

Business and Economic Development



GOALS:

- A. Concentrate future industrial, commercial and other business development in areas that have adequate infrastructure and are accessible to residents of the Town and beyond.
- B. Promote a high quality of design in commercial, industrial and other business areas.
- C. Promote the continued economic viability of agriculture (See Farmland and Agriculture chapter).



Existing Plans and Programs

Empire Zones

A total of four Empire Zones are located either wholly or partially within the Town of Batavia:

Area 1—City and Town of Batavia comprises 527 acres located in both the Town and the City of Batavia. In the Town of Batavia, this area includes the Chapin International manufacturing building, O-AT-KA Milk Products Cooperative facilities and acreage for an agri-business park just east of O-AT-KA.

Area 2— Med & Tech Park includes 65.32 acres of the new Med & Tech Park located adjacent to the main campus of Genesee Community College on R. Stephen Hawley Drive.

Area 3— Batavia Gateway Corporate Park, Gateway II and surrounding area includes 239.26 acres located just north of the Batavia Interchange (Exit 48) of the New York State Thruway. The area encompasses the original Batavia Gateway Corporate Park, Gateway II Corporate Park and the surrounding area along the east side of Route 98 and south side of West Saile Drive.

Area 4— Batavia Industrial Park includes 88.49 acres located south of Pearl Street (Route 33) in both the City and Town of Batavia and encompasses all of the Batavia Industrial Park. This park has shortline rail service operated by Genesee Valley Transportation with access to the CSX mainline.

Existing Conditions

As depicted on the Existing Land Use Map (See Map 2), approximately 109 commercial and industrial properties are located in the Town of Batavia.

Commercial Development

Existing commercial development is located in the following areas:

- Northwest of the City of Batavia along Park Road, Lewiston Road and Veterans Memorial Drive. This area includes a Holiday Inn and other hotels along Park Road west of the Thruway interchange, a Home Depot, Wal-Mart, and other retail along Veterans Memorial Drive, the Batavia Downs parking lot and smaller commercial businesses along Park Road.
- West of the City along West Main Street Road. This area includes a mix of automotive, motels, restaurants and retail establishments.
- East of the City along East Main Street Road. This area includes motor vehicle dealerships, small shopping plazas and restaurants.
- Rt. 98 and Saile Drive north of the Thruway. Businesses in this area include a Harley-Davidson dealership on West Saile Drive, a veterinarian and retail.

Smaller concentrations of commercial development are located:

- At the intersection of Clinton Street and Batavia-Stafford Town Line Road
- In the Hamlet of East Pembroke
- In the Hamlet of West Batavia

Commercial recreational facilities include the Batavia International Speedway, located on Harloff Road in the northwestern portion of the Town. In addition, a portion of the Batavia Downs harness racing and Off-Track Betting facility is located on Park Road in the Town of Batavia.

Industrial Development

Industrial development in the Town of Batavia includes:

- O-At-Ka Milk Products, a dairy cooperative located partially in the Town southeast of the City of Batavia, manufactures butter, dried milk and a variety of canned and bottled products.

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- Hansen Aggregates, located south of the City of Batavia, mines sand and gravel mining and manufactures “ready-mix” concrete.
- (Kistner) Concrete products facility located southeast of the Hamlet of East Pembroke

In addition, several smaller manufacturing operations as well as storage, distribution and warehousing facilities are located in the Town.

Town Workforce

Approximately one-half of all employed Town residents work within Genesee County, predominantly at businesses and institutions located in the City and Town of Batavia.

Place of Work for Employed Town Residents

	Town of Batavia		City of Batavia		Genesee County
Worked in the Town or City of Residence	729	24.6%	3,924	55.8%	28.8%
Worked elsewhere in Genesee County	1,488	50.3%	1,245	17.7%	32.1%
Worked in Rochester	122	4.1%	420	6.0%	8.3%
Worked elsewhere in the Rochester MSA	269	9.1%	819	11.6%	16.5%
Worked outside of the Rochester MSA (1)	353	11.9%	630	9.0%	14.3%
Total Employed Residents	2,961		7,038		29,042

(1) Includes Monroe, Livingston, Orleans, Ontario and Wayne Counties

Major employers located in the City and Town of Batavia include:

Company	Employment
O-AT-KA Milk Products Cooperative	320
Chapin Manufacturing	250
Automotive Corporation	109
Agway Feed & Fertilizer	75
Western Regional Off-Track Betting Corp.	74
Hodgins Engraving	60
Holiday Inn	55
CH Wright Distribution Corp.	54
Genesee Precision	51

Economic Development

Genesee County Economic Development Center (GCEDC)

The Genesee County Economic Development Center (GCEDC), previously known as the Genesee County Industrial Development Agency, is a public benefit corporation established by in 1970 under New York's General Municipal Law. GCEDC is an autonomous organization, separate from Genesee County, which is governed by a seven-member board of directors.

Targeted Industries

The GCEDC has identified the following “targeted industries” as a focus to its economic development efforts:

- Agribusiness, including product distribution and packaging, food production and processing, farm equipment manufacturing and agri-tourism.
- Distribution/Warehouse Facilities
- Rural Healthcare/Telemedicine
- Manufacturing

These industries are well-suited to take advantage of Genesee County’s location, access to the Thruway, workforce and other assets. Agribusiness can build from a network of established agricultural production, processing and support businesses. Medical technology business can network with the new Medical Technology Park at Genesee Community College.

