



**Office for
the Aging**

Smart Growth/ Age Friendly/ Livable Communities Benefit People of All Ages

**2025 Adirondack Planning Forum
Thursday May 8th, 2025 Hotel Saranac**

**Presented by John Cochran
Chief of Staff**

Objectives

Overview of NYSOFA:

- Rebranding / Redefining Aging - Level Set / Economics of Aging
- Economics of Aging/ Statewide Needs Assessment Survey -- North Country Findings
- Embed Smartgrowth/ Age friendly and livable community principles into state and local government work
- Governor Hochul's proposed Executive Budget for SFY 2025-2026
- Master Plan for the Aging Update



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What Characterizes Older Adults

Older adults bring enormous economic and social value to their families, their communities, and the economy. Governor Hochul recognizes these vital contributions in her budget by promoting opportunity and economic security for older New Yorkers, caregivers, and families alike. This budget provides critical supports to help older New Yorkers age in their communities of choice and support those who care for them with direct services

Older Adults in New York are:

- **A growing population with increased and unprecedented longevity:** Older adults are living longer and healthier lives, and their numbers are growing.
- **Highly heterogeneous:** There is enormous variation in health, functional ability and financial status. Disparities exist along the dimensions of income, gender, race/ethnicity and education.
- **Social and economic impact:** Older adults hold a disproportionately large share of our country's wealth, represent a enormous source of consumer spending and economic productivity, and contribute in myriad ways (e.g., support to grandchildren, child care) to family and community life.



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What is Aging

- **Normative and lifelong:** Aging is a normative process that extends across the lifespan.
- **Cumulative:** Educational, financial and social experiences and contexts of childhood and middle age predict well-being in older adulthood.
- **Distinct from disease and decline:** While physical and cognitive changes are a normative part of growing older, aging does not necessarily mean disability.

Source: <http://www.frameworksinstitute.org/aging.html>



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Do you think of?



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Do you think of?



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Prevention

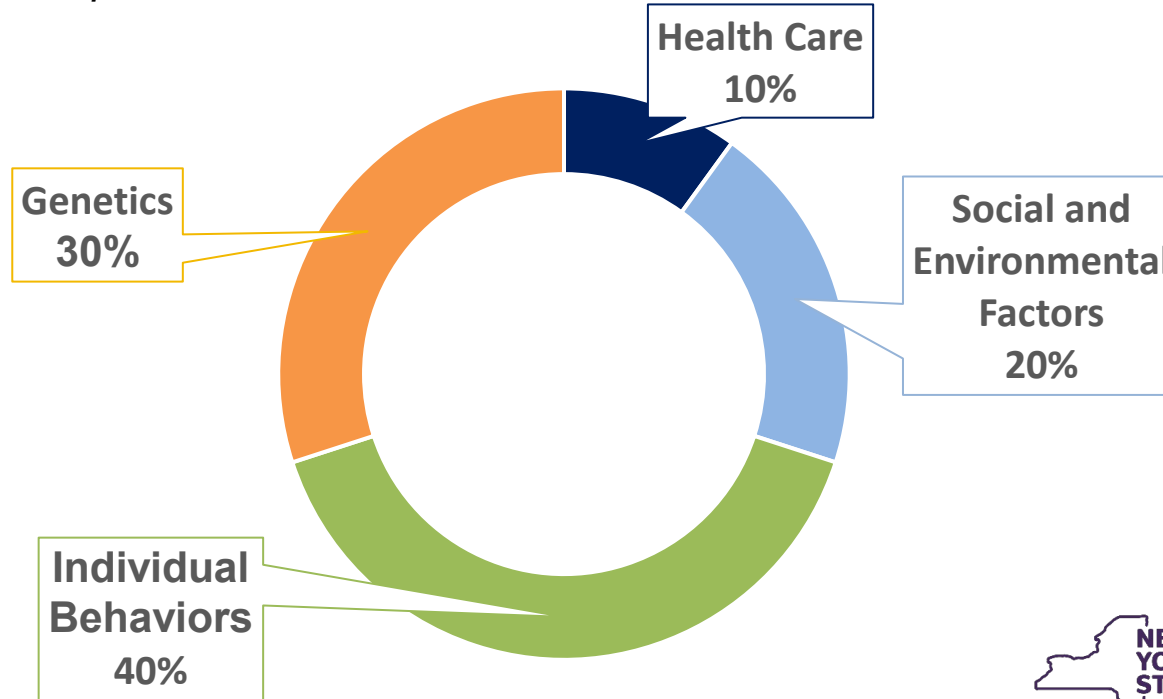
Cure



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What Determines Health?

Impact of Different Factors on Risk of Premature Death



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What Makes Up Good Health?

