tompkins County department representatives. The community stakeholders included representatives of Tompkins County Legislative Committees, County and community advisory committees, housing specialists and advocates, landlords, developers, and contractors. There was strong participation and active exchange of ideas. Attendance at the roundtables was as follows: eleven (11) Chief Elected Officials, thirteen (13) code enforcement officers, five (5) planners and sustainability officials, and thirteen (13) community stakeholders.

The first set of stakeholder surveys and roundtables focused heavily on the identification of the stakeholder perspectives, the strengths and weaknesses of the current state of code enforcement, and on what are the emerging trends, challenges and potential opportunities that shared services could provide to improve the effectiveness and efficiencies of code enforcement in Tompkins County.

A second roundtable was held in May of 2023 and included the Chief Elected Officials, the code enforcement officers and municipal planners. The main purpose was to review the findings of the stakeholder surveys and interviews, as well as to review a preliminary set of thirteen potential strategy areas that emerged from the first set of roundtables and surveys. The second, and critical, purpose of this roundtable was to gain feedback on the strategy areas and finalize the priority list. Municipal representatives then broke out into individual municipal groups to review the strategy areas and define their top 5-6 strategies areas. The roundtable then regrouped, and each municipality shared their priorities and rationale with the full group. Municipalities then completed a priority worksheet identifying their top 5-6 strategy areas that they would like to see be implemented.

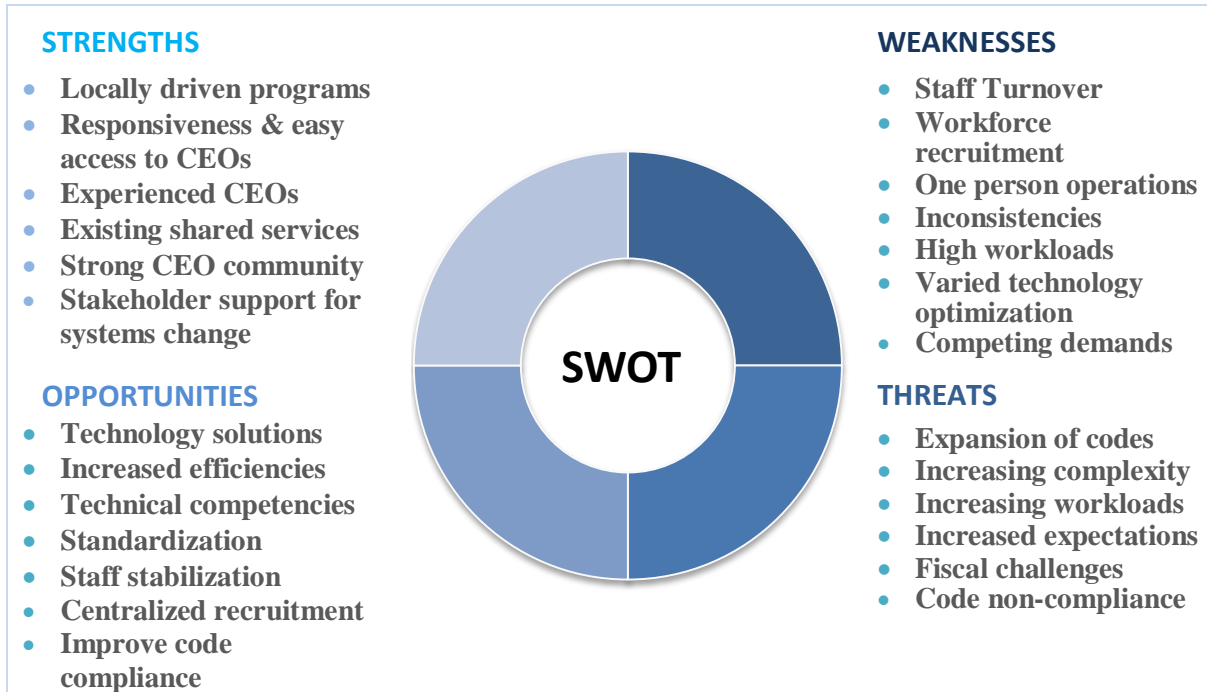
In August of 2023, a roundtable of code enforcement officers was held to review and provide input and recommendations on the draft of the top six priority strategies.

Observations

There were obvious distinctions in perspectives from the different stakeholder groups; however, there was also considerable consistency and alignment between the key themes related to challenges, emerging trends and potential opportunities and strategies presented by members within each of the roundtables as well as between and among various stakeholder groups.

The major observed strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are depicted in **Table 12: Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats**, on the following page.

Table 12: Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats



Strengths of the Current System

The following is a summary of the strengths identified by stakeholders:

- Numerous stakeholders stated that the code enforcement officers are dedicated employees with a high sense of responsibility to the administration and enforcement of the Codes.
- Overall, the code enforcement community feels that they have strong working relationships with their respective chief elected official and boards, and appreciate the support received for ongoing training opportunities.
- A number of chief elected officials stressed that they valued the local delivery of code enforcement and viewed it as a strength. Chief elected officials offered the following views:
 - Local Code Officers knows the community and have the institutional knowledge.
 - Services reflect the culture of the community relative to enforcement.
 - The integration of administration and enforcement of the Uniform Code and NYS Energy Codes with enforcement of land use local laws and functions streamlines services for constituents and is cost effective.
 - Locally delivered code operations based on the municipal comprehensive plan, interaction with the municipal boards, the planning board and the zoning board of appeals combined with open door access and rapid response from the local code enforcement officer is valued by residents.
 - Municipal service delivery provides convenience for residents and the ability to meet in person to discuss projects and the code implications.
 - The presence of the code officer in the community offers the opportunity to educate the public on better and safer construction options.
 - Municipal willingness to share services and to provide backup and assistance to each other was noted as a system strength by multiple stakeholder groups.

- The Tompkins County code enforcement officers see themselves as a strong-knit community that can rely on each other for technical assistance, problem solving, mentoring and mutual aid and coverage.
- The longevity of a number of the code enforcement officers brings expertise and institutional knowledge of the codes, the community and construction projects.

Challenges

Maintaining trained and certified code enforcement officers

- Chief Elected Officials, code enforcement officers and other stakeholders identified succession planning as challenging, particularly in small operations that only have one full-time or less code enforcement officer where there is no internal succession capacity.
 - The code enforcement officers were concerned that as a group, the average age and concentration of experience is skewed to code enforcement officers nearing retirement. They are concerned that municipalities may not be prepared for their retirement. In addition, they do not see the same interest in code enforcement by the younger workforce.
 - There is lack of a pool of certified code enforcement officers to pull from. Typically, code enforcement officers are hired first and then receive the mandatory training necessary for certification. In smaller communities this can result in significant gaps in coverage.
 - It sometimes takes months, if not more, to find a potential candidate and then the new hire has to spend months in training before they can perform all of the functions of the position.
 - Recent New York State Enacted Legislation. Effective 4/23/23, new code enforcement officers must complete the training within one year and cannot perform code enforcement functions until they complete two-thirds of the NYS certification training, which can take up to four months to complete. In order to perform building safety officer functions, new safety inspectors must complete the training within six months and cannot perform building inspector functions until they complete two thirds of the required training which can take more than two months. This will further impact the code enforcement operations during periods of turnover and transition.
 - Staff turnover, particularly in small communities with one or less staff, is problematic. One community indicated that they have had four code enforcement officers in ten (10) years with gaps in between.
 - Limited backup coverage when the code enforcement officer is sick or on vacation or when they have left the position.
 - Civil service qualifications have hindered the recruitment process, including the transferring of certified code enforcement officers from other counties.
 - Limited capacity to provide competitive wages and benefits in smaller municipalities.
 - Code enforcement officers felt that it takes a minimum of two (2) years on the job to truly have command of the Uniform Code, the Energy Code and the job responsibilities.
- **Vacancies result in work backlog**
 - Vacancies in communities with one or less code enforcement officers are typically addressed through a temporary shared service arrangement with another municipality. However, the temporary shared service arrangement is most often insufficient to handle the full range of responsibilities. As a result, functions are postponed and then subsequently impact the incoming code officer who has to address the backlog, is often not yet certified and is required to take the mandated training. Code officers indicated that it is often the fire safety inspections that get pushed off along with administrative responsibilities, including data input of documentation related to tracking permits and the related functions.

- Code enforcement officers providing shared service assistance indicate they are more than willing to assist other municipalities; however, temporary sharing negatively impacts their ability to complete their own workload.
- Turnover results in continuous loss of institutional knowledge.
- **Continuous Expansion of the Roles and Responsibilities of Code Enforcement Officers**

There was consensus among all stakeholder groups that there has been a continuous expansion of responsibilities placed on code enforcement officers, often without the corresponding expansion of resources.

- The continued expansion and complexity of the codes and the range of responsibilities can be very taxing to learn, administer and enforce. Code enforcement officers not only need to know the current code, but must also administer and enforce prior versions of the code.
- The expansion of the NYS Energy Code was identified by all the stakeholder groups as adding significantly to the workload of both code enforcement officers and the property owners/contractors/developers. This requires additional specialized training related both to the code and to emerging technologies. With electrification initiatives underway, there is concern that this task will only continue to become more complex and time consuming.
- It is typical for code enforcement officers to have administration and enforcement responsibilities for a range of municipal laws and ordinances. Examples include: responsibility for zoning and other land use codes, expanded energy construction conservation codes that go beyond the NYS Energy Code, stormwater management, short-term rentals, 911 addressing, floodplain administration and other municipal operations assignments.
- There was consensus on the part of many code enforcement officers, chief elected officials and County Emergency Management and County Information Technology Services/GIS that placing responsibility for assigning 911 addresses to the code enforcement officers presents multiple challenges. Reasons provided include:
 - The County maintains the master address database, not the municipalities.
 - Creation of an address, inclusive of street name, spelling, structure, and unit numbering on the street and within multi-unit dwelling structures, including directionals (e.g., north, south, etc.) requires a particular knowledge and skill set, access to data across jurisdictions not only within Tompkins County but with communities in adjacent counties as well.
 - The shift to location-based addressing requires more robust mapping resources and alignment with stricter industry/governmental 911 addressing standards. Given these shifts, centralization of the function may be more practical, better supports public safety goals and would be more efficient.
 - Code enforcement officers stated that this function takes up time that could be spent on code enforcement and they already confer with the County's 911 addressing staff to assign and verify numbering.
- Increasing development and construction of new housing, including single family housing, multi-dwelling housing, and commercial development was touted as very positive for the Tompkins County community. However, it has increased the workload of the code enforcement officers and presents smaller communities that typically handle existing and new single family housing projects with the challenge of administering and enforcing the commercial codes.
- **Insufficient Staffing to Handle Expanding Workload**
 - A number of code enforcement officers spoke to their concerns regarding the challenges of expanding workloads and expanding Uniform Code, Energy Code and local codes. Their comments reflected a high sense of responsibility and concern for community health and safety.

They expressed concern that the level of the workload can impact the timelines for completion of tasks. Some expressed concern that in the attempt to meet the current workload, they may miss something important in a code.

- Local contractors/developers identified the depth and breadth of the code enforcement officers' workload as a primary challenge with the current system, particularly in the communities with one or less code enforcement officers. They spoke of the complexity of the code, the numerous responsibilities of the code officers, the lack of time for proper training, and the ongoing turnover as negatively impacting the effectiveness of the system. One community stakeholder stated that it was his perspective that no one but the code officers themselves and the contractor community has any understanding as to importance of strong code enforcement, the level of complexity of the codes and current technologies or an understanding of how difficult the code enforcement job really is.
- One community stakeholder stated, "CEOs are overwhelmed and do not have enough staff." Others spoke of situations where it can take more than five (5) weeks to get a permit reviewed even when the application is complete. Multiple examples were provided of situations where construction jobs had to shut down while waiting for a construction inspection.
- **Code Enforcement Officer Training**
 - Code enforcement officers and developers/contractors identified a trend in the NYS basic certification training for code enforcement officers. Both groups spoke to the fact that the certification trainings are now held virtually. The trainings at one time were in-person and provided far more extensive hands-on training. One observation was that the training has shifted from practical training on how to implement the codes to training more focused on how to utilize the code's reference guides to find the relevant codes.
 - The expansiveness and complexity of the Uniform Code and Energy Codes was stressed by both code enforcement officers and contractors as a big challenge. There are volumes of codes and multiple versions of the codes. Code officers are responsible to administer and enforce it all. A full set of the codes and reference documents can cost \$20K. The basic training cannot fully prepare a code enforcement officer, particularly in small communities that do not have experienced supervisors.
 - Community stakeholders spoke to the concern that the initial CEO certification training does not train code officers to distinguish the critical life safety codes such as firewalls, structural issues, etc., among the massive building and energy codes.
 - Multiple code officers stated that the annual in-service training would be of more value if delivered locally and in-person. Tompkins Cortland Community College and Onondaga Community College historically offered classes for the code enforcement officers, these no longer exist. These classes were very effective trainings for code officers and contractors.
 - It should be noted that there were code enforcement officers that felt they had access to both NYS and regional training opportunities which were ample to meet their needs. However, they noted that the municipality has to be willing to pay for training and recognize that time for training can negatively impact workload and therefore negatively impact customer service.
 - The time needed for continuing education impacts workload issues; particularly when the trainings are long in duration and provided outside the Tompkins County area.
- **Limited Energy Code Training**
 - The expanding energy code expectations and the electrification of buildings and vehicles will require that the code enforcement community be prepared to monitor and enforce the energy code expansions, including inspections of heat pumps, charging stations and solar farms as well as other renewable energy facilities. This will include additional training in the emerging codes and new technologies.

- Code Officers indicated that the current energy code trainings provide the same information over and over again, not necessarily new information applicable to the new codes and technologies.
- There are 3 different energy codes in Tompkins County each requiring its own training. This presents challenges to county-wide training.

- **Contractor competencies**
 - There was general consensus across stakeholder groups, including contractors, that there are incompetent and/or fraudulent contractors that take advantage of homeowners, perform substandard work often leaving a homeowner with unfinished or poorly constructed product. Unlike other states, New York does not have a contractor registry or certification process.

- **Interagency Communication and Data Sharing**
 - Fire departments and code enforcement officials typically interface after a fire or other disaster event, which resulted in damage to building structures. If there is an incident or fire that deems a structure, or units of the structure, uninhabitable, the CEO is called to come to scene. The communication between the fire departments and the code enforcement offices varies; some fire departments have good communication with the CEO and others do not. It is sometimes difficult to get in touch with the code enforcement officer, particularly outside of work hours.
 - County Department stakeholders and code enforcement officers both indicated that the sharing of data across departments, and between County departments and code enforcement officers, would benefit from improved streamlining and potentially improved through technology solutions. County departments indicate that easier access to building permit data needed for functions such as assessment and community planning would be beneficial. Code enforcement officers indicated that they need easier and timely access to real property data from the County.
 - Stakeholders identified ongoing topics that could likely streamline decision-making if the stakeholders had a process to better communicate and coordinate. An example of this is the decision making process relative to the placement and sizing of on-site septic systems which involves interfaces between County Environmental Health codes, NYS Uniform Codes, Local Short Term Rental Laws and the County property assessment process.

- **Inconsistency**
 - Contractors, landlords and housing specialists struggle with the inconsistency in operations and expectations between and amongst the code enforcement offices. This is exacerbated by the turnover in code officers in the smaller communities. Contractors/developers noted inconsistencies in the permit applications and required documents, timing to process a permit, wait times for construction inspections, and the interpretation, expectations and application of the actual codes.
 - Contractors observed that, in general, there is better communication and consistency in the larger code enforcement offices. The larger offices have deeper staffing benches so that loss of a single code enforcement officer doesn't disrupt operations as the workload can be more easily distributed. The larger offices have experienced supervisors, standardized processes and expectations and have the capacity to implement interactive technology tools.
 - The lack of a universal electronic permit and inspection system adds to the inconsistencies. There are four different commercial systems, one in-house system linked with Laserfiche and six (6) communities that only utilize desktop applications, such as Word and Excel.
 - A number of planners, code enforcement officers and chief elected officials indicated that they also see value in increasing consistency in operations across municipalities. Stakeholders spoke specifically to uniformity in permit applications and required documentation as well as shared permit tracking system and data management systems.

▪ **Technology**

- A number of Chief Elected Officials and code enforcement officers identified the need for building permit and code enforcement management software and indicated that a county-wide system may be of value. Pricing of software systems for stand-alone operations was raised as a barrier. Code enforcement officers, community stakeholders and planners also spoke to the value of electronic tracking and data management systems and further spoke to the value of standardization of the system across municipalities.
- Smaller municipalities indicated that they do not have the technical resources to create forms, update their webpages, etc.
- A number of stakeholders indicated that the smaller municipalities do not have the technical expertise needed to host and manage some of the more sophisticated software systems, address data transfer issues or regularly maintain their website pages.
- Contractor and developer stakeholders strongly recommended using technology to make the permitting and inspection process more efficient. One example highlighted was to utilize video and photo documentation that can be transferred electronically to the code enforcement officer instead of requiring an on-site inspection for certain types of inspections.

▪ **Aging Housing Stock**

There were code enforcement officers, planners and elected officials that identified aging housing stock as a challenge. One stakeholder indicated that this challenge in their community involved abandoned homes that would benefit from increased enforcement of the building code. This municipality indicated that it does not have the resources to manage a condemnation process. Pursuit of a homeowner rehab program and increased inspections of these properties was suggested.

▪ **New FEMA Flood Maps**

New Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Maps have recently been released. These changes will expand the areas falling within floodplains and may require application of code requirements that historically did not apply to properties, depending on the type of flood elevation provided in the maps.

▪ **Residents with little means to comply**

Stakeholders, including chief elected officials and code enforcement officers, identified the inability of some homeowners to afford the necessary corrective action as a barrier. The homeowners often want to comply with the codes but without the necessary resources, the homeowner and code enforcement officer are left with limited choices to ensure compliance.

Perceptions on Potential Roles for Tompkins County

The majority of the town and village chief elected officials indicated a preference to maintain local control of code enforcement for the reasons outlined in the strengths section above. Two (2) of the eleven (11) Town and Village participating chief elected officials expressed a willingness to consider a county-wide code enforcement operation as one of a continuum of options for further exploration. There were community stakeholders that expressed support for further exploration of county-wide code enforcement. All of the chief elected officials, as well as code enforcement officers, planners and community stakeholders, indicated that there is value in pursuing shared service/collaborative solutions that address local challenges, present opportunities for program improvement and efficiencies and support the local code enforcement community.

Prioritization Process

As part of the evaluation of each of the potential opportunities and the process for prioritization, a number of factors were considered. First, the County administrative leadership and County representatives on the Steering Committee provided input into the prioritization of initiatives. The County representatives felt the following three factors were important to consider in the prioritization process:

- Responds to the initial legislative intent to address shortage of available code enforcement officers and building safety inspectors,
- Supports energy conservation, and
- Makes a positive impact on life safety.