Programs

The **Sale Lease Back (SLB) Agreement** provides financial benefits to commercial, industrial, manufacturing and service oriented firms that make capital investments and create new jobs. Eligible projects include the construction or purchase of land, buildings, machinery and equipment and related technology infrastructure. Benefits of the SLB include:

- 60% average property tax abatement over 10 years
- Elimination of State (4%) and local (4%) sales tax
- Elimination of 1.25% County mortgage tax

Since 1985, the GCEDC has operated the Genesee County **Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)**. The RLF provides gap financing loans to Genesee County business owners for the acquisition of machinery and equipment and limited working capital for use by manufacturing, distributing and limited service industries.

The GCEDC issues **taxable or tax-exempt industrial development or revenue** bonds (IDB or IRB) to finance capital investments of at least \$1 million for industrial or qualified non-industrial projects. Eligible projects include construction, acquisition and renovation of real property, and the purchase of machinery and equipment.

Small Cities funds may be used to finance capital investments that will result in the creation or retention of at least 7 new jobs. Funds may be in form of low interest loan or grant.

The Genesee Gateway Local Development Corporation

The Genesee Gateway Local Development Corporation (GGLDC) is a not-for-profit 501-c3 Corporation established by the GCEDC in 2004. The GGLDC focuses on real estate development, building re-development, emerging market opportunities and is responsible for the development of Gateway I and II business parks.

Issues and Opportunities

The Town of Batavia has numerous advantages to offer commercial and industrial businesses. The following narrative summarizes the Town's strengths and weaknesses with regard to economic development.

Strengths

Thruway interchange. Access to the Thruway offers the potential for huge distribution and transportation cost savings for companies.

Location. Genesee County is centrally located between Buffalo and Rochester and is easily accessible to southern Ontario. The Town's location adjacent to the City of Batavia provides a ready market for commercial development.

Airport. The Genesee County Airport is a full service airport facility with a recently extended runway, measuring 5,500 ft., that is capable of handling most business jet aircrafts.

Railroads. Access to rail transportation to obtain supplies and to ship goods is an important consideration for certain companies.

Industrial Parks. Gateway and Gateway II provide "shovel-ready" sites for businesses seeking sites for industrial or other businesses.

Recreation/ Tourism. Commercial recreation facilities in and near Batavia attract customers from throughout the region who utilize businesses in the Town.

Weaknesses

Lack of sewer and water. Sites for new industrial and commercial development are limited to those that are served with public water as well as sewers.

Natural constraints. A significant amount of land in the Town is constrained from development due to natural features such as wetlands and floodzones.

High costs. The high cost of electricity, as well as taxes and sewer and water costs, may discourage businesses from locating or remaining in Genesee County and New York State.

Opportunities

Land adjoining the City of Batavia is in demand for commercial development. Areas west of the City are served by both public water and



Highlights of Focus Group Discussion

On June 28, 2006, the Comprehensive Plan Committee hosted a focus group of economic development specialists and business representatives. Steve Hyde from the Genesee County Economic Development Corporation stated that the GCEDC was formed in 1970. GCEDC offers financial incentives to developers to create jobs and for capital investments. He noted that 44% of every dollar spent on projects turns into assessed value. The GCEDC created the Genesee County Gateway Local Development Corp. to carry out retail and commercial development projects.

Tony Mancuso stated that Mancuso Development started in 1958. The company acquires old buildings, renovates them and rents them to small businesses. They only handle commercial and industrial properties.

Both participants agreed that Genesee County's biggest strength is access to the NYS Thruway. Other assets include the County Airport and access to rail transportation. Concerns include high taxes, high costs for utilities (especially electric) and water supply, in sufficient sewer and water capacity, and the lack of housing in the \$100,000-\$150,000 range.

Mr. Mancuso stated that the Land Use Plan should be somewhat flexible and suggested that certain areas should be designated for both commercial and light industrial.

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sewer and have access to State highways. Commercial development projects that are currently proposed include a 357,000 square foot retail center along the southeast side of Veterans Memorial Drive.

The development of Gateway I provided for the development of a new hotel, manufacturing and commercial development east of Route 98 north of the Thruway interchange. The completion of Gateway II, located south of Saile Drive, will accommodate additional industrial and commercial development.

Other pending development includes the proposed Med-Tech Park located adjacent to Genesee Community College. This facility is intended to provide space for companies that design and manufacture sophisticated medical devices, telemedicine technology, and related biomedical goods and services.

Recommended Actions

1. Rezone land for commercial, industrial and other business uses as depicted in the Future Land Use Map.
2. Work with the Genesee County Economic Development Center (GCEDC) to support existing businesses located within the Town and to establish sites for new businesses to locate in the Town.
3. Improve and extend infrastructure as needed to support existing and future commercial and industrial development.
4. Support the provision of additional accommodations to encourage visitors from outside Batavia to stay and patronize businesses within the Town.
5. Assist small businesses to obtain grant funding for façade and other business improvement projects.
6. Work with business operators to institute programs to promote business development.