1. Outdoor Spaces
and Buildings

2. Transportation

3. Housing

4. Social
Participation

The AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities

and work within

The 8 Domains of Livability

help communities become great for people of all ages

5. Respect and
Social Inclusion

6. Civic Participation
and Employment

7. Communication
and Information

8. Community
and Health Services

Learn more at [AARP.org/agefriendly](https://www.aarp.org/agefriendly)



Age Friendly

4Ms of an Age-Friendly Health System

The Age-Friendly Health System initiative helps health systems adopt an evidence-based framework for assessing and treating critical issues for older adult health. Focusing on the 4Ms:

- What Matters
- Medication
- Mentation, and
- Mobility

The health systems in NYS implementing the 4Ms have consistently demonstrated improved patient satisfaction, fewer emergency room visits, shorter hospital lengths of stay, fewer hospital readmissions, and functional improvement



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Increasing Life Expectancy

In 1914, the average child born in the United States had a life expectancy of about 55 years. Today's children can expect to live closer to 80 years. For some, those "extra" years will be healthy, active, independent years. For others, old age will mean frailty and dependence on others. *(source: Havard Medical Journal)*



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Economics of Aging/ Statewide Needs Assessment Survey -- North Country Findings



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NORTH COUNTRY REGION



Clinton Essex
 Franklin Hamilton
 Jefferson Lewis
 St. Lawrence



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North Country Region

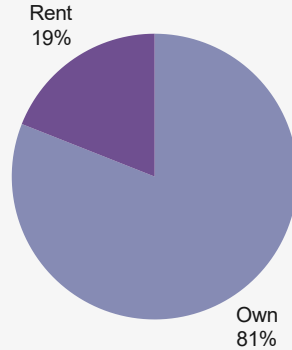
Demographics are Shifting

	2015	2025	2045	CHANGE	%
Total Population	435,413	421,530	418,752	-16,661	-0.04
0-17	95,902	85,437	83,042	-12,860	-0.13
18-44	156,089	154,198	141,592	-14,497	-0.09
45-59	90,842	69,356	80,327	-10,515	-0.12
60+	92,580	112,539	113,791	-21,211	+0.23



NORTH COUNTRY—ECONOMICS

HOME OWNERSHIP AGE 60+



67%



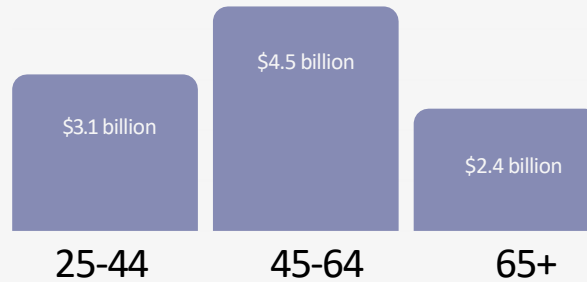
**HOMEOWNERS WHO ARE
Mortgage Free**

33%



**HOMEOWNERS WHO ARE
Paying Mortgage**

PERSONAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME GENERATED ANNUALLY

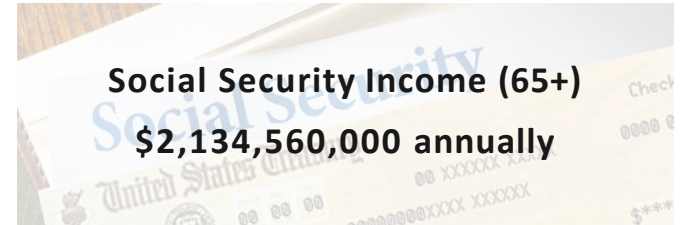


**67% or \$6,877,467,300 of the personal
household income in the North Country is
generated by people 45+**



Social Security Income (65+)

\$2,134,560,000 annually



NORTH COUNTRY REGION

Economic Contribution of Volunteers 55+



29,141 volunteers

15,929,194 hours

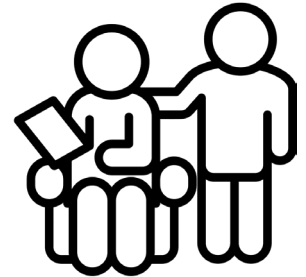
**\$446,017,432 annual
volunteer contribution**

Economic Contribution of Caregivers 50+

47,380 caregivers

442,400,000 hours

**Economic Value of
\$825 million**



New York's First Ever Statewide Needs Assessment Survey

POLCO Community Assessment Survey for Older Adults
(CASOA) 2023

Preliminary Results (Updated May 3, 2023)



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ABOUT

- First survey of its kind ever conducted in New York State.
- 26,464 responses from New Yorkers 60+.
- A partnership with the Association on Aging in New York (AgingNY) and the research firm Polco.
- Postcards and printed surveys were mailed to a randomly selected sample of residents 60+.
- Respondents statewide also had a digital option for answering the survey.
- Survey period: first quarter 2023.
- Survey was available in six languages.



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Statewide – Needs Assessment Results

Overall Health

- 72% of older adults considered their overall health to be “excellent or good”.
- 82% considered their overall mental health/emotional wellbeing to be “excellent or good”.

Overall Community

- 78% of older adults called their community an “excellent or good” place to live.
- 52% of older adults called their community an “excellent or good” place to retire.
- 71% of older adults said they are very “likely/somewhat likely” to remain in their community throughout retirement.
- Nearly 70% of older adults have lived in their community for 20 years or more.



Clinton County – Needs Assessment Results

Overall Health

- 46% of older adults considered their overall health to be “excellent or good” (72% statewide).
- 84% considered their overall mental health/emotional wellbeing to be “excellent or good” (82% statewide).

Overall Community

- 82% of older adults called their community an “excellent or good” place to live (78% statewide).
- 58% of older adults called their community an “excellent or good” place to retire (52% statewide).
- 77% of older adults said they are very “likely/somewhat likely” to remain in their community throughout retirement (71% statewide).
- Nearly 70% of older adults have lived in their community for 20 years or more (Same as statewide).



