



Economic Resiliency and Recovery Plan: Towns of Constantia & West Monroe, Villages of Central Square & Cleveland

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Executive Summary

The North Shore Council of Governments (NorCOG), a partnership consisting of the Towns of Constantia and West Monroe and the Villages of Central Square and Cleveland, recognizes the need to take a comprehensive look at economic and community development needs throughout the North Shore area in anticipation of a number of regional growth opportunities. The planned Micron development in nearby Clay and the designation of the SMART I-Corridor Tech Hub open opportunities for business, resident, and visitor attraction in the North Shore. This is a unique opportunity, and it is critical for NorCOG municipalities to plan for this potential growth in order to best leverage it and to ensure that it aligns with community character. The best outcomes will be realized by communities that have a defined vision and are prepared to facilitate the realization of that vision. The North Shore is a rural area that offers residents plenty of space. There is a desire to maintain this community character, while still welcoming development that will benefit the communities. Doing so will be a balancing act, and will require strong collaboration among the NorCOG communities.

In July of 2023, NorCOG engaged MRB Group to create an Economic Resiliency and Recovery Plan to help guide the use of limited local capacity and fiscal resources in pursuing economic development and community projects that will best serve the North Shore into the future. As such, this report is the combined work of the partner municipalities and MRB Group, and is informed by various local and regional plans, as well as input from stakeholders.

The culmination of these efforts is the Action Plan Matrix included in this document. It includes goal areas, strategies/actions, priority levels, timing, rough-order-of-magnitude costs, and relevant potential funding sources and partners. The Action Plan Matrix is arranged into the five thematic “Focus Areas”, namely:

1. Existing Business Expansion and Entrepreneurship
2. Infrastructure Updating and Expansion
3. Expand Recreational Offerings
4. Expand the Tax Base
5. Zoning and Policy

Rather than restate the Action Plan Matrix here, we instead summarize below the most important findings of the analysis, all of which guided the recommendations contained in the Action Plan Matrix:

Infrastructure expansion and upgrading will be necessary to attract and support desired growth. Water and sewer will be critical for business attraction and housing development (where appropriate), and roadway upgrades may be required to accommodate increased

commuter traffic. However, small rural communities also have limited tax bases, restricting the ability to finance and maintain this infrastructure. Development of new infrastructure will require NorCOG municipalities to work collaboratively to gain a clear understanding of current capacities, future needs, and an approach to creating additional capacity. This will better enable them to pursue outside funding sources to implement infrastructure projects.

Expanding the tax base will be critical to ongoing maintenance of infrastructure and continued community investment and services. Generating revenue includes multiple facets: increased population, increased visitation, and increased property values through business development. The North Shore could benefit from balancing revenue growth across these three components, aiming to maintain open space and community character. Focusing on quality of life enhancements and creating regulatory guardrails to guide the placement of future business and housing development via comprehensive planning, zoning, and/or design guidelines will help to strike this balance.

Recreation and entertainment, particularly family and youth activities, will be critical to realizing economic, tourism, and quality of life gains in the North Shore. Stakeholder feedback indicated that there are excellent assets that create opportunity in this space, but there are also some clear challenges. The area is rich with natural resources and outdoor amenities, such as Oneida Lake, snowmobile trails, and the rail trail. Additionally, there are a variety of nearby events that bring visitors into the surrounding areas, such as fishing tournaments and festivals. These assets are key to future growth of recreation and tourism, and outside funding resources could be available to support their enhancement and promotion with proper planning and collaboration. However, the municipalities face certain limitations, such as a lack of overnight accommodations for visitors and little municipally-owned waterfront property to increase public lake access.

Existing business retention and expansion will also work to expand the tax base by providing local jobs and contributing to community vibrancy. A combination of small business supports and business attraction activities will help to create a strong economic base, reduce storefront vacancies, enhance opportunity for prosperity, provide more amenities for visitors, and improve quality of life for residents.

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Introduction

The North Shore Council of Governments (NorCOG), consisting of the Towns of Constantia and West Monroe and the Villages of Central Square and Cleveland, is interested in planning for and facilitating economic growth that aligns with the North Shore communities' vision and character, particularly as the development of the Micron plant in nearby Clay, NY, along with other regional economic development efforts, generates new opportunities for job and business growth. Infrastructure challenges were highlighted as a primary struggle for economic revitalization in the North Shore area, just as Oneida Lake and recreation were recognized as assets and opportunities. Seeking to better leveraging these key assets and opportunities, as well as various state, federal and local funding streams, the communities needed a strategy and vision for the path forward. In July 2023, NorCOG, with staff support from the Tug Hill Commission, engaged MRB Group to create an Economic Resiliency and Recovery Strategy to identify priority actions and guide collaborative efforts in the coming years.

The Towns and Villages are located on the northwestern shore of Oneida Lake and constitute the southeastern corner of Oswego County. From east to west, the Village of Central Square covers 1.9 square miles, the Town of West Monroe covers 38.6 square miles, and the Town of Constantia covers 99.67 square miles, which includes the Village of Cleveland. Together, these communities are defined by their relationship to Oneida Lake and plentiful natural resources, as well as their rural character. State Route 49 runs through each of these communities before connecting to State Route 81, which provides easy and direct access to the Syracuse area for commuters. However, Route 49 is infamous in the community for crashes, traffic, and noise, and may require updates to accommodate future commuting to Micron and targeted development within the North Shore.

While other local and regional plans remain relevant with respect to overall strategy, challenges, and opportunities, this Economic Resiliency and Recovery Plan is built around five focus areas that expand upon these efforts. It provides specific actions that the NorCOG municipalities and their partners can act on to direct and facilitate future development. Recent stakeholder engagement, economic data, and a review of existing plans informed the development of this plan.



Framework

The Action Plan Matrix that follows lays out steps that the partnering NorCOG municipalities can take or facilitate to achieve their vision and advance the five focus areas. It includes priority levels, timing,¹ rough-order-of-magnitude costs,² and relevant potential funding sources and partners. It is assumed that the four partner municipalities – Constantia, West Monroe, Cleveland, and Central Square – will play some role in activating, facilitating, and/or implementing each action. As such, they are not listed as partners within the matrix. This matrix is designed to serve as a living document that can be updated and adapted as additional steps are made in economic and community development. The five focus areas are:

1. Existing Business Expansion & Entrepreneurship
2. Infrastructure Updating & Expansion – Water, wastewater, roads, broadband
3. Expand Recreational Offerings
4. Expand the Tax Base – New residents, visitors, businesses
5. Zoning & Policy Updates

The strategies in the matrix were, in various cases, adapted from prior plans and materials and/or informed by recent interviews with community stakeholders.

This plan reflects significant current consensus around the following items:

- Route 49 is a priority area in terms of both congestion relief and sewer expansion.
- Recreation is critical to quality of life, tourism, and future economic growth.
- The tax base is not robust enough to fund substantial infrastructure improvements, but those improvements are needed to attract new development. Outside resources are needed to offset upfront costs, and ultimately a larger tax base will be required to maintain new systems.
- Local small businesses will be key to enhancing community vibrancy and providing new job opportunities. Additional technical assistance and resources are needed to support and promote existing local businesses, as well as to facilitate new business creation by local entrepreneurs.

¹ Near Term – within 2 years, Mid Term – 2-5 years, Long Term – 5+ years or an ongoing activity over time

² Some actions in the matrix may have little or no cash cost, however it is recognized that such items will require the time of municipal staff and other partners.

Action Plan Matrix

FOCUS AREA 1: Existing Business Expansion & Entrepreneurship				
STRATEGIES & ACTIONS	PRIORITY	TIMING	COST	RESOURCES & PARTNERS
Engage with Operation Oswego County to promote and identify potential participants in the Micro-Enterprise Program to access technical assistance and low-interest financing. Explore pursuing a local microenterprise grant fund to supplement the available funding from OOC.	High	Near Term	\$	Operation Oswego County, NYS HCR CDBG Microenterprise Assistance Program / Economic Development Program, NY State Seed Funding
Survey families with young children regarding their childcare needs and gaps.	Med	Near Term	\$	Central Square School District
Encourage and facilitate collaboration between and among businesses on programming that increases vibrancy, creates cross promotion, and bolsters shop local sentiment.	Med	Mid Term	\$	Market NY, Greater Oneida Lake Chamber of Commerce, CenterState CEO
Work with existing and potential childcare providers on training, planning, and capacity building to enable the expansion of available childcare slots in the community as needed, most immediately before and after school care.	Med	Mid Term	\$	NYS OCFS Division of Child Care Services, QUALITYstarsNY, Child Care & Development Council of Oswego County, Central New York Community Foundation, SBDC

FOCUS AREA 1: Existing Business Expansion & Entrepreneurship (cont.)

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS	PRIORITY	TIMING	COST	RESOURCES & PARTNERS
Provide free or low cost professional services, such as advertising, accounting, or legal support, to existing and new businesses through partnership with a community organization and/or local businesses.	Low	Long Term	\$\$	Greater Oneida Lake Chamber of Commerce, Operation Oswego County, NYS HCR CDBG Economic Development Program, Central New York Community Foundation, CenterState CEO

FOCUS AREA 2: Infrastructure Updating & Expansion

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS	PRIORITY	TIMING	COST	RESOURCES & PARTNERS
Work with Oswego County to apply for a Rt. 49 Corridor Analysis through the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC), including an assessment of the impacts of future development scenarios.	High	Near Term	\$	Oswego County, SMTC, Operation Oswego County, NYS DOT
Complete a comprehensive capacity analysis of the water and sewer service throughout the NorCOG region.	High	Mid Term	\$\$	Local water and sewer authorities, towns and villages, NYS DOH, ARPA, NYS DEC, NYS EFC
Protect water quality and quantity through activities such as remedying sewer overflows and stormwater pollution, installing green infrastructure, and planning with the Oneida Lake watershed in mind.	High	Long Term	\$\$\$	NYDEC, USEPA, NYS EFC Engineering Planning Grant, NYS DEC WQIP, NYS EFC WIIA, NYS EFC GIGP, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), Oneida Lake Association, CNY RPDB

FOCUS AREA 2: Infrastructure Updating & Expansion (cont.)

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS	PRIORITY	TIMING	COST	RESOURCES & PARTNERS
Develop and implement a comprehensive, phased approach to water and wastewater expansion needs throughout NorCOG communities in order to facilitate development, better leverage funding, and realize economies of scale. Consider desired future uses, such as overnight accommodations and a grocery store, when planning and building infrastructure.	Med	Mid Term	\$\$	NYS DEC, Northern Border Regional Commission, USEPA, NYS DEC WQIP, NYS EFC WIIA
Once complete, coordinate with partners to implement recommendations of the Rt. 49 Corridor Analysis.	Med	Mid Term	\$\$	SMTC, NYS DOT, ARPA, Tug Hill Commission, Oswego County
Identify and catalog local and county municipal owned assets and properties in the NorCOG region, and assess how they may be utilized for needed infrastructure expansion (e.g. laying fiber or a sewer trunk line along the rail trail, installing wireless technology on town owned property, etc.).	Low	Near Term	\$	Oswego County, Operation Oswego County
Encourage more equitable and affordable access to broadband by investing in infrastructure that would promote and attract last mile connections by private internet service providers and access to the most up-to-date wireless technologies.	Med	Long Term	\$\$\$	Oswego County, ARPA, NYS ConnectALL, USDA ReConnect Program, USDA-RD Community Connect Grant Program, CNY REDC, CNY RPDB

FOCUS AREA 3: Expand Recreational Offerings

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS	PRIORITY	TIMING	COST	RESOURCES & PARTNERS
Pursue NYS DOS Local Waterfront Revitalization Program funding to create and implement a comprehensive strategy for development along, access to, and protection of the lakefront area with particular focus on the County's rail trail.	High	Near Term	\$\$	NYS DOS LWRP, Tug Hill Commission, Operation Oswego County
Identify and acquire an available building that could be redeveloped into a community center, offering services, recreational space, and activity programming.	High	Mid Term	\$\$\$	Local realtors, Greater Oneida Lake Chamber of Commerce, towns and villages
Promote existing recreational resources, such as Oneida Lake, in conjunction with regional partners to attract more visitors and expand the market/demand for recreational businesses and tourism investments.	High	Long Term	\$\$	Visit Oswego County, Oswego County, Market NY, Oswego County Soil & Water, Greater Oneida Lake Chamber of Commerce
Partner with local organizations and facilitate the creation of new activities for youth and families year-round, such as recreational classes, sports, and clubs.	Med	Long Term	\$\$	Central Square School District, Central New York Community Foundation, local churches, nonprofits, and businesses
Leverage natural resources to expand outdoor recreational opportunities by developing and promoting experiences that emphasize engaging with the community's parks, lakefront, rail trail, and outdoor spaces, including the development of a public pier in the hamlet of Constantia as noted in the Town of Constantia Comprehensive Plan.	Med	Mid Term	\$\$	NYS Parks EPF and Recreational Trail Program, American Trails Trail Fund, Project for Public Spaces, USEPA Environmental Education grants, Market NY, Oswego County Soil & Water, Central New York Community Foundation, Northern Border Regional Commission, NY OPRHP Land & Water Recreation Fund, Constantia

FOCUS AREA 3: Expand Recreational Offerings (cont.)