The municipalities had multiple opportunities to weigh in on the selection of the priority strategy areas. First, they participated in an initial survey on which they were asked to provide their recommendations for strategies to consider. An initial set of thirteen strategy areas were defined and the municipalities were then asked to identify their top 5-6 strategy areas. The municipal rankings were placed in 3 categories to assist in final selection of the priority areas recommended for implementation:

Group 1 Strategies: At least 10 municipalities included the following three (3) strategies as part of their priority list. All three are recommended for implementation:

- Shift 911 addressing responsibility to the County. (Priority Strategy #1)
- Building permit and code enforcement information management system. (Priority Strategy # 2)
- Establish centralized specialized code enforcement services and/or technical assistance programs. (Priority Strategy #5)

Group 2 Strategies: At least 5 municipalities included the following five (5) strategies as part of their priority listing. Three (3) are recommended for implementation and noted below:

- Expand and centralize recruitment strategies to create a pipeline of code enforcement officers and building safety inspectors. (Priority Strategy #3)
- Shared presentment/prosecution services. (Priority Strategy #4)
- Municipal to municipal shared staffing. (Priority Strategy #6)
- Establish a contractor registry and training program. (Recommended for an Alternative Approach)
- Carve out stormwater management services and centralize or regionalize delivery. (Recommended for an Alternative Approach)

Group 3 Strategies: Two or less municipalities included the following five (5) priorities in their priority listing. **Section IX: Strategy Areas Recommended for Future Consideration** outlines the recommendation for each of these strategy areas.

- Coordinate access to in-service training.
- Carve out building safety inspections and operating permits and deliver on a county or regional basis.
- Carve out the management of short-term rentals and deliver centrally or regionally.
- County-wide administration and enforcement of the uniform code and energy code.
- Shared service procurement or centralized provision of work resources: instruments, equipment, vehicles, and other resources.

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The stakeholder input process identified a number of ideas and potential opportunities and strategies for collaboration and/or share services initiatives. The initial ranking resulted in thirteen potential areas for development. Through continued review and input by the Steering Committee, multiple rankings by the municipalities and further input from municipal and County staff, the thirteen areas were further re-organized into (1) Six Priority Strategies, (2) Two strategies recommended for alternative approach, and 3) Five opportunities identified for future consideration.

STRATEGY 1

COUNTY ASSIGNMENT OF NEW 911 ADDRESSES

SUMMARY

Currently, the 911 addressing process is conducted at the municipal level with assistance from the Tompkins County GIS Division of Tompkins County ITS. This shared service initiative proposes to streamline the property addressing process. Tompkins County Department of Emergency Response (DoER) would be the addressing authority, with the County GIS Division assuming technical responsibility for the assignment of the street name, property number, unit number and point location for new addresses established within the nine towns and six villages of the County, following Next Generation 911 Standards. This initial proposal does not include the City of Ithaca. This strategy would: (1) increase compliance with the NG911 addressing standards designed to ensure the best location information for emergency responders; and (2) centralize the creation of the addresses at the County level resulting in improved efficiencies and reductions in the workload of the code enforcement officers.

POTENTIAL IMPACT AREA

County-wide

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

- Tompkins County
- Towns of Caroline, Danby, Dryden, Enfield, Groton, Ithaca, Lansing, Newfield, Ulysses and
- Villages of Cayuga Heights, Dryden, Freeville, Groton, Lansing and Trumansburg

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Current Operations

The creation of an address involves the assignment of a street name, name spelling, numbering on the street, unit identifier, and directionals (e.g. north, south). Assigning addresses to meet 911 Emergency Response standards provides first responders with the correct location for emergency response. There is a national initiative, known as Next Generation 911 (NG911), to update the 911 infrastructure necessary to meet the shift to a wireless mobile society and to enable the public to transmit text images, video and data

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to a 9-1-1 call/dispatch center. This requires assignment of spatial locations (geocoding and reverse geocoding of addresses).

In Tompkins County, local addressing is the responsibility of each municipality and the departments responsible for addressing may vary. Since the advent of enhanced 911 in the 1990's, the municipalities have been working to improve the addressing to conform to 911 Emergency Response standards, however, there are inconsistencies in the application of these standards. Centralization of the process would facilitate improved standardization and enhance public safety response to local emergencies.

The County GIS Division currently manages the master street address guide (MSAG) that has street names and number ranges used to define emergency service areas and boundaries which is then applied to route 911 calls to the appropriate emergency responder. The County GIS Division also manages the addressing and mapping data used in the computer aided dispatch (CAD) system.

Up to this point, the County has assisted the municipalities with 911 addressing by reviewing the draft address developed by code enforcement officer for compliance with 911 standards. Based on emerging technologies, NG 911 standards have been issued on a national level and County GIS Division is using these national standards in its review. The code enforcement officers have indicated that they do not have the expertise, the necessary technology tools, or the breadth of GIS data, to review and address cross jurisdictional and/or cross County addressing issues.

To support the creation of NG911 compliant addressing, the County established a Laserfiche workflow process enabling the County GIS Division to review the address proposed by the municipality for compliance with NG911 standards. The County reviews the proposed address and sends back address verification should the address meet the NG911 standards. Should there be an issue, the County works with the municipality making suggestions to adjust the address, however, there is no requirement at this time for the municipality to accept the recommendations from the County. Once the address is finalized, the municipality then sends the new address to a designated set of recipients.

Proposed Initiative

As a next step to: 1) streamline the location based addressing process, 2) standardize addressing across municipalities and 3) reduce the workload of the code enforcement officers, this shared service initiative proposes that the County Department of Emergency Response be designated as the addressing authority with the County GIS Division designated as the agency to manage new addresses to best meet NG911 standards. The code enforcement officers would notify the County of the need for a new address via the current portal notification system. The County would provide the address to the municipality and the municipality would then follow their process to notify the proper recipients of the address. Should setting a new 911 compliant address require the re-addressing of an existing address, this would also be assigned by the County GIS Division under the authority of the Department of Emergency Response. This would eliminate the need for the code enforcement officers to navigate the NG911 standards. However, it would not remove the municipal responsibility to follow their own local zoning when requesting an address.

Should a new street name be needed, the municipality would provide three (3) street name options with its request for an address. County GIS would select the new street name in conformance with the addressing

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standards. No new address number and unit number, or new street name would be established prior to County NG911 review and approval.

Conceptual Approach to Workflow, Roles, and Responsibilities

1. Code enforcement officers would provide the County with the following information using the existing County portal system:
 - The required location measurements, as defined by the County GIS, are necessary to set an address number and unit number in conformance with NG911. This information would be obtained by the building site location map review currently conducted by the municipal code enforcement office.
 - The municipality would provide 3 options ranked in order of preference for a new street name.
 - Should the new address require a re-addressing of an existing address, County GIS Division would assign the change in address.
2. The County GIS Division, under the authority of the Department of Emergency Response, would apply NG911 addressing standards and identify the highest ranked street name and return that street name to the municipality.
3. Should the establishment of a new address require re-numbering and/or unit re-numbering of an existing address, the Department of Emergency Response would review with the County GIS Division and, if deemed critical to public safety, include those re-addressing changes to the municipality.
4. The municipality would be responsible for working with the property owner of any existing address that requires a number change. The Department of Emergency Response would provide assistance as needed on NG911 addressing and convey the importance of compliance with addressing standards for the protection of life, safety, health and property.
5. The municipality would be responsible for sending out the new address to their respective partners.
6. Municipalities remain responsible for communication and interaction with the property owners.

PROJECT BENEFITS

- The desired outcome is enhanced protection of life, safety, and property. Accurate addressing that complies with NG911 addressing standards facilitates timely emergency response by providing first responders the most accurate address including street address, number, unit identifier and corresponding spatial location.
- The County GIS Division has the expertise and access to technology tools necessary to perform the addressing in conformity to NG911 addressing standards. The County is also better positioned to handle cross-jurisdictional and cross-county addressing issues.
- Efficiencies would be gained across the town and village code enforcement operations. The code enforcement officers (CEOs) would no longer need to dedicate time to developing the accurate numbering for new addresses. It would be done centrally by the County.
- A required sign off by County on proposed street names prior to finalization would limit duplication or similarity of street names within municipalities; cross jurisdictionally and across County lines.

RESOURCES

The project results in the elimination of the duplication of effort and time in the assignment of new 911 addresses. The streamlining of authority and responsibilities will also eliminate the back and forth discussions between County

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ITS/GIS and the municipal code enforcement offices.

On an ongoing basis, limited additional County ITS/GIS staff time is anticipated to implement this strategy. There will be a front end need for additional dedicated time to transition and initiate the implementation. The timing of the project implementation will need to consider the overall ITS/GIS staffing capacity and workload.

Code enforcement officers anticipate that this would free up a portion of their time, making those hours newly available to perform code enforcement functions.

Budget Implications: N/A

Cost Savings or Avoided Costs

The number of addresses needing assignment varies from year to year; however. County ITS/GIS anticipates there would be an average of 425 per year in the area of the County outside the City of Ithaca based on the number processed for the first 8.5 months of 2023. The avoided cost has been estimated by municipalities in a range of 10 minutes to 1 hour per address; However, municipalities also speak to the value of “one less thing” to have to learn, research and practice which results in additional gains in efficiency for the code enforcement officers.

COST SHARING OR COST ALLOCATION METHODOLOGIES: N/A

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES: N/A

ACTION PLAN

Action Description	Facilitation & Participating Parties	Month Begin	Month End
Identify a Project Facilitator	County Planning would provide temporary facilitation until a lead has been finalized.	1	1
Finalize proposed role, responsibilities and workflow.	County DoER, County ITS/GIS, and designated municipal representatives	1	3
Conduct necessary inter-municipal review and input processes.	CEOs, Village Mayors and Town Supervisors	3	3
Prepare draft inter-municipal agreement and distribute for review.	County Attorney, County DoER, County ITS/GIS, and Municipalities	4	5
Develop and/or amend local laws and resolutions necessary to implementation.	County and Municipal Attorneys	4	5
Revise necessary tools and forms to conform to updated process.	County ITS/GIS	2	5
Execute Inter-municipal agreement.	County and Municipalities	5	5
Kick Off Initiative	County DoER, ITS/GIS	6	6

STRATEGY 2

COUNTY-WIDE OR SHARED SERVICES BUILDING PERMIT AND CODE ENFORCEMENT SOFTWARE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

SUMMARY

The goal of this strategy is to select a common building permit and code enforcement software management system/service by developing and issuing a cooperative inter-municipal Request for Proposal (RFP). Currently, there are 5 software systems being utilized by 11 of the code enforcement operations and there are 5 code enforcement operations that utilize a combination of excel and word documents to assist with management of operations.

The gains in efficiency and the reduced need for technology supports offered by a number of current vendors, in combination with approachable pricing, make this the right time to find a shared services solution. The workflow tools would reduce the time code enforcement officers spend on repetitive tasks, phone calls, scheduling, cutting and pasting documents, as well as finding and filing documents. There is significant opportunity for a high return on investment, standardization across municipalities and improved communication with residents, contractors and developers.

The shared service procurement process will also generate cost savings. The greater the number of municipalities that participate in the shared procurement, the greater the potential pricing discounts.

POTENTIAL IMPACT AREA

There is the potential for a county-wide solution; however, an outcome that results in an increase in number of municipalities using a shared a workflow automation system will be a positive shared service project.

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

The majority of the Towns and Villages expressed interest in further exploration, except for the Towns of Ithaca and Lansing which indicated they want to remain with their current software system. The cost factor was raised as a potential issue by a number of the municipalities.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The goal would be to migrate as many of the code enforcement operations as possible, including those currently without a system, to an affordable software solution. Interested municipalities would develop and issue shared services Request for Proposal for a building permit and code enforcement software management system. The RFP process will offer the collective the ability to compare the software system offerings and pricing to find the optimal return on investment for each community.

The emerging technologies in building permit and code enforcement software management systems present new and significant opportunities for efficiency gains. The process would enable municipalities to explore the advantages of workflow automation, including an on-line permit application, document routing, generation of documents, forms and reports, homeowner/contractor communication portal with automatic notification systems, automatic scheduling, integration with parcel-based information systems such as GIS

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mapping and parcel data, fee calculation and on-line payments, etc. In general, the tools are intuitive, flexible and have been simplified requiring less technology support to operate.

In the emerging cloud-based systems, a municipality does not buy the software upfront, but rather, pays an annual service fee. There are one-time upfront costs associated with tailoring the system to the municipality's needs, training, and integration with local GIS or other land use systems. Annual costs typically reflect 2 primary factors – the number and types of modules the municipality desires to purchase and a standardized pricing metric such as population or number of parcels. However, vendors indicate that a shared services procurement process presents an opportunity for pricing discounts. One vendor indicated that should a group of municipalities develop standardized permit applications, this could also result in materially reduced start-up costs.

Approach

1. Establish a Workgroup

A representative workgroup consisting of interested municipal code enforcement officers, planners and information technology experts should be established to develop a collective RFP.

2. Coordinate and set up system demonstrations

The technologies have significantly improved and offer many tools designed to streamline, automate and support the workflow of code enforcement officers. It will be important to have a collective understanding of the technology capacity by the participating municipalities. Most vendors offer on-line or in-person demonstrations of their products and interested municipalities have already begun to participate in demonstrations. The Village of Cayuga Heights has offered to host demonstrations of its Laserfiche system.

3. Develop and Issue Request for Proposal

- Develop consensus on the shared service arrangement options such as:
 - Shared RFP utilized only for purposes of determining pricing and potential discounts for municipalities to use for individual procurement and contracts.
 - Shared RFP utilized to develop an umbrella contract with a lead municipality.
- Review software hosting models: vendor hosted, premise hosted or a shared premise hosting arrangement. It should be noted that a number of vendors have moved, or are moving, towards vendor hosted products as the only option.
- Determine the modules each municipality is interested in obtaining such as building code permitting and inspections; planning, zoning, etc.
- Understand data ownership issues.
- Develop a collective understanding of acceptable cost ranges and also an understanding of the pricing methodologies utilized by potential vendors. Typically the pricing for the vendor hosted model is an annual service fee based on the modules chosen and standard measures such as number of parcels, population, etc. (municipality is not purchasing the software). The consultant obtained copies of several recent RFPs issued in New York State and will provide copies to the County under separate cover.
- Collectively define both the essential features vs. desired features and evaluation criteria. (See **Appendix E: RFP for Software - Potential Product Features**).

4. Conduct a collective review of the submitted proposals and select product.

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- 5. Obtain governing body approvals and contract for services. Enter into intergovernmental agreements as necessary.**
 - 6. Prepare and submit a grant to support the initial software tailoring, the training, data migration and related mobile device costs.**
-

PROJECT BENEFITS

- Reduced Software Pricing through Shared Service Procurement
- Potential Gains in Efficiency and Effectiveness
 - Workflow Management
 - The automated workflow features are the key to the efficiency gains found in the contemporary software options. The processes can be tailored to meet the specific needs of each municipality.
 - Provision of a dashboard for quick and easy visualization of workload and outstanding items.
 - Automation of functions historically conducted as manual tasks:
 - On-line upload of permit application.
 - Automatic generation of documents and notification of permit or inspection status change.
 - Scheduling of inspections.
 - Report generation.
 - Search, review and mark up applications, permits, notices of violations.
 - Use of drop down boxes and checklists.
 - Automatic interface and updates from GIS and/or other parcel data.
 - Automatic population of fields from parcel data.
 - Notification of missing information in applications.
 - Time stamped notifications.
 - Reduced time to write up inspections.
 - Automatic generation of fees based on fee schedules and on-line payment options.
 - Contractor/Home Owner and Other Stakeholders (Planners; Zoning, etc.) Portal
 - Automatic notifications on permit and inspection status updates and email direct from system.
 - Ability to track permit status by all parties.
 - Provide permit updates to the Code Enforcement Office.
 - Integration with Other Systems
 - Pay Processors.
 - GIS, Real Property Tax Services and/or Assessment Data.
 - Mobile Applications
 - Capacity to write up inspections and send notifications from the field.
 - Capacity to upload documentation and photos from the field.
 - Access to project files including historical parcel information from the field.
- Standardization

Standardization and consistency of the system, applications, expectations for accompanying documents, checklists, etc. provide benefits to code enforcement operations, contractors and homeowners. The more consistent the applications and required documentation expectations are, and the more the notification systems are consistent and automated, the more consistent and complete the

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submissions will be. Standardization also facilitates easy back up coverage/temporary coverage between and among municipalities.

RESOURCES

Temporary Staff Support

A temporary project facilitator would support the development of an RFP with the participating municipalities and the proposal review and selection process. There may be a need for technical assistance from County Information Technology Services/GIS and County Assessment.

Annual Costs

- For operations moving from paper and desktop applications, there would be a new annual cost, however a gain in efficiency and potential avoided cost for additional staff would be anticipated.
- For operations that may shift from one system to another, it would be dependent on the pricing of the existing system and new system.
- Should the collective desire to procure software and host locally, the annual cost may be lower, but there would be a larger upfront cost.
- Marginal increases in data plans or hot spots for field devices.
- The net change in cost to a municipality depends on:
 - The product chosen and its pricing system.
 - The modules the municipality opts to purchase.
 - The size of the municipality's operation.

Upfront Costs

- Vendor start-up costs for training, tailoring software to the code enforcement operation, forms and workflows, uploading parcel data, etc.
- Costs for the transfer of data or the formatting of data for transfer.
- Devices such as smart phones or tablets.

Budget Implications

The project budget will be determined by the product and modules chosen, and the number and size of the municipalities participating. There are a number of products on the market, however, the samples below reflect products recently procured within Tompkins County and/or by New York State county code enforcement operations that shared information with this process.

Lewis County provides centralized code enforcement operations for 25 municipalities. Lewis County recently issued an RFP in spring of 2023 for a cloud based work flow building permit and code enforcement software system. They received 9 proposals and selected CloudPermit for an annual price of approximately \$40,000. The pricing was based on a combination of population and parcel metrics.

Seneca County recently initiated a new contract with CloudPermit for an annual cost of \$33,000.

The Town of Groton (2020 pop: 3,567 outside village) recently selected CloudPermit building permit and code enforcement software system with an annual cost of approximately \$3,600 per year.

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OpenGov building permit and code enforcement software is currently utilized by the City of Ithaca, the Town of Ithaca and the Town of Lansing. Tompkins County currently utilizes the OpenGov enterprise system. The County Administrator's Office connected with OpenGov to explore the opportunity for a county-wide building permit and code enforcement software system at a discounted price. OpenGov presented an estimated annual price of \$184,000 to provide the building permit and code enforcement software to all municipalities currently not using OpenGov in Tompkins County (exclusive of upfront costs).