Essex County – Needs Assessment Results

Overall Health

- 71% of older adults considered their overall health to be “excellent or good” (72% statewide).
- 81% considered their overall mental health/emotional wellbeing to be “excellent or good” (82% statewide).

Overall Community

- 75% of older adults called their community an “excellent or good” place to live (78% statewide).
- 55% of older adults called their community an “excellent or good” place to retire (52% statewide).
- 80% of older adults said they are very “likely/somewhat likely” to remain in their community throughout retirement (71% statewide).
- Nearly 70% of older adults have lived in their community for 20 years or more (Same as statewide).



Franklin County – Needs Assessment Results

Overall Health

- 74% of older adults considered their overall health to be “excellent or good” (72% statewide).
- 74% considered their overall mental health/emotional wellbeing to be “excellent or good” (82% statewide).

Overall Community

- 72% of older adults called their community an “excellent or good” place to live (78% statewide).
- 59% of older adults called their community an “excellent or good” place to retire (52% statewide).
- 82% of older adults said they are very “likely/somewhat likely” to remain in their community throughout retirement (71% statewide).
- Nearly 70% of older adults have lived in their community for 20 years or more (Same as statewide).



Hamilton County – Needs Assessment Results

Overall Health

- 79% of older adults considered their overall health to be “excellent or good” (72% statewide).
- 93% considered their overall mental health/emotional wellbeing to be “excellent or good” (82% statewide).

Overall Community

- 89% of older adults called their community an “excellent or good” place to live (78% statewide).
- 67% of older adults called their community an “excellent or good” place to retire (52% statewide).
- 71% of older adults said they are very “likely/somewhat likely” to remain in their community throughout retirement (71% statewide).
- 62% of older adults have lived in their community for 20 years or more (70% statewide).



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Jefferson County – Needs Assessment Results

Overall Health

- 68% of older adults considered their overall health to be “excellent or good” (72% statewide).
- 84% considered their overall mental health/emotional wellbeing to be “excellent or good” (82% statewide).

Overall Community

- 74% of older adults called their community an “excellent or good” place to live (78% statewide).
- 53% of older adults called their community an “excellent or good” place to retire (52% statewide).
- 75% of older adults said they are very “likely/somewhat likely” to remain in their community throughout retirement (71% statewide).
- 65% of older adults have lived in their community for 20 years or more (70% statewide).



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St. Lawrence County – Needs Assessment Results

Overall Health

- 71% of older adults considered their overall health to be “excellent or good” (72% statewide).
- 79% considered their overall mental health/emotional wellbeing to be “excellent or good” (82% statewide).

Overall Community

- 73% of older adults called their community an “excellent or good” place to live (78% statewide).
- 47% of older adults called their community an “excellent or good” place to retire (52% statewide).
- 79% of older adults said they are very “likely/somewhat likely” to remain in their community throughout retirement (71% statewide).
- 81% of older adults have lived in their community for 20 years or more (70% statewide).



Embed Smartgrowth/ Age friendly and livable community principles into state and local government work



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Smart Growth

Our approach has been one that centers on the idea that state government, through its leadership and by setting an example through action –

- Can create a coordinated, integrated process from the top down and from the grassroots, community-up to create an environment,
- Backed by data, to advance and embed smartgrowth/age friendly and livable community principles into state and local government work; and,
- Create organizational change to improve population health and the built environment and demonstrate that this approach is inclusive of public and private stakeholders.



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Smart Growth – Connecting People to their Communities

Many of today's communities are navigable mainly by car, leaving many older adults unable to access the resources they need including healthcare and grocery stores due to driving restrictions.

Smart Growth is about designing communities for everyone that:

- strengthen people's connections to each other - reduce social isolation,
- improve health,
- increase physical activity, and;
- support and advance the economic environment through proactive design and future-based



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Smart Growth and Aging In Place

Smart Growth and related infrastructure planning plays an important role to support aging in place.

- Land use interventions, such as building mixed-use places and reducing parking requirements, bring destinations closer together.
- Transportation interventions, such as providing sidewalks, protected crosswalks, and accessible public transit, ensure that safe routes connect those destinations.
- Zoning reform allows people to age in place, such as allowing mixed-use zoning so destinations like grocery stores are reachable within a very short walk, or supporting accessory dwelling units or ADUs.

Together these actions result in communities where older adults can move independently without needing to drive or rely on caregivers for rides.



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Impact of Inactivity

Neighborhood characteristics are associated with distinct physical activity patterns

Sedentary lifestyles are increasingly recognized as a threat to public health. Inactivity is second only to cigarette smoking as a contributory cause of death and, if current trends continue, is expected to surpass smoking in coming years.
(source: National Institute of Health - NIH)

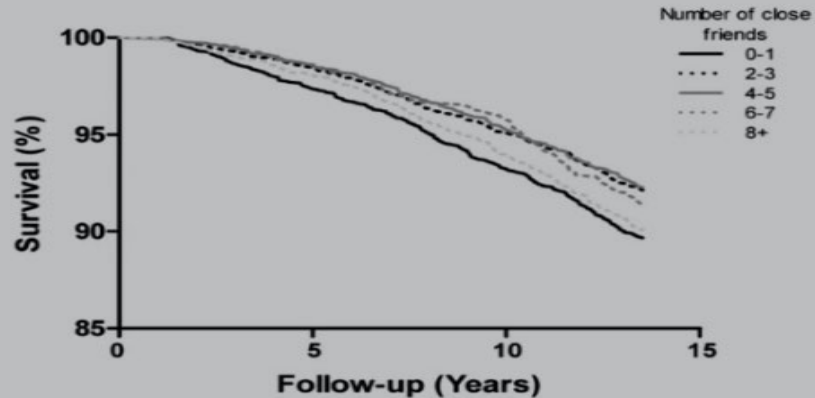
New York is ranked 32nd in the country for Physical Inactivity by those over 65. Meaning that almost a third of older adults in the State had reported doing no physical activity or exercise other than their regular job in the past 30 days.
(source: United Health Foundation - America's Health Rankings)



