

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY LINKAGES BETWEEN ALLEGANY STATE PARK AND NEARBY COMMUNITIES

VOLUME 7

**A GUIDEBOOK PUBLISHED FOR CATTARAUGUS COUNTY'S
SMART DEVELOPMENT FOR QUALITY COMMUNITIES SERIES**



PREPARED FOR

**THE CATTARAUGUS COUNTY LEGISLATURE'S
ALLEGANY STATE PARK PERIMETER STUDY**



PREPARED BY

CATTARAUGUS COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PLANNING AND TOURISM

AND

THE SARATOGA ASSOCIATES

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS, ARCHITECTS, ENGINEERS, AND PLANNERS, P.C.

**December 31, 2002
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December 31, 2002

Members, Cattaraugus County Legislature
Economic Development and Planning Agencies
Municipalities, Businesses and Citizens

Dear Colleagues:

We are fortunate to have Allegany State Park in Cattaraugus County. The 65,000 acres inside the park present nature at its best, attracting an average of 1.5 million visitors every year. The perimeter zone around the park is even larger, offering a wide variety of recreational opportunities, business activities, and tourist attractions.

This study by Cattaraugus County, called Cattaraugus County Allegany State Park Perimeter Study (2002), received funding support from Senator Patricia McGee. The enclosed economic strategy by The Saratoga Associates and the Cattaraugus County Department of Economic Development, Planning and Tourism, looks at linkages between the state park and various communities and projects around the park's perimeter. It includes:

- A new approach that moves beyond conventional economic development strategies by integrating lessons learned from similar gateway communities throughout the United States, by recommending economic development projects that have support in regional markets, and by presenting siting techniques and architectural designs that can protect the sensitive resources of Allegany State Park and surrounding communities.
- New estimates that 2,400 or more new jobs would be created by the proposed demonstration projects by 2025 if the proposed Route 219 Freeway is constructed and if an aggressive marketing effort is made beginning in 2005.

We want our county to grow and prosper, while protecting your community's character, environment, and beauty. This report shows us how to accomplish this new prosperity. For more information on Cattaraugus County, go to our Home Page at www.co.cattaraugus.ny.us.

Sincerely,

Gerard J. Fitzpatrick
Chairman

GJF:THM:mep
Enclosure

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**CATTARAUGUS COUNTY – ALLEGANY STATE PARK PERIMETER STUDY
TASK 3 LINKAGES BETWEEN PARK AND COMMUNITIES**

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. PROJECT BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

Recent and proposed highway improvements in Cattaraugus County (I-86 and Route 219) are expected to place the Allegany State Park/Salamanca Area at the center of a major regional transportation and tourist crossroads. Refer to Map I-1 “Regional Perspective,” and Map I-2 “Cattaraugus County” for additional graphic representation of the County. This newly emerging, regional crossroads is expected, in coming decades, to create locational advantages for a variety of traditional industrial and commercial investments, as well as for recreational and tourist-related investments in and around the State Park perimeter area. As depicted on Map I-1, the County possesses four beneficial main jumping-off points or staging areas for regional trail excursions to destinations outside of the County. These regional connections will be discussed in more detail in *Section IV Functional Community Connections*.

In efforts to capitalize on this potential economic growth related to the proposed transportation improvements and to ensure the sensitive resources of the Park and perimeter area are protected, Cattaraugus County Department of Economic Development, Planning, and Tourism with assistance from a \$100,000 Member Item from Senator Pat McGee, set out to prepare the Allegany State Park Perimeter Study.

In addition, two visioning Guidebooks developed by Cattaraugus County, The Saratoga Associates, and Randall Arendt¹, in 2001, helped set the stage for the County in preparing for future growth The Smart Development for Quality Communities, Volume 1 – A Guidebook for Cattaraugus County, New York, Elements of a Countywide Vision, encourages people in each community to work together, to create new value and community character in support of business and village downtowns, and to cherish their rural homeland and its ecosystems.² These two Guidebooks are part of a series of guides published by Cattaraugus County, received the Governor’s Quality Community Award for Excellence at the 2002 Quality Communities – Quality Coasts Conference in Albany, New York.



The Allegany State Park Perimeter Study consists of five main steps: Step 1 – National case study of similar county gateways to major parks; Step 2 – “Economic and Market Analysis Inside and Outside the Park;” Step 3 – “Linkages Between Park and Community in Cattaraugus County, New York;” Step 4 – Action Plans Demonstration Projects; and Step 5 – Implementation.