Jefferson County uses CivicGov which was recently purchased by CivicPlus. CivicPlus also offers a cloud based workflow building permit and code enforcement software system. CivicPlus representatives indicated that they signed on a NYS town with a population of 40,000 for an annual price of approximately \$25,000.

Cost Savings or Avoided Costs

The ongoing increase in mandates and required building code and energy code are making it impossible for current operations to manage without adding staff. Contemporary Building Permit and Code Enforcement Software Management Systems have the capacity to streamline functions and increase the productivity of staff; potentially mitigating additional staffing resources. Based on a conservative assumption of a 5 - 10% increase in efficiency and avoided staff time, a preliminary estimate of potential avoided staff cost increases of approximately \$120,000 per year could be achieved. (This assumes all municipalities other than the City of Ithaca, Town of Ithaca and Town of Lansing move to a new system.). The following provides several informal municipal findings relative to implementation of a variety of automated permit system.

- Columbine Valley, Colorado Building Department Coordinator estimates a 50% time savings in the issuing of construction permits; equivalent to 10-12 hours per week.
- Santa Clarita, California City Building Official indicated that their automation process reduced counter visits by 70%.
- Syracuse, New York Central Permitting Office reported saving 3,126 hours related to the permit issuing system.

Town of Granby, New York Town Supervisor reported a 40% reduction in processing time and streamlined inter-departmental communication which resulted in faster decision making.

COST SHARING OR COST ALLOCATION METHODOLOGIES:

Each municipality would pay for their service based on modules they chose to procure. A number of the products provide not only building permit and code enforcement modules, but may also include zoning, planning and short-term rental modules. Cost allocation metrics utilized for building permit and code enforcement software often include the number of parcels, the number of annual permits and/or population.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES: The shared services approach would be eligible for the following grants:

- New York State Local Government Efficiency Grant. The grants are typically released in late May with a July submission date and following January contract start. Grant funds could be used for startup equipment such as phones and tablets; system tailoring and training.
- If the municipalities include this initiative in a County-wide Shared Services Initiative Plan (CWSSI), the documented savings for year one will be eligible for a 100% matching grant.

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ACTION PLAN

Action Description	Facilitation & Participating Parties	Month Begin	Month End
Identify a Project Facilitator	County Planning staff can provide limited facilitation assistance utilizing leadership and support from municipalities, County Purchasing, ITS/GIS, etc.	1	1
Organize product demonstrations, invite all municipalities and finalize municipal interest.	Project Facilitator	1	2
Convene Workgroup: 1) Define Expectations; 2) Develop Timetable; 3) Finalize Critical Decisions	County Facilitator and Participating Municipalities	2	2
Prepare grant to fund year one costs. * Timing needs to coincide with grant cycle(s)	County Facilitator and participating municipalities	See *	
Standardize permit application (likely to result in significant start-up cost savings)	County Facilitator and Participating Municipalities	2	5
Develop RFP considering elements described in the Approach Section above.	Facilitator and Workgroup with support from County ITS	3	4
Issue RFP	County on behalf of municipalities	4	5
Evaluate Proposals	Workgroup	6	6
Municipalities take actions to enter into contract(s)	Municipalities	7	8
Roll out mobilization	Vendor, Project Facilitator and CEOs	8	12

STRATEGY 3

CREATE A PIPELINE OF CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS AND BUILDING SAFETY INSPECTORS

SUMMARY

Chief Elected Officials, code enforcement officers and other stakeholders identified succession planning as challenging. The decentralized code enforcement service model makes it very difficult to maintain a pipeline of qualified code enforcement officers. At the time of this study, there were 11 code enforcement operations dependent on one code enforcement officer, with little or no in-house pipeline of staff. In small operations that only have one full-time or a part-time code enforcement officer, there is often no internal succession capacity.

Chief elected officials also spoke of the burden that recruitment efforts place on their small operations. Code enforcement officers are concerned that, as a group, the concentration of experience within the County is skewed to officers nearing retirement, and that municipalities, individually and collectively, may not be prepared as there is not a pool of certified code enforcement officers from which to hire. Typically, code enforcement officers are hired with little to no experience as a code enforcement officer and then receive the mandatory training necessary for certification. In smaller communities this can result in significant gaps in coverage. It sometimes takes months, if not longer, to find a potential candidate. The new hire must then complete the Code enforcement officer certification training and testing process that involves more than 200 hours and often takes 5-6 months to complete.

A collaborative and centralized strategic approach to this issue can better support local workforce succession goals. A targeted outreach and recruitment strategy is recommended using three inter-connected initiatives applying a diversity and inclusion lens. The initiatives include:

3.A Develop a recruitment toolkit.

3.B Streamline job titles, specifications and qualifications to optimize recruitment efforts.

3.C Conduct Centralized Outreach and Recruitment to Targeted Audiences.

POTENTIAL IMPACT AREA	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
County-wide	Tompkins County and all interested Towns and Villages

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

An inter-municipal and centralized approach presents an opportunity to identify potential candidates that may not be found by a municipality on its own. It particularly enables the exploration of non-traditional channels. It will be important to institutionalize these initiatives so that the efforts made during the facilitated first year are not lost.

It is recommended that the strategy initiatives focus on targeted outreach and recruitment. The volume of candidates needed each year is relatively small so large recruitment efforts may not produce the desired

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results. It is also recommended that this approach can be supported by working collaboratively with community partners such as County Civil Service, the Workforce Development Board, union trade groups, the firefighter community, and relevant educational programs at educational institutions such as Tompkins-Cortland Community College. A focus on diversity and inclusion can reach potential candidates that may not be reached through existing recruitment strategies. Job seekers place a high value on workforce diversity. The County Inclusion and Diversity Officer could provide recommended outreach and recruitment strategies. The strategy includes three interconnected recommended initiatives.

3.A Develop a recruitment toolkit that includes sample recruitment tools that can easily be replicated across municipalities.

- Optimize use of social media and prepare template posts that can be tailored to best meet municipal needs.
- Develop an attractive job posting template and short recruitment video. Find ways to tell inspiring stories to engage potential applicants talk about the code enforcement community they will be joining and the community they'll be serving.
- Create a detailed, easy-to-read summary of entry-level requirements.
- Include a listing and contact information of community partners that will be crucial to the ongoing maintenance of the pipeline.
- Include general overview of the Civil Service processes for requests to update or create new positions, civil service examination and hiring process and County Civil Service representatives contact information.

3.B Streamline job titles, specifications and qualifications to optimize recruitment efforts.

- County Civil Service will work to address the municipal needs within the context of New York State and County Civil Service rules and regulations to: 1) Streamline titles; 2) Re-align qualifications and job duties; and 3) Explore new titles such as CEO Assistant.
- Utilize the civil service exam announcement as a recruitment opportunity. Develop an understanding of the timetable and structure recruitment efforts well in advance of the testing timetable in order to build a strong civil service list.
- If local candidates are not available, lateral transfers from outside the County can bring valuable experience and diversity to your community. Working with civil service to optimize tools such as “transfer in” and designing job qualifications that include experience as a certified code enforcement officer can facilitate the transfer of experienced code enforcement officers from other counties in the absence of local candidates.

3.C Conduct Centralized Outreach and Recruitment to Targeted Audiences.

- **Develop a Transitional Career Initiative:** The Code Enforcement community can capitalize on the many skilled professionals from the construction industry, the trades and fire protection services that may be at the stage in their career where they are seeking a new challenge or transition from the physical demands of their current jobs. They have knowledge and skills that can be valuable to the code enforcement community.
 - Develop strong relationships with local union leaders and trade associations. Networks

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are a valuable recruitment tool. The code enforcement community can place itself in the position of knowing when professionals may be ready to transition to a new job challenge.

- Develop relationships with the firefighting community, both volunteer and paid. Firefighter professionals understand building safety and fire prevention, and may have an interest in a second career as a building safety inspector or code enforcement officer. Jefferson County hires a cadre of retired firefighters that work seasonally and conduct all the public assembly area inspections for the County each year. This model could be used for any or all of the required inspections.
- **Develop an Alternative Route Model:** Design a program that supports prospective staff to attend the certified NYS DOS training before they are hired for a position in a Tompkins County municipal code enforcement program. Successful completion of the program would not guarantee a position in code enforcement; however, those that obtain their certification are able to pursue employment as certified code enforcement officers. This would reduce by months the time new hires are not able to perform their full responsibilities. This approach could be incentivized by a hiring stipend for candidates that complete the training prior to hiring. Collaboration with the Workforce Development Board and other employment and training organizations could facilitate this approach.
- **Create a Community College to Codes Pathway:** College students have a low awareness of the code enforcement career opportunities. Code enforcement officers spoke to the value of strong ties with professors and programs and recommended re-establishing those connections.
 - Develop relationships with the faculty of preferred degree.
 - Offer to be guest speaker during relevant class topics and consider job shadowing or internships.
 - Communicate how this career path could utilize what they have learned about construction and building safety in a way that also enables them to serve their community.

Implement Results-Driven Recruiting

After implementing the various initiatives during the first year, track and document the impact of each of the each of the recruiting and hiring approaches and document what worked and did not work and allocate effort going forward accordingly.

PROJECT BENEFITS

A shift from a reactive hiring process to a proactive development of future code enforcement professionals will:

- Support municipal goals of succession planning.
- Improve compliance with mandated building safety inspection schedules.
- Eliminate backlog of workload and documentation created by vacancies that new code enforcement officers face.
- Enable code enforcement officers to start work immediately.

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- Reduce turnover of code enforcement officers.

RESOURCES

Staffing Resource Needed

During the first year development phase, the project would need a coordinator (in-kind) that can facilitate the development of the chosen approaches, facilitate development of relationships with community partners, produce the elements of the tool kit, facilitate communication with civil service and support the preparation of necessary documents and track results.

Other Resources

Minimal resources may be needed to support outreach initiatives such as social media outreach and are estimated at no more than \$2,000.

COST SHARING OR COST ALLOCATION METHODOLOGIES: N/A

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES:

This initiative could be a component of a larger Local Government Efficiency grant focused on multiple strategies identified in this Study.

ACTION PLAN

Action Description	Facilitation & Participating Parties	Month	
		Begin	End
Identify a Project Facilitator.	County Planning staff can provide initial facilitation until a lead has been identified among Human Resources or municipal partners.	1	1
Establish impact monitoring system.	Facilitator	1	1
Work with Civil Service to update, modify and streamline job titles, specifications and qualifications.	Facilitator and interested municipalities	1	4
Initiate development of items for the recruitment tool kit to support the Transitional Work, Alternate Route, Community College and Civil Service exam initiatives. Modify as needed and finalize by Month 12.	Facilitator with support from County Human Resources, Civil Service, Workforce Development Board and Municipalities.	2	12
Undertake the Transitional Work Initiative including diversity and inclusion strategies and	Facilitator and representative code enforcement officers	3	6

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Action Description	Facilitation & Participating Parties	Month	
		Begin	End
efforts.			
Develop an Alternate Route initiative.	Facilitator	4	7
Undertake the Community College to Code Pathway initiative for implementation in the new school year.	Facilitator and representative code enforcement officer(s)	4	11
Develop Recruitment Tool Kit.	Facilitator	8	10
Conduct impact evaluation by initiative and prepare plan for institutionalization.	Facilitator	12	12

STRATEGY 4

SHARED COURT PRESENTMENT/PROSECUTION SERVICES

SUMMARY

Ten (10) Town and Village code enforcement officers recommended that the municipalities create a collective to seek and utilize shared presentment/prosecution services across municipalities. Code enforcement officers reasoned that each municipality handles so few cases each year that it is difficult to develop and maintain the expertise necessary to build the case and related documentation and to consistently prosecute/present non-compliant cases in court.

POTENTIAL IMPACT AREA

Sub-county: All interested municipalities may participate.

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

10 municipalities expressed varying interest in shared presentment/ prosecution: Towns of Dryden, Enfield, Ithaca, Lansing, Danby, Newfield and Ulysses and the Villages of Dryden, Cayuga Heights and Groton.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Concept

Through the development of a designated panel of attorneys to present/prosecute non-compliant cases, this proposed initiative creates consistency and standardization across municipalities, centralizes expertise, facilitates use of best practices, and increases CEO support and potentially reduces existing costs. Municipalities would individually contract for their own services, and it is envisioned that the service contract would be fee for service based. Development of a panel of attorney(s) dedicated to building code presentment/prosecution (and potentially other land use codes) creates a centralized team that is experienced in all the relevant sections of law: Executive Law, Penal Law, Town Law, Village Law, 19 NYCRR Section 1203 and each municipality’s Local Law Authorizing its Code Enforcement Program.

Background

There are a wide range of court remedy paths for non-compliance and violations of the New York State Uniform and Energy Codes. New York State Law, Chapter 18, Article 18, §382 empowers local governments to use civil, criminal, and administrative remedies in their enforcement of the Uniform Code and Energy Code. Local governments may also seek injunctive relief from the appropriate State Supreme Court. Executive Law §382 authorizes local governments to order, in writing, the remedy of any violation of the uniform fire prevention and building code, and to issue appearance tickets for violations of the uniform code if needed. Issuing notices of violation of the both New York State and local codes is an everyday part of the job. However, the time and effort needed to pursue a violation in court can be a tedious and time-consuming process. A code enforcement officer will need to schedule a court date, assemble supporting documentation, create an accusatory instrument, and issue an appearance ticket for the court date.

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The Secretary of State's minimum standards do not mandate procedures for correcting code violations. The process of seeking remedy is left to municipal discretion. Part 1203 does delineate enforcement methods that a local government may use if the municipality believes it cannot address the violation by the use of other enforcement tools. Part 1203 also allows local governments to enact laws or ordinances and commence and prosecute actions that impose criminal and/or civil sanctions for violations of the Uniform Code.

Code enforcement officers in Tompkins County agree that remediation of violations and non-compliance through administrative and voluntary approaches is their primary goal and first course of action. The towns and villages in Tompkins County utilize their local municipal court as a tool of last resort after they have attempted to remedy non-compliance and violations on an administrative and voluntary basis. The towns and villages typically address the cases through criminal prosecution at the town and village justice court level. Based on law, the Tompkins County District Attorney has the legal jurisdiction to prosecute Uniform and Energy Code enforcement criminal cases, however, the District Attorney has delegated that prosecutorial authority to the town and village attorneys, as is done in many counties. In some municipalities, and as permitted by law, the case is presented in court by the code enforcement officer rather than an attorney.

Approach

- At an individual municipal level, discussions between municipal leadership, the municipal attorney and the code enforcement officer should take place to finalize participation in this collective strategy.
- As part of the process, a review of the Local Laws and Ordinances Establishing the Code Enforcement Program could be reviewed. A preliminary review of the local laws and ordinances that were located on-line, found that 11 of the 11 local laws/ordinances provided for the range of remedies authorized by New York State. However, it should be noted that not all of the local laws are written exactly the same.
- The other four municipalities whose local laws/ordinances were not available on-line are encouraged to review their local law/ordinance to determine if the local law provides for the full range of remedies. As part of the presentment/prosecution strategy, a review of the components of the Local Laws on the books and comparison to the model local law prepared by the NYS Department of State may inform municipalities of potential updates and improvements that would assist in the presentment/prosecution initiative.
- A project facilitator could work with a representative group of code enforcement officers and municipal attorneys to prepare a collective draft Request for Proposal that addresses the scope and format of the services; the qualifications desired and the evaluation criteria to be used. The draft could then be circulated to the participating municipalities for their review.
- Upon finalization, a timeline would be established and the RFP/RFQ could be issued. A representative workgroup would then review the responses and make a collective recommendation to the participating municipalities.
- Municipalities would individually contract for their own services and it is envisioned that the service contract would be fee for service base.

PROJECT BENEFITS

Shared prosecution/presentation service could:

- **Increase the level and speed of remediation of potential public health and safety concerns resulting from non-compliance by providing:**
 - Centralized experienced representation of cases across multiple municipalities.
 - Consistent presentation/prosecution of non-compliant cases to municipal courts.
 - Standardization of the system, applications, expectations for accompanying documents, checklists, etc. provide benefits to code enforcement operations, contractors and homeowners.
- **Generate Gains in Efficiency and Effectiveness**
 - Elevate the experience and knowledge of the presentation/prosecution of cases across the County.
 - Uniform workflows, processes and forms that meet the needs of the municipalities would provide for easy management of notice of violations and appearance ticket processing.
 - Reduced non-compliance in the first instance through strong enforcement and a strong collective message that non-compliance with health and safety will not be tolerated.
 - Facilitate easy back up coverage/temporary coverage for another municipality.
- **Increase consistency and standardization in approach and experience across municipalities**

A unified approach across the municipalities would reduce non-compliance in the first instance resulting in improved safety and potentially less time and energy spent on seeking compliance.

RESOURCES

Currently a number of the Towns and Villages use their municipal attorneys or contract attorneys to present/prosecute cases in court and that compensation is paid on a rate per hour basis.

Based on the input from the code enforcement officers interested in pursuing this initiative, there are possibly 30-40 cases taken to court in total each year. There is a wide range in cost per hour for the legal services. The average cost paid per case is currently not known, however one jurisdiction reported an average case cost of \$2,500.

For those municipalities currently paying on a rate per hour basis, it is reasonable to assume that a collective procurement approach would potentially be less than the current costs. An assumption of a 10% savings would result in approximately \$9,000 in annual savings.

COST SHARING OR COST ALLOCATION METHODOLOGIES:

Each municipality would pay for the function based on usage and the rate(s) determined through the collective RFP/RFQ process

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES:

If the municipalities include this initiative in a County-wide Shared Services Initiative Plan (CWSSI), the

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documented savings for year one will be eligible for a 100% matching grant.

ACTION PLAN

Action Description	Facilitation & Participating Parties	Month Begin	Month End
Identify a Project Facilitator.	County Planning staff can provide temporary facilitation until a lead has been identified among municipalities.	1	1
Finalize municipal interest in the shared presentment/prosecution of case and gain additional information on the number of cases and the cost per case.	Chief Elected Officials, code enforcement officers and municipal attorneys and the project facilitator	2	3
Convene Workgroup of representative code enforcement officers and Municipal Attorneys to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define Expectations for shared presentment/prosecution. • Develop Timetable. • Develop the RFP/RFQ. 	County Facilitator and Municipal Workgroup	4	5
Issue RFP	County on behalf of municipalities	6	7
Evaluate Proposals	Workgroup	7	7
Municipalities take actions to enter into contract(s)	Municipalities	8	8
Roll out mobilization	County Facilitator, Participating Municipalities and Panel of attorneys	8	12

STRATEGY 5

ESTABLISH SPECIALIZED SERVICES AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

SUMMARY

This strategy includes two primary initiatives to support the technical assistance and support needs identified by the code enforcement community.

- 5.A Establish specialized technical assistance and training programs for: 1) code enforcement officers and 2) residents, developers and contractors on the Energy Code and its related technologies and/or commercial/large housing projects.
- 5.B Expand the panel of third party electrical and other specialty inspectors.