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Smart Growth-Connecting People to their Communities

Having A Large and Robust Social Network Lowers Your Risk of Death



Smart Growth – Connecting People to their Communities

Getting Rural New York Back on Its Feet

Yes, rural residents want to walk — and small towns see pedestrian traffic as a way to revitalize their downtowns:

- While distances can be a challenge for people walking in the countryside itself, small towns and cities seem well-suited for pedestrian transportation.
- Many boast extensive sidewalk networks, short distances to and around shopping districts, and less car traffic on local streets, which makes walking feel safer and less stressful.

(source: American Planning Association – Creating Great Communities for All)



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Smart Growth – Connecting People to their Communities

Rural communities face unique challenges, but they are more compatible with the principles of smart growth and walkability than you might think:

- Many rural places are set up with the bones to support smart growth principals.
- Walkability, and interventions to make communities more walkable have positive effects on health, safety, accessibility, economics (including tourism), social ties, and overall quality of life.

(source: America Walks, Brooking Foundation)



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Smart Growth – Connecting People to their Communities

Bringing life back to Main Street:

- Tapping this potential offers a prime opportunity to reverse the economic and population decline engulfing many rural communities.
- That's because there is growing evidence that walkability is a key way to stimulate economic development and attract young people to a place. Still, fewer rural residents walk than would like to.
- Main Streets have a significant role to play in fostering social cohesion.

(source: American Planning Association – Creating Great Communities for All)



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Economics of Smart Growth

Communities that have smart growth attributes tend to be more attractive to tourists:

- Tend to have downtowns that are walkable - capture a greater share of tourist dollars as visitors are interested in experiencing community life.
- They have places where visitors and residents alike feel community pride and activity are increasingly likely to be strong economically.

(source: American Planning Association – Creating Great Communities for All)



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Older Adult Tourism

Older adults constitute a significant portion of the tourist market and contribute substantial financial resources to the travel industry:

In 2024, according to AARP older adults accounted for approximately 37% of all travelers, and they tend to spend a considerable amount on vacations, often exceeding other age groups.

For example, a study by AARP found that older adults will spend an average of \$6,659 on vacations in 2024. Visitors generate significant economic benefits to households, businesses, and government alike and represent a critical driver of the state's future.



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Older Adult Tourism

More major findings from the AARP survey:

- Most older travelers (85%) rank travel in their top three priorities for discretionary spending, significantly higher than other kinds of expenses.
- Family trips are older adults' number one motivator for domestic travel this year, ranking well above solo vacations.
- For 2023, 61% of travelers anticipate domestic-only travel. 50% of their domestic trips will be by car this year, compared to 43% in 2022.

(source: AARP)



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Economic Impact of Tourism on Adirondacks

Visitors generate significant economic benefits to households, businesses, and government alike and represent a critical driver of the state's future. In 2023, tourism-supported jobs accounted for 7.4% of all jobs in the state.

In 2023, visitors to New York spent \$88 billion across the state economy. In the Adirondacks, visitor spending and tourism-related employment grew to \$2.3 billion and 19,844 jobs, respectively.

Visitor spending in the Adirondacks in 2023 increased by 7% over 2022 levels.

Seasonal second home spending also generates significant economic activity in the region, tallying \$334 million (15% of total spend).

(source: Economic Impact of Visitors in NY 2023 – Adirondacks Focus)



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Economic Impact of Tourism on Adirondacks

Of all New York State counties, the tourism industry is most important to the Adirondacks in terms of employment. In 2023, total tourism-generated employment registered 19,844 jobs, 18.2% of regional employment. Moreover, 14.2% of all labor income in the Adirondacks region was generated by tourism.

Tourism in the Adirondacks yielded \$268 million in state and local taxes in 2023. Sales, property, and hotel bed taxes contributed \$144 million in local taxes.

If not for tourism-generated state and local taxes, the average household in the region would have to pay an additional \$2,447 to maintain the same level of government revenue.

(source: Economic Impact of Visitors in NY 2023 – Adirondacks Focus)



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**The New York State
Budget:
An Historic Investment in
Priorities for
Older New Yorkers**

A Historic Investment in NYSOFA Services and Priorities for Older Adults

Governor Hochul proposes the Largest Investment in Aging Services in New York State History.

The FY 2026 Executive Budget expands and strengthens core NYSOFA programs and services including:

- Adding \$45 million to NYSOFA's annual budget to address older adults across the state awaiting services (also known as “unmet need”). This funding will continue \$23 million in historic investments for older New Yorkers across the state awaiting services – bringing the amount invested to \$122 million since 2018.
 - A total of \$200 million invested for this purpose since 2019.
- Investing an additional \$3.4 million in Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) funds for providers.