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS	PRIORITY	TIMING	COST	RESOURCES & PARTNERS
Work with local organizations and businesses to create and promote additional community events. Consider themes focused on unique community assets/characteristics for a visitor draw.	Low	Mid Term	\$\$	Market NY, Central New York Community Foundation
Continually assess, extend, and improve accessibility to trail systems throughout the North Shore region.	Low	Long Term	\$\$	Oswego County; CNY RPDB; NYS Bridge NY and OPRHP Recreational Trails Program; USDOT RAISE, TA Set Aside, Healthy Streets Program, CMAQ Improvement Program; Parks & Trails NY Partnership Grant; American Trails Trail Fund

FOCUS AREA 4: Expanding the Tax Base

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS	PRIORITY	TIMING	COST	RESOURCES & PARTNERS
Pursue NY Forward or a combined DRI award to fund transformative redevelopment and infrastructure efforts.	High	Near Term	\$	NYS ESD, Operation Oswego County
Identify a 40+ acre site that could be a planned business park area for future commercial development, and undertake predevelopment work that would make the site more marketable for business attraction or speculative build.	High	Mid Term	\$\$	Operation Oswego County
Align and promote tax and funding resources to incentivize the development of diverse housing options, particularly rental, senior, and workforce opportunities.	Med	Near Term	\$	RPTL 485-a, NYS HCR, Oswego County IDA, Restore NY

FOCUS AREA 4: Expanding the Tax Base (cont.)

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS	PRIORITY	TIMING	COST	RESOURCES & PARTNERS
Promote existing business financing programs offered by state, regional, and county entities in a consistent and comprehensive way.	Med	Near Term	\$	Oswego County IDA, Oswego County, Greater Oneida Lake Chamber of Commerce, Visit Oswego County, CNY REDC
Actively coordinate and collaborate with regional economic development, tourism, and funding partners to ensure an aligned approach to facilitating growth and consistent messaging about NorCOG communities as places to live, work, and visit.	Med	Mid Term	\$\$	Central New York Community Foundation, Oswego County IDA, CNY REDC, CNY RPDB, CenterState CEO, Oswego County Tourism
Create a comprehensive listing of land available for sale and redevelopment to reference in business development and attraction activities.	Med	Mid Term	\$	Oswego County IDA, Operation Oswego County, Greater Oneida Lake Chamber of Commerce, local realtors, Northern New York Community Foundation
Work with regional partners to inventory the skillsets available in NorCOG communities. Leverage this information to target appropriate business attractions, thereby retaining talent and creating new employment opportunities.	Med	Long Term	\$	Oswego County IDA, Operation Oswego County, CenterState CEO
Develop a wayfinding strategy to improve signage for motorists and rail trail users.	Low	Mid Term	\$\$	Market NY

FOCUS AREA 4: Expanding the Tax Base (cont.)

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS	PRIORITY	TIMING	COST	RESOURCES & PARTNERS
Monitor market conditions (e.g. population, traffic counts) and site readiness (e.g. shovel ready, water and sewer, ability for curb cuts, etc.) as it relates to desired uses, such as a grocery store or hotel/motel development. When appropriate, prepare a site marketing package and send to potential chains and developers.*	Low	Long Term	\$\$	Operation Oswego County, Oswego County, Tug Hill Commission
Connect downtown areas to master bike paths being developed regionally.	Low	Long Term	\$\$\$	OPRHP Recreational Trails Program, Parks & Trails NY Partnership Grant, American Trails Trail Fund, People for Bikes, CNY RPDB, Northern Border Regional Commission
Create more inviting and engaging public spaces. This could include public art, landscaping enhancements, flexible community event spaces, etc.	Low	Long Term	\$\$\$	Project for Public Spaces Community Placemaking Grants, NYS HCR, NYS DOS, NY Forward, Central New York Community Foundation, Pratt-Northam Foundation

*Many larger grocery chains provide contacts and/or site criteria on their websites. For example:

- Aldi: <https://corporate.aldi.us/real-estate/property-requirements/>
- Dollar General & DG Market: <https://www.dollargeneral.com/corporate/real-estate>
- Lidl (not currently in NY): <https://www.realestate-lidl.com/store-concepts/prototype-store>

FOCUS AREA 5: Zoning & Policy

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS	PRIORITY	TIMING	COST	RESOURCES & PARTNERS
Explore whether to allow more flexible accessory dwelling units, bed and breakfast or inn style uses, and/or short term rentals, as well as what restrictions would be needed to maintain community character while offering accommodations for visitors.	High	Near Term	\$\$	Tug Hill Commission, Oswego County Planning & Community Development, HUD YIMBY
Create or update zoning in all component municipalities to clearly identify appropriate areas and standards for desired development projects (e.g. commercial, manufacturing, multi-family and dense housing vs. rural housing, recreation, etc.), with the aim of defining preferred growth areas and conservation areas.	Med	Mid Term	\$\$	Tug Hill Commission, Oswego County Planning & Community Development, HUD YIMBY
Develop design guidelines and zoning standrds to ensure consistent (re)development, maintenance of the area's aesthetics, and prevention of sprawl.	Low	Mid Term	\$\$	Tug Hill Commission, Oswego County Planning & Community Development



Appendix A: Economic & Market Analysis

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Introduction

The following market overview presents information on the current economic conditions within the North Shore Council of Government (NorCOG) Region, consisting of the Towns of West Monroe and Constantia, and the Villages of Cleveland and Central Square. This analysis includes demographic, industry, and real estate trends. The data displayed throughout the market profile was collected from numerous sources, as noted below, that collectively depict current market conditions. Insights from the following analysis will provide a foundation for strategic planning purposes in later phases of the project.

Data Note

Data included in the following analysis was sourced from the American Community Survey estimates from the US Census Bureau, Esri, Lightcast (formerly Emsi), and CoStar.

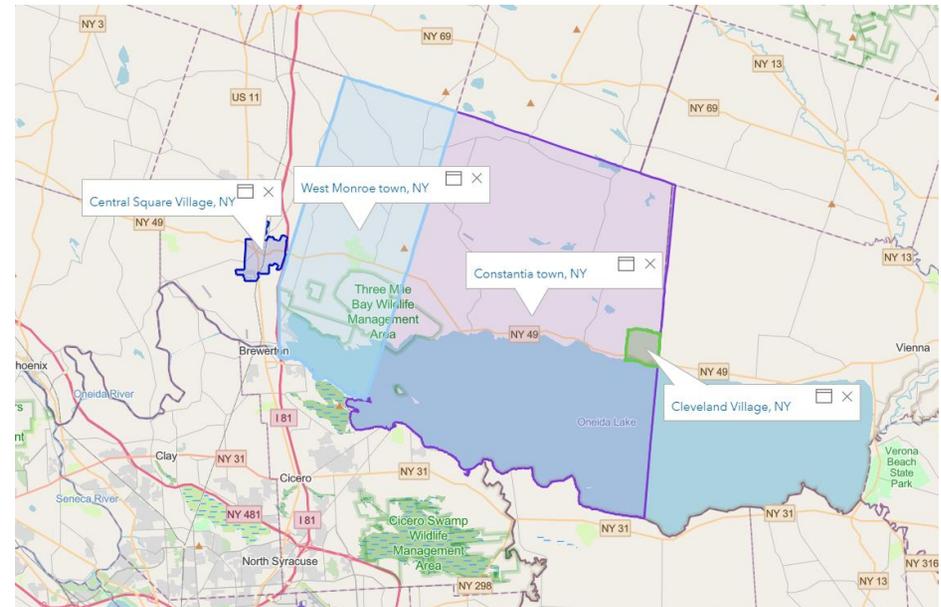
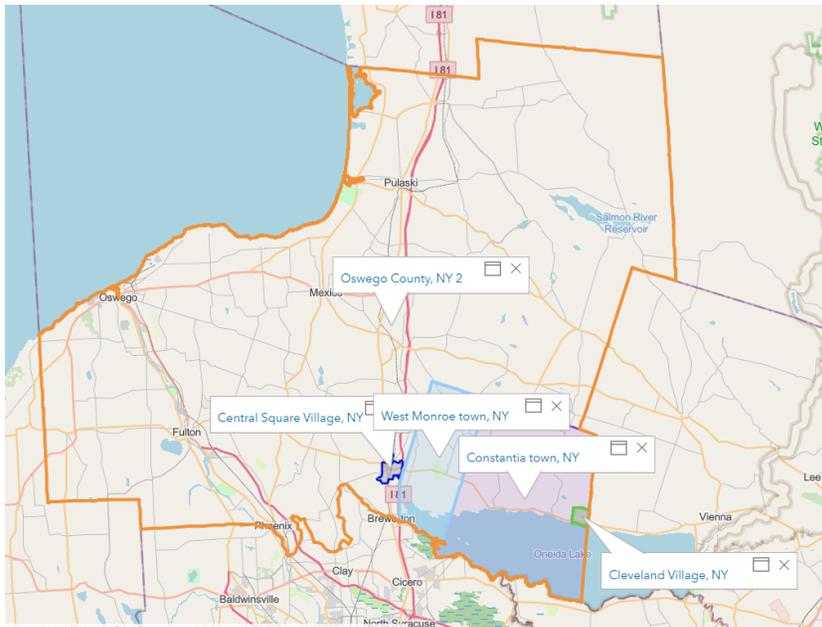
Data Limitations

Data boundaries for the Towns and Villages are approximated within Esri and Lightcast, and as such the data likely include some areas outside of the town boundaries. In most instances, this approximation should not change the overall takeaways from the data. For the industry data, a ZIP code approximation of the NorCOG Region was used including ZIP codes: 13028, 13036, 13042, 13044, and 13167.

When looking at areas with smaller populations, the demographic data estimates could be subject to sampling errors and thus have a larger margin of error than estimates from larger population areas. However, these figures are still helpful for identifying trends.

Market Area

The following sections on demographic, economic, and industry trends incorporate data covering the following geographies: (1) Town of Constantia (purple), (2) Town of West Monroe (light blue), (3) Villages of Central Square (blue) and Cleveland (green), (4) Oswego County (orange), and (7) New York State.



Demographics

Overview

The table shown to the right is a comparison of demographic trends for the Towns, Villages, Oswego County, and New York State.

- There are approximately 10,473 residents in the NorCOG Region across the Villages and Towns, which account for roughly 9% of the County's total population in 2023. The Town of Constantia is the most populous Town and the Village of Central Square is the most populous Village. With the exception of Central Square, each of the Region's geographies have experienced a modest loss in population since 2010.
- According to Esri estimates, the median age of the Region's communities ranges from 42.1 in the Village of Cleveland to 46.8 in the Town of Constantia. Each community has seen a steady increase in median age over the last thirteen years. The Region's communities have a slightly older population than the County.

Demographic Fundamentals				
Population				
	2010	2023	Change	% Change
Village of Central Square	1,784	1,851	67	3.8%
Village of Cleveland	750	719	(31)	-4.1%
Town of Constantia	4,973	4,668	(305)	-6.1%
Town of West Monroe	4,252	3,954	(298)	-7.0%
Oswego County	122,109	116,264	(5,845)	-4.8%
New York	19,378,102	20,113,414	735,312	3.8%

Source: US Census; Esri

Median Age				
	2010	2023	Change	% Change
Village of Central Square	42.3	46.4	4.1	9.7%
Village of Cleveland	39.3	42.1	2.8	7.1%
Town of Constantia	42.8	46.8	4.0	9.3%
Town of West Monroe	41.6	46.2	4.6	11.1%
Oswego County	38.3	40.7	2.4	6.3%
New York	37.9	39.8	1.9	5.0%

Source: Esri

The table to the left shows projected demographic trends for the next five years:

- All geographies are expected to see a decline in population over the next five years, including New York State. However, the decline is less than 3% for each community.
- The Median Age in each geography is anticipated to rise over time, and remain slightly above the State median. The Town of West Monroe is expected to see the greatest increase in median age through 2028 and have the oldest median age (48.6).