Department of Economic Development, Planning, and Tourism

The National Case Study Report “Summary and Analysis Of Similar Park Gateway Planning Initiatives” confirms that rapid or unplanned development can result in faceless and unattractive commercial and residential development, including strip malls, sign proliferation, and franchise architecture around major park facilities. Other potential problems identified includes traffic congestion, increasingly automobile-dependent communities, and overburdened infrastructure. The overall findings are that community/park-cooperative long-term planning has not traditionally been pursued in a coordinated, comprehensive, or ongoing manner in gateway communities. Rather, park-community relationships are typically needs-based, or reactionary to target issues. Therefore, with the help of this “Perimeter Study,” Cattaraugus County can gain a strategic edge by facilitating a coordinated focus between perimeter communities and Allegany State Park. Such initiatives would be unique and could help position the county ahead of other regional tourist destinations.

The second report, “Economic and Market Analysis Inside and Outside the Park,” provides an inventory of existing manufacturing, commercial, and tourism assets in the Park and Perimeter Zone, and evaluates the needs and opportunities that they create. The analysis is based on State and Federal projections of highway traffic, economic development, and cross-sector increases in employment opportunities. The report also outlines the industrial, commercial, and tourism-based potential in the Perimeter Zone of the Park. In addition to the specific economic activity recommendations, appropriate sites were identified within the Perimeter Zone for commercial, industrial, and tourism-related development. Specifically, demonstration projects are identified for the Allegany State Park Gateway Communities of Limestone, the City of Salamanca, and Onoville. These projects, which include an Outdoor Sports Recreation Center and Allegany State Park Visitors’ Center in Limestone, the State Park Village in Salamanca, and the Onoville Marina Improvement Projects, are discussed in greater detail within *Section V Demonstration Projects* of the Task 3 Report.

The Market Analysis Report culminated with a Focus Group Meeting in May of 2002. Members from each community in Cattaraugus County were invited to attend and participate in this meeting. The Saratoga Associates gave a presentation on the findings of the Case Studies and the Market Analysis, as well as earlier studies by Cattaraugus County. The presentation was followed by a question and answer period, which introduced numerous ideas for potential economic development projects throughout the County. A summary of this and other meetings is provided in Appendix A, and a brief overview of the recommended projects are also provided in *Section V Demonstration Projects* of this report.



B. PROJECT PURPOSE AND GOALS

The general purpose of the Allegany State Park Perimeter Study is to identify a variety of opportunities generated by the new, emerging, regional transportation crossroads at the edge of the Park. The Perimeter Study's overall goal is to promote economic growth around the edge of the Park, while keeping traditional industrial development separate and out of sight from tourist-sensitive settings and attractions. The desire is to maximize the economic benefits of growth in the Perimeter Zone.

C. PROJECT DESCRIPTION – LINKAGES BETWEEN PARK AND COMMUNITIES

This study on "Linkages" is the major community planning and design task in the Perimeter Study. This report is divided into three main sections: (1) Preparation of Development Guidelines/Standards, Design Factors, and Principles; (2) Identification of Functional Community Connections; and (3) A detailed discussion of the proposed Demonstration Projects as refined and updated in 2002. The report will conclude with a discussion of the economic impacts of the proposed demonstration projects, and the recommended implementation methods to fully realize these important projects.

The first section of this report recommends specific development standards for both public sector improvements and private sector investments, along with methods on how to keep industrial and tourism businesses separate through zoning, trail designs, signage, and other techniques and amenities. As future development occurs around Allegany State Park, a consistent, high quality development pattern and character should be encouraged in order to allow for industrial development, while at the same time, fulfilling the expectations of the State Park's visitors. These expectations require a quality visitation setting, natural resources, visual beauty, and desirable tourist experiences. The proposed design guidelines/standards will help ensure that future development around the perimeter of the Park occurs in a concise, practical, and compatible manner.

The second section of the report identifies potential community, Park, and regional trail connections within the County and beyond. The proposed trail connections offer recreation opportunities for both motorized and non-motorized recreational activities, including hiking, biking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, horseback riding, canoeing, and snowmobiling. Both the physical connection (i.e., trailhead locations and trail alignment issues) and policy issues (i.e., user conflicts, adjacent landowner concerns, trail management/policing responsibilities) have been considered. In addition, concept plans and cost estimates for improving the major road systems and gateway entrances into Allegany State Park, from the community side of the planning process, has been developed in this section of the report.



Department of Economic Development, Planning, and Tourism

The third section of the report includes detailed discussions of the proposed Demonstration Projects some of which were developed in the Market Analysis Report as well as in other previously published Cattaraugus County reports. Some Demonstration Projects discussed within this report are new and emerging concepts, such as the proposals to revitalize three villages. Finally, this section will include a general overview of a number of emerging long-term County-wide projects.

The report concludes with a discussion of the economic impacts associated with the proposed projects, and a Recommended Economic Development and Implementation Strategy to assist the communities and the County with seeing the projects through to fruition.