Total funding of \$68 million in FY26, from \$33 million in FY25

Improving the Wellbeing of Older Adults

The Budget includes proposed investments and programs to support older New Yorkers across state government that would:

- Improving access to housing through innovative approaches to homebuilding.
- Improving quality of life and ability to age in communities of choice through expanded access to preventive and emergency services, reducing risk of cardiovascular disease, and expanding access to cooling services for those with chronic conditions.
- Improving community integration through expanded access to open space, and investing in clean water.

Improving housing access and conditions for Older Adults

The Budget proposed investments and programs to improve older adults housing access and the conditions of their homes:

- Pro-Housing Community Program technical assistance and redevelopment of abandoned property – working with counties and municipalities to change their planning and zoning and redevelop vacant/abandoned buildings, which will increase housing stock and lower costs for older adults looking to downsize.
- Banning rent price fixing – to lower the cost of rent for older adults and families.
- Innovative approaches to homebuilding such as factory-built and modular homes that are less expensive and provide older adults an opportunity to downsize, if they choose to, and open more housing stock for larger families.
- Banning investors from buying homes for 75 days – providing an opportunity for people of all ages to identify a suitable home and not have it taken by large investors for cash.

New York State's Master Plan for Aging: Building on Investments

Why does New York need a Master Plan for Aging?

Improving the Conditions for Aging

A growing need to develop strategies to address the growth of New York's older adult population, which is incredibly diverse:

- Need to plan for how to best harness the power of state government to meet their needs
- Addressing social determinants and improving access to preventive services across the lifespan enables healthier aging and healthier older adults
- Central goal is to retain older adults in New York
- Leverage the economic and social capital of older adults in our communities

Process to Develop the Master Plan for Aging

The following subcommittees were created, along with another 38 Workgroups to evaluate services, supports, and programs that support older adults to remain healthy and successfully engaged in their communities:

1. Long Term Services and Supports
2. Home and Community-Based Services
3. Informal Caregivers
4. Formal Caregivers
5. Health and Wellness
6. Housing, Community Development, and Transportation
7. Safety, Security, and Technology
8. Economic Security

Foundational Pillars to Support the MPA

The MPA Subcommittees developed proposals based on an organizational framework that provided concepts to develop problem statements on issues impacting aging and proposals that address those problems and barriers.

1. Housing access and community planning
2. Informal caregiver and workforce support
3. Affordability of basic necessities for older adults
4. Access to services in and engagement with historically marginalized communities
5. Modernization and financial sustainability of healthcare, residential facilities, and community-based aging network service providers
6. Social engagement of older adults
7. Promoting health and access to services and supports in rural communities
8. Combating elder abuse, ageism, and ableism
9. Technology access and development
10. Prevention and wellness promotion and access

NYSOFA

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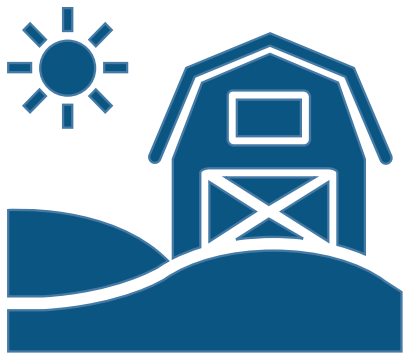


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**Department of
Transportation**

Transportation Planning for Livable Communities in New York State



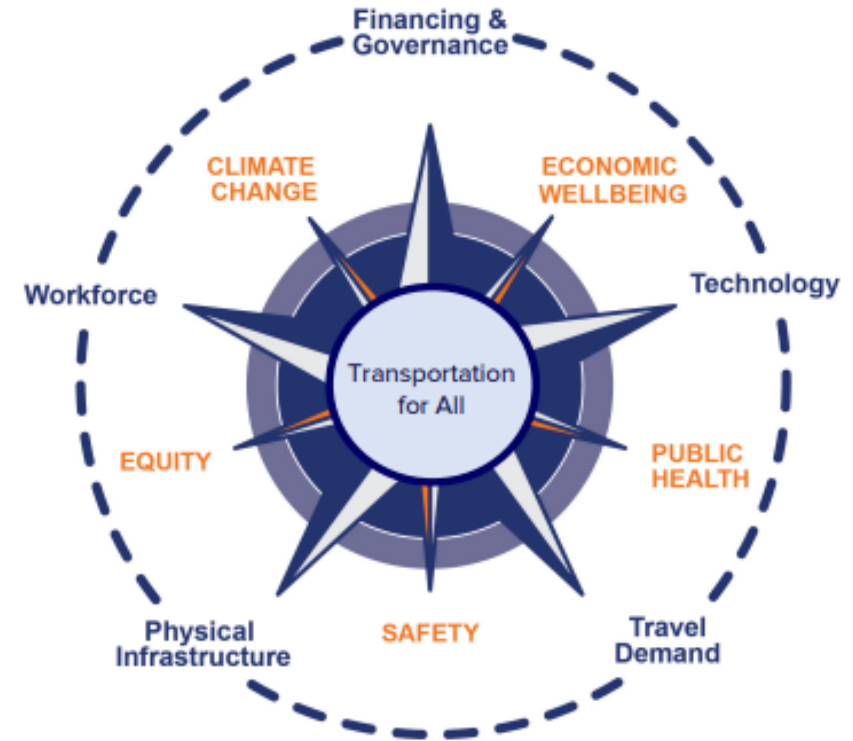
Debra Nelson, Director of Office of Policy, Planning & Performance
Adirondack Planning Forum | Livable Communities Panel
Saranac Lake, New York