The specialized technical assistance program for the code enforcement community would be designed to increase the knowledge and expertise of the Tompkins County Code Enforcement community and related stakeholders to gain competencies in the new energy conservation construction materials, technologies, and building designs. Examples include air source heat pumps, charging stations, and solar farms, as well as other renewable energy technologies. The initiative also includes an effort to provide technical assistance supports for the residents, contractors and developers; and this is recommended to be provided through the establishment of a pilot(s) of New York State’s Third Party Support Program in Tompkins County. Given the ongoing emergence of new energy efficient construction technologies. Initiative 5.A also recommends an annual activity to collectively identify needed trainings and to communicate these needs to the existing entities that sponsor trainings and to those that develop and deliver the technical trainings.

The code enforcement community relies on third party inspectors, particularly electrical inspectors. Unfortunately, the current demand for inspectors far out paces the supply in Tompkins County and the region as a whole. This initiative is focused not on finding additional inspectors but rather developing new inspectors as the pool of existing inspectors has been exhausted.

POTENTIAL IMPACT AREA	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
Sub-county: All interested municipalities may participate.	7 municipalities expressed interest in a technical assistance program: Towns of Caroline, Danby, Enfield and Ulysses and the Villages of Cayuga Heights, Freeville and Groton. A number of municipalities indicated that cost could be a consideration. The majority of Towns and Villages were interested in expanding the pool of specialty inspectors; especially electrical and plumbing.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

5.A Establish Technical Assistance and Training Programs on the Energy Code and Related Technologies and/or Commercial/Large Housing Projects.

5.A.1 Technical Assistance for Code Enforcement Officers

- Technical assistance for code enforcement officers is envisioned to include a pilot project, optimally grant funded, that would enable the code enforcement community to engage with energy conservation construction experts to gain field based and virtual technical assistance services related to both plan reviews and construction inspections as related to both the Energy and Stretch Codes. The project would also include a process to select technical experts to perform plan reviews and inspection services on a fee for service basis for interested municipalities. The technical experts for the pilot would:
 - Offer access to technical experts via phone and/or zoom to provide technical assistance services relative to the administration and enforcement of the Energy and Stretch Codes, as well as the building code relative to large complex commercial/housing projects.
 - Provide a combination of virtual and on-site technical assistance services and training on the Energy and Stretch Codes and on commercial/large housing projects during permit plan review and inspection, that can address, for example, code interpretations, specifics on particular building technologies and inspection expectations.

The fee for service option for interested municipalities would seek technical experts to:

- Handle complex multi-family housing and/or commercial construction projects from permit application through certificate of compliance for interested municipalities.
- Handle the administration and enforcement of the Energy Code, including plan reviews and inspections for interested communities on a fee for service basis. This would include: provision of building permit plan reviews and on-site inspections on a fee for service basis for Energy and Stretch Code enforcement and on large and/or commercial permit plan reviews and site inspections.

5.A.2 Pilot the Third Party Support Program for Residents, Developers and Contractors

Municipalities are permitted to allow permit applicants to utilize and pay for third-party support providers to plan check and inspect for compliance with the 2020 Energy Conservation Construction Code of New York State (ECCCNYS). This in no way takes the place of the roles and responsibilities of the local code enforcement officer. The use of qualified third-party providers is voluntary on the part of the permit applicant. NYSERDA has developed third-party support resources which include:

Third-Party Manual. NYSERDA developed the manual to assist municipalities implement the third-party service provider program to check plans and inspect residential and commercial buildings for compliance with the NYS Energy Code or locally adopted codes such as NY Stretch. The manual provides information for municipalities, qualified third-party support providers, and permit applicants.

List of Qualified Third-Party Support Providers. NYSERDA has developed and continues to expand a pool of technically qualified “Third-Party Support Providers” with expertise in energy code plan review and inspection for commercial and residential buildings. There are certified third-party support providers located in Tompkins County and the surrounding area.

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Advancing Code Compliance Technology: NYSERDA has provided grant funds to municipalities to support the development of electronic/online compliance technology platforms. One of the municipal awardees is working with their cloud-based provider to incorporate advanced elements related to the energy code into the software. This project should consider including such criteria in the software RFP.

Approach for Initiatives 5.A.1 and 5.A.2

- Seek grant funds to provide a pilot project for technical assistance code enforcement officers for an 18 month period.
- Prepare and issue a shared service Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for both a pilot technical assistance program and for the provision of both specialized plan reviews and specialized building and energy code inspections. New York State Energy Research and Development Authority had sponsored training and technical assistance programs through a contract with Newport Ventures, T.Y Lin and other contractors. Unfortunately, the state-wide program has been discontinued. This NYSERDA training/technical assistance model has been identified by a number of the Tompkins County stakeholders as a potential technical service model.
- Representatives of the collective would select providers and negotiate the terms of the contract.
- Pilot the Third Party Support with one or two interested municipalities to evaluate the potential benefits and challenges of the program and share the results with other municipalities and expand the program within the County.
- If access to qualified third party providers is a barrier, work with community partners to develop local and regional resources.

5.A.3 Identification & Request for Technical Training on Energy Conservation Construction Technologies

A long-term recommended activity for the code enforcement community is to collectively identify needed trainings such as those on the new energy code provisions and related energy conservation construction technologies and to collectively request that these trainings be developed and delivered by one of the existing trade organizations and technical training entities. **Appendix F: Identification and Request for Technical Needs** provides a description and approach for this recommended annual activity.

5.B Expand the panel of third party electrical and other specialty inspectors.

Concept

The majority of the municipalities in the County, and New York State, utilize the services of third party certified electrical inspectors as part of the code administration and enforcement program rather than performing the service in-house. The Town of Ithaca is the only town or village that conducts the inspections in-house. The Town created Electrical and Code Enforcement Officer positions. The qualifications include having multiple years of electrical experience, require the incumbent to obtain a certification within 18 months, and maintain an electrical certification for their duration of employments.

Code enforcement officers and municipal planners have identified that there is a shortage of certified electrical inspectors within the County and surrounding areas. They are having difficulty meeting current demand and will not have the capacity to address the anticipated increase in need related to new energy conservation technologies and the expected expansion of New York State Energy Construction

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Conservation Code. It is not that the certified inspectors need to be found, but rather a new pool of certified inspectors needs to be created.

5.B Approach

Work with existing inspection companies to encourage expansion of their certified inspector staff.

- Should the initial approach not result in an expansion of the pool, identify and work with community partners including electrical and other trade unions, Southern Tier Building Officials Association and the County Workforce Development Board to identify potential candidates interested in becoming a certified inspector and as necessary identify potential third party host employers for the inspectors.
- Consider the creation of an electrical inspector position that can be shared among participating municipalities if no other solutions can meet the demand.
- Create a list of inspectors including contact information, credentials, and rates.

RESOURCES

Staffing Resources

Strategy facilitation and grant writing services would be needed. It is assumed that this is in-kind.

Other Resources Needed

5.A.1 Technical Assistance Contract: The cost for an 18 month pilot technical assistance program for the municipalities within Tompkins County or a wider region – such as the Southern Tier Building Officials Association would optimally be funded through a grant. Assuming a cost of \$1,600 per day and a mix of virtual and on-site technical assistance, the cost for services for the equivalent of 75 days over the 18 months would be \$120,000. A program could be scaled to meet the resources available; including targeted grants.

5.A.2 No costs needed.

5.A.3 No costs needed.

5.B Expand the Pool of Electrical Inspectors: Municipal staff time would be needed to collaborate with community partners on recruitment initiatives. The cost for the third party inspector is already paid by the permit applicant so there would continue to be no municipal cost.

Cost Savings and Avoided Cost

Optimally, through a shared service approach, the cost for a pilot technical assistance program can be funded through a grant. For the communities that desire ongoing technical experts to handle complex energy and large projects, the shared services approach should result in cost/rate reduction compared to market pricing.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES:

NYS DOS LGE Grant: The technical assistance pilot program initiative would be eligible for Local Government Efficiency Grant. An application on behalf of the municipalities in Tompkins County or in a

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wider region such as the Southern Tier Building Officials Association should be seen as favorable.

NYSERDA grant opportunities regarding energy code enforcement should be monitored for potential future funding. There have been grant awards made in the recent past supporting similar initiatives.

ACTION PLAN

Action Description <small>(Note: For this strategy only the 2 priority initiatives are included in the action plan)</small>	Facilitation and Participating Parties	Month Begin	Month End
Assign a Project Facilitator.	County Planning staff would provide temporary facilitation.	1	1
5.A Establish Technical Assistance Programs			
1. Seek grant funds and prepare grant to provide a pilot code enforcement officer technical assistance program.	Lead agent and participating municipalities.	1	6
2. Prepare and issue a shared service Request for Qualifications (RFQ).		Upon award of funding	TBD
3. Select providers, negotiate the terms of the contract and develop sharing arrangement for the services.		TBD	TBD
4. Kick off the pilot technical assistance program.		TBD	TBD
5. Identify & support municipality(s) participating in the Third Party Support Provider program.		1	4
5.B Expand the Pool of Certified Electrical and Plumbing Inspectors			
1. Work with existing inspection companies to encourage expansion of their certified inspector staff.	Lead agent and participating municipalities.	1	3
2. Work with community partners to identify potential candidates to become certified and as necessary identify potential third party host employers.		4	6
3. As a last alternative, consider the creation of an electrical inspector position that can be shared among the participating municipalities.		7	9

STRATEGY 6

MUNICIPAL TO MUNICIPAL SHARED STAFFING

SUMMARY

There are a number of shared code enforcement arrangements in Tompkins County. A prime example is the shared code enforcement staffing in the Town and Village of Dryden. Other shared staffing arrangements cited in Tompkins County include mutual aid and temporary back up coverage agreements.

Decentralized code enforcement operations in small communities do not easily lend themselves to succession planning or to continuity of service planning. As such, municipalities recognized that creative alternative solutions may need to be employed. Code enforcement officers, Chief Elected Officials, and other stakeholders repeatedly raised concerns that reliance upon an already taxed code enforcement officer to cover for another municipality during a vacancy should not be the only solution. This concern is compounded by the expansion and complexity of both the Uniform Code and the Energy Code. Stakeholders stated that there is currently not enough capacity in the overall network, nor is there a pipeline of potential candidates to fill positions. Shared staffing was identified as a strategy to address workload issues and to develop a deeper bench of staff to support unanticipated vacancies within the system.

One key takeaway from the review of the County-wide operations was the significance of efficiency gains achieved when certain functions are performed on a regional or county-wide level. Functions such as the building safety inspections can easily be carved out of the code enforcement officer responsibility and can be performed by a pool of, or individual, building safety inspectors.

Article 5-G of the General Municipal Law allows for both inter-municipal service agreements (contract for services) and joint/cooperative agreements for the provision of services for which they are empowered to perform individually. **Appendix B: Intergovernmental Cooperation Options** provide a review of the options and references to the relevant sections of New York State laws. The Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code and the State Energy Conservation Construction Code, Executive Law 381 (2) also provide for the sharing of services. This authority provides local government officials the flexibility to develop joint activities and to enter into contractual agreements for the provision of services. One example of a cooperative agreement that may be of interest in Tompkins County is the Municipal Alliance for Code Enforcement (MACE) in Alleghany County. MACE has been in existence since 2000 and includes 21 municipalities. A more detailed description is provided in the project description below.

POTENTIAL IMPACT AREA

Sub-county: All interested municipalities may participate.

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

8 municipalities expressed current interest in exploring shared staffing opportunities: Villages of Groton, Freeville and Trumansburg and the Towns of Caroline, Danby, Enfield, Newfield and Ulysses. Others indicated that they do not have a current need but may have interest in the future.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Concept

Eight municipalities expressed interest in shared staffing. The municipalities identified three positions for potential sharing: code enforcement officer, building safety inspector and electrical/code enforcement officer. **Table 13: Potential Interest in Shared Positions** summarizes the reported interest.

Table 13: Potential Interest in Shared Positions				
Municipality	CEO	Electrical/ CEO	Building Safety Inspector	General Interest
Freeville, Village				Yes
Groton, Village	Yes 10-20 hrs./week	Yes, 10-20 hrs./ week	Yes 10-20 hrs./week	
Trumansburg, V				Yes
Caroline, Town			Yes	
Danby, Town			Yes	
Enfield, Town	Some interest 5-10 hrs./ week	Medium Interest 5-10 hours/week	Some Interest 5-10 hours/week	
Newfield, Town				Yes
Ulysses, Town	Yes	Yes	Yes	

The study process identified three (3) potential inter-municipal agreement models for this initiative:

- **Joint/Cooperative Agreement:** Should two or more municipalities choose to share a code enforcement officer, the optimal model would be a joint agreement. This enables the staff to be appointed by the participating municipalities, enabling the code enforcement officer to perform the full duties of a code enforcement officer on behalf of each participating municipalities. It is recommended that municipalities consider arrangements that support the creation of full-time code enforcement officers or electrical/code enforcement officers, provided with employee benefits, to provide a sharing of costs in support of a recruitment and retention strategy. Shared benefit costs potentially make it financially feasible for the participating municipalities.

A joint agreement is used when municipalities agree to share in the provision of a service as opposed to one municipality contracting with another for a service. This type of agreement requires active participation from each local government. It is common in joint/shared agreements to include an inter-municipal governance oversight structure to oversee the collective delivery of service. **APPENDIX G: Sample Cooperation Agreement for Code Enforcement Services** is an illustrative agreement prepared by the NYS Department of State specifically for code enforcement shared staffing.

An example of this model is the MACE model that operates in Alleghany County in which multiple municipalities collaborated to institute a single operation for the provision of the full continuum of Uniform Code and Energy Code administration and enforcement for all participating municipalities. MACE provides full Uniform and Energy Code administration and enforcement services for 21 municipalities covering 17,000 parcels in an area with a population of more than 28,000. MACE is

VII. Prioritized Strategies Recommended for Implementation

overseen by an administrative board comprised of the Village mayors and Town Supervisors of the participating municipalities. One municipality functions as the lead, and manages the consolidated budget and the day to day operations of the employees. Participating municipalities share in the cost on a per parcel basis. The municipalities utilize a universal application and process as well as a universal fee scale. The shared service arrangements also include Floodplain Management and Zoning Officer functions for municipalities as needed. The staffing structure includes a CEO Coordinator and 3 code enforcement officers.

- **Inter-municipal Service Agreement (IMA):** A second and more commonly utilized shared service model is an inter-municipal agreement in which one municipality provides staffing services to one or more other municipalities. In the world of building code administration and enforcement, this model fits best for shared staffing, other than the code enforcement officer. For example, one or more municipalities could contract for building safety officer inspection services from another municipality. This could provide a cost effective model to address the building code operations workload issues. This could be designed as a “circuit rider model” that could provide shared services to multiple municipalities.
- **Mutual Back-Up Agreements:** Expand mutual back-up systems between and among municipalities for emergency response, for fire and other disasters, in the absence of a code enforcement officer. This enables coverage during vacations and other leave time in communities that only have 1 code enforcement officer.

Approach

- The initial activity would be to work with the municipalities to match needs based on the following considerations: title, hours needed, municipal proximity and readiness to proceed. It should also evaluate willingness to share fringe benefit costs to support a full-time position.
- Determine the shared services model to be pursued. As stated in the project summary above, there are two general routes municipalities may take: 1) Joint Agreements that would be optimal for sharing a code enforcement officer or 2) the IMA Service Agreement that could be utilized for a variety of shared staffing scenarios including building safety inspectors or support staff or the mutual aid shared service.
- Develop the scope of services, the functions to be performed, the term, pricing and personnel time and cost sharing. Other agreement considerations include: liability, equipment, etc.
- Obtain municipal board authorizations and enter into an inter-municipal agreement.
- Periodically re-evaluate municipal interest in new/changed shared staffing needs and opportunities.

PROJECT BENEFITS

- Supports succession planning.
 - Reduces gaps in service.
 - Presents opportunities to address workload issues cost effectively.
 - Provides back-up.
 - Increases overall stability in code enforcement system within the County.
 - Streamlines recruitment processes.
-

VII. Prioritized Strategies Recommended for Implementation

RESOURCES, BUDGET AND COST SAVINGS OPPORTUNITIES

Partnerships may present an opportunity for creative means to address staffing needs. The data show that the smaller the municipality, the more challenging it is to achieve workload standards of large operations. By working together, municipalities could be able to increase efficiencies and at the same time create increase staffing stability by offering full time opportunities with benefits. Examples:

- Should a municipality need only 10 hours of a staff person but cannot find someone to take the limited hours, with a partnership with another municipality they may be able to hire only the hours needed to meet their need and avoid additional costs.
- Sharing municipalities desire to create staffing stability by sharing a full time staff person with full time benefits, the salary and benefits based on proportional hours needed.

COST SHARING OR COST ALLOCATION METHODOLOGIES:

Examples include: Hours utilized by each municipality or number of parcels or permits per year.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES:

If the municipalities include this initiative in a County-wide Shared Services Initiative Plan (CWSSI), the documented savings for year one will be eligible for a 100% matching grant.

ACTION PLAN

Action Description	Facilitation & Participating Parties	Month Begin	Month End
Identify a Project Facilitator to be used during Planning Phase only.	County Planning staff can provide facilitation assistance until a lead has been identified among municipalities or no longer needed.	1	1
Planning phase should include the 1) matching of needs & opportunities between and among interested municipalities and 2) determination of type of shared service arrangement.	Facilitator and participating municipalities	2	6
Negotiation between municipalities.	Municipal representatives	TBD	TBD
Municipal authorizations for agreements and execution of agreements.	Participating municipalities	TBD	TBD
Annual re-evaluation of staffing needs and opportunities for shared services.	Municipalities	Ongoing	

Summary Snapshot of the Priority Strategies

In summary, the Study identified six strategy areas identified for implementation. Each strategy area, its initiatives and anticipated outcomes are depicted below in **Table 14: Snapshot of Priority Strategy Areas**.

Table 14: Snapshot of Priority Strategy Areas

Strategy 1	Strategy 2	Strategy 3	Strategy 4	Strategy 5	Strategy 6
Centralization of 911 Addressing	County-wide Building Permit & Code Enforcement Software Management System	Create a Pipeline of Code Enforcement Officers & Building Safety Inspectors	Shared Court Presentment/ Prosecution	Establish Specialized Services and Technical Assistance Programs	Municipal Shared Staffing
Initiative	Initiative	Initiatives	Initiative	Initiatives	Initiatives
1.A County Department of Emergency Response Assumes 911 Addressing Authority & County ITS/GIS Assigns Addresses	2.A Issue RFP & Select a Shared Software System	3.A Recruitment Toolkit 3.B Streamline job titles and specifications 3.C Centralized Recruitment	4.A Shared RFP/ RFQ to create a shared panel of experts to provide uniform prosecution of non-compliant cases	5.A Establish Specialized Technical Assistance Program 5.B Panel of third party specialty inspectors.	6.A Match staffing needs and share CEOs and BSIs between municipalities
Outcome	Outcome	Outcome	Outcome	Outcome	Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved emergency response Reduced duplication of effort 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standardization Workflow efficiencies Improved communication Reduced pricing Cross Coverage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Stability Avoided vacancies Reduce/Avoid Backlogs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health & Safety Reduced Non-compliance Standardization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased Energy Conservation Competencies Increased code compliance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stabilize Staff Address high workloads efficiently Increase Back Up

Strategy Areas Recommended for Future Consideration

In addition to the six priority strategies, an additional nine strategy areas were identified through the study process as potential strategies for future development and implementation and are outlined in more detail in **Appendix H: Strategy Areas Recommended for Future Consideration**.