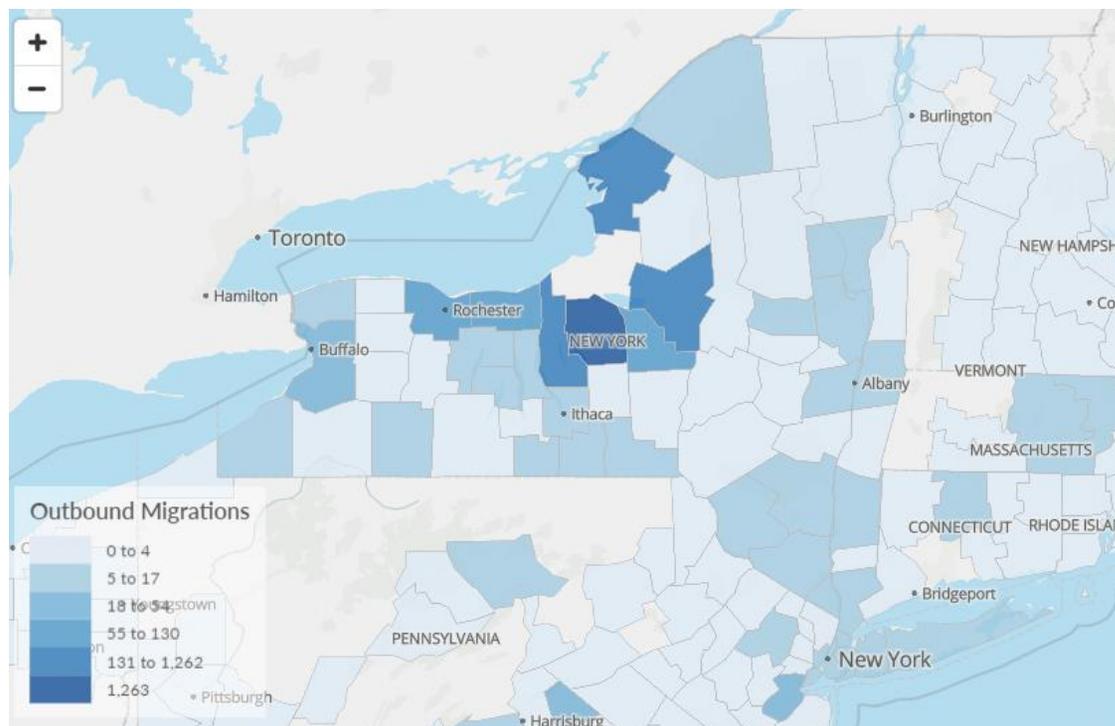
Demographic Fundamentals (Projected)				
Population				
	2023	2028	Change	% Change
Village of Central Square	1,851	1,824	(27)	-1.5%
Village of Cleveland	719	702	(17)	-2.4%
Town of Constantia	4,668	4,540	(128)	-2.7%
Town of West Monroe	3,954	3,901	(53)	-1.3%
Oswego County	116,264	114,917	(1,347)	-1.2%
New York	20,113,414	19,995,476	(117,938)	-0.6%
Median Age				
	2023	2028	Change	% Change
Village of Central Square	46.4	47.0	0.6	1.3%
Village of Cleveland	42.1	43.7	1.6	3.8%
Town of Constantia	46.8	48.0	1.2	2.6%
Town of West Monroe	46.2	48.6	2.4	5.2%
Oswego County	40.7	41.9	1.2	2.9%
New York	39.8	40.9	1.1	2.8%

Source: Esri

Migration

Though the population in Oswego County is expected to decline over the next few years, it appears that those leaving the County are staying nearby. According to 2020 migration data from Esri, 1,263 people left Oswego County only to settle in nearby Onondaga County. The next most popular destination was Jefferson County, with 188 residents who left, followed by Cayuga, Oneida, Madison, Monroe, and Wayne counties, all of which are relatively close by.

The most popular out-of-state destinations for former Oswego County residents were northeastern states and Pennsylvania, as well as warmer states including Florida, Arizona, North Carolina, and California. However, out-of-state migrations from Oswego County occurred at far lower levels than in-state migration. In-state migrations accounted for 65.3% of movement out of Oswego County, and out-migration to other states accounted for the remainder (34.6%).



Race Composition

The chart below shows the racial composition of the geographies. The data for the County, Region, and its component parts reflect substantially less racial diversity than the State as a whole. Oswego County and the NorCOG geographies are all more than 90% white. The Town of West Monroe in particular lacks diversity, with 97.6% of the population being white and a diversity index of only 6.4.³

Race Composition, 2023						
	Village of Central Square	Village of Cleveland	Town of Constantia	Town of West Monroe	Oswego County	New York
White Alone	92.7%	91.1%	92.8%	97.6%	96.3%	65.7%
Black Alone	0.4%	0.6%	0.3%	0.3%	0.8%	15.9%
Native American Alone	0.4%	0.0%	0.3%	0.5%	0.4%	0.6%
Asian Alone	0.4%	0.1%	0.3%	0.4%	0.6%	7.3%
Pacific Islander Alone	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Some Other Race Alone	0.5%	0.3%	0.5%	0.0%	0.5%	7.4%
Two or More Races	5.5%	7.9%	5.8%	1.2%	1.3%	3.0%
Hispanic Origin (Any Race)	1.6%	3.2%	1.6%	0.9%	2.1%	17.6%
Diversity Index	16.5	21.6	16.2	6.4	11	66.7

Source: Esri

³ The Diversity Index measures the probability that two people from the same area will be a different race/ethnic group. A higher index group indicates a greater probability.

Projected Income Growth

The table below displays the median household income for each NorCOG community, the County, the State, and the projected growth through 2028. Among the NorCOG communities, the Town of West Monroe has the highest median household income at \$69,861, and the Village of Central Square has the lowest at \$52,142. Both Towns have a higher median household income than the County and both the Villages have a lower median household income than the County. Through 2028, median income in each community is projected to grow. The highest growth in incomes, in both absolute and percentage terms, is projected in the Village of Cleveland, significantly outpacing growth in the County and State.

Median Household Income (Projected)				
	2023	2028	Change	% Change
Village of Central Square	\$52,142	\$55,004	\$2,862	5.5%
Village of Cleveland	\$54,422	\$65,513	\$11,091	20.4%
Town of Constantia	\$66,584	\$74,350	\$7,766	11.7%
Town of West Monroe	\$69,861	\$78,216	\$8,355	12.0%
Oswego County	\$59,172	\$64,515	\$5,343	9.0%
New York	\$77,077	\$85,392	\$8,315	10.8%

Source: Esri

Educational Attainment

The table below outlines the educational attainment of the population in the various geographies. The NorCOG communities overall have higher levels of attainment at the levels between high school graduate and associate degree. The Village of Central Square has the highest portion of the population with a bachelors or graduate degree (26.0%), compared to 22.8% in the County, 20.5% in the Town of West Monroe, 16.8% in the Village of Cleveland, 11.3% in the Town of Constantia, and 41.0% in New York State. The Town of West Monroe has the highest concentration of individuals without a high school diploma or equivalent.

However, the top 10 occupations (right-hand table) do not align with the relatively high levels of education in the NorCOG communities, suggesting the area lacks sufficient high-skill employment opportunities, indicating that many residents of the North Shore are likely commuting to work in other communities.

Educational Attainment (age 25+), 2023

	Village of Central Square	Village of Cleveland	Town of Constantia	Town of West Monroe	Oswego County	New York
Less than 9th Grade	2.0%	1.5%	1.0%	0.8%	2.2%	5.1%
9th - 12th Grade, No Diploma	4.7%	7.3%	7.1%	9.5%	6.8%	5.8%
High School Graduate	18.4%	28.9%	26.5%	28.0%	29.1%	20.8%
GED/Alternative Credential	8.9%	15.7%	11.1%	8.1%	8.0%	4.0%
Some College, No Degree	19.9%	19.5%	17.7%	18.5%	16.7%	13.7%
Associate Degree	20.1%	10.3%	25.3%	14.6%	14.5%	9.6%
Bachelor's Degree	17.8%	10.9%	7.8%	12.4%	13.2%	23.2%
Graduate Professional Degree	8.2%	5.9%	3.5%	8.1%	9.6%	17.8%

Source: Esri

Top 10 Occupations, NorCOG

SOC	Description	2022 Jobs	2022-2023 % Change
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	244	3%
25-9045	Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	171	-1%
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	151	-1%
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	134	-1%
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	128	5%
41-2011	Cashiers	121	2%
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	97	3%
25-1099	Postsecondary Teachers	88	15%
25-2022	Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	87	-1%
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	86	2%

Source: Lightcast

Housing Stock

The table below shows some general indicators around housing and households. The percentage of households renting in Central Square (37.1%) is substantially higher than the other NorCOG communities and Oswego County. The average household size in Central Square is also lower (2.12) than other NorCOG communities. Median rent prices in the Region range from \$773 in Central Square to \$1,214 in the Town of West Monroe. Compared to the County, median rent prices are higher in West Monroe and Cleveland, and lower in Central Square and Constantia.

The Housing Affordability Index looks at home values and income data to indicate the extent to which residents can afford to buy existing homes in an area. Values over 100 indicate a higher level of affordability compared to national averages. Based on this index, Cleveland, Constantia, and West Monroe all show a high level of affordability. Central Square is the exception, but is generally aligned with national averages of affordability.

Households and Housing, 2021						
	Village of Central Square	Village of Cleveland	Town of Constantia	Town of West Monroe	Oswego County	New York
Households	872	279	1,911	1,622	46,488	20,113,414
Average Household Size	2.12	2.58	2.44	2.44	2.40	2.51
Housing Units	939	340	2,358	1,819	55,047	8,602,791
Owner Occupied Units	55.8%	68.2%	81.0%	76.6%	65.5%	48.5%
Renter Occupied Units	37.1%	13.8%	9.6%	12.5%	18.9%	41.8%
Median Home Value - owner occupied	\$159,424	\$147,581	\$170,353	\$177,926	\$153,049	\$416,411
Median Gross Rent*	\$773	\$1,083	\$923	\$1,214	\$844	\$1,390
Housing Affordability Index	97	118	125	124	123	68

Source: Esri, *US Census Bureau, 2017-2021 American Community Survey

Vacant Housing Units

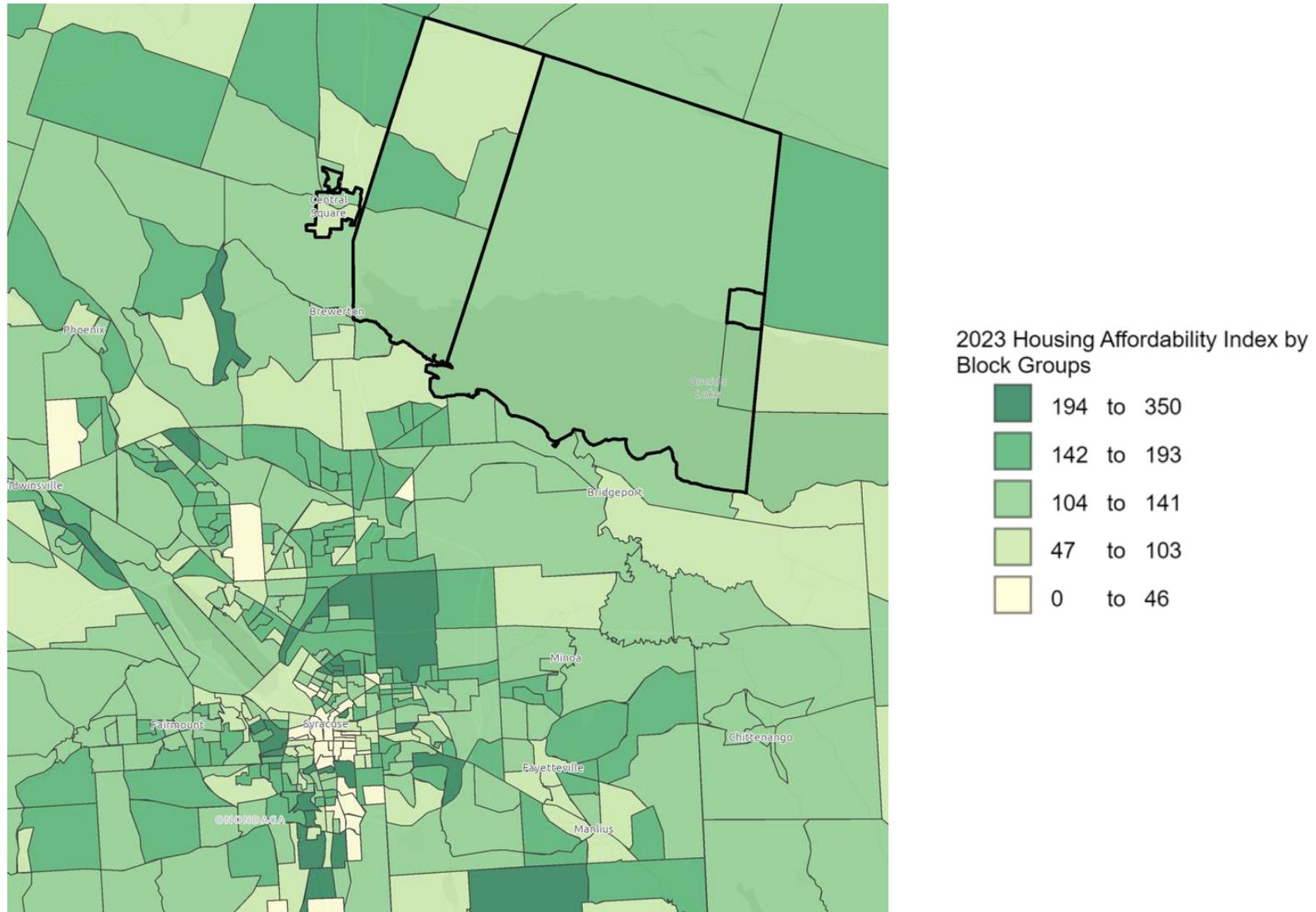
The table below describes the status of the vacant housing units in the Region. The primary cause of vacant housing in the Region is seasonal vacations homes and 'Other.' Vacant housing that falls into the 'Other' category includes homes that do not fit neatly into the other categories surveyed. Examples of reasons homes are classified as 'Other' include homes that are vacant and the current owner does not wish to rent/sell, homes that are be used for storage, and homes that are being repaired or renovated, among other explanations.