Thursday, May 8, 2025

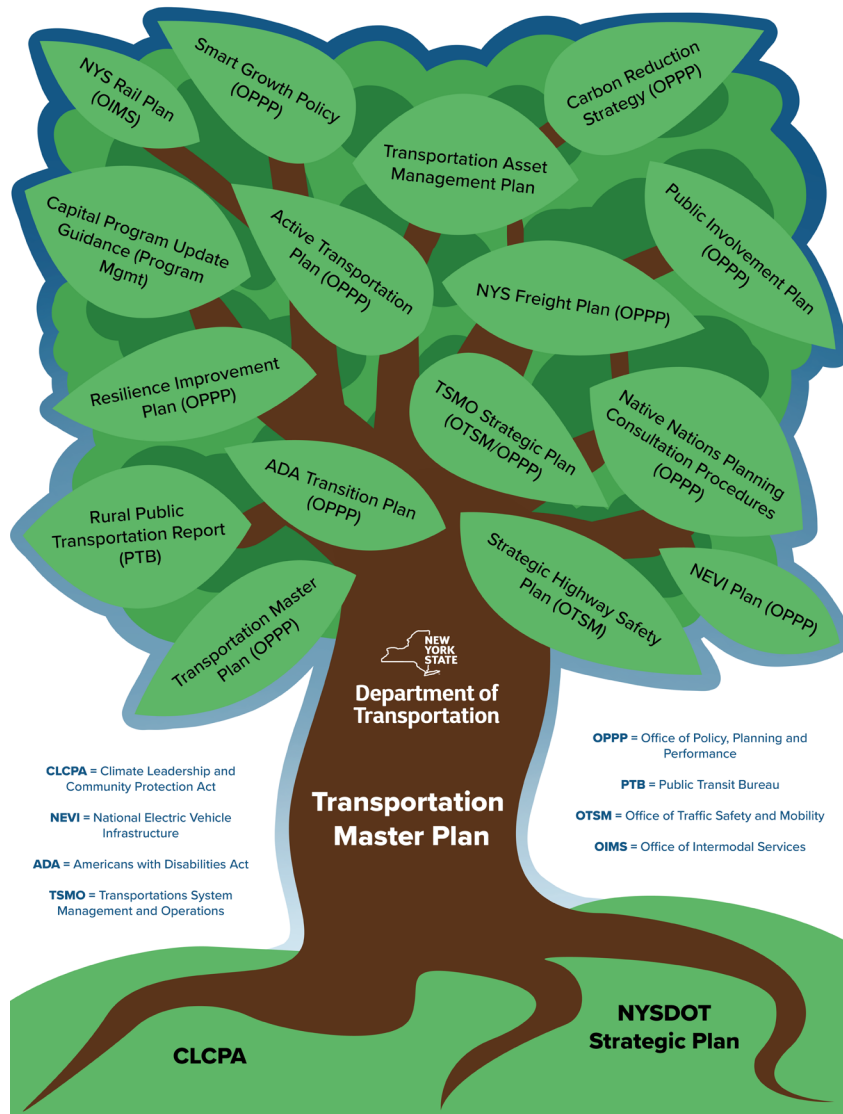
NYS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION STRATEGIC PLAN

PLANNING FORWARD

“It is the mission of NYSDOT to provide a **safe, reliable, equitable, and resilient** transportation system that **connects communities**, enhances **quality of life**, protects the **environment**, and supports the **economic-well-being** of New York State.”



NYS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION “FAMILY OF PLANS”



To align with and advance NYSDOT’s vision and mission, various program areas prepare an array plans with intersecting themes, driven by NYSDOT’s *Planning Forward* strategic goals and vision.

Each plan in the “Family of Plans” plays a unique role in NYSDOT’s support for communities to improve quality of life, improve access and connection to community services, and promote economic competitiveness and prosperity.

NEW YORK STATE TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN 2050



New York State's Transportation Master Plan 2050 Lays Out a Vision for Community-centered Transportation:

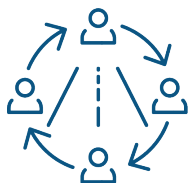
Transportation strengthens the health, safety, economic vibrancy, livability, and sustainability of communities throughout New York State.



Safe Transportation for All



Accessible & Affordable Transportation Choices



Community-Responsive & Resilient Transportation System



Environmental Stewardship & Climate Action



Reliable & Efficient Transportation Network



Strengthen Economic Competitiveness

NEW YORK STATE TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN 2050

PEOPLE

*Residents,
commuters,
visitors – all ages,
abilities, and
backgrounds*

Community-Centered Transportation

PLACES

*Neighborhoods,
communities,
gathering places,
destinations*

EXPERIENCES

*Safety, condition, reliability,
accessibility, environment*

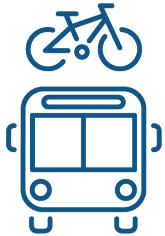
NYSDOT ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION STRATEGIC PLAN

Active Transportation Vision (Draft) - Through collaboration and engagement, NYSDOT will provide a connected and accessible active transportation network, offering all users access to travel CHOICES by **C**reating **H**ealthy **O**ptions to Improve **C**ommunity **E**xperience and **S**afety.