Strategies Identified for Potential Alternative Development Approaches

Three strategies ranked fairly high during the prioritization process; however, it was determined that successful implementation may be better served through alternative approaches and service systems than through this code enforcement administration and operations study.

- **Establish a contractor registry and training program.**
- **Carve out stormwater management services and centralize or regionalize delivery.**
- **Exploration of the feasibility of a county-wide or sub-county regionalized courts specializing in Uniform Code; Energy Codes and Other Land Use Codes.**

Strategies Recommended for Future Consideration

The following six strategy areas certainly showed promise for both efficiency and effectiveness gains; however were not ranked consistently as high as the priority areas by the municipal stakeholder groups.

- **County-wide administration and enforcement of the uniform code and energy code.**
- **Shared service procurement or centralized provision of work resources: instruments, equipment, vehicles and other resources**
- **Coordinate In-service Training**
- **Carve out building safety inspections and operating permits and deliver on a county-wide or regional basis.**
- **Carve out the management of short-term rentals and deliver centrally or regionally.**
- **Establish an inter-municipal Code Enforcement Officer Mentorship**

VIII. Implementation Approach

Supportive Initiatives

During the study process, several inter-governmental cooperation initiatives surfaced that address key objectives of the study and would be important to the overall effectiveness of code enforcement operations in Tompkins County and to the success of the prioritized strategies identified in this study.

- Initiative #1:** Develop 1) a uniform permit application with a uniform documentation list to accompany the permit application, 2) a uniform checklist of inspections and 3) a uniform fee schedule that can be utilized by municipalities.
- Initiative #2:** Evaluate cross-agency data exchange needs and establish cross-system protocols for information flow.
- Initiative #3:** To improve communication, establish interagency communication systems and processes between code enforcement officers and county departments and/or between county departments that support compliance with all codes. An example topic is the sizing and siting of septic systems which involves environmental health codes, the Uniform Code, local codes such as zoning, planning and short-term rentals and interfaces with County Assessment.

Facilitation/Coordination Role

Development and implementation of shared municipal services is almost never easy. Successful shared service implementation requires a strong cross jurisdictional team and that team gains focus and strength through facilitation, coordination and support services. The transition phase of shared service projects is often the most difficult. In order to support the six identified strategies and three the initiatives above, it is recommend that facilitation and support resources be directed to each strategy area during the development, transition and initiative kick-off. It is anticipated that the resources will only be needed on a short-term and part-time basis (approximately 12 months). Envisioned coordination and support roles include:

- Coordinate meetings of the Code Enforcement Officers in Tompkins County.
- Maintain the schedule of the necessary action steps.
- Update and document progress.
- Facilitate process to support improved interagency work and information flows.
- Develop shared documents.
- Identify needed resources.
- Grant development.
- Liaise with County departments and other stakeholders as needed

In the current municipal environment of limited resources and highly competing demands, multi-pronged approaches are often deployed to facilitate and support of the development and start-up of projects. The Tompkins County Department of Planning and Sustainability has offered to provide a limited number of staff hours in 2024, and possibly beyond, to support implementation of the strategies that tie closely to the work of its Department (Strategies 2, 5, 6). The County Information Services/GIS operation has offered

to be the facilitator for Strategy 1; however the timing of strategy implementation will need to consider and be coordinated with the overall Information Services/GIS staffing capacity and competing workload demands. County Planning staff will also assist in the identification and recruitment of other municipal or county staff/officials to facilitate Strategy Areas 3 and 4 and supports for the other initiatives. Utilizing content area experts and supports can best serve the implementation of a specific strategy area. Transitional short term facilitation and supports would also be eligible for inclusion in New York State's Local Government Efficiency Grant program given that the overall project will result in a number of efficiency and effectiveness gains with strong returns on investment.

Funding Opportunities

A number of the shared service strategy areas including the shared procurement of an automated workflow and data management system and the shared energy conservation technical assistance initiative would be eligible for grant funding offered through such agencies as the New York Department of State and the New York State Energy Research Development Authority, among others. These code enforcement shared service initiatives could also be included in a Tompkins County County-wide Shared Services Initiative (CWSSI) Plan and documented first year savings would then be eligible for a CWSSI matching grant equal to 100% of the savings generated.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Overview
Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code
and
Energy Conservation Construction Prevention Building Code¹

In New York State the task of developing and promulgating the Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code (Uniform Code) and State Energy Conservation Construction Code (Energy Code) is a State responsibility. Pursuant to Executive Law §381 each local government is responsible for administering and enforcing the Uniform Code and State Energy Code within its boundaries. A local government that administers and enforces the Uniform Code and Energy Code is required to adopt local laws, ordinances, or other regulations that establish the local government’s code enforcement program. The code enforcement program must include the features described in the “minimum standards” regulations adopted by the Secretary of State.

Energy Law §11-107 provides that administration and enforcement of the Energy Code within a municipality shall be conducted by the governmental entity responsible for administration and enforcement of the Uniform Code.

County Owned Buildings

Pursuant to a Department of State regulation (19NYCRR Part 1201) counties are accountable for administration and enforcement of the Uniform Code with respect to:

- Buildings, premises and equipment in the custody of, or activities related thereto undertaken by, the respective county, and
- Buildings, premises and equipment in the custody of, or activities related thereto undertaken by, any special purpose unit of local government created by or for the benefit of the respective city, village, town or county.

19 NYCRR Part 1203

The Secretary of State is responsible to establish the rules and regulations prescribing minimum standards for administration and enforcement of the Uniform Code and has adopted 19 NYCRR Part 1203 (Uniform Code: Minimum Standards for Administration and Enforcement). A local government’s code enforcement program must satisfy the following minimum standards:

- **Designating Responsibility for Code Enforcement.** The persons, offices, departments, agencies or combinations thereof responsible for administration and enforcement of the Uniform Code must be clearly identified.
- **Building Permits.** Building permits must be required for any work which is required to conform to the Uniform Code. Certain exceptions are permitted.

¹ New York State Department of State Division of Building Standards and Codes, Administration and Enforcement of the Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code and the State Energy Conservation Construction Code, 2022

- **Construction Inspections.** Inspections of certain specified elements of the construction process must be conducted. Building permit holders must keep work accessible and exposed until inspected and accepted by the municipality.
- **Stop Work Orders.** The code enforcement program must include procedures for the use of stop work orders to halt work that is determined to be contrary to provisions of the Uniform Code, or is being conducted in a dangerous or unsafe manner, or is being performed without obtaining a required permit.
- **Certificates of Occupancy or Compliance.** A certificate of occupancy or a certificate of compliance must be required (1) for all work for which a building permit was required and (2) whenever the general occupancy classification of a building is changed.
- **Notifications.** The code enforcement program must include procedures for the chief of any fire department providing firefighting services for a property to notify the code enforcement official of any fire or explosion involving any structural damage, fuel burning appliance, chimney or gas vent.
- **Unsafe Structures and Equipment.** The code enforcement program must include procedures for identifying and addressing unsafe structures and equipment.
- **Operating Permits.** Operating permits must be required for conducting certain specified activities or using certain specified categories of buildings.
- **Fire Safety and Property Maintenance Inspections.** The code enforcement program must provide for fire safety and property maintenance inspections of all buildings which contain an area of public assembly, all multiple dwellings, and all nonresidential occupancies. The interval between inspections of buildings containing an area of public assembly cannot exceed one year. The interval between inspections of multiple dwellings and nonresidential occupancies must be consistent with local conditions; provided, however, that such interval cannot exceed one year for dormitory buildings, and such interval cannot exceed three years for all other buildings.
- **Complaint Procedures.** The code enforcement program must include procedures for addressing bona fide complaints which assert that conditions or activities fail to comply with the Uniform Code or with local laws, ordinances or regulations adopted for administration and enforcement of the Uniform Code.
- **Condition Assessments of Parking Garages.** The code enforcement program must include provisions requiring condition assessments of parking garages.
- **Record Keeping.** The code enforcement program must establish a system of records of the features and activities specified above and of fees, if any, charged and collected.
- **Reports.** Every municipality responsible for administration and enforcement of the Uniform Code is required to submit an annual report of its activities relative to administration and enforcement of the Uniform Code to the Secretary of State

Opting Out

Executive Law § 381 provides that a municipality may decline to be the entity enforcing the code within its boundaries. The municipality may adopt a local law stating that it will not enforce the code and

thereafter responsibility for enforcement will pass to the county in which the particular city, town, or village is located. If a county declines to enforce the code, it may likewise adopt a local law to that effect and responsibility for code enforcement will immediately pass to the Department of State.

Administration and Enforcement of Local Laws and Ordinances

In some communities, the CEO may also be tasked with enforcing other laws, such laws relating to flood plains, stormwater, junk, or zoning.

Integration with other municipal program related to land use or fire prevention

Programs for administration and enforcement of the Uniform Code and the Energy Code may be combined with other programs in the municipality related to land use or fire prevention. For example, zoning laws frequently require permits and certificates of occupancy which can be effectively combined with similar instruments used to enforce the Uniform Code and the Energy Code. Fire protection and education programs may already have some relation to code enforcement and may provide a source of manpower for code enforcement functions. Local needs and conditions should be considered when designing a municipal code enforcement program. The Department of State regulations prescribing minimum standards for administration and enforcement of the Uniform Code provide local government officials with wide discretion in the design of a municipal enforcement program.

Required training and Certifications²

CEOs must complete an initial 114 hour basic training program within one year of initial appointment, and thereafter must complete at least 24 hours of in-service training each year throughout their careers. These training requirements reflect the complexity of the job of the CEO, and demand a significant commitment on the part of a person who wishes to serve as a CEO.

² New York State Department of State, Division of Building Standards and Codes Training Website, March, 2023

APPENDIX B

Intergovernmental Cooperation Options¹

Determining how the local governments will move forward with the provision of Building Code Enforcement in their municipality is ultimately up to the individual local governments. Such decisions can include use of shared services as a means to provide effective and efficient code enforcement service delivery.

In 1959, New York State enacted Article 5-G of the General Municipal Law, allowing inter-municipal cooperative agreements for the provision of services. Counties, outside the City of New York, along with cities, towns, villages, and school districts may enter into agreements to perform functions or services jointly which they are empowered to perform individually.² Additionally, when the State of New York adopted The Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code and the State Energy Conservation Construction Code, Executive Law 381 (2) also provided for the sharing of services.³ This authority provides local government officials the flexibility to develop joint activities and to enter into contractual agreements for the provision of services. Although allowed by law, deciding on which type of inter-municipal cooperation to use depends on many issues, such as the activity to be shared, size of municipalities, economies of scale and costs, convenience, final provision of service and how to maintain local autonomy while providing the best service possible.

Shared services often involve complex programmatic, administrative, financial, and liability issues. Given these complexities, it is recommended that municipalities utilized a legal inter-municipal agreement to formalize the relationship rather than the informal handshake often used in the past. Providing services between and among multiple municipalities require complex administrative, financial, and legal agreements. Formal cooperative agreements may be divided into two categories:

- Service Agreements - a contractual agreement between local governments where a local government provides services for one or more other local governments for a price.

¹ New York State Department of State, Shared Enforcement of the Uniform Code and Energy Code: A Guide to Increasing Efficiency by Sharing Code Enforcement Responsibilities, 2008

² The statute provides as follows: "Two or more local governments may provide for joint administration and enforcement of the uniform code, the state energy conservation construction code, or both, by agreement pursuant to article five-G of the general municipal law. Any local government may enter into agreement with the county in which such local government is situated to administer and enforce the uniform code, the state energy conservation construction code, or both, within such local government. Local governments or counties may charge fees to defray the costs of administration and enforcement."

³ The statute provides as follows: "Two or more local governments may provide for joint administration and enforcement of the uniform code, the state energy conservation construction code, or both, by agreement pursuant to article five-G of the general municipal law. Any local government may enter into agreement with the county in which such local government is situated to administer and enforce the uniform code, the state energy conservation construction code, or both, within such local government. Local governments or counties may charge fees to defray the costs of administration and enforcement."

- Joint Agreements – a contractual agreement between local governments where they agree to share in the provision of a service. This type of agreement requires active participation from each local government.

Choosing which of these types of agreements to use depends on the local governments involved and their capacity to perform the service.

SERVICE AGREEMENTS⁴

If local governments determine a service agreement is the best option to provide services, important issues need to be evaluated. For example: is the cost of the service as important as providing the best service possible, or is there a combination of cost and how the service is provided that needs to be addressed. The scope of service for any agreement should be clearly defined and stated within the agreement, including the time within which the service shall be performed. Charges and payments need to be clearly articulated, including how any user fees are determined and to whom they are paid. Individual liabilities of all parties involved in an agreement and legal fees and defense costs need to be determined at the time of agreement.

JOINT AGREEMENTS⁵

If local governments determine a joint agreement is the best option to provide services, the best way to share in the provision of service need to be evaluated. How will the local governments work together to provide the service and how will the costs of the service be assessed among the participants? Any agreement is a contract between participants and due to the nature of municipal service certain other considerations are unique to joint agreements.

Which local government will be the employer of personnel for building code enforcement and administration needs to be determined. Will administrative staff continue to be employed by the local governments? If enforcement officers are shared between participants is there a single employer providing salary and benefits and how will those costs be divided among the participants, and how are salaries and benefits negotiated among the participants? Additionally, the allocation of staff time among the participants and costs to the participants need to be clearly defined in the agreement. The statutes authorizing intergovernmental agreements provide a number of options for apportioning costs, including basing charge-backs upon full value of real property, services received or rendered, benefits received or rendered, or a combination thereof. The statutes further provide that “any other equitable basis” may be used for allocating costs.⁶ The distribution of resources needed for the service, including

⁴ New York Department of State’s publication ‘Intergovernmental Cooperation’,
<https://dos.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2023/01/intergovernmental-cooperation-with-sample.pdf>

⁵ New York Department of State’s publication ‘Intergovernmental Cooperation’,
<https://dos.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2023/01/intergovernmental-cooperation-with-sample.pdf>

⁶ New York Department of State’s publication ‘Intergovernmental Cooperation’,
<https://dos.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2023/01/intergovernmental-cooperation-with-sample.pdf>

vehicles, computers, and computer software, also needs consideration as to which participant will provide along with cost allocation among participants.

According to state law any inter-municipal agreement is limited to a duration of five years--or to the legally permissible period of usefulness of any capital improvement called for in the agreement--whichever is longer.⁷ Any agreements should not be open-ended or call for "automatic" renewals "unless terminated". Contracts should call for a specific duration complying with the law, providing for review and extension by the participants.

⁷ Gen. Mun. L., §119-o(2)(j).

APPENDIX C

Code Enforcement Officers and Building Safety Inspectors
Certification and Training Requirements

Basic Training

The Code Enforcement Basic Training Program is administered by the Educational Services Unit of the NYS Building Standards and Codes Division. The Basic Training Program provides initial training and certification to individuals who wish to become a Certified Building Safety Inspector (BSI) or a Certified Code Enforcement Official (CEO).

Code Enforcement Basic Training

The Basic Training Program is provided through live webinars. Participant must complete the training and testing program. Classes are full day and the tests are given at the end of each module. To become a Certified Code Enforcement Official, participants must successfully complete all six basic training courses (9A through 9F) which total 24 full days of training and 12 hours of testing.

Basic Training Requirements to become a Certified Code Enforcement Official		
Module	Topic	Training Time
Module 9A	Introduction to Code Enforcement Practices, Part 1 – Regulations, Administration, and Enforcement	4 consecutive Full Days & 2 hour test
Module 9B	Introduction to Code Enforcement Practices, Part 2 – Fire Safe Design.	4 consecutive Full Days & 2 hour test
Module 9C	Inspection Procedures for Existing Structures	4 consecutive Full Days & 2 hour test
Module 9D	General Construction Principles	4 consecutive Full Days & 2 hour test
Module 9E	Residential Building Construction	4 consecutive Full Days & 2 hour test
Module 9F	Commercial Building Construction	4 consecutive Full Days & 2 hour test
Total		24 full days and 12 hours of testing

Building Safety Inspector

To become a Certified Building Safety Inspector, you must successfully complete the following basic training courses and testing. There involves 12 full days of training broken into three modules of 4 consecutive days followed by test after each module. To complete the series, based on current DOS schedules, it takes approximately 2 and a half months to complete.

Basic Training Requirements to become a Certified Building Safety Inspector		
Module	Topic	Training Time
Module 9A	Introduction to Code Enforcement Practices, Part 1 – Regulations, Administration, and Enforcement	4 consecutive Full Days & 2 hour test
Module 9B	Introduction to Code Enforcement Practices, Part 2 – Fire Safe Design.	4 consecutive Full Days & 2 hour test
Module 9C	Inspection Procedures for Existing Structures	4 consecutive Full Days & 2 hour test
Total		12 full days and 6 hours of testing

In-service training Requirements

Building Safety Inspectors Annual In-Service Training Requirements

- 6 hours of In-Service training is required each calendar year (January 1 to December 31).
- Of these 6 hours, at least 3 hours must be obtained by completing training courses that are approved by the Department of State, Division of Building Standards and Codes (DBSC) in Topic 1, Code Enforcement and Administration ([19 NYCRR 1208-3.3\(b\)\(1\)](#)).
- A maximum of 3 hours of Professional Development Electives may be applied toward the 6 hours of annual In-Service training.

Code Enforcement Officials Annual In-Service Training Requirements

24 hours of In-Service training is required each calendar year (January 1 to December 31) and must meet the following requirements:

- 12 of the 24 hours must be obtained by completing training courses that are approved by the Department of State, Division of Building Standards and Codes (DBSC).
- Of the 12 hours of approved courses:
 - at least 3 hours must be obtained in Topic 1, Code Enforcement and Administration ([19 NYCRR 1208-3.3\(b\)\(1\)](#));
 - at least 3 hours must be obtained in Topic 2, Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code ([19 NYCRR 1208-3.3\(c\)\(1\)](#)); and
 - at least 3 hours must be obtained in Topic 3, Energy Conservation Construction Code ([19 NYCRR 1208-3.3\(c\)\(2\)](#)).
- A maximum of 12 hours of Professional Development Electives may be applied toward the 24 hours of annual In-Service training, the categories for professional development electives are outlined by DOS.