Vacant Housing Units, 2021						
	Village of Central Square	Village of Cleveland	Town of Constantia	Town of West Monroe	Oswego County	New York
Vacant Units (%)	7.1%	18.0%	9.4%	10.9%	15.6%	9.7%
Vacant Units (#)	67	61	222	198	8,587	834,471
For Rent	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	13.7%	15.7%
Rented, not occupied	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	29.2%	1.2%	4.4%
For Sale only	13.3%	12.8%	17.3%	0.0%	8.7%	6.1%
Sold, not occupied	0.0%	21.3%	2.5%	0.0%	2.8%	4.3%
Seasonal/occasional	0.0%	10.5%	73.5%	19.8%	52.4%	35.4%
For migrant workers	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	0.2%
Other	86.7%	55.3%	6.6%	51.0%	20.9%	34.0%

Source: Esri, *US Census Bureau, 2017-2021 American Community Survey

Housing Affordability Index

The heat map below shows the housing affordability index by census tract in Central New York. The NorCOG Region is outlined below in black. The Region offers comparably more affordable housing than many suburbs of the City of Syracuse.



Housing Age

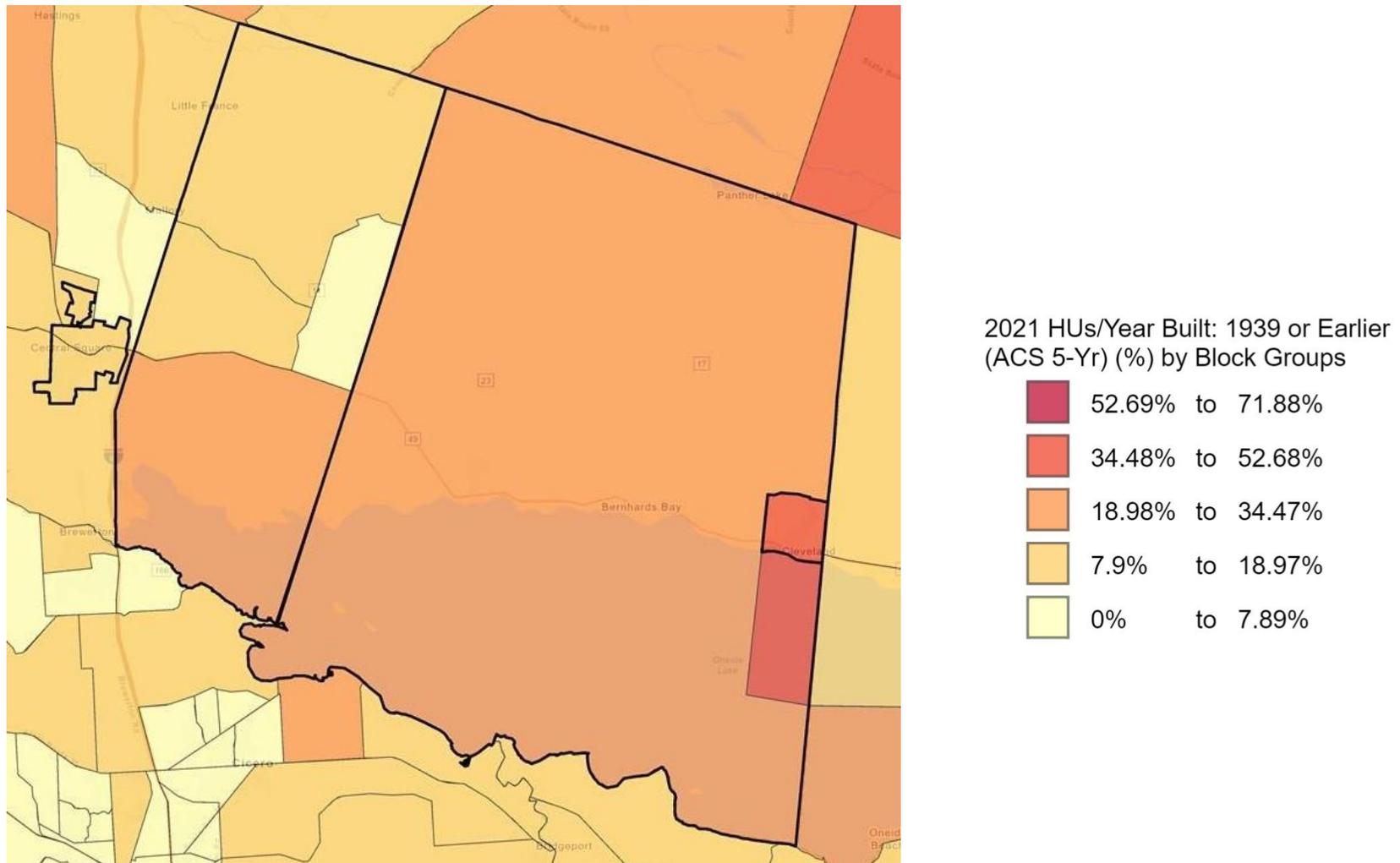
The housing stock is considerably older in the Village of Cleveland compared to other NorCOG communities with 47% of housing units built prior to 1940. Unlike the County and State. With the exception of the Town of West Monroe, over 60% of the housing units were built prior to 1970. This is noteworthy because older housing is more likely to have hazardous materials, such as lead and asbestos, and to be more vulnerable to severe weather events.

Housing Units by Year Built						
	Village of Central Square	Village of Cleveland	Town of Constantia	Town of West Monroe	Oswego County	New York
Built 2020 or later	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
Built 2010 to 2019	8.5%	1.5%	3.9%	8.5%	2.9%	3.8%
Built 2000 to 2009	7.9%	11.1%	8.2%	9.6%	7.7%	6.1%
Built 1990 to 1999	5.8%	16.8%	14.7%	21.5%	12.6%	6.2%
Built 1980 to 1989	14.5%	1.8%	10.9%	19.1%	14.5%	7.6%
Built 1970 to 1979	30.1%	6.9%	17.8%	8.2%	13.7%	9.8%
Built 1960 to 1969	6.2%	6.3%	8.7%	6.3%	8.1%	12.5%
Built 1950 to 1959	10.8%	5.4%	9.3%	7.1%	8.1%	14.5%
Built 1940 to 1949	3.6%	3.3%	2.2%	2.6%	3.9%	7.9%
Built 1939 or earlier	12.7%	47.0%	24.4%	17.1%	28.3%	31.4%

Source: Esri, US Census Bureau, 2017-2021 American Community Survey

Housing by Age

The heat map below shows the percentage of housing units that were built prior to 1939 by census block group. The outline of the NorCOG Region is in black. The Village of Cleveland and the Southern portion of West Monroe have the highest portion of homes built prior to 1939. In general, the Region's housing stock is slightly older than that of other northern Syracuse summers.



Type of Housing

In each community, most housing units are single-family detached homes. The Village of Central Square has a significantly lower share of single-family detached homes (48.3%), compared to 75.1% in the Village of Cleveland, 82.1% of the Town of Constantia, and 69.0% of the Town of West Monroe. In each community, at least 10% of the housing units are mobile homes.

Housing Units by Type						
	Village of Central Square	Village of Cleveland	Town of Constantia	Town of West Monroe	Oswego County	New York
Total	953	334	2,317	1,875	54,449	8,449,178
1, detached	48.3%	75.1%	82.1%	69.0%	69.3%	41.7%
1, attached	3.6%	0.6%	1.4%	2.0%	1.5%	5.3%
2	7.1%	8.7%	1.3%	2.3%	5.0%	10.0%
3 or 4	7.3%	0.6%	0.1%	0.9%	4.3%	6.8%
5 to 9	13.1%	0.0%	3.1%	1.1%	3.1%	5.1%
10 to 19	6.4%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	1.2%	4.2%
20 to 49	0.9%	0.6%	0.1%	0.0%	0.8%	8.3%
50 or more	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	16.3%
Mobile Home	10.8%	14.4%	12.0%	23.3%	12.8%	2.2%

Source: Esri, US Census Bureau, 2017-2021 American Community Survey

Industry Analysis

Industry Composition

The figure to the right shows the industry sector composition of the NorCOG Region and Oswego County in 2023⁴. The largest industry sector in the Region and County is **Government**, accounting for 2,407 jobs, or approximately 44.7% of total jobs in the Region, and 9,469 jobs or 26.2% of jobs in the County. **Retail Trade** is the second largest, employing 738, and Construction is the third largest, employing 413.

Industry Composition - NorCOG and Oswego County, 2023					
NAICS	Description	NorCOG		Oswego County	
		Job Count	% of Total	Job Count	% of Total
90	Government	2,407	44.7%	9,469	26.2%
44	Retail Trade	738	13.7%	4,462	12.3%
23	Construction	413	7.7%	2,402	6.6%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	393	7.3%	3,459	9.6%
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	311	5.8%	1,306	3.6%
31	Manufacturing	223	4.2%	3,547	9.8%
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	174	3.2%	4,339	12.0%
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	160	3.0%	1,081	3.0%
48	Transportation and Warehousing	122	2.3%	1,064	2.9%
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	100	1.9%	770	2.1%
42	Wholesale Trade	92	1.7%	581	1.6%
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	73	1.4%	511	1.4%
52	Finance and Insurance	57	1.1%	713	2.0%
99	Unclassified Industry	38	0.7%	109	0.3%
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	25	0.5%	491	1.4%
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	23	0.4%	333	0.9%
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	<10	-	71	0.2%
22	Utilities	<10	-	1,042	2.9%
51	Information	<10	-	201	0.6%
61	Educational Services	<10	-	192	0.5%
		5,379		36,158	100.0%

Source: Lightcast

⁴ Due to geographical data limitations, the NorCOG Region is proxied by five ZIP codes: 13028, 13036, 13042, 13044, 13167 which closely approximate the Region’s boundary.

Employment Trends

The table below shows employment trends from 2013 to 2023 in the Region and Oswego County. From 2013, the Region added a net of 289 jobs, compared to the County which had a net loss of 446 jobs over the same time period. In the Region, the Retail Trade industry added 134 jobs over the last ten years, whereas the County lost 196 jobs in the same industry over the same time period. Also notable is that the Region added 24 jobs (31%) in the Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services industry while the County lost 232 jobs (23%).

Historical Industry Trends - NorCOG and Oswego County, 2013 - 2023									
NAICS	Description	NorCOG				Oswego County			
		2013 Jobs	2023 Jobs	2013 - 2023 Change	2013 - 2023 % Change	2013 Jobs	2023 Jobs	2013 - 2023 Change	2013 - 2023 % Change
90	Government	2,380	2,407	27	1%	9,580	9,469	(111)	(1%)
44	Retail Trade	603	738	134	22%	4,658	4,462	(196)	(4%)
23	Construction	413	413	(0)	(0%)	1,818	2,402	584	32%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	383	393	10	3%	3,600	3,459	(141)	(4%)
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	378	311	(68)	(18%)	1,608	1,306	(303)	(19%)
31	Manufacturing	156	223	68	43%	3,113	3,547	434	14%
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	200	174	(25)	(13%)	4,956	4,339	(617)	(12%)
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	83	160	77	92%	858	1,081	224	26%
48	Transportation and Warehousing	74	122	48	64%	509	1,064	555	109%
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	77	100	24	31%	1,003	770	(232)	(23%)
42	Wholesale Trade	73	92	20	27%	558	581	23	4%
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	90	73	(17)	(18%)	451	511	59	13%
52	Finance and Insurance	61	57	(4)	(6%)	693	713	20	3%
99	Unclassified Industry	11	38	26	235%	47	109	62	133%
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	37	25	(12)	(32%)	518	491	(26)	(5%)
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	12	23	11	93%	212	333	121	57%
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	<10	<10	-	-	59	71	13	21%
22	Utilities	<10	<10	-	-	1,929	1,042	(887)	(46%)
51	Information	14	<10	-	-	234	201	(33)	(14%)
61	Educational Services	<10	<10	-	-	146	192	46	32%
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	32	-	(32)	(100%)	55	14	(41)	(75%)
	Total	5,090	5,379	289	6%	36,604	36,158	(446)	(1%)

Source: Lightcast

Projected Employment Trends

Nearly every industry in the Region is expected to add jobs through 2033. In total, the NorCOG Region is anticipated to grow by 21%, or 1,123 jobs, outpacing the projected growth of the County. The Region’s largest industry, **Government**, is expected to add 520 jobs. The **Construction** and **Accommodation and Food Services** industries are expected to add another 178 jobs over the next ten years.