Safe and Comfortable

Incorporate spaces that make walking, rolling, and bicycling a safe and appealing choice for everyone.



Accessible and Connected

Provide a useful and convenient system that gets people where they need to go regardless of age or ability.



Community-responsive

Provide a network that serves the various contexts and community needs across the state.



Future-focused

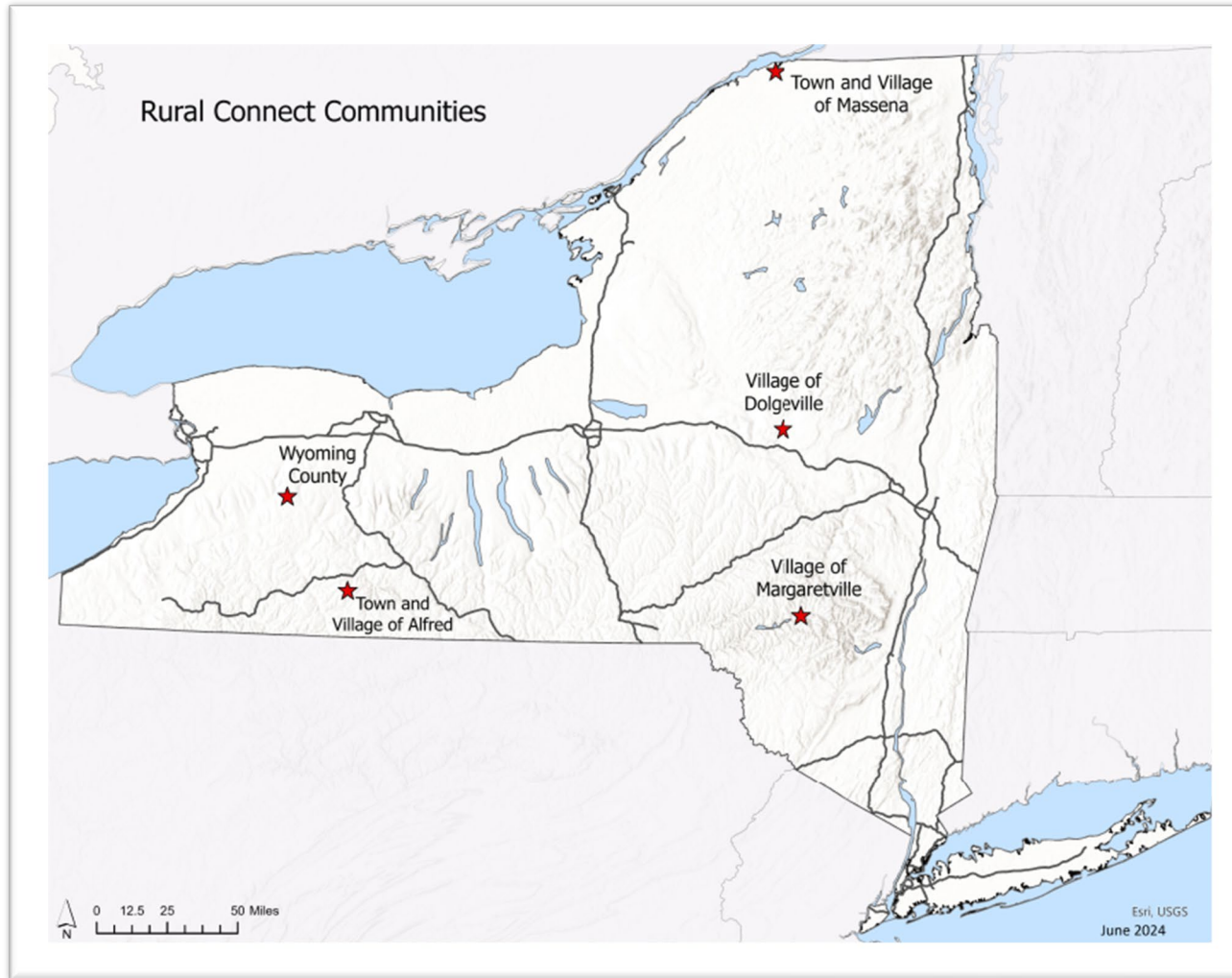
Work effectively with partners and communities to provide a connected and accessible active transportation network.

