ONONDAGA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

2027 EXECUTIVE BUDGET WRITTEN STATEMENT

SECTION 1:

2026 INITIATIVES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

2026 was another significant year for the Department of Planning, with the Department advancing a broad portfolio of initiatives designed to prepare Onondaga County and its municipalities for continued growth and investment. Major accomplishments include:

- Housing Onondaga Phase II is nearing completion and will be released in the fourth quarter of 2026. The study provides an updated assessment of the County's housing market and establishes a foundation for future County housing policies, programs and investments.
- The Greenways + Blueways Master Plan is underway, creating the first comprehensive countywide strategy to guide future investment in an interconnected network of trails, waterways and recreational assets.
- The Lysander–Baldwinsville–Van Buren Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) was initiated to develop actionable strategies that capitalize on the Seneca River as a recreational, economic and community asset.
- Continued implementation of the County's Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan, along with administration of County agricultural programs and support of the Agriculture Council.
- Continued partnership with the Central New York Regional Market to move its Strategic Plan toward implementation, including planning for significant future capital improvements.
- Hosted the Onondaga County Planning Federation Symposium in March 2026, attracting more than 300 attendees and continuing the County's role in providing training and technical assistance to local planning and zoning officials.
- Expanded the County's direct investment in municipal comprehensive planning and zoning initiatives. To date, more than $1 million has been committed to 20 municipalities, providing communities with resources to modernize plans and regulations and better prepare for future growth and investment.
- Initiated the Safe Streets for All Strategy, establishing a countywide effort to identify targeted policies, programs and infrastructure investments capable of reducing traffic fatalities and serious injuries.
- Advanced the Greenways + Blueways Grant Program, with $1.1 million in initial funding proposed to move locally important projects toward implementation.
- Initiated the Convention District Signage Master Plan, creating a coordinated approach to wayfinding, identification and promotional signage while advancing design and engineering for two major gateway signs.
- Initiated procurement for the Inner Harbor Parking Study, which will move beyond an assessment of today's parking conditions to establish a long-term strategy for accommodating redevelopment, major events and future growth throughout the Inner Harbor and Syracuse Lakefront Development District.
- Initiated a comprehensive Data Center Study to position the County and its municipalities to proactively address one of the region's emerging land-use and infrastructure issues. The study will establish a framework for evaluating future development while balancing economic opportunity with infrastructure capacity, environmental stewardship and quality-of-life considerations.

2025 BUDGET REVIEW

Planning will end 2026 within budget.

SECTION 2:

2027 BUDGET OVERVIEW

The 2027 budget includes standard salary, and wage increases consistent with the baseline budgeting approach

The 2027 Budget also includes increased cost in maintenance & utilities, and supply expenses due to inflation and contract escalators.

The Planning Department's 2027 Travel and Training appropriation remains flat from 2026 and supports professional development, including the Upstate APA Planning Conference, the NYS Geospatial Summit, and specialized geospatial software training. These opportunities help staff remain current on planning practices, GIS technology, and emerging tools used to support the Department's work.

The 2027 Professional Services appropriation increases slightly due to increased cost of website hosting and maintenance. This account also supports mapping and Pictometry services.

The 2027 Contractual Services appropriation remains flat, supporting the CNY Regional Transportation Authority.

Revenues decreased slightly due to the city abstract calculation and its prior year reconciliation.

Other revenues remain flat from 2026 consisting of the sale of surplus office equipment.

SECTION 3:

2027 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Department's 2027 priorities will focus on translating planning into implementation and ensuring that Onondaga County and its municipalities are positioned to successfully manage and capitalize on continued regional growth.

- Advance implementation of Plan Onondaga through major County initiatives and direct partnerships with municipalities, agencies and community stakeholders.
- Implement recommendations from Housing Onondaga Phase II and continue supporting municipal planning and zoning efforts that expand housing opportunities and prepare communities for future growth.
- Prepare for Micron-related growth by coordinating planning around housing, infrastructure, transportation, land use and community development.
- Complete the Safe Streets for All Strategy and position priority projects to compete for federal, state and other implementation funding.
- Advance the Greenways + Blueways initiative from planning toward implementation by establishing countywide priorities, identifying funding opportunities and supporting projects that expand and connect the system.
- Complete the Inner Harbor Parking Study and establish a long-term parking and mobility framework capable of supporting redevelopment, major events and continued investment throughout the Syracuse Lakefront.
- Complete the Comprehensive Data Center Study and provide the County and municipalities with a practical framework for evaluating future proposals and addressing infrastructure, environmental and quality-of-life considerations.
- Advance implementation of the Central New York Regional Market Strategic Plan, including identifying funding opportunities for priority capital improvements.
- Continue strengthening the County's agriculture, farmland protection and food systems programs and implementation of the Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan.
- Expand partnerships with towns and villages by providing planning expertise, technical assistance and strategic County investment to help communities modernize comprehensive plans and zoning and prepare for future development.