Projected Industry Trends - NorCOG and Oswego County, 2023 - 2033									
NAICS	Description	NorCOG				Oswego County			
		2023 Jobs	2033 Jobs	2023 - 2033 Change	2023 - 2033 % Change	2023 Jobs	2033 Jobs	2023 - 2033 Change	2023 - 2033 % Change
90	Government	2,407	2,927	520	22%	9,469	10,813	1,344	14%
23	Construction	413	514	101	25%	2,402	2,870	467	19%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	393	470	77	20%	3,459	3,997	537	16%
31	Manufacturing	223	291	68	30%	3,547	4,254	707	20%
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	160	227	66	41%	1,081	1,376	295	27%
48	Transportation and Warehousing	122	184	62	51%	1,064	1,615	552	52%
44	Retail Trade	738	793	56	8%	4,462	4,655	193	4%
42	Wholesale Trade	92	135	43	46%	581	777	197	34%
99	Unclassified Industry	38	63	25	67%	109	183	74	68%
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	100	123	23	23%	770	858	87	11%
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	73	92	19	25%	511	649	139	27%
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	174	190	16	9%	4,339	4,659	320	7%
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	311	327	16	5%	1,306	1,300	(6)	(0%)
52	Finance and Insurance	57	72	15	26%	713	796	83	12%
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	23	32	9	38%	333	429	97	29%
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	-	-	0	0%	14	<10	-	-
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	25	24	(1)	(4%)	491	556	65	13%
22	Utilities	<10	<10	-	-	1,042	1,059	16	2%
51	Information	<10	12	-	-	201	258	58	29%
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	<10	<10	-	-	71	84	13	18%
61	Educational Services	<10	13	-	-	192	321	129	67%
		5,379	6,502	1,123	21%	36,158	41,511	5,354	15%

Source: Lightcast

Location Quotient Analysis

A location quotient (LQ) analysis compares the concentration of a regional industry to the concentration of the same industry across the country. By comparing regional employment patterns to that of the country as a whole, we can identify industries with high local concentration that may represent specialization and competitive advantages of the NorCOG Region. Note that we generally consider LQ values above 1.20 or below 0.80 as "significant."

The table to the right contains the results of the LQ analysis for NorCOG at the 4-digit NAICS code level. Industries within the Government sector (NAICS 90) were removed to show specifically private sector industries with a competitive advantage based on concentration. Industries with fewer than 10 jobs were also removed.

The NorCOG Region has a high concentration of jobs across various **Manufacturing** industries, and the highest concentration of jobs in the **Fuel Dealers** industry. The **Nonresidential Building Construction, Automotive Repair and Maintenance, and Automobile Dealers** industries are also notable as these sectors are highly concentrated and each employ over 100 people.

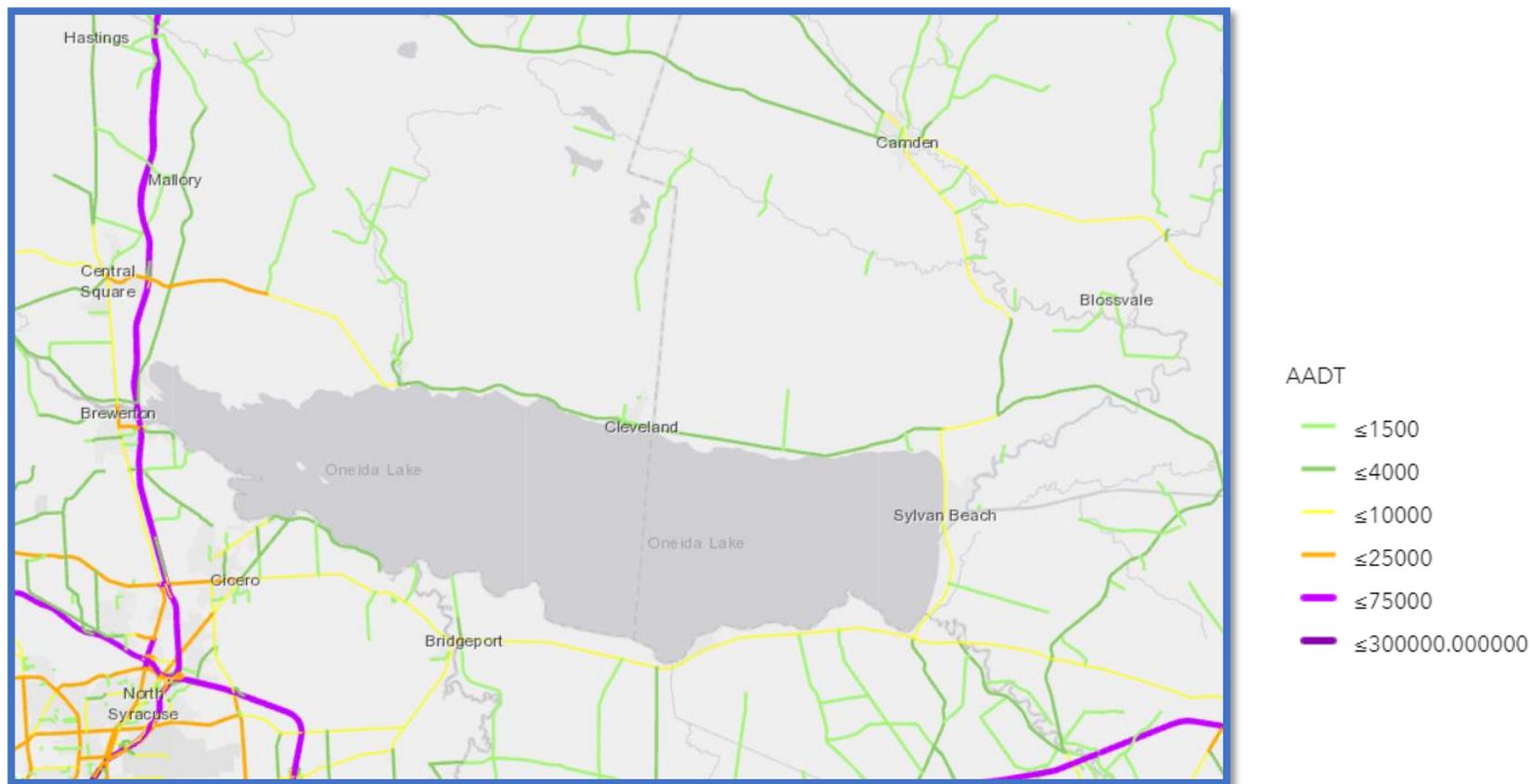
All of the top thirty (30) 4-digit industries, except Special Food Services, are considered highly concentrated. This means that they are producing far more goods and services than are required by local demand, making them important export-led economic drivers.

Top 30 Industries by Concentration, NorCOG Region 2023				
NAICS	Description	NorCOG		
		2023 Jobs	% of Total Jobs	2023 LQ
4572	Fuel Dealers	29	0.53%	12.78
3259	Other Chemical Product and Preparation Manufacturing	30	0.56%	12.48
4442	Lawn and Garden Equipment and Supplies Retailers	63	1.17%	9.31
3222	Converted Paper Product Manufacturing	71	1.32%	8.72
3352	Household Appliance Manufacturing	15	0.28%	6.72
4452	Specialty Food Stores	44	0.81%	5.55
8134	Civic and Social Organizations	42	0.77%	4.55
2371	Utility System Construction	81	1.50%	4.32
4247	Petroleum and Petroleum Products Merchant Wholesalers	13	0.24%	4.21
4821	Rail Transportation	27	0.50%	4.03
4599	Other Miscellaneous Retailers	74	1.38%	3.64
2362	Nonresidential Building Construction	107	1.99%	3.56
8111	Automotive Repair and Maintenance	138	2.56%	3.48
4411	Automobile Dealers	119	2.22%	2.91
4249	Miscellaneous Nondurable Goods Merchant Wholesalers	34	0.64%	2.81
3121	Beverage Manufacturing	28	0.52%	2.49
4412	Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	14	0.26%	2.36
8122	Death Care Services	11	0.21%	2.36
4453	Beer, Wine, and Liquor Retailers	12	0.23%	2.12
5621	Waste Collection	13	0.25%	2.05
2361	Residential Building Construction	83	1.54%	1.87
4561	Health and Personal Care Retailers	65	1.21%	1.78
4921	Couriers and Express Delivery Services	64	1.18%	1.77
4571	Gasoline Stations	50	0.94%	1.63
6219	Other Ambulatory Health Care Services	18	0.34%	1.54
4922	Local Messengers and Local Delivery	11	0.21%	1.51
5616	Investigation and Security Services	48	0.90%	1.41
2381	Foundation, Structure, and Building Exterior Contractors	48	0.90%	1.29
4551	Department Stores	39	0.72%	1.29
7223	Special Food Services	29	0.54%	1.15

Source: Lightcast

Daily Traffic Volume

The map below shows the traffic volume of the main roads in the NorCOG Region. The Region's most heavily trafficked road is I-81 that runs North-South through the Village of Central Square. I-81 sees an annual average daily trips (AADT) count of 37,238 trips, approximately 13% (or 3,746 trips) are trucks. In the Town of West Monroe Route 49 sees on average between 6,241 - 10,643 AADT on a typical day, with traffic volume increasing to the west. In Constantia, Route 49 has an AADT of 1,866, 9% of which are trucks.



Real Estate Market Analysis

The following market analysis uses CoStar data on multi-family, industrial, office, and retail real estate trends in the NorCOG communities.

Multi-Family

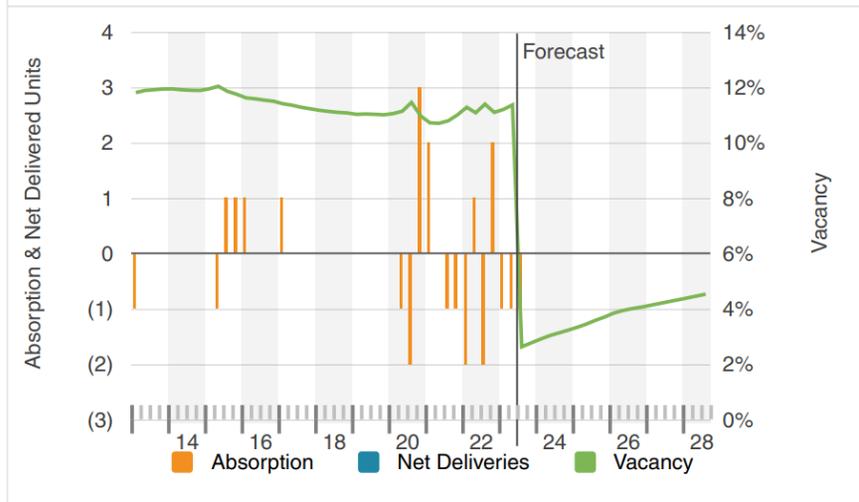
In the CoStar database, there are approximately 648 multi-family units in the NorCOG Region across 17 buildings. The vacancy rate of multi-family units has historically ranged between 11 and 12%, currently estimated at 11.7%. There have been no deliveries over the last ten years captured by CoStar.

Market rents are currently estimated at \$868 per month. In general, rents have increased steadily but modestly over the last ten years. CoStar projects market rents are going to continue to increase, but at a greater rate, through 2028.