In-service training opportunities

There are a number of opportunities available for in-service training for both Code Enforcement Officers and Building Inspectors.

New York State Department of State (DOS)

- Hosts multiple webinars throughout the year that Code Enforcement Officers and Building Inspector staff must register for.
- Provides a library of on-line courses that can provide 15 hours of training credit
- Offers a self-study program

Simpson Strong-Tie provides in-service training that is authorized by DOS New York State DOS on a variety of topics that address Topics 1, 2 and 3.

Additional Continuing Education Opportunities. A number of organizations provide continuing education programs that offer continuing education credit hours accepted by the Division of Building Standards and Codes. For example, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) provides energy code training on various topics across the state. All of our courses offer 3 hours of continuing education and learning units from the Department of State as well as credits from the American Institute of Architects. Each class is approximately 4 hours in length. Other entities include offering continuing education include Federal Emergency Management Agency; New York State Building Officials Conference and regional conferences including the Southern Tier Building Officials Conference.

New Certification Requirements Effective April 2023 Set by Recent NYS Legislation

The timeframe to complete basic training changed effective April 27, 2023 based on new legislation signed into law in 2022. The times frame for completion have been materially reduced. The requirements of minimum basic training which code enforcement personnel shall complete in order to be eligible for continued employment or permanent appointment, and the time within which such basic training must be completed following such appointment, provided however, that absent a written extension from the secretary of state for good cause shown:

- Building safety inspectors must complete the minimum basic training within six (6) months from the date of appointment for building safety inspectors AND a building safety inspector must complete at least one-third (1 Module) of required basic training courses prior to performing building safety inspector enforcement activities.
- Code Enforcement Officers must complete the minimum basic training within twelve (12) months from the date of appointment as code enforcement official AND the code enforcement official must complete at least one sixth (1 Module) of required basic training courses prior to performing building safety inspector enforcement activities and must complete two-thirds (4 Modules) of required basic training courses prior to performing code enforcement official enforcement activities.

APPENDIX D

**CIVIL SERVICE TITLES, MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS
AND JOB SPECIFICATIONS**

Tompkins County	
Title	Minimum Qualifications
Code/Fire Enforcement Officer (Various Jurisdictions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Associates Degree or 60 credit hours leading to an Associates in civil engineering, construction technology or related field AND 1 yr. full time experience in building construction or firefighting; OR b. 60 credit hrs. in 4 yr. program in same as above AND 1 yr. of experience outlined in (a) above; OR c. HS or GED diploma AND 3 yrs. in building construction; building trades or firefighting; OR d. HS or GED diploma AND 3 yrs. experience in review/interpretation of building plans, property surveys and zoning regulations. e. Equivalent combination of a, b, c and d above.
Zoning/Code/Fire Enforcement Officer Various Towns and Villages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Bachelors degree in civil engineering, construction engineering or related field and 1 year full time equivalent experience as building inspector; independent contractor; skilled building construction trades worker or firefighting; OR b. Associates degree or 60 semester hours in same in (a) above AND 3 years experience same as described in (a) above. c. HS or GED Diploma AND 5 years of experience same as described in (a) above.
Zoning/Code/Fire Enforcement Officer Town of Lansing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Bachelors degree in civil engineering, construction technology or related field and 1 year full time equivalent experience as building inspector; independent contractor; skilled building construction trades worker or firefighting; OR b. Associates degree or 60 semester hours in civil engineering, construction technology or related field AND 3 years of experience same as described in (a) above. c. HS or GED Diploma AND 5 years of experience same as described in (a) above. d. Equivalent combination of a, b and c above.
Code Enforcement Officer (Town of Ithaca and Town of Dryden)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Associates Degree in engineering, construction technology or related field; OR b. HS or GED diploma AND 2 yrs. in in building inspection; independent contractor, skilled construction work or related experience; OR c. HS or GED diploma AND possession of 1 or more certifications: Introduction to NYS Code Enforcement Parts I and II; Building Code of NYS; Residential Codes of NYS; General Construction Principles; or Inspection Procedures for Existing Structures
Electrical & Code Enforcement Officer (Town of Ithaca)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Associates Degree in electrical construction technology, electrical technology, electrical engineering or related field AND 3 yrs. exp. as Journeyman electrician or electrical trades work experience; OR b. HS or GED Diploma AND 5 yrs. exp.as Journeyman electrician or electrical trades work experience; c. Any combination of training & experience equal to or greater than above. <p>NOTE: Experience as a code enforcement officer with electrical inspection experience may be substituted for the electrical experience in a, b and c above.</p> <p><u>SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS</u></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incumbent must complete an electrical certification from the IAEE or the ICC within eighteen months of appointment, if they do not already have it. Incumbent must maintain electrical certification for the duration of employment. • Incumbent must successfully complete the prescribed training programs established by the NYS Fire Administrator and the NYS Fire Fighting and Code Enforcement Personnel Standards and Education Commission within eighteen (18) months of appointment. In addition, incumbents must attend and complete the continuing education requirements on an annual basis. Incumbent must maintain said certification for the duration of employment. • Must possess and maintain a valid New York State Drivers' License.
Code Safety Inspector (Town of Ithaca)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Associates Degree in Civil engineering, construction technology or related field: OR b. HS or GED Diploma AND 1 yr. of experience in construction; building trades, firefighting or in review/interpretation of building plans, property surveys or zoning/code regulations; OR c. Any combination of the above equal or greater than the above. Experience as a building inspector can be substituted for equal experience to above.
Building Inspector (Various Jurisdictions)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Associates degree in engineering or construction technology, or related field AND 2 yrs. experience as a building inspector, independent contractor, skilled building construction trades worker, or in a fire-fighting organization; OR b. HS or GED Diploma AND 4 yrs. full time experience as a building inspector, independent contractor, skilled building construction trades worker, or working with a fire fighting organization; OR c. Any combination of training & experience equal to or greater than that described in (a) and (b) above. <p><u>NOTE:</u> The successful candidate must be willing and able to participate in the NYS Code Enforcement Training (NYCRR-9b) and obtain certification within a reasonable time frame (as determined by the Town, based upon the frequency of the classes).</p>

Building Inspector Tompkins County

Department: Various Agencies Throughout Tompkins County

Classification: Competitive

Approved: 0

Revised: 2/95; 4/01; 5/13

By: AF, Commissioner of Personnel

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

(a) Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered two year college with an Associate's Degree in engineering or construction technology, or related field **AND** two years of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) experience as a building inspector, independent contractor, skilled building construction trades worker, or working with a fire fighting organization; **OR**

(b) Graduation from high school or possession of a high school equivalency diploma **AND** four years of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) experience as a building inspector, independent contractor, skilled building construction trades worker, or working with a fire fighting organization; **OR**

(c) Any combination of training and experience equal to or greater than that described in (a) and (b) above.

Tompkins County is Committed to Equity and Inclusion. We encourage those with similar values to apply.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

The successful candidate must be willing and able to participate in the NYS Code Enforcement Training (NYCRR-9b) and obtain certification within a reasonable time frame (as determined by the Town, based upon the frequency of the classes).

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:

This position involves responsibility for administering and enforcing the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code, or a local building code of approved by the State Fire Prevention and Building Code Council. The work is performed under the general supervision of the Town Supervisor or his/her designee with wide leeway allowed for the exercise of independent judgment when carrying out the duties of the position. The incumbent will perform all related duties (including those of zoning officer) as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

Administers and enforces all provisions of the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code, and any other local zoning laws and building codes, rules and regulations pertaining to the construction or alteration of buildings and structures; Prepares rules and regulations, application forms, building permits and certificates of occupancy for the approval of the local governing body, to be used for the administration and enforcement of various codes, laws, etc. Supervises, coordinates and participates in the inspection of the various stages of construction; Issues a certificate of occupancy for a building constructed or altered in compliance with the provisions of the Uniform Code; Issues, denies or revokes building permits and certificates of occupancy as necessary; Issues written notices to correct unsafe, illegal or dangerous conditions in existing structures; Inspects existing buildings and structures, as necessary, to ensure their conformity with the fire prevention provision of the State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code; Inspects buildings and structures in the process of construction or repair for compliance with approved plans and specifications and applicable building codes, laws and regulations; Maintains accurate records on all transactions and activities including all applications received, permits and certificates issued, fees charged and collected, inspection reports and notice and orders issued; Prepares a variety of forms, reports and presentations relevant to the Code Enforcement activities of a municipal government; Conducts Fire Safety field inspections of buildings containing public assembly space, building accessible to the general public space, and multiple resident structures; Responds to Fire Department calls, as necessary, to determine safe continued use status of structures and equipment suffering fire or other similar damage;

Responds to phone inquiries concerning all services provided by the Codes Office;
Maintains a familiarity with all Town zoning laws and conducts zoning conformance inspections as necessary;
Causes "Stop Work" orders to be issued;
Does "Plan Reviews" for all permits;
Reviews, checks and passes on plans and specifications submitted with building permit applications for compliance with building codes, zoning laws, and other applicable laws;
Investigates complaints of violations of building codes and zoning laws;
Evaluates effectiveness of administrative procedures and enforcement mechanisms and implements improvements;
Explains the requirements of the Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code, zoning laws and related codes to building contractors, architects, engineers, real estate agents, and the general public;
Provides for removal of illegal or unsafe conditions and secures the necessary safeguards during construction;
Works with building inspection personnel in other municipalities on matters of joint concern and overlapping jurisdiction;
Maintains data and records on building inspection activities and prepares periodic reports.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Thorough knowledge of the modern practices, principles, materials and tools used in the building construction trades;
Good knowledge of the principles of fire prevention;
Good knowledge of basic building inspection techniques;
Good knowledge of the principles and practices governing the storage and distribution of combustibles;
Working knowledge of how to operate a personal computer and spreadsheet, word processing, and database software;
Ability to prepare clear and concise written reports and to maintain records in an orderly manner;
Ability to establish and maintain cooperative relationships with other public officials, building contractors, and the general public;
Ability to read and interpret building plans and specifications;
Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing;
Ability to be firm but courteous;
Willingness to attend all necessary schooling;
Honesty, integrity thoroughness, tact, and good judgment are required;
The employee's physical condition shall be commensurate with the demands of the position.

Originally created 02/95

B16.doc

Code Enforcement Officer Tompkins County

Department: Towns of Ithaca and Dryden
Classification: Competitive
Labor Grade: Ithaca grade of N
Approved: Town Bd. Res. #2004-098
Revised: 03/05; 11/05; 1/07; 8/18
By: AF, Commissioner of Personnel

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: At the time of application, the candidate must demonstrate:

(a) Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered two year college with an Associates degree in Engineering or Construction Technology or related field; **OR**

(b) Graduation from high school or possession of a high school equivalency diploma **AND** two years of full time paid (or the equivalent part-time) experience in building inspection, or as an independent contractor, skilled construction worker, or similar work in a closely related field; **OR**

(c) Graduation from high school or possession of a high school equivalency diploma **AND** possession of one or more of the following certifications: Introduction to NYS Code Enforcement Practices Part I and Part II; Building Codes of New York State; Residential Codes of New York State; General Construction Principles; or Inspection Procedures for Existing Structures

Tompkins County is Committed to Equity and Inclusion. We encourage those with similar values to apply.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

Must possess a valid New York State Drivers' License at the time of application and maintain such license for the duration of employment.

Incumbent must successfully complete the prescribed training programs established by the NYS Fire Administrator and the NYS Fire Fighting and Code Enforcement Personnel Standards and Education Commission within eighteen (18) months of appointment. In addition, incumbents must attend and complete the continuing education requirements on an annual basis.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:

This is a responsible technical position that reviews plans for, and completes inspections of, construction and building use for compliance with zoning ordinance and enforces the State Uniform Fire Prevention, Building Code and Energy code. Work is performed under the general supervision of the Director or Senior Code Enforcement Officer with a moderate level of leeway allowed for the use of independent judgment in carrying out the work activities. The incumbent will perform all related duties as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

- Examines building permit applications including reviewing plans to determine compliance with the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention, Building code, Energy Code, as well as local laws and zoning ordinances;
- Inspects construction sites including family dwellings, commercial buildings and industrial complexes for compliance with building codes, submitted plans, and if practicing acceptable work standards;
- Performs fire safety inspections of public assembly areas, multiple residences and non-residential occupancies
- Assists in explaining and interpreting the Uniform Fire Prevention, Building Code and local zoning ordinances and laws to contractors, developers and the general public;
- Investigates complaints concerning building and zoning code violations;
- Prepares a variety of forms, records and reports relevant to Code Enforcement activities;
- Issues written notices to correct unsafe, illegal, or dangerous conditions in existing structures;
- Issue building permits and certificates of occupancy and violation notices;
- Responds to phone inquiries concerning all services provided by the office;
- Day-to-day coordination with other Town Departments and staff;
- Attendance at Town Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Planning Board meetings when requested;

- Performs a variety of related duties as required.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Good knowledge of modern practices, materials and tools used in building construction trades;
- Good knowledge of the building trades;
- Good knowledge of the State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code and local zoning ordinances;
- Ability to prepare reports and maintains records in an orderly manner;
- Ability to effectively and tactfully work with building contractors and the general public to achieve compliance with all State and Town regulations;
- Ability to read and interpret plans and specifications;
- Ability to be firm but courteous and honest;
- Ability to understand complex oral and written directions;
- Ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing;
- Ability to deal courteously and effectively with the public, boards and committees, and counterparts in other municipalities;
- Ability to operate a personal computer, utilizing spreadsheets, word processing and database software;
- Honesty, integrity, thoroughness, tact and good judgment;
- Physical condition commensurate with the demands of the position.

Code Safety Inspector Tompkins County

Department: Town of Ithaca

Classification: Competitive

Approved: 10/2022 by RP

By: RP, Commissioner of Human Resources

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

1. Possession of an Associate Degree with specialization in Civil Engineering, Construction Technology or a related field;
OR
2. Graduation from high school or possession of a high school equivalency diploma AND one year of satisfactory experience in building construction work or in a building trade such as carpentry, plumbing, electrical or related trades or a fire-fighting organization or experience in the review and interpretation of building plans, property surveys, and zoning/code regulations.; OR
3. Any combination of training and experience equal to or greater than that defined in (a), (b), or (c) above. Experience as a qualified building inspector can be substituted for an equivalent amount of the above required experience

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

- Must possess and maintain a valid New York State Drivers' License.
- Incumbent must successfully complete the prescribed training programs established by the NYS Fire Administrator and the NYS Fire Fighting and Code Enforcement Personnel Standards and Education Commission within eighteen (18) months of appointment. In addition, incumbents must attend and complete the continuing education requirements on an annual basis. Incumbent must maintain said certification for the duration of employment.

Tompkins County is Committed to Equity and Inclusion. We encourage those with similar values to apply.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:

The work involves responsibility for administering and enforcing the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code or a local fire and/or building code if approved by the State Fire Prevention and Building Code Council. The employee will make inspections of construction for compliance with Multiple Residence Law, Town Zoning Code and NYS Uniform Code. Work is performed under the general supervision of the Director of Code Enforcement with a moderate level of leeway allowed for the use of independent judgment in carrying out the work activities. The incumbent will perform all related duties as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

- Interprets the Multiple Residence Law, Town Zoning Code and NYS Uniform Code;
- Examines and inspects buildings and property to determine compliance with the provisions of the Multiple Residence Law, Town Zoning Code and NYS Uniform Code;
- Inspects residential and commercial properties for fire hazards, building and general house-keeping safety;
- Investigates complaints and assists in processing violations of the Multiple Residence Law, Town Zoning Code and NYS Uniform Code;

- Makes written reports of violations to property owners;
- Maintains records and prepares reports of inspection activities;

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Thorough knowledge of modern practices, principles, materials and tools used in building construction;
- Thorough knowledge of the local zoning code;
- Good knowledge of building trades;
- Good knowledge of the State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code and the local Zoning Code;
- Good knowledge of the principles of fire prevention;
- Good knowledge of the provisions of Multiple Residence Laws;
- Ability to write clear and concise reports and to maintain records in an orderly manner;
- Ability to establish and maintain cooperative relationships with other public officials, building contractors and the general public;
- Ability to read and interpret plans and specifications;
- Courtesy; honesty; integrity; thoroughness; firmness, tact; good judgment and good powers of observation are required personal characteristics.
- The employee's physical condition shall be commensurate with the demands of the job.

Originally created 10/2022

C146

Code/Fire Enforcement Officer Tompkins County

Classification: NC for part-time positions in Towns of Enfield, Groton, Lansing, Ulysses and the Villages of Groton, Lansing, and Trumansburg. Competitive if in excess of 50% or full-time in these locations and for all other positions/locations.

Approved: Originally created 03/21/88; NC for Towns of Enfield, Groton, and Lansing per NYS CSC 6/22/88; NC for Villages of Lansing, Groton and Trumansburg per NYC CSC 09/11/06; NC for Town of Ulysses per NYS CSC 09/10/13. Competitive all others.

Revised: 3/88; 6/88; 9/93; 3/06; 10/06; 12/08; 10/13; 1/19

By: HH, Commissioner of Personnel

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

(a) Possession of an Associate Degree with specialization in Civil Engineering, Construction Technology or a related field AND one year of full time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) experience in building construction work or a fire-fighting organization; OR

(b) Satisfactory completion of 60 semester hours at a regionally accredited or New York State registered four year college or university in a program leading to a Bachelors Degree in Civil Engineering, Construction Technology, or a related field AND one year of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) experience in building construction work or a fire-fighting organization; OR

(c) Graduation from high school or possession of a high school equivalency diploma AND three years of satisfactory experience in building construction work or in a building trade such as carpentry, plumbing, electrical or related trades or a fire-fighting organization; OR

(d) Graduation from high school or possession of a high school equivalency diploma AND three years of satisfactory experience in the review and interpretation of building plans, property surveys, and zoning regulations.

(e) Any combination of training and experience equal to or greater than that defined in (a), (b), (c) or (d) above.

Tompkins County is Committed to Equity and Inclusion. We encourage those with similar values to apply.

NOTE 1: Experience as a qualified building inspector can be substituted for an equivalent amount of the above required experience.