NEW YORK STATE'S RURAL CONNECT PROGRAM

Bringing the USDOT Thriving Communities Regional Pilot Program to New York State



NEW YORK RURAL CONNECT PARTNER COMMUNITIES



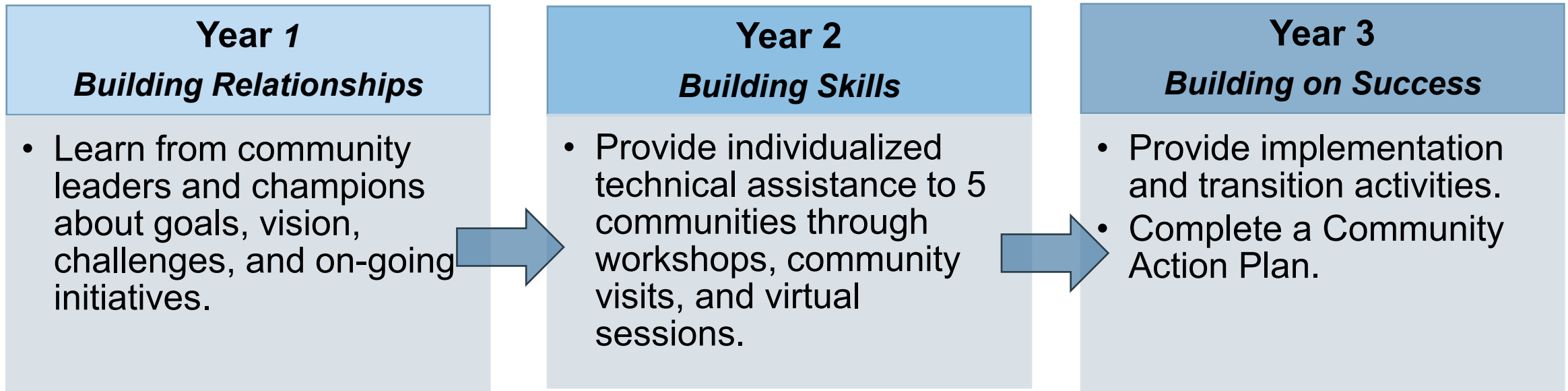
Partner Community Considerations

- **Rural/non-metro area**
 - Located in rural regions of the state
- **Community readiness**
 - Articulated visions and goals in existing plans, grants, programs, etc.
- **Active engagement with community members**
 - Engaged the community on previous or on-going projects.
- **Demonstrated need for capacity building**
 - Need for transportation planning and technical support due to limited resources and staff.

WHAT IS NEW YORK STATE RURAL CONNECT PROGRAM?

- NYSDOT and its partners, NYS Dept of State and consultant team with ICF International was 1 of 6 applicants nationally that was awarded a Thriving Communities Regional Pilot Program grant by USDOT.
- NYSDOT and its partners will collaborate and assist communities with their transportation projects, plans, and goals by providing technical assistance and growing capacity in areas where the community feels they need it.

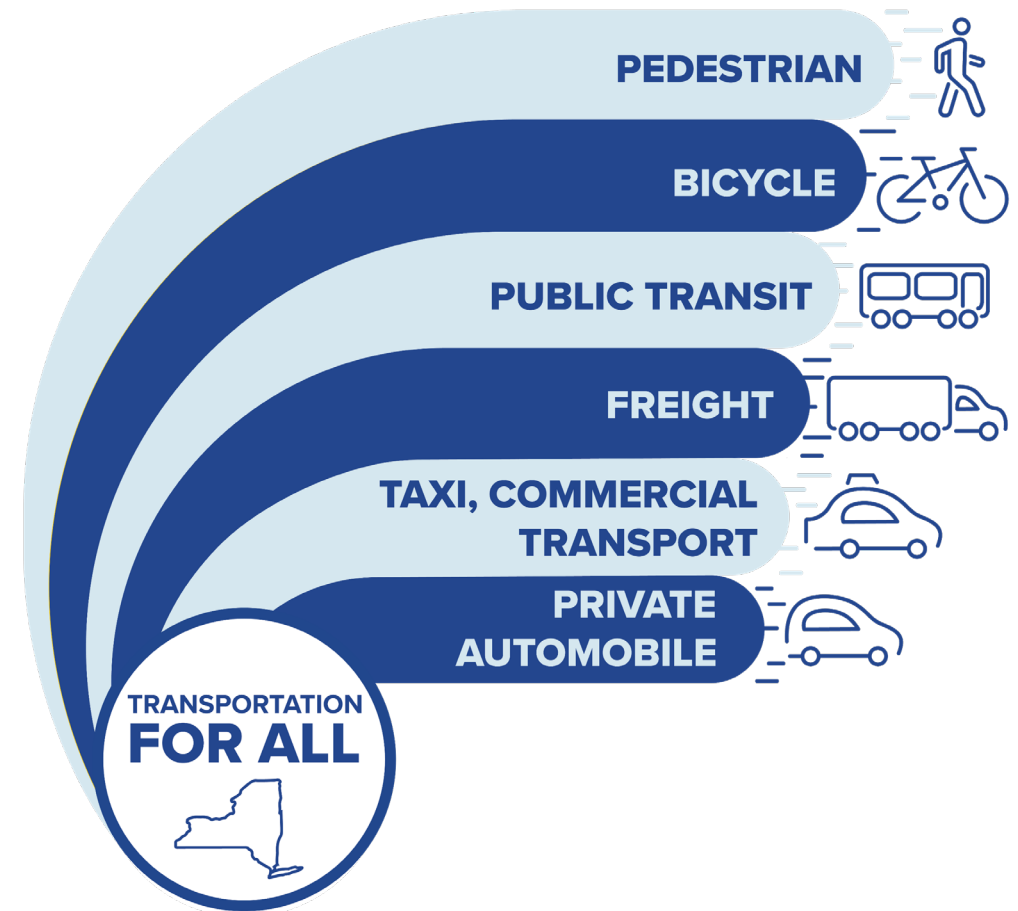
3 YEAR RURAL CONNECT TIMELINE



TRANSPORTATION FOR ALL

NYSDOT's community-focused vision for transportation puts people at the center

- A safe street must be safe for all users:
 - Pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and drivers
- Prioritize the needs of people rather than any one particular mode
- Create a roadway safer for everyone using it





Department of Transportation

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