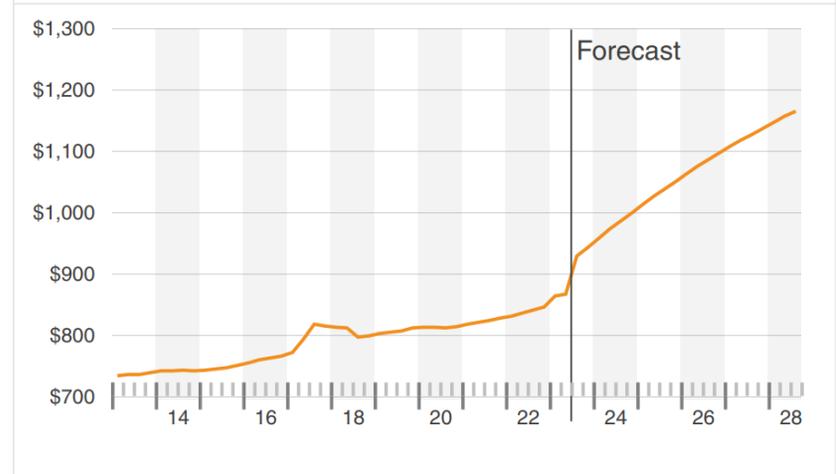
Multi-Family Real Estate Trends: NorCOG Region



Absorption, Net Deliveries & Vacancy



Market Asking Rent Per Unit

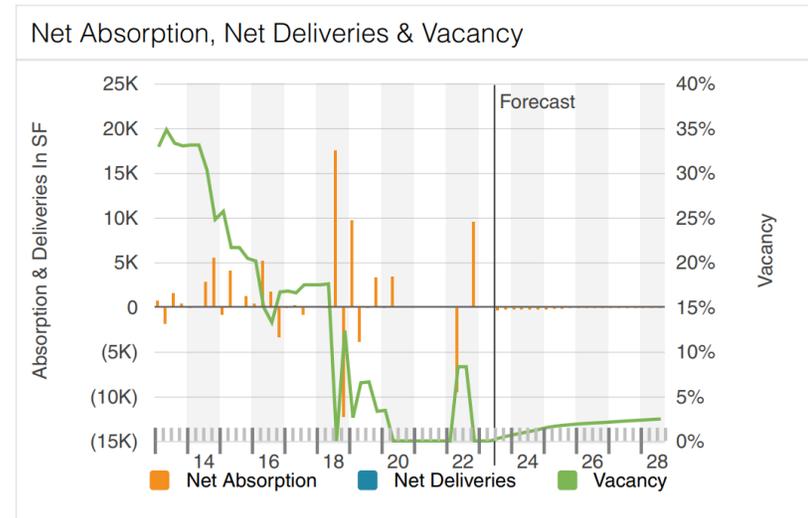
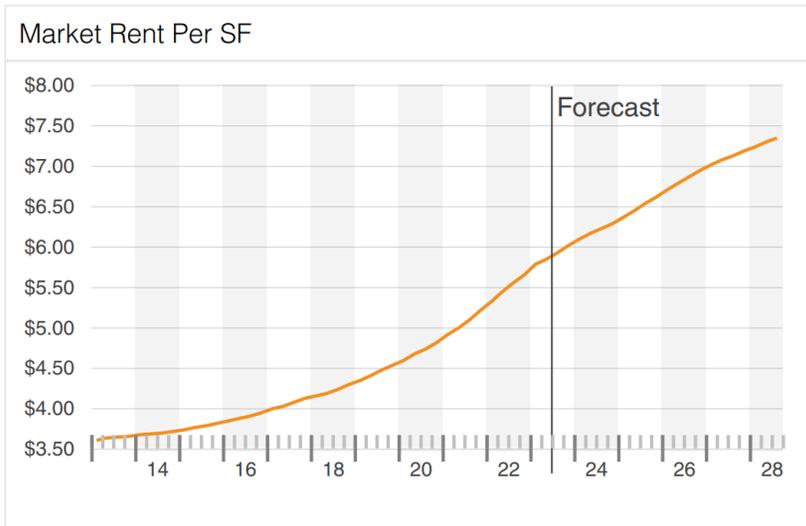


Industrial

In the CoStar database, the NorCOG communities have approximately 115,000 square feet of industrial real estate across twelve buildings. Much like the rest of the State and Nation, industrial real estate appears to be in short supply and high demand. Currently, all of the Region’s industrial properties are fully occupied. Over the last ten years, there have been no significant deliveries that were captured by CoStar.

Industrial rents have grown consistently over the last ten years, a trend that is projected to continue through 2028. Currently, industrial rents are estimated at \$5.86 per square foot.

Industrial Real Estate Trends: NorCOG Region



Office

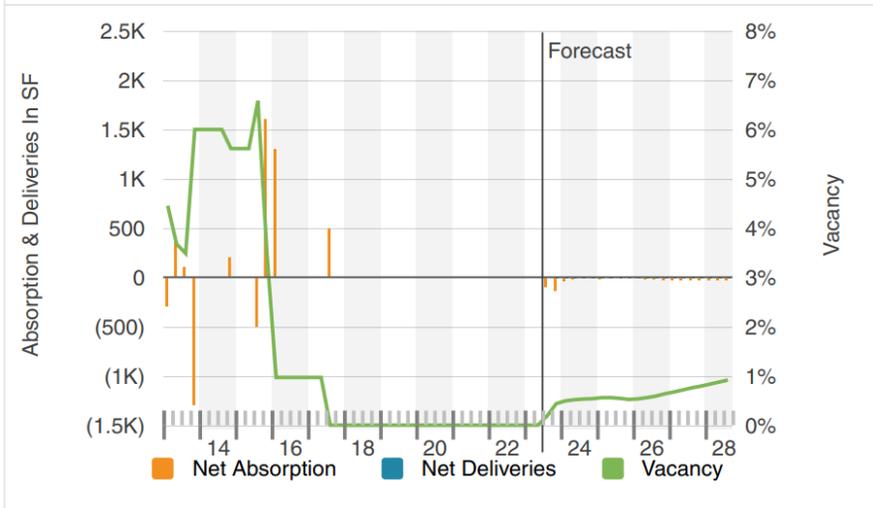
In the CoStar database, there are approximately 52,000 square feet of office space in the NorCOG Region across 8 buildings. The majority of the Region's offices are located in the Village of Center Square. According to CoStar, office properties in the Region have been fully occupied since 2017. There have been no new deliveries nor demolitions in the Region's office market over the last ten years.

Historically, rent prices have been volatile but generally rose over the past ten years from \$12.10 per square foot in 2014, to their current ten-year high of \$14.85 per square foot. According to CoStar, rent prices are expected to decline slightly to around \$14.50 per square foot through 2028.

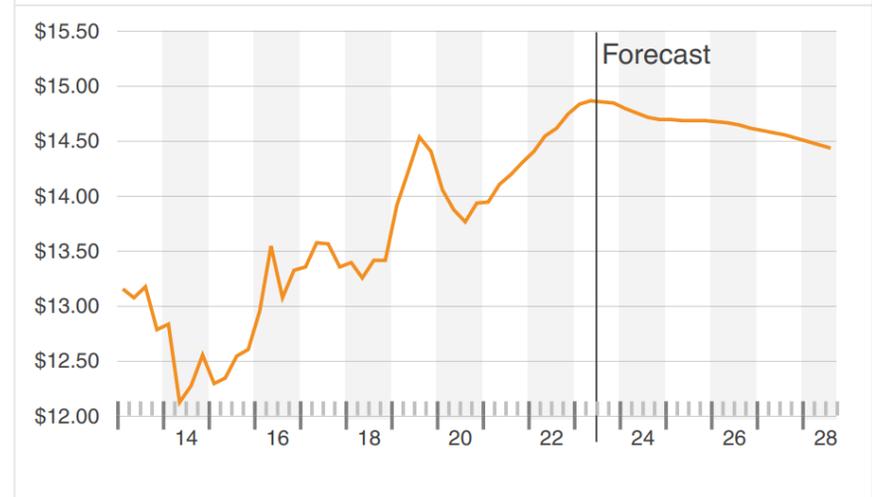
Office Rent Rate Trends: NorCOG Region



Net Absorption, Net Deliveries & Vacancy



Market Rent Per SF



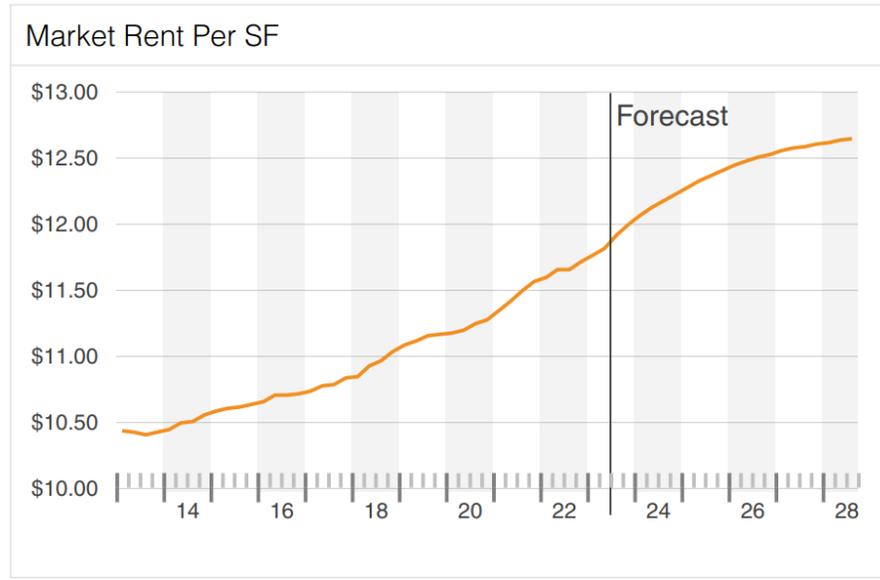
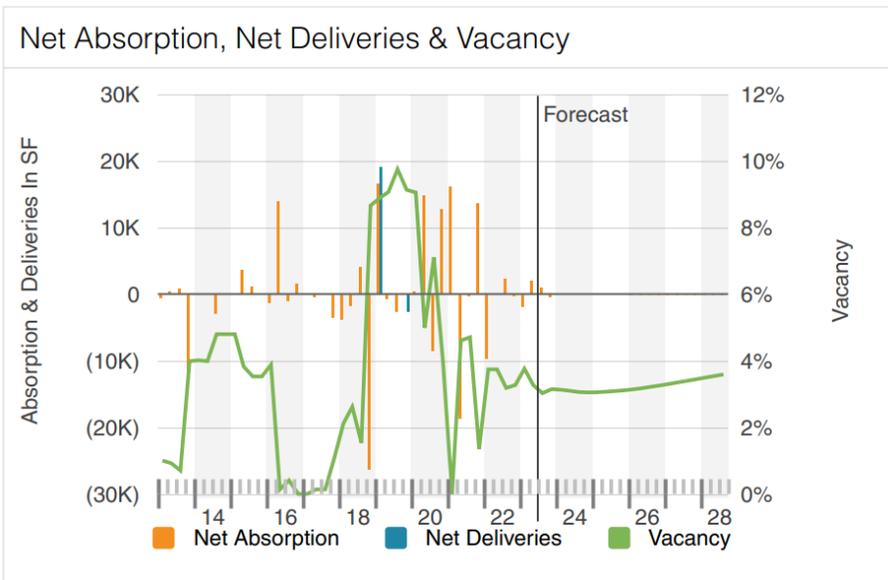
Retail

In the CoStar database, the NorCOG Region has approximately 407,000 square feet of retail space. Vacancy rates have ranged from 0% to 9.5% over the last ten years. Starting in late 2018, a large vacancy followed by a new delivery drove the vacancy rate from 1.7% to a ten-year high of 9.5% in 2019. Currently, vacancy rates are estimated at 3.3%. There has been one delivery to the NorCOG retail market that added 19,500 square feet of retail space in Q1 2019.

Rental rates in the Region have increased steadily over the last ten years from about \$10.48 per sq ft in 2013 to \$11.87 per sq ft currently.

Retail Real Estate Trends: NorCOG Region

INVENTORY SF	UNDER CONSTRUCTION SF	12 MO NET ABSORPTION SF	VACANCY RATE	MARKET RENT/SF	MARKET SALE PRICE/SF	MARKET CAP RATE
406K +0%	0 -	612 -87.9%	3.3% -0.1%	\$11.87 +1.9%	\$120 +1.3%	8.1% +0%
Prior Period 406K	Prior Period 0	Prior Period 5K	Prior Period 3.4%	Prior Period \$11.65	Prior Period \$118	Prior Period 8.1%





Appendix B: Stakeholder Engagement Overview

Prepared by:

MRB | *group*

November 2023

Introduction

The North Shore Council of Governments, comprised of the Towns of Constantia and West Monroe and the Villages of Central Square and Cleveland, engaged MRB Group to develop an Economic Resiliency and Recovery Plan that will guide collaborative economic development efforts in the communities in the coming years. These partners sought a community-driven economic development action plan to generate revitalization momentum and business continuity to make the area more resilient to future economic shocks. It is important that any such strategy is rooted in the needs and desires of the broader community, as well as the true capability and capacity of partners. The project process included various forms of stakeholder engagement to ensure that this strategy was mindful and inclusive of true community needs. This included two surveys, a public workshop, and a series of interviews. These efforts are summarized on the following pages.

Surveys

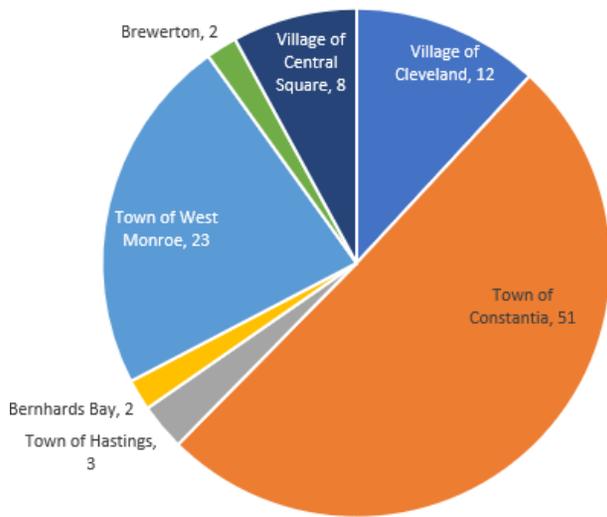
Two online surveys were developed and distributed throughout the community. The first survey was focused on residents of the villages and towns and received 101 responses. The second survey was focused on businesses, but only received 15 responses.