NOTE 2: Candidates for appointment in this class will be required to complete any mandated training as established by the Department of State.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:

The work involves responsibility for administering and enforcing the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code or a local fire and/or building code if approved by the State Fire Prevention and Building Code Council. Under general supervision, provides for the coordination of all activities relevant to ensuring compliance with the appropriate laws, codes, rules and regulations. A Code Enforcement Officer may supervise a small number of Building Inspectors, Zoning Compliance personnel, and/or clerical personnel. The incumbent will perform all related duties as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

- Administers and enforces all provisions of New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code and other codes, laws, rules and regulations pertaining to the construction or alteration of buildings and structures;
- Prepares rules and regulations, application forms, building permits and certificates of occupancy for the approval of the local governing body, to be used for the administration on enforcement of the various codes, laws, etc.;
- Supervises, coordinates and participates in the inspection of various stages of construction, and upon completion of construction of buildings and structures;
- Issues, denies or revokes building permits and certificates of occupancy as required;

- Issues written notices to correct unsafe, illegal, or dangerous conditions in existing structures;
- Inspects, as necessary, buildings and structures for compliance with the fire prevention provisions of the State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code;
- Issues a certificate of occupancy for a building constructed or altered in compliance with the provisions of the Uniform Code;
- Maintains accurate records on all transactions and activities including all applications received, permits and certificates issued, fees charged and collected, inspection reports and notice and orders issued;
- Prepares a variety of reports relevant to Code Enforcement activities for the municipal government;
- Initiates civil and/or criminal complaints for continued noncompliance with the Uniform Fire Protection and Building Code.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Thorough knowledge of modern practices, principles, materials and tools used in building construction;
- Good knowledge of building trades;
- Good knowledge of the State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code and the local Zoning Code;
- Good knowledge of the principles of fire prevention;
- Ability to write clear and concise re-ports and to maintain records in an orderly manner;
- Ability to establish and maintain cooperative relationships with other public officials, building contractors and the general public;
- Ability to read and interpret plans and specifications;
- Courtesy; honesty; integrity; thoroughness; tact; and good judgment are required personal characteristics.
- The employee's physical condition shall be commensurate with the demands of the job.

Originally created 3/21/88

c44.doc

Code/Fire Enforcement Officer (part time) Tompkins County

Department: Various municipalities

Classification: NC for part-time positions in Towns of Enfield, Groton, Lansing, Ulysses and the Villages of Groton, Lansing, and Trumansburg. Competitive if in excess of 50% or full-time in these locations and for all other positions/locations.

Labor Grade: N/A

Approved: Originally created 03/21/88; NC for Towns of Enfield, Groton, and Lansing per NYS CSC 6/22/88; NC for Villages of Lansing, Groton and Trumansburg per NYC CSC 09/11/06; NC for Town of Ulysses per NYS CSC 09/10/13. Competitive all others.

Revised: 3/88; 6/88; 9/93; 3/06; 10/06; 12/08; 10/13; 1/19

By: HH, Commissioner of Personnel

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

(a) Possession of an Associate Degree with specialization in Civil Engineering, Construction Technology or a related field AND one year of full time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) experience in building construction work or a fire-fighting organization; OR

(b) Satisfactory completion of 60 semester hours at a regionally accredited or New York State registered four year college or university in a program leading to a Bachelors Degree in Civil Engineering, Construction Technology, or a related field AND one year of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) experience in building construction work or a fire-fighting organization; OR

(c) Graduation from high school or possession of a high school equivalency diploma AND three years of satisfactory experience in building construction work or in a building trade such as carpentry, plumbing, electrical or related trades or a fire-fighting organization; OR

(d) Graduation from high school or possession of a high school equivalency diploma AND three years of satisfactory experience in the review and interpretation of building plans, property surveys, and zoning regulations.

(e) Any combination of training and experience equal to or greater than that defined in (a), (b), (c) or (d) above.

Tompkins County is Committed to Equity and Inclusion. We encourage those with similar values to apply.

NOTE 1: Experience as a qualified building inspector can be substituted for an equivalent amount of the above required experience.

NOTE 2: Candidates for appointment in this class will be required to complete any mandated training as established by the Department of State.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:

The work involves responsibility for administering and enforcing the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code or a local fire and/or building code if approved by the State Fire Prevention and Building Code Council. Under general supervision, provides for the coordination of all activities relevant to ensuring compliance with the appropriate laws, codes, rules and regulations. A Code Enforcement Officer may supervise a small number of Building Inspectors, Zoning Compliance personnel, and/or clerical personnel. The incumbent will perform all related duties as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

- Administers and enforces all provisions of New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code and other codes, laws, rules and regulations pertaining to the construction or alteration of buildings and structures;
- Prepares rules and regulations, application forms, building permits and certificates of occupancy for the approval of the local governing body, to be used for the administration on enforcement of the various codes, laws, etc.;
- Supervises, coordinates and participates in the inspection of various stages of construction, and upon completion of

- construction of buildings and structures;
- Issues, denies or revokes building permits and certificates of occupancy as required;
- Issues written notices to correct unsafe, illegal, or dangerous conditions in existing structures;
- Inspects, as necessary, buildings and structures for compliance with the fire prevention provisions of the State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code;
- Issues a certificate of occupancy for a building constructed or altered in compliance with the provisions of the Uniform Code;
- Maintains accurate records on all transactions and activities including all applications received, permits and certificates issued, fees charged and collected, inspection reports and notice and orders issued;
- Prepares a variety of reports relevant to Code Enforcement activities for the municipal government;
- Initiates civil and/or criminal complaints for continued noncompliance with the Uniform Fire Protection and Building Code.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Thorough knowledge of modern practices, principles, materials and tools used in building construction;
- Good knowledge of building trades;
- Good knowledge of the State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code and the local Zoning Code;
- Good knowledge of the principles of fire prevention;
- Ability to write clear and concise re-ports and to maintain records in an orderly manner;
- Ability to establish and maintain cooperative relationships with other public officials, building contractors and the general public;
- Ability to read and interpret plans and specifications;
- Courtesy; honesty; integrity; thoroughness; tact; and good judgment are required personal characteristics.
- The employee's physical condition shall be commensurate with the demands of the job.

Originally created 3/21/88

c44.doc

Electrical and Code Enforcement Officer Tompkins County

Department: Town of Ithaca
Classification: Competitive
Labor Grade: N
Approved: TB 02/2010
Revised: 11/15; 6/20
By: LG, Deputy Commissioner of Human Resources

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: At the time of application, the candidate must demonstrate:

- (a) Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered two-year college with an Associate's degree in electrical construction technology, electrical technology, electrical engineering or related field **AND** three (3) years of full time paid experience (or its part time equivalent), as a Journeyman Electrician or other electrical trades work experience; **OR**
- (b) Graduation from high school or possession of a high school equivalency diploma **AND** five (5) years of full time paid experience or its part time equivalent, as a Journeyman Electrician or other electrical trades work experience; **OR**
- (c) Any combination of training and experience equal to or greater than that described in (a) and (b) above.

NOTE:

Experience as a Code Enforcement Officer with electrical inspection experience may be substituted for the work experience in the electrical field required in (A), (B) and (C) above.

***SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:**

- Incumbent must complete an electrical certification from the IAEE or the ICC within eighteen months of appointment, if they do not already have it. Incumbent must maintain electrical certification for the duration of employment.
- Incumbent must successfully complete the prescribed training programs established by the NYS Fire Administrator and the NYS Fire Fighting and Code Enforcement Personnel Standards and Education Commission within eighteen (18) months of appointment. In addition, incumbents must attend and complete the continuing education requirements on an annual basis. Incumbent must maintain said certification for the duration of employment.
- Must possess and maintain a valid New York State Drivers' License.

*Failure to maintain the licenses and certifications specified above may result in termination of employment.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:

This is a responsible technical position that reviews plans for, and completes inspections of, construction and building use for compliance with the Town Code and enforces the National Electric Code, State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building codes family. Work is performed under the general supervision of the Director or Senior Code Enforcement Officer with a moderate level of leeway allowed for the use of independent judgment in carrying out the work activities. The incumbent will perform all related duties as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

- Examines electrical permit applications including reviewing plans to determine compliance with the National Electric Code;
- Examines building permit applications including reviewing plans to determine compliance with the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Codes family, as well as the Town Code;
- Conducts inspections and reviews all rough wiring installations for concealment of such wiring in accordance with the performance specifications in the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building code;
- Conducts final inspections and fixture count on all electrical work requiring a permit;
- Conducts electrical inspections on the installations of photovoltaics used as an alternate energy source;
- Inspects construction sites including family dwellings, commercial buildings and industrial complexes for compliance with electric and building codes, submitted plans, and if practicing acceptable work standards;

- Performs fire safety inspections of public assembly areas, multiple residences and non-residential occupancies
- Assists in explaining, enforcing and interpreting the National Electric Code, NYS Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Codes family, and the Town Code to contractors, developers and the general public;
- Investigates complaints concerning electrical, building and zoning code violations;
- Prepares a variety of forms, records and reports relevant to Electrical and Code Enforcement activities;
- Issues written notices to correct unsafe, illegal, or dangerous conditions in existing structures;
- Issues electrical and building permits and certificates of occupancy and violation notices;
- Responds to phone inquiries concerning all services provided by the office;
- Day-to-day coordination with other Town Departments and staff;
- Participates in required electrical and code enforcement trainings;
- The incumbent will perform a variety of related duties as required.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Thorough knowledge of the practices, techniques and methods used in residential and commercial electrical construction work, by having a thorough knowledge of the National Electric Code;
- Good knowledge of modern practices, materials and tools used in building construction trades;
- Good knowledge of the State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code and local zoning ordinances;
- Ability to prepare reports and maintains records in an orderly manner;
- Ability to effectively and tactfully work with building contractors and the general public to achieve compliance with all State and Town regulations;
- Ability to read and interpret blueprints, surveys, maps, plans and specifications;
- Ability to enforce codes, ordinances and regulations with firmness and tact, but courteously and professionally;
- Ability to understand complex oral and written directions;
- Ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing;
- Ability to deal courteously and effectively with the public, boards and committees, and counterparts in other municipalities;
- Ability to operate a personal computer, utilizing spreadsheets, word processing and database software;
- Honesty, integrity, thoroughness, tact and good judgment;
- Ability to effectively work with and serve a diverse local community;
- The employee's physical and mental condition shall be commensurate with the demands of the position, either with or without reasonable accommodations.

Originally created 02/10/10

E47

Zoning/Code/Fire Enforcement Officer (Town of Lansing) Tompkins County

Department: Town of Lansing

Classification: Competitive

Approved: 3/2021

By: LG, Deputy Commissioner of Human Resources

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

- (a) Possession of a Bachelors Degree from a regionally accredited or NYS registered college or university in Civil Engineering, Construction Technology or a related field **AND** one year of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) experience as a building inspector, independent contractor, skilled building construction trades worker, or working with a fire fighting organization; **OR**
- (b) Possession of an Associates Degree or 60 semester hours of study at a regionally accredited college or university with a focus on Civil Engineering, Construction Technology or a related field **AND** three years of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) experience as a building inspector, independent contractor, skilled building construction trades worker, or working with a fire fighting organization; **OR**
- (c) Graduation from high school or possession of a high school equivalency diploma **AND** five years of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) experience as a building inspector, independent contractor, skilled building construction trades worker, or working with a fire fighting organization; **OR**
- (d) Any combination of training and experience equal to or greater than that defined by the limits of (a), (b), and (c) above.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENT:

The successful candidate must successfully complete the prescribed training programs established by the NYS Fire Administrator and the NYS Fire Fighting and Code Enforcement Personnel Standards and Education Commission within eighteen (18) months of appointment (as determined by the Town, based upon the frequency of classes). In addition, incumbents must attend and complete the continuing education requirements on an annual basis. Incumbent must maintain said certification for the duration of employment.

Tompkins County is committed to Equity and Inclusion. We encourage others with similar values to apply.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:

An incumbent in this class is responsible for administering and enforcing the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code and Energy Code and the inspection of construction and building use for compliance with applicable Town zoning laws. Work is performed under the general supervision of the Director of Planning with considerable autonomy and use of independent judgment in carrying out work activities. The position provides assistance to the Director and may act for Director regarding the code enforcement division of the department in his/her absence. Attendance at evening meetings at various boards and committees of the Town may be requested. The incumbent will perform all related duties as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

- Administers and enforces all provisions of New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code, Energy Code, and any applicable Town Laws, Sign Laws, and other codes, laws, rules and regulations pertaining to the construction or alteration of buildings and structures;
- Prepares rules and regulations, application forms, building permits and certificates of occupancy for the approval of the local governing body to be used for the administration and enforcement of various codes, laws, etc.;
- Inspects building use for compliance with Zoning Laws;
- Supervises, coordinates and participates in the inspection of various stages of construction for compliance with Zoning Laws and upon completion of construction of buildings and structures;
- Examines building permit applications to determine compliance with the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code, Energy Code, and local zoning ordinances;

- Performs regular field inspections of construction sites for compliance with Building Codes, Energy code, submitted plans, and acceptable work standards;
- Reviews project plans for all new buildings, alterations, additions, and demolitions;
- Issues, denies or revokes building permits, zoning permits, and certificates of occupancy as required;
- Explains and interprets the requirements of the Zoning Laws to contractors and the general public;
- Issues written notices to correct unsafe, illegal, or dangerous conditions in existing structures;
- Inspects, as necessary, buildings and structures for compliance with the fire prevention provisions of the State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code;
- Issues a certificate of occupancy for a building constructed or altered in compliance with the provisions of the Uniform Code and the Zoning Law;
- Maintains accurate records on all transactions and activities including all applications received, permits and certificates issued, fees charged and collected, inspection reports, and notice and orders issued;
- Prepares a variety of reports relevant to Code Enforcement activities for the municipal government;
- Participates in the development of forms and processes necessary for Code Enforcement activities;
- Responds to phone and email inquiries concerning all services provided by the department;
- Initiates violation notices and initiates civil and/or criminal complaints for continued noncompliance with the Uniform Fire Protection and Building Code;
- Day-to-day coordination with other Town staff as needed;
- Provides clarification and interpretation of existing Zoning, Sign, and NYS Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code Laws to the general public and Town Boards;
- Acts as Town Stormwater Management Officer (SMO);
- Conduct on-site inspections for compliance with stormwater practices and ground disturbance issues;
- Investigates complaints / violations concerning stormwater / drainage issues;
- Coordinate with Town staff and consulting engineers on Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) requirements;
- Attends Project Review Committee meetings to coordinate development review with Town staff and consultants;
- May be required to attend meetings (when necessary) and provides information and to Planning Board, Board of Zoning Appeals and Town Board concerning action involving permits or appeals.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Thorough knowledge of the modern practices, principles, materials and tools used in the building construction trades;
- Good knowledge of the State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code, Energy Code and zoning laws;
- Good knowledge of the principles of fire prevention;
- Good knowledge of basic building inspection techniques;
- Good knowledge of the principles and practices governing the storage and distribution of combustibles;
- Good knowledge of how to operate a personal computer and spreadsheet, word processing and database software;
- Ability to write clear and concise reports and to maintain records in an orderly manner;
- Ability to establish and maintain cooperative relationships with other public officials, building contractors and the general public;
- Ability to read and interpret plans and specifications;
- Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing;
- Ability to be firm but courteous;
- Willingness to attend all necessary training;
- Honesty, integrity, thoroughness, tact, and good judgment are required;
- Physical condition commensurate with the demands of the position;
- Work is subject to inside and outside environmental conditions.

Originally created 3/2011

Zoning/Code/Fire Enforcement Officer Tompkins County

Department: Various Towns and Villages
Classification: Competitive
Approved: 08/07/1990 Town Board Action
Revised: 09/91; 04/01; 02/05; 03/15
By: HH, Commissioner of Personnel

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

(a) Possession of a Bachelors Degree from a regionally accredited or NYS registered college or university in Civil Engineering, Construction Technology or a related field **AND** one year of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) experience as a building inspector, independent contractor, skilled building construction trades worker, or working with a fire fighting organization; **OR**

(b) Possession of an Associates Degree or 60 semester hours of study at a regionally accredited college or university with a focus on Civil Engineering, Construction Technology or a related field **AND** three years of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) experience as a building inspector, independent contractor, skilled building construction trades worker, or working with a fire fighting organization; **OR**

(c) Graduation from high school or possession of a high school equivalency diploma **AND** five years of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) experience as a building inspector, independent contractor, skilled building construction trades worker, or working with a fire fighting organization; **OR**

(d) Any combination of training and experience equal to or greater than that defined by the limits of (a), (b), and (c) above.

Tompkins County is Committed to Equity and Inclusion. We encourage those with similar values to apply.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENT:

The successful candidate must be willing and able to participate in the NYS Code Enforcement Training (NYCRR-9b) and obtain certification within a reasonable time frame from the date of appointment (as determined by the Town or Village, based upon the frequency of classes).

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:

An incumbent in this class is responsible for administering and enforcing the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code and the inspection of construction and building use for compliance with applicable town or village zoning laws. This employee will coordinate and supervise the work activities of Building Inspectors, Zoning Compliance Officers and/or clerical personnel to ensure compliance with the appropriate laws, codes, rules and regulations. The work is performed under the general policy direction of a Town or Village Board of Trustees. Supervision may be exercised over a small number of Building Inspectors, Zoning Compliance, Planning and/or Clerical personnel as necessary. The incumbent will perform all related duties as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

- Supervises the work of Building Inspectors, Zoning Compliance and/or Clerical personnel as appropriate;
- Administers and enforces all provisions of New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code and any applicable Town or Village Zoning Laws, Sign Laws, and other codes, laws, rules and regulations pertaining to the construction or alteration of buildings and structures;
- Prepares rules and regulations, application forms, building permits and certificates of occupancy for the approval of the local governing body to be used for the administration and enforcement of various codes, laws, etc.;
- Inspects building use for compliance with Zoning Laws;
- Supervises, coordinates and participates in the inspection of various stages of construction for compliance with Zoning Laws and upon completion of construction of buildings and structures;
- Issues, denies or revokes building permits, zoning permits, and certificates of occupancy as required;
- Explains and interprets the requirements of the Zoning Laws to contractors and the general public;

- Issues written notices to correct unsafe, illegal, or dangerous conditions in existing structures;
- Inspects, as necessary, buildings and structures for compliance with the fire prevention provisions of the State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code;
- Issues a certificate of occupancy for a building constructed or altered in compliance with the provisions of the Uniform Code and the Zoning Law;
- Maintains accurate records on all transactions and activities including all applications received, permits and certificates issued, fees charged and collected, inspection reports, and notice and orders issued;
- Prepares a variety of reports relevant to Code Enforcement activities for the municipal government;
- Cites violations and initiates civil and/or criminal complaints for continued noncompliance with the Uniform Fire Protection and Building Code;
- Provides clarification and interpretation of existing Zoning, Sign, and NYS Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code Laws to the general public and Town or Village Boards;
- In consultation with Planning Board Chairman, prepares legal notices for Planning Board and Board of Zoning Appeals and the agenda for "Business Sessions";
- May be required to attend meetings (when necessary) and provides information and to Planning Board, Board of Zoning Appeals and Board of Trustees concerning action involving permits or appeals.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Thorough knowledge of the modern practices, principles, materials and tools used in the building construction trades;
- Good knowledge of the State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code, local building code and zoning laws;
- Good knowledge of the applicable Town or Village Zoning Laws;
- Good knowledge of the principles of fire prevention;
- Good knowledge of basic building inspection techniques;
- Good knowledge of the principles and practices governing the storage and distribution of combustibles;
- Good knowledge of how to operate a personal computer and spreadsheet, word processing and database software;
- Good knowledge of the principles and practices of supervision;
- Ability to write clear and concise reports and to maintain records in an orderly manner;
- Ability to establish and maintain cooperative relationships with other public officials, building contractors and the general public;
- Ability to read and interpret plans and specifications;
- Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing;
- Ability to be firm but courteous;
- Willingness to attend all necessary schooling;
- Honesty, integrity, thoroughness, tact, and good judgment are required;
- Physical condition commensurate with the demands of the position.