Community Survey

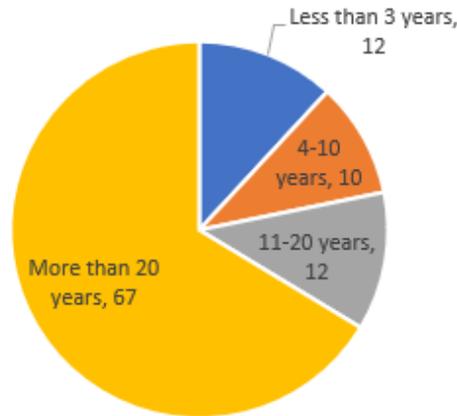
The community survey included nine questions about demographics and what is impacting residents' quality of life. One hundred and one responses were received. While the detailed results are outlined below, some key themes included a desire for more recreational opportunities, restaurants, and retail. Furthermore, inflation and high cost of living were indicated as critical factors impacting the most respondents.

The first five questions were intended to collect demographic information, and provided the following information about the residents completing the survey:

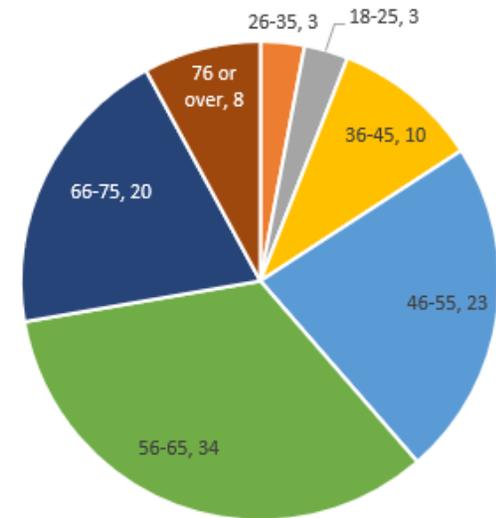
1) Survey respondents reside in:



2) Survey respondents have lived in the NorCOG area for:



3) Survey respondents are aged:



4) 43% of respondents commute to a workplace 4 or more days a week while only 7% work from home for 4 or more days per week. 24% of respondents are retired, and 17% have hybrid working schedules.

5) 98% of survey respondents own their homes, and 2% rent.

Respondents were then asked a series of questions about what influences quality of life in the community, as well as how quality of life could be improved.

1) Which of the following critical issues negatively impact your quality of life? (select all that apply)

- a. Inflation/cost of living increases – 66 (66%)
- b. Personal safety/crime – 41 (41%)
- c. Access to/affordability of high-speed internet – 32 (32%)
- d. Quality of municipal infrastructure – 28 (28%)

- e. Impacts of new development (e.g. reduced green space, traffic, noise, etc.) – 24 (24%)
 - f. Quality of transportation infrastructure – 23 (23%)
 - g. Access to new employment opportunities – 18 (18%)
 - h. Access to eldercare – 15 (15%)
 - i. Housing affordability – 10 (10%)
 - j. Food insecurity – 7 (7%)
 - k. Access to addiction treatment and recovery services- 6 (6%)
 - l. Access to childcare – 5 (5%)
 - m. None of the above – 7 (7%)
 - n. Other
 - i. Lack of restaurants and businesses- 4 (4%)
 - ii. Outside property flippers – 1 (1%)
 - iii. Recreational vehicle traffic – 1 (1%)
 - iv. Pedestrian safety – 1 (1%)
 - v. Unfriendly community – 1 (1%)
- 2) Think about the types of community efforts that would improve your day-to-day quality of life, from small things that seem easy to lofty goals that feel impossible (but awesome). List up to 5 of these ideas that would have the greatest impact for you. This was an open-ended question for residents to respond in their own words. Some common responses included:
- a. More recreation (river access, parks, trails, dog park, social activities, events, etc.) – 36 (36%)
 - b. Business development (retail, restaurants, bars, breweries, etc.) – 22 (22%)
 - c. Rt. 49 and road/pedestrian safety – 21 (21%)
 - d. Community center and gym – 13 (13%)
 - e. Maintain rural character and preserve natural resources – 11 (11%)
 - f. High speed internet – 11 (11%)
 - g. Public safety and crime – 9 (9%)
 - h. Sewer infrastructure improvements – 8 (8%)
 - i. Aesthetic enhancement (green spaces, street trees, flowers, decorations, cleanliness, color, etc.) - 5 (5%)
 - j. Building/housing exterior enhancements (façade improvements, curb appeal, etc.) – 5 (5%)
 - k. Others –

- i. Better communication from local leaders – 5 (5%)
 - ii. Addiction/mental health services – 4 (4%)
 - iii. Lower tax costs – 1 (1%)
 - iv. Support/prioritize small, local businesses- 1 (1%)
 - v. Closed 3 elementary schools (Cleveland, North Bay, and Verona Beach) – 1 (1%)
 - vi. Food programs- 1 (1%)
 - vii. Improved zoning- 1 (1%)
- 3) Of the ideas listed above, which do you think could be tackled by the local community relatively easily and still have a recognizable impact? In other words, what is the low hanging fruit? This was an open-ended question for residents to respond in their own words. Some common responses included:
- a. Recreation, including year-round activities, more community events, youth activities, community center, senior center, cultural attractions/activities, gym, dog park – 17 (17%)
 - b. Infrastructure, including water, broadband, public transportation, and sewer – 8 (8%)
 - c. Community newsletter/improve communication and collaboration – 6 (6%)
 - d. Property maintenance and improvements – 6 (6%)
 - e. Lower cost of living and tax burden – 5 (5%)
 - f. Business development, including grocery store options, and more gas stations, etc. – 4 (4%)
 - g. Reduce crime – 4 (4%)
 - h. Lower taxes – 1 (1%)
 - i. Senior housing – 1 (1%)
 - j. Addiction services – 1 (1%)
- 4) What types of businesses would you like to see in your local area? This was an open-ended question for residents to respond in their own words. Responses included:
- a. Grocery/Food Stores – 34 (34%)⁵
 - b. Restaurants/Bars/Food Service – 32 (32%)
 - c. Gym/Recreation – 14 (14%)⁶

⁵ Aldi's was specifically referenced by multiple respondents. Similarly, there were multiple responses that expressed desire for (food)stores other than Walmart.

⁶ YMCA was specifically referenced by multiple respondents.

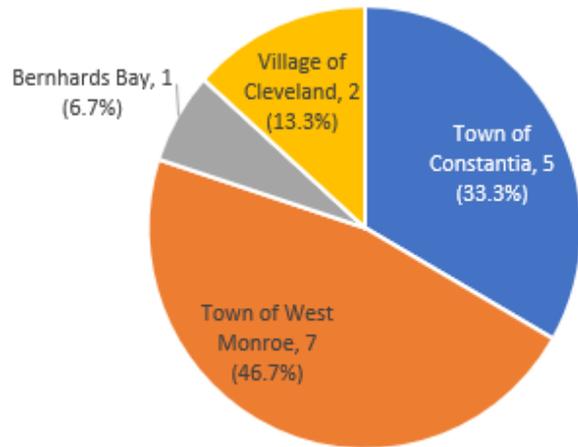
- d. Kid/Family oriented – 8 (8%)
- e. Gas station – 8 (8%)
- f. Pharmacy/Primary care doctor/Mental health and substance abuse centers – 5 (5%)
- g. Laundromat/alterations – 4 (4%)
- h. Small specialty shops – 4 (4%)
- i. No new businesses – 3 (3%)
- j. Entertainment businesses – 3 (3%)
- k. Car wash – 2 (2%)
- l. Other – 1 response each
 - i. Pet food store
 - ii. Hair salon
 - iii. Light industry
 - iv. Libraries/bookstores
 - v. School
 - vi. Strip mall

Business Survey

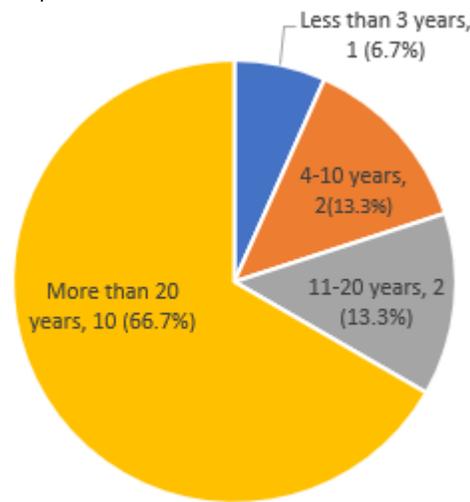
The business survey included nine questions, which covered basic business information and what business-owners have identified as ways to improve the local business environment. Fifteen businesses completed this survey.

The first 3 questions were intended to collect demographic information, and provided the following information about the residents completing the survey:

1) Survey respondents are located in:



2) Survey respondents have been in operation for:



3) These businesses are in manufacturing (3), food service (3), auto repairs (2), retail (2), professional services (2), tree service/logging, construction, and pest control.

Respondents were then asked a series of questions about issues impacting their businesses and how to improve operations.

- 1) Which of the following critical issues negatively impact your business? (select all that apply)
 - a. Inflation/increasing costs – 13 (86.7%)
 - b. Workforce availability – 10 (66.7%)
 - c. Workforce skillsets/experience – 10 (66.7%)
 - d. Supply chain disruptions – 6 (40%)
 - e. Substance use/abuse affecting the workplace – 4 (26.7%)
 - f. Transportation and logistics – 4 (26.7%)
 - g. Quality of municipal infrastructure – 4 (26.7%)
 - h. Access to/affordability of high-speed internet – 3 (20%)
 - i. Shifting consumer/customer habits – 3 (20%)
 - j. Access to childcare/eldercare for employees – 0
 - k. None of the above – 0

- I. Other –
 - i. Cost of doing business in NYS – 1 (6.7%)
- 2) What aspects of the surrounding community positively impact your business? This was an open-ended question, with responses as follows:
 - a. Support of local people and their pride in the community – 6 (40%)
 - b. Location/access to Rt. 49 – 6 (40%)
 - c. Growing tourism attracts customers – 2 (13.3%)
 - d. Support industries/businesses nearby – 2 (13.3%)
 - e. Availability of public utilities (including police force)
- 3) What types of businesses would complement your business in the local area? This was an open-ended question, with responses as follows:
 - a. Manufacturing/distribution/construction/support businesses – 4 (26.7%)
 - b. Grocery store – 2 (13.3%)
 - c. Restaurants and breweries - 2 (13.3%)
 - d. Public transport/infrastructure – 2 (13.3%)
 - e. Gas station – 1 (6.7%)
 - f. Hotel – 1 (6.7%)
- 4) Think about the types of community efforts that would improve the environment for your business, from small things that seem easy to lofty goals that feel impossible (but awesome). List up to 5 of these ideas that would have the greatest impact for you. This was an open-ended question for residents to respond in their own words. Some common responses included:
 - a. Infrastructure improvements – 5 (33.3%)
 - b. Community events and festivals – 4 (26.7%)
 - c. Housing developments – 2 (13.3%)
 - d. Manufacturing and distribution facilities/development – 2 (13.3%)
 - e. Promote tourism – 2 (13.3%)
 - f. Add light to tower at Memorial Park in Cleveland – 1 (6.7%)
 - g. Retail stores – 1 (6.7%)

- 5) Of the ideas you listed above, which do you think could be tackled by the local community relatively easily and still have a recognizable impact? In other words, what is the low hanging fruit? This was an open-ended question for residents to respond in their own words. Some common responses included:
- a. Community involvement through recreation – 1 (6.7%)
 - b. Light in tower as landmark for Cleveland from the lake – 1 (6.7%)

Opportunities & Challenges Workshop

On October 30, 2023, the study team held a public workshop to gather input from residents and community leaders. Fifty community members were in attendance. This workshop included two components: interactive boards and a facilitated discussion of community opportunities and challenges.

Interactive Boards

Workshop participants were asked to indicate their opinions on four separate boards using green, pink and orange dot stickers.

Two of the boards were maps: one of the Villages of Cleveland and Central Square and one of the Towns of West Monroe and Constantia. For these boards, the dot colors correspond to: green indicating good aspects, pink indicating areas that need improvement, and orange indicating that they have an idea for the area. Photos of the resulting boards are shown on the next page.

In the Village of Central Square, attendees noted areas in need of improvement as the intersection of Main St and Route 49, the natural area where Little Bay Creek intersects with the railroad, and in the area of Webb Ave.

In the Village of Cleveland, attendees noted areas in need of improvement as Lakeview Park, the former Sunset Deli building, Bridge Street between North St and Route 49, and the wastewater treatment plant.