Originally created 08/07/1990

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APPENDIX E

Code Enforcement Software RFP - Potential Product Features

The following is a sample listing of the features often considered when developing a Request for Proposal for a code enforcement workflow and data management software system. Typically features are defined as either essential features vs. desired features. Examples to be considered:

- On-line permit application process, permit issuance, inspection tracking system and document generation.
- Building safety inspection tracking system and document generation.
- Report generation such as the 1203 report or municipal monthly reports.
- Ability to define the tasks that you want automated.
- Easy search and review of applications and permit.
- Ability to set up workflows, approval processes and track workflows.
- Efficient document generation and capacity to populate fields.
- Constituent portal and/or communication-update system that enables code enforcement staff, residents and/or contractors to check the status of building permits or building inspection through automatic notification system.
- Scheduling of inspections.
- On-line fee payment and tracking system.
- Records retention and file management system that includes files, drawings, etc. and is easily navigated and retrievable.
- Interface with municipal and New York State Codes for easy retrieval for inspections and development of notices of violation.
- Mobile friendly / support mobile access (smartphone or tablets) with access to features including real time data, ability to upload documentation from the field, ability to complete an inspection report in the field and mark up documents.
- Capacity to support automatic data exchanges with entities such as County GIS or county assessor such as enabling ongoing updates to parcel data for the code enforcement data base.
- Address / parcel verification.
- Dashboard functionality to monitor the status of review tasks and track the completion against scheduled due dates.
- Enable the flexibility to define the document review workflow and notification process based upon the requirements for each project.
- Flexibility of the system architecture. Is it easily editable by a user?
- Technical capacity to support virtual inspections.

APPENDIX F

Activity 5.A.3: Identify and Request Technical Training Needs

Concept

Code enforcement officers have identified a number of technical trainings on specific energy conservation construction technologies and how the technology interfaces with the energy code that they would find valuable; however are not available. Rather than re-inventing the wheel, this activity involves a periodic identification of the training topics desired and a request to the institutions that currently provide the trainings to develop and provides specialty trainings on the identified topics.

NYSERDA, through a contract with expert trainers, already provides building industry stakeholders, including code enforcement officers, with energy code training and support services to help improve compliance with building codes and help New York State reach its energy efficiency and sustainability goals. However, the energy code is complex, and the current trainings cannot meet all of the training needs of the code enforcement community. Tompkins County and its municipalities have identified a need for more in-depth training for the code enforcement community on topics such as conducting building permit plan reviews specific to the energy code, new energy conservation building technologies, including air source heat pumps and all electric construction building technologies.

Approach

The Tompkins County code enforcement community would:

- Collectively identify topics for training and technical assistance that are currently not available on a periodic basis.
- Request that trade organizations and energy code experts create the specialized trainings. It is recommended that formalization of the partnerships with local trade organizations such as Southern Tier Building Officials Association (STBOA), local community colleges, and specialty trainers be established to foster this initiative. The goal would be that the trainings are eligible for annual in-service credits. Partnerships present opportunities for underwriting of training and sharing of costs. Working with regional partners could produce desired training that could be attended by CEO's from other counties, resulting in more training options, larger training pools, and reduced fees. Cost would be fee for service with anticipated underwriting of the cost for certain trainings. A regional approach may make training programs attractive grant funding.

Note: The Southern Tier Building Officials Association (STBOA) sponsors a number of trainings for the Code Enforcement Community. STBOA often works with training providers to develop new training programs for the code enforcement community.

Example: As a part of this study process and on behalf of the Tompkins County code enforcement community, a request to Newport Ventures, was made for specific training assistance. Newport Ventures is an energy code technical assistance and training provider under contract with NYSERDA. In response, Newport Ventures is developing a training curriculum on air source heat pump technologies and the corresponding enforcement of the energy code. Their intent is to obtain NYS approval for credits towards annual in-service training requirements. The training will be provided in-person in the Tompkins County area for free. The training will also be provided in a webinar format.

APPENDIX G

APPENDIX G: Sample Cooperation Agreement for Code Enforcement Services

NOTE: This form is intended to be used only as an illustrative sample and may not be appropriate in every situation. The attorney for each party to an agreement of this type should always be consulted at every stage of development of the agreement. **Under no circumstances should this form or any provision in this form be used without consultation by each party with its attorney.**

MUNICIPAL COOPERATION AGREEMENT
FOR
CODE ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

THIS AGREEMENT is made this _____ day of _____, 20__ by and among the

TOWN OF A, a municipal corporation of the State of New York with principal offices located at the Town Hall, _____, New York (hereinafter referred to as “Town of A”),

TOWN OF B, a municipal corporation of the State of New York with principal offices located at the Town Hall, _____, New York (hereinafter referred to as “Town of B”)

TOWN OF C, a municipal corporation of the State of New York with principal offices located at the Town Hall, _____, New York (hereinafter referred to as “Town of C”),

TOWN OF D, a municipal corporation of the State of New York with principal offices located at the Town Hall, _____, New York (hereinafter referred to as “Town of D”),

TOWN OF E, a municipal corporation of the State of New York with principal offices located at the Town Hall, _____, New York (hereinafter referred to as “Town of E”), and

VILLAGE OF E, a municipal corporation of the State of New York with principal offices located at the Village Hall, _____, New York (hereinafter referred to as “Village of E”).

WHEREAS, the Town of A, Town of B, Town of C, Town of D, Town of E and Village of E are required by the laws of the State of New York to administer and enforce the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code (hereinafter referred to as the “Uniform Code”) within their respective boundaries; and

WHEREAS, the Town of A, Town of B, Town of C, Town of D, Town of E and Village of E are required by the laws of the State of New York to administer and enforce the New York State Energy Conservation Construction Code (hereinafter referred to as the “Energy Code”) within their respective boundaries; and

WHEREAS, the Town of A, Town of B, Town of C, Town of D, Town of E and Village of E have heretofore administered and enforced the Uniform Code and the Energy Code (sometimes hereinafter referred to collectively as the “Codes”) within their respective boundaries, using their own employees and/or independent contractors, and have determined that such services might be better and more efficiently provided to their residents and property owners by the cooperative efforts contemplated by this Agreement; and

WHEREAS, the Town of A, Town of B, Town of C, Town of D, Town of E and Village of E have agreed to each appoint the same individual to the office and position of inspector and Code Enforcement Officer for each such Town and Village, and to have the administrative activities handled jointly, and for such other aspects to be handled jointly, as hereinafter provided,

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS MUTUALLY AGREED AND PROVIDED AS FOLLOWS:

1. The term of this agreement shall initially be for _____() years, extending from January 1, 20_____to December 31, 20__, but shall continue in full force and effect for a term of five years upon the same terms and conditions unless any participating Town or Village shall give written notice not later than September 1st of any year that they will not be participating in such cooperative program for the upcoming year.
2. The Town of A, Town of B, Town of C, Town of D, Town of E and Village of E agree to establish a single “Code Enforcement Department” which shall be administered according to the terms and provisions of this Agreement, which shall coordinate and consolidate to the maximum extent possible the operation of the duties and responsibilities of the Towns and Village as it relates to Code Enforcement of the Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code.
3. The Town of A, Town of B, Town of C, Town of D, Town of E and Village of E agree that they will jointly interview and evaluate all potential candidates for the position of Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer and agree upon the person who is best qualified and situated to serve the needs of the participating municipalities. They agree that they shall each hire the one individual for their respective municipality, as is agreed upon by the majority of the participating municipalities. Such individual shall be designated as the Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer for each municipality by its governing Town Board or Village Board of Trustees, but the operations and performance of duties shall be according to the provisions of this agreement.
4. The administration of the activities under this Municipal Cooperation Agreement shall be handled by an Administrative Board which shall be comprised of the Supervisor or Mayor from each Town or Village, and one member of the Town Board from each Town or Trustee of the Village Board of Trustees, as designated by each Town and Village. The day to day affairs of the Department established by this Municipal Cooperation Agreement shall be administered by a Director appointed by the Administrative Board. The Administrative Board shall meet not less frequently than once each quarter, or from time to time at the request of the Director, or at the request of a majority of the Supervisors and Mayors of the participating municipalities.
5. It shall be the responsibility of the Director and Administrative Board to develop a consolidated budget for the Code Enforcement Department prior to September 1 of each year of the operation of this Agreement, which proposed budget shall be forwarded to the governing Board of each participating municipality on or before September 1 of each year. Such budget shall set forth the proposed share of expenses to be paid by each participating municipality for the upcoming year.
6. It is agreed that each participating municipality shall pay a pro-rata share of the total budget based upon the number of assessable parcels which each municipality has within its boundaries, as compared with the other participating municipalities. Each municipality shall forward its share of the expenses for the operation of the Department to the Director of the Department semiannually, with such payments being due not later than the last day of each January and July during the term of this

Agreement, In order to have sufficient funds on hand to cover startup operations, each participating municipality shall make a payment not later than January 5th, 20_, which payment shall be in the amount of that municipality's proportionate share of approximately one-twelfth of the budget for the Department for the first year of operations.

7. It is agreed and understood that each participating municipality shall be deemed the employer of the Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer for the number of hours, as a percentage of the total hours worked by such employee, which corresponds to its percentage of the overall budget for this Department. No single Town or Village shall be deemed to be the employer of the Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer, but rather such employee shall be deemed to be a part time employee of each municipality for that number of hours which reflects its pro rata share of the Departmental budget. In no event shall the Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer work more than twenty (20) hours in any given work week for any single participating municipality.
8. It is agreed that the records and property of the Code Enforcement Department shall be maintained at the A Town Hall, and that the Town of A shall act as the coordinator of the Code Enforcement Program, unless otherwise agreed by the Administrative Board. The Town of A shall be entitled to reimbursement from such Department for the expenses which it incurs for clerical and related expenses, including telephone charges, office supplies, etc. The Town of A shall also act as the paying agent for the employees of the Department established under this agreement, including the payment of fringe benefits, all of which shall be determined and set as agreed between the Administrative Board and the persons employed or appointed by the participating municipalities pursuant to this Agreement.
9. The Administrative Board shall establish a schedule of rates and fees which shall be charged by the Inspectors/Code Enforcement Officers appointed by each municipality, which payments shall be collected and paid over to the department. A record of all collected fees shall be sent to each municipality not less often than semiannually each year, showing the amount of fees collected from each participating municipality, These fees shall be credited to each participating municipality in accordance with the percentage of the budget paid by each participating municipality, and not as a percentage of fees collected from inspections or permits issued within each municipality. A credit for such fees, in excess of the operating expenses of the Department, will be credited towards the budget for the next fiscal year.
10. Expenses incurred for legal fees, insurance premiums and similar charges related To the provision of these services and related Code Enforcement activities shall be paid by each municipality, and shall not be a charge or expense of the Department established under this Agreement.
11. The provisions of this Agreement may be changed during any calendar year by approval of a majority of the governing board of each participating municipality, following submission of a proposal for such change or modification from the Administrative Board of the Department. No such changes shall become effective during any year unless agreed to by all participating municipalities, acting through their governing board.
12. It is contemplated that other municipalities may consider joining and participating in this cooperative program from time to time. Such expansion of the Department is hereby approved subject to the following terms and conditions:

- a. Any proposal to include any other municipality in this Department shall be made in writing, with a report from the Director on the anticipated impact of such an addition upon the budget of the Department, addressing increased revenue, increased expenses, personnel impact, and similar issues.
 - b. Any newly participating municipality shall be required to contribute such amount as is determined to represent an appropriate charge to equalize past contributions of those municipalities already participating in the Department for such capital expenditures as automobiles, supplies, etc.
 - c. The final decision on whether any new municipalities should be permitted to join in the Department shall be subject to the unanimous approval of all those municipalities already participating in the Department.
13. This Agreement shall be interpreted to be in compliance with the provisions of Article 5-G of the General Municipal Law, and shall also be interpreted to be in compliance with the Civil Service Law of the State of New York, If any portion of this Agreement is found to be invalid the remainder of this Agreement shall continue in full force and effect, subject to necessary changes to address such partial invalidity.
14. Each participating municipality hereby signifies its approval of this Agreement and authorizes its Chief Executive Officer to execute this Agreement on its behalf.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, each municipality has caused this Agreement to be executed on its behalf by its Supervisor or Mayor, effective the day and year set forth above.

(Signatures)

APPENDIX H

Appendix H

Strategy Areas Recommended For Future Consideration

In addition to the six priority strategies recommended for implementation, an additional nine strategy areas were identified through the study process as potential strategies for future development and implementation.

Strategies Recommended for Potential Alternative Approaches

The first three strategies outlined below ranked fairly high during the prioritization process with stakeholders; however, it was determined that successful implementation may be better served through alternative approaches and service delivery systems than through this code enforcement administration and operations study.

- **Establish a contractor registry and training program.** Promotion of contractor competencies was identified as an important strategy within all stakeholder groups including the contractors. As an alternative to directly pursuing the development of a local contractor registry, it is suggested that a statewide solution first be sought. New York's neighboring states of New Jersey, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Vermont and Massachusetts deliver contractor licensing or registration programs at the state level. The County, City and towns and villages could work with their respective state associations, such as the New York State Association of Counties, New York State Association of Towns, New York Conference of Mayors, and the New York State Building Officials Conference, to explore a statewide solution.
- **Carve out stormwater management services and centralize or regionalize delivery.** This is an important specialized and technical function that smaller municipalities may not have the expertise nor the volume of work to deliver in-house as a stand-alone municipality. A shared service arrangement has the potential to leverage program improvement and cost effectiveness. This strategy falls outside the intent of the building code study, however, it is recommended that should municipalities be interested in exploring, this initiative should be referred to the existing Stormwater Coalition for advancement.
- **Exploration of the feasibility of a county-wide or sub- county regionalized courts specializing in Uniform Code; Energy Codes and Other Land Use Codes**

It is estimated that the towns and villages handle approximately 30 to 40 building code non-compliance court cases on an annual basis. Code enforcement officers indicate that this places a strain on the municipal court system. The municipal courts handle thousands of criminal and traffic cases each year. It is not practical for all the municipal courts to attain and maintain the specialized knowledge needed to handle the relatively few code enforcement cases. During the study process, Code Enforcement Officers recommended that the creation of a centralized specialized code enforcement court be explored for cases in which all other efforts to remedy the violation have failed. The Code Enforcement Officers felt that a specialized court would place fewer burdens on the municipal courts and would have greater likelihood to increase compliance.

Preliminary research of the concept revealed a complexity of issues and identified the number of critical stakeholders that would need to be involved in both the exploration and development of a specialized court to be utilized by multiple jurisdictions. There are a number of considerations, legal matters and critical stakeholders such as the New York State Office of Court Administration and the Tompkins County District Attorney's Office, municipal courts, municipal leadership and municipal attorneys. Should there be local interest, a preliminary legal review is recommended for the purpose of outlining the current legal framework, the considerations that need to be addressed, and a determination whether there are potential options that would be considered feasible. Justice Courts are not routine agencies or offices of local government. Justice Courts are governed by the Uniform Justice Court Act ("UJCA") as well as a host of other statutes, regulations and rules enacted by the State Judiciary. It is recommended that consideration of this strategy may best be considered in the context of larger discussions and strategies that may occur in the future relative to the creation of district (hub) courts within Tompkins County.

Strategies Recommended for Future Consideration

The six strategy areas outlined below certainly showed promise for both efficiency and effectiveness gains; however were not ranked consistently as high as the priority areas by the municipal stakeholder groups. It is recommended that the Tompkins County communities may want to consider development of these strategy areas at some future point.

- **County-wide administration and enforcement of the uniform code and energy code.** Delivery of code enforcement on a county-wide basis has a number of opportunities for increased efficiency and effectiveness; however, there was limited interest by the municipalities even in its exploration and it was deemed impractical to pursue at this time. Should there be municipal interest in the future, a county-wide model has the potential to take advantage of economies of scale, an ability to create centralized expertise in identified technical areas and to create standardization and consistency in the administration and operations of code enforcement services.
- **Shared service procurement or centralized provision of work resources: instruments, equipment, vehicles and other resources**
Note: This strategy area had only a few interested municipalities, however, for those interested communities, it is recommended that this strategy area can be explored by the municipalities at any time.
- **Coordinate In-service Training:** The study process identified the need more in-depth technical training; however, it was determined that the Tompkins County code enforcement community does not have the capacity to coordinate the provision of in-service trainings. As an alternative, the study recommends that the code enforcement community collectively identify the types and specific desired trainings and communicate this information to those entities that sponsor trainings and to those that have the expertise to develop and deliver the technical trainings desired.
- **Carve out building safety inspections and operating permits and deliver on a county-wide or regional basis.** Building safety inspections can be easily carved out from the responsibilities of the Code Enforcement Officer and be provided on a county/sub-county regional basis by a pool of building safety inspectors. The building safety inspections cover public assembly and multi-family and

commercial facilities. This would be a cost effective means to address workload issues. Part-time individuals with construction and/or firefighting experience could be engaged to perform these important inspections for the municipalities. This concept has been incorporated as part of the **Strategy 6: Municipal to Municipal Shared Staffing**.

- **Carve out the management of short-term rentals and deliver centrally or regionally.** There are numerous short-term rental properties in Tompkins County. A number of municipalities have adopted local laws setting rules and regulations for the operation and use of short-term rental properties. The administration and enforcement of these locally adopted local laws is often the responsibility of the code enforcement officers. Given the complexity of the issue and the studies and initiatives that have been undertaken or are underway, the management of short-term rentals was determined to be outside the scope of this Study, and was not ranked as one of the priority strategy areas by the towns and villages.
- The following two initiatives were identified during the detailed development of six (6) priority strategy areas but were not included in the final set of priorities. Both initiatives are valuable and worthy of future consideration.
- **Establish an inter-municipal Code Enforcement Officer Mentorship program.** **Strategy 5: Establish Specialized Services and Technical Assistance Programs**, initially included the development of a County-wide mentorship program for new code enforcement officers to address the specific needs of the individual based on the new role, experience of the mentee, type of building activity in the community, etc. Based on the initial assessment, a matching of mentor – mentee would be established. The CEO mentorship would be initiated at the time of hire and continue through the certification process and potentially up to 18 months. However, given the number of initiatives within this strategy and the efforts each initiative would require, it is recommended that this initiative be considered on the list for future consideration.