The only areas indicated as needing improvement in the Town of West Monroe are the entry points to the town on Dutch Hill Road and Route 26. In the Town of Constantia, multiple participants indicated a need for improvements in the downtown area on the lake, generally

Economic Recovery & Resiliency Planning

Towns of Constantia & West Monroe,
Villages of Cleveland & Central Square

NorCOG
The North Shore Council of Governments

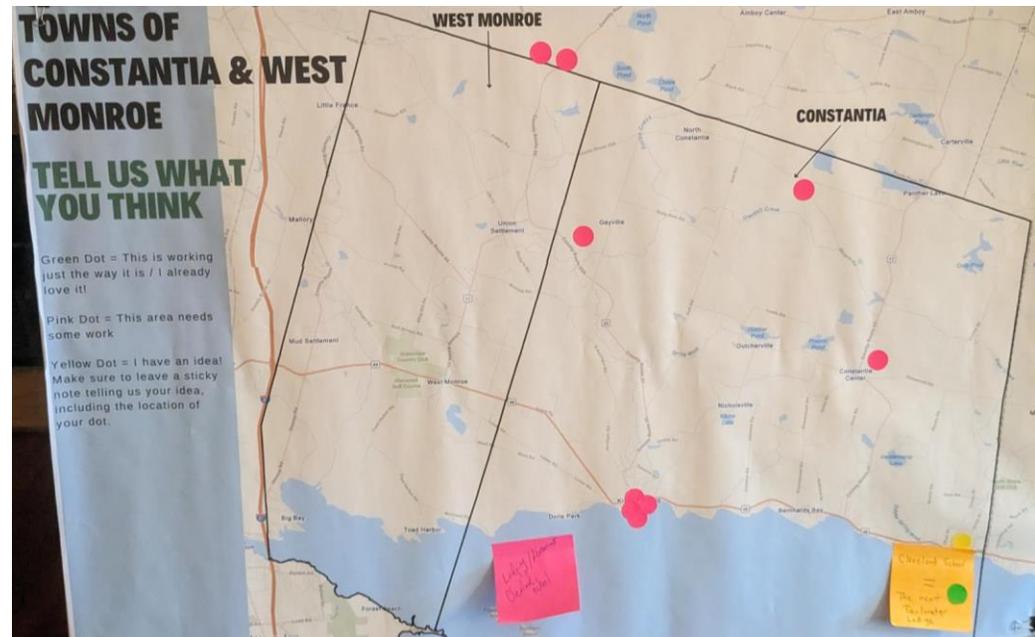
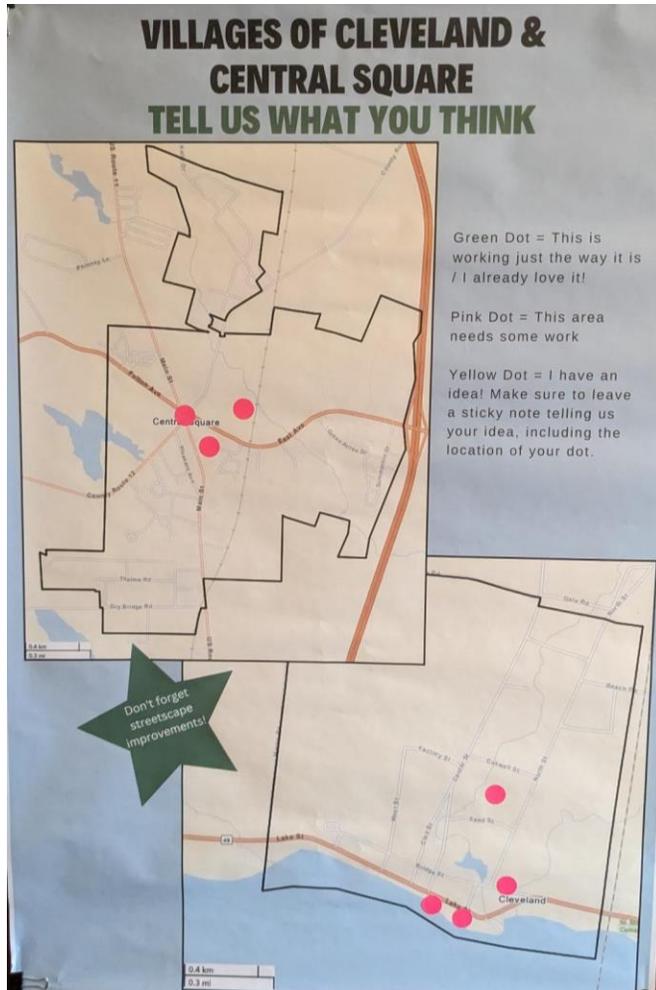
We want to hear your vision for the future!

Join us in developing a strategy for future growth and resiliency in our community.

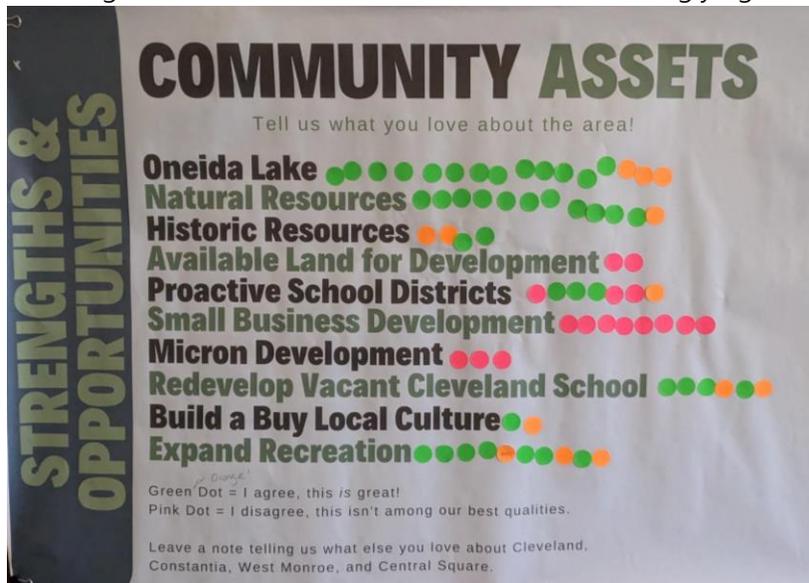
MONDAY, OCTOBER 30TH
7-8:30pm
AA Cole Elementary School Gym
1683 NY-49, Constantia, NY 13044

Listen to discussion about key opportunities and challenges and offer your ideas for the community.

at Route 49 and Redfield St. There was also interest in seeing the vacant Cleveland School converted into a recreational amenity or lodge. Other areas of Constantia that were noted as needing improvement include an area on the north side of Route 23A just to the east of the town line, the intersection of Route 65 and Whipple Road, and the undeveloped area between Route 17 and Roosevelt Road (south of Panther Lake S&G).



The other two boards outlined community needs and assets that were identified by reviewing the survey responses to date and past community plans and documents. Respondents were asked to place dots next to items as follows: green or orange indicating agreement, and pink indicating disagreement. Both boards are pictured below. There was fairly consistent agreement with the identified community needs and most of the community assets. However, community members largely disagreed that small business development was currently a community asset. Community assets related to recreation and natural resources gathered the strongest support. Community needs involving taxes and infrastructure were the most strongly agreed upon.



Comments on the Community Needs board indicated a need for:

- Water and sewer access,
- Another gas station,
- Improvements to town roads and sidewalks,
- Increase police/security presence,
- A community center that provides activities and resources for people of all ages,
- No- or low-cost childcare options, particularly before and after school care,
- Healthy recreational activities,
- More volunteerism, and
- Fundraisers.

Opportunities & Challenges Discussion

MRB Group facilitated a conversation with the attendees of the public workshop to: 1) confirm and expand upon community strengths and weaknesses; 2) identify critical challenges that are creating barriers to progress; and 3) identify opportunities for the community to become more vibrant, resilient, and successful.

There was general agreement with the listings compiled from prior discussions and plans, as shown to the right, but did offer some additions.

To the strengths, community members offered the following additions:

- Active agricultural industry – businesses offering jobs, producing raw materials
- Rural character – high quality of life
- Proximity to Syracuse, snow mobile trails, and the Adirondacks
- High volume of good quality water
- Active VFW and Legion – offering activities, events, and benefits
- Caring community members
- The fish hatchery
- Good fire department

To the weaknesses, community members offered the following additions:

- Lack of public gathering space or a community center
- The need for expanded broadband connectivity and service providers
- Lack of local jobs
- Concerns about safety and crime, particularly vandalism
- Increasing tax pressure on existing residents
- Lack of youth activities – a lot of activities were lost with the closure of two churches



Identified Strengths

- Oneida Lake
- Natural resources
- Historic resources
- Available land for development
- Proactive school districts



Identified Weaknesses

- Rt 49 congestion
- Infrastructure limitations
- Housing vacancy
- Lack of local medical services
- Limited power and gas
- Lack of local professional services

- Loss of numerous social services with the closure of the Cleveland School, which acted as a hub for many services (e.g. food bank, benefits access, senior services, etc.). – now there is a gap for accessing these services

Community members offered the following ideas to address some of the above challenges and weaknesses:

- Establishing a local, dedicated public safety entity that can provide a more consistent presence, rather than relying solely on the County Sheriff's office
- Better leverage regional events, like fishing tournaments, to gain more revenue and visitor spending
 - Increase overnight accommodations, there is currently no where for people to stay in the areas
- There is near zero rental vacancy, would be good develop additional rental options that are affordable to the workforce and seniors
- A comprehensive and coordinated marketing plan for the North Shore to help to attract visitors and businesses
- Incorporate community benefit agreements into any public incentives
- Collaborate more with Oswego County
- Build trust with and engage young adults and youth in the community to boost volunteerism





Appendix C: Projects Examples

Prepared by:



December 2023

The following project summaries provide examples of investments and strategies that other communities have undertaken. These particular projects are similar to the recommendations in this plan, and as such provide a realistic view of the possibilities and the types of resources available.

Village of Phoenix – 2022 NY Forward Recipient

The Village of Phoenix is one of three communities in the Central New York region to be selected to participate in the New York Forward program. Phoenix was awarded \$4.5 million to help complete transformative and/or catalytic projects along the Canal Waterfront District, located along Lock 1 of the Oswego Canal. It features a variety of businesses, nearby neighborhoods, and public spaces on North Island, Lock Island, and at Henley Park. The award has enhanced economic, residential, and recreational opportunities by reinvesting in the buildings and supporting a thriving canal community.

Village of Clinton and Town of Kirkland – DRI Round 6 Recipients

Building on recent investments, rich history, and arts and culture assets, the Village and Town collaborated to prepare a winning Downtown Revitalization Initiative proposal that aims to modernize infrastructure; further commit to ongoing environmental, climate, and economic initiatives; and enhance programs for wellness, health, and quality of life. The communities' vision focuses on opportunities to expand existing uses in the Village Center, grow the local housing stock, modernize infrastructure and encourage the use of underutilized parcels.

Town of Cicero SMTC Corridor Study for US-11 (2020)

The SMTC assisted the Town of Cicero with an analysis of future land use and transportation system needs within the US 11 Corridor. The study examined the portion of Route 11 from Bear Road (the Village of North Syracuse line) to Route 31. Walkability, pedestrian safety, and access management were key targets in the Study. The SMTC staff developed four design concepts for future development within and adjacent to the study corridor, based on a development scenario (type and intensity of uses) that was identified through discussions with the community.

Village of Chittenango and Town of Sullivan SMTC Tuscarora Road Corridor Study (2022)

Tuscarora Road's speeds and volumes do not align with the corridor's predominantly residential context. The study presents short- and long-term strategies to: improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists along and across Tuscarora Road, encourage drivers to follow the posted speed limit, and reduce the number of vehicles using Tuscarora Road as an alternative to State Route 5, which runs through the Village's business district. The study also provides an implementation plan with short-, mid-, and long-term goals and projects. Cost

estimates are included for each potential project, and additional research needs are highlighted to provide the municipalities with starting steps for improving their corridor.

Cato-Meridian Elementary School and Community Recreation Center

The Cato-Meridian Elementary School, in Cayuga County, benefits from the attached community recreation center that boasts a fitness room, gym, track, pool, and locker rooms. The Center was added to a school building project that added 14 elementary school classrooms and is the first project of its kind in the state. The aim was to provide a space for kids after school, as well as the large community who previously had to travel to Fulton, Jordan, or Auburn for similar facilities.

Village of Holley – Former Holley High School Redeveloped into Senior Housing and Village Offices

The Holley High School is now home to 41 affordable homes for seniors as well as offices for the Village of Holley. Now known as Holley Gardens, the building has a community room, central air, laundry facilities, and outdoor space for residents. Its downtown location provides easy access to the library, restaurants, churches, and stores in the Village. The original auditorium was kept for Village use as a public meeting space, and the space under the balcony was renovated to create administrative offices for the Village.

Town of Yorktown – School Redevelopment into Community Center

Since the Town of Yorktown's acquisition of the school in July of 1980, a variety of grants for capital improvements, administration, programming, training programs, and technical assistance have facilitated the building's transformation into a community center. Previously, the building had been rented for events by civic and cultural organizations, including the Town. When the school district tried to sell the building, the community feared demolition of their de-facto community center, and formed a committee for the reuse project.